

## Factors that are causing spectators' disinterest in the women's football championship competitions in Côte D'ivoire

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2025, 28(02), 204-213

Publication history: Received on 20 September 2025; revised on 01 November 2025; accepted on 03 November 2025

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2025.28.2.3485>

### Abstract

This research on the explanatory factors of spectators' disinterest in women's football championship competitions in Ivory Coast aims to analyze the factors that explain spectators' disinterest in accessing stadiums during women's football championship competitions. Indeed, despite the interest that spectators have in the king of sports, disinterest persists in women's sport. The said research took into account 100 subjects among men and women who were present at the stadium during women's football matches and people living near the stadium. At the end of the surveys, it appears that the disinterest in women's football in Ivory Coast is explained by a lack of media visibility, inadequate infrastructure for spectators, an average level of play in the face of emerging professionalism, socio-cultural challenges such as patriarchal barriers, and a lack of commercial promotion and organization of unifying events. Low financial support and the absence of professionalism in clubs also contribute to a less attractive spectacle.

**Keywords:** Spectator Disinterest; Stadiums During Competitions; Women's Football; Infrastructure

### 1. Introduction

Sport could be defined as a set of exercises, most often physical, practiced in the form of individual or team games that can lead to competitions. Beyond this definition, sport encompasses a set of moral values, such as a sense of effort and fair play. It is in this vein that Giraudoux (1996) states that sport is the only way to preserve human quality. It is notably a tool for bringing together, unifying, motivating, influencing, and mobilizing several sports enthusiasts around a common goal. Based on this definition, we can define football as a team sport played with a spherical ball between two teams of eleven players each in a playing space (stadium) designed to host sports competitions and promoting accessibility for other stakeholders in the sports movement, namely spectators. Created in the mid-19th century, football was a few years ago conjugated to the masculine, it was once unfortunately excluded from the environment of women given their roles and place in Sinda society (2017). But today this situation tends to disappear with modernization we see more and more women in the field of sport. However, this massive involvement of women in the

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sporting environment more precisely does not arouse much interest among spectators, because for years we have been witnessing football matches with an almost deserted stadium. It is often regrettable and unfortunate to see a low enthusiasm of the public or even supporters who struggle to fill the stadiums during football matches and most often when it comes to women's football. To have more information on the subject, we decided to conduct a study to highlight the factors that are at the base of this disinterest. Thus, it is around these different observations that our research work will be situated. You will find in the development of our work several parts begin first with the theoretical framework of the study which begins with the justification of the choice of our research subject which includes three (3) steps first the personal motivation which consists of showing to justify the reasons which push us to make the choice of this subject. It is followed by the social relevance which consists of showing the impact that our subject can have on society and finally the scientific scope. Then we have the problem which is an observation between what is and should be defining the problem which the research is tackling, our research problem followed by the different subsidiary questions, the hypotheses and the objectives The third part is devoted to the methodological framework of the research.

### **1.1. Research questions**

After several reflections within the framework of our research, we asked ourselves various questions.

### **1.2. General research question**

What factors explain the low level of engagement of the Ivorian public in women's football competitions in Côte d'Ivoire?

### **1.3. Subsidiary Questions**

- What is the link between the quality of the show and the stadium attendance rate during women's football championship competitions?
- What is the influence of the communication strategy on the spectator participation rate in Ivorian women's football championship competitions?

#### *Research Objectives*

We have a general objective and specific objectives.

#### *General Objective*

This study aims to analyze the factors that explain the lack of interest of spectators in attending stadiums during women's football championship competitions.

#### *Specific Objectives*

- Determine the link between the quality of the show and public disapproval of Ivorian women's football competitions.
- Determine the influence of the communication strategy on stadium attendance rates during the various competitions of the Ivorian women's football championship.

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## **2. Methodological approach**

### **2.1. Study population**

The population of the municipality of Marcory is estimated at approximately 249,858 inhabitants. However, the study does not cover the entire population. A sample was drawn from this population. This work consists of collecting information from our target audience, which is composed as follows: the president of the Ivorian Football Federation, the manager of the Robert Champroux stadium in Marcory, and the staff working at the men's and women's stadium. Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, the target audience will be the spectators attending women's football competitions organized by the Ivorian Football Federation and people living near the stadium, men and women aged between 13 and 65.

