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Master's Degree in Physical Education

**RESTRUCTURING THE MALE
DOMINANT SPORT:**

The Case of Korean Women Boxers

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Abstract

Restructuring the Male Dominant Sport: The Case of Korean Women Boxers

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Boxing has traditionally been believed to be a dangerous sport where women's participation has been limited. However, in Korea, the number of women participating in boxing has increased over the past decade due to the popularity of combined boxing exercises, increasing interests in weight management, and increases in media exposure – particularly that of a famous actress boxer, Siyoung Lee. Women boxers have actively involved in traditional boxing training and competition, while initially being attracted to the health and weight loss benefits of boxing exercises.

The purposes of this study were to understand the experiences of Korean women boxers, the perspectives of the existing boxing community toward women's participation in boxing, and the influence of women's participation in the boxing – a male dominant sport. In-depth interviews and participation observations were utilized to collect data. Five women boxers, four male boxers, and four boxing instructors (three male and one female) were selected as research participants.

The key findings are as follows:

First, as to reasons for "becoming women boxers", a combination of factors such as weight management and appearance, gym location convenience, media influence, past experience in other sports, and the encouragement of family members all influenced women boxers to participate in boxing. However, it was found that women boxers were introduced to sparring and tournaments only through their boxing instructors. Women boxers experienced two different types of boxing, respectively, non-combat "diet" boxing and combat style "traditional" boxing. During the period of non-combat "diet" boxing, women boxers participated in boxing exercises and workouts for weight loss. Through combat style "traditional" boxing, however, women boxers experienced different training methods, changes in emotions during sparring, developing trust with sparring partners, controlling intensity of spars, and satisfaction and accomplishment. With these experiences women boxers developed three views of boxing. First of all, they stated that their view of boxing changed from a brutal form of combat to an athletic sport; second, the women boxers believed that their participation in boxing had the potential to change to a profession from the initial motivations of a social activity; third, women boxers kept traditional boxing participation a secret to avoid stereotyping and conflicts within their external social networks.

Second, the responses of the boxing community were categorized into three themes, "perspectives of female participation in boxing", "management toward male and female boxers", and "the changing nature of boxing". The boxing community – male boxers and boxing instructors – had various perspectives on the participation of women in boxing. In general, the boxing community had a positive view of women participating in sports. However, at the same time, male boxers and boxing instructors had ambivalent views toward women's participation in boxing: instructors favored women's participation in boxing for business reasons; however, male boxers were not comfortable with women participating in combat style "traditional" boxing. As to the theme of

"management toward male and female boxers", instructors treated boxers equally with respect regardless of gender. Additionally, it was stressed that both male and female boxers undergo the same boxing training. In the responses of "the changing nature of boxing" (whether boxing could be a female sport due to the increasing participation), the boxing community had diverse views. Some instructors pointed out that boxing had the potential to become a sport without a fixed gender connotation; however, one boxing instructor highlighted the characteristics of boxing and disagreed with the fact that boxing could become a "female sport".

Finally, theoretical implications about increasing women's participation in a male dominant sport – boxing – were analyzed by applying Anthony Giddens' structuration theory. The findings were organized by structure, agent, rules and resources, which are the main concepts of the structuration theory. Through the participation of women in boxing, the structure of the masculine sport is reshaped by interactions with women boxers and their boxing instructors. Day-to-day activities of the women boxers, routine boxing work-out programs, and tournament competitions are all combined to create a new culture within the social sphere of boxing. Though boxing is pre-dominantly occupied by male counterparts, mostly male instructors, women are gradually becoming a part of this structure. Therefore, through interaction, women have the opportunity to experience "traditional boxing" within the changing structure of boxing. Furthermore, the participation of women boxers at both the recreational and professional level provides a basis in the promotion and development of female boxing in Korea.

Keyword : female boxing, boxing participation, male dominant sport, Structuration Theory

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I. Introduction

Boxing is one of the most brutal; most violent male-dominant sports known to man (Lowe, 2003). From outside the ring boxing looks unattractive and monstrous, people who are not initiated label it as a traditionally male-only sport and a symbol of masculinity (Hargreaves, 1997). Despite the brutality of boxing, women have been increasingly stepping into the ring.

Throughout the history of boxing, the participation of women in both professional and amateur boxing has been limited to the roles of entertainers and supporters. Furthermore, the origin of women's involvement in boxing is generally known, despite the fact that professional women's boxing started as early as 1876 (Guttmann, 1991; Halbert, 1997). In spite of its early origins, women's boxing is still not being taken seriously, as Joyce Carol Oates (1994, p. 73) writes, "The female boxer... cannot be taken seriously. She is a parody, she is a cartoon, she is monstrous" (Halbert, 1997; Hargreaves, 1997).

Hargreaves (1997) explores the participation of women in traditional male sports in particular boxing, she compared the images of male and female boxers as well as the images of females fighting in early matches. Through this research, the researcher points out the difference between men's and women's development in contemporary boxing and other sports, in addition to the increasingly popular box-aerobics, boxing training, and competitive boxing. Halbert (1997) highlights the unfair treatment among professional women boxers in the United States and the stereotypical associations of women boxers. Mennesson (2000) applies Bourdieu's concept of habitus theory to investigate the participation of women in boxing. Halbert (1997) and Mennesson (2000) both focus on the micro-level interaction between females and boxing and men

and boxing (Wacquant, 1992, 2004), on the other hand, Lafferty and McKay (2004) analyzed the relationship and interaction between men and women by applying a/the concept of gender regime.

In recent years, Paradis (2012) has used Bourdieu's theory to define and understand the perceptions of the relationship between the participants and the boxing context of a specific boxing gym in the United States. Chaudhuri (2012) examines India's women boxers and their success in a country that virtually prohibits professional boxing. Dortants and Knoppers (2012) observe how trainers approach ethnically diverse males and females who participate in boxing at a gym in the Netherlands.

Understanding the connotations associated with male and female boxers is a difficult phenomenon to interpret as cultural settings in various countries rapidly change. Boxing is a violent sport in which women are not traditionally involved. This is common in most societies with socially expected gender roles of women. However, as health is becoming an increasingly contentious issue in the 21st century, new trends in exercise and sports are changing. Korean women for example have been increasingly attracted to combination workouts such as box-aerobics (Hahm, 2003). Additionally, the popularity of boxing as a leisure activity has inclined among Korean women, most of whom are participating for appearance-oriented motivations such as weight loss and muscle tone (Kim, Jeong & Kim, 2011).

In Korea, the history of boxing dates back to the late 1900s when it was first introduced by American missionaries (Song & Son, 1989). During the Japanese colonization of Korea (1909-1945) and after Korean Independence, boxing was one of the most watched sports (Shin, 2007). However, under the influence of a booming economy and the introduction of new Western popular

culture, despite Korea having developed a strong foundation, boxing lost its popularity and hid in the shadows of newly popular sports such as baseball and soccer (Na & Song, 1998; Shin, 2007).

As previously mentioned, boxing was the most popular sports for spectators during and shortly after the Japanese colonization of Korea. However, at this time, the thought of women participating was incomprehensible for such a conservative culture. With the changing perspectives of female roles in society, 'girl power', health and diet, and the need for self-defense rose, Korean women gradually entered boxing gyms to experiment with new ways of achieving their goals. Not only did social changes influence Korean women to enter boxing gyms, but public figures had much effect, triggering women to voluntarily participate in boxing.

In 2010, well-known Korean actress Siyoung Lee began in order to prepare a role in a short drama as a female boxer. Even though the drama didn't air Lee continued to train (OBS News, 2013). Later in 2011 she entered the National Women's Amateur Boxing Championship, winning first place in the 48kg weight division gaining much attention for female boxing in Korea (Sport Chosun, 2013). According to The Focus, an online Korean newspaper, "boxing, a sport previously in the shadows is attracting women more than ever, due to the outcomes of celebrities losing weight..." (The Focus, 2013). News reports have coined this 'the Siyoung Lee Effect' as the key catalyst behind promoting women's boxing (Munhwa Ilbo, 2013). The actress Siyoung Lee competed in the National Amateur Boxing Championship/2013 Boxing National Team Prematch (Jungok Ahmachuar Boxing Daehiu geom 2013 Boxing Gokgadaepyo Sunsoo Sunbaljuan) in the 48kg weight division and as the first well-known actress to compete professionally. Through her

participation as an amateur boxer, public interest in an unpopular sport has been reignited (Munhwa Ilbo, 2012).

Furthermore, Korea's youngest professional boxer Joohee Kim and world champion Jihyun Park have been getting increasing media attention despite boxing promoters and managers still in opposition to female boxing. Promoters have shared this hesitation particularly in women's professional boxing. Promoters are often hesitant to support and organize female boxing matches, due to feminine inferiority complexes, such as "women are weak and should be pretty so can't box" (E-Today, 2013). Several boxing officials have argued that there is no use in organizing "boring" female matches as they are "boring" so there is no reason to make women fight. Despite the increasing popularity of female boxing, female professional boxers still encounter difficulties in relations to organizing matches.

Domestically, qualitative studies regarding the participation motivations of boxing and how participation has effected life satisfaction (Koo, 2008), the effects of boxing on body composition and physical self-concept among female participants (Lee, 2011) and the relationship between motivation and physical self-efficacy for recreational level women boxers (Chu, 2012) have also been researched. Furthermore, Kim (2004) conducted a phenomenological study on female boxers participating in collegiate boxing club activities. All of which investigate the external factors, relationships and effects between participation motivations and satisfaction of life or psychological effects, as well as the exploration of college level boxing club participants. what these studies lack however are reasons as to why women are passionately involved in sport that society has deemed unfit for them and the connotations that are formed with female participation in boxing, whether as a hobby or profession. Thus, by

applying Giddens's (1984) structuration theory, understanding the experiences of female participants in boxing, the social structure, and the process of structure can be used as a tool to interpret the findings.

Giddens's structuration theory is based on human agency and social structures which reproduce and create social systems. Agency and structure are in constant interaction and establish a relationship. In other words, society is a constructivist phenomenon and people are restrained by the social structures that they themselves have helped create (Giddens, 1984). By applying the structuration theory, it will offer an explanation of human agency and the relationships between social structures and phenomena.

Agency and structure cannot be conceptualized individually, but both concepts need to be combined to understand social structure via social phenomenon. As a result, studies related to women's participation in contact sports, boxing, and sociological change is a field of research that needs to be investigated to understand female participation in male-dominant sports. Moreover, this study seeks to identify motives behind women getting involved in boxing, to investigate why and what women gain from their experiences as well as how they adapt to and influence a male dominant institution. This will be done by applying Giddens's structuration theory. Thus, constructing a basis in which a full background of Korean female boxing history and its promotion can be understood as well as the sociological patterns and structures of female participation in male dominant sports.

1. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Korean female

boxers and the responses of the boxing community towards the increase in number of female boxers, and finally how Korean female boxers influence a male dominant sport, boxing, through their participation.

2. Research Questions

To achieve the above mentioned purpose of this study, the following research questions were explored.

1. What are the experiences of Korean women boxers?
2. How has the Korean boxing community responded to the increasing number of Korean female participants?
3. In the case of Korea, are women boxers restructuring a masculine sport with their participation in boxing? If so, how?

3. Definitions of Key Terms

1) Korean Women Boxing Participants

This study is focused on Korean women boxing participants. These women generally start boxing as a leisure sport and later participated in national amateur boxing tournaments thus becoming seriously involved in the sport. Throughout the research Korean women who participate in boxing will be refereed to as "women boxers" and "female boxers". These boxers box at a recreational level. They do not earn money when entering competitions, however, they mostly enter tournaments with individual and social motives.

2) Professional Boxers

Professional boxers are boxers who compete in boxing matches for "prize money". The ultimate goal of a professional boxer is to win championship titles. For professional boxing matches, promoters and sponsors financially invest for matches between specific boxers. Therefore, professional boxers need to be prepared all year-around as sponsored matches maybe suggested with little warning. When professional boxers compete in a match, they wear minimal protection and lighter, thinner gloves than their amateur counterparts. Furthermore, professional boxers cannot compete in amateur boxing matches once they have debuted as a professional boxer.

3) Amateur Boxers

Amateur boxers wear protection such as headgear during matches. It is an official sporting event in the Olympic Games where there is a focus on amateurism. Amateur boxers are listed in the Korean Amateur Boxing Federation and have the opportunity to join the national team. Knockouts are rarely seen in amateur boxing, because amateur boxing is scored by the number of times the opponent is contacted by a hit. Unlike professional boxing, moving between classes of boxing is possible for amateurs. However, after debuting as a professional boxer they cannot fight again as an amateur boxer. Many amateur boxers see amateur boxing as a stepping stone to the professional league.

II . Literature Review

1. Women's Participation in Male Dominant Sports

Traditionally, contact sports have been considered as a male arena (Daniels, 2005). However, in the past 10 years, women have become increasingly involved in contact sports which were stereotypically categorized as male "macho" sports, such as rugby, tackle football, and wrestling. With the increase of women's participation in various sports, researchers have explored the motivations and involvement as well as the gender roles and structures of how women approach masculine sports. The following mentions women's participation in both team and individual sports that involve physical contact which women have been increasingly participating in.

1) Team Contact Sports

Many women are participating in team sports that express conventional male images which are strongly governed by male institutions (Hargreaves, 1994). Team sports such as rugby or ice hockey include intense physical contact and aggressiveness in games which illustrate their sheer masculinity (Cahn, 1995). Despite the physical contact and aggression women encounter, women's experience in team sports has been proven to help develop individual character, identity, and cooperation skills (Migliaccio & Berg, 2007; Rail, 1992; Scaton, Fasting, Pfister & Bunuel, 1999). Simultaneously, women face controversies and personal conflicts over gender roles (Fallon & Jome, 2007; Pelak, 2002). Therefore, there exists ambivalent attitudes within team sport

experience among women. The next part of this chapter will analyze previous research on women's participation in team sports that shape masculinity and physical contact.

(1) Rugby

Fallon and Jome's (2007) study of female rugby players in eastern United States reveal gender role expectations and conflicts that participants had to cope with during their participation in the sport. Women's participation in rugby led to multiple conflicts of social constructs in relation to their gender role expectations as a feminine women and a masculine athlete. However, after observation, it revealed that the participants were not influenced by social constructs in relation to their gender roles, but they fiercely built their surroundings to cope with future difficulties that may occur, such as discrimination, application of negative stereotypes and social exclusion.

Murray and Howat (2009) explores South Australian women's participation in rugby by explaining their motivations and involvement through the 'enrichment hypothesis' in addition to the challenges that women experience by deciding to participate in a sport that is traditionally for male participation. The participants were mainly influenced by family members, friends, and significant others to become involved in rugby. Through participation the women reportedly receive a range of benefits, such as, fun, fitness, and social interaction as well as personal confidence and enhanced mental development. The participants reported that rugby became a setting for them "to vent stress" and "build positive character". Murray and Howat (2009) crucially point out that a strong support network and surrounding environment are crucial when

encouraging women to participate in rugby and other contact sports.

As a result, team sports such as rugby, where there is a lot of fast and aggressive physical contact between players, has been found to have a positive effect on encouraging women to actively manage the environment they are in. In addition, family support for participation plays a great role in the encouragement of playing contact team sports (Fallon & Jome, 2007; Murray & Howat, 2009). Females participating in the historically male dominant sport, rugby, are reinterpreting the traditional images and relations of masculinity and femininity through active participation (Hargreaves, 1994). Furthermore, studies regarding the potential empowerment as well as the active participation of women in contact team sports have been thoroughly researched (Migliaccio & Berg, 2007; Whitson, Birrell, & Cole, 1994)

(2) Tackle Football

Migliaccio and Berg (2007) apply a physical feminist perspective to explore empowerment among women who participate in tackle football. The authors also investigated the benefits and barriers the participants encountered during their participation. The female participants reportedly experienced several advantages of participation such as developing new relationships among teammates, trust and teamwork, and personal pleasures regarding the positive emotions they felt about their body image.

However, Migliaccio and Berg (2007) mention the problems the participants faced in their research. The risk of injury among participants and negative perceptions of the general public in regards to women's tackle football as well as the media coverage that followed the female participants and the pressures

of personal responsibilities were some of the constraints female participants faced. Moreover, in the US opportunities for women and girls to participate in sports have inclined with Title IX (Title IX is a portion of the Education Amendments of 1972 which protects every individual from discrimination based on gender, U.S. Department of Education) starting a new chapter in the twentieth century in which gained a numerous amount of female athletes in competitive sports, one of them being ice hockey (Lawler, 2002).

(3) Ice Hockey

Pelak (2002) applies "collective identity" theory to understand the process of female ice hockey participants entering a male domain. The female ice hockey participants experienced the importance of material resources and external factors, thus, experiencing unfair treatment on and off the ice. Despite the fact that Title IX created new opportunities for women and girls, there remains a lack of support for females to actively participate, find welcoming chances in getting into the game and becoming recognized within competitive athletics (Pelak, 2002).

