



## **Breaking the Barriers in Women's Fencing: Historical Roots, Title IX and Empowerment of Women**

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### **Abstract.**

Due to historical, social, and cultural bias, financial constraints as well as a lack of leadership, women's involvement in fencing had been limited throughout fencing's history until Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in the USA became law. A review of women's fencing shows a history of breaking the barriers with the enacting of Title IX to eliminate gender discrimination in sports and education being the most significant turning point. Title IX has broadened and deepened the scope and participation of women in fencing and made fencing an enabler and driver to enhance women's grit and leadership, leading to the empowerment of women in society. This paper has systematically reviewed the literature and evaluated the role of fencing in the empowerment of women through archival analysis, first-hand observation, and interviews. A framework is developed to highlight the linkage between Title IX, women's fencing, and empowerment. It is evident that the impact of Title IX for women with fencing as an enabler and driver is far-reaching. It has widened the scope of women fencing by reaching the general public and deepened the scope of women fencing by raising the visibility of this women's sport into national and international arenas. The paper aims to lay the ground for future research into fencing heroines and how they had broken the barriers in history, and their social impacts.

**Keywords:** discrimination; gender; history; impact; sports