### **2.2. Sampling**

Sampling is the process of selecting a group of people or a portion of the population, including the sample, to represent the target population of the study. There are various sampling techniques. The sample, for its part, is a fraction of the population on which the study is based and which the researcher judges to be able to provide him with relevant

information for his study. The researcher must mention the target population, the basis of his survey, give the sampling technique used, and the sample size. This study aims to understand and explain scientifically the phenomenon under study. The choice therefore fell on sampling by reasoned choice. First, sampling by reasoned choice is a sampling technique which consists of choosing elements of the population on the basis of particular criteria, so that the elements chosen are representative of the phenomenon studied. As for the administration of the interview guide, it will be a question of meeting the president of the Ivorian football federation FIF as well as the manager of the ROBERT CHAMPROUX stadium in Marcory and the staff working at the stadium, to the extent that they are directly in contact with sporting events, they will be able to give us quality information. Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, we will use the convenience or blind sampling technique. This technique because it will allow us to select a portion of the available and easily accessible population meeting the selection criteria that will provide us with the necessary information. This fraction of the population will be 100 male and female respondents in total, which took into account people present at the stadium during women's football events and people living near the stadium as long as they have this ease of access to the stadium.

### **2.3. Data collection method and tools**

#### *2.3.1. Data collection instruments*

The data collection technique is a crucial step in writing a dissertation. Thus, the collection of information will be done through observation, documentary research, and a questionnaire survey.

##### **Observation**

N'Da defines observation as: "an information gathering technique that involves a researcher observing behaviors or events unfolding over a given period of time and recording them." Observation is simply a survey technique that involves the researcher observing the behavior of actors during their actions in the field while being with them. Observation allows the researcher to gain insight into the manifestation of the phenomenon being studied. There are different types of observation, but the one used in this study is direct observation.

For Berthiaume (2004), direct observation is based on accurately reporting the observed behavior, with as little interpretation as possible. This technique will allow us to examine the phenomenon directly in the field of study and allow us to better understand the field of study and gather certain information.

##### **Documentary research**

This involves outlining the different types of documents used in the writing of our work, specifying how they were relevant to our work, and also providing the location where we obtained these documents. Indeed, for the writing of our work, most of the documents used were sourced from the internet, such as scientific journal articles, books, academic journals, theses, dissertations, and online dictionaries, which served us throughout the completion of our work. To do this, we used search engines such as [persee.fr](http://persee.fr), [theses.fr](http://theses.fr), Google Scholar, [lafouille.com](http://lafouille.com), Larousse and others.

As well as many other documents that allowed us to justify the delimitation of our field, also to locate our study area and provide certain details to our work. For example: the monoFigure of the municipality of Marcory which was submitted by the Marjory town hall after filing the letter requesting authorization for data collection issued by the National Institute of Youth and Sports. Also, to allow us to obtain more information on our subject, we also used certain documents from the Ivorian Football Federation.

##### **Questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire is an instrument for collecting data and information through questions. These written questions are addressed to the target group, who respond in writing. It is a data collection tool generally used for statistical, numerical, and quantitative research. It contains a set of closed and open-ended questions and is also based on the themes obtained from specific objectives. It allows for the collection of statistical data, the determination of percentages, and numerical data. As part of our study, we have not yet conducted a survey at the study site, so we have not yet used a questionnaire. However, in our actual study, we will likely use questionnaires to understand the reasons why spectators do not participate in women's football championship competitions. According to Grawitz, the questionnaire "is an essential means of communication between the researcher and the researcher. The questionnaire contains a series of questions regarding the issues on which the researcher is expected to provide information." »

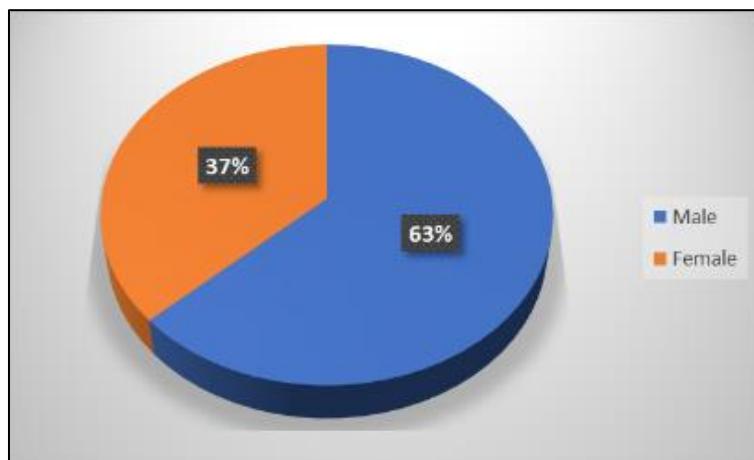
## 2.4. Qualitative data analysis

At this stage, we used the TECNO SPARK 20 mobile phone to record interviews with the subjects who gave us permission to do so. We faithfully transcribed these interviews during the data analysis.

