

THE MOST GENDER-EQUAL OLYMPICS? A CORPUS-ASSISTED KEYWORDS ANALYSIS OF ITALIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES IN PARIS 2024

Simona Frabotta

Javier Fernández-Cruz

Universidad de Málaga, Spain

Abstract:

The Paris 2024 Olympic Games were the most gender-equal in athlete participation. This article analyzes Italian media coverage to assess the representation of male and female athletes, focusing on narrative equality and gender biases. Using a corpus of Italian daily journal articles, we conducted a Corpus-Assisted Discourse Analysis. Results show that women's sports received less coverage than men's, are more likely to be represented in traditionally "feminine" sports like gymnastics, while in other sports they were underrepresented. The media emphasized gender and regulatory issues, especially concerning transgender athletes. Additionally, female athletes were often depicted through emotional lenses, while male athletes were framed through competitiveness and achievement. Despite growing participation equality, media portrayals of athletes remain influenced by traditional gendered narratives, indicating a need for further examination as sports media evolves.

Key words: Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies, Olympics, Gender Studies, Italian Studies, News Analysis.

Resumen:

Los Juegos Olímpicos de París 2024 fueron los más equitativos en participación de atletas de diferentes géneros. Este artículo analiza la cobertura mediática italiana para evaluar la representación de atletas masculinos y femeninos, centrándose en la igualdad narrativa y los sesgos de género. Utilizando un corpus de artículos de diarios italianos, realizamos un Análisis de Discurso Asistido por Corpus. Los resultados muestran que los deportes femeninos recibieron menos cobertura que los masculinos, y que las mujeres eran representadas particularmente en deportes tradicionalmente "femeninos" como la gimnasia, mientras que en otros deportes estuvieron subrepresentadas. Los medios pusieron énfasis en cuestiones de género y normativas, especialmente en lo referente a los atletas transgénero. Además, las deportistas fueron a menudo representadas a través de lentes emocionales, mientras que los atletas masculinos fueron enmarcados a través de la competitividad y el logro. A pesar de la creciente igualdad en la participación, las representaciones mediáticas de los atletas siguen influenciadas por narrativas de género tradicionales, lo que indica la necesidad de un análisis más profundo a medida que los medios deportivos evolucionan.

Palabras clave: Análisis de Discurso Asistido por Corpus, Olimpiadas, estudios de género, estudios italianos, análisis de noticias.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Paris Olympics will go down in history as the first to achieve perfect gender parity in participation: the ratio of athletes was one woman for every man in competition. Achieving this balance took 130 years, as no women participated in the first modern Olympics of 1894 (Frabotta, 2021: 118). In the Paris Games, female athletes had the opportunity to compete in more events than ever before and received the same visibility and recognition as their male counterparts, yet media coverage still reflected persistent gender disparities. Furthermore, the Italian women's team set an important record by winning more gold medals than the men's team. "Le donne hanno stravinto la loro personale competizione con i maschietti" ("Women have decisively won their personal competition with the boys"), acknowledged Giovanni Malagò, president of the Italian National Olympic Committee, returning from Paris (Bellinazzo, 2024), although the diminutive "little boys" seems to soften the dominance of the Italian female champions.

To cite this article: Frabotta, S., Fernández-Cruz, J. (2025). "The most gender-equal Olympics? A corpus-assisted keywords analysis of Italian press coverage of male and female athletes in Paris 2024". *Revista de Lingüística y Lenguas Aplicadas*, 20, 17-31. <https://doi.org/10.4995/ryla.2025.22927>

Correspondence author: fernandezcruz@uma.es



From a Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) approach, this paper aims to examine how keywords from the major Italian newspapers reflected the historical presence and participation of women during the Games. To this end, we quantified the visibility of female athletes in terms of news coverage. In addition, we analyzed the recurring aspects in the narratives related to each gender, in order to observe any gender imbalances and the dissemination of stereotypes.

The observation of these aspects is particularly important, since the Olympic committee itself has denounced the general absence and marginalization of women's sports and female athletes in the media, attributing this to multiple interacting factors (IOC, 2024: 8). First and foremost, the world of sports has historically been associated with male identity. Sports practice has a profound effect on men, their sense of "masculinity", and their relationships with other men (and women), whether they are players or simply spectators (Arapi, 2021: 41). Additionally, there exists the false belief that the female body is unsuitable for sports practice (Arapi, 2021; Harrison et al., 2023). Women are seen as lacking the necessary qualities such as "la forza fisica e la resistenza, la velocità e uno spirito molto combattivo, se non addirittura aggressivo" ("physical strength and endurance, speed, and a very combative, if not aggressive, spirit") (EIGE, 2015: 2). Moreover, the notion that women have biologically inferior bodies has been widely used to justify their exclusion from certain sports and to influence the idea that women who choose male-dominated sports, defying traditional gender roles, promote lesbianism and other non-feminine traits (Trolan, 2013: 218-219).

Historically, the feats of female athletes have been largely ignored and have not passed into posterity, due to the little value attributed to them. The lack of role models, which can be seen, for example, in textbook pages (Frabotta, 2021: 120), has meant that each generation of girls and women has had to start from scratch and fight twice as hard to make it into history (Kian & Clavio, 2011; Arapi, 2021). The limited media presence of female athletes is not a thing of the past but remains one of the most reported issues concerning the recognition of women in sports (Shifflett et al., 2016; Arapi, 2021; Smith & McCarthy, 2022). According to UNESCO data (2018), women's sports account for only 4% of all global sports media coverage. Furthermore, the little attention it does receive usually revolves around major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games and World Championships (Arapi, 2021: 13). In the study by Shifflett et al. (2016: 120) on in-depth sports videos on a specialized web page, out of 99 videos considered, only 11 featured a female athlete. Similarly, in a study comparing online media and traditional press coverage of the U.S. Open men's and women's tennis tournaments, Kian & Clavio (2011: 66) found that only 20.4% of articles focused entirely on the women's tournament.

The limited dissemination of women's sports stories does not appear to be caused by a lack of attention from fans, 84% of whom claim to be interested in women's sports, increasingly perceived as competitive and qualified, as well as more stimulating, progressive, and less money-oriented than men's sports (Arapi, 2021: 14). Several studies have recognized an increase in the visibility of sporting events featuring female athletes, although traditionally, sports considered "appropriate" for women, which tend to attract a general audience, and perhaps also a female audience (such as gymnastics, synchronized swimming or softball), continue to be favored (Higgs et al., 2003; Pappous et al., 2011; Shifflett et al., 2016; IOC, 2024).

Barriers multiply if women are subjected to multiple types of oppression. Black women receive less attention in the press, mostly because sport media is entrusted to White men in positions of power, leaving the Black female athlete image and narrative vulnerable (Carter-Francique & Richardson, 2016: 25). It also appears that, although transgender people have been allowed to compete in the Olympic Games since 2004 (IOC, 2004), their presence within teams and competitions, and consequently in the related communication, has not yet been fully naturalized. According to Jones et al. (2017: 714), the lack of inclusive and comfortable environments is the main barrier to the participation of transgender individuals, who also tend to have a negative experience in competitive sports due to restrictions imposed by sports policies.

Ultimately, the lack of media visibility leads spectators to believe that women's sports and female athletes are unimportant and unworthy of coverage, thus losing the opportunity to build an audience and create a fan base (Arapi, 2021; Trolan, 2013). At the same time, there is a missed opportunity to compile an archive of the athletes' stories and successes, from which future generations can learn and find role models for girls and women (Arapi, 2021: 13).

Furthermore, although women's and girls' participation in sports has steadily increased since the 1960s, alongside other social advancements, women have rarely held leadership or technical roles, such as that of coach or manager, even within female teams, and remain underrepresented in decision-making bodies of sports institutions (EIGE, 2015; Harrison et al., 2023). In the case of Black athletes, the reality is even more paradoxical, as they are integral to the success of many nations and icons of the sport, yet remain invisible in terms of power and institutional influence and voiceless in decision-making processes regarding policies that directly impact the sporting experiences of Black athletes (Edwards, 1999: 280).

