A Call to Coaches: Preventing Athlete Violence through Promoting Healthy Masculinity

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Socio-Cultural - Other (Other)
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This presentation will explore preliminary evaluation data of the program A CALL TO COACHES. This program was developed by the organization A CALL TO MEN with a primary mission of engaging men in the prevention of violence against women through the promotion of health masculinity.

This is important to the field of sport management for several reasons. First, at the professional and college level there are high rates of sexual assault and relationship violence (Locke, Mahalik, 2005, Murnen & Kohlman, 2007). Second, there appears to be hyper masculine culture, in both male and female sports (Clark, 2016). Third, there are few programs that are designed to address this issue in athletes, and those have very little empirical support (DeGue, et al, 2014).

A CALL TO COACHES provides a different approach to violence prevention through active engagement of men in need to reframe language, redefine masculine norms and reset expectations of men and boys (Addis, Mansfield, Syzdek, 2010). Rather than viewing this as an activity outside sports, the program focuses on the need to focus on development of healthy masculinity as an outcome of sports. In particular there is focus on coaches decreasing language and actions that degrade women, girls and other marginalized groups; to challenge harmful cultural and social norms; and to actively decrease instances of bullying and homophobia.

This is a half-day educational program aimed at coaches, intentionally 80% male, in five major cities across the US. Each event had between 150 and 300 participants registered from the local community recruited through a targeted media campaign focusing on local coaches and athletic organizations.

This evaluation was conducted using on-line survey distribution of pre, post and 3 month follow-up surveys. All of the surveys included three measures. First, the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (Parent & Moradi, 2011) examining conformity to traditional masculine ideology. Second, was the Intolerance Schema measure (Aosved, Long, & Voller, 2009) which focused on the presence of race and gender based intolerance. Finally, there was a measure that examined participants’ individual engagement in violence prevention activities. The surveys also included questions about the participants coaching and sport participation as well as a range of demographics characteristics.

Preliminary data from the pre-post surveys at the first 2 sites found significant changes in both masculine norms and engagement in violence prevention measures. These findings seem to suggest that the program may be beneficial in helping men be more honest in their representation of their masculinity and also increase their comfort as change agents around violence prevention. However, it remains to be seen if these findings hold across the remaining three sites and further if these effects are carried into the three month follow-up.

The presentation will examine the full findings from all five sites in this program and potential implications for violence prevention strategies within sports.