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'Female Masculinity' in Female Sport: Stories from the Field

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List of Acronyms

APA	American Psychiatric Association
DSD	Disorder of Sex Differences
HRT	Hormonal Replacement Therapy
IOC	International Olympics Committee
TERF	Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist
WA	World Athletics

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Showing gratitude is a reflective action that depicts a reflective person, a quality all humans must possess to be truly appreciative of the barest things such as breathe, life, laughter – Taiwo Adetunji (2020)

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Abstract

This study is about controversies around the ‘politics of the body’ in female sports. It outlines the ‘question’ of masculinity in female athletes’ physical appearance and internal bodily systems – the latter is determined through scientific inquiry. To unravel discourses surrounding these issues, the paper examines a number of stories of female athletes whose ‘femininity’ has been in question. The social construction and biological standpoint of gender and sex and how opposing views elevate or de-elevate the bodies and people involved, comes out through these stories. Whilst the medicalization of trans women’s bodies is in most cases an individual choice, the choices of intersex women are often much narrower, with decisions about their gender assignment being required or forced on them. Unsurprisingly, intersex women in sport tend to be black and nationals of African countries while transwomen are citizens of western countries. The paper delves into the experiences of Caster Semanya and Annet Negesa who are intersex women athletes and Jillian Bearden and Laurel Hubbard who are trans women athletes. Their experiences will reveal that even though trans and intersex women’s bodies are regulated by the similar rules, the outcomes tend to differ. The stories told of how individual women’s ‘feminine masculinity’ affected them further confirm that privilege and oppression are experienced by different bodies, regardless of the ideal of a shared female gender community in sports.

Relevance to Development Studies

This paper contributes to the body of knowledge prevalent in the sport discourse which combines scientific explanation of bodies and fairness and social explanation of lived experiences and mental fairness to self. It also examines the nature of gender and racism in sport and how this contributes to female athletes’ experiences and existence. In general, this study asks readers to go deeper in understanding debates around ‘female masculinities’ in sport, while ruminating over what development really means to such individuals and groups, especially those from the Global South.

Keywords

Female Masculinity, Sport, Bodies, World Athletics, Intersex women, Trans women, Cis-women, IOC

Chapter 1 Introduction

Female Masculinity: a floating category, ruled by the society, ascribed a pseudo-masculine stance within lesbian circle and a sore in feminist lens – Taiwo Adetunji (2020)

1.1 The Research Problem

On November 1st, 2019 the World Athletics updated its policy allowing intersex and trans women to compete in the female sports category if they agree to take medication targeted at reducing their testosterone level to that within the ‘normal’ female range (WA 2019)a. Also, they would be expected to remain on this medication for at least five months before being eligible to compete in the female sports category (WA 2019)a. The policy was originally targeted at intersex persons, that is women with Y chromosome, a biological trait naturally present but often regarded as restricted to men (Handelman et. al 2018: 805). What makes this policy peculiar is the inclusion of transwomen, for whom it is no longer mandatory to undergo sex reassignment treatment to be allowed to compete (WA 2019)b.

The World Athletics decision was received with mixed feelings. Intersex women would rather compete without the medical requirement due to the series of side-effects on their health (Abdul 2019). Transwomen would like to be fully accepted in female sport without being seen as men (BBC Sport 2019)a. Several influencers from various fields support this opposition to the World Athletics decision. They argued that this eligibility clause is a violation of human rights and consequently puts these women’s careers, their health and even their lives in jeopardy (North 2019).

However, former, and current athletes and some feminists are also advocating for trans and intersex women to be restricted from competing in the female sports category due to the advantage emanating from their biological makeup (Coleman 2019). This biological advantage is seen as ‘unfair’ by some due to the higher testosterone levels in their bodies which aids blood circulation and heightens endurance levels in sport. These advocates for ‘female’ athletes have argued that in another 10-20 years, the female sports category will be completely defeminized and will be taken over by intersex and trans women (Coleman 2019). They also claim that cisgender women are experiencing oppression and victimization from fans who support the rights of intersex and trans women. When ciswomen are accused of being transphobic and racist, they claim they are merely voicing their preference for a level playing field in sports and want to ensure that women’s place in sports remains protected (Coleman 2019).

It is within this set of conflicting discourses and debates that I seek to examine and unravel the tensions between biological understandings of sex and the social construction of gender in female sport and how this is affecting ‘women’ involved in spaces of competitive sports. I will describe the ways in which intersex and trans women are constructed in gender discourses, particularly in the sports arena and argue that even though trans and intersex women’s bodies are regulated by the same rules, the outcomes tend to differ. More importantly, the study will show how bodies are constructed and reconstructed in gender discourse around the category and practices of female sports. To do this, I outline and analyse four case studies – Caster Semenya, a South African world champion and an Olympian whose success sparked series of questions around her body and how it possesses more advantage from other ciswomen. Annet Negesa is a Ugandan athlete, a three times gold

medallist whose body was not only scrutinized but altered in ways that hampered her career. Jillian Bearden, an American elite cyclist whose recent winnings sparked controversies as having advantage since she was biologically male but transgender into female. And Laurel Hubbard, New Zealander who is a weightlifter sparked similar controversies as Jillian at the maiden championship organized by her country where she carted off gold medals at supposedly the expense of other athletes. These cases will be thoroughly discussed in subsequent chapters.

1.2 The Governing Bodies

World Athletics (WA) was founded as the international governing body for track sport and field athletics in 1912 at the Stockholm Olympics Games in Sweden (WA website). During that time, it was known as the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF). In 2001, it was renamed the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) to suit its popularity as the foremost regulating organization for athletics sport. In 2019, it underwent a name change again, emerging as World Athletics further sealing its capacity to maintain presence and relevance in large parts of the world. The World Athletics has solidified its presence in Asia, Africa, Europe, South and North America and Oceania regions (WA website). The World Athletics Council is responsible for making all decisions relating to athletics sport and management of the sport discipline.

WA sports consist of sprints, middle/long steeplechase, hurdles, heptathlon/decatlon, road running, jumps, throws, race walks, relays, cross country, mountain running, ultra-running and trail running. These sports features under several competitions slated within the course of each year. In 2020 alone, there were over 200 competitions scheduled to take place in different locations in various countries, although many were cancelled due to the Corona virus pandemic (WA website). The World Athletics Championship competition is held every two years with over 2000 athletes from over 200 nations participating (WA website). During the last WAC in Doha in 2019, the individual gold medallists won \$60,000, silver \$30,000 and bronze \$20,000, while for the relay team, the gold was worth \$80,000, silver \$40,000 and bronze \$20,000 (WA website). WA recognizes the Olympics Games as one of the foremost sport tournaments internationally, featuring wide range of sporting activities including winter and summer sports. The International Olympics Committee (IOC) is the focal organizer and preserver of the Olympics Games and regards athletics as the strongest and most central part of the Olympics because of how many fans and how much crowd attention athletics attracts.

The IOC makes rules and regulations for eligibility to compete in the Olympics. They also work with the International Sports Federation whose recognition is contingent on following the Olympic Charter established by the IOC. The IOC also mandates National Olympics Committees (NOCs) to select and enrol suitable and eligible athletes to compete in the Olympics games. This is crucial because participating in the Olympics is country-based and individual countries are liable for athletes' misdeeds, such as doping or gender fraud (IOC website). The Olympics are held every four years – alternating between winter and summer games every two years. The IOC and WA both agree that fairness is vital to preserve the overall credibility of competitive sports. Both organisations engage in discussions on ways of protecting female sport while making fairness an important component.

Beyond this, the WA and IOC are also enduring institutions whose intention to keep sport alive under their tutelage will do everything to keep the sport's sphere *sane* including controlling bodies to maintain this vision.

1.3 Background

Sports has traditionally been considered the domain of men, particularly those sports requiring considerable physical strength, endurance, and tenacity. Women were not allowed to participate in ancient Olympics at all and were only included in modern games for the first time in 1896 (Reese 2005: 695). Although it is important to note that the domination of men in sports is not a natural process but a social arrangement, it reinforced social norms of attributing physical strength to men and physical weakness to women. And this links directly to why gender testing became necessary because seeing unusual physical exertion in a woman is almost a misnomer.

Women were finally allowed to participate in 1900 at the Paris Summer Games (Reese 2005: 695). Even then, segregation of gender in sport has remained, and is widely utilized since it is recognized that – on average – men are stronger than women and therefore to ensure a level playing field, each gender should compete with ‘their own kind’ (Reese 2005: 696). Unfortunately, this segregation has led to cases of possible and actual sex fraud, where those who are biologically men have posed as women to be allowed to participate in women’s sports category (Reese 2005: 699). These cases of fraud became the basis for gender testing in female sport. The male sport is however devoid of any gender test since it is inconceivable for women to parade as men to participate in men’s sport, they have no such ‘physical ability’. However, doping, a performance enhancing substance is tested in men’s and women’s sport to ensure credibility of winners without fraudulent advantage.

Gender testing in female sports has been ongoing for decades, although much has changed over the years. The World Athletics launched the first gender policy in 1946 mandating athletes to present medical certificates to show that they were indeed females (Anawalt et. al 2019). By 1966 women were being subjected to visual examination of their genitals to confirm they were female, before being permitted to compete in the European Athletics Championship (Heggie 2010: 160). According to Maren Sidler, an athlete at that time, she reported that ‘you stand in front of the examiners naked and they just look at you while you wait for them to make a decision’ (Heggie 2010: 160). In the same year, 1966, to qualify to compete as a woman at the Commonwealth Games in Jamaica, manual examinations which were tantamount to ‘groping’, were carried out on female athletes’ bodies (Heggie 2010: 160). This indicates how officials in-charge would touch these women to verify they were ‘female-enough’ to be allowed to compete in female sports. In 1967 at the Pan-African Games in Winnipeg, female athletes had to display themselves naked, and were viewed publicly by officials and their peers, an experience many athletes described as humiliating and insensitive (Heggie 2010: 160).

Complaints about these kinds of procedures of gender verification propelled the WA to upgrade to scientific testing, mainly of chromosomal and hormonal tissue material. Chromosomal testing is also known as buccal smears, a process of taking epithelial cells sample from the inside of the cheek (Ferguson-Smith & Ferris 1991: 18). This sample is then used in detecting the number of chromosomes and if there is the presence of Y chromosomes in the cells (Ferguson-Smith & Ferris 1991: 18). This system was eventually abandoned due to its inability to detect differing physiological feature resulting from complex biological makeup (Ferguson-Smith & Ferris 1991: 18). The WA replaced it in 1988 with ‘Manual and Visual Check’ – medical practitioners check for the absence of penis and scrotum on the female body and issue a certificate of health and gender to the athlete (Ferris 1992: 694). In 1992, the WA opted to stop ‘blanket testing’ and decided from then on only to require an athlete to be tested when her gender was called into question (Heggie 2010: 160). This tends to imply that when some athletes’ bodies are viewed as incompatible with specific gender ideals or norms, such person must undertake gender testing. It remains quite unclear how such

‘testable’ bodies will be identified and consequently tested. The World Athletics policy however stated that their medical manager may initiate such testing based on information from ‘reliable sources’ such as the athlete herself or the team doctor affiliated with the athlete (WA 2019: 6)a. Interestingly, in another section of the policy, it was stated that anyone (including other athletes) can bring such information about another athlete. However, they may not do so simply to harass or stigmatize the athlete concerned (WA 2019: 6)a. This implies that other women athletes could make complaints about ‘masculine looking’ athletes that would then lead to gender testing.

