



The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Empowering Women in Sport

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: The research aims to identify the social responsibility of sports institutions in empowering women in the sports field, and to determine the factors that affect the achievement of this empowerment.

Methods: The research sample consisted of working women in sports institutions (clubs - sports federations - Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth), players and coaches in various sports. The descriptive survey method was used as it is suitable for the nature of the study.

Results: The most important results came in the need to enhance the role of sports institutions in empowering women in sports, support the rights of sportswomen and enable them to contribute effectively to all aspects of sports, from training to management. The ministry should support programs that enhance women's opportunities to participate in sports.

Conclusions: The research underscores the vital role of sports institutions in empowering women in sports, highlighting the need for enhanced support and opportunities. It calls for the Ministry to implement programs that promote women's participation and rights within the sports sector.

Keywords: Social Responsibility, Empowerment, Women in Sport

Introduction:

The Omani woman contributes effectively to the progress of Oman, participating in all fields and contributing to the drive for development. The Basic Law of the State ensures equality between men and women, granting her equal rights in education, health, work, and participation in decision-making, in addition to her responsibilities towards her family and community. The Omani woman has proven her ability to contribute to the national renaissance, after her contributions were limited to the home and community. Sports institutions must provide equal opportunities for participation in sports for both genders as part of the social responsibility of these institutions. Empowering women in sports promotes social justice and contributes to building more inclusive and diverse communities, which benefits the entire society by enhancing the health and physical fitness of women, promoting social integration, and creating economic and educational opportunities.

The recent decades have seen increasing interest in the role of women in the family and society as an essential element in the development process alongside men. Many conferences have shown the importance of enhancing the status of women and supporting their role in achieving political, economic, and social development. This is because human resources are the fundamental pillar of any society, and they are the key to production, development, scientific, and technological progress (AlDhuwaidi, 2008).

Social responsibility is one of the most prominent concepts that have gained great importance in community institutions. Women have a major role in this field, as the social responsibility of women is defined as the commitment to performing the duties of society through the experiences and capabilities they possess, which helps in the development of society and the improvement of its standard of living and ways of life (Bernardi & Threadgill, 2010).

Social responsibility is considered one of the most prominent obligations and duties that fall on the shoulders of the members of society in general and women in particular, due to its importance in determining the direction of each individual towards society and directing their contributions and actions in the service of the community in which they live, as it is considered the right of society upon them to provide the services they can and to participate in its development and growth (Karim Jan, 2017). Achieving women's empowerment must play a role in enhancing social responsibility, which aims to integrate women into the various institutions of society and participate in its development and the preservation of its interests to enhance the concept of social responsibility.

Social responsibility is defined as the conscious and aware feeling of an individual's obligations towards their group and community, especially when the group and community are in dire need of the individual's efforts, sacrifices, and contributions, which should continue and escalate over time (Caroll, 1999). Social responsibility is also defined as a set of obligations and commitments that fall on the individual, which drive them to work for the benefit of the group, with the aim of developing and improving the community, or removing the problems and challenges it faces (Jacoby, 2000; Mehta, 2012).

According to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), empowerment is defined as "providing women with greater opportunities to access resources and control society" (UNIFEM, 2000), which means the full participation of women in decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation. Women's empowerment and increased participation in the labor market are influenced by social and economic factors, with a significant impact of the media's perception of the role of women on encouraging society and their sense of value and capabilities as a productive element (Nasar, 2009).

Studies indicate that empowering women in sports can enhance their participation in physical activities, leading to improved physical and mental health. A study by Pratt et al. (2014) found that women who participate in sports have lower rates of depression and anxiety compared to nonparticipating women. Additionally, a study by Nelson et al. (2017) showed that programs focusing on developing women's sports skills and abilities help increase their participation and success in sports (Nelson & Rinehart, 2017).

The process of empowerment is complex and intertwined, and depends on individual confidence, as it requires changing traditional roles and adopting methods that encourage creative thinking and participation in decision-making, which enhances their value and helps them improve their work methods and reduce organizational conflicts within the institution (Jamal, 2009).

The Research Problem

The social responsibility of sports institutions is considered one of the modern concepts that seek to achieve sustainable development through initiatives targeting the community in general. The role of sports institutions goes beyond just organizing tournaments and competitions to include social awareness, developing community programs that enhance the participation of different groups, especially women. The social responsibility of sports institutions includes several key areas such as education, health, employment, and women's empowerment, where the results of studies by Babiak & Wolfe (2006) and Walker & Parent (2010) confirm that sports institutions can be driving forces for social change and capable of improving the image of sports and promoting gender equality through adopting social responsibility initiatives that target women's empowerment and achieving gender equality.

