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Promotion of Women's Basketball: A Look at Parental Opinion

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ABSTRACT: Young girls are increasingly interested in team sports, particularly basketball. Competitive or recreational sports practice has a decisive influence and a significant effect on female participants. These activities strengthen physical health and instill life skills such as resilience, teamwork, and stress management. However, young girls face social realities that impact their ambitions. This study analyzes the motivational factors and barriers to basketball practice among young girls at Club Arrow. The stratified sampling technique based on the categories of benjamin, minime, cadet, and junior allowed for the formation of a sample of 120 parents. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire. Thus, the results of the study indicated that the obstacle to girls playing basketball is the lack of family support. However, the majority of parents adopt an overall favorable attitude toward the practice of women's basketball. Also, parental encouragement is reinforced by the success and visibility of female athletes.

KEYWORDS: encouragement, basketball practice, parents of players, women's basketball,

1 INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization indicates that moderate or vigorous physical activity has beneficial effects on health (References). Thus, in children and adolescents, physical activity improves physical fitness, cardiometabolic health, bone health, cognitive outcomes, mental health, and reduces body fat.[1].

Beside these aspects, sports are a means of education and training for the youth (cf. UNESCO charter and sports charter, 2015). It allows young people to acquire a number of attitudes and behaviors that enable them to integrate properly into society. Respect for the rules, the spirit of competition, fair play, team spirit, respect for the opponent, etc., are all values that are transmitted in associations and on sports fields [2]. Le sport offre aux jeunes une occasion d'être en phase avec le milieu social de référence. C'est pour cette raison que la loi 84-59 portant Charte du Sport considère le club sportif comme une cellule éducationnelle de base (Fall, 2010 p. 21).

[1] https://www.who.int/fr/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity consulté le 13 janvier 2026
[2] https://proevolutionacademy.com/les-valeurs-dans-le-sport/ consulté le 11 Février 2026

Sport offers young people an opportunity to be in tune with their reference social environment. It is for this reason that Law 84-59 on the Sports Charter considers the sports club as a basic educational unit (Fall, 2010 p. 21). Sport is perceived as a space full of hope. It structures, brings together, and creates opportunities. It is also a space of support, a catalyst for personal development, and a source of physical and mental well-being (Gueniat and Marti, 2022 p. 2). It is in this logic that Bourdieu highlights the construction of a support network thru sports activities. For him, they offer young people much more than just a space for physical exercise; they create a place for meetings, sharing, and learning. These networks, whether formed of close ones or professional contacts, are essential for helping them find stability and advance in their journey (Bourdieu, 1993).

It is clearly observable the various advantages related to sports and physical activity, which represent a vector of social inclusion and provide benefits related to physical, mental, and cognitive well-being for children and adolescents. They constitute educational and social pathways by contributing to their stability and development. However, despite this recognition of sports, the participation of girls in basketball practice is marked by a differentiated perspective from parents. They do not always allow the players to participate in training sessions or competitions, particularly in the youth championships. This situation guides the objective of the study, which is to analyze the factors of motivation and barriers to practicing basketball among the girls of Djecikpo Club Arrow in Treichville.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

