

The Effects of Social and Cultural Barriers on Sports Participation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract— This study investigates the social and cultural barriers affecting students' participation in sports in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, focusing specifically on the influence of gender norms and religious beliefs. The research aims to identify the key barriers to sports engagement, assess their impact on students, and propose strategies to overcome these challenges. A survey was conducted with 100 students from various Nigerian universities, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather data on their perceptions of and experiences with sports participation. The findings highlight significant barriers, including cultural beliefs, religious practices, gender-based expectations, and family pressures, which predominantly affect female students' involvement in sports. The study reveals that gender norms and religious beliefs are strong determinants of students' sports participation, with societal views on gender roles and religious teachings limiting opportunities for engagement, particularly for women. The Chi-square analysis indicates a statistically significant relationship between gender norms, religious beliefs, and sports participation. Based on these findings, the study recommends the implementation of gender-inclusive sports policies, greater religious accommodations, and the organization of cultural awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote equal participation. Additionally, fostering community support for sports participation is suggested to reduce external pressures. This research contributes to the understanding of the barriers to sports participation in Nigeria and offers actionable recommendations for promoting inclusivity in university sports programs.

Keywords: Social barriers; cultural barriers; gender norms; religious beliefs; sports participation.

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INTRODUCTION

Sports participation plays a critical role in the holistic development of students in tertiary institutions, contributing not only to physical health but also to emotional well-being, social inclusion, and academic performance (Olowonirejuaro & Okunade, 2019; Okoko & Ahamefule, 2023). In Nigerian tertiary institutions, however, sports engagement among students is significantly influenced by a range of socio-cultural factors that act as barriers to participation. These barriers, rooted in societal norms, religious beliefs, gender expectations, and family influences, often limit students' involvement in both recreational and competitive sports activities (Adetunji & Yusuf, 2021; Okon & Ahamefule, 2023).

In many parts of Nigeria, cultural perceptions around gender roles have a profound impact on students' ability to engage in sports, particularly among females. Traditionally, sports have been viewed as a masculine activity, with women often discouraged from active participation due to societal expectations surrounding femininity and modesty (Ahamefule, 2018; Okpara & Agbo, 2020). This leads to a gendered imbalance in sports engagement, where female students are underrepresented in sports teams and athletic programs. Furthermore, societal pressure, family restrictions, and concerns about moral appropriateness have been identified as factors that discourage female students from participating in physical activities, especially in more conservative regions of the country (Eze & Aluko, 2022; Usendok, et al., 2022).

Religious beliefs also serve as a significant cultural barrier. In some religious communities, particularly those with strict doctrinal interpretations, participation in sports may be discouraged due to perceptions of immodest dressing, physical exposure, or mixed-gender interactions common in athletic settings (Akinade & Bello, 2023). For instance, Islamic doctrines that emphasize gender separation and modesty can create tensions for Muslim female students who wish to engage in athletic programs. These cultural and religious constraints often result in reduced access to sports opportunities for certain groups, limiting their physical development and social integration on campus.

Social barriers such as peer pressure, stigma, and class distinctions also contribute to low levels of sports participation (Gregory & Adie, 2024). In some cases, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may lack the financial resources to afford sports kits, registration fees, or transportation to sports venues, thus excluding them from institutional programs (Oyetunde et al., 2018; Gregory & Fruebi, 2024). Additionally, societal views that prioritize academic achievement over physical activities often lead to limited support for sports development in higher education institutions (Nwankwo & Udeze, 2021). This academic-centric mindset, reinforced by parents and institutional policies, discourages students from dedicating time to sports,

thereby undermining the value of physical education as part of a well-rounded academic experience.

Moreover, infrastructural deficiencies and policy neglect further exacerbate the issue. Many Nigerian tertiary institutions lack adequate sports facilities, trained personnel, and structured programs, which limits students' motivation to participate in sporting activities (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Waliya & Mbey, 2024). Without inclusive policies that address the intersectionality of gender, religion, socio-economic status, and cultural background, efforts to improve sports participation may remain ineffective.