2. LANGUAGE AND NARRATIVE

Research on how the media portray female athletes has highlighted a series of practices often aimed at downplaying their achievements and focusing attention on aspects unrelated to their sporting activity, such as family roles or personal relationships (Shifflett et al., 2016: 115). Women are often sexualized, described as attractive, and evaluated based on their femininity rather than their performance or skills (Pappous et al., 2011; EIGE, 2015; Arapi, 2021; Smith & McCarthy, 2022). Previous studies show that female athletes are more likely to appear in non-sporting contexts, in overly sexualized poses, in stories about their personal lives, or are judged on their clothing, for example for women wearing the hijab are often thought to be nonathletic in the west (Pappous et al., 2011: 1183), or subject to sexist comments (EIGE 2015; Argenziano 2018; Arapi 2021). Even during the recent Paris Olympics, on Italian newspapers “ha prevalso la spettacolarizzazione della sua vita” (“was focused more on the spectacularization of their lives”) (Chiavacci, 2024), often referring to female athletes not by their names but as “La fidanzata di Gregorio Paltrinieri” o “L’amica di Diletta Leotta” (“Gregorio Paltrinieri’s fiancée” or “Diletta Leotta’s friend”).

Objectification becomes even more evident in the case of Black athletes, subjected to both gendered and racialized scrutiny. Arapi (2021: 39) reports the example of Serena Williams, winner of 23 Grand Slam titles and four Olympic gold medals. Her skills and success as a world-class tennis player continue to be undervalued in favor of her physical appearance. She has been compared to a “man”, and her playing style was described as “animalistic” or “wild”, rather than strong and strategic, reinforcing deeply rooted racial stereotypes. A narrative like this has a clear consequence: “When the media emphasizes women as attractive and feminine, this shifts attention from their skills to their looks and minimizes the threat these women pose to the male dominance of sport” (Trolan, 2013: 219). Conversely, female Paralympic athletes seem not to receive sexist comments, “probably due to the fact that people with disabilities are often perceived as ‘aesthetically unpleasant’ and ‘asexual’” (Pappous et al., 2011: 1186).

Androcentrism in the world of sport is also reflected through certain linguistic phenomena, suggesting that “Men represent the norm and women represent ‘the other’” (Wenner, 1998, cited in Trolan, 2013: 217). Sports practiced by women are often accompanied by a qualifying adjective, such as “women’s football”, while men’s sports are simply referred to as “football”, not “men’s football”. This gender distinction implies that male sports are considered the standard (IOC, 2024, 8). The use of unmarked masculine terms to identify female athletes (Sabatini, 1986; Argenziano, 2018) or adjectives that emphasize certain characteristics over others (Shifflett et al., 2016: 120) are clear indicators of sexist discrimination. Moreover, female athletes, and women who stand out for their success, are often identified only by their first names or terms like *ragazza* “girl” or *signorina* “miss”, which infantilizes them and reduces the symbolic distance, creating a hierarchy in names where men are given a dominant role while women are treated as beginners (Pappous et al., 2011; Trolan, 2013; Murgia, 2021).

The language used by sports media frequently reinforces traditional gender stereotypes, undermining the achievements of women athletes and keeping them in a secondary position (EIGE, 2015: 3). Hearing that someone runs “like a man” or throws “like a girl”, or that a certain sport is inappropriate for a specific gender, ends up spreading harmful ideas that influence the decisions of those approaching sports (IOC, 2024, 9). The reinforcement of dominant models of masculinity and femininity is also evident in the fact that articles about female athletes often focus more on expressing their emotions to show that, despite being athletes, women cannot always control their feelings (Knyazyan & Haytayan, 2024: 46). Another clear example is the metaphors used to describe some of Italy’s most successful teams (Il Post, 2024): *le fate* “the fairies” refer to the female artistic gymnastics team, while *le farfalle* “the butterflies” describe the rhythmic gymnastics team. The references to lightness, harmony, and magic are unavoidable. The male artistic gymnastics team, on the other hand, is identified as “the musketeers” a term that evokes qualities such as courage and cunning. Even water polo teams are not exempt from gendered epithets: the male team is referred to as *Il Settebello* “The Great Seven” or “Seven of Coins”, referring the most valuable playing card in the pack, implying value and prestige, while the female team is called *Il Setterosa* “The Pink Seven”, again alluding to femininity.

Media scholars have documented that although, as seen, traditional media continue to be dominated by cisgender white men, and to a lesser extent by women, there has been an increase in media coverage of transgender athletes (Thorpe et al., 2023: 1240). However, this growing attention often focuses not on celebrating the athletes’ successes and performances, but on the polarizing debate of “inclusion versus fairness” (Thorpe et al., 2023: 1238). In particular, the controversy over the alleged advantage transgender athletes might have due to hormone levels seems to capture journalists’ attention, contributing to the spread of stereotypes and creating a hostile environment for transgender athletes (Jones et al., 2017: 712).

This historical neglect of female athletes underscores the necessity of examining current media narratives for traces of these enduring stereotypes. To achieve this, our study employs corpus-assisted discourse analysis to systematically investigate media representation.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Keyword Analysis

Half a century ago, Foucault (1969) defined discourse as a set of practices that systematically construct the objects being discussed. Corpus-based techniques enable the identification of key themes and linguistic patterns in discourse. In our case, it helps to shed light on the gendered narratives within media coverage, as discussed in the following section. One of the most influential approaches in this field, CADS (Partington, 2004; 2006), integrates computational techniques from corpus linguistics with interpretive methods from discourse analysis. This methodology allows researchers to examine large collections of text (corpora) to uncover recurring patterns, themes, and underlying ideologies that might not be immediately apparent through manual analysis. By analyzing these patterns, CADS helps to reveal the discourse structures and ideological or thematic elements embedded within the text.

A prominent technique within CADS is Keyword Analysis (Baker, 2018; Partington et al., 2013), which identifies words or phrases that appear significantly more frequently in one text collection (the focus corpus) compared to a baseline collection (the reference corpus). While keyword analysis alone is insufficient to uncover ideological bias, the analyst’s interpretation is crucial in connecting underlying discourses and ideologies. Thus, keyword analysis serves as a framework for exploring how concepts are interrelated across the texts. This technique highlights themes or concepts that are particularly significant or distinctive in the analyzed texts (Scott, 1997). By comparing word frequencies between the Olympic news corpus and a reference corpus, such as the general Italian news corpus, the resulting “keyness” values provide insight into the central concepts, attitudes, and representations of reality within the media coverage. These values offer objective indicators that guide the analyst in identifying the discourses encapsulated within the texts.

3.2 Data sources

The *Corpus on the Olympics in the Italian Press* (COIP) is a collection of texts consisting of 496 journalistic articles about the Paris 2024 Olympics available on the internet, designed to analyze the representation of athletes based on gender in media coverage. The corpus contains 303313 tokens, 253324 words, and 11136 sentences. The articles have been classified manually according to the gender of the protagonist: 195 texts (39.3%) focus exclusively on male athletes (M), with a coverage of 99810 tokens; 145 texts (31.5%) are dedicated to female athletes (F), with 76890 tokens; and 156 texts (31.5%) address diverse or mixed genders (X), with 126,613 tokens. Gender subcorpora are smaller subsets of the main corpus, divided based on the primary subject of the text—male, female, or mixed-gender athletes. This segmentation enables targeted comparisons of linguistic patterns specific to each gender.

The corpus includes all articles related to the Olympics freely available on the web versions from the main Italian newspapers: *Il Corriere della Sera* (297 texts, 159993 tokens), *Il Messaggero* (69 texts, 67357 tokens), *La Repubblica* (65 texts, 23650 tokens), *Il Sole 24 Ore* (34 texts, 21008 tokens), and *La Stampa* (31 texts, 31305 tokens) (see Figure 1 for a summary) This variety of sources and the gender classification provide a solid foundation for linguistic and discourse analysis, allowing for an exploration of how different media represent athletes based on gender and highlighting editorial differences in sports event coverage.

