

Inclusive Sport Survey

The Sport Experiences of Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People
in the Australian Capital Territory



ACT
Government

April 2014

Conducted by Sport and Recreation Services, ACT Government

Contact

Kathy Mumberson, Play by the Rules Project Officer

Email sport_act@act.gov.au | Phone 02 6207 7678



Acknowledgements

The Inclusive Sport Survey was conducted by Kathy Mumberson, the Play by the Rules Project Officer employed by Sport and Recreation Services, ACT Government. It is one of several components of the Inclusive Sport Project that addresses discrimination, harassment and bullying in sport.

An Inclusive Sport Steering Committee was formed to assist in various aspects of the project and the survey, including: research and question design, use of language, and promotion of the survey. Thanks must go to each of the committee members: Sean Costello, from the ACT Human Rights Commission; Peter Hyndal, from A Gender Agenda; Keiran Rossteuscher, from ACT AIDS Action Council; and Peter Gourlay, from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. Each committee member provided valuable input regarding important aspects of the survey and played an essential role with its successful rollout.

Paul Oliver and Pete Downs from Play by the Rules partnered with Sport and Recreation Services to deliver the Inclusive Sport Project and effectively promoted the survey through their networks and on the Play by the Rules website.

Dr Carolyn Symons from the Victoria University conducted the Victorian *Come Out to Play* Research Project, a benchmark research project and the first of its type in Australia. Carolyn and Grant O'Sullivan, also from Victoria University, provided practical guidance in relation to the survey questions and promotion of these questions to the wider community. They were very generous with their expertise and openly shared with us their knowledge and experiences from the *Come Out to Play* research project.

The ACT Government's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) Community Advisory Council provided valuable input and assisted in promoting the survey throughout their networks. Many local lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community groups and state sporting associations in the ACT also effectively promoted the survey throughout their networks and to their membership.

A very big thank you must go to all the survey participants who responded to the survey and contributed their sport stories to the Inclusive Sport Project. Their experiences will shape the content and delivery of the Inclusive Sport Project during 2014 and other initiatives to be developed to improve the sport experiences for LGBTI people in the ACT.

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Summary of main findings	6
Introduction	8
Method	10
About the participants	14
Experiences from school sport and Physical Education classes	17
Sport participation	20
Discrimination	29
Challenges for sport	38
Conclusion	45
Recommendations	49
Attachment A: <i>A model sports organisation...</i>	50
Attachment B: Useful resources and websites	52
Attachment C: <i>Come Out to Play</i> recommendations	54
Attachment D: <i>Different Strokes</i> Transgender Swimming	56
References	58

Summary of main findings

- Most people participate in physical activity for “general fitness, health and well-being benefits.”
- The main themes to emerge from participants’ best sporting experiences include: achievement and winning – both at the elite and grassroots levels, being part of a team or community, being accepted and welcomed, experiencing health benefits, having the opportunity to travel and broaden life experiences, having fun and friendship, gaining confidence and providing a positive contribution.
- 16.5% of people identified gym-based activities (group fitness, stationary exercises, and weights/circuit training) as their ‘main’ sport or recreational activity.
- The most common ‘main’ sport identified in the survey is football/soccer (12.9%), followed by roller derby (4.9%) and cricket and hockey (both 3.6%).
- Most people were ‘not out’ regarding their sexuality and/or being transgender (37.1%).
- 40.8% of respondents have felt unsafe in a sporting environment.
- 34% of survey respondents had experienced sexism in sport. Women experienced the most sexism, followed by transgender people and men.
- 32.2% of respondents had experienced verbal homophobia/bullying in sport.
- 3.6% of respondents had experienced homophobic assault in sport.
- 7.1% of respondents had experienced verbal harassment/bullying in sport based on being transgender or intersex.
- Fewer than 1% of respondents had been assaulted in sport due to being transgender or intersex.
- 16% of men and 10.8% of women identify a sport in which they would like to participate but do not due to their sexuality. The most common identified activities in which men would like to participate but do not are rugby union, martial arts and rugby league. For women, the sports are dancing, ice hockey, netball and swimming.
- 10.9% of respondents identify a sport that they would like to participate in but do not due to being transgender or intersex. 70% of them would like to do swimming, followed by dancing and a range of sports including netball, football/soccer, basketball and weights training.
- 50.4% of respondents do not know if their clubs or recreation provider have policies around safety and inclusion for LGBTI people.

- 58.4% of respondents do not know if their club or recreation provider have anti-discrimination policies regarding sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.
- Most describe their school sport/Physical Education (PE) experiences as thoroughly enjoyable to enjoyable (around 46%) or thoroughly unenjoyable to unenjoyable (around 32%). Around 22% describe it as satisfactory.

Introduction

Public discussion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) issues was once something of a taboo topic. A period of social change has since occurred in Australia that has resulted in important changes to legislation that previously disadvantaged LGBTI people. There are also several Australians, whose sexuality or gender diversity has become known as a result of their high public profile, including politicians Bob Brown and Penny Wong, former High Court Justice Michael Kirby (AC), entertainer Ian (Molly) Meldrum, army officer Lt-Col Cate McGregor and athletes Matthew Mitcham, Daniel Kowalski, Natalie Cook and Ian Roberts. Together, these factors have contributed to an increase in LGBTI communities gaining a level of visibility and acceptance in the larger Australian society and locally in the ACT.