## 2.5. Quantitative data analysis

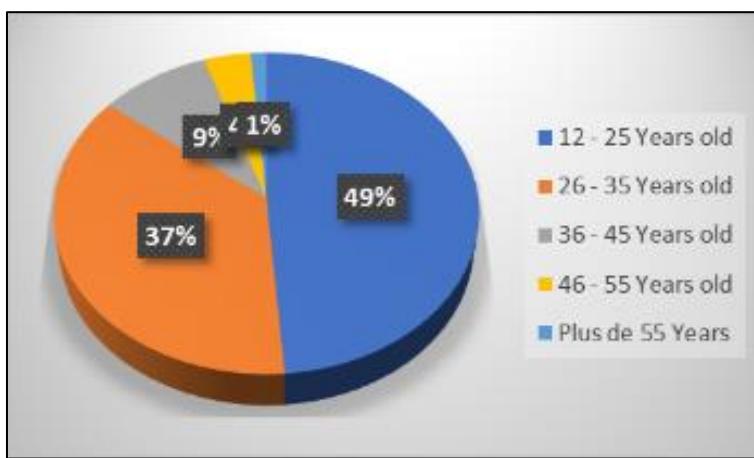
In this part of the research, we used several methods to analyze and process the data. In this work, the descriptive analysis method, a mathematical method that allows for the processing of multiple data sets, was used. In this analysis, data analysis is very important. It can be done in several forms, such as manual analysis or software-based analysis, in which flat sorting and cross-tabulation were used. Through analysis, the data were entered into a table (single entry) or a matrix (double entry table), or presented in the form of a Figure, histogram, or pie chart. Using statistical software, we synthesized the data and, above all, highlighted the major trends that describe our phenomenon.

## 3. Results



**Figure 1** Distribution of respondents by gender

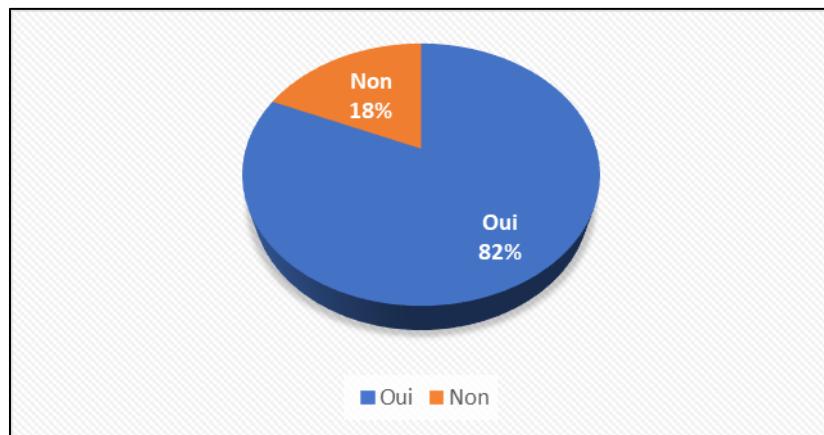
This Figure shows that the audience is predominantly male, with a minority female. This analysis reveals that, out of the total of 76 respondents, there are more men than women, and 48 out of the 76 respondents were men, making a percentage of 63.2% of respondents compared to 36.8% of women.