Female tackle football participants and female ice hockey participants, both concluded positive and negative experiences which were directly related to the importance of support from family and spouses. Compared to the female rugby participants, female tackle football and ice hockey participants rarely mentioned environmental and mental support from family and friends, but rather personal responsibilities pressuring them from new opportunities to join male-oriented sports. The characteristics of these three sports, rugby, tackle football, and ice hockey, share commonalities and the benefits that the female participants gain

are similar, however, the circumstances and surroundings participants in these sports have grown up with play a crucial role in influencing mental and material support when females enter male dominant sports.

From an early age women are discouraged from participating in male dominant sports clearly because of traditional social expectations and the image females are expected to portray (Park & Wright, 2000). However, in the past decade there has been an increase in the number of women participating in these sports. Due to the support of family members, social changes, importance of health and diet, and gender equality. Female participation in male-only sports has greatly influenced how women and girls are perceived in the sporting world.

2) Individual Contact Sports

Individual sports refer to sports that an athlete competes in individually. In previous studies it has been noted that female participation in predominately masculine individual sports is more acceptable to society than team sports (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983). This is true due to the fact individual sports such as gymnastics or swimming allow women to express their feminine physique (Duncan & Hasbrook, 2002). However, individual sports that involve physical contact, for example, wrestling and boxing are controversial toward women's participation. Though, individual sports have great benefits of dominance, adventurousness, and self-sufficiency, the image that individual sports appeal differ from the characteristics the sport expresses (Green-Demers, Pelletier, Stewart & Gushue, 1998). In the following, studies that include individual contact sports, such as wrestling and boxing will be analyzed.

(1) Wrestling

The history of wrestling goes back to the ancient Olympics. Wrestling, a domain that women were not traditionally open to, is a form of combat sport which involves various techniques and detailed moves that portray the male physique. Sisjord (1997) discusses the experiences of both male and female amateur wrestlers. When exploring the results, female wrestler's did not perceive their body to be masculine, however, they commonly had strong beliefs in that wrestling is a male dominated sport. Furthermore, female wrestlers faced exclusion during sparring sessions due to the lack of other female wrestlers. In addition, male wrestlers showed ambiguous behaviors toward female's participating in wrestling matches and training sessions. Some of which were in favor of females wrestling, however, when it came to personal preferences they hesitated to accept female wrestling.

In Sisjord and Kristiansen's (2008) research, male and female wrestlers were interviewed to explore their athletic experiences and the viewpoint of amateur wrestling covered in the media was analyzed. Male wrestlers had media coverage in the mainstream media environment, whereas attention to female wrestlers derided inside the wrestling world. Both studies construct contradicting aspects of understanding and accepting male and female wrestlers. Female wrestlers were perceived to be a minority in the sport, as wrestling is traditionally a male-dominant sport mainly supporting male competitors. However, pervious studies have showed a strong bias in analysing only the affects of female participation on female participants and how they were portrayed in the media.

Moreover, Sisjord and Kristiansen (2009) examines female elite wrestlers and

their gender roles in the sport. The findings were focused on the wrestling context and social setting outside wrestling. The researchers discussed the different ways female wrestlers adjust to the strength training programs with relation to their muscle size and physicality, in addition to the participant's experiences from and its effect on their private lives. The female wrestlers encountered concerns between developing strength and avoiding large muscle development simultaneously. Ironically however, the female wrestlers understood that in order to win they strategically would need to develop strength and bulky muscles were therefore unavoidable. The experiences of these participants varied in relation to each female wrestler's position, performances, and situation they were placed in.

(2) Boxing

Boxing, pugilism, prize fighting, is a martial art in which two people test their strength and speed. Boxing has long been a sport that represents masculinity and has long been an institution predominately ruled by males (Hargreaves, 1997). Even in the Olympics, it is wasn't until the 2012 London Olympics, that women's boxing became an official event (Lindner, 2012). Thus, women's participation in boxing has been seen as against traditional norms, however, as the social perspective changes and gender equally improves, more women are being introduced to boxing and other traditionally male dominant sports (Dortants & Knoppers, 2012).

Women were seen at matches, mostly as the entertainers or as supports of male boxers (Woodward, 2008). There were female boxing matches, however, they were purely for male entertainment (Hargreaves, 1994). In the 1990s,

however, women's access to boxing gyms and their participation in martial arts increased as a result of the desire for self-defence against male violence and harassment. Furthermore, women were influenced by the obsession of body image and the positive effects that boxing training had on their body image and health. Most importantly, the women who participated in martial arts started to enjoy themselves and gradually entered man-only sports (Sugden, 1997).

As women stepped into traditionally male dominant sports, in this case boxing, the female sport culture redefined the female athlete. In the process of change, female boxers faced complex and contradictory outcomes (Hargreaves, 1994; Halbert, 1997). It is said that professional female boxers's experiences are similar to that of male boxers, however, this is not the case, with female boxers experiencing gender stereotypes and discrimination ultimately leading them to search for strategies of impression management as roles of masculine athletes and feminine figures of society (Halbert, 1997). In becoming female boxers, personal backgrounds played a major influence when developing self identity and how they perceived themselves as participants in masculine games (Mennesson, 2000). Studies regarding the image of female boxers and how female boxers see themselves as boxers have been conducted from the early phase of female participation in boxing.

Most research investigated only female boxers experiences and how these experiences have influenced the participants, also, contradictory gender roles that underlie within the female boxers (Halbert, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994; Mennesson, 2000). On the other hand, studies have also explored how both male and female boxers are represented in boxing. Competitive boxing proceeds to create diverse structures women are constantly challenging tradition

by participating in male favored sports (Lafferty & McKay, 2004). Through participation and the reproduction of boxing culture, Bourdieu's concepts and approaches of "habitus" have been applied to understand the perceptions and interactions that lie beneath what many know as the masculine boxing culture (Paradis, 2012; Woodward, 2008).

Even though, many argue that "boxing is for men, and is about men" (Oates, 1987) women are steadily becoming involved in male-oriented context. On an international scale, women's boxing is being rapidly promoted. Women's amateur boxing made its debut at the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games and the 2012 London Olympics respectively including three weight divisions, Flyweight, Lightweight, and Middleweight (Official website of the IOC & COC, 2012; 2009). Furthermore, with the inclusion of female boxing in the Olympics, the participation of women in boxing will not only increase, but the perceptions and gender stereotypes associated with women in masculine domains, boxing included will be redefined.

2. Korean Women's Participation in Boxing

1) History of Korean Boxing

In Korea, boxing has traditionally been a sport in which boxers train in harsh conditions and deal with poverty (Na & Son 1998). Therefore, in Korean society, boxing has been referred to as the "hungry sport" due to the image it portrays (Kim, 2009). Well-known Korean boxers such as Gisoo Kim, Suhwan Hong, Songjun Kim were some of the boxing heroes that received much media attention in the early development of Korean boxing.

During the Japanese colonization of Korea (1910-1945), boxing was used as a means of representing Korean patriotism and resistance. Later in the 1950s, throughout the social and political turbulent era, boxing became the major interest of the public (Na & Son, 1998). From the 1960s to the late 1990s, 45 Korean boxers won world championship titles, allowing Korea to become known as one of the world leaders in boxing (Korea Boxing Commission Official Site). During this period, investments toward the boxing industry, development of scientific training methods/centers for boxers, media exposure and product endorsement opportunities skyrocketed (Shim, 2007).

Despite its historical popularity in the early 2000s Korean boxing was almost unheard of in the professional sense and lied in the shadows of modern popular professional sports, such as soccer and baseball. In addition, high school and university students began excluding boxing to train in other sports (Shim, 2007). During this period, Korean boxing struggled to retain its popularity. With popular interest shifting to there new sports, boxing began to lose a majority of its spectators. However recently, the sport once known for

its brutal spectacle of masculinity has began a transition attracting an entirely different gender class.

2) Korean Women's Boxing and Boxing Today

(1) Korean Women's Boxing

Taking on leisure sports and increasing physical activity helps prevent serious diseases and psychological stress. Along with the development of our understanding of health benefits increased, people became aware of the importance of physical activities (Kong, Kim & Sung, 2007). This has also been supported by a variety of lifestyle related diseases such as obesity and type two diabetes which have inarguably occurred due to the lack of health maintenance and physical exercise (Kong, Kim, Sung, Moon, Lee & Cho, 2009). With an ever increasing variety of options, people generally search for sports or exercises that they find fun and interesting.

In the past, boxing was exclusively a male domain in relation to both participation and spectatorship. However, in recent years this has gradually shifted with increasing women participation and spectatorship. Boxing has traditionally been a sport for entertainment and was labeled as a spectator sport, but with social change and the combination of diet effects in appearance-oriented societies, the promotion of boxing among women has inclined. From diet-boxing, self-defence boxing, box aerobics to taebo and various other combination boxing programs, Korean women began to be attracted to the fun, practical, and dietary benefits of the sport (Lee, 2011).

Before the period in which boxing was primarily a means of popular weight

loss, the boxing culture in Korea had already shown significant change and an increasing awareness. Korean professional female boxer Kim Messer, won the IFBA Junior Flyweight title which was held in Seoul, 2000. Her match was well broadcasted by the Korean media and set a precedent for Korean female boxers (Yonhapnews, 2000). Later that year, the Korea Boxing Commission officially opened the Korean professional boxing test to 7 female boxers. This was the first step in officially endorsing women's boxing in Korea.

In 2002, Inyoung Lee was the first professional female boxer to win a Korean Flyweight title. In winning a world title in 2003, holding a record of five wins and two KOs, she ranked sixth in the International Female Boxers Association's (IFBA) fly division. At the age of 30, she began boxing as a hobby, which soon became her profession (Lee, 2003).

When Inyoung Lee won her title as the first Korean Flyweight title champion against 17 year-old high school student, Joohee Kim, it was the first official female match in the history of Korean boxing (Yonhap, 2002). Kim started boxing at age of 15, setting the record as the youngest and one of the first female boxers in Korea. Currently Joohee Kim holds 11 titles including WBA, IFBA, and WIBA (E-today, 2013).

As the number of female boxers increased in Korea, boxing was on the path to finding its place back in the mainstream sports industry, not only as a watched combat sport, but also as a sport the public could freely participate in. Korean women were also allured by a Korean concept known as "Momzzang". "Momzzang" refers to a person who has a desirable body shape. This concept was first introduced by Dayeon Jeong who stayed in shape with boxing exercise programs (Kukmimilbo, 2004). As the various health benefits of boxing became known, they were included into more workout plans and

classes. Enhanced fitness, bolster mental strength, bolstered mental strength, endorsed cardio pulmonary function, and a chance to learn self-defense were all very attractive to the number of growing participants (Kim, Song, Lee, 2005)

In 2011, Korean actress Siyoung Lee captured media attention with her outstanding achievement as a female amateur boxer. Korean women were encouraged to join the sport by how well the well known actress ranked in boxing tournaments and her physical appearance as a result of her boxing training. The actress entered several women's amateur boxing tournaments and placed first in most of her fights. As a direct result of this, the number of women entering boxing gyms increased. Korean boxing officials have coined this the "Siyoung Lee Effect" (Munhwa Ilbo, 2013). In 2013, Siyoung Lee joined the Incheon city boxing team as a stepping stone to enter the national team and entering the Asian Games (Sport Seoul, 2013). Her outstanding achievements drew attention not only to the boxing community, but also to the media and public. Various news reports became headlines for this actress turned boxer (Newsen, 2013).

Women's participation in boxing has altered the way people perceive the sport. Though it is still predominately known for its violence, brutality and male dominance, the surface of boxing has changed. From boxing being the most watched and mediated sport to its downfall, and now back to its popularity as a popular weight-loss sport for women, constant change has attracted a wide variety of participants.

(2) Boxing Today

Choi, Kim and Kim (2003) conducted a qualitative research to investigate the life satisfaction of people engaging in boxing-aerobics as a health promoting life style. The study shows, that there is a co-relation between life-satisfaction and self-esteem and the age group of the participants. In that, boxing-aerobics is more effective for older participants. Furthermore, participants have positive attitudes toward their life styles and social activities. Hahm (2003) also conducted surveys on participants of boxing-aerobics to explore the recognition of boxing-aerobics as a form of "Sport For All". Results showed, women in their 20's-40's participate in at least one or two sporting activities to maintain health. Boxing-aerobics is an appropriate sport for women of all ages due to the flexible amount of training and equally flexible intensity.

Boxing-aerobics has become a popular "weight loss" sport that the general public is increasingly attracted to. Aside from boxing-aerobics and its esthetic, weight loss effects, traditional boxing itself was also a sport that people began to take interest in. Kim (2004) explored the experiences and motivations of female collegiate boxers. The female boxers were members of the college's sports club. This study revealed the motivations for participating in boxing through in-depth interviews where both emotional and social experiences were uncovered. The participants underwent both positive and negative experiences, from self-achievement, physical training and satisfaction to injuries and risks of stereotyping.

As the phenomenon of boxing-aerobics manifested, Koo (2008) analyzed how the motivation of participating in boxing influenced satisfaction of life.

Koo's (2008) analysis concluded that participants with high participation motivations had the highest level of life satisfaction. Lee (2008) reported "the factors of enjoyment" among women who participate in boxing in ways to promote boxing as a "Sport For All". Enjoyment factors include relieving stress, losing weight, gaining strength, and improving social relationships as well as positive psychological changes. Lee (2011) studied the effects of body composition and the physical self-perception of women boxers. Lee (2011) conducted a series of workouts with a divided groups of female participants, "control group" and "experiment group". Each group consisted of 12 participants, a total of 24 research participants. The "experiment group" participated in an hour of boxing workouts while the "control group" did not participate in workouts. Results indicated that the experiment group had a more positive opinion on self image and had a greater self-esteem.

According to the 2010 Sport White Paper by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism the number of listed boxing clubs added up to a total of 122 with 3,708 members. In the 2011 Sport White Paper, the number of clubs and members increased to 244 clubs and 6,047 members. This is only a portion of the active boxing population in Korea. The clubs and members listed in the 2010 and 2011 Sport White Paper are those that are voluntary and nonprofit, which means that the number of gyms that are in business are not included in the report. Through this, it is foreseeable that there is an increasing number of people involved in boxing as a "Sport For All".

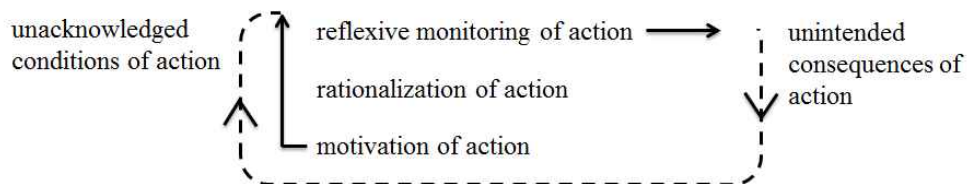
Studies have shown the benefits that women experience during and after participating in boxing. However, there lacks in-depth analysis of how and why women begin participating in boxing, how they adapt to a male dominant

sport and what keeps them interested in boxing. This lack of academic research and debate derives from the fact that female participation in boxing is still a new phenomenon. The promotion of female professional boxers, appearance-oriented societies leading to women's interest in dieting and women's boxing becoming official events in major sport festivals such as the Olympic Games and Asian Games and how this has affected perceptions and stereotypes of participants have however been looked at. Needless to say, boxing is still at a phase that is clearly male dominant. Though there is a growing number of female participants and professionals, boxing remains to be a male domain but now one of which that women are not afraid to enter.

From its soaring popularity to its dramatic down fall, and now moving on to its new era, boxing in Korea has shown potential that it can still be one of the mainstream popular sports the public can enjoy, not only as spectators, but also as participants. Interestingly to say, the popularity of boxing among female participants is rising, though boxing has been known as a male domain. Women are mostly participating in boxing workouts and boxing combination exercises for aesthetic and health reasons. Further studies need to focus not only on the statistics of participation rates, but also qualitatively understanding the experiences and social phenomenon of female participation in male-dominated sports as an important social change.

3. Anthony Giddens's Structuration Theory

Giddens argues that people are not entirely free to act as they choose as they are constantly influenced by environmental conditions. He emphasises that the relationship between structure and action is the main element in the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1993). He continues by adding that structure refers to "structuring property" which can be understood by rules and resources. Structure appreciates the existence of knowledge (memory trace), social practice (recursive acts of knowledge), and capabilities (production of practices) (Giddens, 1979).



[Figure 1] Stratification Model of Consciousness and Action (Giddens, 1984)

Figure 1 represents the reflexive monitoring of everyday action which involves the conduct of both individuals and others. Actors continuously monitor the flow of their activities and expect others to act according to their routine, monitor perspectives and social and physical activities within the context they move in (Giddens, 1984). Also the actions are not questioned by the actors due to the nature of adaptation and these actions becoming constant practices.