In comparison to the research and policy work done to improve sport opportunities for other disadvantaged groups (e.g. women and girls, people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and ethnic minorities), much less has been done for LGBTI communities, particularly so for transgender and intersex people. A handful of research projects have been undertaken nationally and internationally. Of note is the *Come Out to Play* research project, which provides an analysis of the sport experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Victoria. With the exception of a few projects, including *Come Out to Play*, what has been done is largely anecdotal and therefore difficult to measure or qualify. There are also gaps in the information and resources that are available to the sports community.

To address some of these issues at the local level, the ACT Government has funded the Inclusive Sport Project, which will address harassment, discrimination and

“Sport is recognised as a vital social institution, bringing people together, promoting health and providing important opportunities for the demonstration and celebration of sporting talent and achievement. It is also the place where GLTBI Australians are largely invisible, silent and marginalise.”

(Challenging Homophobia in Sport Initiative)

bullying, including homophobia and transphobia in the sport environment. A component of the project is the delivery of a survey to LGBTI communities, which seeks to find out the sport experiences of LGBTI people in the ACT. Following an analysis of the survey data, a series of recommendations have been developed and delivery of the Inclusive Sport Project will be finalised.

The Inclusive Sport Survey will be the first sport specific study of its type conducted in the ACT and will compliment other research that has been undertaken. It will also compliment the various policy documents, projects and campaign activities that have been developed nationally and internationally to address homophobia and transphobia in sport and issues that exist for intersex athletes.

Method

Participation

The survey was open to anyone who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex and lived in the Australian Capital Territory or its surrounding regions (e.g. Queanbeyan, Goulburn, etc). The surrounding regions of the ACT were included so that people living outside of the ACT but participating in competitions delivered by ACT's state sporting organisations could participate in the survey.

Most of the survey questions were based on those used in the *Come Out to Play* research project. The wording of some survey questions was modified based on the advice of the Inclusive Sport Steering Committee and to include intersex people. The survey was hosted by Survey Monkey and was open from 2 September 2013 to 8 October 2013. The questionnaire consisted of 160 questions.

Quantitative and qualitative information was collected by the survey manager. To compliment the 'who, what, where and when' questions, open-ended questions were included to obtain the thoughts, feelings and unique experiences of the respondents. Responses to these questions provide an authentic and genuine understanding of the sport experiences and challenges faced by LGBTI people in sport.

The Inclusive Sport Survey was anonymous, and as such only personal data relevant to the survey content was requested from participants. In order to truthfully report the findings of the survey and feelings of the participants, some responses have been quoted in the survey report. Minor editing has been made to a selection of the quotes that have been printed (e.g. the name of the sport) at the discretion of the survey manager. Canberra is a relatively small and well-connected community and the editing was considered necessary to protect the anonymity of the participants and other LGBTI people involved in sport and recreation.

Survey questions

The survey comprised nine main sections.

1. Demographics: mainly closed-ended questions about gender, gender and sexual identification, age, living arrangements, ethnic background, education and employment.
2. Connections with sport: closed and open-ended questions regarding previous and current involvement with sport and recreation. Participants were also asked to outline the nature of their 'main' sport or recreational activity and if they have never participated in or discontinued their involvement in sport, and the reasons why.
3. Benefits of sport: closed and open-ended questions regarding benefits obtained as a result of participation in sport and recreation and the opportunity to describe their best sporting experiences.
4. Discrimination in sport: closed and open-ended questions about experiences of sexism, verbal harassment, physical assault, and other forms of discrimination in sport.
5. Challenges for sport: closed and open-ended questions regarding sport and recreation activities in which survey respondents would like to participate but do not because of their sexuality or gender identity and whether respondents have felt unsafe in a sporting environment.
6. Safe, welcoming and inclusive sport policies: closed-ended questions regarding the policies of sport and recreation providers that address anti-discrimination and the safety and inclusion of LGBTI people, and how welcoming clubs are in relation to various minority groups and the wider community.
7. School sport experiences: closed and open-ended questions regarding school sport and physical education class experiences.
8. General health and physical activity: closed-ended questions regarding weekly participation in sport or physical activity and a self-assessment of their health.
9. Additional comments: open-ended questions inviting respondents to provide additional comments or experiences not already provided and feedback on the survey.

Participant recruitment

A communication plan was developed which outlined a range of strategies that were undertaken during the month of September. The plan outlined how the survey would be promoted with the intention of:

- reaching as many LGBTI people living in the ACT and the surrounding region as possible;
- recruiting a roughly equal number of male and female participants;
- recruiting a reasonable sample of transgender and intersex people; and
- recruiting people involved in sport, as well as those not involved in sport.

A logo (below) was designed and used with all publications and on the survey.



A range of promotional resources (presented at **Figure 1**) were designed, published and distributed either electronically or as hard copies to a broad range of organisations, institutions, businesses and community groups. The materials were also distributed to members of the Inclusive Sport Steering Committee, the ACT Government's LGBTIQ Community Advisory Council and Play by the Rules.

Online advertising was purchased and a range of strategies were implemented to promote the survey to ACT Government employees. It was also promoted on the Sport and Recreation Services website and the Play by the Rules homepage.

FIGURE 1: Promotional items

LGBTI sport survey



**WHAT ARE YOUR
SPORT EXPERIENCES?**

Sport and Recreation Services want to know the sport experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people, particularly any barriers to participation.