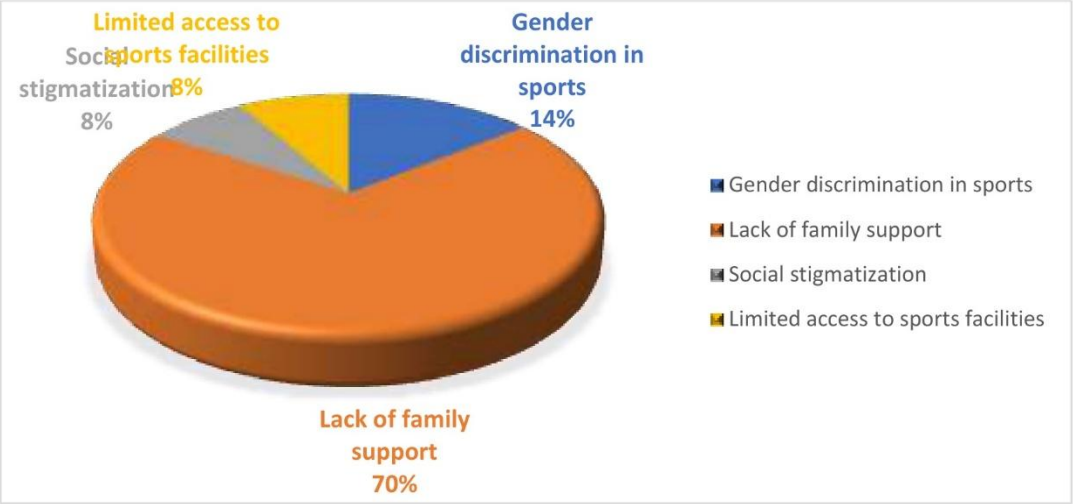
The study was conducted in the municipality of Treichville, where the Djecikpo Club Arrow is located. This cross-sectional study is based on a quantitative approach. The stratified sampling technique allowed us to define our sample. The strata are composed of the categories: benjamin, minime, cadet, and junior of Djecikpo Club Arrow. The parents of these players were interviewed, with 30 parents in each category. The sample consists of 120 parents of the players. The questionnaire was used to collect data on the following themes: obstacles to playing basketball, parents' opinions on regular basketball practice, factors encouraging parental support for basketball practice, and parents' attitudes toward basketball practice. The survey was conducted over a period from early February to the end of March 2024, and the SPHINX software was used for the database. The analysis and interpretation of the results are based on the expectancy-value theory (Eccles et al., 1991). The theory specifies that parents' decisions regarding their children's sports participation are based on parental beliefs related to the usefulness of sports and the risks children face, the values assigned to the activity, success expectations according to the child's gender, and social and cultural norms.

3 RÉSULTATS

The collection of quantitative data from the parents of girls provided information related to the obstacles to playing basketball, the parents' views on regular basketball practice, the factors promoting parental encouragement of basketball practice, and the parents' attitudes toward basketball practice. The subsections below present these results. The source of the presented data comes from the data collection conducted in the field.

3.1 THE OBSTACLES FACED BY GIRLS IN PLAYING BASKETBALL

It has been noted that adolescents (boys and girls) practice sports nowadays. Also, that sports promote the development of adaptive habits and the ability to face challenges. However, girls face adversities in practicing sports, primarily in basketball, as illustrated by the graph below.

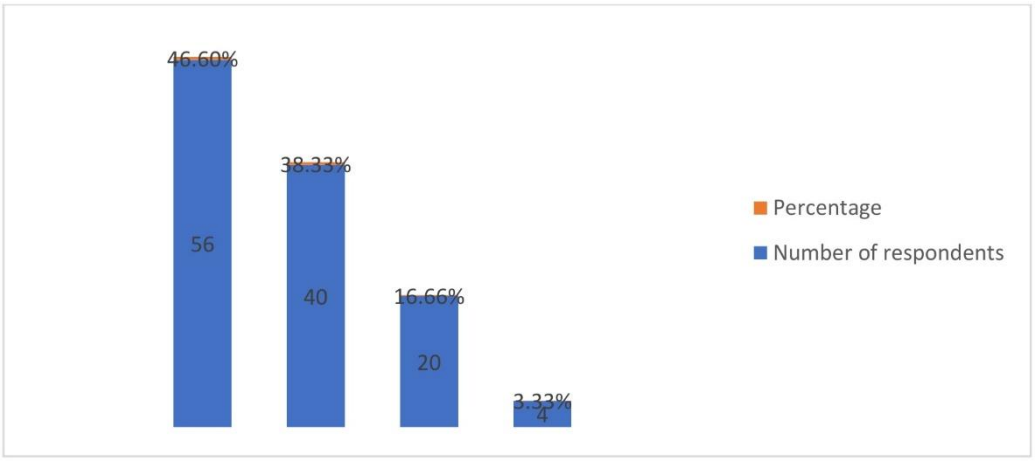


Graph. 1. Obstacles related to Basketball practice

The analysis of the graph shows the different aspects that hinder the practice of basketball among girls. It is about gender discrimination in sports, which accounts for 17%. Next The lack of family support is 84%, social stigma is 7.5%, and limited access to sports facilities is 8.33%. These results indicate the predominant influence of the family on girls' sports engagement, the persistence of social norms, and gender inequalities**.**

3.2 PARENT' OPINIONS ON GIRLS REGULAR PARTICIPATION IN BASKETBALL

The regular practice of basketball among girls does not result from individual will, but from family encouragement. This section highlights the parents' opinions on this matter.

