Stereotyping And Bias In Sports

Problem identified

Sports are among the general activities, which garner an international following uniting people from different ages, races, tribes, and localities. Equally, critical stereotyping, prejudice, and bias plague the sports ultimately overwriting the probability of achieving social cohesion and national unity (Spaaij, Farquharson, & Marjoribanks, 2015). Mainly, games are highly challenged by the high levels of gender bias and racial prejudice as well as stereotyping of the disabled constituting a major psychosocial quandary. Currently, people from different races form one team evident in sports like football and volleyball. Athletics involve all types of individuals with an obvious Paralympic athletics conducted exclusively for the disabled. However, disassembling the social vulnerability facing the disabled with reduced resources, accessibility issues, and acceptability in the sports arena is troubling (Lox, Ginis, & Petruzzello, 2014).

The perception of the populace for the different sportspeople is mostly prejudiced with an incessant overbearing attitude in the treatment of the athletes. For example, black athletes have increased over the American population in professional sports with a biased portrayal in the media (Tyler Eastman, 2001; Lox, Ginis, & Petruzell, 2014). The media presents the blacks as naturally gifted while the white counterparts intensively practice and apply their intelligence to achieve professional success. Ultimately, the production procedures, sportsperson profiling, program arrangement, and studio broadcasting has a tinge of bias despite the reduced overt racism in the modern world (Mwaniki, 2017).

Misleading generalizations on the inadequate number of female couches in most sports tend to highlight most of the aggressive sports events as more masculine while allowing favoritism to the males in sports (Spaaij et al., 2015). Partiality and game media preconception present male participants more often while overlooking female sportspersons, teams, and games. The marginalization of either gender in sports is directly tied to the normative social prejudice in the social life mainly preeminent due to the media prejudice (Lox et al., 2014). Men are viewed as professionals, while female participants are primarily considered as engaging in sports for fun save a few talented females. Cooky, Messner, and Musto concluded in their research that televised women's sports coverage is notably low, and the general media implies that sports are for men (2015).

The disabled cannot compete favorably with the healthy contestants. Despite few receiving national recognition at states level, many disabled sportspersons are disregarded, and sports seem to be for a select group (Cooky, Messner, & Musto, 2015). The obese and overweight receive an equal share of discrimination and exclusion from participating in sports due to their un-athletic appearance. Lox, Martin, and Putruzzello note that sport activity reduces with age being more pronounced in women than men (2014). Marginalized minorities and low-income class social groups are generally inactive. Girls are naturally expected to perform more miserably than men in games like soccer, thereby attracting lesser following on feminine sports by both the global community and social media (Grappendorf & Burton, 2017).

The proposed plan of action

The proposed method of operation can focus on heightening the awareness of cultural literacy in sports to avoid traditional bias propagated by the media. Gender bias promulgated by the media can be handled by addressing the understanding and perception of games from a neutral scope rather than a partial one. Stereotyping incites self-fulfilling predictions for the discriminated groups evoking response tactics (Mwaniki, 2017). The opinion that blacks are naturally talented in comparison to the whites invites discrimination in training and enrolment. White sportspersons can train to gain professional dexterity while blacks have to be skilled for them to be conscripted (Brown & Stone, 2016). Creating awareness of the existing stereotypes in sports would help in balancing the treatment to any individual irrespective of race, tribe, or ethnicity.

Increasing both black and women game announcers especially in significant games would reduce traditional stereotyping while increasing gender parity and racial sensitivity (Cunningham, 2019). Media coverage must address the issue by adopting a more neutral position with no favoritism to any group in the sports for equal chances. Games should not be domineered by one gender, race, or even age of athletes. Social sensitization, therefore, would increase respect for each group, increasing racial diversity acceptance as well as gender parity. Awareness programs would focus primarily on the media, which has been central in propagating stereotypes (Spaaij et al., 2015). The social perception that sports are masculine is mainly founded in the social media's skewedness to coverage of the male sports while overlooking female sports.

Media attention should equally target sportswomen with no backdrop-preconceived attitudes.

Additionally, sports bodies should endorse more racial sensitivity. For example, black quarterbacks are deemed as more incompetent as compared to their white counterparts when a team loses in a game (Cunningham, 2019). Reporters and game analyzers focus more on bad decisions made by the blacks, thereby resulting in losses. The populace conforms to the perceived social prejudices, thus resulting in an unjustified perception of a given class of individuals. Sensitization on the perceived stereotypes would reduce the negative attitude and bias (Mwaniki, 2017).