This selective system of testing prompted the Stockholm Consensus which requires those who identify with a gender different from their sex to complete surgical anatomical changes and hormonal therapy before they can partake in sport. This position was espoused by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 2004 (Anawalt et. al 2019). Although that rule was updated in 2019 de-necessitating compulsory sex change for transgender individuals, but they must reduce their testosterone level to female range to be eligible to compete. The on-going efforts of World Athletics and the IOC to uphold gender divisions in sport causes them to choose scientific position on biological sex, thereby giving credibility and the final authority to science. But although science became the final decider of who is male or female, it was not science, but other people, who decided who would be tested in the first place, and hence certified or not, to compete in the female sports category. Sometimes it appears that making science the final arbiter of who is female and who is not, is another excuse that justifies a much wider tendency to present control over women’s bodies as something natural rather than the result of man-made decisions and actions.

1.4 Justification of the Study

Centuries ago, the notion that there is only two sex or gender was dominant, it thereby restricted individuals from living life to the fullest. But today, there is gradual recognition of the fluidity of gender and sexuality making it easier for individuals to self-identify in whichever way they desire (OHCHR 2012). This is not to say in some climate or space, such self-identification does not result in violence or bodily harm either by the state or society but it is that at least such possibility is now recognized in the global sphere and by prominent organization such as the UN and other relevant organizations.

However, gender fluidity has made its way into sport *disrupting* its original bi-arrangement of gender classification within the sport sphere. Its presence propelled science to delve deeper into its realm finding explanations and ways of accommodating it while the society grapples with discussions on inclusion and diversity vs threatening disenfranchisement and maybe extinction of cisgender women in sport. As a result of this, there is been a divide between scholars, feminists, and activists whose work is dedicated to advancing the lives of women in all sphere. Therefore, this research is paramount in discussing different ways in which intersex and trans women are affected by the WA and IOC rules even though in the eyes of the public they both carry masculinity as a trait. This paper also seeks to bring varying perspectives of the story while propelling readers to think along with the narratives and hopefully find ways of ameliorating the situation for all parties involved.

1.5 Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of this research is to examine debates initiated by WA/IOC policy regulation on trans and intersex women’s participation in female sport which also bring forward the tension between sex and gender consideration in sport.

Research Questions

How is female gender constructed and contested by World Athletics?

- What are the leading debates surrounding sex and gender in female sport?
- How does this debate affect intersex and trans women's bodies in sport?
- How do these debates impact the lives of female athletes in sport?

1.6 Sex and Gender in Female Sports

In 2019, the World Athletics updated its policy permitting females with Disorders of Sex Development (DSD – a term used in replacing ancient words such as 'hermaphrodite') also known as intersex persons and trans women to compete in the female sport category (WA 2019: 2)a. Their eligibility is reliant on their willingness to take certain hormonal medication targeted at lowering their blood testosterone level to female range (WA 2019: 3). The WA emphasized that no intersex or trans woman athlete will be required to undergo surgical hormonal or anatomical operation, however it is the responsibility of such athlete to seek advice from her medical team and follow the most suitable medical path (WA 2019: 3)a.

The recommended blood testosterone level must be below five (5) nmol/L₆ for a continuous period of at least six months before slated games (WA 2019: 3)a. It is emphasized that this treatment must be *voluntary* and not forced by any official or medical team of the World Athletics, however, failure to fulfil this eligibility criteria restricts intersex women from participating in 400m to one-mile races (WA 2019: 4)a. Whilst the same rules apply to trans-women, they must however not change their gender for at least four years after participating in international competitions (WA 2019)b. According to WA, the rationale for this requirement is to ensure levelled playing field for *all* women (WA 2019: 2)a. This is because *cisgender* women possess lower level of testosterone in their blood therefore putting them at a disadvantage with intersex and trans women whose testosterone level is hovering in the *male* range (WA 2019: 2)a.

While this seems like a noble cause from the World Athletics angle, there has been evidence that intersex women gained very little from this rule. This could be seen from cases of athletes who had no idea of their condition (as in DSD) and only knew when someone (or other athletes) became suspicious of their strength, agility and more importantly their back-to-back winnings and decided to report (Abdul 2019). This often led to an investigation about their 'true sex' and recommendations as mentioned above are given. While investigating an intersex athlete whose gender is being questioned, she faces undue exposure from the media and if she succumbs to the recommendation, she faces possible health-related negative effects. Scholars and activists within sport and health sphere has called for a stop to this rule mandating World Athletics to allow women with DSD compete without taking testosterone reduction medication. The World Medical Association (WMA) also declared publicly that sport physicians should not follow WA's advice because it is unethical and baseless (WMA website). Even though trans women are no longer required to undergo sex reassignment before competing however they still face restriction such as reducing their blood testosterone level to 5 nanomoles (originally 10 nanomoles) for a period of six month which may be a difficult task (WA 2018).

However, other health scholars, feminists and women's advocates argued otherwise, supporting cis women's agitation to completely disallow women with DSD and transwomen from competing in female sport category (Coleman 2019). The general argument is intersex

and trans women not only possess testosterone in the male range, but that WA did not accurately calculate the number of months or years required to reduce male-range testosterone level (Handelman et.al. 2018: 805). This means testosterone level in cis male range cannot sufficiently reduce to cis female hormone range within 6 months or even a year but will take at least 10 years (which is not totally guaranteed) in which it begins to subside (Coleman 2019). Also, if someone with DSD or transwomen develop with their testosterone level through puberty, the required muscles to suit the sex/gender already formed maturely and not easily reversible within World Athletics specified months (Coleman 2019). Furthermore, it took women decades to break into sport a dominantly male domain and today, women are still struggling despite their hard work to win medals in international competition (Coleman 2019). This submission is backed with results from the last 2016 Rio Olympics games where the three athletes who emerged first, second and third place are all intersexed athletes (Coleman 2019, ChaCha 2016).

This whole debate remains a bone of contention within the female sports category creating sides while raising series of arguments around gender and sex and how it is constructed socially and scientifically particularly in sport. Also, it causes a stratification amongst women raising the question of who is a woman or woman-enough.

1.7 Organization of the paper

This study opens some current debates in sport around gender, by highlighting WA rules and regulations and the justification for applying them to some categories of women who compete in sports. It outlines the objections of some cisgender women athletes and their supporters to ‘masculine women’ competing in the female sports category. The study examines a number of stories, including a string of downgrades experienced by some gold medalists, dethroned by intersex athletes, as well as the dethronement of some intersex and trans women athletes as well. Chapter two presents the various concepts useful in explaining this problem and tries to show how such concepts connect with one another. Chapter three highlights the methodology and methods of inquiry. Chapters four, five, six and seven tell the stories of ‘female masculinities’ among athletes competing in female sports. It analyses four case studies. Each of these chapters engages with one case study expansively and in-depth. Chapter Eight discusses intersectionality and the tension of choices that separates the experiences of intersex and trans women. Chapter Nine presents a summary of findings and conclusions.

Chapter 2 Current Debates and Theories

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines sport as a theoretical field and how biological sex and gender diversity operates within it. Sport as a field of study focuses on many aspects of human life. It ranges from sociology, psychology, and science of sport. However, for the purpose of this paper, I will focus on the sociology and science of sport since the former focuses on social problems that affect groups of people (Coakley 2003: 10) and the latter provides explanation for the composition of bodies and its ability. Sport is designed as an enjoyable activity that shifts people's attention from their routine lives (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 12). It is created to provide a series of feelings – exhilaration, comfort, excitement and sometimes anger or a sense of loss depending on who the individual and its contribution to such sport. According to Curry and Jiobu (1984) sport represents physical activity promoting fair, competitive and nondeviant action particularly because it is guided by rules, regulations, and traditions (cited in Delaney & Madigan 2015: 13). Coakley (2006) echoes the institutional, competitive, and physical nature of sport while adding that participants exertion and skilfulness emanates from internal and external motivation (cited in Delaney & Madigan 2015: 13). The definitions did recognize that sport requires physical strength and ability.

2.2 The emerging Sociology of Sports

For every concept there is always a theoretical grounding. Sports as a human invention has been philosophized widely, including in the social sciences. Within sociology, social theories of sport have been associated with various schools of thought. One of such is the functionalist school – which recognizes sports as a social affair designed to function positively within society to transmit and protect accepted cultural values such as teamwork and competitive drive (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 32). In this school of thought, sport is deemed a supportive system of social order, leveraging existing norms and values, and integrating itself as a social institution to function within society without causing disruption (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 32).

Stevenson and Nixon (1972) opine that sports helps to preserve the social order through socioemotional function, socialization of children, political functions, social integration, and social mobility (cited in Delaney & Madigan 2015: 32). These show through ritualistic behaviour, societal expectation, singing of the national anthem before commencing matches, interactions with people from other nationalities and provision of college scholarships to athletes, for example (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 32). It also shows through the presence of governing bodies whose goal is to maintain order by standing as an authority responsible for making rules and regulations that determine eligible or ineligible athletes to compete in international sport competition. For the functionalist school, which accords with dominant views of sports in the media and in politics, sports help people fit well and easily into their society and sports works to smooth social relations efficiently, without hiccups. Functionalist were however, criticized for painting a picture-perfect society where everyone flourishes without any conflicts or dilemmas, and where all enjoy participating in sport at the same level (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 33). This position is ignoring those who do not 'fit in' or benefit from the social order and are thereby excluded from reaping these supposed benefits of sports. This school of thought is still largely dominant in sport today, considering how bodies different from socially recognized bodies are repeatedly badgered into altering their very

essence to fit into social order of sport or risk exclusion. The happy-go-lucky outlook that sport has, remains contested although by those in the minority, but the WA and IOC remain the arbiters maintaining order in sport and are firmly committed to keeping this image.

Conflict theorists argue otherwise, as their name suggests. From this perspective, society consists of different parts that are in competition with one another over scarce resources and each competitor operates on different levels of power and authority (Coakley 2004: 41). Conflict theories further clarify that there is no single set of norms and values in any society, but many competing and contrasting sets of norms and values, even where one is dominant. Society showcases the dominant norms and values, based on whomever is in positions of authority, and consequently can make rules and regulations which others then by and large adhere to (Coakley 2004: 41). Such dominant groups typically include WA who currently make guiding principles for all sport participants (athletes, coaches) to follow. While following Marxist analyses of power and domination, conflict theories also examine sports as a business, considering internal power relations and questions of material acquisition within sports as central, as well as how such material interests affect those who lack access to such authority and positions of control (Coakley 2004: 41).

Gruneau (1975) posits that the social system of sport espouses different levels of inequality, and that sports is not solely designed for entertainment or recreational purposes, but comprises a set of activities rooted in power, status and wealth (cited in Delaney & Madigan 2015: 36). Also, the competitive nature of sport leaves little hope of success for lower class people, reflecting an ideology of bourgeoisie, which alienates athlete-workers from one another, and pushes them to work against each other while ruining any hope for social revolution (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 36). Sports has here become one of the forms of opium of the people, along with religion which Marx spoke of. Finally, from a conflict theory perspective, competitive sport is inherently inegalitarian because it differentiates between winners and losers, rewarding the former and offering little consolation for the latter. This school of thought recognizes material wealth as placing individuals or institutions in the position of power to make rules and regulations for those without similar room for manoeuvre. Conflict theorists have been criticized for focusing too much on material roots of conflict in society, that is economic resources while ignoring gender, race, and other social relations of power (Coakley 2004: 43). Conflict theories have been criticised for not recognising individuals' desire to experience and excel in sports as a means of individual – and perhaps even collective – empowerment (Coakley 2004: 42). Conflict theorist ideology of sport remains visible in the dealings of IOC and WA. Even though these governing bodies are not-for-profit organizations, they control huge sums of money yearly and through such financial influence can control bodies within the sport space. Moreover, the IOC and WA need to control bodies because it is in the management of bodies that their resources come from, without bodies, sport is non-existent.