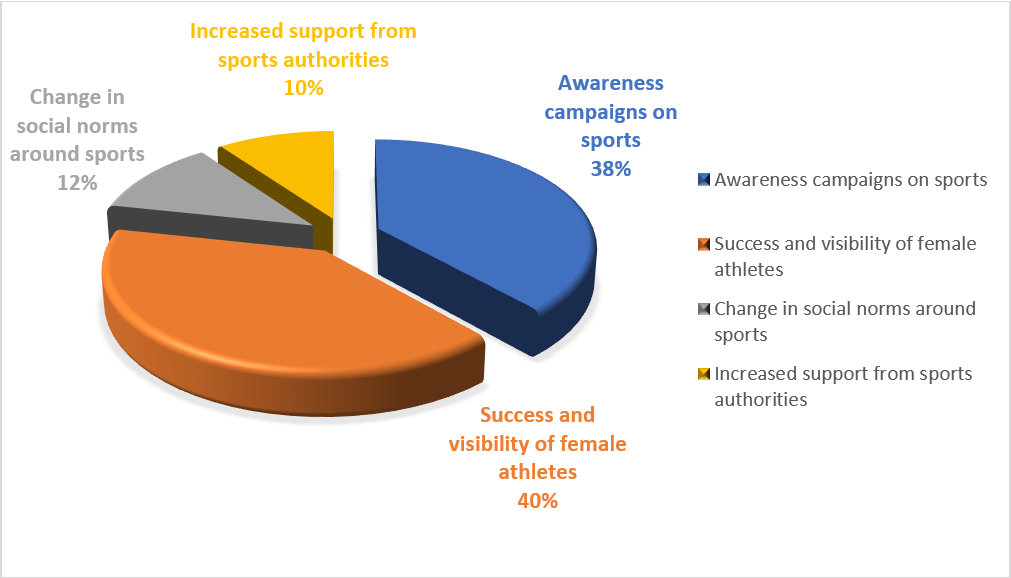


Graph. 2. Parents opinion on their daughter's attendance in basketball

Graph 2 indicates that parents express differing opinions regarding their daughters' attendance in basketball practice. Some parents express strong support for regular basketball practice (46.66%), while 33.33% say they are somewhat supportive. Unlike the previous ones, 16.66% of parents express a rather unfavorable opinion, and 3.33% of parents are extremely unfavorable to the regular practice of basketball.

3.3 DETERMINANTS OF PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT IN GIRLS' BASKETBALL PRACTICE

Parents play an essential role in girls' participation in basketball practice. They adopt supportive behaviors and also advocate for factors promoting women's sports illustrated in the graph.