During September be part of the **Inclusive Sport Survey** and help us make sport inclusive, safe and fair. Go to - www.surveymonkey.com/s/inclusivesp



Business Card

WHAT ARE YOUR SPORT EXPERIENCES IN THE ACT?



MEMBERS OF LGBTI COMMUNITIES ARE ASKED TO DO THE **INCLUSIVE SPORT SURVEY** AND HELP US MAKE SPORT **INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND FAIR**

Web banner



**WHAT ARE YOUR
SPORT EXPERIENCES
IN THE ACT?**



**Do the Inclusive
Sport Survey**
and help us make sport
inclusive, safe and fair



Web tile



LGBTI sport survey



**WHAT ARE YOUR SPORT
EXPERIENCES?**

The benefits of sport are many and well known. Sport contributes to the **physical, emotional and social well-being** of participants and can teach important **life lessons** on self discipline and teamwork. Being part of team can bring fantastic shared rewards and build **community connections**.

Given these benefits it is essential that sports provide a safe and inclusive environment for all people, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex communities.

Sport and Recreation Services want to know your experiences of sport in the ACT, particularly any barriers to your participation.

During **September** be part of the Inclusive Sport Survey and help us make sport **inclusive, safe and fair**.

To do the survey go to
www.surveymonkey.com/s/inclusivesp







Flyer

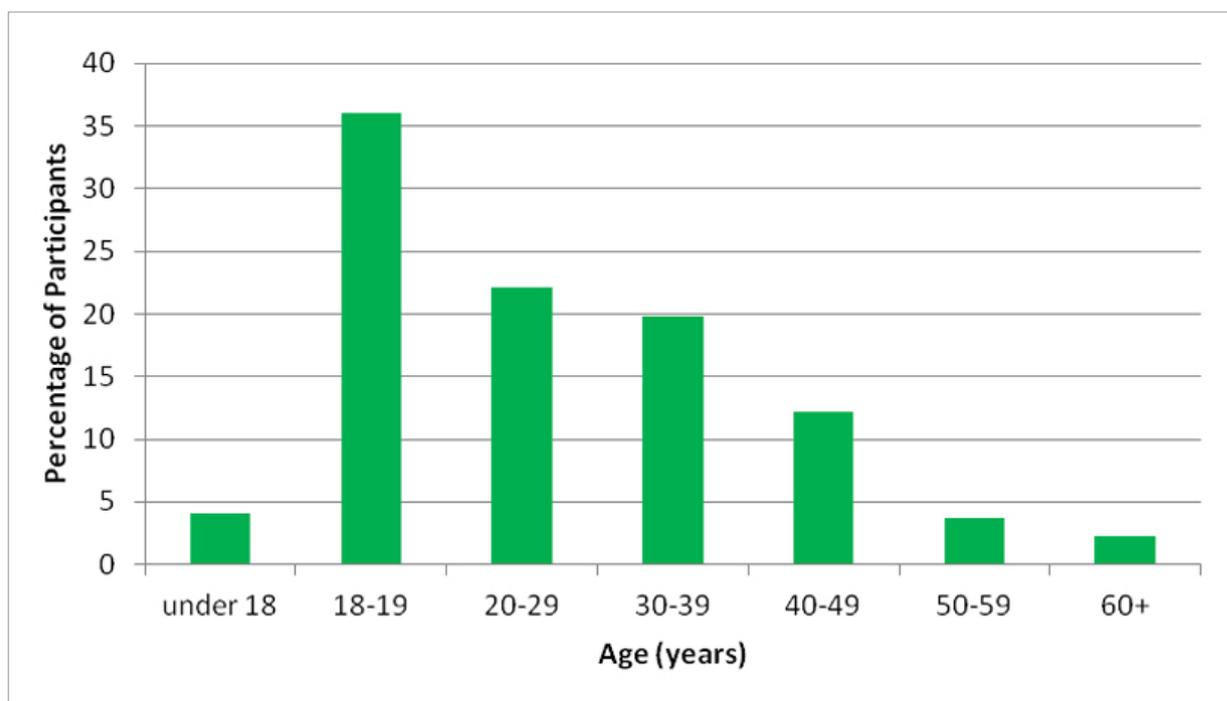
About the participants

318 people participated in the study by completing the online survey. 26 survey participants were excluded from the data analysis because the participants did not live in the ACT or its surrounding regions. There were, therefore, 292 active surveys on which the findings of this report are based.

The average age of respondents was 35.6 years with a range of 17 to 71 years. **Figure 2** illustrates the distribution of participants by age.

- 2.2% of respondents are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- 79.1% of participants describe their ancestry/ethnic background as Australian. 32.6% of respondents described it as Caucasian and 4.4% as Asian. Fewer than 1% of participants described themselves as African, Asian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, or a combination of the options available.
- The majority of respondents work full time (33.4%). 34.8% of participants have a university degree, which is similar to the figure recorded in *Come Out to Play* (33%), although more of the *Come Out to Play* respondents also have a postgraduate degree (36.9% compared to 21.5% in this survey).

FIGURE 2: Age of survey participants



General health and physical activity

Participants were asked how many of the past seven days they were physically active for thirty minutes or more. 87.2% of females 81.3% of males and 67.4% of transgender and intersex participants were active in the last seven days of completing the survey. The majority of participants were active four of the past seven days.