Sport theoretical analysis is incomplete without highlighting feminist contribution to the field. It is in this theoretical field that gender became a body of discourse. Feminism is a theoretical position that recognizes male supremacy and dominance in most space(s) and practices of life. Feminists are generally committed to denaturalizing this dominance and advocating for more women to step into the public sphere(s) on their own terms (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 42). Critical feminist theorists propose that to understand social actions such as sports, it would be important to investigate the way they interpret the meaning of gender (Coakley 2004: 51). Feminists further highlight the importance of women in society, arguing that gender segregation norms are not mainly about sex classification, but about socially constructed versions of what females are supposed to do and not do (Coakley 2004: 51). Often, biological explanation such as women's inability to handle strenuous physical activities since their bodies already bear the stress of menstrual cycles and the burden of

childbearing (Sayer 1982: 70). Such comments on physical ability or inability was repeatedly sold as reasons why women should not do or be part of something (Sayer 1982: 70). Feminist theorist however, debunked this understanding of women's bodies as unfounded particularly because some of these notions were not naturally or biologically derived as claimed but part of a social and cultural agenda to suppress and exclude women from sports (Sayer 1982: 69, Fausto-Sterling 2000: 7). They therefore called for a non-discriminatory practice that gives equal opportunity to women to participate and compete in sports without the colourful explanation of physical ability and difference (Coakley 2004: 52).

One of the key achievements of feminist advocacy particularly in the US is presenting series of evidence that hastened the ratification of Title IX. Title IX is an Act that forbids educational institutions under government funding from excluding women and girls from competing in sport based on their sex (NCAA Website). The domestication of this law in both private and public schools increased the number of girls competing in sport and ultimately at the international level such as World Athletics U18 Championships (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 47). Title IX not only advanced women's participation in sport but also declared female sports as a protected category (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 42). Feminist theorist are highly pro-women making it their foremost goal to push for women's equality and liberation in the society and by the same token, also in sports.

However, feminist theorist, particularly the first wave, was criticized for focusing solely on one gender (women), especially considering that some men also faced some forms of discrimination and oppression (Delaney & Madigan 2015: 42). This view is in part corroborated by Connell's analysis of masculinities and the hierarchies between different notion of what it means to be a man in a society that places some men in the position to dominate other men based on their socioeconomic standing, their sexuality and their race (Connell 2005: 74). Moreover, this propels us to recognize that some men are oppressed within the society since they are required and sometimes forced to conform to dominant ideas about masculinity. Halberstam takes this further by noting that some feminists tend to define female masculinity as an extended version of men's psychic power, conferred on certain women to advance men's patriarchal agendas, therefore classifying masculine women as almost a different category or sub-set of women with 'patriarchal' characteristics (2010: 19). Feminist theorization is very much alive in the sport sphere and deeply embedded in the current debate between sex and gender in sport. Some feminists strongly believe sex should remain the eligibility clause in sport because allowing the influx of men into female sport will render the fight for women's visibility in sport useless while others believe women are women regardless the body-type they carry.

Despite criticisms, the influence of feminist theorizing in sports cannot be ignored because it disrupted 'business as usual' in many spheres and started a whole series of discussions and actions around women's inclusion in sports sectors previously almost exclusively dominated by men. All these theoretical positions have contributed to an increased level of scholarly and intellectual attention to sports as both a field of study and as a set of human activities and institutional, regulatory practices.

2.3 Sex Differences

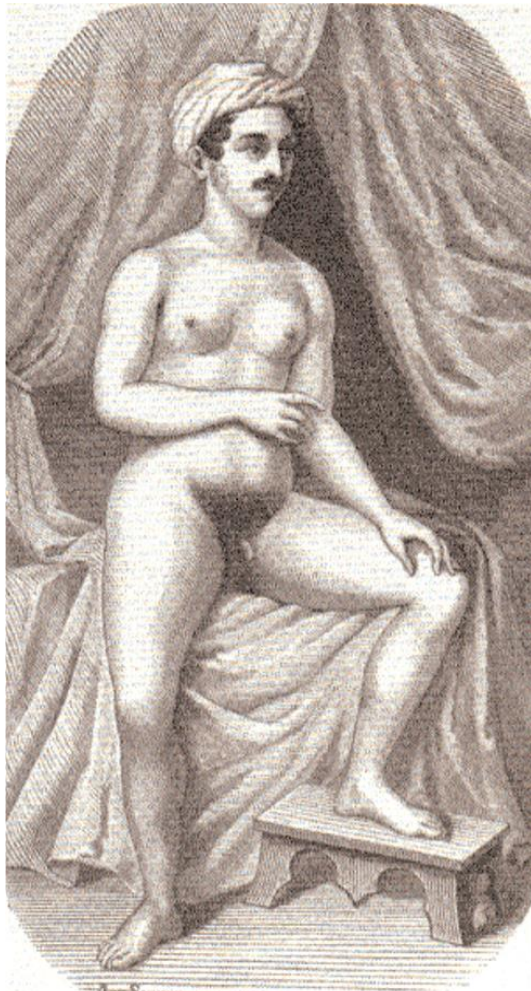
Ab-normal is a short version of Absolutely-normal! – Taiwo Adetunji 2020

The word 'sex' in English is used to represent organic beings – bodies - identified either as male or female (Gentile 1993: 120). Biological sex is the scientific term for biological differentiation between human bodies that are male and female. Biological sex is determined by human genetics and chromosomal formation, responsible for producing genes, organs and

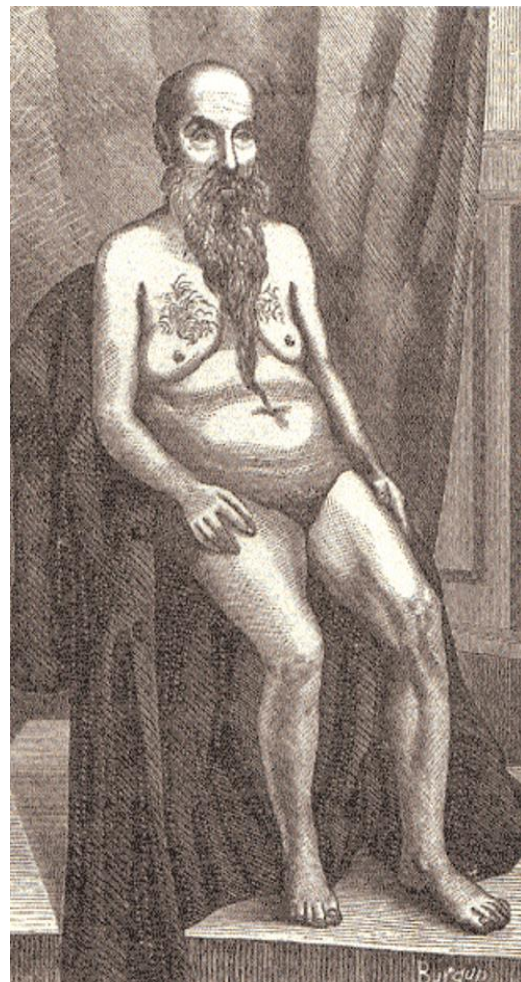
hormones inside the body and genitalia and other physical traits outside body which makes them male or female. In biology, the difference between male and female bodies is genetically determined, with males having 46XY and female 46XX chromosomes (Fausto-Sterling 1985: 18; Handelman et.al. 2018: 805). The most visible attribute that influences the declaration of a new-born baby as male or female are its genitalia – penis for males and vagina for females. Further differentiation is the presence of testes for males which produces high dose of testosterone hormones and ovaries for females which produces oestrogen hormones. This scientific differentiation of male or female based on chromosomes, genes, genitalia is highly contested as a socially-charged decision (Fausto-Sterling 2000: 52) which influences how bodies that carries both male and female traits and genes are perceived and treated.

Such bodies are called '*intersex*', meaning a person, at birth, who possesses distinguishing sex markers of both male and female, which may or may not be visible. They are therefore assigned the most 'obvious' or medically appropriate sex at birth, so they can be socialized accordingly (Jones 2009: 1). This implies intersex individuals have no clear space in the social settings and must allude to one of the dominant and recognized sex – male/female. Where it is difficult for doctors to choose, further medical inquiries may take place to ascertain the internal bodily system of the child, confirming or ruling out the presence of testes, uterus and/or ovaries, before assigning a sex to the child. Doctors sometimes suggest surgical intervention which has been linked to several ethical debates – that is, whose decision it should be (parents, doctors, the child/young adult) (Wiesemann et. al. 2010: 672).

Image 1: An intersex woman sitting pretty in her own skin



Source: Porter 1998 – Marie-Madeleine Lefort aged sixteen



Marie-Madeleine Lefort aged sixty-five.

Due to the biological makeup of intersex individuals, they are usually androgen insensitive which means their body responds actively to androgens (a hormone responsible for producing testosterone in large quantity) (Handelman et. al. 2018: 810). There are differing levels and types of androgen concentration in the female body which are Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), nonclassical adrenal hyperplasia, Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH) and hyperandrogenism (Handelman et. al. 2018: 810). Individuals with the first two condition may compete with women fairly because they produce relatively the same or a little higher testosterone than other women. The last two conditions are described as ‘under-virilized male’ possessing ambiguous genitalia which doctors misconstrued as vagina and ascribed female at birth (Handelman et.al. 2018: 811). Despite being raised as female, they however possess male sex chromosome of 46XY, testes and adult male testosterone concentration (Handelman et.al. 2018: 811). This implies women with hyperandrogenism, that is, intersex are men but ‘under-virilized’ (not man-enough).

This reasoning is one of the strongest argument in sport leading to further studies to measure the effect of testosterone on hyperandrogenic women and it was discovered that those running the 400m hurdles to – 1 mile have a greater advantage than other women (Bermon, Garnier 2017: 7). This is because the testosterone is more active and contributes greatly within this timeframe (Bermon, Garnier 2017: 7). This revelation is the basis for WA’s restriction of women with DSD or hyperandrogenism from races between 400m to one mile. This observation is however declared as erroneous and lacking quality inquiry by other sport scientists (Pielke et.al 2019: 18). According to them, the data used were duplicated and therefore the conclusions are invalid. Moreover, women with DSD have very little advantage which could be overshadowed by physical skilfulness possessed by other athletes (Pielke et. al. 2019: 9). This conjecture remains a debate between scientists, scholars, and researchers.

What is clear is that intersex individuals disrupted the neatly binarized categorization of male and female pushing doctors to explain to the society why such *abnormality* exist. They in turn deemed it a disorder that occurs through genetical mutation requiring treatment because ‘a disorder of either sex or sex roles is a disorder in the social fabric’ (Cadden 1996 cited in Faustino-Sterling 2000: 34) and ultimately in sport. Hence, unsurprisingly the IOC and WA regulation of intersex body in sport. The clamour to alter the natural state of intersex individuals is a combination of biological assertion driven by social perception of sex.

