

# 11th ASEAN Council of Physical Education and Sport (ACPES) International Conference 2025



Contribution ID: 143

Type: Oral

## Hope Beyond Struggles: Trans Women Athletes Journey to Inclusion in Sports

Thursday, October 2, 2025 5:15 PM (15 minutes)

### ABSTRACT

Several researches indicated how trans women athletes experienced challenges and barriers in participating sports and physical activities such as rights in sports competitions, discrimination and stereotyping. Yet, a dearth of research indicating the hopes of trans women athletes in sports participation. Thus, this study aimed to examine the struggles and hopes for inclusion in sport participation. A total of six trans women athletes who participated in this study with at least 3 years of sports participation, had undergone feminizing hormone therapy for at least three years and were interviewed using a semi-structured approach. Thematic analysis revealed two key struggles: performance issues and hormonal changes. Despite these significant obstacles, participants expressed hopes centered on supporting LGBTQIA+ community and policy, and the achievement of personal empowerment and community acceptance. The findings highlight the critical need for inclusive policies, resources, and supportive environments that enable trans women athletes to fully and fairly participate in sports. Trans athletes often face discrimination, unequal treatment, and a lack of understanding, all of which limit their chances to succeed and feel accepted. True inclusion goes beyond simply allowing participation that requires the creation of safe, respectful, and affirming spaces where trans women can grow and thrive. The study also reveals that hope for policy reform, broader acceptance, and equal opportunities plays a vital role in sustaining their motivation and resilience. These findings call on sports organizations, policymakers, and communities to take meaningful action in building a more inclusive and equitable sporting world for all.

Keywords: Transwomen athletes, sports participation, inclusion, gender identity, hormone therapy

**Author:** Mr GENERALAO, Christ (N/A)

**Co-author:** Ms TORING, Lady Mae (ROTC Lecturer)

**Presenters:** Mr GENERALAO, Christ (N/A); Ms TORING, Lady Mae (ROTC Lecturer)

**Session Classification:** Inclusive and Adaptive Physical Activity

**Track Classification:** Inclusive and Adaptive Physical Activity