1) Overview of Literature Applying Giddens's Structuration Theory

Song and Lim (2005) examined the mechanism of "body making" among dancers with the application of Giddens's structuration theory. This study was to understand both the practiced and general processes of body making among dancers within the dance culture. The participants manifested a variety of resources such as appearances, trained bodies, performances, training systems, and character etc to accomplish their goals. Moreover, through the daily context of the dancers, they enforced the social system and by self-examination, they reproduced new structures related to body making.

Ogden and Rose(2005) conducted a study to investigate the decreasing number of African Americans participating in baseball by applying the structuration theory. As the number of African American leagues started to decrease, African American baseball players began entering major league baseball which gradually created new baseball cultures. However, African American baseball culture could not maintain pace with the existing baseball culture and eventually integrated. As a result, it was argued that entering pre-existing cultures and reproducing social structures show the duality of structure.

Dixon (2011) explored the experiences of football fans to explain how social structures define the general practices from the perspective of Giddens's structuration theory in the context of football fandom. The author mentions that rules such as family, friends, the community, resources such as uniforms and football club accessories act to influence how football fandom culture is portrayed in the daily lives of football fans.

Though there is a lack of empirical research on Giddens's structuration

theory in the sociology of sport, to explore the relationship between individuals and structure, Giddens's theory plays an iconic role (Dixon, 2011). Therefore, in this study, daily experiences of Korean women boxers and the process of change in traditional boxing are yet to be explored.

2) Social Structure and System

Giddens stated that structure is related to a continuous pattern of rules and resources which reproduce social systems, and that this can only be enacted by actions (Giddens, 1987). In other words, structure defines the relationship between rules and resources within society. In addition, these rules and resources exist inside the environment that the human agent is in. Rules and resources are practised by agents to constantly produce and reproduce structures under time and space (Giddens, 1984; Turner, 1986; Song, 2004; Lee, 2013).

Systems are a pattern of actions that give specific order to interactions. Giddens mentions that systems exist in time and space, which emphasizes the fact that people can observe systems in certain locations and times (Giddens, 1993). Structures do not exist in time and space, only in the moments in the constitution of social systems.

Structures are properties of systems, to understand social systems is to identify the rules and resources within the context, which mainly produce and reproduce the interactions of the actors. Here, the importance of power may follow. Power is not a description of a state, but an ability to accomplish the actor's will, even though there may be barriers (Giddens, 1979; Bryant & Jary 1991).

(1) Rules

Rules refer to generalizable procedures to understand situations in which can reproduce through social practices (Giddens, 1984). Understanding rules means to put them into action. Rules are the process of daily practices which can also be the result of the action. Giddens noted he's more interest in the context of the implication of the rules than what they explicitly state. The expressed rules are codified interpretations, and to understand the rules, Giddens emphasizes the importance of knowledge in that of human agency. To reproduce social relations, human agents practice rules over time and space. The rules are mostly related to conversations, interaction rituals, daily agendas that are not printed nor spoken in words, but rather shown with action.

(2) Resources

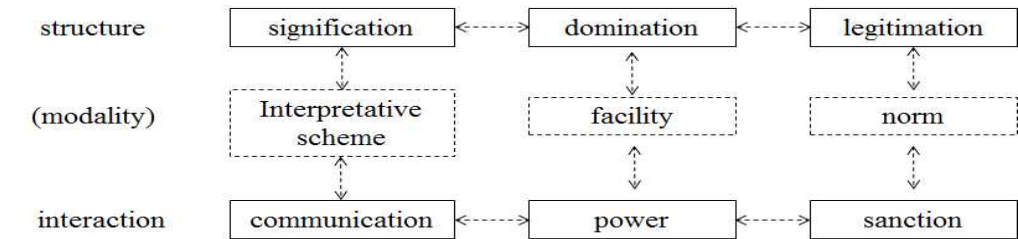
Resources are the sources which command over human agent activities in relation to power. Giddens explains resources in two separate dimensions. First, authoritative resources which "are non-material sources of power resulting in the dominion of some actors over others" and allocative resources which are material sources of power" (Giddens, 1984). Although it is said that rules are made by the action of agents, sources and the ability to engage in the action are needed to accomplish specific actions. Therefore, human agents are given the power to perform certain actions.

In the process of which human agents change the form of rules and resources, the two combine to link social relations. Rules and resources are created, recreated, and maintained across time and space. As the fundamental

meanings of both rules and resource differ according to time and space, social relations vary when playing the role of the link (Turner, 1986; Song, 2004).

3) Duality of Structure

In the concept of structuration, the duality of structure is involved. Giddens stresses that "the fundamentally recursive character of social life, and expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency" (Giddens, 1979). This means that structure enables and restrains certain tasks of social action. Actions are made under structure, though they also reproduce system and reinforce the structure they are acting within.



[Figure 2] Analytical Elements of the Process of Structuration (Giddens, 1984)

From Figure 2, it can be seen that structure is made up of rules and resources, rules are transformed into "signification" and "legitimation" through a mediating process and resources are transformed into authoritative and allocative resources. Rules and resources mediate interactions by interpretative scheme, facility and norm. Modals depicting an/the interpretative scheme, facility and norm actors create power which disables others from specific actions. Actors communicate to interpret and produce the needed actions. Therefore, the interaction within the structure and its context can transform through the mediate of power, morality and communication which links to the reproduction of social systems.

III. Research Methodology

Strauss and Corbin (1990) defined a qualitative research as a person's life, story, behavior, movement, and interacting relationships. Furthermore they argued that there is no use for statistical theory. In addition, Crewswell (2007) stated that, to understand research participants, observations should be made within the natural environment the participants are involved in. Furthermore, researchers should focus on the context and understand the viewpoints of the participants in the arising situations which the participants are present.

Considering these points, to explore how and why women participate in boxing and how their experiences define the male dominant sport by applying Giddens's Structuration Theory, it is appropriate to conduct a qualitative research. Most former Korean studies related to females participating in boxing, dealt with participation motivation factors and effects concerning life satisfaction by applying a quantitative approach. Therefore, to investigate the actual experiences and actions of women's participation in boxing, stepping into the women's boxing culture, qualitative analysis is an essential approach to understand and interpret the dynamic experiences of participants.

1. Research Procedures

This study focuses on understanding the experiences of women participating in boxing and how their experiences and participation influence the male dominant sport. First, observations were made to explore the experiences of women's boxing participation. Literature was reviewed regarding the participation of women in male dominant sports. Afterward, research questions

and goals were formed. The researcher then sought suitable candidates as research participants by daily conversations with potential participants and observations of interaction in the gym by the researcher. Further into the study, data were collected through in-depth interviews and participation observation, in addition to journal entries by the participants and researcher alike. With the collected data, generic steps were applied to analyze the data (Creswell, 2007).

2. Research Participants

To select the participants for the research, the researcher personally joined a boxing gym in Seoul, Korea. From August 2012, the researcher exercised at the gym approximately 3 times a week. In January 2013, the researcher agreed to spar with other women boxers attending the same gym. After sparring, the researcher, women boxers and boxing instructors formed rapport during conversations related to sparring and personal events.

From mid January 2013, the participants in the study began training for the National Amateur Boxing Tournament held in March. In April 2013, the instructor suggested a sparring tournament among the women boxers to novice women boxers who were interested in entering an amateur boxing tournament in May. These sparring matches were not only held in the specific gym the researcher personally attended, but other instructors from different gyms introduced other women boxers to have friendly matches. There sparring matches were held weekly for both male and women boxers interested in sparring. Through several sparring sessions, small conversations and meetings out of the gym, the researcher became associated with the women boxers

individually. Becoming familiar with women boxers from the gym played a pivotal role in identifying the experiences of women boxers and exploring how these participants define boxing, in addition to understanding how the boxing community has responded to female boxing participation.

To identify the experiences of women boxers, explore what they believe boxing to be, and to understand how the boxing community has responded toward female boxing participation, five women boxers with experience in sparring and tournament preparation were interviewed. Participation observations were made among women boxers. Additionally, a total of four instructors including a female boxing instructor, two male boxing instructors, and a male former boxing instructor were also selected as research participants. Finally, four male boxers who have also experienced sparring and tournament preparation were selected to be interviewed and observed.

<Table 1> Personal Background of Research Participants

	Participants	Age	Occupation	Duration of Boxing Participation	Boxing Experience
Women Boxers	A	24	Company Representative	8 months	National Tournament Champion
	B	24	Employee	12 months	National Tournament Semi-Champion
	C	26	Private Business Owner	12 months	National Tournament Champion
	D	28	Health Specialist/ Graduate Student	8 months	Sparring Training

	E	29	Employee	18 months	National Tournament Champion
Male Boxers	F	24	Employee	18 months	National Tournament Semi-Champion
	G	24	University Student	8 months	National Tournament Semi-Champion
	H	24	University Student	12 months	Competed at a National Tournament
	I	25	University Student	6 months	National Tournament Champion
	Participants	Age	Occupation	Experiences in the Field of Boxing	
Boxing Instructors	J	43	Instructor	Former Female Professional Boxer	
	K	40	Instructor	Former Professional Boxer	
	L	29	Instructor	Current Professional Boxer	
	M	73	Former Instructor	Former Amateur Boxer/ Former Amateur Boxing Team Instructor	

3. Collecting and Analyzing Data

To understand women boxers' experiences, responses of the boxing community toward female participation, and the changes to the structure of a masculine sport, data were collected through in-depth interviews and

participation observation. When conducting in-depth interviews, all interviews were audio recorded on a personal audio recorder. Audio recorded interviews were transcribed for analysis. After analysis, data were translated into English. During observation, the researcher documented journal entries to maximum data. Additionally, the researcher participated in training with woman boxers to have a clear understanding of women boxers' boxing experiences. The following are the specific methods utilized to collect suitable data.

1) Participation Observation

For a better understanding of the participants the researcher, a woman herself, fully participated with other women boxers. Full participation plays a main role in collecting data as well as observing participants at a close distance. The researcher can also access a variety of people within the boxing community to gain diverse and true data (Creswell, 2007).

In this study, to understand the experiences of women boxers, a full participation approach was used. Furthermore, the full participation allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the data and to make educated observations and judgments. Participation observation was conducted from August 2012 and continued until ample data were collected. During participation, the researcher and female participants participated in national tournaments and semi-sparring sessions as well as personal meetings in and out of the boxing gym.

2) In-depth Interviews

In-depth interview is a technique that is useful in a qualitative research to collect rich data related to the experience, knowledge, opinion and belief of the participants in an open situation where participants can freely express their point of view. It is also known as "a conversation with a purpose" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Pilot interviews were conducted in advanced to organize an overall understanding of how the interviews will be carried out. The pilot interviews were composed of open-ended questions in a semi-structured format. After pilot interviews, the researcher refined the interview questions to proceed a thorough interview among the participants.

The interviews were conducted from early July until there was abundant data to construe. These interviews were taken after the participants had experienced both semi-sparring matches and sparring training. The researcher choose this period due to the researcher identifying changes in women boxers' perspectives of boxing and changes in physical appearances with participants. Therefore, participants were able to explain what boxing is to them and what part of their lives boxing influenced. Instructors and male boxers were categorized as the boxing community. They were also interviewed according to the same process as the women boxers.

Each interview took approximately 40 minutes for all participants, including female and male boxers as well as head directors and coaches. After analysis follow up interviews were conducted which took an average of 20 to 30 minutes. In the second interviews, questions specifically focused on personal feelings and opinions. Additionally, vague responses to the researcher were

asked to be clarified by the participants for a better understanding.

3) Journal Entries

A reflective journal was used to aide the researcher in retaining information. It was also used as a tool of communication between the participants and the researcher (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In advance, specific situations can be written to enrich the data when analysis. Journal entries were also used to shape interview questions. Also through daily conversations, the researcher can document special happenings surrounding the participation of the female participants.

Journal entries were written from the start of boxing workouts, however, in the first 5 months of participation, only personal feelings and findings in the boxing gym were documented. The early journal entries were used as guidelines when constructing the study. Later, journal entries included questions and curiosities toward possible participants.

4. Strategies for Validating Findings

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility and validity are explained in terms of trustworthiness and authenticity. Therefore in this research, to validate the findings and analysis, triangulation, progressive subjectivity, peer debriefing, and member checks were conducted.

1) Triangulation

Triangulation is a method that uses two or more different ways to facilitate the validations of the results (Rothbauer, 2008). Through triangulation, the researcher will use multiple sources, methods, theories, and investigators to understand and explore the correct direction of the research and to corroborate the existing findings.

2) Peer Debriefing

For an intersubjective agreement colleagues participated in peer debriefing in collected data from participation observation, in-depth interviews and context analysis. Peer debriefing is a technique performed to enhance the credibility and validity of qualitative research by helping the researcher to be honest and provide opportunities to clarify misinterpretations (ThếNguyin, 2008). Through this method, the researcher is unlikely to lose one's subjectivity toward the perspectives of the participants as well as checking the external factors which could have an influence in the process of the research.

3) Member Check

Member checking will provide the credibility of the collected data. At this phase, the interpretations and conclusions can be accurately pointed out by going back to the research participants to review and check the collected data for accuracy.

5. Research Ethics

In this study, to protect confidential information regarding the research participants, data were dealt carefully throughout the entire research. In earnest, all participants were informed of the research purpose and how the results of the study will be employed. In addition, they were informed of how the research will be conducted and why observations and interviews will take place. Before personal interviews and observations, participants signed an agreement form that was approved by Seoul National University Institutional Review Board. Furthermore, all participant's names were mentioned under a false name that only the researcher was aware of.

IV. Findings

Throughout the history of women's participation in sports, there have always been limitations placed on involvement (Hargreaves, 1994). However, as the demand to lose weight, improve fitness and participate in sport has increased, women have recently become increasingly involved in combat sports, such as boxing. In this research, experiences of women boxers were explored to identify how women became introduced to a sport that has historically symbolized masculinity.

To investigate the experiences of Korean women participating in boxing, the responses of the boxing community toward the increasing number of female participants in boxing, and whether Korean women boxers are restructuring stereotypes of the masculine sport, participation observations and in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data. The results are as follows.

1. Korean Women's Boxing Experience

To understand the experiences of Korean women participating in boxing, personal experiences play an essential role in interpreting participation motivation and perspectives. Popper and Eccles (1977) have highlighted that experiences are combined through specific participation or exposure from particular settings people are engaged in. These experiences are determined and influenced by personal and social factors. Personal factors indicate individual circumstances whereas social factors are a combination of the environmental factors that the person belongs to. Different factors urge and attract people to participate in physical activities. For participation in sports previous, diverse physical activity experiences have an influence on people's ability to participate well in future sports (Hoffman, 2009).

In the following, Korean women's experience of boxing is explored in chronological order. The researcher begins with the motivations behind selecting boxing as the chosen sport for investigation. Later, it is studied how women become introduced to sparring. Through sparring, Korean women's accomplishments were verified. With the verified accomplishments, the researcher could understand how the participants defined boxing.

1) Becoming a Woman Boxer

Generally, motivations are separated into intrinsic and extrinsic motives. According to Weiner (1986), intrinsic motives are aimed at the participation in the sport itself rather than having a certain purpose or to receive compensation. However, it is difficult to draw a line between both intrinsic and extrinsic motives in a social phenomenon. Therefore, in this study, motives were not analyzed by distinguishing intrinsic and extrinsic motives. Here, it provides an in-depth explanation of the women boxers' experiences when entering into boxing and their experiences afterwards.

In the early experience of the women boxers, their motives of being introduced to the boxing gym were related to individual circumstances and their social environment. Individual circumstances are largely divided into local physical activity culture, economic considerations, and personal attributes whereas the social environment is influenced by parents, peers, and teachers or coaches (Hoffman, 2009; Mennesson, 2000). According to the Korean women in this study, most of their participation motives were related to individual personalities and personal choices.

(1) Entering the Boxing Gym

Participants selected boxing for several common reasons. Women boxers firstly

felt the need to exercise and lose weight. Regardless of their personal backgrounds, wanting to lose weight was the most common and important factor for women participants. This is in sharp contrast to Wacquant's (1992) research of the motivations male boxers. All women boxers state at least one of the following reasons that attracted them to participate in boxing: weight management, accessibility, and curiosity. Furthermore, personal experience in other sports and the encouragement of family members also had an affect on boxing participation.

During interviews, women boxers listed multiple personal preferences which had an influence on their selection of the sport. Table 2 indicates the motivations of the participants in getting involved in boxing. Women boxers C and D mention the importance of weight management and appearance by taking celebrities as examples. Women boxers A and E point out the location of the gym played a role in easy access. Woman boxer C highlights that shewas encouraged to participate through media exposure, specifically that related to Siyoung Lee. Women boxers B, C, and D's past experience in other sports had an effect in their current involvement in boxing.