In light of the remarkable developments witnessed by the Sultanate of Oman in various social and economic fields, the issue of women's empowerment in sports emerges as an essential part of efforts to achieve gender equality, and despite the developments witnessed in the sports field in recent years, there are still major challenges facing women in this sector. To achieve effective participation of women in sports, it requires strong community and institutional support, which can be achieved by activating the social responsibility of sports institutions.

Sports play an important role in enhancing mental and physical health and developing social and leadership skills. Empowering women in this field not only contributes to improving their general health, but also enhances their status in society and supports their role in social development. In this context, the importance of studying the role of the social responsibility of sports institutions in enhancing women's participation in

sports in the Sultanate of Oman emerges, with the aim of understanding the different aspects of this role and the related challenges.

Study Objective

The study aims to identify the social responsibility of sports institutions in empowering women in sports in the Sultanate of Oman.

Study Questions

1. What is your analysis of the current policies and strategies of sports institutions in supporting and empowering women in sports?
2. What is the role of sports institutions in promoting women's empowerment in leadership and participation in the sports field?
3. What are the attitudes towards the role of women in supporting and developing the social, cultural, and economic environment of the sports community?

Study Terminology Social Responsibility

Al-Kharashi (2004, p. 48) defines social responsibility as the conscious feeling of individual commitment towards the group and society, especially when there is a need for continuous individual efforts.

Research Importance

- Clarifying the role that sports institutions can play in empowering women in sports.
- Identifying and analyzing the cultural and social barriers facing women in sports.
- The research results can be used to measure the effectiveness of current programs and initiatives aimed at empowering women in sports.
- The research helps sports institutions and decision-makers develop effective policies and strategies to enhance women's participation in sports.
- The research contributes to enhancing women's status in society by supporting their effective participation in sports.

Research Procedures

Research Methodology: Descriptive approach using survey method, suitable for the nature of the study.

Research Population: Consists of individuals concerned with social responsibility (female coaches - female athletes - women working in sports institutions)

Research Sample: The research sample was selected using the random sampling method to ensure a balanced and comprehensive representation of those concerned with the subject, totaling (107) individuals. The sample consists of three main categories:

- **Female Coaches:** The research included a group of female coaches from various sports institutions in the Sultanate of Oman. They were randomly selected from a list of female coaches working in sports clubs and national sports bodies.
- **Female Athletes:** A random sample of female athletes participating in sports activities at the club and national team levels was selected. This includes athletes from various sports to ensure diverse representation.
- **Women Working in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth:** A random sample of female employees working in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth was selected. The aim of this selection is to study the impact of government policies and initiatives related to social responsibility on empowering women in sports.

An electronic questionnaire was distributed to the research sample individuals. Table (1) shows the frequencies and percentages of the research sample individuals according to its variables.

Table 1: Distribution of the research sample according to its variables

VARIABLES	LEVELS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
GENDER	Female	107	100.0
TOTAL		107	100.0
EXPERIENCE	Trainers	> 5	8
		5-10	9
		< 10	7
	Players	> 5	24
		5-10	19
		< 10	13
		> 5	7

TOTAL	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth	5-10	9	33.33
		< 10	11	40.74
			107	100.0
AGE TOTAL		20-25	32	29.91
		26-29	29	27.10
		30-35	25	23.36
		35 and older	21	19.63
			107	100.0

Table (1) shows the total sample of 107 individuals and they were distributed in terms of experience and age for the total sample

Exploratory Study Sample: An exploratory study was conducted to compute the psychometric properties of the questionnaire using a random sample of 14 participants from the research population, exclusive of the main sample.

Data Collection Instruments:

The questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection instrument.

Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire

First: Validity of the Instrument: The validity was assessed using two methods

Content Validity: The researchers utilized expert judgment to evaluate the appropriateness of the dimensions and items.

Internal Consistency Validity: This was established by calculating the correlation coefficients between individual items and the total score of the dimension to which they belong (i.e., between the item score and the total score of items within the same dimension).

Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire Instrument

First: Validity of the Instrument: The validity was assessed using two methods

Content Validity: Expert judgment was employed to evaluate the relevance and clarity of the dimensions and items. Based on expert feedback, some items were eliminated while others were modified.