Participants were asked to rate how physically active and how healthy they believe they are. The majority of participants believe they are 'moderately active' and that their health is 'very good'.

Gender and gender diversity

Survey participants were asked what they identified their gender as: male, female or other. 43.3% of respondents identified their gender as male and 48.7% as female. The remaining 8% of survey respondents ticked the 'other' box, with most providing comments describing their gender as, "transgender/ trans", "FTM", "M to F". A few identified their gender as "queer", "gender fluid" or similar, and one as "agender." These responses demonstrate that for some people identifying their gender is not as simple or straightforward as ticking the male or female box.

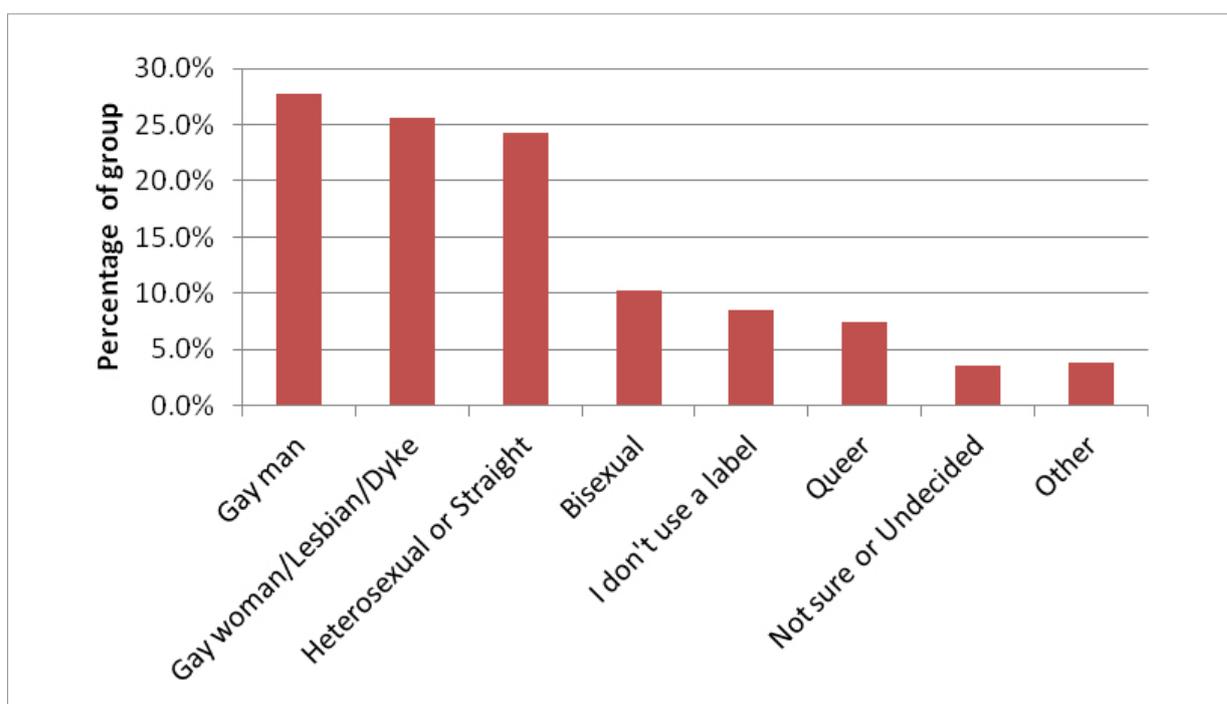
Participants were also asked if they are transgender or intersex. A small number of respondents (1.3%) are intersex; however, 18.2% of respondents are transgender. *Come Out to Play* recorded a much lower percentage of respondents that identified as transgender (3.9%); however, it is important to note that the two surveys structured questions regarding gender and gender identity differently.

Come Out to Play acknowledges that recruiting transgender participants is difficult because they are fewer in number and, "often remain hidden" (*Come Out to Play*, 23). A Gender Agenda, a local community organisation that works with sex and gender diverse people and groups in the ACT, was actively involved in many aspects of the survey. The high percentage of transgender and intersex people that participated in the survey is probably due to the work of A Gender Agenda which actively promoted the survey to their members and communities.

Sexuality

The most common sexual identity from the survey is 'gay man' with 27.8% of respondents selecting this option. Slightly fewer people selected gay women/lesbian, dyke (25.6%). A significant portion of respondents also identified as heterosexual or straight (24.3%) which is higher than expected but would include those transgender and intersex respondents that identify as heterosexual or straight. **Figure 3** illustrates the sexual identity of the respondents from the options provided.

FIGURE 3: How respondents identify their sexuality



Experiences from school sport and Physical Education classes

For many people their first sporting experiences take place in the school setting. Research tells us that a negative experience during physical education lessons (which includes using the change rooms prior to and after the lesson) has a significant impact on same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people. *Writing Themselves In 3* reported that 80% of the abuse experienced by same-sex attracted and sex and gender diverse young people occurs at school. It also reported that same-sex attracted and sex and gender diverse young people felt least safe in sport.

