



## A HISTORICAL STUDY ON; WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS (OLYMPIC)

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**ABSTRACT** Women's sport history started back in the 19th century. By the end of the 19th century, horseback riding, archery, golf, tennis, skiing and skating were being enjoyed among women in the upper social class. Its use to promote gender equity and empower girls and women is often overlooked because sport is not universally perceived as a suitable or desirable pursuit for girls and women. This article aims to analyze the trend of women's participation in sports and physical activity at international and national levels. As we know about the Olympic Games, this is a platform of maximum countries of the world to meet together for sports. So Olympic Games are the best representatives of all games and sports competition at various levels. Some women i.e. Karnam Malleswari, Saina Nehwal and M.C. Mary Kom won the medals in Olympic games. On the basis of this trend we can say that, the women's participation in sports will be equal to men's near the mid of this century in Games.

### KEYWORDS :

#### INTRODUCTION:-

Sport is an integral part of the culture of almost every nation. The first time for female athletes to participate in the modern Olympic Games was the second Olympic Games in 1900. Only free male Greek citizens were allowed to participate in the 1st modern Olympic Games as well as the ancient Olympic Games.

According to the IOC (International Olympic Committee), only 12 female athletes participated in the second Olympic Games out of the 1066 athletes from 19 countries. They competed in only two events which were golf and tennis. In the 3rd St. Louis Olympics, archery was the only women's event. In the 4th London Olympics, archery, figure skating, and tennis became women's events, and diving, swimming and tennis in the 5th Stockholm Olympics. The decision of whether women can participate in the event or not was up to men who operated the Olympic Games. The events that men considered being a "feminine sport" were recognized as women's sport events.

#### Women sports Today:-

The Basic Act on Sport stated, "Sport is a universally shared human culture". Sport refreshes our body and mind and helps maintain a healthy lifestyle. Sport enhances self-efficacy and can be used as an effective communication method. Recently, we have come across many outstanding performances by female players in soccer and baseball, which used to be considered a sport for only men. A total of 204 countries and regions, the largest number in Olympic history, participated in the Beijing Olympic Games. Among the 25 medals that Japan won, 12 were won by female athletes.

It seems that the gap between men and women in sport is getting much smaller when we look at women's sport history. However, there are still definite issues that must be solved concerning women's sport. For example, female athletes who must raise their family and children often face challenges of balancing athletic career and personal life. There is still a low ratio of female coaches and executives in sports organizations. In short, the number of female coaches who have the potential to become leaders has not increased yet. Considering these issues in women's sport, Japanese Center for Research on Women in Sport encourages research to ensure that female athletes can focus on their athletic performance in a better environment.

#### Sports participation of women in India:-

The Status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. With a decline in their status from the ancient to medieval times, to the promotion of equal rights by many reformers, the history of women in India has been eventful. In modern India, women have held high offices in India including that of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Leader of the Opposition. Several Indian women have participated in the Olympics in the past. First time only four Indian women were participated in 1952 Olympics (Helsinki) in athletics. The first Indian woman to ever win an Olympic medal was Karnam Malleswari who won a bronze

medal at the Sydney Olympics in the Women's 69 kg category in Weightlifting. After that in 2012 London Olympic Games Saina Nehwal (Badminton) and M.C. Mary Kom (Boxing) secured one bronze medal each. Several Indian women have participated in the Olympics in the past. Currently the total is 5. Five women from India have won an Olympic medal and their names are as follows:- Karnam Malleswari, Mary Kom, Saina Nehwal, P.V. Sindhu & Sakshi Malik. Sakshi is a Freestyle Wrestler and she won the nation a Bronze in the Rio 2016 summer Olympics. India was represented by five-time world champion Mary Kom who was the only Indian to qualify for the event. However, she lost to Nicola Adams of the UK in the semi-final. She stood third in the competition and earned herself an Olympic Bronze medal. Sakshi Malik became the first Indian woman to win a medal in Wrestling. She won the Bronze medal in Women's 58 kg freestyle wrestling in 2016 Summer Olympics held in Rio. Saina Nehwal was the first Indian to win a medal in Badminton at the Olympics, by winning the Bronze medal at the London Olympics 2012 on 4 August 2012. Geeta Phogat became the first ever Indian woman to qualify for the women's 55kg wrestling in the London Olympics 2012. Women's wrestling was announced in 2004. P.V. Sindhu became the first ever Indian woman to win the Silver medal at the Olympics, by reaching the Badminton final at Rio Olympics 2016. However, she lost to Carolina Marin of Spain in the final on 19 August 2016. She became the youngest Indian woman to win an Olympic medal. Through P.T. Usha could not win the medal in 1984 Olympics in 400m hurdle race, yet that was her remarkable and extraordinary performance. Infact, there is a long list of Indian female athletes who won various positions in world cups, commonwealth games, asian games etc. Among these Anju Bobby George, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal, Krishna Poonia, Seema Antil, Garima Chaudhary, Jwala Gutta, Geeta Phogat, Deepika Kumar etc. are the prominent Athletes of India.

#### CONCLUSION:-

##### "Sports: A Powerful Strategy to Advance Women's Rights."

Though time is changing very fast and situations are improving. A number of sportswomen has been defying the odds i.e., social and psychological hurdles related to participation of women in sports but there is still a lot to be achieved. No doubt the number of women participants in sports is having an increasing trend year by year but it is lesser than to men. There may be number of reasons for less number of women participation in sport. The mind set of persons will have to be changed specially of parents, families, schools, colleges, teachers and administrators. So on the basis of this trend we can say that, the women's participation in sports will be equal to men's near the mid of this century in Games.

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