Biologically, intersex female athletes are reported to carry masculine traits which gives them advantage over cis-female athletes because their body naturally produces testosterone a coveted steroid that aids blood circulation and stamina crucial to sport performance. This however has no basis because all bodies produce testosterone in varying levels and therefore cannot be effectively measured (Camporesi & Maugeri 2016: 49). Other peculiarities often not mentioned is that intersex women could impregnate other women and in rare cases where they have both uterus and testes could impregnate themselves (Irmak 2010: 449). This in itself could be seen as deviant peculiarity that disrupts social arrangement and understanding of what sexes can(not) do.

Socially, it is often obvious intersex women have stronger features that does not fit dominant feminine look and are consequently called tomboys, men or even ugly. And while competing in female’s sport, they are continuously regarded as privileged males winning medals. This view though echoes biological and scientific representation of intersex women but it displays cultural and social understanding of intersex which corroborates Beauvoir (1949: 43) observation that biological facts is not without social influence designed to maintain social order.

Biological sex is therefore criticized for its contribution to unequal treatment and blatant discrimination of certain individuals in the society. Despite this criticism, Sayer (1982: 30)

urges us to not overlook the contribution of biological sex and theories because it is useful in explaining certain individual dynamism which is crucial to gender discourse.

2.4 Gender Diversity

Gender represents the non-physiological characteristics of sex that are culturally and socially recognized as appropriate to males and/or females (Unger 1979: 1086, Uzzell, Horne 2006: 581). Due to its non-physiological status, it often reflects through institutional rules, social norms and cultural display. Fausto-Sterling (2000: 243) observed that some sociologists view gender as a manifestation of successful interaction within a group. This implies gender is beyond individual display of self but a reflection of perceived performance in their environment. Butler noted that gender is hardly an original performance but very much reliant on socialization within small groups or the larger society (Butler 2009: 5). This is not to say individuals are not exercising their agency by identifying as they deem but that even such exercise draws its strength and familiarity from certain forces in the society. Butler (2007: 24) posits that gender is complex and consequently impossible to pin into a single stratum or given permanent identity. Which means gender is fluid and moves as quickly or slowly as deemed by the identifier but certainly not without existing template. Therefore, where gender is embraced by an individual or group it could change abruptly or steadily and could be performed in different ways across different spaces.

Riding on this, gender diversity refers to different ways in which sex and gender is constructed across cultures and traditions thereby leaving little chance to neatly classify individuals as male and female or man and woman (Nanda 2000: 1). This indicates gender or sex in one culture is different in another. It resonates with Oyewunmi's account of gender in her anthropological study of Yorùbá society in Nigeria, where she demonstrates that the construction of gender is a colonial development since the culture originally displayed no fixed gender segregation in relation to individuals or their roles (1997: 187). Consequently, gender was used in some societies to disrupt existing harmonious relationship between men and women whilst replacing it with antagonism and hierarchies – lording men over women (Mendoza 2016: 16). Nanda's definition however weaved together sex and gender raising a long-term controversy over the sameness or differences between gender and sex. Nanda observed that some culture make no distinction between the natural and cultural and correspondingly sex and gender because doing this may trivialize the influence of biology and culture on human experiences and actions (2001: 3). For instance the experiences of intersex women is deeply affected by both sex and gender interpretation in the society resulting in their body to be subjected to biological adjustment. Butler surmised there may be no reason to separate gender and sex because sex although left in the realm of science but ultimately serves political and social purposes (1999: 10-11). Nonetheless, human experiences of gender and sex differs even within a single culture

Following this line of thought, Connell observed masculinity studies in the 80s and 90s are conducted in specific settings and stereotypically discussed maintaining existing perception of men as attributable to *all* men (2005: xii). Connell described masculinity as a process and practice that reproduces itself within and outside the bodies of men (2005: 45). And proposes three levels of masculinities – hegemonic, complicit, and subordinate/marginalized masculinity(ies) (Connell 2005: 71). Hegemonic masculinity represents the standard of masculinity which is dominantly expressed in spaces and requiring others to emulate it. Such masculinity is often habited by those in high places who supposedly set the example for others. By virtue of this positioning, they dominate, oppress, and subjugate women and other men in the society (2005: 77). Complicit masculinities are those who enjoy the benefit of being male but do not necessarily fit the standard dominant masculinity. This may be due to occupational choice or other things societally regarded atypical to masculinities (Connell

2005: 79). Subordinate/marginalized masculinities (particularly gay men, men of colour) are those whose peculiarity is unpopular or seen as abnormal and therefore derecognized as men or having masculinities trait. They are also regarded as performing differently from the typical notions of masculine gender and are consequently subjugated and treated dismally within the society (Connell 2005: 80). Connell's analysis of masculinities explains the diversity within male gender, but these differences depends clearly on how they are positioned or perceived in the society.

Connell's analysis however limits masculinity within the men's sphere. Sedgwick therefore (1995: 12-3) suggests we examine masculinity that has nothing to do with maleness and Halberstam leveraged on this insight in her analysis of female masculinity showing us the possibility of masculinity operating in the female's gender (Halberstam 1998: 2). Halberstam opines that female masculinity is not about copying or discrediting current masculine ideologies but refusing to engage it (1998: 9). This implies masculine female should develop their own style and ideology of masculinity to avoid toxin masculinity that is hegemonic and oppressive. Breger (2005: 82) however posits Halberstam's analysis is limiting and proposes the term 'feminine masculinities' and masculine femininities, an inclusive category that acknowledges masculine females, feminine males, intersex and transgender individuals. This is in recognition of individual's natural endowment that strikes the society as bizarre and those whose natural state feels oppressive and therefore seeks to change it. Even though the infusion of feminine and masculine tendencies is the reality of some individuals, but it is not without social and cultural influences. For instance, masculine women are almost always seen to be lesbians and feminine men as gays further affirming heterosexual expectations of gender and sex even where their performance is deviant (Butler 1990: 9). This suggests that even in a same sex relationship, one person *must* assume the male role and the other the female. It is based on de-normalizing such assumption that queer theory emerged. Queer derecognizes the normalization of binaries heterosexuality and homosexuality as the only or dominant ways individuals could exist or explore their sexuality (Butler 1993: 230, Calafell, Nakayama 2016: 2). Queer perspective instead embraces everything that is brandished as abnormal thereby accepting the multiple ways in which individuals and groups chooses to exist and live their lives.

Therefore, gender diversity is a process that recognizes the possibility and presence of multiple genders such as feminine, masculine, femininities, masculinities, non-binary individuals who either assume these frames by themselves or allow the society to determine it for them. The above theorization serves as a reminder that even though sport hosts hundreds of thousands of athletes from various countries with diverse cultures and knowledge about gender and sex, but they must bow to a regulation that recognizes individuals as either male or female and man or woman on the field.

2.5 Conclusion: from Concepts to Analytical Framework

Sport relies on biological explanation to make rules and regulations (WA 2019)a. This was declared by the current president of the WA claiming it is the only way to maintain the integrity in sport while ensuring women enjoy the winnings sport promises to give (WA website). This means biological sex remain the focal determinant of who could compete or not and therefore becomes an important tool of analysis in this paper. Whereas gender diversity serves as a reminder of continuous gravitation towards reinforcing individual agency and capacity to make decision about self and act accordingly. Even beyond this, gender diversity provides insight on differing bodies across culture, space, and time and how owners of such bodies use it in expressing themselves in the society.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology and methods used for this inquiry. It details the techniques and strategies employed in gathering data for the analysis.

3.2 Positionality

When I express an action as a woman, I find it an insult when you liken me to a man – Taiwo Adetunji 2020

The above quote is a reflection of my childhood and indeed adulthood where every leap of courage I take is seen as reserved for masculinity or a man and I am constantly reminded that I should make effort not to take a man's place. As a cis gender woman and non-athlete researching gender diversity and creating discourses around intersex and trans women in sport, my discussions is that of an outsider, who has no first-hand knowledge of pain, suffering, victories and discriminations these women carry. Therefore, I will not be able to share personal experiences while presenting their stories.

Initially, I intend following an absolute objectivity path on this intellectual journey, however, I recall Harding's observation that researcher may find themselves in the centre of varying ideologies such as liberalist and socialist feminist discourses but it is best to start their research from women's lives and experiences (2005: 266). In doing so, we become aware of the multiplicity of such experiences and the differing outcomes it may generate (2005: 267). Due to the impossibility of deriving a single fact or interpretation from women's lived experiences, then I realize objectivity may be restrictive for me – not allowing me go the extra mile to gather resources useful in showing the experiences of these women in their collective and separate spaces.

Therefore my positionality in this debate is in sisterhood with women regardless the spaces they occupy but acknowledging and beaming light on their struggles against oppression and dehumanization and reminding the populace that human dynamism cannot be defined since it produces and reproduces itself whether repeatedly or alternately but definitely in different ways. I believe without any doubt that the individuals I will be discussing in this paper are women because they identify as such and carry the term uniquely in the same space – sport. I refer to Caster and Annet as intersex women and Jillian and Laurel as transwomen solely for the purpose of this paper. In another space, I would simply refer to them as women because I understand how empowering and disempowering *labels* can be in certain places.

3.3 Women in the History of Gender Testing in Sport

In the first chapter, I gave an overview of gender testing which started as a physical exercise and today a scientific inquiry. There are certain intersex women who contributed to the changes IOC and WA made to DSD policy. Dora Ratjen is a popularised story of a man posing as a woman to participate in female sport in 1936 leading to the consensus to establish gender testing, it was later discovered in 2008 that Dora was battling with gender uncertainty (Heggie 2010: 158). In 1967, Ewa Kłobukowska, a polish sprinter failed the visual inspection of genitalia, underwent further surgery which is the chromosomal test and failed it and this

form of testing became the one in use (Heggie 2010: 158). In mid-80's, Maria Martinez-Patino a Spanish hurdler failed the chromosomal test and consequently disqualified from competing. She was advised to claim injury and retire but she refused and sue the IOC (Heggie 2010: 161). It was eventually discovered she is androgen insensitive but has no physiological advantage. She was consequently reinstated but the years of being banned from sport affected her performance. Chromosomal test was abandoned and eventually blanket testing. I did not consider Maria's case because she is no longer active in sport.

In 2014, following multiple gold medal win at the Asian Junior Athletics Championship, Dutee Chand was invited in for doping test but a gender test was conducted instead, and it was discovered she is androgen insensitive (Macur 2014). She was therefore disqualified from the 2014 Commonwealth games. She sued the IOC and WA for violating her human rights and restricting her from performing (Macur 2014). She won the case and now competes in national and international sport (Macur 2014). I decided not to analyse Dutee's case because she currently competes in the 100-200metres race which is within the WA's policy since it restricts androgen insensitive athletes from 400m-1,500m race. Also, it will be correct to say Dutee limited her race within 100-200 to avoid having issues with IOC/WA because in 2014, she ran 4×400m and won two gold medals which is why her blood was tested.

Caster Semenya's sport saga started since 2009 and persist to date. She was ban from competing in 2020 Olympics and her appeal to both CAS and Swiss court was rejected. I chose Caster's case because it is active and gathers series of controversies surrounding race, sexuality, and gender. Annet Negesa story happened in 2011 but was not told and consequently unpopular even though her life changed completely due to the incidence. She told her story in 2019 and even now, the story is still very much active since she intends to sue WA eventually. I chose Annet's story to popularize the injustice that was done to her and how she was silenced even amid it.