<Table 2> Women Boxer's Initial Motivations to Start Boxing

Why Participants Get Involved in Boxing	A. Weight Management and Appearance
	B. Gym Location Convenience
	C. Media Influence
	D. Past Experience in Other Sports
	E. Encouragement From Family Members

A. Weight Management and Appearance

Weight management and appearance have had great influence on the

participants' involvement in boxing. Participants have shown interest in exercising and managing their weight. Therefore, the initial goal for female participants in boxing was to lose weight and manage their appearances. Woman boxers C and D each have different motivations to participate in boxing however they shared common underlying expectations such as weight loss and improved health. Woman boxer D mentions that exercising is an essential part of life and she highlights how important playing a sport is. Woman boxer C adds, to lose weight she needs to play a sport.

"I need to exercise, I thought to myself. I was thinking about which sport I should play to lose weight ... I wanted to be like the girls on T.V " [Woman Boxer C]

"Honestly, I think exercising is like a vital portion of life. A person can't just stay at school and live without moving around. I mean I couldn't live like that." [Woman Boxer D]

As seen above, the importance of exercise has been identified among the participants. This infers that women are interested in sports and women show familiarity with exercise. The desire to lose weight was a common motif among all participants. The "momzzang" concept was also a common motif with participants mentioning they want to look like their idols and the women they saw on TV.

B. Gym Location Convenience

The location of boxing gyms was a factor that aided in attracting participants to the sport. Participants have stated that they saw a boxing gym near their homes and imagined themselves working out and losing weight at

these gyms. Additionally, having the gym close to their homes was a crucial factor for these participants as it allows for more convenient access after working hours.

"At first I wanted to learn a sport and I thought about my options. Then I saw this boxing gym near my house. I wondered how things worked around the gym and tried to imagine myself in there, sweating, losing a couple of kilos." [Woman Boxer A]

These findings support Coakley and White's (1992) study which investigated the mechanism of how young people made decisions when it came to sports participation. The motivations of these participants were related to their mental image of boxing and how energetic it would be.

"I've been interested in boxing for a long time, ages. But because there wasn't a gym close by, I didn't have a chance. When I moved over here, I saw a gym and enrolled right away ... It's easy to get to and I can just walk home. I don't need to take a cab or the bus or anything." [Woman Boxer E]

Participants all attended boxing gyms near their homes during the evening due to the fact that they all had work commitments during the day. Participants needed a place that was easily accessible for them. Women boxers became interested and grew curious about boxing. Since the boxing gyms were near their homes, they would pass by the gyms occasionally and become increasingly curious about the sport.

C. Media Influence

Through the exposure of media, participants became naturally exposed to

women's boxing. Images of celebrities and "momzzang" stars portraying fit bodies allured participants to get involved in boxing. Furthermore, actress Siyoung Lee's success as an amateur boxer in national tournaments was well documented in the media and played an important role in attracting women boxers to participate.

"When I looked around, there was a boxing gym in the area. So I was like, do girls go there? Do you really learn how to hit someone? (Laugh) But then again, it (boxing) was on television, you can see TV stars losing weight after boxing workouts. Siyoung Lee really got my attention." [Woman Boxer C]

Woman boxer C states that she had seen celebrities engaging in boxing as a diet workout activity which encouraged her to participate. This further highlights how media exposure on popular culture has influenced participants to become interested in boxing as a weight loss exercise. Participant C specifically mentions a celebrity (Siyoung Lee) who has influenced and encouraged her to participate. Thus supporting the inferred "Siyoung Lee Effect" and highlighting the enormous influence popular culture has had on the increasing popularity of women participating in boxing.

D. Past Experience in Other Sports

Past experiences in other sports have influenced the participants' selection of sports they currently participate in. The participants have mentioned attempts to lose weight or to get healthier in the past by participating in other physical activities. Mennesson (2000) identified that past experience in sports strongly influences women to participate in sports with shared characteristics in the future.

"Before (boxing), I went to fitness centers and I did yoga. Things like that. But I didn't feel like I was getting enough exercise so I tried Taebo (a different form of boxing which is a combination of both boxing and Taekwondo)." [Woman Boxer B]

"When I was in elementary school I did swimming, Kendo (Japanese Fencing), and gymnastics." [Woman Boxer C]

Additionally, these Women boxers were also interested in other energetic sports and preferred them to calm sports such as yoga. Their decision mostly reflected their personalities and preferences.

"Well, I feel well suited to combat sports and I like it. I always wanted to try it, but never had the chance ... So I tried yoga and jazz dance, things like that, but they didn't really suit me." [Woman Boxer D]

F. Encouragement from Family Members

Participants were also influenced by their family members. Several studies have supported that the family environment and support network have great influence on decision making before participating in a sport (Boutilier & SanGiovanni, 1983; Cote, 1999; Mennesson, 2000; Murray & Howat, 2009).

"I was pretty interested in it (boxing) from a long time ago though. My uncle was a boxer, so when I was young I saw a few of his matches. Anyways, after that I'd always wanted to try it." [Woman Boxer B]

"I have an older brother and we use to watch comics all the time when we were young. We would watch "The Fighting" (a cartoon comic about boxing) or something like that. (Laugh) At that time it ("The Fighting") looked cool so I always thought about imitating the cartoon's moves." [Woman Boxer D]

According to Woman boxer D, an older brother was acting as the socializing agent during her childhood. Interestingly noted during this study was that all five women boxers had an older brother in their family. All participants stated that they would often get into physical 'play fights' and sometimes physical altercations with their brothers and that "fighting" was a very natural and normal activity when they were younger. This comfort with fighting may have acted as a catalyst encouraging the Women boxers to participate in sparring.

(2) Entering the Fighting Ring

Instructors played leading roles when the Women boxers first started to spar. Participants were all asked by their instructors whether they wanted to "take a shot at sparring" approximately 6 months into their boxing workouts.

"It might have been about 6 months into boxing. The instructor suggested I try sparring as it was part of the curriculum ... The instructor said, 'You can enter a national tournament, it'll be a good experience and this would be a good chance to try something.' So I wanted to try it and that's how it all started. I mean I was a bit scared because I could've hurt my face or something, but since the instructor recommended it and said that it would be fine and a

good experience, I thought why not?" [Woman Boxer B]

Like the other participants, Woman boxer B began sparring roughly 6 months into her boxing training. She also commented that sparring was part of the "boxing workout curriculum". When answering the interview questions, the participant highlighted that she was getting tired of mundane boxing exercises and wanted to try something new. She also points out that the instructor recommended her to participate in a boxing tournament. This opened new opportunities for women boxers to approach combat style boxing.

Additionally, participant B states that she was afraid of being injured through participation. Most participants were afraid of sustaining injuries and/or scars particularly on the face. However, the instructors reassured the participants and highlighted that through their training they would be studying correct boxing methods to ensure safety. This highlights the development of trust between the instructors and participants. We can also conclude that trust was built through social interaction outside of the ring via dinners, activities and conversations. Trust was also formed during sparring sessions where instructors acted as seconds (instructors during matches) to the boxers and provided a pair of eyes from outside the ring.

"Actually, I really had no intention of entering a tournament. (Laugh) ... The coach asked, 'wanna try out for a boxing tournament?'. But I just kept on thinking it was just a joke or something. He was like, 'don't you like boxing?' ... I thought to myself, I guess I really do like boxing and learning new techniques, maybe I should try entering a tournament. I think that's what I was thinking of at that time." [Woman Boxer C]

"It (Learning to box) was fun. So I really wanted to try entering a

*tournament too. The instructor said that I need to give it a shot.
He gave me confidence and helped me throughout our training."
[Woman Boxer E]*

By listening to Woman boxer C and E's response, it is supported that they were interested in learning the techniques of boxing. However, they were in doubt of their ability to spar. Participants were encouraged to try something new that would alter their understandings of the masculine sport with the encouragement of their instructors.

During tournament preparation achievement, motivation, and bonds among participants began to build up among women boxers. Through their first experiences in sparring, they were gradually motivated to participate in local and national tournaments. All of which were recommended by their instructors. The reasons behind instructors supporting and advising the women boxers will be discussed in further chapters of the findings.

2) Being a Woman Boxer

Women boxers separate weight management boxing (non-combat diet boxing) and boxing training (combat style boxing) as different types of boxing. Weight management boxing is noted as non-combat boxing where women practice boxing footwork and fixated punches in front of a mirror. This includes mainly core workouts, jump ropes, boxing footwork, sandbag drills and mitt boxing drills. They do not include physical contact against an opponent. However, "mass boxing was used as a training tool. "Mass boxing" is when a novice boxer goes into the ring with a skilled boxer and trains by only letting the novice boxer attack. The skilled boxers move around to work on their footwork but they do not attack back.

According to women boxers, instructors suggest sparring with other women

boxers in the gym. After the women boxers' first sparring experience, the boxers decide whether they want to continue sparring in the future. Despite liking boxing workouts, some women have slowly stopped coming to boxing gyms after negative sparring experiences. However, the selected research participants enjoyed this experience and wanted to continue to box and enhance their skills boxing skills. The following are the encountered experiences of participants in both non-combat and combat style boxing.

(1) Non-Combat Diet Boxing: Exercising Out of the Ring

Participants approached boxing as a diet exercise before they became seriously involved in sparring and tournaments. During their diet boxing period, participants experienced weight loss and increased fitness levels which were their initial goals. Participants stated they were pleased with their new body shapes and the new stronger body image they portrayed. The following Woman boxer expresses her attitude toward strong and fierce women.

"Some girls think muscles are manly. I think not. They look strong and healthy. Boxing kind of has that image too." [Woman Boxer D]

"I lost weight, but my arms were gaining muscle. It felt good. I looked stronger." [Woman Boxer C]

During their transition from non-combat diet boxing to traditional combat style boxing, women boxers began to recommend both forms of boxing in their communities. Some recommended both non-combat and combat boxing, however, there were participants who only recommended non-combat diet boxing. In the statement below, participant B recommends combat style boxing. She highlights the benefits of combat style boxing and how energetic and

interesting it is compared to other sports that she has experienced in the past.

"I really recommend it (boxing and sparring) ... Because of me some of my friends are learning to box. Well, 'cause first of all, you can really learn how to protect yourself. It's better than learning self-defence. When you learn self-defence there are so many rules and things you have to learn, it's so complicated. But when you learn boxing, you start gaining strength instantly. I think you can be stronger than the average woman and strong enough to defend yourself from a guy ... It's a learning sport. And when you're punching the sandbag or shadowing alone you can relieve stress or if you have any worries it helps you think clearly and relieve them ... boxing is a really energetic sport you sweat a lot and it actually feels real good after a workout. I mean it's better than pulling weights over again like a robot." [Woman Boxer B]

"I'm usually the one recommending it. Some people call me the ambassador of boxing (Laugh). Because I'm almost always telling people to try boxing." [Woman Boxer E]

Participant B talks about the benefits of boxing and sparring exercises and particularly mentions self-defence and stress relief. In addition, participant E expresses her appreciation for the sport and highly recommends women try boxing. However, in the following, participant A states that sparring is not suitable for everyone. She adds that people can only understand boxing after they have experienced sparring. She also points out the purpose of participation in boxing according to each individual. Woman boxer A insists sparring should be seriously considered before starting.

"If losing weight isn't the only purpose someone starts boxing, sparring is something to try. Sparring gives the person a chance to really find out what boxing is about. But if that's not the reason, then don't spar. (Laugh) You have to think about it (sparring) a lot before you start, because it's like a huge step into boxing "
[Woman Boxer A]

In the next statements Woman boxers C and D say sparring would be a good experience for a person who is interested in boxing. Additionally, women boxers say that the decisions are all up to the person getting ready to spar.

"You can feel the difference once you've sparred. Maybe trying it out is okay. I mean if you're interested in boxing." [Women Boxer C]

"If they (women) want to spar then, it's something that should be recommended, but it's really up to the person. If they feel uncomfortable about it then they shouldn't try it. I mean if women wanted to try it, it'd give them courage, but since this is a rough man's sport, women might not enjoy it (sparring)" [Woman Boxer D]

(2) Combat Style Boxing: Fighting in the Ring

Participants mentioned that sparring was a "new world", "true boxing", and "the real thing" in comparison to sparing and individual training. Particularly, the differences between having an opponent and being alone in the ring were stressed. The participants revealed the differences in training, changes in emotion, trust development with sparring partners, and controlling intensity

during sparring. The following are the major trends that were found during female boxer's sparring experiences. They are categorized into five experiences and are combined in establishing the experience of "new world" boxing.

Table 3 specifies the experiences gained through combat style boxing also known as sparring. Women boxers E, A and B mention the differences in the methods of training. Women boxers A and D highlight the emotional changes they experience during their sparring sessions. Women boxers B, C and D talk about their first sparring experiences and developing trust with their sparring partners. Women boxers E and D point out controlling the intensity of the sparring sessions and the importance of learning from sparring partners. Last, women boxers C, B and E describe their satisfaction and accomplishment gained from sparring.

<Table 3> Experiences of Sparring

Combat Style Boxing: Fighting in the Ring	A. Different Training Methods (Traditional/Hybrid)
	B. Changes in Emotions
	C. Developing Trust with Sparring Partner
	D. Controlling Intensity of Spars
	E. Satisfaction and Accomplishments

A. Different Training Methods (Traditional/Hybrid)

In the following, participants share their first sparring experiences. Women boxers state the differences between non-combat diet boxing and combat style. Participant B specifically states that combat style boxing is "the real thing" and participant E comments that sparring is "another world".

"It really doesn't matter how long and how much you practice in

front of the mirror. Because when you go in (the ring) you feel your body freeze and you start forgetting everything you learned. It's a totally ... (Laugh) It's another world up there (in the ring)."
[Woman Boxer E]

"It really just hurts. (Laugh) And you get frustrated. But the funny thing is that you don't really think that you never want to ever do it again. It kind of brings out a different side of you and you think about how much better you can do." [Woman Boxer A]

Like Woman boxer A, all participants say that their first sparring experience caused physical pain. However, participants wanted to continually participate to improve their skills. Some participants even talked about the "addictiveness" of sparring. They constantly wanted to spar to test their skills and to practice newly learned techniques. In the statement below, Woman boxer B highlights the difference between non-combat diet boxing and combat style boxing. She mentions her instructor's beliefs and naturally agrees on the differences between the two, mainly because she has personally experienced both types of boxing. Woman boxer B also states that boxing is punching another person and that it is "a whole different story" from practicing in front of the mirror.

"Honestly, at first, since I didn't know anything, it was embarrassing because there were a lot of people in the gym. I didn't even know how to punch someone. The instructor always said that even if someone can punch a sandbag well that doesn't mean that they can enter a tournament. He said that there is a difference between people who have sparred and haven't ... He was right. The sandbag just stands there waiting to get punched, but a person doesn't." [Woman Boxer B]

B. Changes in Emotions

In the previous statement, Woman boxer B emphasizes the difference in punching a sandbag and an actual person. This belief was gained by the participants through experiencing sparring and by the guidance and conversations they had with their instructors. Instructors explain the situations the women boxers are in and emotionally support women during sparring. This was observed during sparring sessions. Instructors play the role of the "second" also known as the "corner man". The "corner man" aids and assists the boxer during a boxing match by giving advice.

Generally, novice boxers become dependent on their "corner man". During sparring or boxing matches it is not easy for a boxer to comprehend the situation they're in. The role of the "corner man" is to be a "second pair of eyes" to the boxer. The "corner man" guides the boxer through the game, not only to win, but also to calm the boxer and notify them when they're in danger. Further roles and the guidance provided by instructors will be explained in upcoming chapters.

"There are so many feelings. I mean. Wow (Laugh). It's about listening to your "second" and thinking about yourself in the ring. The "second" is so important. It's usually the instructor shouting and telling you what to do and to be careful, of course. And then there's the opponent. Even with the opponent there's so much going on between us. They're the girls you know and chat with day to day. It's scary, yet exciting. Scary because you don't want to hurt, them but at the same time exciting to try out your new techniques and footwork" [Woman Boxer A]

Participant A mentions the emotions she goes through whilst sparring. She

says that countless emotions are experienced, such as being scared and confused because she has to process large amounts of information in a split second. For example she needs to, listen to her coach, interpret her actions and her opponent's intentions while remembering that it is a social activity.

"When you just practice in front of the mirror alone you're comfortable with all the steps and jabs ... But once you go in the ring you can't do anything that you're use to ... Then it pops up in your mind that this is the real thing. And that it's different from practicing alone." [Woman Boxer D]

Woman boxer D reveals that sparring is exciting and attracts her to learn more about boxing. Through the statements of Woman boxers A and D the differences between sparring and practicing alone are clearly identified. When there is an opponent, women boxers are eager to test their practiced skills, however, they are afraid of physically contacting their opponent because she is a fellow boxer. Through these mixed feelings women boxers establish mutual relationships with their sparring partners.

C. Developing Trust with Sparring Partners

In sparring, it is essential to have the appropriate sparring partner. In other words, the instructor should consider the height, weight, boxing ability of the participants and whether the boxer is an out-fighter or in-fighter. In the following, Woman boxer B stresses the importance of sparring partners.

"Your sparring partner is so important. Instructors match you up with the right partner. Usually similar height and weight. And sometimes women who use a different style of boxing to you."

