Background

Following the women's push for liberation and equal rights movements, various national and international laws have been passed over the last 50 years to empower women. Specific to sport is the Brighton Declaration of 1994.

As one of the renowned nations in sports, Kenya remains a dominant power in long distance running.

The last decade has witnessed an increase in women's participation in sport and in production of exemplary performances, both locally and internationally.

Kenyan women are a dominant force in the women's push for liberation and equal rights movements, various national and international laws have been passed over the last 50 years to empower women. Specific to sport is the Brighton Declaration of 1994.

Kenyan women are a dominant force in the world marathons.

The government Minister is yet to ratify the Brighton document.

Nevertheless, some of the most successful girls' and women's empowerment programs are those by non-profit organizations such as Sadili Oval's model "Girl Power" program, whose mission is: "Providing girls with Education, Leadership and Entrepreneurship in life through sports".

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of international policies on women sports in Kenya.

Methods

Participants: Purposively selected five women in various sport organizations (Patton, 2002). Procedures: Interviews and use of participant forms.

Location: Nairobi. Data Analysis: Used constant comparison (Le Compte, 2000) and thematic analysis (Robison, 2001).

Results

Table 1. Representation of women leaders in sport organizations in Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Sport organization</th>
<th>Field of number of women leaders</th>
<th>Total of number of women leaders</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National University Commission for Sports (NUCS)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics Kenya (AK)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Secondary Schools Sports Association (KSSA)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi Secondary Schools Sports Association (NSSA)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Secondary Schools Sports Association (KSSA)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyan Basketball Federation (KBF)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Secondary School Sports Association (KSSA)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Volleyball Federation (KVFL)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Basketball Federation (KBFL)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya Rugby Union (KRU)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program targets majority of girls from underserved communities in Kenya.

Over 400 girls participate in the annual Girl Power program.

The program utilizes youthful role models to impact the girls.

For instance, Intercooler is a 23-year-old basketball coach at the Sadili Oval club and is also one of the program leaders. As a former basketball player, she admits to having taken advantage of the chance to play on the college team, and advises girls on knowing their goals in life and to bridge sports and academics:

I got a scholarship there, so I started with the one in Multimedia University, KCCIT., need to be college and universities leagues only, so as I used to play there, so as I was finishing I got a scholarship there and I asked what are you guys offering me, I want to get educated because I was thinking you can play yes, but you can't play forever, you might get an injury where will you go from there, you should have a plan B and my plan B was giving me a scholarship, give me an education, so they used to give me "(FG)."

Challenges

The government Minister is yet to ratify the Brighton document.

A number of women leaders in sport indicated that they were not aware of the Brighton declaration.

Discussion

There is a slight increase in participation of women in sport as well as in decision-making process, but not impactful.

Intervention by world bodies has helped more women to engage in leadership roles in sports, as noted by one of the participants: "Reason they wanted the men to be there at that particular time till...the body...the World Hockey body said now we only want, and are talking about Kenya, we only want lady umpire, if you want a man this time you are going to pay for this ticket. That is how women started entering slowly." (FL).

Conclusion

TAKWIS needs to be more proactive in providing education and information on empowerment policies to communities, through effective outreach programs.

There should be more support for non-profit organizations and community groups that use sport to empower girls and women.

The government has to play a leading role in supporting women in sport, as one participant noted:

"The Minister has a lot to do, Affirmative Action for women in sports...the direction they take (the Ministry is) the direction the Federations will take if...they show us they have no time for women...federations...will have no time for us. And Affirmative must be guarded by us who are in Federations...but through the Ministry (MC)."

The 30% Affirmative Action rule, although not directly making reference to women in sports, is viewed as the catalyst to the implementation of the sports policy and subsequent increase in opportunities for women in sports.

Increasing participation of women and girls in sports at the grassroots is the most definite way of ensuring a stronger and constant leadership feeder program.

Increased leadership roles for women are likely to enhance girls' and women's participation in sports.

Selected References