Trans women in sport are not new but unpopular. However, with the policy update in 2019 allowing them compete without sex reassignment sparked a lot of debates and therefore makes it an important story to examine. Although it was difficult to choose whose case to portray since there is yet to be a transwoman in Olympics or World Athletics Championship. Although there are 17 transmen and 33 transwomen listed in sports, their stories either are incomplete or they are inactive as sportsperson and therefore not enough for analysis. However, the case of Jillian was very interesting. She got the licence to compete as a woman in 2017 and won. More importantly, she is pleased with IOC/WA transgender policy and advocates for more transgender individuals to join sport while adhering to the rules. I chose Laurel Hubbard because she qualified for 2020 Olympics amid injuries which occurred sometimes during competition. Her success attracted public scrutiny particularly because of her body weight.

My case study list is Caster Semenya, Annet Negesa, Jillian Bearden and Laurel Hubbard.

3.4 Case Study Materials

For Caster Semenya, I accessed a documentary 'Too Fast to be a Woman: The Caster Semenya's Story' shot by Max Ginane between 2009-2011. I specifically chose this material as a resource because it provided a trajectory of Caster's struggles – starting from her night of victory, speculations about her gender and her quest to get back on the tracks. The documentary showed her daily exercise routine, her relationship with family and friends, her legal

battle with the IAAF and depression and her reinstatement. The documentary was produced into a movie and shone widely. I used supporting resources from New York times and other reliable media outlets to get an update of her current position in athletics. For Annet Negesa, I used a documentary produced by a German organization called the Dark Side of Sport' shot in 2019. I chose this as my primary data source due to the quality of information it delivered. Also, this documentary showcased other women with similar case as Annet. I used supporting article from New York times and telegraph to get an updated information on her case. For Jillian, I used resources from BBC Sport because it contains discussion regarding her transitioning and sport. And for Laurel, I used interviews from Stuff News, a popular news outlet in New Zealand. For the intersex case studies, I used materials from 2009-2020 to capture Semenya's initial journey with WA. For transwomen however, I found more resources from 2015-2020 because the IOC changed mandatory sex reassignment at that time which encouraged more transwomen to proceed into sport space.

Due to the nature of my research, I sought access into sport science sites where I gathered scientific information on testosterone, oestrogen medication, contraceptives and effect of testosterone reducing drugs on intersex and trans women. Such sites include sport med, British Medical Journal (BMJ), sport science and recommended readings from WA itself. To aid my analysis, I used writings of Fausto-Sterling, Janet Sayers, Judith Butler and Camporesi and Maugeri's articles. These authors provided extensive analysis on gender and sex as a social determination and how it affects women in sport. I also bring in some opposing voices such as Dorian Coleman a former athlete herself advancing women's rights in sport. I used materials from WA and IOC website to correctly state their preference in this discourse.

To put faces to names circulating on internet, I sought YouTube channels for informative videos, TV news and interviews of athletes, health practitioners and feminist who are talking about the female sport category dilemma. Some of the leading feminist for the exclusion of intersex and trans women from sport are Shannon Davies, Paula Radcliffe and Martina Navratilova whose voices echoes the gradual defeminization of female sport category. Other voices such Veronica Ivy, Joanna Harper and Chris Mosier are asking for the inclusion of transwomen.

3.5 Risk and Ethical Challenges

It was tasking conducting this research currently due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is because the 2020 Tokyo Olympics would have held this year and feature several transwomen competing in varied sports. This would have strengthened my analysis by giving me access to a pool of trans women athletes with their stories told either personally or by groups they identify with or general media. And because their presence would spark fresh conversations that may educate readers on how current some issues are.

Ethically, I hope not to essentialize the experiences these women lived and endured but to discuss it pragmatically yet empathetically while working fastidiously towards contributing to the body of literature that seeks to lower the suffering of women and ultimately girls.

Chapter 4 Caster Semenya's Success and Vulnerability

The way you were born is the way you were born – Caster Semenya (cited Ginane 2011)

4.1 Introducing Caster Semenya

Caster Semenya is a 29-year-old track athlete, born and raised in Limpopo in South Africa. She is a two-time gold medallist at the World Athletics Championship and the Olympics. She is however banned from track except she agrees to lower her blood testosterone which purportedly gives her an advantage over other competitors. This chapter discusses Caster Semenya's efforts to compete and the outcome of World Athletics Policy on her career. I will use sport as an institution built on rules and regulations and biological sex to analyse the presence of gender diversity in sport and how this disrupt the neat binary sport recognizes as the ideal.

Image 2: Caster racing towards her gold medal



Daniel Bellamy / Euronews

4.2. The 'Testosterone' Advantage

Sport as an institution recognizes biological sex as the basis for eligibility in any of the sport category (WA website). The rationale for this standpoint is a recognition that men are naturally stronger, heavier and have a smoother circulation of blood than women and may win most sporting competition due to this advantage (Handelman et.al. 2018: 803). Moreover, men's advantage flows from testosterone, a hormone produced by testes while women produce testosterone but in small quantity through their ovaries (Coleman 2018: 72). The amount of testosterone produced by male is between 10.2 – 39.9 while in female is from 0.4 – 2.1 nanomoles (Handelman et.al. 2018: 803). Therefore, the sport world is *neatly* stratified into two categories, male and female.

Caster Semenya an elite track athlete however falls in the middle of this binary. This was discovered after testing her blood – originally collected for doping, a requirement for all

athlete (Ginane 2011). However, WA did not inform the athlete that her genetical composition is being checked which is contrary to UNESCO observation of the sensitivity of genetical information:

‘Human genetic data have a special status because: they can be predictive of genetic predispositions concerning individuals; they may have a significant impact on the family, including offspring, extending over generations, and in some instances on the whole group to which the person concerned belongs; they may contain information the significance of which is not necessarily known at the time of the collection of the biological samples; they may have cultural significance for persons or groups’ (Article 4).

Weismann (2011: 216) noted that this Declaration is duly recognized and included in privacy laws of the European Commission and other Western countries. Yet the World Athletics located in Monaco, a European country and operating under its laws failed to fully protect Caster Semenya’s genetic information from the media or public scrutiny.

The test result revealed Caster is hyperandrogenic, a situation where androgen hormone is produced in high quantity in females (Davis, Edwards 2014: 45). Androgens are tantamount to testosterone and can grow in both male and females but function differently after puberty (Coleman 2018: 71). Therefore, women with hyperandrogenism are in fact ‘men’ due to their biological makeup (specifically the presence of high testosterone) (Coleman 2018: 65). This implies that Caster Semenya who has lived all her life as a woman and identifies as one is regarded as a man due to biological makeup. It also gives credence to the snickering of Elisa, Lynsey and Maria who thinks she is a man. This brings to fore the irreconcilable debate between the similarity or difference between sex and gender. Nevertheless, this debate has no effect on how sport sees athletes or the category they compete under. Caster was therefore declared as having higher advantage than most women which is the reason, she dominated the 800m track category for a decade (Handelman et al. 2018: 804). This scientific inquiry into Caster’s bodywork renders her cultural and social upbringing and knowledge of self, irrelevant particularly in the world of sport.

Speaking of advantage, several observations had point at Michael Phelps who has Marfan Syndrome a rare genetical condition that causes the tissues to produce long limbs and flexible arms (Camporesi & Magueri 2016: 52). Or Usain Bolt whose longer legs aids him to take longer stride compare to his opponents and Mantyranta with elevated oxygen capacity aiding blood circulation which strengthen his endurance level (Camporesi & Magueri 2016: 51-2). This why Hämäläinen differentiated between performance and property advantage in sport - the former refers to the mental ability to strategize and propel self to the finish line while the latter points at certain genetical peculiarities athletes possess which strengthen their endurance and blood circulation (2012: 316). He however stressed that without performance advantage, property advantage may be useless since physical attributes need continuous push to stay resilient during competition (Hämäläinen 2012: 316). This line of thought is similar to Caster’s response to why she lost the gold medal to Mariya in 2016 Olympics – she confirmed she wrongly calculated her moves which cost her the competition even worse, she trained even a day before the tournament which is not advisable for any athlete (Supersport 2019). Although the gold medal given to Mariya was returned to Caster because doping substance was discovered in her blood which enhanced her performance. Therefore, capitalizing on androgenic advantage in intersex women seems biased. Moreover, considering the varying physical and genetical endowment of humans, it is very difficult and almost unlikely to measure the quantity of such endowments in individuals (also see types of intersex condition in chapter 2).

Despite these observations, WA/IOC and its medical staff disagrees completely. They opined that physical advantage such as Phelps and Usain or even genetical condition such as Mantyranta add no advantage to their performance. According to Bermon, androgens

specifically produces high levels of testosterone which generally aids physical performance of all athletes, hence the reason for the ban on doping (Bermon, Garnier 2017: 2). However, recall the history of gender testing and how it evolved over the years – it generally started with physical appearance then genital before the sophistication of blood, chromosome, and genes testing. This history then is a reminder that the test was conducted first based on bodily appearance and even this was done based on outstanding performance of such bodies and the resulting success of it. The WA/IOC remain distant from questions of how these tests are initiated in the first place since it is no longer a blanket testing. More so, we have no idea which intersex condition Semenya has because this result is not released to the public. This is not to say that it should be done but to emphasize the lack of transparency prevalent in the IOC/WA’s dealings with *certain* athletes.

4.3 Reactions from Other Athletes

When I pee, I pee like you, I know I like men stuff, I know I have deep voice, I am raised as a woman – Caster Semenya (Ginane 2011).

While Caster Semenya was at her corner getting ready for the 2009 Olympics race, Elisa Cusma Piccione and Mariya Savinova were having locker room tête-à-tête making fun of Semenya’s appearance. Jenny Meadow recounted to Anna Kessel of *The Guardian* that Elisa said “...For me, she is not a woman’ while Mariya said ‘just look at her’ (Kessel 2010). Lynsey Sharp will later insinuate the same preference in 2016 after she came 5th in the Olympic race. According to her, ‘Everyone can tell the difference between those with the condition (hyperandrogenism) and not.... ‘It’s so annoying that they are here’ (cited in Stevens 2016). It is fair to assume her first statement refers to the physical appearance of the medallists – Caster, Francine and Wambui.

Image:3 Francine, Caster, Wambui medallists 2016 Olympics



Source: RegionWeek (2019)

This sort of mockery is not new to masculine women. Halberstam shared hers and other masculine women's bathroom experience where feminine women either snicker at them or call the security to ascertain they are not men (Halberstam 1998: 20). This behaviour continuously reinforces popular idea of masculinity solely domicile in men and restricted from women's bodies. Krane (2001: 118) further affirms that bodies that does not fit hegemonic femininity particularly those with excessive musculature are regarded as masculine and often attract public scrutiny. Caster was teased endlessly as a young girl for being tomboyish because she would rather wear trousers than a skirt, play football or wrestle with boys rather than play dress up for dolls (McRae 2009). Even as an adult, Caster still deals with public scrutiny of her appearance.