[Woman Boxer B]

After the women boxers' first sparring session most of the participants mentioned that they cried. The participants stated that they found their first experience emotionally overwhelming. Some participants particularly stated that they would start crying when hugging their opponent after the sparring session. C expresses her emotions after sparring and the reasons to crying after sparring sessions.

"I think it's because you know it's finally over. You feel relieved and your partner feels the same way. You hug each other and for some reason tears fall, not because it hurts, but it feels like we did it together and it's over." [Woman Boxer C]

When beginning to spar all participants felt uncomfortable with sparring with someone they were becoming emotionally close to, however, because participants trained together to enter tournaments they understood each other. To participant D sparring is a way to communicate and build an understanding with her sparring partner. However, Woman boxer B highlights how some women who first encounter boxing become offended and are hesitant to participate in sparring.

"I think there's a deeper understanding. You're exchanging fists and you don't literally count how much or how little you punch each other. You're communicating and understanding." [Woman Boxer D]

"Some girls get offended after sparring. They don't come to sparring sessions after that. I guess they don't feel good and some even get really pissed. But with the girls that are getting ready for the

tournament, I mean we understand each other. It's just a sport. No intentional harm is intended" [Woman Boxer B]

D. Controlling Intensity of Spars

Controlling intensity is vital in sparring sessions. Although sparring is viewed as a fight from outside the ring it is a vital part of boxing. If a boxer loses his or her pace, the opponent does the same and they instinctively react to each other (Wacquant, 2007). This is the same with Korean Women boxers. Natural instincts occur during their sparring sessions and it is the responsibility of the instructors to control the two fighters. Instructors are important participants in sparring sessions.

"Listening (to the instructor) is key in sparring. If you lose control it becomes a pit fight." [Woman Boxer E]

"You have to know how to restrain yourself. Just because you can punch hard doesn't mean the other person can't. It's the same punch. You have to know how to keep your cool." [Woman Boxer D]

By learning to restrain themselves and controlling the intensity of the game, women boxers improved their patience and are able to focus on technique and footwork during matches. Through these sparring sessions women boxers learn skills from each other.

"Sometimes we (sparring partner and woman Boxer D) talk about how much better we've gotten and teach each other new techniques and give each other advice on how we can improve and what we

like about each others technique," [Woman Boxer D]

E. Satisfaction and Accomplishments

Participants experienced satisfaction and accomplishment during their sparring sessions and after tournaments. However, sparring sessions and tournament preparation are physically and mentally exhausting exercises which require immense mental and physical strength. Sparring sessions are particularly difficult as it's the first step in applying the techniques you have learnt with another partner who is also thinking of how to apply their attack and defense techniques. First of all, sparring requires much more footwork and agility which is often practiced outside of the ring. Second, hand-eye coordination is much more difficult to control when thinking and acting in split seconds. Third and most importantly, sparring requires the willingness and the unyielding tenacity of pushing one's self to endure three minutes of extreme mental and physical exhaustion. Therefore, initially attempting sparring and then continuing it does not happen among all boxing participants. In the following, participants express that participating in sparring and tournaments has been a life milestone.

"I don't even watch sports. So when I was asked if I wanted to participate I was like wow! Awesome! Me? ... And when I got in the ring, the game was really short. Maybe 2 or 3 rounds? So like 10 minutes. It was surprising that it felt so short and at the same time I was like ah, that's nothing, you know? ... It's like life, one decision changes the entire match." [Woman Boxer C]

"It's like I have to! I want to! If anyone was watching my match, I would want them to think, 'oh, she won fair and square.' But still

my first tournament was something that I've never done in my life and it made me feel as though I could do anything if I set my mind on it." [Woman Boxer B]

Participant B states that losing a match encouraged her to further participate as she experienced the desire to win. She also mentions that even though she did not win she felt as though she had accomplished something never experienced before in her life.

"It was cool, really. I've never really liked sport and I was never good at it. I was always last in my P.E class. So I never imagined entering a sporting tournament let alone a boxing tournament. So I felt much more confident about everything I wanted to try." [Woman Boxer C]

This view was shared with participant C who also mentioned feeling confident after entering a boxing tournament. Furthermore, participant E quotes that participation also had an effect on her personality, making her feel more proud of herself. Both of these examples highlight how participation in boxing has helped the Woman boxers achieve a certain level of satisfaction and accomplishment.

"When I'm working out I can feel my body getting stronger every time. ... My personality changed. I mean now I've gained patience and persistence in what I do. I use to be really quiet, but now I'm a bit more out-going ... It's (boxing) a fight against me. You want to quit sometimes, but if you just hang in there for that one minute then you know that you've made it through." [Woman Boxer E]

In the following, participants recognize an enhancement of health which acts as a catalyst encouraging them to continue participating in boxing.

"During training it was honestly really tough. My body got exhausted, but it was really exciting at the same time ... Because after sparring you can figure out what you need to get better at and you can learn from other boxers too." [Woman Boxer B]

"When I started sparring for the first time, I was always disappointed when I was hit by my opponent, it really sucked. Really. And you think, 'really? This person is a better boxer than me.' ... But these days, I want the other person to punch me harder and try to hit me more because it's how I learn. And I can use my techniques and experience from sparring and tournaments to remind me of what I should do in my next match." [Woman Boxer E]

As stated above, Woman boxers B and E feel as though sparring sessions were crucial for their learning as knowledge is shared during and after the session. Furthermore, Woman boxer E stated that she wanted to spar with her partner as realistically as possible so that she could learn as much as she can from the experience. Other participants also mentioned relying on fellow boxers for guidance, feedback and motivation in assisting them to reach their personally set boxing goals.

3) Interpreting Boxing from a Women Boxer's Perspective

Through the experiences of the participants, the researcher has categorized three main perspectives on boxing. These perspectives were constantly mentioned during their interviews and include a typical fight transformed to a

natural sport, a hobby which could one day become a profession and secrecy to avoid stereotyping and social/family conflicts. Table 4 explains who women boxers interpret boxing after their experience.

<Table 4> Interpreting Boxing From Women Boxer's Perspective

Interpreting Boxing From Women Boxer's Perspective	(1) Viewing Boxing as a Sport Not a Form of Combat
	(2) Shift From Social to Professional Boxing
	(3) Secrecy to Avoid Stereotyping and Social/Family Conflicts

(1) Viewing Boxing as a Sport Not a Form of Combat

Women boxers were asked about what they believed the image of traditional boxing was. They highlighted that the natural image they assumed of boxing is the violence associated with a fight. However, after participating in sparring and tournaments their perspective on this masculine sport changed. Women boxers were asked about how they had accessed boxing before they were fully engaged and what their personal thoughts were of boxing. Women boxers stated that they saw boxing as a sport, a future profession, and a secret aspect of their life. This highlights the change in perspective of participants from originally perceiving it to be a typical fight to identifying it as a sport, future profession and not a secret part of their life.

"I've only saw it on T.V and in movies, I'd never been to see a match ... I never understood it to be a thing of reality and I was never really interested in it ... Boxing is a bit violent and in professional matches people don't wear headgear, so it becomes really hitting each other with bare fists right? So I thought it was

really dangerous." [Woman Boxer A]

"Yeah, I saw it on T.V, but never in real life ... Honestly, It was scary. I mean I was interested in it, but when I saw boxing it looked scary and the people in the ring always had their face bloodied up. You can't just ignore something like that ... From a woman's point of view you think about the face, but from a boxer's view? I questioned what really attracts these people to do something that ruins their faces and that is this brutal. I mean it's a difficult sport even for men sometimes. But for a women to do it...? Is it possible? Anyways, it's scary." [Woman Boxer B]

Participants mostly witnessed boxing through the media. Both participants A and B state that boxing looked dangerous and scary. They both mention seeing boxing participants getting hurt and specifically mentioned the boxers' faces. Woman boxer B stresses that while she was frightened by these images she was simultaneously curious about what allures people to participate in and watch such a brutal sport.

"I'd change the channel. It wasn't interesting at all ... Just a square ring with two people punching each other, like a dirty fight (Laugh). Then I didn't know anything about boxing. And when you see those fights usually someone is bleeding. That's how I remember it. So I thought it was just a horrible sport. Like why would people do a sport like that?" [Woman Boxer E]

Additionally, the next statements indicate how women boxers approached boxing before their personal experience. It was noticed that women boxers were not fond of boxing before they encountered it.

"I never use to watch any sports, not even the Olympics or the World cup. I wasn't interested in sports at all. Doing it or watching it. It just wasn't something I did ... but when I saw boxing I thought Why do they do that (Boxing)? Why fight? Wouldn't it hurt? (Laugh) When I was in high school, my brother and I, who's six years older me, would watch WWE on T.V sometimes. But that's just a form of entertainment. It's a show where they all know each other's moves so watching boxing and wrestling (amateur wrestling) had less excitement for me. It's not as flashy. So I've watched pro-wrestling, but never watched a real sport event." [Woman Boxer C]

Interestingly, sports did not interest participants E and C before their involvement in boxing. Their personal preferences of sports in general could be found in the above statements. Although Woman boxer C did not watch the Olympics or the World Cup she was exposed to pro-wrestling from her older brother. The presence of a male figure influenced Woman boxer C to become familiar with combat forms of entertainment.

"But I didn't think of it (boxing) like that (violent) because it is a sport, that's how I felt. So even though people said it's (boxing) a fight or it's violent, I didn't feel the same way, I mean violence is in real fights. If you think of it that way, Hapkido is also a fight instead of a sport, because you hit and kick your opponent. (Laugh) ... Ever since I was young, I never really had anything against combat sports." [Woman Boxer D]

Participant D's perspective differed from the other participants. In her

statement she infers that she has always viewed boxing as a sport. Her personal experience with combat sports and exposure of contact sports had an influence on shaping her perspective of boxing. After the participants started boxing and sparring their perspective of boxing changed. The following interview statements show what the participants currently think of boxing.

"After I started (boxing) I began to relate to other boxers. You think that you can move like the boxers in the movies because they make it look so easy, but it doesn't work like that (Laugh) In amateur matches it looks a bit slow, but even it's hard. 'How much practice would they (professional boxers) have done to move and punch like that?'" [Woman Boxer D]

"There's a difference when you know what it (boxing) is from when you don't. When you don't know what it is, it just looks like fist fights, but after you spar and watch a match you know, 'oh, I know what that feels like.', 'how much training would that boxer have done to get that good?', and 'how did they train?' I was asking myself all these questions at the same time. And you see how the boxer punches and ducks. It's a lot more interesting after you know the science behind it." [Woman Boxer C]

Participants C and D have similar opinions when watching other boxers in a match. They could put themselves in the shoes of the boxers. Aside from empathizing with professional boxers, participants watch matches closely. Women boxers were noted to concentrate on the technical factors of the match. They attempted to copy the footwork and punches of the boxers and tried to imitate the boxer's moves.

"When I first started to learn boxing, it was still simply aggressive and violent, but after I learned boxing, boxing it felt more like a sport with a lot of meaning ... It now seems like a sport and as time passes, you learn the skills and steps so when you're watching a match you see how the match is being managed among the boxers. So it's a lot more amusing. Sometimes I even look for matches to watch ... Yeah, I see the techniques in the match."
[Woman Boxer A]

"I don't think about the scary part of boxing anymore. It's interesting now (Laugh) If I didn't know anything about sparring and sparred, I would've been pissed. I mean you get punched. Who likes being punched? But after learning the techniques and you try the skills that you learned in the ring it gets more exciting ... What's really cool is that you can see the moves and steps of the boxers. 'Oh in that situation you could move like that.' It becomes more like 'how does that work?' rather than 'ouch, that would hurt.' So you focus on the moves of the boxer." [Woman Boxer B]

Two out of five of the participants were not previously interested in sports. However, after experiencing sparring and becoming seriously involved with boxing, the participants began observing the techniques of professional and amateur boxers.

(2) Shift from Social to Professional Boxing

As women boxers became seriously involved in boxing, they were anxious to go to the next level of boxing as professionals. They wanted to learn more and get better as time passed. Additionally, all women boxers had regular jobs

that are not related to sport, however, they did mention a desire to obtain professional licenses and coaching licenses to possibly teach boxing in the future.

"It might not be right now, but later I could get a coaching licence and it could be like my second job or something. But, honestly, a professional licence is something I need to think about. Because you don't wear headgear during the testings." [Woman Boxer A]

Participant A thinks of boxing as a sport that could have an influence on her future career. However, she points out she is not sure if she wants to obtain a professional license. Later in her conversation with the researcher, she stated that at professional testings, headgear must be removed. She showed a sense of discomfort regarding participation with no headgear.

"After the first tournament, since I was the runner-up I aimed to become the next champion so I wanted to try another competition. At first when I started boxing, it was just to lose weight. But it's something that became a hobby, and I thought a hobby that could one day turn into a career. I even thought about boxing as not just a hobby, but maybe an actual career, but there were so many barriers like getting injured." [Woman Boxer B]

According to Woman boxer B, there are discriminatory gender barriers that exist which prevent her from becoming a professional boxer. She expressed two sides of how she perceives boxing as a possible future profession.

"There are a lot of difficulties. But that's the same for all jobs. I mean everyone thinks about quitting. You carry around retirement

forms and constantly think about leaving. But with boxing and all the experience I can go on and become a professional boxer (Laugh) I just honestly just like the sport." [Woman Boxer E]

As for Woman boxer E, she discusses quitting her current job to become a professional boxer. She also stresses her affection toward boxing. Furthermore, in the following statement, she shows how serious she is about boxing and improving her ability to reach a professional level through keeping a journal which documents what she has learnt and what she wants to further develop.

"And you think 'maybe I should try that next time.' Sometimes I write it down in a journal, the skills and steps. I even think about the strength of the boxer. How they handle the power, speed. And if I have spare time I watch the referees and try to catch anything they could've missed." [Woman Boxer E]

(3) Secrecy to Avoid Stereotyping and Social/Family Conflicts

Family members were the social agents that influenced the participants in deciding to participate in combat sports and sport in general. During participation in boxing, some participants were financially supported to attend the boxing gyms by their parents. However, no participants wanted to mention to their parents that they were involved in sparring sessions and boxing tournaments. Parents were aware that their daughters were attending boxing gyms, but did not know about participation in tournaments and sparring.

"They (my parents) knew that I was exercising, but I didn't tell them I was going to compete. After the competition, I told them I became a semi-champion. Runner-up. I mean they told me not to

compete or spar. Anything like that. They told me not to, but I did secretly." [Woman Boxer B]

According to B, her parents discouraged her from competing. This was common amongst all participants' parents. Going to the boxing gym and exercising was allowed and supported, but sparring was not. The reason for this phenomenon lies in the negative perceptions and images of boxing. In the 80s and 90s, boxing was one of the most popular sports in Korea. However, boxing portrayed violence and sorrow among Koreans. This resonated with the parents of younger female boxers and explains why parents are against their daughters participating in combat.

"My family, well, since I'm a woman ... they have a stereotype about sparring. Cause they are older... They still think about the 80s when boxing was really popular. They probably saw it on the T.V. and were shocked by the violent images like I was initially. It's violent, so when they think about boxing they aren't really fond of it. Also because I'm their daughter, they are just worried and don't want me to (spar)." [Woman Boxer A]

Participant A supports the above statements of Woman boxer B. Furthermore, historical coverage of boxing has had an effect on how parents of the participants feel about boxing. However, that is only one element of why dislike their children participating in sparring. It was stated by participant A that because of her gender, there are barriers when it comes to participating in sparring sessions. The connotations of boxing held by parents discourage them from allowing their children to participate. Therefore, reasons of not allowing their children to spar have much to do with the protection of their children.

Additionally, participant B states how boxing has become a part of her life. She describes the boxing ring as symbolic of life and freedom as she is completely in control of her destiny and has to make her own decisions. She continues by highlighting how the sport has changed her in various aspects. Though previously B spars secretly, she indicated that making choices on her own in the ring is a "combination of experiences".

"How should I put this. Boxing is part of my life. You can change your hobby right? Well, if I started a different sport I could fall into it, but even if I'm not a professional or amateur boxer, I want to keep on doing this. And this sport has changed me a lot ... The ring is small, but that's what life is like. You have to make your own choices ... So I want to say this in one word, but how should I put it? (Laugh) It's just like a combination of every amazing experience." [Woman Boxer B]

Even though boxing is becoming popular and there are a lot of women participating in the sport, there still remain preconceptions parents hold that their daughters are in danger whilst in the ring. Participant D notes that she understands why her parents do not want her to spar.

"Parents are the same, they don't want their daughter or son to get sick or hurt, so if I don't say anything about sparring they won't be worried about me. I know that they'll tell me not to spar, but I think I am an adult and I can make my own decisions. I don't necessarily have to do as my parents tell me. And I don't really want to bring it up and make a big deal out of it." [Woman Boxer D]

However, participant D states that even though she sympathizes with her parents, she does not seem to think it is necessary to tell them about her participation in sparring sessions. Parents naturally do not want their daughters to be exposed to danger and want to protect them. However, when it comes to differentiating males and females there is a difference in the way sparring is approached.