**Figure 2** Age group of subjects

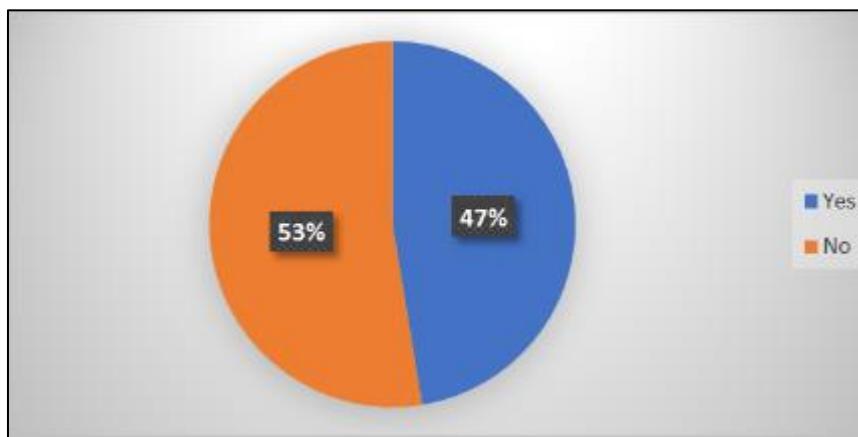
Analysis of this Figure shows that the study population is dominated by young people. Indeed, over 48.7% of respondents were in the 12-25 age group, representing 37 respondents out of a total of 76. This is closely followed by

the 26-35 age group, which accounted for 36.8%. We have a small portion of the population whose age ranges from 36 to 45, which corresponded to 7 respondents, or 9.2%. The 46-55 age group only accounted for 3.2% of respondents.



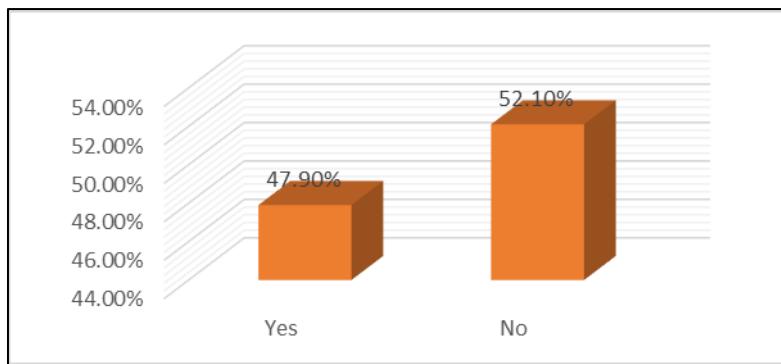
**Figure 3** Have you ever heard of the women's football championship?

The analysis below shows that a large portion of the population is aware of the existence of the women's football championship. Indeed, when asked if they had heard of the football championship, the majority of respondents, representing 81.6%, responded affirmatively. However, we also found that 18.4% of the population were unaware of the existence of the women's football championship.



**Figure 4** Have you ever heard of the Ivorian women's football championship?

Analysis of these results reveals that only 52% of the population studied are unaware of the existence of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. This means that 40 people are unaware of the existence of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. However, 47.4% of people are aware of the existence of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. This means that the majority of the population studied is unaware of the existence of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship.



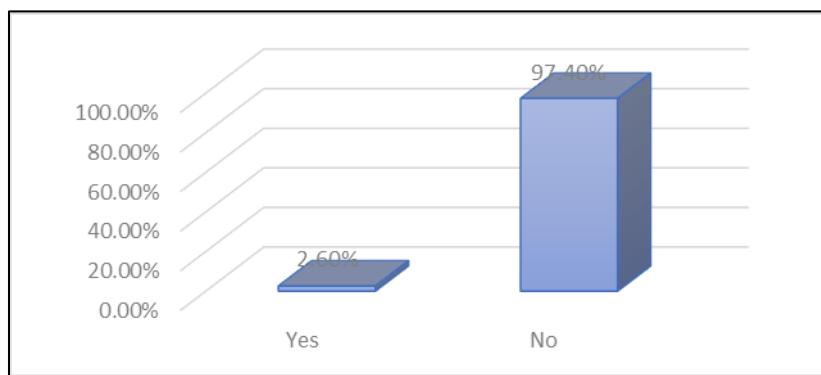
**Figure 5** Did you enjoy watching Ivorian women's football matches?

Analysis of this chart shows that 52% of the population did not enjoy watching Ivorian women's football matches, representing a total of 38 respondents out of 76. In contrast, 47.9% of the population studied, representing a total of 35 respondents out of 76, claimed to enjoy watching Ivorian women's football matches. From this analysis, we can simply say that the majority of the public is not interested in the Ivorian women's football championship.