Survey participants were asked to rank their school sport and physical education experiences from thoroughly enjoyable to thoroughly unenjoyable. For many of the survey participants, sport and physical education was either a thoroughly enjoyable or enjoyable experience (46.6%); however, a large proportion of the participants also described their experiences as thoroughly unenjoyable or unenjoyable (31.6%). Sporting ability, fitness and physical size appeared to be important factors in determining whether the participant was successful and did or did not enjoy their physical education and school sport experiences.

“I was good at sport so I loved it.”

“I loved it because I was good at it. It had a very positive effect on me and made me love sport.”

“Picked on for not being good at sports – made me retreat from physical activities loss of confidence with recreational pursuits.”

“Always hated school sport, mainly because I was small and got pushed around. I also hated team/ball sports because I was uncoordinated and not given any opportunity to gain skills in a supportive environment.”

Several survey participants describe the social and personal growth opportunities, both positive and negative, that their school sport experiences provided.

“I was not a sports star, spent plenty of time subbed off. However, I recall having a great time that included bus trips to venues, riding my bike with mates from

school to venues, interstate trips to participate and being billeted out. I also recall having run-ins with 'team mates' but all this allowed me to grow personally providing me with the skills to participate in life both on and off the field. Great life skill opportunities."

"Playing AFL for the first time. The ball was delivered to my hands and all to suddenly I got ripped off the ground and flew in the air only to thump the ground again. It was a cool but frightening experience. It made me acknowledge my own aggressive side."

The ability and character of the survey respondent's physical education teacher was an important factor as to whether the experience was a positive or negative one.

"We would play Touch Footy what seemed like all the time, however, the boys and even some of the girls would roughly tackle me to the ground and keep me pinned down. The teachers would turn a blind eye most of the time. I didn't like it at all, and the fact that I was severely bullied anyway didn't make it any easier."

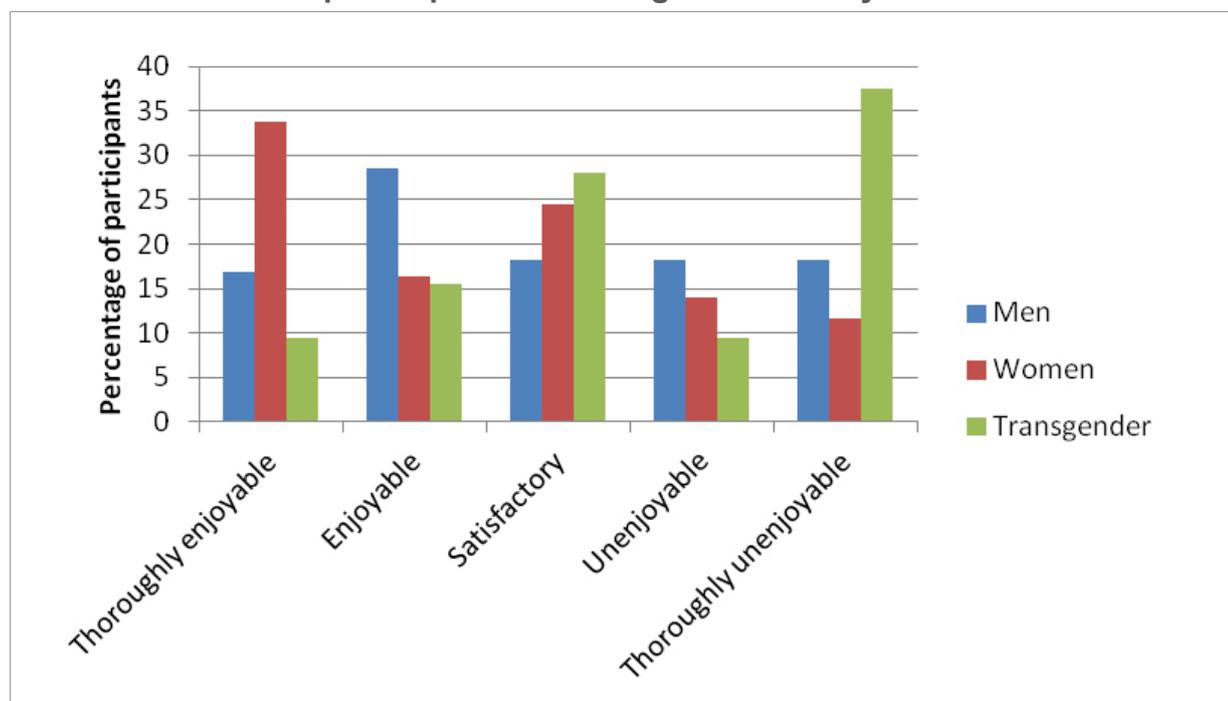
"Overall experience characterised by poor attitude of teachers – no effort made to understand or encourage those for whom sport didn't 'come naturally.' No effort on part of the teachers to call out bullying or abusive behaviour among students – it was tolerated/ ignored."

With one exception, no one who participated in the survey gave examples of teachers intervening if bullying occurred.

"I was a teacher and people being called 'poofs' was annoying and I addressed this in my dealings with students."

The Inclusive Sport Survey reported a noticeable difference between the school sport experiences of men, women and transgender/intersex people, with more females having thoroughly enjoyable school sport experiences, than men and transgender people (see **Figure 4**).

FIGURE 4: School sport experiences and gender identity



The majority of transgender people described their school sport and physical education experiences as unenjoyable.

“Due to being trans and being made to play the ‘girls sports’ it was quite miserable.”