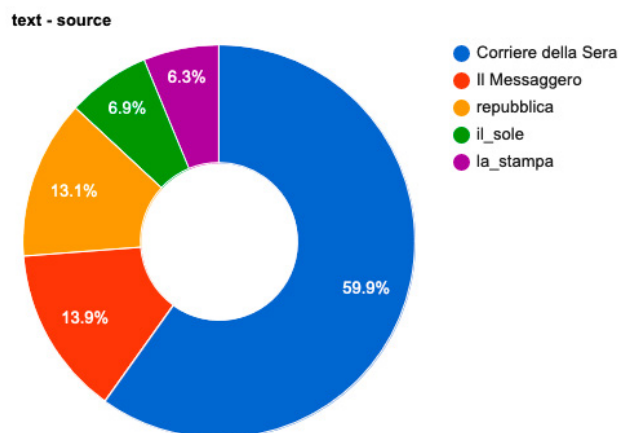


Figure 1 Corpus classification for publishers (number of texts).

The significance of the COIP lies in its capacity to provide a comprehensive and quantifiable basis for examining gender representation in sports media. By categorizing articles according to the gender of the athletes featured and analyzing the distribution of tokens, the corpus enables researchers to identify potential gender biases, patterns, or disparities in coverage. This insight is critical for understanding how media discourse contributes to shaping societal perceptions of gender in sports, highlighting areas where further progress is necessary. The large volume of tokens and diverse classification of texts further ensure robust and nuanced analyses, making it a valuable resource for further gender studies, media analysis, and sports sociology.

3.3 Instruments

We used Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014), a linguistic analysis software that processes large text collections to generate insights such as keyword frequencies, collocations (word pairings), and concordances (words in context). This enables researchers to systematically uncover patterns in language use, manage large corpora, and extract keywords, including compound terms. In its Keywords tool, we selected the gender subcorpus as the focus corpus and Sketch Engine’s Italian Web 2020 as the general reference corpus. This setup allowed us to compare texts based on the gender focus choice with the general corpus, revealing distinctive features in language usage between the two groups. The keyword settings were as follows: Words, Minimum Frequency = 3, Focus Subcorpus = men’s/women’s choice, Reference corpus = Italian Web 2020, Focus on = 10. Proper nouns, country names, and nationalities were discarded.

3.4 Method

First, we manually annotated all the news items to determine the gender of the main character in each piece (masculine, feminine, or mixed). For our analysis, we extracted the 100 most significant keywords from the Women’s and Men’s subcorpora, comparing them to reveal differences in language usage and frequency patterns. Next, we manually analyzed recurring patterns. To validate these findings, we performed contrastive frequency analysis and additional concordance searches, ensuring more robust evidence to support our interpretations. This method enabled us to identify nuanced linguistic patterns and biases in descriptions and narratives, providing illustrative examples of language in the Italian.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

In the analysis of news coverage in the Italian press (Figure 2), a notable disparity emerges between the representation of male (M, N=195, 39.3%) and female (F, N=145, 29.2%) athletes, with significantly more stories dedicated to male athletes. The 50-story difference between men and women coverage underscores a continued gender imbalance in sports journalism, in line with previous studies (Shifflett et al., 2016; Arapi, 2021; Smith & McCarthy, 2022). Additionally, the mixed category (“X”, N=156, 32.5%), which includes news stories featuring both male and female protagonists, falls short of the number of male-focused stories, highlighting the persistent dominance of male narratives in sports media. This trend suggests that, despite efforts toward gender equality, Italian media continue to prioritize male athletes, reinforcing existing biases in media representation.

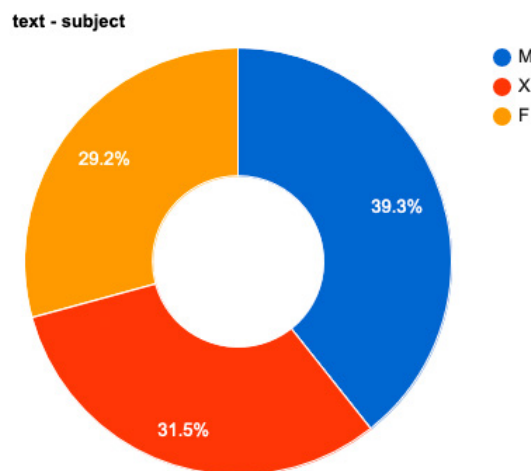


Figure 2 – Corpus classification of number of text by the manual annotation of news covering Men’s (M) / Women’s (F) sport news or news items covering both genders (X).

46 seconds. Aside from this case, gymnastics continues to attract considerable attention due to its traditional association with femininity, as noted in previous studies (Higgs et al., 2003; Shifflett et al., 2016; IOC, 2024), which is regarded as a sport more traditionally representative for women.

While media narratives are influenced by broader gender stereotypes, it is also necessary to acknowledge contingent and context-specific variables that may shape coverage. However, this conclusion holds only partially true. The higher representation of men or women in specific sports may also depend on whether there are outstanding athletes (male or female, and in this case, of Italian nationality) competing in those disciplines. It is evident, for instance, that if there is no Italian female swimmer participating, media coverage of women’s swimming will be limited or nonexistent. Conversely, the presence of a male Italian athlete in a given sport will likely result in increased coverage of the men’s competition. Media attention is also shaped by editorial choices and the perceived interests of the target audience. These contextual factors should be taken into consideration when interpreting coverage patterns.

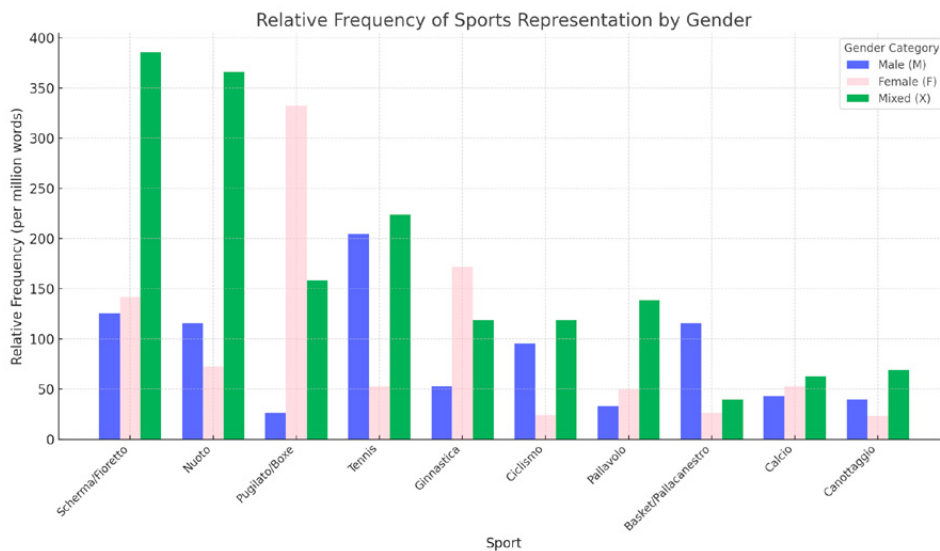


Figure 4. Sports frequency lists in the men’s (M), women’s (F) and mixed subcorpora.

It is interesting to observe that, from a sample of 20 random sentences in the women’s subcorpus, five were linked to gender stereotypicalizations associated with femininity. Examples include highlighting artistic and graceful pursuits, as seen in Ausbildung narratives linked to early engagement in sports and hobbies (1-2). Another example involves the focus on aesthetic choices, such as a gymnast’s French manicure (3), emphasizing traditional feminine qualities. Additionally, accounts of body image in gymnastics, such as balancing weight with muscular strength, reflect societal expectations of female athletes to maintain both form and function (4). In the same line of previous research (EIGE, 2015; Arapi, 2021; Smith & McCarthy, 2022), media coverage frequently aligns women in sports with culturally coded feminine traits and roles.