Internal Consistency Validity: This was established by computing correlation coefficients between individual items and the total score of their respective dimensions (i.e., between the item score and the aggregate score of all items within the same dimension).

Table 2: Spearman correlation coefficient between the statements of the questionnaire

n = 14

First			Second			Third		
M	Spearman	Significance	M	Spearman	Significance	M	Spearman	Significance
1	.837	0.000	1	.878	0.000	1	.614	0.19
2	.905	0.000	2	.947	0.000	2	.541	0.046
3	.898	0.000	3	.903	0.000	3	.915	0.000
4	.969	0.000	4	.832	0.000	4	.0567	.024
5	.841	0.000	5	.847	0.000	5	.883	0.000
6	.796	0.001	6	.757	0.002	6	.697	0.006
7	.784	0.001	7	.771	0.001	7	.843	0.000
8	.670	0.009	8	.806	0.001	8	.738	0.000
9	.938	0.000	9	.758	0.002	9	.863	0.000
			10	.789	0.001	10	.916	0.000
						11	.938	0.000
						12	.876	0.000
						13	.928	0.000

Table (2) shows a rise in the values of correlation coefficients, as the value of the correlation coefficient ranged from (0.541 to 0.969) and these values are significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms that all the statements of each axis are honest and measure what they were set for.

Second: Reliability: Reliability was established - Questionnaire re-administration method: The questionnaire was re-administered after a period of (15 days) to a sample of (14) participants randomly selected from the original population and outside the research sample.

Table 3: Test-Retest Reliability n = 14

Axis	(ICC)	95%	Kappa	sig
First	0.971	0.942 – 0.989	0.915	0.000
Second	0.955	0.910 – 0.983	0.682	0.000
Third	0.892	0.785 – 0.959	0.754	0.000

It is evident from the preceding table that there are no significant differences, and the reliability coefficient for the first dimension is 0.971, for the second dimension 0.955, and for the third dimension 0.892. Additionally, the Cohen's kappa coefficient for reliability was 0.915 for the first dimension, 0.682 for the second dimension, and 0.754 for the third .

Research Application

The questionnaire was administered to a pilot sample from June 4 to June 18, 2024. The main sample, consisting of 107 participants, was surveyed from July 1 to August 25, 2024.

Results and Discussion

Table 4: Total Chi-Square and Percentages for First Dimension (N = 107)

N	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Chi-Square Value	sig
1	27 %25.23	61 57.01%	2 1.87%	17 15.89%	0 -	70.30	P>0.00
2	18 16.82%	52 48.60%	1 0.93%	36 33.64%	0 -	54.68	P>0.00
3	27 %25.23	61 57.01%	1 0.93%	18 16.82%	0 -	71.51	P>0.00
4	8 7.48%	61 57.01%	2 1.87%	36 33.64%	0 -	83.09	P>0.00
5	8 7.48 %	71 66.36%	1 0.93%	27 25.23%	0 -	111.13	P>0.00
6	27 25.23%	53 49.53%	0 -	18 16.82%	9 8.41%	40.40	P>0.00
7	44 41.12%	35 32.71%	1 0.93%	27 25.23%	0 -	38.46	P>0.00
8	19 17.76%	61 57.01%	0 -	26 24.30%	1 0.93%	70.91	P>0.00
9	9 8.41%	54 50.47%	1 0.93	25 23.36%	18 16.82%	77.44	P>0.00

It was evident that all statements were highly significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, indicating that the analysis of current policies and strategies of sports institutions in supporting and empowering women in sports yielded varying levels among the sample. The chi-square value ranged between 38.46 and 111.13, and the results were strongly in favor of "strongly agree" and "agree," with percentages ranging from 32.71 to 57.01.

In this regard, the researchers believe that current policies and strategies in sports institutions are essential for supporting and empowering women in sports. It is crucial for these institutions to conduct periodic reviews of their policies and strategies to ensure alignment with ongoing developments in women's empowerment, thereby contributing to their updating in line with the latest trends and best practices.

The results of Smith's study (2018) confirm that policies involving periodic evaluation and continuous adjustments can be more effective in achieving equality goals. It emphasizes the importance of having evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of policies and the achievement of desired outcomes.

Furthermore, Beaton's study (2020) indicates that policies supporting balanced funding and providing additional support to women's programs significantly improve women's participation in sports.