“It was very difficult for me to accept being placed on the girls teams all the time and having to use the female change rooms when I didn’t identify as female.”

Sport participation

Participants were asked to identify their sport experiences on three levels:

- Lifetime – all the sports in which they had been involved over their lifetime;
- Current – sports and recreational activities in which they are currently involved; and
- Main – the main sport in which they have been involved during their lifetime.

Lifetime

Participants were involved in a vast range of sports and recreational activities over their lifetimes. The most popular recreational activities reported by participants were swimming (42.5%), weights/circuit training (41.6%) and group fitness (41.2%). The most popular sports were football/soccer (35.2%), tennis (32.2%) and basketball (22.7%). Recreational activities such as group fitness classes, jogging/running, swimming and stationary exercises (cycle, treadmill) were more popular than almost all sporting activities.

A small number of survey respondents (n=6) had never participated in a sport or a recreational activity. For most, it was because their friends did not play sport (n=5), the belief that homophobic/transphobic behaviour occurred during sport (n=4), and due to unpleasant school sport/PE experiences (n=4).

Current

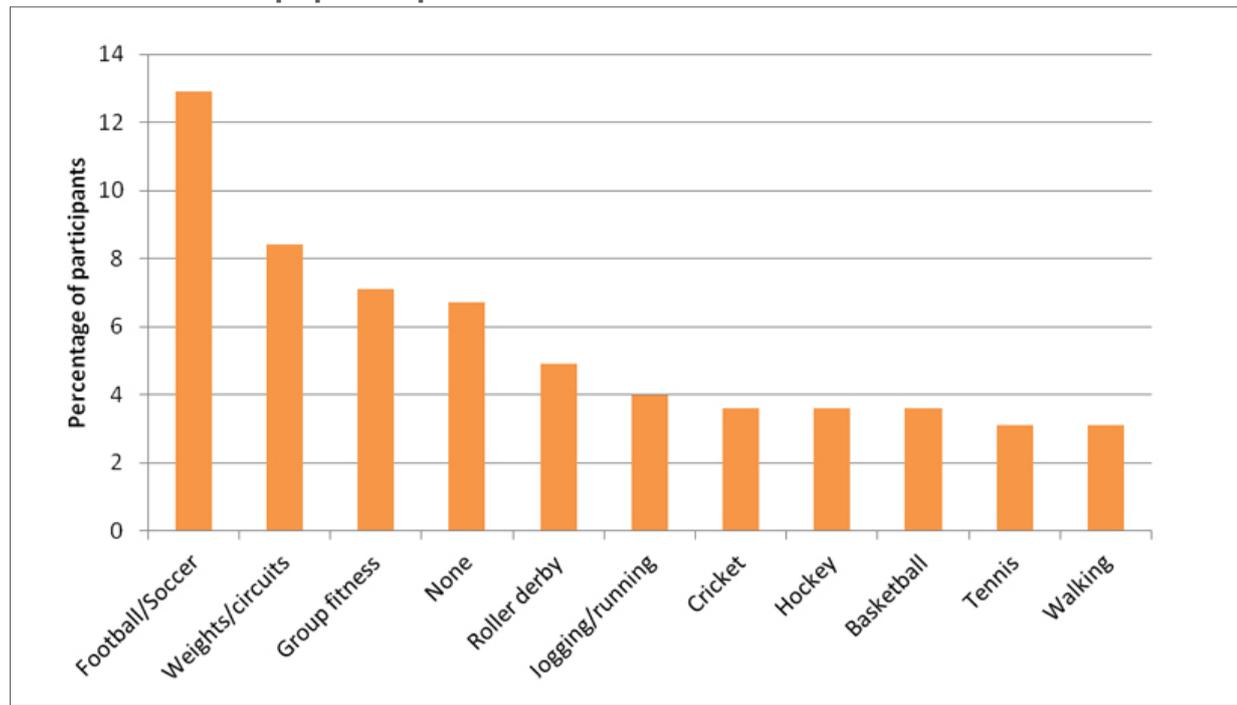
Survey respondents are currently participating in a vast range of sports and recreational activities. The most popular recreational activity is weights/circuit training (31.2%), followed by walking (22.9%) and group fitness (19.5%). The most popular sport is football/soccer 15.1%), followed by swimming (12.2%) and snow sports (6.8%). Recreational activities are again more popular than almost all sporting activities.

18% of participants are not currently involved in a sport or recreational activity.