**Table 1** By what means?

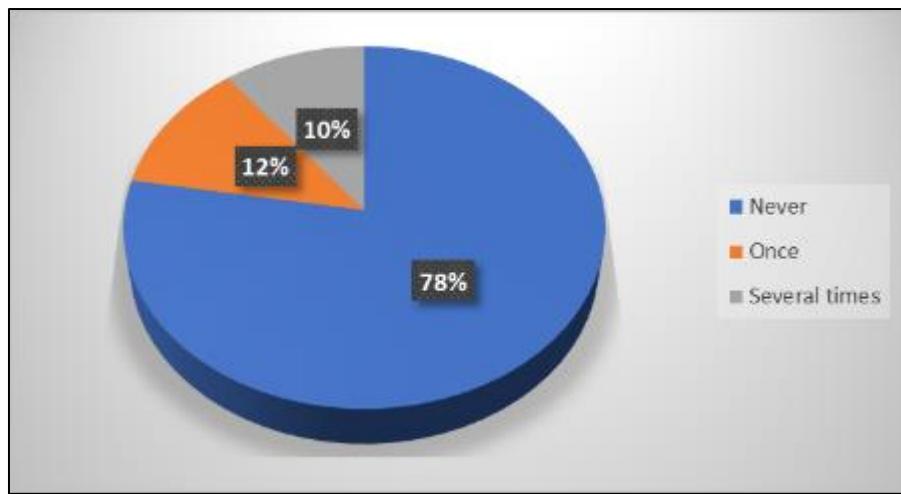
	Effective	% Obs.
Television	31	88,6%
Stadium	4	11,4%
Mobile phone	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total	35	100%

Television is the main source of information and also the main way respondents watch matches. Indeed, out of 76 respondents, 31 watch matches on television, which corresponds to 88.2% of the population studied. We note a low rate of attendance at stadiums. Only 4 people manage to travel to the stadium to watch matches. In percentage terms, only 11.4% of people go to the stadium to watch a match. We can say here that the population does not attend matches in stadiums. The most adopted and practiced means of watching a match is television.



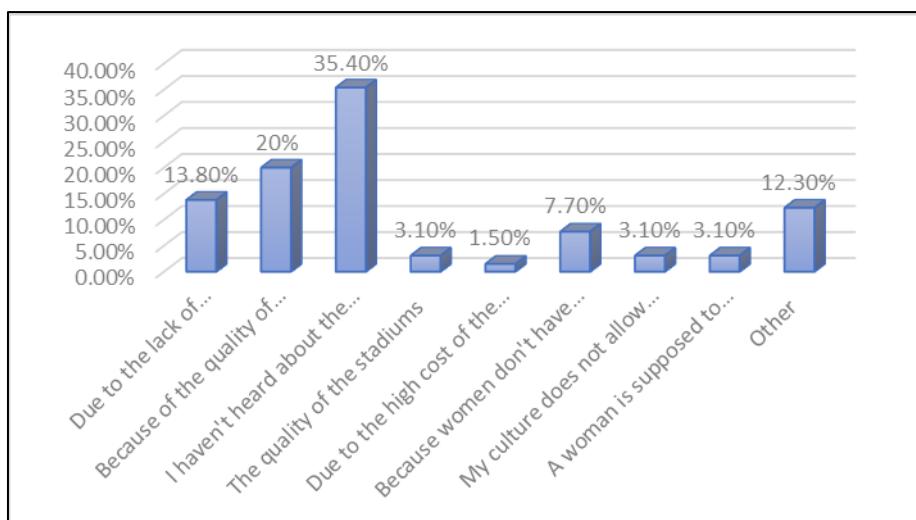
**Figure 6** Do you regularly go to the stadium to watch Ivorian women's football matches?

Out of 76 respondents, only 2 people, or 2.6% of the study population, regularly go to the stadium to watch women's football matches. In contrast, over 97.4% of respondents, or 74 out of 76, have never traveled to a stadium during Ivorian women's football competitions. This analysis supports the previous analysis, which shows that the public prefers not to travel to stadiums to watch Ivorian women's football matches.