Semenya competed at the 2016 Rio Olympics where she came first, followed by a Burundian and Kenyan who were suspected intersex (only from appearance). The women who took 4th, 5th, and 6th position – Melissa Bishop, Joanna Jozwik and Lynsey Sharp respectively were seen hugging and consoling each other on their loss (Critchley 2016). In fact, Joan took to social media congratulating herself as a silver medallist and finishing as the “first European” and the “second white” in the race (Critchley 2019). Joan then questioned why those in authority are doing nothing about the controversies swimming around the three medallists (Semenya, Francine and Wambui). Following this, Nigel Levine a male athlete congratulated Lynsey Sharp on twitter for coming 3rd place in the 800m race (Critchley 2019). And Lynsey Sharp herself during an interview, tearfully stated the competition is beyond their control and they are waiting on the authorities to do something about it (Stevens 2019). She justified that her position is from an informed angle since she wrote her thesis on hyperandrogenism and very certain it gives women with such condition advantage over other women in sport (Stevens 2019). Shannon Rowbury also expressed her discontent with the dominance of intersex athletes competing in women's category, saying ‘It challenges and threatens the integrity of women's sports to have intersex athletes competing against genetic women’ (Zaccardi 2016).

Image 4: Lynsey Sharp facing the camera, hugging crying Melissa Bishop



Source: The Guardian

These series of subtle and not so subtle outburst may have influenced World Athletics 2019 DSD policy to be implemented at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and World Athletics Championship – insisting that intersex women take testosterone-reducing medication. The other athlete's reaction emphasizes the them vs us in sport, pointing out differences between

Semenya, Wambui and Francine and them. This reinforces hegemonic femininity where female athletes are expected to maintain and look soft and womanly rather than having hard features and looking manly.

Caster however publicly declared that World Athletics policy for DSD targets her directly and she will not be taking any medication to reduce a natural gift in her body (North 2019). She therefore took the issue to the Court of Arbitration. The court ruled against her on the grounds that *women's sport category is a protected class* under the Title XI and they as sport gatekeeper are therefore under the obligation to ensure fairness within this category (North 2019). Caster rejected this ruling and went to the Swiss court and the same ruling applied. She is currently ineligible to compete in the next Olympics except she abides by this rule.

Coleman Dorian, a former athlete, and an acclaimed feminist applauded the court's ruling stating that it was the right ruling to protect female sport category and ultimately women (2019). She reiterates the necessity in keeping the female sport from being dominated by individuals who claimed to be women due to their genitalia or gender identity but, are 'men' biologically (Coleman 2019).

In January 2017, Semanya married her long-term partner Victoria and in 2019, they welcomed their first child, although the news was not released until 2020. This information leaves us to wonder – if Semanya had married a man, become pregnant and bring a child to the world, will the DSD rule affect her differently? However, Caster Semanya remains banned from the track until she agrees to take medication. Caster currently plays on the Janine Van Wyk football team in South Africa (BBC 2019).

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed how Semanya's peculiarity disrupts sports and its theoretical standing. I discussed the undue scrutiny Caster gets from other athletes and how this reinforces physical attributes that does not fit the norm.

Chapter 5 Annet Negesa’s Success and Surgery

I love my sport so much, that is why I decided to go for the surgery – Annet Negesa (in Abdul 2019)

5.1 Introducing Annet Negesa

Annet Negesa is a 28-year-old Ugandan track athlete medallist. At only 20 years old she already racked up gold medal at the national 800 metres race in the Netherlands, another for her country at the 2011 All African Games and received an award from the Ugandan Athletics Federation as ‘Athlete of the Year’ (Abdul 2019). With all these successes, she was poised for the 2011 London Olympics, but her name was removed from the list of athletes eligible to compete in the tournament. Annet identifies as a woman that loves sport and compete accordingly under this category, however, her career was cut short due to a surgery that went wrong. This chapter will discuss expansively Annet’s story teasing out the implication of undergoing surgical alteration of the body system.

Image 5: Annet Negesa in 2011 during the All African Games



Source: Sabrina Fajia / MG Radio

5.2 Fairness in Female Sport

Gender testing is an avenue for World Athletics to scientifically determine the sex of an athlete irrespective of her gender or self-identification. This practice was established after men supposedly competed in female sport; however, this story is so coloured that it is no longer valid. This is because certain omissions and accusations were made to cover certain athletes from certain countries and expose others (see chapter three for details). According to the WA/IOC, gender testing is established to create fairness and a level playing ground in female sport, however, their style and approach is questionable in practice.

Annet's blood was collected for routine doping test, a requirement for all athletes but hers was diverted for gender testing. It is unclear what prompted this, but it coincided with Semenya's gender test brouhaha. However, World Athletics stated in their policy that they reserve the right to initiate gender testing (WA 2019). While this act is a violation of human rights and the 'right not to know genetical formation' of individual (Wiesemann 2011: 2), Annet was instructed to keep it all quiet. Instead she was asked to feign leg injury in case those in her community inquire about her sudden decision to drop out of the London Olympics track competition (The Dark Side of Sport 2019). This persuasive prodding to lie about an individual's vulnerability or situation shows the ethical negligence inherent in the World Athletics system. It also points at the oppressive nature of institutions based on power to do and undo.

This intentional silencing worsened Annet's case. She had no outside opinion or advice except those coming from the World Athletics medical team in Uganda where she lives and Nice where directives are coming from. First, she paid \$900 for a full check-up in Nice and £7000 for surgery in Uganda (Rumsby 2019). For someone who is from an underserved area of Iganga bear the cost of that magnitude to make a change she did not desire. Coupled with that, she was given limited information about the entirety of the surgery and later discovered her internal testes were removed. Even worse, a proper postoperative care and medication was not provided, which had negative effects on her body resulting to poor performance on track and consequent loss of her school scholarship (Abraham 2019).

Clearly the idea of fairness is muffled in Annet's story since she is not regarded as female and WA/IOC's fairness commitment is to female athletes. Annet who identifies and is recognized by people in her community as a young budding female athlete was derecognized as same by sport governing bodies. She was prodded and declared 'not-woman enough or man-enough' and consequently subjected to a surgical operation which has a lasting effect on her body. This situation clearly reflects Butler's idea of precarity when it meets gender performativity. Gender performativity is the ways in which an individual expresses her gender while precarity comes in when such expression does not match the gender as recognized in the society. This means such individual faces discrimination, violence or even in extreme cases death because they do not exude the norm. In this case, the medicalization of healthy bodies to fit ideal femininity is questionable and grossly unfair. Annet was not ill or complained about any bodily discomfort before she was subjected to a medical procedure that did nothing but ruin her career.

Annet's story remained untold until she summoned courage to tell it seven years later after her surgery, relating her battle with knee pain, headaches, and depression particularly because she could no longer compete at elite level. She revealed that Dr. Stephen Bermon, a physician at the World Athletics at the time and the current head of health and science department recommended gonadectomy as the first option in getting back on track. Bermon however made no comment but the WA released a statement claiming the doctor had never met Annet before even though she presented evidence of their correspondences (Abdul 2019). This claim is tantamount to denial, an emotional streak that institutions resort to when they understand the implication of acknowledging wrongdoing caused either directly or indirectly by them (Cohen 2001, cited in Delmestri & Goodrick 2016: 240). For instance, Annet's medical record issued by the Women's Hospital International & Fertility Centre in Kampala showed that the World Athletics noted her high testosterone level and gave directives for a thorough examination. It showed Annet underwent gonadectomy and her surgeon Dr Tamale Sali did not provide hormonal therapy (a lifetime post-surgery treatment) because he was awaiting further directives from Dr Bermon (Abdul 2019).

Image 6: Dr. Stephane Bermon



Source: Mulot (2019) Sciences et Avenir

Despite WA's denial, a report published in 2013 by Bermon along with other authors detailed the physical and biological condition of four young elite athletes. They were described as tall, slim, muscular with complete absence of breast, having almost closed labia with excessive pubic hair and never menstruated even at age 18, 20, 21, 20 respectively (Fénichel et. al. 2013: 1056). Having observed this characteristics:

'We thus proposed a partial clitoridectomy with a bilateral gonadectomy, followed by a deferred *feminizing* vaginoplasty and estrogen replacement therapy, to which the 4 athletes agreed after informed consent on surgical and medical procedures. Sports authorities then *allowed* them to continue competing in the female category 1 year after gonadectomy' (Fénichel et. al. 2013: 1057) – emphasis added

So the medical team claimed they informed these athletes that gonadectomy will very likely cause a reduction in their performance but it is the only way to continue participating in female sport. In the above quote the athletes allegedly agreed to the procedure by giving consent – the way this consent was derived is not discussed in the report, however if athletes' job is threatened it is almost normal for them to concede. Annet confirmed she is one of the women in the study (Abdul 2019). If this is true, then the procedure was clearly unfair to Annet and she was not supported afterwards either, These information was not revealed in study which raises the question of ethics in research and how participants are forgotten after conclusion of research. The study also referred to the women as patients even though they walked into that laboratory as healthy women but came out as patients.

During an interview Bermon emphatically justified the reason for gender testing and the procedures recommended stating:

‘you want to compete in the PROTECTED feminine category, then you must not oppose a treatment that affirms your feminine gender (and lowers your T level to female norms) and all the more if you shout from the rooftops that you are a woman!’ (cited in Mulot 2019).

In this statement, Bermon suggests it is unimportant if you are female, once we recommend treatment, it is your responsibility to submit to it to be female-enough. This justifies the medicalization of intersex bodies thereby reaffirming biological representation in sport and the commitment to fixing bodies to suit social spaces.

Annet is currently a fugitive because of the dangers LGBTIQ+ faces in Uganda and sought asylum in Germany which was granted in 2019. She is doing manual jobs to make ends meet while running daily with the hope of competing someday. Some protagonists for the exclusion of intersex persons from sport claimed Annet’s case is a confirmation that intersex women benefit from biological advantage and any alteration will strip them of it.

Varying Outcomes between Semenya and Negesa Explained

Sport as an institution affects athletes in different ways due to different reasons. Semenya and Negesa share some similarities – race, gender, and age yet their encounter with the IOC and WA generated varying outcomes. One factor that may have had an effect on their outcome is education – Caster studied sport science at the University of North West, Potchefstroom on scholarship (Ginane 2011) while Annet was attending King of Kings Boarding School in Iganga showing the differences in educational levels (Trans World Sport 2020). In an interview in 2011, Annet discussed the difficulty in training alone without supervision and studying simultaneously however, Caster had a lifelong coach who trained and monitor her progress. Another factor is that South Africa recognizes gay rights and same-sex marriage as early as 2003 while Uganda in 2020 still derecognizes it which is why Annet was afraid of letting her gender test become public at the time.

5.3 Conclusion

Annet case remains a sore to the eyes and a pain in the ears. She intends starting a litigation against World Athletics until then she is no longer keeping quiet about intersex ill-treatment in sport. This chapter has provided the adverse effect of following through with the World Athletics advice to lower testosterone level by whatever means. It shows that any intersex athlete that follows WA ruling may end up exactly where Annet is.

Chapter 6 Jillian Bearden Journey to Woman-hood

6.1 Introducing Jillian Bearden

Jillian Bearden is an elite cyclist from Colorado who had been competing in the male category. She had lived 34 years of her life as a man before getting the courage to transition to her preferred self in 2015. Jillian was thrilled to finally make the women's team after undergoing several hormonal analyses. She became the first transwoman to win the Arizona El Tour de Tucson in 2016 and consequently faced a lot of backlash including death threats from people physically and on social media (BBC 2019). She feared for her life and almost slipped into depression due to the hurtful words hurled at her on social media. The social abusers accused Jillian of having an advantage competing in women's cycling and therefore winning gold medals easily.