Main

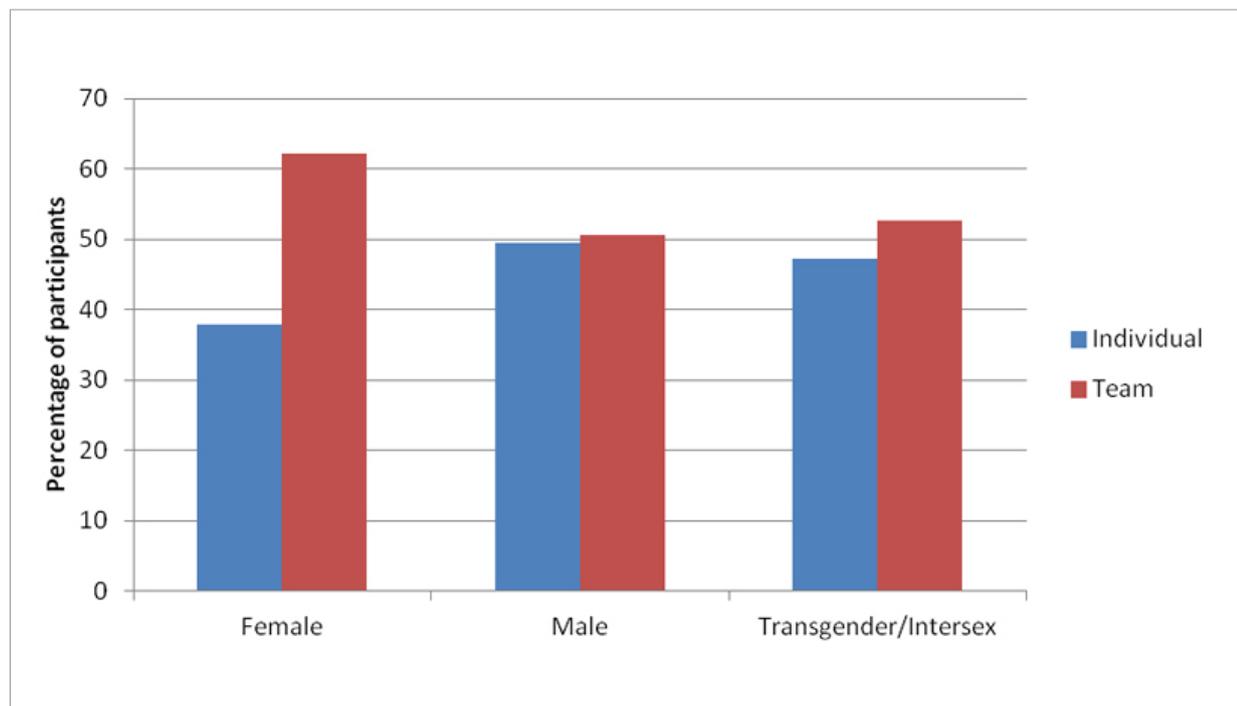
Respondents were asked to identify the main sport in which they have been involved during their lifetime. The most popular sport or recreational activity is football/soccer (12.9%), followed by weights/circuit training (8.4%). It is interesting to note the popularity of roller derby, a relatively new sport in the ACT, with the first league commencing in 2008. The top 10 sports and recreational activities are presented in **Figure 5**.

FIGURE 5: Most popular sports and recreational activities



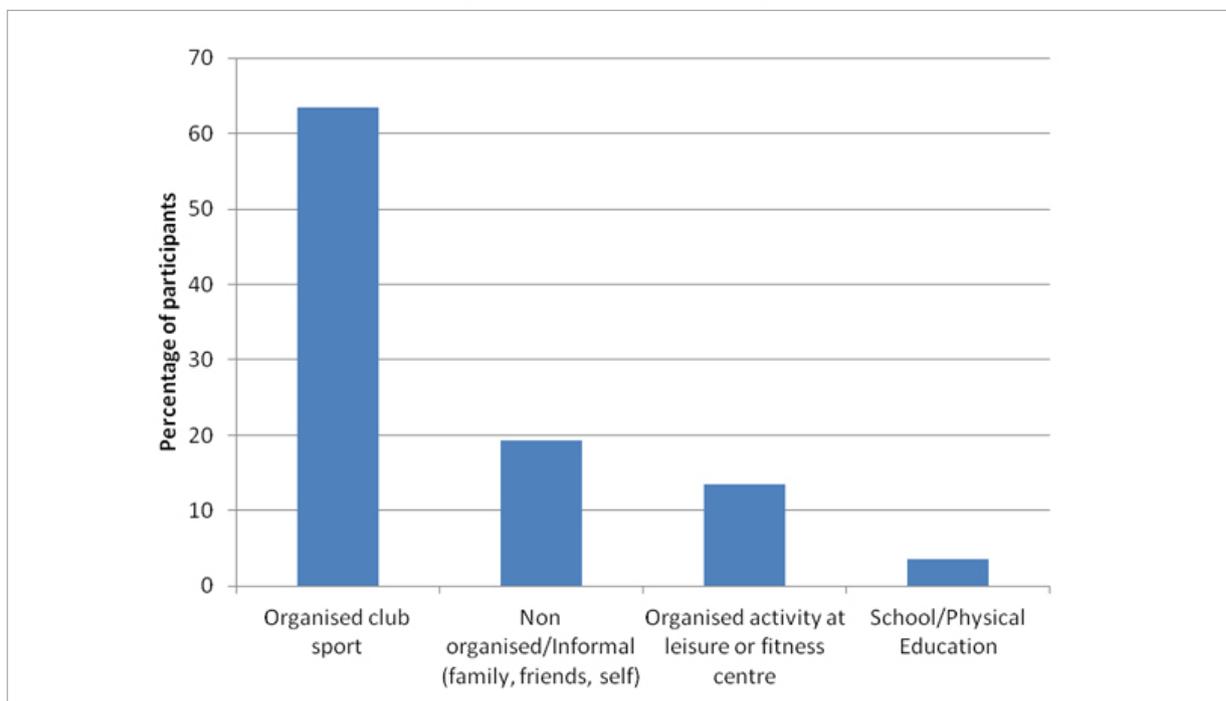
A breakdown of participation in team and individual sports according to gender shows that women are more likely than men and transgender people to participate in a team sport (see **Figure 6**).