**Figure 7** How many times have you attended a women's football match in Côte d'Ivoire?

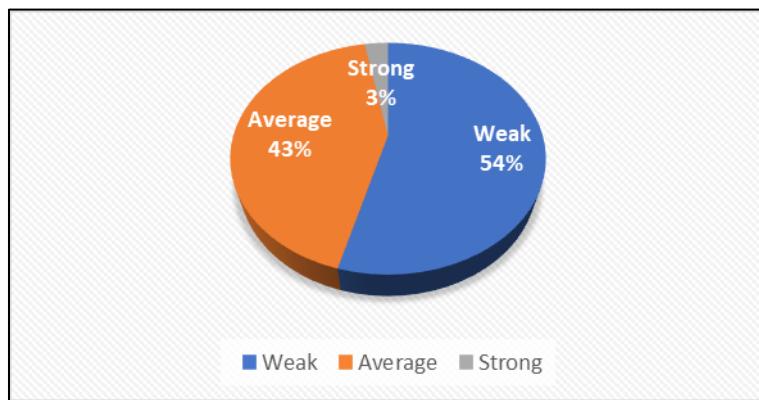
This Figure shows that 77.6% of respondents, or 59 out of 76, have never attended the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. Furthermore, only 11.8% of respondents, or 9 people, have attended the Ivorian Women's Football Championship at a stadium at least once. Unfortunately, only a tiny minority of respondents, representing 8 respondents and 10.5% of the population studied, have watched women's football championship matches at the stadium several times.



**Figure 8** Reasons given by the subjects

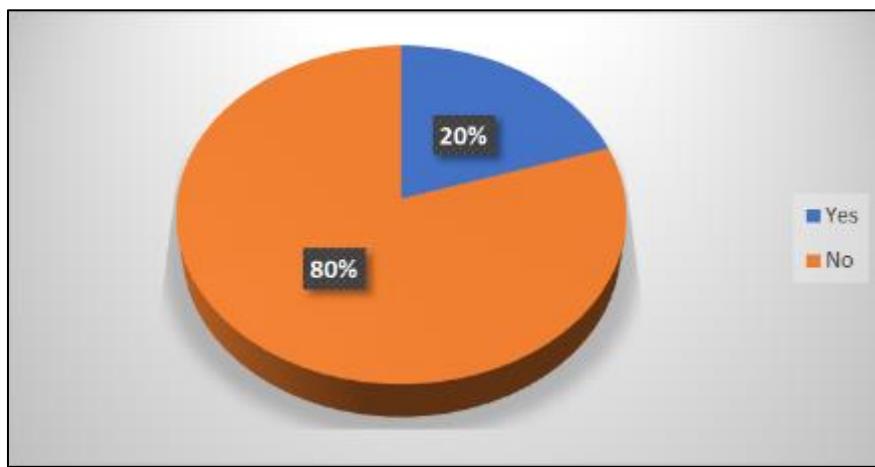
This Figure above explains the reasons why the public does not attend or does not attend enough matches of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. The majority of the population is unaware of, or has at least never heard of, the championship. As a result, 35.4% of the population studied, or 23 people, are unaware of the organization of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship. The Figure also shows that 20.0% of the population studied, or 20 respondents out of a total of 76, do not attend matches, let alone the Ivorian Women's Football Championship, due to the quality of the show. Another 13.8% of the population surveyed, or 9 respondents, justify their non-attendance at the stadium by the lack of professionalism in the players' play. Then the Figure presents a part of the public corresponding to 12.3% of the surveyed population, whose number is equal to 8 people out of 76, who for other reasons do not attend and have never attended the Ivorian women's football championship. Then 1.5%, or 1 respondent out of 76 finds that the entry fee is too high, which does not facilitate their access to competitions. We have a number of 5 respondents, or 7.7% of the population studied who justify their non-membership by the fact that football is a physical sport and therefore should not be played by women. We also have 3.1% of respondents, or 2 people who do not attend competitions because of their cultures and also because football is not a sport that should be practiced by women. Beyond the above, we can say

that there is poor communication on the competitions since the majority of the target population does not know about the existence of the Ivorian Women's Football Championship.



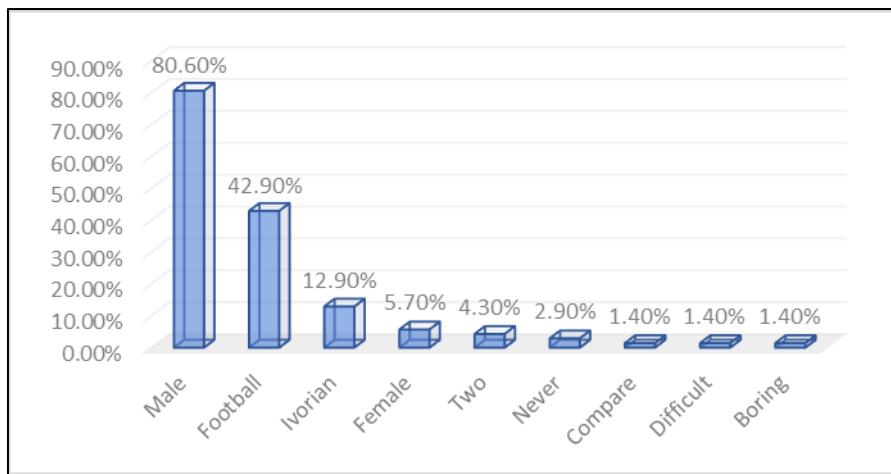
**Figure 9** How much do you like the Ivorian women's championship?