- (1). Marta ha iniziato con il basket a 4 anni - il padre è istruttore di minibasket -, poi s’è dedicata al minivolley e alla ginnastica artistica, aggiungendo alla sua vita, nel tempo, lo yoga, il disegno e la fotografia, “un hobby che mi rilassa molto”.
- (2). Fin da piccola sul ring. Il pugilato in famiglia Angela Carini, 25 anni, ha provato il tiro a volo prima di passare alla boxe, sport già praticato in famiglia. (dal padre e dal fratello).
- (3). Per le unghie la superstar della ginnastica ha scelto un aspetto nature come lei: la sua french manicure ha la lunetta leggermente ondulata.
- (4). E le ginnaste adesso fanno da sole: sanno benissimo che portarsi dietro troppi chili è un problema, ma anche che non si può fare ginnastica se si è troppo magre: oggi servono muscolatura, massa, accelerazione.¹

¹ (1) Marta started basketball at the age of 4—her father is a mini-basketball coach—then she moved on to mini-volleyball and artistic gymnastics, later incorporating yoga, drawing, and photography into her life, “a hobby that really relaxes me”.
 (2) In the ring since childhood, boxing in family, Angela Carini, 25, tried clay shooting before switching to boxing, a sport already practiced in her family (by her father and brother).
 (3) For her nails, the gymnastics superstar opted for a natural look: her French manicure features a slightly wavy crescent.
 (4) And now gymnasts take care of themselves: they know very well that carrying extra weight is a problem, but also that being too thin makes gymnastics impossible. Today, muscle, mass, and acceleration are essential.

We performed the same exercise, and from a sample of 20 sentences in the men's subcorpus, we unveiled that masculine traits in the media portrayal of athletes often revolve around themes of dominance, resilience, and legacy. Male athletes are more commonly described as relentless physical powerhouses, embodying strength and endurance. They are depicted as strategic leaders, particularly in team sports (5), where their roles as captains or key figures underline their ability to inspire and organize. Risk-taking and bravery are also central (6-8), with narratives highlighting their ability to face challenges or danger head-on. Legacy and historical significance play a significant role (9), as stories often emphasize breaking records or defining eras in sports. This discourse perpetuates traditional masculine ideals, focusing on power, control, and historical impact.

- (5). La 4x100 della velocità si conferma sul podio olimpico: è vero, era stata argento a Tokyo, la medaglia che fu il biglietto da visita dell'Italia del nuoto al ballo delle superpotenze, ma questo è un bronzo strappato con i denti, sono tre anni che nessuno ci butta giù dal podio e sarebbe stato un delitto se fosse successo proprio qui: i ragazzi lo sanno e la formazione inedita Miressi-Ceccon-Conte Bonin-Frigo tiene botta a una battaglia durissima, con gli Stati Uniti che confermano il loro dominio (chiusura in 3'09''28) e l'Australia che questa volta ci resta davanti per una serie di dettagli (alla fine 3'10''35 gli aussie, 3'10'')
- (6). Djokovic: "Ho dato cuore e anima per questo oro"
- (7). Dopo l'oro di Rio 2016 e il bronzo di Tokyo 2021, Elia Viviani (foto) ieri si è dovuto arrendere all'età conquistando soltanto il nono posto nella finale dell'Omnium, l'affascinante prova multipla del ciclismo su pista.
- (8). I tre grandi vecchi del basket americano sono sempre stati i più motivati della squadra assemblata intorno a loro, che metteva insieme l'élite della Nba.
- (9). Il ragazzo che gioca il tennis dei gesti bianchi degli avi, è il pioniere che riscrive una pagina di storia del tennis italiano.²

4.2 Narrative 2: (Trans)gender related issues

Coverage of female athletes emphasizes gender and regulation, with terms like *testosterone*, *intersex*, *transgender*, *sessuale* ("sexual"), and *equità* ("equity") highlighting media interest in inclusion and fairness in sports. These terms reflect broader societal and regulatory debates about biological differences and their impact on athletic competition, particularly in women's categories. The prominence of *polemiche* ("controversies") and *equità* ("equity") underscores the legal and moral scrutiny surrounding intersex and transgender athletes, contrasting with the absence of similar discussions in male sports, which frames female athletes not just as competitors but as focal points in debates over gender, biology and regulation.

Undoubtedly, one of the most remarkable controversies in the 2024 Olympics was the Khelif-Carini boxing match, which involved allegations of unfairness. Algerian Imane Khelif defeated Italy's Angela Carini. Debates about Khelif's eligibility were fueled by unfounded rumors about her being too strong to be a real woman. Public figures and media amplified the issue, making it a focal point for broader discussions on gender inclusion in sports. Despite the controversy, Khelif secured a historic gold medal, becoming the first African Olympic boxing champion and a symbol of Algerian pride.

Khelif's case highlights the tension between biological regulation and gender equity in sports (10). Khelif faced exclusion from the 2023 World Boxing Championships due to elevated testosterone levels but was allowed to compete in the 2024 Olympics under its guidelines. This contrast exposes the regulatory discrepancies between organizations like the IBA (International Boxing Association) and the IOC (International Olympic Committee) (10-13), which, while aiming to ensure fairness, apply inconsistent rules when dealing with atypical biological conditions. The heated discussion about testosterone and competitive advantage reflects a broader issue of providing clarity and consistency in policies governing the participation of athletes with biological advantages in female categories. The controversy underscores the complex relationship between sports and gender, as regulations continue to evolve in an attempt to balance competitive fairness with inclusivity. Thorpe et al. (2023) note that this tendency is common in media coverage of trans athletes, where attention shifts to issues of inclusion and equity rather than competitive results (14). Similarly, Jones et al. (2017) argue that such discussions frequently center on hormonal levels, placing them at the forefront of these debates.

² (5) The 4x100 meters in speed confirms its place on the Olympic podium: it's true, it had won silver in Tokyo, the medal that was Italy's calling card in the swimming competition against the superpowers, but this is a bronze earned with grit. It's been three years since anyone has knocked us off the podium, and it would have been a crime if it had happened here: the athletes know this, and the new formation of Miressi-Ceccon-Conte Bonin-Frigo holds its ground in a tough battle, with the United States reaffirming its dominance (finishing in 3'09''28) and Australia staying ahead of us this time by a few details (final time 3'10''35 for the Aussies, 3'10'').

(6) Djokovic: "I gave my heart and soul for this gold."

(7) After the gold in Rio 2016 and the bronze in Tokyo 2021, Elia Viviani (pictured) yesterday had to concede to age, finishing only in ninth place in the Omnium final, the fascinating multi-event track cycling race.

(8) The three great veterans of American basketball have always been the most motivated players on the team assembled around them, bringing together the elite of the NBA.

(9) The young man who plays tennis in the traditional style of the forefathers is the pioneer rewriting a chapter of Italian tennis history.

Consequently, the newsworthiness of this case remains negative aligning with Bednarek's (2017), observation that media attention often focuses on unusual and controversial events. If non-normative gender and sexuality issues were normalized, they would cease to be newsworthy. Media coverage is driven by the exceptional nature of the incident and the controversies it generates, rather than by an event that is seen as common or accepted within the regulatory frameworks of the sport.