Given the potential benefits of sports for youth development, identity formation, and social cohesion, it becomes imperative to examine the effects of these social and cultural barriers on sports participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. By understanding how these barriers function and intersect, stakeholders can develop targeted interventions aimed at promoting inclusive, equitable, and culturally sensitive sports programs that encourage broad-based participation among all student groups (Ajayi & Okon, 2025).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sports participation is recognized globally as a vital component of tertiary education, contributing to the physical, mental, and social well-being of students (Gregory, 2015; Olowonirejuaro & Okunade, 2019). In Nigeria, however, the level of involvement in organized or recreational sports activities in tertiary institutions remains low, despite the availability of sports programs and facilities in some schools. Researchers have increasingly turned their attention to the socio-cultural factors that shape students' participation patterns and limit their engagement in sports (Adetunji & Yusuf, 2021; Ajayi & Okon, 2025).

Gender Norms and Cultural Expectations

One of the most extensively studied barriers to sports participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions is **gender-based cultural expectations**. Traditional Nigerian society often associates sports with masculinity, thereby discouraging female participation. Okpara and Agbo (2020) assert that gender stereotypes in many Nigerian cultures portray athleticism as a trait incompatible with femininity. Consequently, female students may experience social stigma, lack of encouragement, or direct prohibition from engaging in sports.

Religious norms, particularly in Northern Nigeria, exacerbate these gendered perceptions. For example, Akinade and Bello (2023) found that strict interpretations of religious doctrine often restrict female students from wearing sports attire or participating in co-educational sports environments, which directly limits their involvement in athletic programs.

Religious Influences on Participation

Religious beliefs—particularly within Islam and Christianity—often influence attitudes toward physical activity in Nigerian campuses. These beliefs shape what is considered morally acceptable for male and female students, especially regarding dress codes and inter-gender mingling during sports (Eze & Aluko, 2022). In some cases, religious leaders and institutions openly discourage participation in activities perceived to promote indecency or moral laxity.

Moreover, some students from devout families face restrictions that prevent them from joining sports teams or attending competitions off-campus. This has created a population of students who, despite having interest or talent in sports, opt out due to pressure to conform to religious expectations (Akinade & Bello, 2023).

Socio-Economic Barriers

Socio-economic factors also play a crucial role in determining who participates in sports at the tertiary level. Students from low-income backgrounds often struggle to afford sportswear, equipment, or association fees required for club membership or tournament participation (Oyetunde et al., 2018). In addition, some tertiary institutions charge additional levies for sports participation or require travel expenses for competitions—creating further economic burdens on students.

Infrastructural inequality also contributes to unequal sports participation. Ibrahim et al. (2024) note that universities in rural or less developed areas lack proper sports facilities, trained coaches, and equipment, which significantly hampers both access and motivation for student participation.

Parental and Institutional Pressure on Academic Performance

Another significant factor is the **academic-centric culture** promoted by families and tertiary institutions. Nigerian parents and lecturers often emphasize academic success above all else, discouraging students from “wasting time” on extracurricular activities such as sports (Nwankwo & Udeze, 2021). This pressure is particularly high for students in competitive fields such as medicine, engineering, and law, where extracurricular involvement is often seen as a distraction. Research by Adetunji and Yusuf (2021) indicates that many students who once participated actively in sports during secondary school drop out upon entering university due to time constraints and a perceived lack of institutional support for balancing academics and athletics.

Beyond religious and gender norms, broader **cultural beliefs and misconceptions** about sports also discourage participation. In some communities, sports are not regarded as a viable career or path to success, especially when compared with more

“prestigious” professions. This perception leads to a lack of motivation among students to take sports seriously or explore it as a passion or profession (Okpara & Agbo, 2020). Furthermore, students who show exceptional sports talent are sometimes viewed with suspicion or labeled as unserious by their peers and faculty, reinforcing a culture that marginalizes sports in the academic environment (Ajayi & Okon, 2025).

Institutional Gaps and Policy Neglect

Policy neglect within tertiary institutions also serves as a systemic barrier. Many Nigerian universities lack clear policies promoting inclusive sports participation or fail to provide institutional support such as flexible academic scheduling, scholarships for athletes, or incentives for participation in intramural sports (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Without these supports, students are less likely to prioritize sports, especially when other constraints already exist.

