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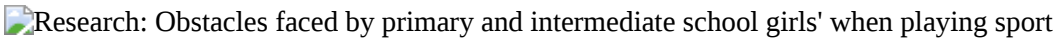
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# Research: Obstacles faced by primary and intermediate school girls' when playing sport

Theme:  
Youth



Co-authored by Holly Spargo

## Abstract:

This report examines the obstacles girls face when playing sports in school in a school environment, focusing on high school and intermediate school levels. Applying social role theory and self-determination theory, the analysis uses qualitative and quantitative data from surveys and workshops to understand how gender roles affect how people view sports. To collect useful data, the study concentrated on two West Auckland Schools. In line with Sport Waitākere's objectives, the project sought to gather data for the improvement of physical and mental health, encouragement of inclusivity, and removal of obstacles to girls’ participation. The results offer practical advice for creating initiatives that support women's empowerment and advance equality in sports.

## Recommendations

Schools could better support girls' participation by:

- Educating coaches and teachers to recognise emotional barriers and provide targeted encouragement to build girls' confidence.
- Strengthening peer support systems can foster camaraderie and reduce fear of judgment. Actively promote girls' sports through visible campaigns and ensure equal resource access.
- Introduce recreational sports options that emphasise fun and participation, reducing pressure and making sports more accessible for all girls.

## Summary of results


The results from the study show that girls face several barriers to sports participation, including fear of judgment, body image concerns, and lack of confidence. At Glenavon School, cultural pressures and limited sports facilities further reduce engagement, while at Green Bay High School, older students benefit from better resources and a more supportive environment. Both schools highlighted the importance of peer support, coach encouragement, and a positive atmosphere for increasing participation. However, disparities between boys’ and girls' sports opportunities and encouragement remain a significant issue across both schools.


## Conclusions


By creating inclusive environments and addressing these barriers, schools can help increase girls' confidence and physical activity engagement. The project shows that lack of resources, cultural attitudes, and societal pressures significantly hinder girls' participation in sports. The findings offer important insights for developing policies and programs that promote equal opportunities for all girls, empowering them to succeed in sports and beyond.

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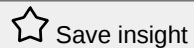
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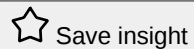
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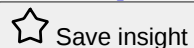
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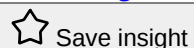
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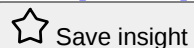
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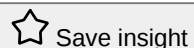
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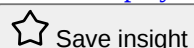
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