Image 7: Jillian speaking at an interview after winning a medal



Source: Photo by Hyoung Chang / The Denver Post

6.2 Jillian's Experience in Sport as a Woman

Gender dysphoria is classified as a disorder in the American Psychiatric Association (APA) diagnostic and statistical manual (APA 2013: 451). It is described as a consistent sense of belonging for the opposite sex, a feeling of inappropriateness with one's sex or gender role, or a distressing sense of social incompatibility with one's gender (APA 2013: 451). This observation indicates an individual may feel uncomfortable with their sex or gender identity and push for ways of changing it to their preference. And that is exactly Jillian's case. During an interview with BBC sport, she explained her near suicide experience in 2014 due to an unending feeling that she is not living her life to the fullest as a man, she bravely opened up to her mom and her wife (BBC 2019). This bold step made her feel free and ready to take on a new journey as a woman publicly even though she has been living that way in her heart.

A 40-year-old Jillian expressed delight at the IOC's transgender regulations confirming the institution did its due diligence and made an informed decision allowing transwomen compete without undergoing sex reassignment (BBC 2019). The day the decision went public

was the happiest day of her life because she could now compete as a woman without bearing the cost of doing a surgical sex reassignment (BBC 2019). Jillian is in complete support of the IOC regulation for transwomen to reduce their testosterone level to 5nanomoles in accordance with ciswomen's range. She confirmed that the medication indeed works, and her performance level has dropped significantly. In fact, Jillian volunteered herself as a test subject for IOC to measure Hormonal Replacement Therapy (HRT) – a medication package use in increasing the production of oestrogen and progesterone hormones in transwomen (Gleeson & Brady 2018). The outcome informed current transgender policy made by the IOC.

Jillian's 2016 win in Arizona resulted to series of verbal attack from people who disregarded her hormonal treatment, focusing on her years of experience cycling as a man and oozing testosterone obtained from puberty as an advantage (BBC 2019). This once again reveals the tension between biological sex and gender identity and how society perceives these phenomena. Even where biological sex is disregarded or relegated to the periphery, the cultural and social discourses of what sex represents and how it should be expressed by gender seems to always prevail (Butler 1999:11). Possessing certain sex markers always seems to mean having ability that others do not regardless of the gender they identify with. Jillian is regarded as a man with a penis (since she did not undergo a sex reassignment), married to a woman, fathered two kids, and therefore willed by the society to stay that way. Whereas going by Jillian's account, she could only save her own life by choosing exactly how she prefers to live it. Furthermore, cycling and competing is a space where she feels truly free and getting a licence to compete as a woman makes it even more exhilarating for her (BBC Sport 2019). Even though Jillian lost the 2017 Colorado Classic bike race reaching the finish line 11 minutes behind the winner, she is still regarded by many as having advantage, although some others interpreted the outcome of the competition as having no advantage (Zeigler 2017).

Joanna Harper a transwoman and scientist however declared that transwomen have no real advantage over ciswomen. To prove this, she conducted a seven years observatory research of 8 transgender women monitoring their race times and the effect of the testosterone reducing medication on their performance (2015: 3). Her study showed that seven of the eight participant experienced performance dwindling effects from the medication (Harper 2015: 3) which implies if transwomen follow the rules and reduce their testosterone level, then they lose their hormonal advantage. Although Harper pointed out that despite this result, transwomen mostly possess larger body mass and weight than ciswomen and may have an advantage in certain sport and disadvantages in others (Harper 2015: 8). This last observation is almost similar to the findings of a study conducted in 2019 which claimed that transwomen after 12months of hormonal therapy still maintain their body mass and muscular strength (Wiik et. al. 2020: 812). However, the authors acknowledged that the transgender participants were not athletes but untrained individuals and this may affect weaken or strengthen their findings – but it does not change the likelihood that transwomen have advantage over ciswomen in sport (Wiik et. el. 2020: 812).

While Jillian is supportive of the IOC/WA's rules, her antagonist Rachel McKinnon also known as Ivy Veronica disagrees (Gleeson & Brady 2018). Rachel was formerly part of a team Jillian co-created, U.S. Trans National Women's Cycling Team – but Jillian asked her to leave due to personal disagreement. Rachel who is a transwoman cyclist, an assistant professor of philosophy and an activist for transgender rights blatantly declared the rules as discriminatory and inconsiderate of transgender athletes' rights. She argued that if an individual is allowed by law to identify as a woman then they should compete as such in sport without restrictions (Gleeson, & Brady 2018). Rachel won two consecutive medals in the same year breaking female records and reported she was forced to reduce her testosterone

levels. She tweeted that real champions desire stronger opponents but sore losers cry at such – a reaction to those rattling her with complaints of her advantage and dominance of female’s cycling in Canada. Jillian however insisted that to pave way for other transwomen into the sport arena, they as trailblazers must adhere to IOC/WA rules and regulations to prove to the public that transwomen can compete with ciswomen without having any real advantage over them.

Conclusion

For Jillian, her major win remains taking her place in the world as a woman and having her family in the picture loving and supportive through her journey despite her father’s dissociation from her. She is currently working towards qualifying for the Olympics in 2021 and may be the first trans woman athlete because no transgender person has competed in the Olympics before. This chapter briefly discusses Jillian’s decision to transition and how she has adjusted to her new life in and outside sport.

Chapter 7 Laurel Hubbard Competing as a Woman

7.1 Introducing Laurel Hubbard

Laurel Hubbard is a 42-year-old weightlifter from New Zealand. She started transitioning in 2014 and became eligible to compete in 2017. She became the first transwoman to win New Zealand's first ever weightlifting world championship medal in 2017 (CNN 2018). She has competed in nine tournaments so far and won six golds, one silver and did not complete the other two games due to arm ligament injury. After recovering from the injury, she struggled to compete in other games to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Her consecutive wins have raised a lot of controversies in and outside her country. People insisted she has not only a testosterone advantage over other competitors but was visibly bigger and heavier than them. Laurel confided that she has learned to ignore criticism because her number one goal is to win medals.

Image 8: Laurel Hubbard



Source: M. Brownstone (2019)

Laurel was born as Gavin Hubbard to a former mayor of Auckland City and the popular owner of Hubbard Foods in New Zealand. She changed name officially in 2014 to Laurel after undergoing 24 months of hormonal therapy (Young 2018). Before now, she had set records in the junior New Zealand weightlifting as a man in 1998. In 2012, she was appointed as Executive Officer for the Olympic weightlifting in New Zealand and was still in that position when she started her transitioning journey (Young 2018). During the 2018 Gold Coast weightlifting competition, she attempted lifting 120kg which was higher than 100kg which other women are attempting, she also tried 132kg and got injured in the process, so Feagaiga Stowers claimed the gold (Young 2018). Despite this turn of event, some people still expressed the unfairness in allowing transwomen into female sport particularly weightlifting which is a gendered sport due to the physical exertion required to succeed in it (Young 2018).

Defending herself, Laurel confided during an interview that people are not aware she is competing under the IOC 2003 Stockholm rules when they agreed to allow people like herself to compete in sport not the recent rules (Campbell 2017). This is an interesting confession because prior to 2015, the IOC mandates transgender athletes to undergo a sex change to be eligible to compete, however, this rule was changed in 2015, so transgender athletes can compete without undergoing anatomical surgery. This implies Laurel had undergone sex reassignment surgery to fulfil the initial rules by the IOC. Laurel also explained that contrary to what people think, she stopped lifting since 2001 when she was 23 because it became too much to keep up the archetypical male idea – ‘I thought if I perhaps tried something so masculine, that is what I will become’ (Campbell 2017). This comment echoes Beauvoir’s assertion that femaleness does not automatically translate into becoming a woman (1949: 14) – therefore Laurel’s efforts in translating his maleness into becoming a man put avoidable pressure on her, today she is living her best life as woman.

Although this changes nothing about how the society feels about her presence in sport. Some people believe that a man will always be a man able to dominate women physically and in other ways (Lewis 2018) and the presence of transwomen in sport, equates that. This debate is not only occurring in elite sport but even in high school. Trans girls who desire to participate in female sport are strongly opposed by parents and others in the community (Emmons 2020). Andraya Yearwood, Ceci Telfer and Terry who won multiple gold medals in their schools were publicly antagonized and some parents went as far as initiating a lawsuit against the school, the sport institution in charge and the state government asking that they exclude trans girls from sport (Emmons 2020). Therefore, it is obvious this debate will stay awhile.

7.2 Exclude Women to Protect Females – An Irreconcilable Contradiction

Exclusion leads to inclusion as inclusion leads to exclusion thereby maintaining a divide in a world that craves oneness – Taiwo Adetunji 2020

There are those who disagree that transwomen are women and therefore not allowed to compete in female sport. Those with this perspective were particularly displeased by the WA and IOC’s regulation de-necessitating transgender individuals from undergoing sex change. For instance Martina Navratilova, a former gold medallist athlete declared publicly that the updated regulation allows for a man to declare himself female, participate and win gold medals, then go back to being a man and making babies (Humphrys 2019). Martina asserts that allowing transwomen in female sport category is another form of cheating, although she later apologized for mentioning cheating but insisted that women and girls’ future in sport must be protected (Humphrys 2019). She was however removed from the advisory board and derecognized as an ambassador of Athlete Ally, an organization promoting equal opportunity in sport for transwomen (BBC 2019)c. Sharron Davies a former British swimmer and gold medallist expressed concerns in allowing ‘men’ in female sport because they have physical advantage that developed from puberty and cannot be reversed (BBC 2019b). She was consequently called transphobic for expressing these views (Petter 2019). Paula Radcliffe explained that trans women and girls could be allowed in sport but not elite sport because female sport has to be protected for women to genuinely win medals at a higher level (BBC Radio 5 live 2019). She was accused of spreading false information and causing people unnecessary fear. J.K Rowling the popular producer of Harry Potter reiterated that sex is real and cannot be ignored and allowing transwomen into bathrooms and other safe spaces may put women and girls in danger (Brooks 2020). Even she was accused of making transphobic

comments – she later released a statement explaining the abuses she faced as a woman and believes allowing men into women’s spaces may trivialize the experiences suffered by women from men.

Those expressing these views were classified as Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist (TERF) a term used for the first time around late 2000s to differentiate ciswomen who are radical feminist and advocates for the exclusion of transwomen from female spaces and those who are not (Smythe, 2018). Many of those called by this acronym expressed displeasure in being labelled as such while insisting they are neither transphobic or harbour ill-feelings towards transwomen but standing in solidarity with women and girls. This sort of name calling is why some people insisted that ciswomen are forced into silence and not allowed to voice their opinions (Ingle 2019). Coleman opined that people who speak against the inclusion of transwomen are often seen as bad people which shows the tension between political correctness and individual’s inclination to express themselves freely (cited in Megan 2019). All of these tensions remain a huge debate in female sport.

7.2 Conclusion

This chapter discussed Laurel’s wins and reactions from the public regarding her physical and hormonal advantage. It also highlighted some ciswomen’s advocacy for the exclusion of transwomen from female’s sport and how their voices were challenged and interpreted as being transphobic.

Chapter 8 Finding Intersections

The differences we see in individuals is not devoid of familiarity, comparison and the desire for replication – Taiwo Adetunji 2020

8.1. Introduction

Intersectionality is a tool of analysis used in identifying dimensions in situations affecting individuals. It describes the relationship between and amongst multiple social relations of power at play in aggravating or de-aggravating certain incidences crucial to a person's existence (Winker & Degele 2011: 51). There are different ways in which race, gender, class, age, identity, and social institutions shape human experiences thereby uncovering privileges and non-privileges located in bodies bearing these categories (Winker & Degele 2011: 53).