Additionally, there is often limited female representation in sports leadership roles, which makes it difficult to promote gender-sensitive policies or create inclusive programs that encourage broader student involvement (Eze & Aluko, 2022).

The Interplay of Multiple Barriers

It is important to note that these barriers are often **interconnected**. For example, a female student from a low-income, religiously conservative family may face overlapping challenges that make sports participation virtually impossible. Addressing these challenges, therefore, requires a multi-dimensional and culturally sensitive approach. Ajayi and Okon (2025) advocate for a **comprehensive policy response** that integrates financial support, cultural education, religious dialogue, and inclusive programming to break down barriers and promote equitable sports participation.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of social and cultural barriers on sports participation among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to explore how gender norms, religious beliefs, socio-economic status, parental and institutional expectations, and cultural misconceptions influence the level of involvement in sports activities. By identifying and analyzing these factors, the study aims to provide insights into the root causes of low sports participation and propose evidence-based strategies for promoting inclusive and equitable access to sports in Nigerian higher education settings. Ultimately, the study aspires to contribute to the formulation of policies and programs that encourage active student engagement in sports, thereby enhancing their physical, mental, and social well-being.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the major social and cultural barriers affecting students' participation in sports in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
2. To examine the influence of gender norms and religious beliefs on students' engagement in sports.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the key social and cultural barriers to sports participation among students in tertiary institutions?
2. How do gender norms and religious beliefs influence students' involvement in sports?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. H₁: There is no significant relationship between gender norms and students' participation in sports.
2. H₂: Religious beliefs do not significantly influence students' involvement in sports.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it will provide empirical evidence on the social and cultural factors limiting sports participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions, which has been an under-researched area. Secondly, the findings will be useful to university administrators, physical education departments, and sports committees in designing inclusive sports policies and interventions. Thirdly, the study will offer recommendations that policymakers and stakeholders can adopt to promote equal opportunities and remove barriers, especially for female and underprivileged students. Lastly, it contributes to the broader discourse on the importance of sports in student development, social cohesion, and campus life in the Nigerian context.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was appropriate because the study sought to collect data from a sample of students in tertiary institutions to describe and interpret the influence of social and cultural barriers on sports participation. The survey approach enabled the researcher to gain insights into respondents' opinions, experiences, and perceptions using structured questionnaires. The population of the study comprised all students enrolled in selected tertiary institutions in Nigeria. These institutions include universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. The estimated population size was approximately **15,000**

students, drawn from different faculties and departments, with a fair representation of both male and female students. A total of **100 students** were selected as the sample size for the study. The **stratified random sampling technique** was employed to ensure that the sample included students from various academic levels, gender, and religious backgrounds. This method enhanced the representativeness and generalizability of the findings.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question One:

To identify the major social and cultural barriers affecting students' participation in sports in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

S/N	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1	Cultural beliefs in my community discourage active participation in sports, especially for females.	2.63	0.36440	Accepted
2	Religious practices or values influence my decision to participate in or avoid sports activities.	2.62	0.78210	Accepted
3	I feel societal pressure to focus more on academics than on extracurricular activities like sports.	2.55	0.32454	Accepted
4	Family expectations discourage me from actively participating in sports in school.	3.12	0.89893	Accepted
5	There is a general perception on campus that sports are not important for serious students.	3.64	1.20605	Accepted

All the mean values are above the neutral point on a 5-point Likert scale (typically 2.50 is considered the threshold for acceptance in many educational studies), indicating that respondents generally agree that these factors are significant barriers to sports participation. Cultural Beliefs (Mean = 2.63), Respondents agree that cultural norms—especially those affecting females—play a restrictive role in sports participation. This aligns with findings from Okpara & Agbo (2020), who highlighted that many Nigerian cultures do not support female involvement in physical activity. Religious Practices (Mean = 2.62), Religion also plays a considerable role in shaping students' attitudes toward sports.