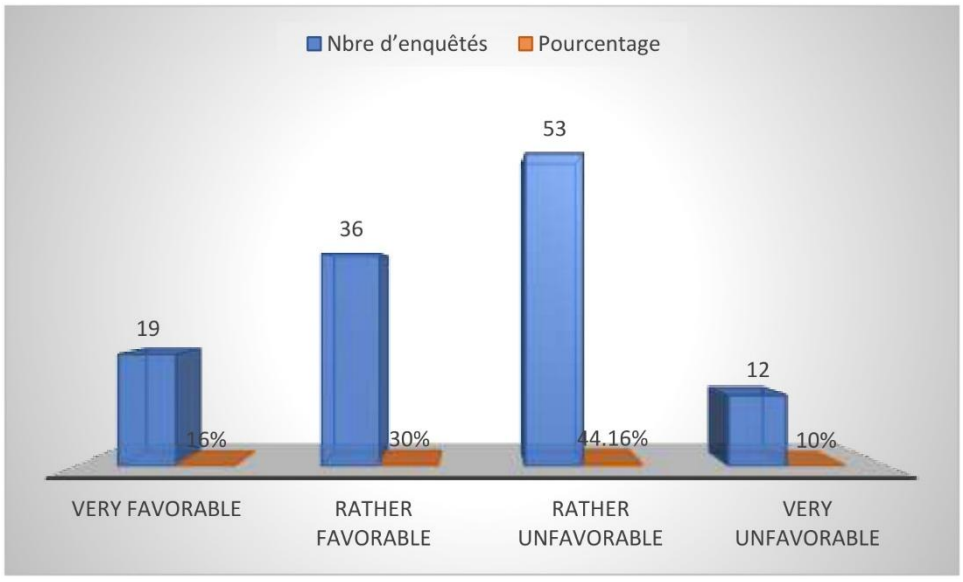


Graph. 3. Parental support in girls' basketball practice

Graph 3 illustrates the levers for transforming women's sports advocated by the parents of girls. Some parents emphasize awareness campaigns about sports (38.33%), while 48% focus on the success and visibility of female athletes. Beside these aspects, 11.66% of parents suggest a change in social norms around sports, and 10% of parents mention increased support from sports authorities. The results indicate that a combination of cultural, media, and institutional factors is needed to promote women's sports.

3.4 Parental Attitude Toward Girls Playing Basketball

Attitudes refer to individuals' reactions to social stimuli. The parents of girls have a predisposition toward their daughters practicing basketball. This is shown in the graph below.



Graph. 4. Parental Attitude and Girls' Basketball Practice

Graph 4 reveals a divergence in parental attitudes toward girls' basketball practice. A majority of 54.16% of parents express a marked reservation, with 44.16% showing a rather unfavorable attitude and 10% of parents being very unfavorable.

Conversely, the other parents are open, with 30% being somewhat favorable and 16% being very favorable. The results illustrate a social resistance in parents' attitudes toward girls playing basketball.

4 DISCUSSION

The study on the factors of motivation and barriers to the practice of women's basketball specifies that girls face a lack of family support. Nevertheless, some parents adopt a supportive stance toward the practice of women's basketball.

4.1 THE OBSTACLES FACED BY GIRLS IN PLAYING BASKETBALL

The data from the study reveals that four aspects constitute adversities to girls' practice of basketball. A strong proportion for the lack of family support, gender discrimination in sports, and social stigma. The family and environmental framework therefore influences the sports engagement of girls. The practice of basketball lacks social legitimacy from the majority of the girls' parents. Thus, without this parental validation, girls' commitment to basketball decreases. Moreover, parents adopt a protective approach toward their daughters to anticipate the fear of judgment and the differential treatment in sports practice related to gender.

Moreover, the inaccessibility of sports facilities also reduces parents' motivation to encourage their daughters to play basketball. Thru these results, the expectancy-value theory shows that a person's engagement in an activity depends on the expectation of success and the value placed on the task. The work of the author Ndiaye (2011, p.32) fits into this logic. She specifies that women encounter obstacles in the practice of competitive sports. These causes are social prejudices, parents intervene at certain times because of the outfits worn. Parents who do not agree with their sports practice, especially when it comes to away matches, also face gender issues because they are called failed boys. Saouter (2016) specifies that although women have gained the right to ride bicycles, swim, run, and participate in car racing. However, the counterpart of this access has been the systematic confrontation with violence such as mockery, control of practices, control of bodies, control of femininity.

Furthermore, the results of Hernandez's work (2022, p. 8) indicate that women are neither equitably present nor even equitably represented in all sports disciplines. Each sports specialty produces differences and inequalities within its own field that can be traced, deciphered, and made visible. Thus, the enduring gendering of sports practices aligns with the gendering of the professional world and reflects, in its own way, the social construction of femininity. Subsequently, Campbell (2021) indicates that women from Africa or Asia are more frequently targeted by femininity tests, and moreover, the processes surrounding the administration of these tests are tainted by racist biases.

