

Appendix

End of project reflections provided by members of the Bournemouth University Sports Faculty Team:

At the conclusion of the project, the client, Alan Mercel-Sanca, asked team members to provide a few words each about what they had learned about the topics they had covered and experience they had gained in completing the report. The responses below show how invaluable the experience was for all of the team members, who had previously no direct awareness of the actual nature and sources of the problems of homophobic and anti-LGBT prejudice in sports and schools contexts, far less its psychologically and socially harmful impacts upon its victims and the broader sports and educational contexts that it takes place in.

I think over the course of the project what I personally learnt was how significant the problem is within society, which is something that most people, myself included when the project began, do not realise. The amount homophobic language is used within a sporting environment is huge, and the most concerning point is that the vast majority of people do not see it as a problem and don't see what they are saying is wrong, which is arguably the most worrying problem we encountered because this makes the issue even harder to tackle. This attitude is something that needs to be tackled, ideally through education, in order to change current behaviour.

Also from the focus group especially, the lack of punishment and education on the subject was something that surprised myself, because the majority of the participants had received little education on the subject and punishment when using inappropriate language. I think it is a subject which education overall attempts to avoid which is the most significant cause to why homophobic language and homophobia is so common today. So before this topic is challenged, openly discussed and explained to children at a younger age it is going to be very difficult to make progress on homophobia and homophobic behaviour.

My experiences from the project were as follows:

I learned that homosexuality still appears to be a taboo subject in society today. I also noticed that homophobic terms were used a lot in everyday life. this wasn't something I had

noticed before but the project has made me more aware of. I think if I was to do the project again I would have dedicate a lot more time to collecting data as the most changing aspect was actually getting people to fill out the questionnaire and talk to us.

My main personal reflection over the project, is actually being aware off the issue itself, before I was one of the people who didn't really see it as an issue, where as with this project I can completely see how much of a problem it is right now. Especially within schools, it is a widespread problem and every day I now pick up on terms being said and think to myself, that shouldn't be said in that way. Also I was surprised with the lack of support given to the cause of combating homophobia by the likes of the FA and other NGB's.

It was a pleasure working with you on the project researching issues around homophobia in sport. I feel that the subject of homophobia in sport is very current at the moment and I'm glad I had an opportunity to get involved in this research. In terms of the recommendations for schools and sports club on how to tackle the problem, I feel that it was quite a discovery that majority of teachers and coaches do not treat the problem of homophobia with any seriousness. This really opened my eyes on how big this problem actually is. When interviewing participants I realized that similarly to them, I sometimes use homophobic terms without really realizing that some phrases may cause a lot harm and offence to individuals who belong to LGBT community. I feel that now after I conducted this research I actually started to monitor myself not to use homophobic phrases and when I observe my friends doing so, I mention it to them so that they can be aware about it too. Overall I feel that I benefited from taking part in this research to a great extent.

Researching into homophobia in sport was a very interesting project and when analysing the results I was shocked at how prevalent it is in society today. The most

surprising element discovered was how many individuals use homophobic terms on a daily basis in a non-homophobic manner. Homophobic terms today seem to have more of a multi-use for the word which needs to be identified correctly to the public. I very much enjoyed the project and hope our team have made a contribution to any future action to help tackle the issue of homophobia.

Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to work with you on this project, it really has been an interesting and educational experience. I would say that what I have taken away from this the most is that there is still, very much, a culture of homophobia that exists within our society. What I found most interesting, however, is that many people are not aware that this culture exists. Many of our participants admitted to hearing or using homophobic terms but didn't see it as being offensive. I think this is especially true in schools where terms such as 'you're gay' are thrown around so much without the pupils giving a second thought as to what they are actually saying. Obviously, these terms do cause offense and I believe it is the schools' responsibility to properly educate their pupils so that they understand the effect these terms can have on people.