Following Winker and Degele's proposition of a multi-level approach to intersectionality, I will use gender, body, and race as an analytical lens to reveal the ways in which these concepts influence Annet and Caster's experiences in sport. Bermon's interview with *Science et Avenir* will be used expansively here since his comments revealed the ideas guiding the decision to subject intersex women to medical treatment. This chapter will also explore the subject of choice and how intersex and trans women respond to it.

8.2 Unintelligible Gender, Noticeable Bodies

I start this narrative with gender since it is the most visible way in which individuals and groups express themselves. This expression may be physical, or through form filling or joining certain activities reserved for a gender they affiliate with. Caster and Annet identify as a woman and express it based on their own understanding which emanates from their cultural environment. Within their social space, they never felt the need to defend their identity, they simply operate within the threshold that those who know them know who they are.

Despite observations that gender expression is specific to certain culture, it does not change the fact that it is expected to play out publicly in intelligible ways thereby maintaining the status quo (Butler 1999: 23). This means women can immediately be spotted with long flowing hair, cinched waist, cosmetic makeup and men with short hair, baggy trousers, and muscled figure. However, where a woman then carries a muscled body, dresses in baggy trousers and wear no makeup, she is displaying an unintelligible gender but even this comes with its own assumption. Such assumptions include speculations about her sex, sexual preference and maybe even her mental state.

Caster's outlook does not fit the typical physical expression of the gender she identifies with. She had always dressed in 'men's attire' which causes others to misconstrue her gender even in her community (Ginane 2011). Annet however, made efforts to wear skirts, earrings and even head-ties (mostly recognized as women's accessory) during her interview in 2011, even this may have been a result of cultural influences. Their venture into sport relegated their knowledge of self, leading to questions about the validity of such knowledge irrespective of how long such knowledge had been in existence. Semenya and Negesa's bodies were targeted for various reasons. First their gender identity as a woman is expected to physically emulate the 'regular and normal' feminine look – this was expressly stated by Bermon in an interview with *Science et Avenir*:

'If you have a high testosterone level and you are **socially accepted** as a woman and want to "look like" a woman and compete with women, the treatments (e.g. oral contraception) that affirm your female gender are the standard of care for you' (cited in Mulot 2019)

This implies there is a standard look for all women and as an identifier of such gender category, you must be identical physically to gain social recognition and acceptance in that circle. This further affirms Beauvoir's submission that science interpretation of gender and sex is not without social influences with the goal of maintaining social order (1949: 10). Bermon in that interview stated intersex women must use contraceptives to lower their testosterone level and feminize their unusually muscled body. The body is constantly expected and used to satisfy social cravings through scientific alterations.

While Bermon was responding to Pielke one of his biggest critic who accused WA of using intersex women as guinea pigs by forcing them to take oestrogen drugs to document outcomes – Bermon referred to him as 'our science watchdog'

'He forgets one small detail: this oestrogen pill treatment is the standard of care for transgender 46XY who want to assert their feminine gender (or sex). I do not believe that these thousands of transgenders are considered guinea pigs by the scientific community' (Mulot 2019)

This statement is interesting because it deems intersex and trans women has having the same 'condition' and should use the same remedy. This line of reasoning may have influenced online materials – whenever I search google for 'transwomen athletes', Semenya's picture is always the second among the other faces that pops up. This is very strange and incorrect since those who have no knowledge of Semenya may think she is transwoman. Semenya mentioned there are speculations that she changed her gender, her response was 'how do I change gender in a rural village, we don't even have good doctors or money for such change' (Ginane 2011). This statement echoes the background of many African athletes who ventured into sport in the hope of ameliorating their financial status, but their success is then called into question. Annet also hails from the poorest part of Iganga, likewise Wambui and Francine from rural parts of Kenya and Burundi, respectively.

Furthermore, while it appears Bermon was speaking generally about intersex bodies from all nationalities in sport, then he narrowed it to a single location:

'.....Finally, gonadectomy (removal of gonads, ovaries or testicles) is a treatment that can also be considered in certain circumstances. This treatment has been demonized by bioethics brokers who cogitate in their beautiful Stanford offices (in the States), but who have never brought their US-centric vision to bear on the very real situations of these **African** DSD athletes that I have encountered over the past 12 years!' (Mulot 2019)

From this comment, it appears individuals with DSD in sport are all from Africa. Now, those identified as intersex athletes from Africa are Caster, Annet, and speculatively Wambui and Francine and Dutee Chand from India, there seems to be no report of other nationalities active in sport today. However, Bermon's outburst is false because historically, every intersex person discovered in sport before the commencement of gender testing were from Western countries. In fact, the first intersex athlete was from Britain, Mark Weston who competed and won shotput in female sport in 1925-1929 and made the news but was painted in positive light with claims that he was unaware of his unfair advantage over others (Heggie 2010: 159). This story is often not talked about except for Ratjen and others (see methodology chapter for other names). Secondly, research showed that globally, intersex births consist of 0.05 to 1.7% of the entire population excluding data from African countries (CHR website: no date). Finally, Bermon's encounter with *African DSD* is a result of undue scrutiny of their success which then necessitates testing of their blood without full consent.

Bermon's declaration raises the question of racism and how black bodies are constructed in and outside sport. Cahn noted that when women started venturing into sport, an Olympic official Norman Cox, ridiculed African American female athletes saying:

'the International Olympic Committee should create a special category of competition for them - the unfairly advantaged 'hermaphrodites' who regularly defeated 'normal women..' (cited in Vertinsky & Captain 1998: 541)

This statement shows scrutinizing and stereotyping black women's bodies is not new. Black women's bodies is also described as muscular and manly because of their closeness to apes (Vertinsky & Captain 1998: 541). These sort of stories is used to stereotype and shape black women's bodies to uphold white supremacy (Withycombe 2011: 479). Meaning black bodies is otherized to sell white bodies as the ideal femininity. Hunt observed that the ideal female athlete in international sport are 'white, thin, tall and heterosexual' (2018). This is evident in how Anna Kournikova who had never won a single medal is declared as the most photographed athlete for her looks compared to Serena Williams who is a multi-world champion but referred to repeatedly as ape-like and manly (Abraham 2019). Also, commentators tend to emphasize 'deep brown skin' whenever Serena walks into the field (Abraham 2019). This subtle references to bodily material is not only a means to place identities on athletes but to quickly otherize as 'them vs us' (Appiah 2018: 6).

Going back to Bermon's comment, if the number of intersex births truly represents considerable part of the western population, how come they are not discovered in sport and only intersex athletes from the global South are identified? Remember 'blanket testing' is now out of the picture giving room for certain bodies to be targeted. And the process of such targeting is not documented but an arbitrary endeavour that dehumanizes and oppresses intersex athletes from Africa.

8.3 Intersecting Choices

One of the most obvious difference between trans and intersex women is choice. This singular concept affects and determines the sort of support, scrutiny, and publicity that both athletes get thereby influencing their experiences in sport. For instance, WA published a press release celebrating 'experts' who supports their policy (WA 2019). These experts include Dr Angelica Lindberg, David Handelman, Johanna Harper, Dorian Coleman, and Richard Auchus, all of whom are in the medical profession dealing with endocrinology. This shows that WA rely on advice from medical scientist due to the peculiarity of intersex women's bodies since they possess a natural substance that aids physical performance in sport. Intersex women who are born with androgens without having the choice to say no or yes to its presence in their body are forced to undergo medical intervention despite no sign of illness. Even if alterations are made when they are babies, it is no guarantee that some of the eventual physical effects will not manifest. I liken the situation of intersex women to the environment and the effort we make as a people to alter it to suit our idea of what it should look like.

Transwomen however seem to be able to make a choice, although they could not make a choice in how they wish to be born or the sex markers they desire to be born with. However, due to life experiences and personal conviction, transwomen start their journey into a different space. However because they made this choice does not necessarily make their life easier or better. In fact, transwomen probably face higher risks in their community because they were known all their lives as being someone else before deciding to change it.

The major difference between both intersex and trans women is that while the former probably have no idea of their condition or have no desire to change anything, the latter often make a choice to transition to the person they want to be. Some trans women even explore choices of undergoing feminizing surgeries to avoid unnecessary scrutiny from the public. Relating this to the athletes discoursed in this paper, intersex athletes expressed no desire to undergo medical treatment to affirm their gender while transwomen athletes made the decision to undergo medical treatment to transition successfully to their new gender.

8.4. Conclusion

Both transwomen and intersex women are in the current biological and social mess because they are in the spotlight and successful in their craft. If they were losing to ciswomen, this sort of conversation may not have emerged. This chapter highlights the various intersections amongst the women and how it shapes their experiences.

Chapter 9 Concluding Remarks

9.1 Quick Recap

In this paper, I introduced the debates around including intersex and trans women into female sport and gave a brief background on gender testing and how it became institutionalized. For a clear understanding of how sport has evolved over the years, I highlighted various schools of thought and their argument on what sport should express, promote and achieve in the society and discussed biological sex differences a phenomenon held strongly by sport and gender diversity which is now paramount to human existence. I showed that biological sex even in itself is unable to maintain two neatly stratified sex – female, male especially when the peculiarity or intersex individuals occur. Under gender diversity, I showed that even within a single gender affiliation, individuals could express their gender in varying ways and even such peculiarity is not absolute but an offshoot of yet another existing gender performance – which re-echoes Butler’s submission that gender performance is not singular or nouvelle but very much reliant on expressions located in the society.

In discussing my cases, I examined the concept of testosterone advantage, fairness and inclusion in sport and highlighted the voices of current and past athletes who believe female sport should be protected. While exploring intersections amongst the women, Dr. Bermon statements implied racial stereotyping of black bodies as the only bodies that carries ‘Disorder of Sex Differences’ (DSD). Then I examined the subject of choice noting it is not strait-jacketed in any way but remains one of the most noticeable differences in the medicalization of intersex bodies and trans women’s bodies.

9.2 Further Study

When I started this research and examined the debates, my first reaction is to suggest a ‘third’ sport category. My justification at the time is in recognition of how in some cultures – such as the hijras, referring to self as the third sex is no misnomer (Appiah 2018: 16). I therefore ask the question ‘will creating a third gender sport category’ resolve this debates or at least ameliorate the consequences on women and girls access to sport?

Secondly, the WA established centres in locations across Africa training and helping young athletes to find their place in sport. While this might be a noble course, it will be interesting to conduct field research in one or more of those centres to examine the ways and manner these young athletes are engaged and eventually recruited. This might reveal something important that will help in ensuring history such as Annet case does not repeat itself or might as well be a dead end.

Lastly, from learning and studying intersex individuals and their peculiarities, I cannot help but link their medicalization in western countries to a more subtle system in parts of Nigeria – such system include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (although I do not totally agree with this term) or vagina restructuring. Is it possible that the above system is established to avoid having to deal with possible genital differences such as elongated clitoris? I think this will be an interesting inquiry to make of which I am willing to pursue.

Appendices

Picture 1



Source: Pragya Sood, also Dark side of sport has the story
Pratima Goankar – Committed suicide after gender testing confirm she is a man



Source: Pragya Sood
Pinki Pramanik – Kicked out of sport after allegedly looking like a man



Source: Pragya Sood

Santhi Soundarajan – kicked out of sport after gender testing. Now a carpenter.



Source: Daniel Gallan Dutee Chand

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