This supports studies by Akinade & Bello (2023), which revealed that religious values sometimes conflict with sporting practices such as attire, gender mixing, and scheduling. Societal Academic Pressure (Mean = 2.55), There is agreement that students experience societal pressure to prioritize academics over extracurriculars like sports. This reflects findings by Nwankwo & Udeze (2021), who reported that many students

abandon sports in tertiary institutions due to academic expectations. Family Expectations (Mean = 3.12), The relatively higher mean here suggests that family influence is a strong barrier. Families often encourage children to focus solely on academics, viewing sports as a distraction (Adetunji & Yusuf, 2021). Campus Perception (Mean = 3.64), This is the highest mean score among all items, indicating strong agreement that many students believe sports are not for "serious" students. This perception may discourage even interested students from participating due to peer pressure or fear of being judged.

The analysis reveals that a combination of cultural, religious, academic, familial, and peer-influenced perceptions constitute significant barriers to sports participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions. These findings emphasize the need for inclusive policies, awareness campaigns, and institutional support that address these social and cultural constraints.

Research Question Two:

To examine the influence of gender norms and religious beliefs on students' engagement in sports.

S/N	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
6	My gender affects the level of encouragement or support I receive to participate in sports.	2.61	0.43128	Accepted
7	There are certain sports I avoid because they are considered inappropriate for my gender.	3.10	0.79523	Accepted
8	Religious teachings in my community discourage participation in certain sports or wearing sports attire.	2.96	0.52651	Accepted
9	I would participate more in sports if there were gender-specific facilities or teams.	2.58	0.78433	Accepted
10	My religious obligations (e.g., dress code, prayer times) sometimes conflict with sports schedules or participation.	1.24	0.36423	Accepted

All items were accepted, indicating that gender norms and religious beliefs significantly influence students' participation in sports. Let's break it down: Gender-Based Support (Mean = 2.61), Respondents generally agree that gender influences the level of support they receive. This reflects broader societal norms where male students may be more encouraged than females to engage in physical activity (Okafor & Nwogu, 2019). Gender-Specific Sport Avoidance (Mean = 3.10), A strong agreement with this item suggests that many students consciously avoid certain sports deemed inappropriate for

their gender. This aligns with findings by Adeyanju (2020), where societal stereotypes limited female participation in sports like football and wrestling. Religious Restrictions (Mean = 2.96), There is broad consensus that religious teachings impact participation, especially in relation to attire or mixed-gender settings. This is consistent with studies by Ibrahim & Musa (2022), showing that modesty norms and religious practices can restrict engagement in team sports. Gender-Specific Facilities (Mean = 2.58), This result shows that lack of gender-sensitive facilities is a barrier. Respondents believe that creating gender-specific teams or spaces could increase participation, especially for female students who may prefer same-gender environments due to cultural or religious reasons. Religious Obligations and Scheduling Conflict (Mean = 1.24), This is the only item with a very low mean, suggesting that most students do not see religious obligations as a major scheduling conflict with sports activities. This could imply that while beliefs may influence participation ideologically, they don't significantly interfere with practical time commitments.

The data shows that gender norms and religious beliefs play a notable role in shaping sports engagement among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. While most students accept the influence of societal and religious expectations, actual religious obligations (such as prayer times or dress codes) seem to have less direct interference with scheduling. This indicates that while perceptions and societal expectations are powerful influencers, logistical or time-based religious conflicts are not major barriers.

Hypothesis One:

H₁: There is no significant relationship between gender norms and students' participation in sports.

	There is no significant relationship between gender norms and students' participation in sports.
Chi – square	23.876
d.f	3
Assumption significance level	0.030

At a 0.05 level of significance:

- If **p-value ≤ α (0.05)** → **Reject** the null hypothesis (**H₀**)
- If **p-value > α (0.05)** → **Fail to reject** the null hypothesis

Since the **p-value = 0.030** is **less than 0.05**, we **reject the null hypothesis**.

There is a statistically significant relationship between gender norms and students' participation in sports. This means that students' level of involvement in sports is

influenced by societal and cultural expectations associated with gender. For instance, certain sports may be viewed as "male-dominated" or "unsuitable for females," which discourages equal participation.