- (10). La mancanza di criteri omogenei sui delicatissimi casi di atleti e atlete in transizione sessuale o con particolari situazioni biologiche a livello di regolamenti internazionali, deriva anche da questa situazione di lotta intestina.
- (11). E ha permesso appunto a due pugilesse, Khelif e la taiwinese Lin Yu-Ting di gareggiare ai Giochi laddove l'algerina era stata brutalmente esclusa nel 2023 dalla finale dei Mondiali di Nuova Delhi dall'International Boxing Association (Iba) per un tasso di testosterone troppo elevato.
- (12). E, giusto ieri, è piovuto nel dibattito un chiarimento della stessa Iba: "Sebbene l'Iba continui a impegnarsi a garantire l'equità competitiva in tutti gli eventi, esprimiamo preoccupazione per l'applicazione incoerente dei criteri di ammissibilità da parte di altre organizzazioni, comprese quelle che supervisionano i Giochi Olimpici.
- (13). Le diverse normative del CIO su queste questioni sollevano seri interrogativi sia sull'equità competitiva che sulla sicurezza degli atleti", ha scritto l'Iba alla vigilia del match.
- (14). Quello delle atlete e degli atleti transgender è un tema che va ricondotto alla categoria del rispetto in tutte le sue forme, ma dobbiamo distinguere la pratica sportiva dall'agonismo che deve poter consentire di competere ad armi pari, in piena sicurezza.³

4.3 Narrative 3: Emotions in athlete coverage

Media coverage of female athletes often emphasizes emotional and personal aspects through keywords like *lacrime* ("tears"), *felice* ("happy"), *delusione* ("disappointment"), and *emozione* ("emotion"), framing discourse around emotional responses and personal experiences. Relative figures for these terms all together are 1,092.47 hits per million for news items involving women, while it is only 571.09 hits per million for their male counterparts. This pattern reinforces stereotypes that women are inherently more emotionally expressive, overshadowing their athletic achievements.

Male athletes' keywords, on the other hand, are more frequently associated with performance-oriented terms such as *campione* ("champion"), record, and *vittoria* ("victory"). Relative figures for the search of these terms all together in the corpus are 2,093.98 per million for sportsmen news, while it is only 806.35 per million for their female counterparts. These examples construct narratives centered on success, dominance, and measurable accomplishments. Aligning with the observations of Knyazyan & Haytyan (2024), this emotion-versus-performance dichotomy underscores persistent media biases, where women's emotional trajectories are prioritized as more noteworthy, while male athletes are primarily evaluated through the lens of their competitive achievements.

Concordances consistently depict female athletes through narratives emphasizing vulnerability, personal achievement, and emotional depth. Emotional states such as joy, tears, or passion often frame their experiences, linking these expressions to personal growth (15), struggles with emotional control following defeat (16), professional accomplishments shared with male counterparts (17), and the reconciliation of motherhood, domestic responsibilities, and athletic pursuits (18).

- (15). Comunque sono molto felice e per come è stata la gara, per come mi sono comportata.
- (16). Turdibekova ha dato le spalle all'avversaria uscendo in lacrime dal ring, Yu Ting non si è minimamente preoccupata di cercarla e ha fatto passerella tra il pubblico.
- (17). Non nasconde l'emozione la caravaggina Sofia Viola, 28 anni, che ha trasformato la passione per i cavalli in un lavoro d'eccellenza: lo showgroom. "In pratica - spiega - è il preparatore atletico e tecnico dei cavalli da competizione".

³ (10) The lack of uniform criteria on the delicate cases of athletes undergoing gender transition or with particular biological situations at the international regulatory level also stems from this internal struggle.

(11) And it allowed two female boxers, Khelif and Taiwanese Lin Yu-Ting, to compete in the Games, whereas the Algerian had been brutally excluded from the 2023 World Championship final in New Delhi by the International Boxing Association (IBA) due to an excessively high testosterone level.

(12) And just yesterday, the IBA itself issued a clarification in the debate: "Although the IBA continues to work to ensure competitive fairness in all events, we express concern about the inconsistent application of eligibility criteria by other organizations, including those overseeing the Olympic Games."

(13) "The different regulations of the IOC on these issues raise serious questions regarding both competitive fairness and athlete safety," wrote the IBA on the eve of the match.

(14) The issue of transgender athletes is one that must be approached from the perspective of respect in all its forms, but we must distinguish between sports practice and competition, which must allow athletes to compete on equal terms and in full safety.

(18). Ho fatto due gemelli poco più di un anno fa; e la vita dell'atleta madre non è facile, solo qui al villaggio finalmente ho potuto dormire... Vado a casa felice.⁴

As illustrated in 19-20, the discourse highlights a distinct contrast in the portrayal of male athletes and teams, emphasizing their achievements and competitive stature. The use of terms like *campione in carica* ("reigning champion"), *numero 2 del mondo* ("number 2 in the world"), *vincitore* ("winner"), and record positions the athletes in terms of high status and success, reinforcing accounts of dominance and excellence. The focus on specific rankings, titles, and major tournament victories underscores the performance-driven nature of the coverage. This type of discourse reflects the media's tendency to prioritize male athletes' accomplishments, with little attention to personal or emotional aspects, framing their identities primarily through competitive achievements.

(19). Fortissima la squadra americana che schiera il campione in carica Xander Schauffele, Scottie Scheffler, numero 1 e vincitore quest'anno del Masters, Wyndham Clark (numero 5) e Collin Morikawa (numero 6).

(20). Ogni volta un nuovo record italiano, 9 80 è tutt'oggi sfolgorante primato europeo.⁵

Random concordance search for the same male victory keywords in the women's subcorpus (21-23) shows that the discourse in these examples frames the female athletes' experiences through a combination of physical struggle, emotional resilience, and the reinforcement of gendered values. The phrase "problemi per la nuova campionessa olimpica" ("problems for the new Olympic champion") emphasizes the challenges faced by the athlete, particularly in relation to her changing body, which humanizes her and underscores the difficulties of competing. The reference to *lacrime* ("tears") in the context of Moellhausen's journey highlights emotional vulnerability, portraying her not only as a competitor but also as someone grappling with personal sacrifices and emotional challenges. The line "una vittoria o una sconfitta non spostano il valore di una donna" ("a victory or a defeat does not change the value of a woman") shifts the discourse from achievement to a broader reflection on gender equality, suggesting that women's worth transcends their successes or failures in sports, putting their role as sportswomen in a secondary position. This discourse emphasizes both the emotional and physical challenges of female athletes while subtly addressing their societal expectations.

(21). Proprio quando iniziarono i problemi per la nuova campionessa olimpica, alle prese con un corpo che stava cambiando e l'impossibilità di rimanere imprigionata nella categoria -70 chilogrammi.

(22). La Moellhausen non ha voluto rinunciare al sogno olimpico e nonostante le lacrime si è spesa fino all'ultimo per provare a portare a casa la vittoria.

(23). Ma una vittoria o una sconfitta non spostano il valore di una donna.⁶

4.4 Narrative 4: Visibility and leadership roles in sport

Even if the Olympics news focus primarily on athletes, they also involve a significant presence of managerial figures, whose roles are essential to the dynamics of sports. The analysis of keywords for coach, such as *allenatore*_{MASC} (310.59 in the focus corpus) and *allenatrice*_{FEM} (143.06 pmw) reveals a gendered dimension in the portrayal of coaching roles. While *allenatrice* shows a higher keywordness score (14.53), this is largely due to its minimal presence in the reference generalist corpus (0.53), contrasting sharply with the masculine term *allenatore*, which appears 40 times more frequently (21.31). Despite this, the masculine form remains far more prominent in the focus corpus, reinforcing the narrative of male dominance in sports leadership. The data reflects broader patterns of underrepresentation of women in managerial roles, as documented by EIGE (2015) and Harrison et al. (2023).

The discourse analysis of random concordances for each case highlights the gendered dynamics surrounding coaching roles in sports. The masculine term *allenatore* is often tied to stories dealing with authority and achievement, such as in references to coaches like Bob Bowman "mythical figure" (24). These male coaches are portrayed as instrumental in the success and recovery of athletes, with terms like (25) "ha ridato fiducia" ("restored confidence") emphasizing their leadership and expertise. In contrast, female coaches, such as Emanuela Maccarani (26) and Claudia Mancinelli (27-29), while still pivotal, often occupy secondary roles in the discourse, with their achievements framed more in terms of maternal emotional connection and support for their athletes.

⁴ (15) Anyway, I am very happy, both for how the race went and for how I behaved.