Sports institutions work to ensure the protection of women's rights from any discrimination or harassment in the sports environment. Soler Prat et al. (2021) highlight that developing effective policies to combat discrimination and protect women from harassment significantly contributes to fostering a fair and inclusive sports environment. This includes establishing mechanisms for monitoring and detecting any form of discrimination, thereby enhancing the provision of a supportive environment for all participants.

Table 5: Total Chi-Square and Percentages for Second Dimension (N = 107)

N	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Chi-Square Value	sig
1	54 50.47%	26 24.30%	1 0.93%	26 24.30%	0 -	52.59	P>0.00
2	36 33.64%	43 20.19%	0 -	18 16.82%	10 9.35%	26.42	P>0.00
3	28 26.17%	42 39.25%	1 0.93%	27 25.23%	9 8.41%	49.96	P>0.00
4	36 %33.64	53 49.53%	0 -	9 8.41%	9 8.41%	52.51	P>0.00
5	40 37.38%	51 47.66%	1 0.93%	15 14.02%	0 -	58.50	P>0.00
6	28 %26.17	53 49.53%	0 -	17 15.89%	9 8.41%	41.15	P>0.00
7	38 %35.51	34 31.78%	1 0.93%	25 23.36%	9 8.41%	47.53	P>0.00
8	47 %43.93	41 38.32%	1 0.93%	9 8.41%	9 8.41%	82.39	P>0.00
9	30 28.04%	49 45.79%	0 -	27 25.23%	1 0.93%	43.69	P>0.00
10	29 27.10%	41 38.32%	1 0.93%	27 25.23%	9 8.41%	48.75	P>0.00

The results indicated that all statements were highly significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, suggesting that the analysis of current policies and strategies of sports institutions in empowering women in leadership and participation in sports yielded varying levels among the sample. The chi-square value ranged between 26.42 and 82.39, and the results were strongly in favor of "strongly agree" and "agree," with percentages ranging from 20.19 to 50.47.

In this regard, the researchers argue that sports institutions play a pivotal role in empowering women in leadership and participation by providing specialized training programs and both financial and human support, thereby enhancing their leadership and management skills. Moreover, these institutions contribute to increasing women's representation in leadership positions and decision-making, fostering diversity of perspectives and enhancing the effectiveness of sports management. Furthermore, they support women's participation in community activities and international events, thereby enhancing their visibility and impact on a global level. This plays a pivotal role in achieving equality and empowering women to lead in sports, and suggests that providing training opportunities enhances women's leadership and management skills, enabling them to assume leadership roles effectively (Dickson & Vardaman, 2019). This empowerment also includes supporting women in community sports and international events, enhancing their visibility and impact on a global level (Lee & Gill, 2021).

Additionally, encouraging women to participate in decision-making by involving them in committees and boards enhances diversity of perspectives and contributes to improving the effectiveness of sports management (Kavanagh & O'Sullivan, 2020). This representation is not limited to the local level but extends to increasing women's representation in international forums and conferences, enhancing their opportunities to influence global sports policies (Brown & Miller, 2019). This contributes to building a more inclusive and diverse sports environment, enhancing the success of women-specific programs in sports institutions.

Table 6: Total Chi-Square and Percentages for Third Dimension (N = 107)

N	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Chi-Square Value	sig
1	56 52.34%	49 45.79%	1 0.93%	0 -	1 0.93%	100.07	P>0.00
2	57 53.27%	50 46.73%	0 -	0 -	0 -	0.46	P>0.00
3	47 43.93%	59 55.14%	1 0.93%	0 -	0 -	52.56	P>0.00
4	48 44.86%	58 54.21%	1 0.93%	0 -	0 -	51.94	P>0.00
5	47 43.93%	50 46.73%	1 0.93%	9 8.41%	0 -	72.10	P>0.00
6	40 37.38%	58 54.21%	1 0.93%	7 6.54%	1 0.93%	127.35	P>0.00
7	48 44.86%	50 46.73%	1 0.93%	8 7.48%	0 -	75.02	P>0.00
8	40 37.38%	58 54.21%	1 0.93%	8 7.48%	0 -	81.00	P>0.00
9	39 36.45%	59 55.14%	1 0.93%	8 7.48%	0 -	82.42	P>0.00
10	44 41.12%	40 37.38%	1 0.93%	22 20.56%	0 -	43.32	
11	29 27.10%	68 63.55%	1 0.93%	8 7.48%	1 0.93%	151.46	
12	39 36.45%	51 47.66%	1 0.93%	15 14.02%	1 0.93%	96.22	
13	27 25.23%	69 64.49%	1 0.93%	9 8.41%	1 0.93%	153.42	