Society restrains women from participating in masculine sports. The ideal woman is not one whom fights and participates in masculine sports. This may perhaps be a result of Korea's Confucian social structure worth noting however is that discrimination against women is not exclusively a Confucian practice, but a global phenomenon. Despite many programs and policies promoting female participation in all sports, women still remain outsiders in predominately male sports such as boxing and rugby. This study has supported this viewpoint, specifically in relation to women's participation in boxing and sparring sessions.

2. Responses of the Boxing Community

To understand the responses of the general boxing community in relation to female participation both male boxers and instructors were interviewed. The male boxers were of a similar skill level to their female counterparts. Both male and women boxers trained together for the same tournaments. The responses of the boxing community were divided into three categories: Perspectives of female participation in boxing, management toward both male and female boxers and the changing nature of boxing. Table 5 points out the responses of the boxing community.

<Table 5> Responses of the Boxing Community

Responses of the Boxing Community	(1) Perspectives of Female Participation in Boxing
	(2) Management Toward Both Male and Female Boxers
	(3) The Changing Nature of Boxing, Female Sport vs Male Sport

(1) Perspectives of Female Participation in Boxing

A. Male Boxers' Perspectives

Male boxers expressed their personal opinions on how they felt about women playing sports in particular boxing and sparring. In the following statements, male boxers express an ambivalent viewpoint of women participating in sports and women participating in boxing.

"I really don't have anything against women playing sports. It's sport, anyone can play ... If they want to play then they can, it's

simple ... At first, when I saw girls sparring I thought they would have weaker punches and actually wondered why they (girls) sparred at all because it would hurt. I mean why do something that could hurt you, but now I think it's fine if the girl that's sparring really wants to do it." [Male Boxer F]

Male boxer F states that he didn't understand why some women would put so much effort into sparring. However, as he trained with the women and was exposed to their sparring workouts and gradually became comfortable with women sparring. He also mentioned the potential pain that sparring could bring to the Women boxers.

"Exercise is a good thing. Isn't it? I never thought of it to be something negative. I think women should exercise however they want, whether it's boxing or anything else." [Male Boxer H]

Male boxer H associates exercising as a positive activity. Also that all women should exercise. All male participants had similar thoughts towards women participating in sports in general. However, in relation to women sparring there was initially great discomfort, yet as they were exposed to women sparring, their perception of it changed.

Interestingly, all male participants with sisters stated that they didn't want their sister to participate in sparring or boxing. Also if they were not able to spar that they shouldn't start boxing in the first place. In their comments, the male participants say that their sisters could potentially get hurt and that they didn't want that to happen. Through these comments, it can be inferred that male participants were not entirely comfortable with women participating in aggressive sports such as sparring and boxing.

"Honestly, if my sister wanted to box, I wouldn't want her to. I would try to stop her. I mean exercise is okay, but boxing, it's a difficult sport and she could get hurt ... And if she's not going to spar, there really is no reason for her to even start boxing.." [Male Boxer F]

"A sister? Umm, that's a difficult question. I guess I would say it's ok at first, I'm not a very strict older brother, telling my siblings what to do and what not to do. Really, I wouldn't be so fond of it because once you start (sparring) you can get hurt and punched. And I mean if you're very unlucky you can get knocked out ... I would be very worried." [Male Boxer H]

Male participants also answered questions regarding women's sparring. They pointed out the areas women generally excel in and the differences between women's sparring and men's sparring.

"Honestly, men's sparring is a lot more exciting. For women's boxing to be as exciting, the female boxer needs to be really good, but there aren't a lot of cases like that." [Male Boxer I]

"If you watch boxing just for fun, then guy's matches are so much more entertaining. I think it's because guys know and use more skills and techniques." [Male Boxer G]

B. Boxing Instructors' Perspectives

During participation observation it was noticed that the relationship between boxers and instructors played an essential role in guiding the boxing

participants. As mentioned earlier in the previous findings, women boxers were often encouraged to start sparring and entering tournaments. This shows that the efforts and guidance of boxing instructors had a massive influence on these women. Therefore, head instructors and coaches were questioned on why women entered boxing gyms and how and in what ways women boxers were taught and advised. In addition to any differences they have noticed between male and women boxers.

In the second part of the head instructors and coaches responses, perspectives on female boxing participation will be explored. Typical answers of financial motivations behind recommending boxing participation to females are common. However, the attitude toward how they managed the women boxers have much to do with their affection of the sport.

In this part of the findings, female participation in boxing is viewed in a positive manner. Boxing instructor L state's differences between men and women boxers during training which are consistent with personality differences between genders.

"It's awesome to see and to train women. When I coach I feel that the women have more patience than men. You think they'll be afraid of getting hurt during sparring, but they are more into it. In the ring, women try to use the skills they have learnt so it's a bit different from men." [Boxing Instructor L]

In the next statement Head instructor K states what he thinks about women when they are sparring as well as the differences between men and women boxers. He says that women lack power and strength, however, their mental strength far exceeds male boxers and that he prefers instructing women's sparring because of this.

"For men, they have a way of showing off when they spar. They want to show others what they are capable of. As for women, it's different. When women spar they want a challenge. They want to try something new. It would be nice to have a lot of male boxers, but for females, through boxing they get a sense of achievement. ... Personally, women's sparring is a lot more interesting to me. They are more detailed in refining their skills, even though they lack physical strength initially. I mean power and strength is something they can work on later but their (Women) sportsmanship is way better than men's." [Boxing Instructor K]

This opinion on women's strength and power was shared with boxing instructor M. who additionally argues that despite once being a professional boxer he does not recommend it as a career.

"There is a difference in power and strength. Women have physically unique characteristics that restrain them from the power that men are naturally born with ... Boxing is great to learn how to protect yourself and to diet, but for a career I don't recommend it." [Boxing Instructor M]

(2) Management Toward Both Male and Female Boxers

Boxing instructors discuss how they coach both men and women. They mention that there is no difference in instructing men and women. Boxing Instructor J states that she treats all gym members equally and as if they were a family member.

"There isn't anything special, all a boxing director has to do is

their best. ...You have to care for each and every person like they are your own child. That's what I do ... For women the workout programs are concentrated on losing the fat, so there's a lot of fitness workouts, like running and jumping rope. And I have to keep on giving them mental help, like continuing to cheer them on during workouts and telling them to keep it up." [Boxing Instructor JJ]

Head instructor K also says that there is no difference in training men and women. He also points out what men and women prefer when they are learning boxing as well as the ways to motivate them to continue boxing.

"There is no difference in managing a male or a female. It's the same, but training is a bit different, for guys the training program is mostly focused on punching the sand bag and gaining strength. As for women, mostly easy techniques are studied to keep the sport interesting. So all female participants learn something new every day." [Boxing Instructor K]

Boxing instructor K also stresses that without guidance from an instructor or coach women do not have the opportunity to try sparring or even enter tournaments. He also mentions a lack of available information and the image that boxing portrays. In this sense, instructors and coaches are the sources of encouragement for boxing tournament participation.

"Most of the time, if no one recommends it(sparring), women don't spar at all. Almost a hundred percent of the time. Women could start boxing to exercise, but because of the social image it has, women don't know the routes or ways to start sparring. They don't have the information needed to enter a tournament or even start

sparring. So, if the instructor or coach doesn't recommend sparring then it's really impossible to experience it(sparring)." [Boxing Instructor K]

"It's always up to the person. It's their decision. The only thing I can do is ask. Then I think it opens up something new for people. ... Since they start boxing, I mean boxing isn't boxing unless you spar" [Boxing Instructor L]

In boxing coach L's statement he says that boxing isn't boxing without trying to spar. This is one of the reasons he recommends sparring. However, he also points out that the final decision is up to the person.

(3) The Changing Nature of Boxing, Female Sport vs Male Sport

Due to the increase in women participating in boxing workouts, the researcher asked the participants whether this phenomenon could change a masculine sport, boxing, into a sport that mostly women would be participating in. Vast and contrasting answers were suggested. Male boxer F stated that, because of boxing's deep rooted stereotypes of masculinity, there could not be a change in the sport at all. In male boxer G's statement he also mentions boxing as a fight and due to gender stereotypes associated with fighting it would take a long time for it to develop as an equal sport for both men and women.

"Yeah, it's a male sport. ... I mean boxing is originally a violent and brutal sport that's kind of like a guys thing. (Laugh) It's a sport that shows off the strength of men. Boxing itself is masculine. Women can participate and there's really nothing wrong with that,

but for it to become a women's sport. I don't really agree with that." [Male Boxer F]

"I think it would be impossible. First of all it's fighting. And it's an aggressive sport. When you think about women's sports, you automatically think about a less aggressive sport like figure skating. ... It could take a long time, but I guess one day it could be an equal sport that both males and females could enjoy." [Male Boxer G]

However, male boxer H points out the possibility of a transition in gender stereotypes of boxing. Korean society is very responsive to popular culture and if a particular female boxer became very well known it could start a trend and expand women's boxing immensely. He uses Korean figure skater Yuna Kim as an example.

"Right now it's still a male-centered sport. But I guess if someone like a Yuna Kim of boxing comes out then it could change. Oh, but now that Siyoung Lee is famous, a change in boxing could happen, but it's going to take a long time. (Laugh) " [Male Boxer H]

Overall, male participants share positive perceptions about women participating in sports. However, they do not all favor women sparring due to the fact that they do not feel comfortable with women hurting each other. In addition, male participants perceived boxing to be a masculine fighting sport. Also they stated that women participating in boxing usually follow programs that are male-oriented. Therefore, regardless of the increasing number of women participating in boxing, it will be difficult for it to transition into a women's sport.

The next two statements express the opinions of boxing instructors in relation to boxing as a female sport. These opinions are in great contrast. Instructor L argues that boxing could become an equal sport, however, he shares similar opinions to male boxer F in the previous comments about the increasing number of females boxing. He strongly argues that boxing is fundamentally fighting and that it cannot become an exclusively female sport.

"It can be a sport like soccer or basketball where both men and women can participate. It's not just a sport for men and it's not just a sport for women." [Boxing Instructor L]

"What is boxing? It's a fight right? Who do think of when you hear the word fight? Seriously, it's not a woman. It's a man. So do you think the structure of boxing will change just because there are an increasing number of females? I think not. Both men and women can participate, but the fundamentals of boxing will never change." [Boxing Instructor M]

Head instructors had similar perspectives toward female boxing. They all favored female participation in boxing, however, they pointed out the differences between male and female boxing participants. Even though men and women start boxing for similar reasons such as diet and exercise, when they begin sparring their motivations differ. Men are more competitive and want to show others their power and capability, whereas women think of sparring as an opportunity to apply the skills they have been studying and to obtain personal fulfillment.

Moreover, the views of whether the increasing number of female boxers will change the form of boxing into a female sport. Instructors stated that it has become a general sport that both men and women can participate in. However,

one boxing official stated that boxing itself, because of its obvious characteristics it cannot become a female sport. Furthermore, boxing embodies fighting and the general connotations associated with fighting are masculinity and male participation. Therefore, we can infer that women may enter a male sport, such as boxing, but cannot change deep-rooted stereotypes and connotations associated with it.

3. Stepping into the Frame of Masculinity

One of the purposes of this study is to theorize the lived experiences of women boxers entering a masculine sport. Therefore, the researcher adapted Giddens's Structuration Theory to interpret the experiences of the research participants. In this part of the results, rules and resources of women boxer's experiences and the boxing community will be discussed as well as the duality of structure.

Rules are social practices which are understood by actions in various situations and are distinguished as "generalizable procedures" and "tacit knowledge" (Turner, 1986). There exists both formal and informal rule agents which become natural behavior that is practiced through time and space. When constant behavior is practiced over a period of time new structures are formed which are combined with resources.

Resources, combined with rules, are actions which are performed to reach specific goals. The two types of resources that Giddens refers to are "allocative" and "authoritative". They may refer to the facility or space that the action is taken place as well as the authority to passively inculcate an action. At this point the agent interacts with these resources. Therefore, with the existing rules, resources are combined to create structure.

When structure is produced, a duality of structure is also found. According to Giddens, human actions are controlled under structure and at the same time human actions create new structure. This duality of structure lies between agency and structure. Therefore, in this part of the findings, rules and resources found among the female participants whom enter the structure of a masculine sport as well as the duality of what the structure implies will be in the following text.

1) Generally Developed Behaviors Amongst Women Boxers

As highlighted in the text above, rules are social practices which can be separated into two different categories, "generalized procedures" and "tacit knowledge". However in this study, due to the characteristics of boxing gyms or any other type of fitness health gym, which are extremely commercialized, there is not a distinct separation between these two types of rules. Women boxers join the boxing gyms firstly to exercise or lose weight, on the contrary, they do not form a group independently because that is not their initial purpose of their participation.

In the women boxers' participation motivation, there are similar patterns among the women. The first goal in participation was to exercise and later a space was found to help them achieve their goals. Finally with a boxing gym in close proximity to their house, they logically decided to enroll and participate. Factors such as family influence or media exposure were the final contributing factors. Therefore, the participation motivations to participate have one goal and similar patterns. These contributed to the creation of structure.

Later when these women enter the boxing gyms, they pay the gym to "take care of their bodies". Instructors and coaches train these women to reach their goals of losing weight and improved fitness. At this point, we can assume that the payment for rendered services can be referred to as a "generalizable procedure". This rule is practiced every one to three months according to the participant's decision of payment. Another form of "generalizable procedure" indicates the 1:1 learning sessions with either the coach or instructor. In the following statement, head instructor J points out the routine of her workouts.

"All participants, male or female, have to take the padded mit lesson before they go home. It's effective for their diet and it's the last interaction between me and the participant. And I can figure

out what they need to learn next." [Boxing Instructor J]

This rule is practiced throughout the entire boxing gym making it a structured routine for all participants. While the process of diet boxing continues, women are encouraged to try sparring approximately six months into their workout. As sparring begins, women enter the peak of "sweat science". At this point they are gradually welcomed into the community of boxing. Moreover, after sparring, boxers and instructors get together for social conversations about daily life and the sparring session of the day. At times the sparring is filmed on a camera which becomes a resource that is distributed among the participants and is talked over.

A number of rules are practiced within the structure whether they are official or spontaneous. To maintain the structure of newly introduced female participants in the boxing society, various efforts are made between the instructors and participants. Practices are routinely made, almost making them rituals among the members of the society in question.

2) Interaction With Routine Behavior and Influence of Instructors

As it was explained previously in the introduction of the structuration theory, resources are a combination of opened up space and authorized actions. To reach specific goals, in this case boxing training, women are first and foremost guided by instructors and coaches. In addition to the head gear, boxing gloves and necessary equipment. The authority figures place the female participants in situations such as sparring to reach the ultimate goal they are aiming for.

To do this, instructors and coaches play an essential role by devising a plan to accomplish the goal. They automatically create a boxing workout program that is suitable for each individual and test to see whether the female

participant can execute the necessary actions. Additionally, the authority figures slowly initiated the female participants as "semi-boxers", those who are not professional boxers, but are whom are seriously involved in boxing, into the formally existing boxing community.

In the process of being accepted to the community, female participants are able to choose whether they want to get involved. This usually happens after sparring sessions or during the first stage of boxing workouts.

"Sometimes after workouts we (other female participants and instructors) get together in the gym and chat and just talk about random things that happen to us on a daily bases. I call them my boxing family. I don't know what it is, but there is something that connects us." [Woman Boxer B]

"I think it's because we spar together. (Laugh) We see the worst and best in each other. ... We hug after we spar. At that moment, I don't know about others but I feel totally relieved and there's like a few seconds that I want to cry. It's like yes, we did it. We made it through. I think that's what everyone else thinks too. (Laugh)" [Woman Boxer D]

These two statements highlight the social relationships that are also developed outside of the ring. Participant B also mentions the boxing gym has become her boxing family. Through this we can assume that the participants and instructors have developed a close and trusting relationship. This could be a natural phenomenon. However instructors and coaches insist that female participants and coaches talk about sparring or daily life after workouts in social conversation. In the following statement an instructor stresses the benefits of engaging in conversation after a workout.

"These girls don't know each other. Before, during, and sometimes even after sparring. They need to get to know each other because that's how they can push each other to spar and have fun at the same time. And then I can also know what's going on with everyone, if someone isn't feeling well or if someone is hurt."

[Boxing Instructor K]

Through these statements and observations, female participants occasionally go out to eat after workouts or tournaments. Also when female participants have birthdays or special events instructors celebrate with them. Therefore, instructors and coaches take on a role, not only to teach and train, but to make a practical and mental environment that is comfortable for the female participants in be involved in. Material goods and practical setting are provided for the interaction between the instructors and participants. These are the combination of both the "allocative" and "authorative" resources.

3) Creating Structures Within the Developed Structure

Duality of structure is the central concept of the structuration theory. As the reproduction of structure begins, social relations and practices are the processes that develop a structure. Women boxers' experiences', male boxers' responses to women's participation, and instructors' guidance and perspectives have formed interrelationships which contribute to the reproduction of structure. If we look at the women boxers as one group and male boxers and instructors as another, then in this sense the two groups are in interaction with each other. This way they form a structure that is mutually understood and respected among the members of the two groups.