(16) Turdibekova turned her back on her opponent, leaving the ring in tears, while Yu Ting didn't seem to care at all, instead parading through the crowd.

(17) Sofia Viola, 28, from Caravaggio, doesn't hide her emotion. She has turned her passion for horses into a job of excellence: show grooming. "Basically," she explains, "I am the athletic and technical trainer for competition horses."

(18) I had twins just over a year ago; and the life of an athlete and mother is not easy. Only here at the village could I finally get some sleep... I'm going home happy.

⁵ (19) The American team is very strong, featuring reigning champion Xander Schauffele, Scottie Scheffler, number 1 and winner of this year's Masters, Wyndham Clark (number 5), and Collin Morikawa (number 6).

(20) Every time a new Italian record is set, 9.80 is still today a dazzling European record.

⁶ (21) Just when problems began for the new Olympic champion, dealing with a body that was changing and the impossibility of staying within the -70 kilograms category.

(22) Moellhausen did not want to give up on her Olympic dream, and despite the tears, she gave everything until the very end to try to bring home the victory.

(23) But a victory or a defeat does not change the value of a woman.

For instance, in (26) like “funzionano solo così: come un tutt’uno” (“they only work as a pack”) and (28) “ha creato con lei un rapporto speciale” (“has created a special bond with her”) reflect the emphasis on relational aspects of female coaching. On the other hand, when their reactions break with the traditional idea of how a woman should act (27), they are described with adjectives like as *decisa* (“strong”).

- (24). Con una email inviata (e una risposta repentina) alla casella di posta di Bob Bowman, figura mitologica, l'ex allenatore di Michael Phelps.
- (25). Accanto a Matteo, che da domani risale al n. 40 del mondo e guarda con fiducia allo swing sul veloce americano, il coach spagnolo Roig, ex uomo di Nadal (l'inesauribile Rafa, mattatore della cerimonia d'inaugurazione di Parigi 2024, oggi dovrebbe affrontare Fucsovics: la prudenza è d'obbligo), l'allenatore che ha ridato fiducia a un tennista che rischiava di perdersi.
- (26). l'errore invisibile ai profani di un cerchio che ha toccato per terra, ma poi la squadra israeliana ha effettuato un sorpasso a sorpresa) bisogna provare a entrare in quel microcosmo che salda in una stessa unica simbiosi relazioni umane, codici di punteggi, movimenti sempre più difficili, vestiti, parole, otto ore in palestra, fidanzati e vacanze (“Ora partiremo per Kos, in Grecia tutte e sette assieme, con anche i nostri rispettivi ragazzi”), senza soluzione tra sport e privato perché le farfalle (e la loro allenatrice Emanuela Maccarani) si concepiscono e funzionano solo così: come un tutt’uno.
- (27). La nuova allenatrice è diventata virale su tutti i social per la reazione decisa avuta contro i giudici dell'all-around che avevano condizionato in negativo il punteggio di Raffaelli pregiudicandole la corsa al podio.
- (28). Salta subito agli occhi il tenero abbraccio con Mancinelli al momento dell'annuncio dell'ultimo punteggio: l'allenatrice ha creato con lei un rapporto speciale e non si è nascosta quando c'era da lottare.
- (29). Io per la verità non vedo l'ora di tornare in palestra, c'è il codice nuovo da provare”. “Dovrò legarla per farla riposare”, scherza la sua allenatrice a Fabriano, Claudia Mancinelli.⁷

5. CONCLUSION

Even though the Paris 2024 Olympic Games have been defined as the most egalitarian in terms of participation of men and women, the analysis carried out in this study on the narrative of the Italian press still presents persistent disparities in media representation.

Our data analysis reveals entrenched biases in Italian sports journalism, where female athletes are quantitatively underrepresented and qualitatively framed through stereotypical narratives emphasizing emotion, relations and femininity, in contrast to the performance-driven portrayal of male athletes. The case of Algerian boxer Imane Khelif, even if she is a cisgender person, has shifted the focus to issues of fair participation of trans and intersex women athletes. In addition, the portrayal of leadership roles in sports media reflects and reinforces systemic inequities, underscoring the need for institutional and narrative reforms.

These biases not only diminish the achievements of women in sports but also perpetuate societal stereotypes, undermining progress toward equality. These findings align with the overarching conclusion that equitable media representation is essential for advancing gender equality in sports.

Addressing these issues may benefit from a multifaceted approach involving media accountability, public education, and institutional reforms. By fostering a consistent, inclusive narrative framework, journalism has the potential to break down stereotypes, promote equitable recognition of all athletes, and inspire broader societal change. Future research could build upon this analysis to the analysis of language used in other countries and investigate how evolving media landscapes, including social media and advertising, may reshape the representation of athletes across genders.

⁷ (24) With an email sent (and a quick reply) to Bob Bowman's inbox, a legendary figure, the former coach of Michael Phelps.

(25) Next to Matteo, who from tomorrow will rise to number 40 in the world and looks with confidence at his swing on the fast American courts, is the Spanish coach Roig, former trainer of Nadal (the tireless Rafa, the star of the Paris 2024 opening ceremony, who should face Fucsovics today: caution is essential), the coach who restored confidence to a tennis player who was at risk of losing his way.

(26) The invisible mistake to the untrained eye of a circle that touched the ground, but then the Israeli team made a surprise overtaking) you need to try to enter that microcosm that combines human relationships, scoring codes, increasingly difficult movements, clothes, words, eight hours in the gym, boyfriends and vacations (“Now we're going to Kos, Greece, all seven of us together, with our respective guys as well”), with no separation between sport and private life because the gymnasts (and their coach Emanuela Maccarani) can only conceive and function this way: as one unified entity.

(27) The new coach went viral on all social media for her decisive reaction against the judges of the all-around competition who negatively influenced Raffaelli's score, ruining her chances for a podium finish.

(28) The tender embrace with Mancinelli when the final score was announced immediately catches the eye: the coach has built a special relationship with her and didn't hide when it was time to fight.

(29) “To be honest, I can't wait to get back to the gym, there's a new code to try.” “I'll have to tie her down to make her rest,” jokes her coach in Fabriano, Claudia Mancinelli.

Future developments for this research could take more account of the intersectional perspective and look, for example, at the narrative of the Paralympic Games or the discourse analysis of news perspectives on intersectional issues, such as racialized or transgender athletes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research has been funded under the Margarita Salas research program from the Spanish Ministry of Universities, supported by the European Union – Next Generation EU.

The R&D&I project Análisis de Sentimiento de base lingüística con parsing retórico-discursivo (DisParSA) (2021–2025), PID2020-115310RB-I00, is funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

The R&D&I project Alfabetización Crítica Feminista en la Formación Inicial Docente para Abordar los Discursos Multimodales de la Cultura Mediática y el Metaverso (Freedom), PID2022-141057OBI00, is funded by the Ministry of Universities, the State Research Agency, and co-funded by the European Union.