This finding aligns with previous research such as Adeyanju (2020) and Okafor & Nwogu (2019), which revealed that gender stereotypes can limit access, motivation, and encouragement in sporting activities—especially among female students in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

H₂: Religious beliefs do not significantly influence students' involvement in sports.

	H ₀₂ : Religious beliefs do not significantly influence students' involvement in sports.
Chi – square	23.876a
Assumption significance level	0.000

Chi-Square (χ^2) = 23.876, Degrees of Freedom (df) = Not specified, but Chi-square test results are typically accompanied by df, which we can assume to be in the context of a standard categorical analysis. Significance Level (α) = 0.05, P-value (from the assumption) = 0.000

At a 0.05 significance level:

- If **p-value \leq α (0.05)** → **Reject** the null hypothesis (**H₀**)
- If **p-value $>$ α (0.05)** → **Fail to reject** the null hypothesis

Since the p-value = 0.000 is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis.

This result indicates that religious beliefs significantly influence students' involvement in sports. The null hypothesis, which suggested no significant relationship, is rejected, meaning that religious values, practices, and teachings play an important role in determining whether students participate in sports activities.

Factors such as religious dress codes, prayer times, or prohibitions against mixed-gender sports may all limit the willingness or opportunity for students to engage in sports. This finding aligns with studies by Ibrahim & Musa (2022) and Adediran & Bello (2021), where religious teachings often affect the kinds of sports students are encouraged to participate in.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. The primary focus is on the social, cultural, gender, and religious factors influencing students' participation in sports at tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study sought to identify barriers and assess the significance of these factors in students' engagement with sports activities.

a) **Research Question One: Social and Cultural Barriers to Sports Participation**

The study identified several **social and cultural barriers** that affect students' participation in sports. Key barriers include cultural beliefs, religious practices, societal academic pressures, family expectations, and campus perceptions.

Cultural beliefs (Mean = 2.63) were found to discourage active participation in sports, especially for females. This finding aligns with earlier studies (Okpara & Agbo, 2020), which emphasized that cultural norms in Nigeria often discourage women from engaging in physical activities, seeing them as inappropriate or unnecessary for females. Similarly, **religious beliefs** (Mean = 2.62) also play a significant role in limiting sports participation, particularly in terms of attire and mixed-gender interactions. These findings resonate with Akinade & Bello (2023), who argued that religious values in Nigeria often lead to restrictions in sports involvement, especially for women.

Moreover, **societal pressure to focus more on academics** (Mean = 2.55) was another significant barrier. This societal norm is reflected in the prevalent view that academic success should take precedence over extracurricular activities. Students often feel pressured to allocate their time to studies, leaving little room for physical activities (Nwankwo & Udeze, 2021). Finally, **family expectations** (Mean = 3.12) were strongly influential. Families typically emphasize the importance of academic performance, often viewing sports as a secondary activity that could distract from educational goals.

b) **Research Question Two: Gender Norms and Religious Beliefs**

In exploring the influence of **gender norms** and **religious beliefs** on sports participation, the study found significant relationships.

Gender norms (Mean = 2.61) were a major factor, with many students reporting that their gender affected the encouragement or support they received to participate in sports. These findings are consistent with previous research, which indicated that **male students** often receive more encouragement to engage in sports, while **female students** face societal and cultural barriers (Adeyanju, 2020). Furthermore, **gender-specific sport avoidance** (Mean = 3.10) showed that many students consciously avoid sports deemed inappropriate for their gender, especially females who may feel societal pressure to refrain from participating in certain sports like football or wrestling.

Religious beliefs also significantly impacted students' engagement in sports (Mean = 2.96). The study revealed that religious teachings often discourage participation in certain sports or restrict attire, especially for women. For instance, some sports may require uniforms that are deemed immodest by religious standards, leading students to avoid these activities.

The need for **gender-specific facilities or teams** (Mean = 2.58) was also highlighted, with many students expressing that such provisions would encourage them to participate more actively in sports. This reflects a common view that women may prefer sports activities with same-gender teams or environments that align with cultural and religious norms.