When women enter the structure of boxing, their participation is voluntary.

As their participation in boxing is maintained, routine practices are developed. In making these practices, communication between female participants and instructors form trust. Women boxers gradually follow the instructor's coaching as well as the culture that exists in the existing community structure.

In the reproduction of the structure, it is noted that women were absorbed into the male dominant sport. However the structure of the masculine culture has slowly transformed making it suitable for women to adapt to. Instructors mention that they make programs the same for males and females, yet, they are personalized for each individual. Additionally, conversations, having birthday parties, and eating out occasionally, were practices formed for female participants. Instructors quote, "to keep someone in this sport especially women, it is important to constantly motive them and give them your full attention."

Though, there is a sense of a unilateral relationship between women boxers and the boxing community, there would be no way for this masculine sport to form a different color within the structure. Women's participation in boxing has escalated to the level of professional boxers. According to the Korea Boxing Commission, there are a total of six world professional boxers with champion titles, one of whom is currently defending her 15th title. Interestingly, all six professional boxers are women. Four of which are listed as world champions in the International Female Boxing Association (IFBA). Officials from IFBA state that Korean women's boxing has developed rapidly in terms of the number of boxers, but also in the quality of the boxers and range of the audience interested in boxing. Additionally, there are currently four world boxing referees who are all women and countless female instructors and coaches domestically.

Internally and externally, there have been many changes allowing women to participate in boxing. Consistent with this study, female referees and instructors did not start boxing with the intention to become professionals or world title

champions. Their motivations for participation are consistent with the participants of this study. All women who have touched the zenith of their boxing careers triggered change in the structure of Korean boxing, establishing a platform for women of different backgrounds and aims to enter the masculine sport.

V. Discussion

For centuries, boxing has been noted as a traditionally dangerous sport, prohibiting women's participation (Gorn, 1986; Halbert, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994). Despite the exclusion of women in boxing in the past, women have regularly been seriously competing in boxing matches (Halbert, 1997). Recently, the inclusion of women's boxing in the 2012 London Olympics has brought up controversies in the field of competitive sports (Linder, 2012; Woodward, 2013).

In this study, Korean women boxers' experiences were explored and the responses toward female participation of a historically "manly art" of a male occupied boxing community. Furthermore, how women enter the male dominant sport and recreate the structure of boxing was investigated. Previously, Halbert (1997) and Mennesson (2000) reveal that personal and social backgrounds, the presence of male figures (family members) involved in boxing and academic difficulties or problems at school influence women in their participation of boxing. Similarly, Korean women boxers were influenced by their family members, however, the women boxer's started boxing predominately to lose weight. Losing weight and keeping fit were important motivations of the women boxers when they first began boxing exercises, thus supporting the findings of Halbert (1997). Additionally, academic difficulties were not noted as having an effect on the Korean women boxers, because they all had personal occupations. In comparison, women mentioned the stress gained from their work environments which may be compared to the academic stress of the participants in Mennesson's (2000) study. Furthermore, in Kim's (2004) study of Korean women in college boxing clubs, participants were noted to be interested in masculine sports and to have active personalities. Women boxers in the current research were also found to be interested in

participating in active sports rather than slow exercises such as yoga or pilates.

Women boxers begin boxing as a weight management exercise and to assist with other health related issues. In previous research, women boxers undoubtedly consider sparring as "real boxing" or "hard boxing" (Hargreaves, 1997; Mennesson, 2000). In other words, Korean women boxers separated boxing into "cosmetic boxing" (box-aerobics) and "combat boxing" (combat style boxing). However, there has been little research about how women boxers actually started entering tournaments and matches (Halbert, 1997). Korean women boxers were introduced to sparring and tournaments only through their instructors. Instructors guided women boxers to experience sparring and when instructors indicate that a certain women boxer had the skills to enter a tournament, they suggested and provided information for the boxers to prepare themselves mentally and physically.

Interestingly noted, boxing has been known as "a sport for men from low-income groups", "developing country sport", or "a hungry sport" (Coakley, 2009; Son, 1998; Wacquant, 2004). According to Wacquant (2004), boxing gyms were described as "a shelter for black men to help them get off the streets". However, in the Korean boxing industry, boxing is reestablishing its market position as a physical fitness exercise for women (CNN Travel, 2011; Shin, 2007). This was supported by the participants in this study who viewed boxing as a fitness hobby. Professional women boxers fight for "fight money", that is to say, boxing is their profession. Whereas, Korean women boxers state that it is only their hobby and not their profession. This implies that Korean women boxers are not pressured as much as professional boxers. In contrast to Halbert (1997) and her research of American professional women boxers, Korean women boxers did not mention struggles in their experiences such as discrimination at gyms and matches. Negative stereotypes and conflicts were found among the women boxers and their families, particularly parents. Parents of the women boxers did not understand nor agree with their daughters

competing in tournaments. Moreover, the perspectives and treatment toward women boxers differ throughout tournaments and training.

During tournaments instructors, coaches, corner man (seconds), referees and other boxing associates are men. These men contribute to help these women to experience boxing and all of its technical aspects. It is true that there are more male components in the structure of boxing, however, women are not perceived to be aliens in the "manly art". This in contrast to Halbert's (1997) findings that women boxers were exposed to negative stereotyping and sexual discrimination. The inclusion of girls and women at boxing gyms has altered how men perceive women's boxing (Kim, 2004; Woodward, 2008).

In this research, it was observed in the gym that there were more women participating in, both combat and non-combat boxing, than men. Women were "taking over" the boxing gym, a traditionally male exclusive domain. This study found that a club's tournament preparations were mainly focused on the women boxers. Therefore, women in the gym were treated with great respect as they were the chosen to be representatives of the gym to enter tournaments and win championships, in contrast to male boxers who mostly encouraged women boxers mentally and played the roles of trainers and corner men.

Korean women boxers were found to be more serious and concentrated on their training compared to their male counterparts. Due to this diligence, instructors were found to favor training women boxers over male boxers. Rotella (1999) highlights that times have changed women have proven they are just as strong as men in the ring and this has influenced the perspectives of how women are thought of in the boxing world.

Boxing instructors welcome both male and female participants for obvious financial business reasons, however they have noted a preference for training Women boxers. As Gummerson, Nicola Adams's trainer, stated, "all lads want to do is pass a couple of hours. But the girls come there for one reason to learn." this has been supported with the instructors in this research (Patel,

2012). When research participants began boxing they felt obligated to do their best in the ring and in training to prove that they belong there, compared to male boxers who often want to "show off" their ability.

There is also a difference in the way men and women perceive boxing which is highlighted during sparring sessions. Women boxers are respected among the boxing community after matches that include a high level of skill development, their footwork and their sportsmanship. They show appreciation of their instructor's guidance and their sparring partners for training together. These behaviors of respecting others and expressions of association can be interpreted as conventional practices absorbed in the actions of the women boxers. Women are naturally placing themselves in the structure of the masculine sport and engaging in combat sports, compared to other research in the past where women's involvement has found to influence depictions of male participants (Laffert & McKay, 2004).

Through this interpretation, the inclusion of women in boxing is a natural action and the boxing community in Korea does not exclude women. Moreover, participation of women in boxing does not change the basic fundamentals of boxing as a sport. However, there have been alterations to the structure which allows few more participants to enter the sport. Additionally, women boxers have shown to adapt to the environment provided for them by the boxing community. In other words, women and the boxing community interact to find a medium suitable for both parties. Women boxers are not offered an opinion in the politics of boxing due to the fact that the vast majority of members are still male. This however has been changing with a growth in the number of women not only participating as boxers, but also as world champions, referees, and instructors.

The inclusion of women in boxing has raised positive reactions. The genesis of taking up boxing differs from women boxers of previous studies. Even though women participate in different forms of boxing, it has been highlighted

that women in Korea are engaging themselves in a masculine sport similarly to women in other countries. Women's involvement transcends stereotypes of female boxing and constructs newly developed perspectives of boxing. The participation of women in a male dominant sport is no longer an intrusion. Sports are gradually losing gender stereotypes. Boxing supports this as it is gradually developing as a neutral gender sport, one that is performed by both male and female athletes (Kim, 2004).

VI. Conclusions and Suggestions

1. Conclusions

Modern society has allowed men and women to participate in various traditionally gender exclusive sports alongside one another. This is a sharp contrast to the early 1990s when women were marginal figures in the field of male-oriented sports and vice versa (Halbert, 1997; Coakley, 2009). Despite advancements in gender equality, women's participation in sports that symbolize masculinity is still not unanimously accepted. Despite this, in the case of boxing there has been an increase in the number of female boxers at both the recreational and professional level, internationally and domestically.

At the international level, women's boxing became an official event at the 2012 London Olympics. This was closely followed by controversy and debate about the inclusion of the sport (Woodward, 2013). In Korea, the "boxing boom" for females began in the early 2000s when the "momzzang" concept attracted the public's attention for an ideal body. Later in 2012, the "Si-young Lee effect" played a pivotal role in influencing many Korean women to participate in boxing as both an exercise and a competitive sport (MunhwaIlbo, 2013). In Korea, the rapid growth in popularity of female participation in boxing shows great potential in the future development and promotion of female boxing.

Therefore, this research has studied the experiences of Korean women boxers. Additionally, the study investigates the perspectives of male counterparts and training instructors toward the participation of female boxers at the recreational level. Furthermore, the researcher explores how female boxers reconstructed or adapted to a male dominant sport, by applying Anthony Giddens's Structuration Theory.

Experiences of women boxing participants were analyzed by the process of why they selected this particular sport, what they gained through their experiences, and how they perceived the sport before and after their participation. The study discovered that participants selected boxing for multiple reasons. The most common of which being weight loss and health maintenance. Secondly, the location of the boxing gyms were an important factor in selecting it as the sport they wanted to participate in due to accessibility. Third, media exposure and influence developed curiosity allured them to become interested in boxing. Fourth, participants have been influenced by previously participating in contact sports. And finally, the influence of family and social support networks.

During their participation in boxing, participants faced multiple personal changes which were strongly correlated to and exposed during their sparring experiences. Participants were introduced to sparring only through the guidance of their instructors. The vast majority of participants did not voluntarily show interest in sparring or regional tournaments, rather they were dependent on the instructors' suggestions of sparring. Without the encouragement of the instructors and coaches it would have been difficult for participants to experience sparring and national tournaments.

During participation in sparring the participants adapted transitional approaches toward boxing and gained personal accomplishments. First, women boxers described sparring as "an enlightening experience of boxing". Through sparring experiences, participants were able to exercise, relieve stress, and bond with other female boxers. Second, the participants described boxing as "a dirty fight" before they had experienced sparring, however after participation, such negative views were dropped and they accepted boxing as "a sport". Third, some participants stated boxing was an important turning point in their lives' and that it influenced their perspective on boxing as a professional career.

Next, the reactions of the boxing community to the women boxers and

female participation in masculine sports were studied and showed various results. Male boxers had positive responses to women playing sports and they felt no hostility toward women exercising in the same gym with male boxers. However, in contrast to their prior statements, after watching women sparring the male participants raised a question of why women would want to become involved in a violent sport.

Overtime, male participants became more familiar to women boxers sparring and eventually encouraged fellow women boxers during sparring sessions. Male participants gradually changed their viewpoints of females boxing on the surface, in contrast, their actual perspectives of female boxing has not dramatically changed as they expressed in interviews. During male boxers' interviews, all participants stated they did not want their female sibling to participate in boxing. Surprisingly, three out of four male boxers had at least one female sibling and all women boxers had an older male sibling.

Furthermore, instructors applied different approaches toward boxing participants. Instructors welcomed both male and female participants who were eager to learn. Boxing gyms are private businesses, therefore, attracting clients regardless of gender for their business' success is the goal of gym managers. Therefore, substantive supervision and managing a boxer, regardless of their gender, is crucial for the boxer's motivation to continue their participation in the gym. Moreover, both male boxers and instructors mentioned that boxing could never become a "female sport", regardless of the increasing number of female participants, as the original violent characteristics of boxing have still not fundamentally changed.

Lastly, the actions of women boxers were interpreted by applying Anthony Giddens's Structuration Theory. The theory of structuration is a social theory on the creation and reproduction of social systems which is based on the analysis of structure and agents. In terms of the structuration theory, through the action (boxing participation), the agents (Korean women and boxing

community) position themselves within the structure of a male dominant sport where there are consequences of unintentional, yet organized routines establishing a recreated structure and system. In other words, structures refer to the combination of "rules and resources" embedded within the actions of the agents.

Therefore, actions which involve a routine of day-to-day activities intertwined with both intentional and unintentional consciousness, form practice which then become rationalized forms of action. These routines are dependent on "tacit knowledge" and involve the entire procedure of entering the gym from greeting each other at the gym (a show of respect and association) to scheduled workout programs for each individual and occasionally dinners (space of bonding). Resources, a key concept of structure, are actions dominated by agency which also represent power. In the case of boxing, the boxing community, let alone, the instructors hold the concept of power enabling women boxers to participate in the gym by providing the area of the gym, workout programs, and opportunities to experience sparring. Furthermore, routines, equivalent to habits and rules, are combined with hierarchically organized resources which interact with time and space building the "duality of structure".

According to structuration theory, social systems include "reproducing relationships between individuals and/or collectives across space and time" (Giddens, 1981). Participation of Korean women in boxing reshape the male dominant structure of boxing by their interaction with both male and female boxers as well as instructors who hold the power to create new culture or modify cultures and systems within the boxing society. Though there is little change in the fundamentals of boxing, perspectives and understandings of women participating in a masculine sport is in the transitional stage.

The participation of women boxers has produced a base for the history of female boxing in Korea. According to Korea Boxing Commission, from 2006

to 2013 approximately 91 women passed the professional boxing license examination. Even though there is a clear difference in the number of women professional boxers and male professional boxers, there are at least two to three women boxers participating in every license test throughout the year.

Additionally, in Korea, there are currently six professional boxers with international championship titles all of which are women. Since 2002 there have been 16 professional women boxers with Korean championship titles. Furthermore, at the International Female Boxing Association (IFBA), there are 14 weight divisions with nine championship titles, four of which are held by Korean professional women boxers.

Gradually, instructors are finding merits of training female boxers and promoting boxing in general. Though passive attitudes amongst women boxers exist, the ideal characteristics of the boxing ring which include an opponent and the instructor, boxing cannot be performed alone. Dependent or independent from the power of agency, interactions and silently routinized practices between agents and structure take on the lead of producing social systems.

2. Suggestions

As this inquiry developed, a need for future research became apparent, due to the fact that there has been little in-depth research of the interaction of females in boxing and other masculine sports in Korea. Several questions remain.

First of all, this study was limited to five women boxers, four male boxers and four instructors. In future analysis, participants of different age groups and participants from various boxing gyms should be investigated. A larger number of research participants can assist in developing a more comprehensive

understanding of boxing participant's experiences and the perspectives of the boxing community. Additionally, participants of different age groups may have differing opinions and experiences than the participants in this study, who were all in their 20s.

Second, this study was conducted only among boxing participants at the recreational level. Professional and amateur boxers may offer different insights toward female participation in boxing due to the characteristics associated with different levels of professionalism. In addition, the influence of the participants' personal backgrounds and childhood environments may account for specific understandings of "masculinity" and "sports".

Third, this study only investigated an individual contact sport. Future studies may focus on team sports that involve more social contact, such as football, basketball, or rugby in Korea. Individual sports and team sports have different characteristics which deduct numerous results from participants, showing similar yet opposite views.

Fourth, during the exploration of the women boxers, the data mainly focused on positive accomplishments and support. Female participation in manly sports may not always be welcomed and may go through periods of rejection and exclusion. Previous research explored the barriers and discomforts participants personally experienced. However, most of these studies focused on western women boxers. Therefore, it is likely that women boxers from Asian cultures may experience various forms of alienation and discredit that are different from athletes brought up from western cultures.

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연구참여자용 설명서 및 동의서(성인용)

연구 과제명 : Restructuring the Male Dominant Sport: The Case of Women Boxers

연구 책임자명 : 김 윤 정(서울대학교 체육교육과, 석사과정)

이 연구는 생활체육 복싱에 참여하는 여성의 경험을 이해하고 증가하는 여성의 복싱 참여를 바라보는 복싱계 관계자들의 인식을 알아보고자하는 연구입니다. 귀하는 생활체육복싱에 참여한 경험이 있으며 현재도 생활체육 복싱에 참여하는 여성/남성/관장 혹은 코치이기 때문에 이 연구에 참여하도록 권유 받았습니다. 이 연구를 수행하는 서울대학교 소속의 김윤정 연구원(김윤정, C.P : 010-5573-****)이 귀하에게 이 연구에 대해 설명해 줄 것입니다. 이 연구는 자발적으로 참여 의사를 밝히신 분에 한하여 수행 될 것이며, 귀하께서는 참여 의사를 결정하기 전에 본 연구가 왜 수행되는지 그리고 연구의 내용이 무엇과 관련 있는지 이해하는 것이 중요합니다. 다음 내용을 신중히 읽어보신 후 참여 의사를 밝혀 주시길 바라며, 필요하다면 가족이나 친구들과 의논해 보십시오. 만일 어떠한 질문이 있다면 담당 연구원이 자세하게 설명해 줄 것입니다.