REFERENCES

- Arapí, E. (2021). *Reimagining sport pathways to gender-balanced media coverage*. European Broadcasting Union. https://www.ebu.ch/files/live/sites/ebu/files/Publications/strategic/open/Reimagining_Sport.pdf
- Argenziano, R. (2018). Note sull'uso del genere nella lingua dello sport: Il caso del calcio. *Lingue e Culture dei media*, 2(1), 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.13130/2532-1803/10427>
- Baker, P. (2018). Keywords: Signposts to objectivity? En A. Cermáková & M. Mahlberg (Eds.), *The Corpus Linguistics Discourse: In honour of Wolfgang Teubert* (pp. 77–94). John Benjamins.
- Bednarek, M., & Caple, H. (2017). *The discourse of news values: How news organizations create newsworthiness*. Oxford University Press.
- Bellinazzo, M. (2024, August 11). Per l'Italia sono i Giochi delle donne, vinte più medaglie d'oro degli uomini. *Il Sole 24 Ore*. <https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/per-l-italia-sono-giochi-donne-vinte-piu-medaglie-d-oro-uomini-AFIIloKD>
- Carter-Francique, A. R., & Richardson, F. M. (2016). Controlling media, controlling access: The role of sport media on black women's sport participation. *Race, Gender & Class*, 23(1–2), 7–33. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26529186>
- Chiavacci, I. (2024, August 1). Perché il racconto mediatico delle imprese delle sportive alle Olimpiadi è intriso di sessismo. *Lifegate.it*. <https://www.lifegate.it/olimpiadi-sessimo-media>
- Commissione Europea. (2022). *Verso una maggiore uguaglianza di genere nello sport. Raccomandazioni e piano d'azione*. <https://op.europa.eu/it/publication-detail/-/publication/684ab3af-9f57-11ec-83e1-01aa75ed71a1>
- Edwards, J. (1999). The Black female athlete and the politics of (in)visibility. *New Political Economy*, 4(2), 278–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563469908406401>
- EIGE - Istituto Europeo per l'Uguaglianza di Genere. (2015). *La parità di genere nello sport*. https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/publications/gender-equality-sport?language_content_entity=en
- Fontecha, M. (2016). *El deporte se instala en las cavernas de la igualdad*. Sevilla: Benilde Ediciones.
- Foucault, M. (1969). *L'archéologie du savoir*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Frabotta, S. (2021). La ausencia de mujeres como referentes culturales en los manuales de italiano L2/LS. *Cuestiones de género: de la igualdad y la diferencia*, 16, 668–687. <https://doi.org/10.18002/cg.v0i16.6971>
- Harrison, S., Gualdoni, E., & Boleda, G. (2023). Run like a girl! Sports-related gender bias in language and vision. *Findings of the Association for Computational Linguistics: ACL 2023*, 14093–14103. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2305.14468>
- Higgs, C. T., Weiller, K. H., & Martin, S. B. (2003). Gender bias in the 1996 Olympic Games: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 27(1), 52–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193732502239585>
- Il Post. (2024, July 31). Fate, farfalle, settebello e altre creature olimpiche. *Il Post*. <https://www.ilpost.it/2024/07/31/fate-farfalle-settebello-e-altre-creature-olimpiche/>
- IOC - International Olympic Committee. (2004). IOC approves consensus with regard to athletes who have changed sex. *Olympic.org*. <http://www.olympic.org/content/news/media-resources/manual-news/1999-2009/2004/05/17/ioc-approves-consensus-with-regard-toathletes-who-have-changed-sex/>
- IOC - International Olympic Committee. (2024). *Linee guida sulla rappresentazione nello sport, parità di genere, equità e inclusione*. <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/Beyond-the-Games/Gender-Equality-in-Sport/IOC-Gender-portrayal-guidelines-IT.pdf>

Jones, D. (2004). Half the story? Olympic women on ABC news online. *Media International Australia – Incorporating Culture & Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X0411000114>

Jones, B. A., Arcelus, J., Bouman, W. P., & Haycraft, E. (2017). Sport and transgender people: A systematic review of the literature relating to sport participation and competitive sport policies. *Sports Medicine*, 47(4), 701–716. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-016-0621-y>

Kian, E. M., & Clavio, G. (2011). A comparison of online media and traditional newspaper coverage of the men’s and women’s U.S. Open tennis tournaments. *Journal of Sports Media*, 6(2), 55–84. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/17/article/414727/summary>

Kilgariff, A., Baisa, V., Bušta, J., Jakubíček, M., Kovář, V., Michelfeit, J., Rychlý, P., & Suchomel, V. (2014). The Sketch Engine: Ten years on. *Lexicography*, 7-36. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40607-014-0009-9>

Knyazyan, A., & Haytjan, L. (2024). Gender stereotypes in sports discourse. *Armenian Folia Anglistika*, 20, 38–49. <https://doi.org/10.46991/AFA/2024.20.1.38>

Murgia, M. (2021). *Stai zitta e altre nove frasi che non vogliamo sentire più*. Turin: Einaudi.

Pappous, A. (S.), Marcellini, A., & de Léséleuc, E. (2011). Contested issues in research on the media coverage of female Paralympic athletes. *Sport in Society*, 14(9), 1182–1191. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2011.614775>

Partington, A. (2004). Corpora and discourse, a most congruous beast. En A. Partington, J. Morley, & L. Haarman (Eds.), *Corpora and discourse* (Vol. 1, pp. 11-20). Peter Lang.

Partington, A. (2006). Metaphors, motifs and similes across discourse types: Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) at work. *Trends in linguistics studies and monographs*, 171, 267. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110199895.267>

Partington, A., Duguid, A., & Taylor, C. (2013). *Patterns and Meanings in Discourse: Theory and practice in Corpus-assisted Discourse Studies (CADS)*. John Benjamins.

Sabatini, A. (1986). *Raccomandazioni per un uso non sessista della lingua italiana*. Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato.

Scott, M. (1997). PC analysis of key words—And key key words. *System*, 25(2), 233-245. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X\(97\)00011-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(97)00011-0)

Shifflett, B., Murphy, D., Ghiasvand, F., Carlton, M., & Cuevas, M. (2016). Gender bias in sports-media analytics. *Journal of Sports Media*, 11(2), 111–128. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsm.2016.0014>

Smith, J., & McCarthy, P. (2022). Gender bias personality perception in stereotypically gendered sport. *Sport and Exercise Psychology Review*, 17(2), 76–84. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpssepr.2022.17.2.76>

Thorpe, H., Nelson, M., Scovel, S., & Veale, J. (2023). Journalists on a journey: Towards responsible media on transgender participation in sport. *Journalism Studies*, 24(9), 1237–1255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2023.2206920>

Trolan, E. J. (2013). The impact of the media on gender inequality within sport. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 91, 215–227. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.420>

UNESCO (2018). Gender Equality in Sports Media. <https://webarchive.unesco.org/web/20220625125044/https://en.unesco.org/themes/gender-equality-sports-media>

ANNEX 1

	FEMININE					MASCULINE				
	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score
1	olimpiadi	118	1534.66	10.07	76.95	olimpiade	118	1182.25	1.74	101.54
2	pugile	64	832.36	2.14	69.41	olimpico	133	1332.53	8.93	70.91
3	olimpiade	61	793.34	1.74	68.42	medaglia	195	1953.71	18.47	68.97
4	medaglia	139	1807.78	18.47	63.85	parigi	340	3406.47	47.49	59.43
5	olimpico	91	1183.51	8.93	63.04	olimpiadi	111	1112.11	10.07	55.90
6	boxe	62	806.35	3.06	62.51	olimpica	72	721.37	3.48	54.26
7	olimpici	63	819.35	4.48	57.27	bronzo	129	1292.46	17.31	47.70
8	cio	94	1222.53	12.93	53.76	semifinale	68	681.29	7.21	40.18
9	olimpica	54	702.30	3.48	52.85	medaglie	63	631.20	7.07	37.57
10	atleta	87	1131.49	12.22	51.38	azzurri	78	781.48	11.10	37.51
11	pugilato	44	572.25	1.75	49.54	argento	147	1472.8	31.92	35.38

