Managing a Big Problem: Attitudes towards Sexual Diversity in Spanish Soccer

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Traditionally, sport has been a context of strong rejection and hostility towards diverse sexual orientations (Davis-Delano, 2014; Griffin, 1998; Norman, 2013; O’Brien, Shovelton and Latner, 2013; Pronger, 2000). However, recent studies with young athletes have demonstrated signs of greater tolerance towards this reality within sport (Anderson, McCormack and Lee, 2012; Ensing, Yiamouyiannis, White, and Ridpath, 2011; Kauer and Krane, 2006; Oswalt and Vargas, 2013). Spanish sporting context remains unstudied in aspects related to the acceptance of sexual diversity. In Spain, soccer is the dominant sport, yet sexuality remains taboo due to the strong rejection of this topic. The purpose of this study is to first understand if within Spanish sport, attitudes are more or less tolerant towards sexual diversity according to the classification of Anderson (2009). On the other hand, it is of interest to the researchers to study the case of soccer in Spain, as it could be representative of a context demonstrating more hostility towards sexual diversity than other sports. The present study counts with a convenience sample of 279 soccer players (90.7% men and 9.3% women). Participants ranged in age from 14 to 38 (M = 20.5 years SD = 4.8 years). To measure attitudes, the survey SDS- Attitude Scale towards Sexual Diversity in Sport was implemented in experimental form. It was developed containing 18 items designed to measure attitudes towards sexual diversity in sport contexts. This survey uses a 1-5 Likert-type anchors, developed in a Spanish context. The internal consistency was suitable (Cronbach’s alpha 0.90) and content validity was assessed for experts review. Results demonstrate median levels of rejection of sexual diversity in Spanish soccer. Furthermore, a persistent group (18.4%) of soccer players clearly rejected the presence of LGBT in sport. In regards to gender, there are clear significant differences between men and women, the latter demonstrating stronger attitudes of rejections. The results obtained position sport in Spain, specifically soccer, in category of greater rejection of sexual diversity when compared to western societies previously studied (Caudwell, 2011; Cleland, 2015; Goellner, 2005; Margrath Anderson and Roberts, 2013; Mennesson and Clément, 2003). The data of this study will allow sport managers to implement plans of action and sensibility towards the collective LGBT. Thus being more efficient and relevant in the fight against discriminations in soccer.

References