1. 이 연구는 왜 실시합니까?

이 연구의 목적은 여성 생활체육 복싱 참여자들의 경험을 탐색하고 남성 복싱 참여자와 관장 및 코치들이 여성 복싱 참여자들을 인식하는 관점을 알아보며 여성 참여자들이 남성중심의 스포츠를 어떻게 해석하는지 이해하는데 목적이 있다.

2. 얼마나 많은 사람이 참여합니까?

여성 생활체육 복싱 참여자로 아마추어 대회 혹은 스파링을 경험한 여성으로 4~5명을 선정할 예정이며 복싱 관계자, 즉, 관장 및 코치 4~5명과 남성복싱 참여자 약 4~5명이 참여할 것입니다.

3. 만일 연구에 참여하면 어떤 과정이 진행됩니까?

본 연구는 참여관찰과 면담을 통해 진행될 예정입니다. 참여관찰은 복싱 체육관과 아마추어 복싱 대회 장소에서 이루어질 것이며 면담은 개별적으로 체육관 혹은 카페에서 참여자가 편안해하는 곳에서 진행될 것입니다. 면담 내용은 참여자들의 복싱 참여전의 생활과 복싱에 참여하게 된 계기, 복싱 참여를 하는 과정 속에 일어나는 경험과 느낌, 그리고 대표적인 남성 중심의 스포츠인 복싱을 바라보는 관점에 관해 구성될 것입니다. 만일 귀하가 참여의사를 밝혀 주시면 다음과 같은 과정이 진행될 것입니다.

개별적으로 개인당 1~2시간 정도의 면담을 3회에 걸쳐 진행될 것이며 필요한 경우 1~2회 추가면담이 진행될 수도 있습니다. 연구자는 귀하의 동의하에 모든 면담 내용은 녹취할 예정이며 불편하거나 원하지 않는다면 즉시 연구자에게 말해 면담과 녹음을 중단할 것입니다. 모든 과정은 귀하가 원하는 시간과 장소에서 이루어 질 것입니다.

4. 연구 참여 기간은 얼마나 됩니까?

연구 기간 동안 일주일에 3-4일에 걸쳐 복싱 참여 여성들과 운동을 함께하면서 여성들을 관찰할 예정이며 면담은 1~2시간 진행하여 3회 정도 참여하도록 요청받을 것입니다. 또한 남성 복싱 참여자 혹은 관장 및 코치일 경우에는 면담만 이루어질 예정이며 면담은 1~2시간 진행 될 계획이며 3회 정도 참여하도록 요청 받을 것입니다. 총 연구는 2013년 7월 1일~2013년 12월 31일까지 이루어질 계획입니다.

5. 참여 도중 그만두어도 됩니까?

예, 귀하는 언제든지 어떠한 불이익 없이 참여 도중에 그만 둘 수 있습니다. 만일 귀하가 연구에 참여하는 것을 그만두고 싶다면 담당 연구원이나 연구 책임자에게 즉시 말씀해 주십시오.

6. 부작용이나 위험요소는 없습니까?

면담과 참여관찰 중 불쾌한 감정을 유발할 수 있습니다. 이럴 경우 귀하는 언제든지 녹음을 멈출 수 있습니다. 만일 연구 참여 도중 발생할 수 있는 부작용이나 위험 요소에 대한 질문이 있으면 담당 연구원에게 즉시 문의해 주십시오.

7. 이 연구에 참여시 참여자에게 이득이 있습니까?

귀하가 이 연구에 참여하는데 있어서 직접적인 이득은 없습니다. 그러나 귀하가 제공하는 정보는 여성 생활체육 복싱 참여자들에 대한 이해를 증진하는데 도움이 될 것입니다.

8. 만일 이 연구에 참여하지 않는다면 불이익이 있습니까?

귀하는 본 연구에 참여하지 않을 자유가 있습니다. 또한, 귀하가 본 연구에 참여하지 않아도 귀하에게는 어떠한 불이익도 없습니다.

9. 연구에서 얻은 모든 개인 정보의 비밀은 보장됩니까?

개인정보관리책임자는 서울대학교의 권순용 교수(Tel: 02-880-7703)입니다. 저희는 이 연구를 통해 얻은 모든 개인 정보의 비밀 보장을 위해 최선을 다할 것입니다. 이 연구에서 얻어진 개인 정보가 학회지나 학회에 공개 될 때 귀하의 이름과 다른 개인 정보는 사용되지 않을 것입니다. 그러나 만일 법이 요구하면 귀하의 개인정보는 제공될 수도 있습니다. 또한 모니터 요원, 점검 요원, 생명윤리심의위원회는 연구참여자의 개인 정보에 대한 비밀 보장을 침해하지 않고 관련규정이 정하는 범위 안에서 본 연구의 실시 절차와 자료의 신뢰성을 검증하기 위해 연구 결과를 직접 열람할 수 있습니다. 귀하가 본 동의서에 서명하는 것은, 이러한 사항에 대하여 사전에 알고 있었으며 이를 허용한다는 동의로 간주될 것입니다.

10. 이 연구에 참가하면 댓가가 지급됩니까?

죄송합니다만 본 연구에 참가하는데 있어서 연구 참여자에게 어떠한 금전적 보상도 없습니다.

11. 연구에 대한 문의는 어떻게 해야 됩니까?

본 연구에 대해 질문이 있거나 연구 중간에 문제가 생길 시 다음 연구 담당자에게 연락하십시오.

이름: 김 윤 정 전화번호: 010-5573-****

만일 어느 때라도 연구참여자로서 귀하의 권리에 대한 질문이 있다면 다음의 서울대학교 생명윤리심의위원회에 연락하십시오.

서울대학교 생명윤리심의위원회 (SNUIRB) 전화번호: 02-880-5153

동 의 서

1. 나는 이 설명서를 읽었으며 담당 연구원과 이에 대하여 의논하였습니다.
2. 나는 위험과 이득에 관하여 들었으며 나의 질문에 만족할 만한 답변을 얻었습니다.
3. 나는 이 연구에 참여하는 것에 대하여 자발적으로 동의합니다.
4. 나는 면담 진행 중 면담 내용을 녹취하는데 동의합니다.
5. 나는 이 연구에서 얻어진 나에 대한 정보를 현행 법률과 생명윤리심의위원회 규정이 허용하는 범위 내에서 연구자가 수집하고 처리하는데 동의합니다.
6. 나는 담당 연구자나 위임 받은 대리인이 연구를 진행하거나 결과 관리를 하는 경우와 보건 당국, 학교 당국 및 서울대학교 생명윤리심의위원회가 실태 조사를 하는 경우에는 비밀로 유지되는 나의 개인 신상 정보를 직접적으로 열람하는 것에 동의합니다.
7. 나는 언제라도 이 연구의 참여를 철회할 수 있고 이러한 결정이 나에게 어떠한 해도 되지 않을 것이라는 것을 압니다.
8. 나의 서명은 이 동의서의 사본을 받았다는 것을 뜻하며 연구 참여가 끝날 때까지 사본을 보관하겠습니다.
9. 나는 연구자가 연구를 위해 나를 관찰하고 관찰지를 작성하는 것을 동의합니다.
10. 나는 연구자가 연구를 위해 면담 내용을 녹음하는 것, 시험 혹은 훈련 도중의 사진촬영에 동의합니다.

_____	_____	_____
연구참여자 성명	서 명	날짜 (년/월/일)
_____	_____	_____
김 윤 정	_____	_____
동의서 받은 연구원 성명	서 명	날짜 (년/월/일)
_____	_____	_____
김 윤 정	_____	_____
연구책임자 성명	서 명	날짜 (년/월/일)

만일 있을 경우

_____	_____	_____
법정 대리인 성명(참여자와의 관계)	서 명	날짜 (년/월/일)

※만 18세 이하 미성년을 대상으로 하는 연구의 경우 반드시 부모 동의가 있어야 합니다.

_____	_____	_____
입회인 성명	서 명	날짜 (년/월/일)

관찰 기록지

날짜:	장소:	참여자:
훈련 전		
훈련 중		
훈련 후		
기억할 내용/특이한 점		

국문초록

남성중심스포츠의 재구조화:

한국 여성복싱 사례 중심으로

김 윤 정
서울대학교 대학원
체육교육과

복싱은 전통적으로 여성의 참여가 제한적인 남성중심의 스포츠였다. 그러나 현대에 이르러 여성이 스포츠 활동에 참여할 수 있는 다양한 기회가 생기면서 과거와는 달리 남성중심의 스포츠 활동에도 여성 참여율이 지속적으로 증가하고 있다. 이에 따라 여성복싱이 2012년 런던 올림픽에서 처음으로 정식종목에 채택되었으며, 우리나라에서는 2000년대 초반에 ‘몸짱’의 영향과 여성 프로복싱의 활성화로 대중들의 관심을 끌게 되었다. 이후 2012년 배우 이시영의 복싱 참여 사례는 한국 여성들의 복싱 참가에 기폭제 역할을 하였다. 따라서 국내외적으로 여성 복싱의 참여율 증가는 여성 복싱 발전 가능성을 함의하고 있다고 사료된다.

본 연구의 목적은 한국 여성 복싱 참여자들의 활동 경험을 탐색하고 여성 복싱에 대한 기존 복싱 커뮤니티의 관점을 이해하는 것이다. 또한 역사적으로 남성 중심 스포츠인 복싱의 구조에 여성이 참여함으로써 변화해 가는 현상에 있어 Giddens(1984)의 구조화 이론(Structuration Theory)을 적용하여 해석하고자 하였다. 본 연구에서는 총 13명(여자 복싱 참여자 5명, 남성 복싱 참여자 4명과 복싱 관장 4명)의 연구참여자를 대상으로 심층면담 및 참여관찰을 통해 수집한 자료를 분석하였다.

수집된 자료에 대한 분석 결과는 다음과 같다.

첫째, 본 연구에서는 여성 복싱 참여자들이 복싱시작 동기, 복싱경험에 대해

여 어떻게 인식하고 있는가를 탐색하고자 하였다. 여성의 복싱 시작 동기는 몸매관리, 체육관의 접근 용이성, 미디어의 영향, 과거와 다른 스포츠에의 참여, 그리고 가족의 영향 등으로 조사되었다. 나아가 스파링을 통한 입문 계기는 관장 및 지도자들의 권유가 유일한 요인인 것으로 밝혀졌다. 여성들은 복싱 참여로 인하여 다이어트 복싱과 전통 복싱을 경험하게 되었으며, 다이어트 복싱을 통해서는 몸매를 관리하는 방법을 배우게 되었고 전통 복싱을 통해서는 스파링을 경험하게 되었다. 특히, 스파링 복싱을 통해서는 참여자들이 복싱 운동 프로그램의 차이, 감정의 변화, 스파링 파트너와 신뢰 쌓기, 스파링 중 격렬함 통제, 그리고 성취감을 느꼈다고 조사되었다. 또한 복싱 참여 이후 여성들은 복싱을 바라보는 관점의 변화를 인지할 수 있었다고 나타났는데 여성 복서들은 복싱을 일반적인 싸움에서 자연스러운 스포츠로 관점을 전환하게 되었으며, 취미로만 느꼈던 복싱에 대한 전문성을 습득하면서 복싱을 삶의 일부 분으로 받아들였다는 것이다.

둘째, 본 연구에서는 기존 복싱 커뮤니티의 여성 복싱 참여를 바라보는 관점에 대하여 탐색하고자 하였다. 복싱 관장과 남성 복서들로 이루어진 복싱 커뮤니티에서는 여성의 복싱 참여를 긍정적으로 바라보고 있었는데 그 이유는 매우 다양하였다. 관장들은 복싱장을 운영하는 사업가 및 지도자의 입장에서 남성, 여성에 관계없이 모두가 복싱에 참여하기를 원했기 때문인 것으로 조사되었다. 또한 이러한 상업적인 측면이외에 관장들은 여성의 복싱 참여가 복싱 발전의 기회로 작용하고 있음을 인식하였다. 남성 복서들은 여성이 스포츠 활동으로서의 복싱 참여 현상에 대해서 자연스럽게 받아들이고 있었으며, 여성 복서들의 스파링에 대하여 처음에는 거부감을 느꼈지만, 여성복서들의 스파링을 빈번하게 목격함으로써 여성들의 복싱참여를 긍정적 인지하고 있는 것으로 조사되었다.

셋째, 본 연구에서는 Giddens(1984)의 구조화 이론을 적용하여 여성이 남성 중심 스포츠에 참여하는 과정과 현상을 해석하고자 하였다. 구조화이론은 구조와 행위자에 대한 분석을 기반으로 한 시스템의 창조와 재생산에 관한 사회이론이다(Giddens, 1984). 구조화 이론에 따르면 행위(복싱 참여)와 행위자(여성 참여자와 복싱 커뮤니티)는 남성중심 스포츠구조에 자리 잡아 지속적으로 무의식적인 행위를 반복하여 구조의 구조화를 이루게 된다. 복싱장에서 이루어

지는 규칙은 1:1 개인 레슨과 복싱장에서 인사하기, 주기적 스파링하기, 대회 참가, 그리고 비정기적 회식 자리를 갖기 등으로 이를 통해 여성복서들과 관장들이 복싱장이라는 구조에서 조화를 이루고 상호작용을 통해 그 안에서 새로운 구조를 생성한다. 규칙 이외에 구조화이론을 설명하는 요인으로서 분배적 자원과 권위적 자원, 행위 등을 들 수 있는데 관장이 복서들에게 복싱장이라는 공간을 제공하는 것과 스파링을 위한 용품을 제시하는 것을 분배적 자원으로 볼 수 있다. 권위적 자원은 형태가 없는 자원으로서 1:1 개인 프로그램을 통해 회원들이 무의식 상태에서 이를 무조건적으로 따르는 것을 의미한다. 다시 말하면, 복싱장 안에서 회원들은 돈을 지불하고 서비스를 받는 형태로서 일정한 권력을 소유하고 있지만 동시에 관장은 복싱장에서 회원들과는 다른 형태의 권력을 행사하고 있기 때문에 회원들은 규칙과 함께 구조의 목표를 이루기 위해서 분배적·권위적 자원과 맞물려 행위를 구조화하는 것이다. 그리고 이러한 행위는 권력과 동등한 관계에서 설명이 된다. 복싱장에서 권력을 행사하는 사람은 관장 및 코치이며, 이러한 권위적 자원은 행위자가 다른 행위자를 통제할 수 있는 자원이고 분배적 자원은 행위자가 실제적인 물질을 통제할 수 있는 자원이다. 결론적으로, 복싱장이라는 구조에서 규칙과 자원은 관습화되어 자연스러운 행위가 되고 이러한 행위에 의문을 갖지 않고 권력을 행사하는 사람을 따르게 되는 현상이 발현하게 된다.

본 연구에서는 여성 복싱 참여자가 시합과 스파링을 주기적으로 하게 되는 이유에 대하여 관장의 권유가 있지만 결정적으로는 참여자의 선택으로 이루어짐을 인지할 수 있었다. 이처럼 규칙과 자원들은 상호작용을 통해 관례화되어 새로운 구조를 형성하며, 규칙과 자원이 동시에 공존하면서 구조의 이중성을 보이게 된다(Giddens, 1984). 구조의 이중성은 구조화이론의 주요 개념으로서, 복싱에 참여하는 여성들은 남성중심 스포츠의 구조에 개입되어 그 구조에 적응하는 동시에, 기존의 복싱 커뮤니티가 여성 참여자를 환영하게 되는 인식의 전환을 가져오기도 한다. 여성과 커뮤니티는 상호작용하면서 기존의 구조에 또 다른 발전의 모습들을 양산하고 있는데 여성의 참여로 복싱장의 환경이 변화되어 가고 있는 것으로 이를 설명할 수 있다. 그리고 여성을 우대하기보다 여성도 ‘전통 복싱’에 참여할 수 있는 기회가 마련되었다는 것은 중요한 의의를 제시한다. 복싱이 지니고 있는 근본적인 성격은 변하지 않았지만 복싱장

이라는 구조 내에서 여성이 자리 잡을 수 있는 기회와 시스템이 생성되고 있다. 그러나 이러한 구조는 전혀 다른 새로운 구조로의 혁신적인 변화를 내포하지는 않는다. 다만, 기존의 구조가 새로운 구조를 내재함에 따라 점차 변천해가는 과정과 향후 변화에 대한 가능성을 고찰해낼 수 있다.

주요어 : 여성복싱, 복싱참여, 남성중심스포츠, 구조화 이론

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