The results indicated that all statements were highly significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, suggesting that attitudes toward women's role in supporting and developing the social, cultural, and economic infrastructure of the sports community varied among the sample. The chi-square value ranged between 0.46 and 153.42, and the results were strongly in favor of "strongly agree" and "agree," with percentages ranging from 25.23 to 64.49. In this regard, the researchers argue that women play a vital role in fostering positive social impact through their participation in sports activities, contributing to the building of healthier and more active families. Women's participation in sports also contributes to promoting sportsmanship, discipline, and teaching moral values, enhancing societal harmony and balance (Cunningham & Sagas, 2018). Moreover, women play a fundamental role in promoting social integration and sustainable development by improving quality of life and strengthening social bonds within the community (Eitzen, 2016).

Women also contribute to the transmission of cultural values and heritage through the practice of traditional sports and games, enhancing the preservation of cultural heritage (Gems, 2019). Furthermore, their participation in sports fosters cross-cultural understanding and contributes to building mutual respect and tolerance through such participation (Fletcher & McDonald, 2018).

Additionally, women play an active role in achieving economic development by supporting the sports industry, enhancing investment and economic growth through participation in sports activities and events (Rinehart & Jarman, 2017). This contributes to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship as women develop solutions and programs to enhance women's participation (Aitchison & Beasley, 2016). Moreover, women contribute to creating job opportunities and boosting the local economy by investing in sports and recreation projects, supporting local economic growth (Shaw, 2019).

Conclusions

Promoting Women's Participation in Sports: The current strategy aims to empower women in sports by setting clear objectives and supporting policies that guarantee their rights and enable their full participation. This reflects the commitment of sports institutions to keep pace with developments and ensure that women can participate in and succeed in sports. **Positive Social and Cultural Impact:** Women contribute significantly to fostering a positive social and cultural environment by promoting sportsmanship,

social discipline, and building healthy families. Through their participation in sports, women transmit cultural values and enhance cross-cultural understanding, thereby strengthening social belonging and identity. **Economic Impact:** Women also play a crucial role in driving economic development by supporting the sports industry, increasing investment, and stimulating economic growth. They contribute to fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation, thus boosting the local economy through investments in sports and recreation projects.

Future Directions: Sports institutions are committed to improving the work and training environment for women by gathering feedback and implementing policies that protect their rights. There is also a focus on providing specialized training programs to develop leadership skills, thereby enhancing women's representation in leadership positions and sports committees.

Recommendations

For Sports Organizations:

Update policies and procedures: Sports organizations should regularly update their policies and procedures to ensure they maximize the benefits of developments in women's empowerment. Policies should focus on supporting the rights of women in sports and empowering them to contribute effectively to all aspects of sports, from training to management.

Provide specialized training programs: Develop specialized training programs to enhance leadership skills and confidence among women in sports. These programs should include training in team management, decision-making, and leadership development, thereby increasing their opportunities to assume leadership positions and participate in sports committees.

Promote women's participation in community activities: Encourage women to participate in community activities and cultural events that promote sportsmanship and foster values of discipline and cooperation. This participation enhances social interaction and contributes to building a vibrant sports community.

Expand international cooperation: Enhance international cooperation programs to exchange knowledge and expertise on women in sports. Through global partnerships, organizations can adopt new strategies and enhance support for women's participation in sports.

For the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth:

Develop national policies: The ministry should develop comprehensive national policies that support women's empowerment in sports. These policies should include providing financial and human resources and ensuring the implementation of laws that protect women from discrimination and support their active participation.

Enhance support and participation programs: The ministry should support programs that enhance women's opportunities to participate in sports, including establishing support programs for female talents and increasing their presence in sports events. This can be achieved through scholarships, seminars, and workshops focused on developing women's sports skills.

Encourage research and development: Encourage research and development in the field of women's sports by supporting studies and research that focus on the challenges and opportunities in this field. This research will contribute to improving policies and strategies and enhancing women's representation in sports.

Promote cultural awareness: The ministry should work to raise cultural awareness about the importance of women's participation in sports through awareness campaigns and educational events. This will contribute to changing societal perceptions about women's role in sports and encourage more women to participate actively.

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