These various studies by the authors highlight that social norms and gender inequalities continue to influence women's sports participation. There needs to be a social revaluation of sports disciplines in order to enhance the intrinsic motivation of girls to engage in sports.

4.2 THE OPINION OF PARENTS REGARDING GIRLS' REGULAR PARTICIPATION IN BASKETBALL

The girls' regular participation in basketball is approved by a large majority of parents according to the study's data. The support of the parents demonstrates that basketball is a physical activity that improves the health of girls. It is a team sport that develops muscular strength, agility, concentration, and promotes socialization. Thus, thru the benefits of basketball, parents assess the value of this physical activity and the chances of success it can offer to girls. Nevertheless, a minority of parents are opposed to regular basketball practice. Their reasoning is explained by the fact that regular practice can hinder girls' studies. Their reasoning is justified by the fact that they may have apprehensions about the risks of gender stereotypes that girls face. This attitude of parents can be a source of demotivation for girls in engaging in physical activity in the long term.

The expectancy-value theory related to our study shows that girls' motivation to play basketball is linked to how parents assess the interest, usefulness, and gender inequalities of this activity. The works of the author Debrumetz are similar to our results when they show the benefits of basketball for young people. The practice of basketball allows for the increase of endurance and physical abilities such as strength, speed, and agility. On a psychological level, it develops team spirit, cohesion, and also allows for forging social contacts with team members. Also, depending on their abilities and his physical and psychological aptitudes. The players therefore learn to be at the service of the group and to make the most of their abilities to achieve a collective goal. Basketball helps to understand that discipline and the rules to be followed are necessary on the court, as well as outside (Debrumetz, 2010, p. 38).

In the same vein, Cissé (2025 p. 524) emphasizes that parents play a leading role in their children's sports practice. For him, the way of approaching sports as a leisure activity or a possible profession, as well as the representations that stem from it, are largely shaped by the practices and values transmitted in the family environment. For young people engaged in a dual academic and athletic training, parental influence seems particularly structuring. It can manifest as a strong orientation toward basketball at the expense of other disciplines, as a valorization of sports as a means of social advancement, or even as the reproduction of sporting habits inherited from the family trajectory.

On the other hand, some authors align with the dynamics of parents who are opposed to regular basketball practice. The report on women and sports in Canada (2020) cited by Lefrançais and Julien (2023, p.23) shows that in a survey conducted among girls aged 13 to 17 or parents of girls aged 6 to 12, one in five mentions concerns regarding bullying and safety as a barrier to sports participation. Moreover, Kerr and Willson (2021) cited by Lefrançais and Julien (2023, p.24) report that women are more often victims of violence in sports contexts, but note that the results differ between studies, particularly due to differences in populations and types of violence studied.

Let's remember that the family is a space for structuring the representations, choices, and sports paths of children. Also, insecurity, intimidation, and gender-based violence constitute obstacles to the sports participation of girls and women despite the disparities noted in the research.

4.3 Determinants Of Parental Encouragement In Girls' Basketball Participation

The majority of parents focus on the success and visibility of female athletes to encourage their daughters to engage in sports. For these parents, the trajectories of female success (social achievement, recognition, and opportunities) in sports, highlighted by the media, provide credibility and guidance for their daughters. Moreover, some parents emphasize awareness campaigns. These serve as channels to inform other parents and change their beliefs by increasing the social and moral value of sports and legitimizing girls in sports practice. Other parents, on the other hand, advocate for a change in social norms and increased support from sports authorities.

The institutional and normative framework promotes the fight against gender inequalities, reduces socio-cultural barriers, and allows for the representation of women in sports practice. These results show that the appreciation of women's sports depends on a combination of cultural, media, and institutional factors. Taking into account the three aspects increases the perceived value of the sport and the success associated with the sports practice of young girls and parental support. In line with our results, the Canadian-French Association for the Advancement of Science (ACAFS, 2016) indicates that the broadcasting of women's sports events can have a positive impact on the number of young girls who choose to practice these sports, highlighting the importance of offering role models that young people can identify with.