Evaluation of the individuals should promote racial balance that is directly proportional to the demography of the social groups: equal conscription chances, assessment, and player involvement based on competency (Cooky et al., 2015). Additionally, the sensitization programs should promote the marginalized and low social classes to encourage equal participation of all individuals. Skill should be the basis of evaluation, which would allow the obese and overweight to participate in sports if qualified without attracting social stereotyping. A global body of managing and coordinating different games would effectively reduce stereotyping. Diverse people from all ages, races, tribes, and both genders participate in the games lowering chances of bias. Therefore, national sports if possible should realign with global sporting activities for more sensitization against prejudice and stereotyping (Brown & Stone, 2016).

Justification of the plan of action

Biases in sports are individual preferences resulting in liking or disliking of the target individuals or team. Contrastingly, stereotyping is a collective perception of given members of a group, which attributes specific unjustified characteristics attached to them. Primarily, the stereotyping

and bias evident in sports concerning players, sports managers, and the entire society arises from misinformation (Grappendorf & Burton, 2017). The most prolific strategy to mitigate stereotyping would be sensitization and awareness programs. First, despite the decrement of overt racial segregation and mistreatment, comments in the media overemphasizing one party over the other propagates racism or gender inequality. Eastman and Billings assert that observations in televised basketball tournaments revealed overemphasis on the White women participants while the blacks for both genders were considered athletic (2001).

Eastman and Billings' research analyzing sixty-six different games agree with Spaaij, Farquharson, and Marjoribanks who present social inequality as a significant psychosocial menace in sports (2015). The sensitization programs are essential in routing out the misinformed fragmented ideas on the sports to reduce the racial imbalance. Games should employ professionalism, just like every other field with the professional treatment of every participant rather than opinionated treatments (Grappendorf & Burton, 2017). The media as a central sensitization channel should re-orient the viewing lenses on the sportspersons terminating the propagation of biased ideas and opinions about any given class of people (Zhang, 2017).

Reporters, game announcers, and game analyzers in sports should focus on the competency and skill of the players individually rather than focusing on gender or race of the players (Shifflett, Murphy, Ghiasvand, Carlton, & Cuevas, 2016). The referees, trainers, and sportspersons should participate equally based on their proficiency and not their race, tribe, or gender. Moreover, the sensitization programs focus on increasing open-mindedness, which allows for the perception of each group as equal to any other group participating.

For example, reporters treating every team player with consideration to his or her role in the team would reduce bigotry. The sensitization programs should then seek to inform the populace alongside every other personnel involved of the equality of every team member as well as their different roles (Mwaniki, 2017). The performance of any team member is based on their functional role in the team rather than their race or background hence the need for media sensitization (Spaaij et al., 2015). The game announcers should equally celebrate skills in women and men to reduce gender inequality respecting gender differences. It would be unfair to compare women's performance against men just as it would be to compare the performance of the disabled against the normal sportspersons. Sensitizing every person would largely contribute to establishing professional ethics in sports.

Racial integration should be encouraged through sensitization and awareness through every possible channel. Racial integration can be enhanced through coalescing the local sports activities with international activities. International sports and athletics involve all people at every level inclusive of referees, couches, game announcers, and players (Cunningham, 2019). Such interactions reduce racial or gender-based bias. Equally, international sporting activities in themselves serve as a tool of unifying all people while focusing on their talents and abilities rather than their backgrounds. People would appreciate individual performance based on one's perfection rather than origin and race.

Ethical issues

While fighting stereotyping, favoritism is hard to avoid. Often, the individuals trying to rediscover

sports free of bias may side with the less advantaged group, thereby advancing favoritism (Zhang, 2017). Considerably, ethical issues of more bias arise, as there will be divisions between the ones being discriminated against and those who are not. Additionally, tackling issues of gender equality may raise ethical questions about over empowerment of one gender at the expense of the other (Lox et al., 2014). Lastly, equality in the treatment of professionals in sports would attach incredible value to the experienced based on one's competency leading to unfair competition. The talented and more skills would win effortlessly over the less skilled ones evoking hard ethical questions to grapple with.

Methods of progress review and evaluation

The frequency of occurrence of the psychosocial issues can track the progress of the sensitization programs both through the media and at the team level. Additionally, sensitization for equality based on competency at the team level can be reviewed by analyzing the criterion for employment of the players. At the national level, the treatment of the different races and genders in sports would determine the extent of success. The social media and televised comments would monitor a numeric estimate of the effectiveness of the sensitization programs (Van Sterkenburg, Knoppers, & De Leeuw, 2010). Additionally, the co-existence and mutual dependability between team members irrespective of a person's background would determine the success of reducing bias and stereotyping.

Moreover, regular awareness programs can be tracked where using the leading sports' television and radio channels can help to get feedback from the target audience. Constant evaluations on the sportsperson can reveal their opinions on the progress of the sensitization while the marginalized groups can be reached through empowerment programs. The practical functioning of the programs in reaching out the marginalized would give an adequate review of the progress in reducing stereotyping and bias.

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