Hypotheses Testing and Findings

Hypothesis One: Relationship Between Gender Norms and Sports Participation

The Chi-square test for **Hypothesis One** (H_{01} : "There is no significant relationship between gender norms and students' participation in sports") yielded a **p-value of 0.030**, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was **rejected**, and it was concluded that **gender norms significantly affect students' participation in sports**. This supports the view that gender roles and societal expectations influence whether students choose to participate in sports, particularly in Nigeria, where gender stereotypes still prevail.

Hypothesis Two: Relationship Between Religious Beliefs and Sports Participation

The Chi-square test for **Hypothesis Two** (H_{02} : "Religious beliefs do not significantly influence students' involvement in sports") showed a **p-value of 0.000**, which is significantly less than the 0.05 threshold. As a result, the null hypothesis was **rejected**, meaning that **religious beliefs significantly influence students' involvement in sports**. This finding aligns with studies (Ibrahim & Musa, 2022) that report religious restrictions on mixed-gender sports, attire, and participation times, further discouraging students, particularly females, from engaging in sports.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this research underscore the need for universities and other tertiary institutions in Nigeria to adopt more inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches to sports participation. Specific implications include:

- **Promoting Gender Equality:** Institutions should create gender-specific sports teams and facilities to ensure that both male and female students can participate in sports without facing cultural or societal biases.
- **Religious Considerations:** Universities should consider the religious practices of students when organizing sports activities, ensuring that these activities do not conflict with prayer times or religious dress codes.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Educational campaigns that challenge traditional cultural beliefs about gender roles and the importance of sports could help shift perceptions, particularly among female students, toward a more positive view of sports participation.

- **Holistic Student Development:** There should be a greater emphasis on the holistic development of students, where academic achievements and extracurricular activities, like sports, are valued equally. Encouraging sports as part of students' academic and personal growth can help reduce the stigma and barriers associated with sports participation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this study provides valuable insights into the social and cultural barriers affecting sports participation in Nigerian tertiary institutions, further research is needed to explore the following areas:

1. A deeper analysis of the impact of specific religious practices (e.g., Islam, Christianity) on sports participation.
2. A comparative study of sports participation barriers across different regions of Nigeria to identify regional variations.
3. The role of sports administrators and faculty in fostering an inclusive sports culture within universities.
4. An exploration of strategies for overcoming the identified barriers, with a focus on successful case studies from institutions that have successfully promoted gender-inclusive sports programs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study highlights that gender norms and religious beliefs are significant social and cultural factors influencing students' involvement in sports in Nigerian tertiary institutions. These factors create barriers that restrict full participation, particularly for female students. The study calls for more inclusive sports policies that account for gender, cultural, and religious sensitivities in order to promote equitable access to sports for all students. By addressing these barriers, tertiary institutions can foster a more inclusive, participatory, and holistic environment for student development, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to benefit from sports and physical activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance sports participation in tertiary institutions in Nigeria:

1. Tertiary institutions should implement gender-inclusive sports policies that encourage both male and female students to participate in a wide range of sports activities. This includes providing gender-specific sports teams and ensuring that facilities are accessible and conducive to both genders. Additionally, institutions should

offer training programs for staff to challenge gender stereotypes and promote equal participation.

2. Institutions should take students' religious beliefs into consideration when scheduling sports events and activities. For example, sports activities should be scheduled at times that do not conflict with prayer times or religious observances. Furthermore, universities can offer modest sports attire options that adhere to religious dress codes, particularly for female students, to make sports more inclusive and accessible.
3. Universities should organize campaigns and workshops aimed at changing societal and cultural attitudes towards sports, particularly for female students. These programs should focus on educating students, faculty, and staff on the benefits of sports participation and challenge cultural norms that limit female involvement in physical activities. By changing these perceptions, more students may feel empowered to participate in sports.
4. Universities should work to increase family and community support for students' participation in sports. Institutions can initiate parent-student engagement programs that emphasize the importance of balancing academics with extracurricular activities, including sports. This support can help mitigate family pressures that discourage students, especially females, from engaging in sports. Additionally, collaboration with community leaders can help change the negative perceptions surrounding sports, particularly for women.

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