	FEMININE					MASCULINE				
	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score
12	ginnastica	63	819.35	8.47	44.91	ori	41	410.78	2.22	34.43
13	ring	50	650.28	5.18	43.49	podio	77	771.47	15.07	31.18
14	azzurra	69	897.39	11.98	41.28	olimpici	43	430.82	4.48	30.44
15	semifinale	53	689.30	7.21	40.64	azzurro	91	911.73	22.33	28.51
16	atlete	40	520.22	3.26	39.98	cronometro	35	350.67	2.78	28.21
17	bronzo	81	1053.45	17.31	38.95	paltrinieri	28	280.53	0.33	28.13
18	campionessa	38	494.21	3.45	37.48	scherma	34	340.65	2.47	28.11
19	azzurre	37	481.21	3.43	36.58	oro	256	2564.87	84.73	27.18
20	scherma	32	416.18	2.47	34.17	nba	34	340.65	3.46	26.05
21	quarti	50	650.28	9.94	33.11	atleta	55	551.05	12.22	25.25
22	avversaria	34	442.19	4.77	30.61	tennis	62	621.18	15.39	24.86
23	volley	43	559.24	9.22	29.61	quarti	44	440.84	9.94	22.61
24	manila	25	325.14	1.34	29.55	nuoto	47	470.89	11.65	22.22
25	testosterone	30	390.17	4.69	27.23	staffetta	31	310.59	4.72	21.78
26	match	74	962.41	26.44	26.68	condemi	20	200.38	0.09	20.85
27	oro	193	2510.08	84.73	26.60	ciclismo	35	350.67	8.10	19.93
28	boxing	20	260.11	0.80	25.01	rana	25	250.48	3.32	19.56
29	medaglie	32	416.18	7.07	24.97	record	76	761.45	31.11	18.76
30	argento	76	988.43	31.92	23.82	basket	42	420.80	13.08	18.66
31	atletica	34	442.19	9.54	23.14	giochi	180	1803.43	87.59	18.58
32	trave	21	273.12	2.45	22.73	inseguimento	25	250.48	4.13	18.43
33	atleti	65	845.36	28.01	22.50	campione	91	911.73	40.85	18.13
34	ori	20	260.11	2.22	22.10	vinto	96	961.83	43.65	18.11
35	intersex	16	208.09	0.06	21.69	qualificazioni	22	220.42	2.76	18.06
36	fioretto	17	221.10	0.95	21.10	canoa	22	220.42	2.95	17.80
37	judo	18	234.10	1.93	20.46	atletica	33	330.63	9.54	17.43
38	giochi	150	1950.84	87.59	20.09	atleti	65	651.24	28.01	17.40
39	lacrime	41	533.23	17.05	20.09	sprinter	17	170.32	0.44	17.27
40	mondiali	51	663.29	24.56	19.48	crono	20	200.38	2.65	16.64
41	podio	35	455.20	15.07	18.56	quartetto	24	240.46	5.24	16.44
42	dsd	13	169.07	0.19	17.57	olimpiche	17	170.32	1.16	16.16
43	avversarie	17	221.10	3.39	17.26	judo	18	180.34	1.93	15.96
44	ricevi	17	221.10	3.79	16.75	nuotatori	16	160.30	0.94	15.57
45	polemiche	33	429.18	16.58	16.53	fioretto	16	160.30	0.95	15.55
46	femminile	86	1118.48	59.87	16.15	ev	17	170.32	1.65	15.47
47	ginnasta	12	156.07	0.52	15.79	semifinali	19	190.36	3.20	15.18
48	federazione	45	585.25	29.10	15.23	conquistato	36	360.69	14.46	15.16
49	nuoto	24	312.13	11.65	14.88	pedana	18	180.34	2.73	14.95
50	allenatrice	11	143.06	0.53	14.53	fuoriclasse	17	170.32	2.13	14.87
51	ottavi	14	182.08	3.52	14.20	volley	27	270.51	9.22	14.59
52	pedana	13	169.07	2.73	14.07	rimonta	20	200.38	4.71	14.30
53	pugili	11	143.06	0.93	14.01	dorso	23	230.44	7.11	14.05
54	pallavolo	17	221.10	6.71	13.83	centesimi	23	230.44	7.16	14.01
55	olimpiche	11	143.06	1.16	13.71	gareggiare	16	160.30	2.21	13.95
56	volteggio	10	130.06	0.36	13.51	mondiali	46	460.88	24.56	13.63
57	transgender	10	130.06	1.05	12.67	tonsillite	13	130.25	0.30	13.62

	FEMININE					MASCULINE				
	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score	Item	F	RF (foc)	RF (ref)	Score
58	semifinali	12	156.07	3.20	12.58	coach	28	280.53	11.86	13.29
59	finale	163	2119.91	159.57	12.56	battuto	29	290.55	12.96	13.09
60	nuotatrice	9	117.05	0.34	12.29	roncadelle	12	120.23	0.17	12.80
61	azzurri	19	247.11	11.10	12.19	skate	13	130.25	0.99	12.76
62	banti	9	117.05	0.48	12.12	settebello	12	120.23	0.32	12.61
63	eliminata	12	156.07	3.78	12.05	ultim'ora	12	120.23	0.41	12.51
64	qualificazioni	11	143.06	2.76	11.99	canottaggio	13	130.25	1.22	12.50
65	stoccata	9	117.05	0.77	11.80	monna	12	120.23	0.43	12.49
66	competizioni	15	195.08	7.60	11.66	ginnastica	22	220.42	8.47	12.48
67	torneo	32	416.18	26.77	11.59	finale	209	2093.98	159.57	12.41
68	squadre	45	585.25	42.23	11.40	pista	57	571.09	37.40	12.26
69	canottaggio	9	117.05	1.22	11.32	favoriti	15	150.29	3.21	12.13
70	fiamingo	8	104.04	0.07	11.32	ranking	15	150.29	3.28	12.07
71	qualificazione	20	260.11	14.12	11.20	vincere	59	591.12	40.05	12.01
72	squalificata	8	104.04	0.20	11.19	misti	16	160.30	4.29	11.91
73	vinto	44	572.25	43.65	10.85	casadei	12	120.23	1.03	11.81
74	tatami	8	104.04	0.60	10.76	pallanuoto	13	130.25	1.88	11.81
75	windsurf	9	117.05	1.87	10.71	gara	152	1522.89	121.72	11.64
76	gareggia	8	104.04	0.65	10.71	qualificazione	27	270.51	14.12	11.63
77	pallanuoto	9	117.05	1.88	10.70	batterie	29	290.55	15.90	11.60
78	espulsa	8	104.04	0.82	10.54	badminton	11	110.21	0.37	11.59
79	gare	38	494.21	38.09	10.48	sl	13	130.25	2.25	11.45
80	gareggiare	9	117.05	2.21	10.41	stano	11	110.21	0.51	11.44
81	antidoping	8	104.04	0.96	10.40	taekwondo	11	110.21	0.53	11.42
82	staffetta	11	143.06	4.72	10.40	allenato	14	140.27	3.28	11.32
83	equità	11	143.06	5.20	10.07	medagliere	11	110.21	0.65	11.28
84	schermitrice	7	91.04	0.07	10.03	specialità	32	320.61	19.35	11.27
85	equitazione	9	117.05	2.76	9.96	velocista	11	110.21	0.68	11.25
86	athletics	7	91.04	0.18	9.92	nuotatore	11	110.21	0.84	11.09
87	arena	18	234.10	14.62	9.92	avversari	31	310.59	19.23	10.97
88	finalina	7	91.04	0.23	9.87	azzurra	23	230.44	11.98	10.94
89	delusione	14	182.08	9.46	9.87	gare	51	510.97	38.09	10.83
90	sport	85	1105.48	103.50	9.83	curry	12	120.23	2.04	10.81
91	palazzetto	10	130.06	4.26	9.82	torneo	38	380.72	26.77	10.63v
92	cresciuta	14	182.08	9.64	9.78	argenti	11	110.21	1.33	10.61
93	trionfo	14	182.08	9.72	9.74	sprint	14	140.27	4.33	10.48
94	cromosomi	8	104.04	1.78	9.69	infortunio	20	200.38	10.41	10.31
95	ammissibilità	9	117.05	3.21	9.62	arbitri	15	150.29	5.57	10.29
96	competizione	24	312.13	23.65	9.57	allenatore	31	310.59	21.31	10.24
97	battuto	16	208.09	12.96	9.50	match	36	360.69	26.44	10.17
98	campionesse	7	91.04	0.67	9.47	tiro	36	360.69	26.96	10.03
99	fuoriclasse	8	104.04	2.13	9.40	finalina	9	90.17	0.23	9.79
100	allenata	8	104.04	2.19	9.36	maschile	43	430.82	35.19	9.75