UN Women[3] emphasizes that the visibility of female athletes must be significantly strengthened. This visibility allows for the promotion of more female athlete role models capable of encouraging girls to continue playing. Thus, the recent Parity Now survey revealed that 88% of sports enthusiasts consider professional female athletes as influential role models for young women. In terms of commercial motivation, fans are 2.8 times more likely to purchase a product recommended by a female athlete rather than by any other type of influencer. UN Women specifies that according to World Athletics, female athletes are 14% more followed on social media than male athletes, and they recorded a 4% increase in the number of searches on Google News between 2022 and 2023.

Beside these aspects, some authors focus on promising intervention policies that operate simultaneously at multiple levels. This involves strengthening parental capacities (logistical and emotional support), improving the quality and inclusivity of PE (multisport programs, pleasure-oriented pedagogy), and finally fostering environments where peers can play a positive role (initiation groups, accessible collective activities). Moreover, targeted measures to reduce economic and geographical barriers, as well as specific strategies to encourage girls' participation, are recommended to mitigate the observed inequalities (Dudley et al, 2011).

[3] https://www.unwomen.org/fr/nouvelles/article-explicatif/2024/07/cinq-choses-a-savoir-sur-les-femmes-et-le-sport

4.4 PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD GIRLS' BASKETBALL PRACTICE

The results related to parents' attitudes toward girls playing basketball show two divergent trends, with a strong proportion of parents being opposed to the practice of basketball.

This marked reservation from parents is explained by the fact that they perceive basketball as an activity in contradiction with gender roles. They see basketball as a sport for men that does not align with female potential. Thus, their beliefs, stereotypes, and stigmatization related to basketball limit girl's motivation. Conversely, a proportion below the average, that is, less than 50% of parents are in favor of girls playing basketball. This means they assign a utility value to the sport. In the logic of these parents, sports improve health, discipline, and integration. These parents encouraging their daughters in basketball value their abilities.

In summary, girls' participation in basketball faces social resistance because the majority of parents believe that The data from the study are similar to the work of the authors Cissé et al (2025). They specify that the trajectory of female athletes is shaped by the family environment, within which parents play a crucial role. Thus, the actions of parents oscillate between two poles: on one hand, they appear as facilitators by providing encouragement, guidance, and resources. On the other hand, they can become a source of tension when their expectations are excessive or when their emotional and financial investment exerts undue pressure on the young.

In this same logic, Lareau (2011) and Saint-Martin & Brière (2020) indicate that the weakly negative correlation between the priority given to studies and the taste for sports reflects a symbolic tension between academic capital and athletic capital. This relationship does not necessarily indicate a conflict, but rather a trade-off in the educational investments of families, depending on their representations of social success. The study by Corr and his colleagues (2019) reports four barriers to adolescent girls' participation in sports. These include gender biases in sports, the perception of physical competence, the diversification of priorities and responsibilities, as well as social pressures regarding the performance of femininity. is sport does not value their gender identity. The results of the study showed that parents continuously negotiate between educational capital, which is a priority for girls to ensure their social success, and sports capital, which is perceived as secondary. For girls, socio-cultural pressures related to girls' sports practice limit their enthusiasm for basketball

5 CONCLUSION

This research, conducted at the Arrow Club in Treichville, aimed to analyze the motivational factors and barriers to girls' participation in basketball. The study data indicated that socio-cultural barriers limit girls' participation in basketball. They manifest thru the lack of parental support, the beliefs, and the stereotypes that parents hold about girls playing basketball. This means that parental and environmental perceptions dictate girls' sports engagement. Nevertheless, some parents advocate for strategies to motivate girls to engage in sports. It involves the deconstruction of gender habits, the reconfiguration of social representations, and the integration of mixed-gender in public sports spaces. The limitations of the study are the small sample size (n = 120), which restricts the scope of generalizations, as well as the consideration of only the quantitative approach. These limitations invite further reflection thru mixed and longitudinal approaches, capable of exploring the evolution of parents' perceptions and the motivations of girls in practicing basketball.

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