The curve shown in the figure above shows that 54.3% of the population surveyed have a low preference rate for the Ivorian women's football championship. This represents a total of 70 respondents. We have an average approval rate of 42.3%, or 38% of the total number of 76 respondents. There is also a minority of 2.9%, or 2 respondents, who like the Ivorian women's football championship. In short, we can say that the Ivorian women's football championship is not as popular with the public.



**Figure 10** Have you seen a women's championship schedule through the media or posters?

This result shows that 80% of the population studied, or 60 respondents, did not hear an announcement of the championship schedule or broadcasts of the Ivorian women's football championship through the media (television, posters, radio, etc.). Indeed, only 20% of the population studied, or 15 out of 76 people, saw posters, programs, or a women's football championship match and watched it on encrypted channels. Based on this analysis, we can say that communication about events, whether through posters, the internet, or television, is not taking place or is not sufficiently focused on informing the public about women's football matches.



**Figure 11** Between Ivorian men's and women's football, which do you prefer?

This Figure shows that 88.6% of the population surveyed, or 62 respondents, have a preference for the men's football championship. Meanwhile, 5.7% of the population surveyed, or 4 respondents, have a preference for the women's football championship. We can say that Ivorian men's football is widely appreciated by the public, unlike women's football.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Communication strategy

Based on our results, we can see that the communication strategies used by the Ivorian Football Federation do not influence the popularity of Ivorian women's football. This is primarily due to the media's limited involvement in promoting women's football. Our surveys revealed that only 20% of the Ivorian women's football championship program is visible. Some authors, such as Abouna (2018), show that the under-media coverage of women's sport is a recurring issue in social science research. Their questions focus primarily on traditional media and very little on the internet, which is nevertheless the second-largest media outlet for sports broadcasting. For her, while women's football still has a low presence in the media, it has nevertheless experienced strong growth in recent years. Her objective here is to understand the scope and forms of visibility of the internet in a context heavily dominated by male hegemony. The research is based on monitoring the actors and actresses of women's football and on an ethnographic observation of specific websites.

### 4.2. Quality of the show

Based on the results obtained, we can say that the quality of the show during women's football matches is not unanimous. Indeed, 52% of the population did not enjoy watching Ivorian women's football matches, which represents a total of 38 respondents out of 76. In contrast, 47.9% of the study population, that is, a total of 35 respondents out of 76, claimed to enjoy watching Ivorian women's football matches.

## 5. Conclusion

Spectator disinterest in the women's football championship is a complex and multifactorial phenomenon. This study identified several factors that may explain this situation, including differences in perception and appreciation of men's and women's football, low media visibility, and gender discrimination. The results showed that spectators tend to compare women's football with men's football and consider it inferior in terms of quality and spectacle. Furthermore, limited media coverage of women's football has a direct impact on the visibility and awareness of players and teams, and reduces the championship's ability to attract new fans. Finally, gender discrimination and gender stereotypes also have a significant impact on spectator disinterest in women's football. Fans may be discouraged by sexist prejudices and behaviors, which affect not only the perception of women's football but also women's participation and involvement in sport in general. It is therefore crucial to raise awareness of these factors among fans, the media, and sports organizations, and to take steps to improve the visibility and promotion of women's football. This could include better promotion of events, fairer media coverage, and initiatives to combat gender discrimination. Furthermore, efforts to

improve the quality of the game and the spectator experience could also help attract new fans and increase interest in the women's football championship.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

All authors acknowledge that there is no conflict of interest. They all agree with what is written in this article. In accordance with the requirements of transparency and scientific integrity, we, the authors of this study, declare that we have no conflict of interest, whether financial, commercial or otherwise, that could influence the results or interpretations of our research on initiation rites in Benin, thus guaranteeing the independence and objectivity of our work and ensuring the credibility of our conclusions.

### *Statement of informed consent*

We obtained consent from all participants in this study.

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