FIGURE 6: Participation in individual and team sports by gender



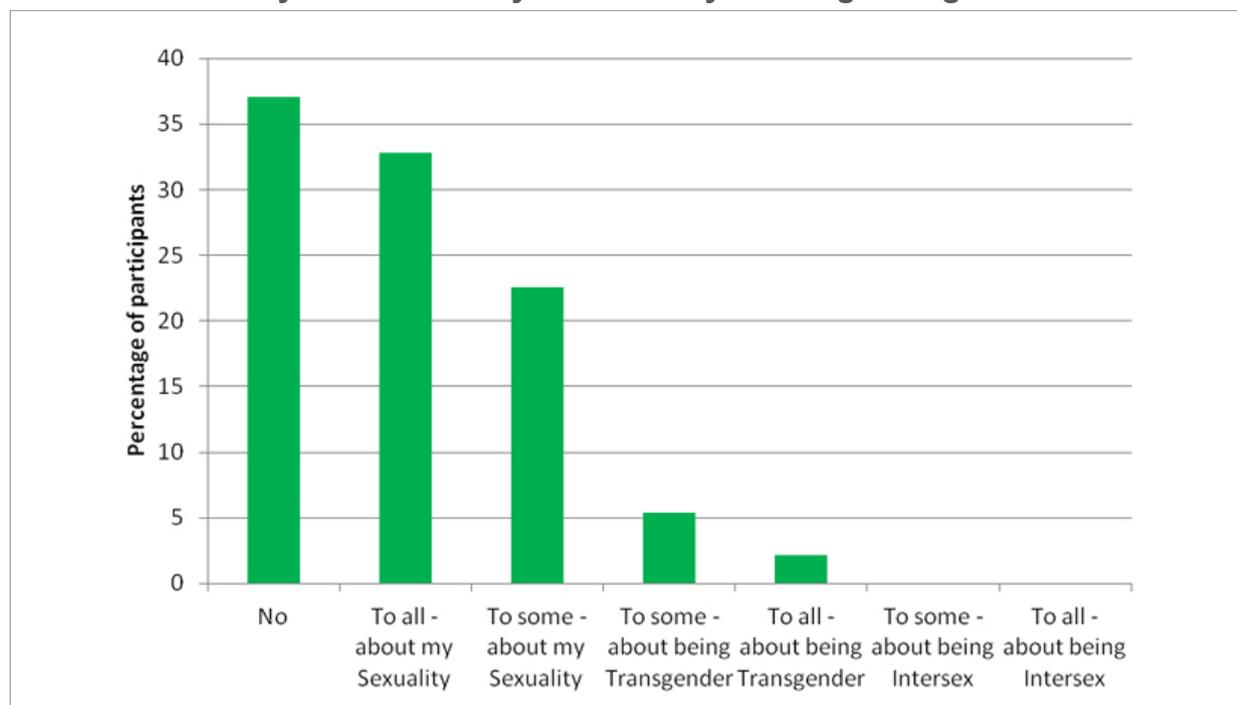
Respondents were asked to identify the context of the main sport in which they participated. **Figure 7** presents these findings, and shows that the majority of respondents participate in organised club sport (63.5%).

FIGURE 7: Participation in organised and non-organised sport and recreation



Survey participants were asked if they were 'out' in their main sport. As presented in **Figure 8**, of those who participated in a mainstream club or organisation, 37.1% of respondents were not out regarding their sexuality or being transgender or intersex. In regards to sexuality, 22.6% were out to some and 32.8% were out to all. In regards to being transgender, 5.4% were out to some and 2.2% were out to all.

FIGURE 8: Were you ‘out’ about your sexuality or being transgender or intersex?



A range of comments in regards to being out/not being out were provided by respondents. For many being ‘out’ was not an issue and they felt accepted and welcomed in sport and recreation. Others expressed confidence with whom they are and did not consider whether others had an issue with their sexuality.

“Eh, I don’t think anyone really cares.”

“Have always found being out to be very inclusive with great reactions from friends and other parties”

“Made no difference to anyone.”

“I am happy with who I am. If someone has a problem with it, it is their problem, not mine.”

Others tended to not be out but if they were asked were honest about their sexuality or gender identity.

“If I happen to become familiar with a person within the organisation and I engage in a conversation about my family life, then I do not hesitate in discussing my female partner and children.”

“Only out to friends or when it came up. I didn’t hide it but didn’t make it known either.”

Others expressed apprehension and uncertainty regarding how people in their club would react to them and as such modified their behaviour, which impacted on their sport experiences and self esteem.

“Had to pretend to be something I am not so I was on edge a lot.”

“It is always difficult to find a sport or be in a club because I consistently found no matter what sport I played or whether I knew someone that was a lesbian in the club it was very closeted or more often yes it is fine but do not talk about it and look girly.”

Others decided to discontinue their involvement in their sporting club or activity, sometimes due to fear of being bullied.

“If I were to express my sexuality I would fear that others would make fun of me and I would feel less of a person than them. I have experienced men bullying me and laugh at me to the point where I stopped.”

“When I played [name of sport] I was not out as transgender as in no one knew I identified as male. When I was younger it was not so much of a problem because the teams weren’t gender specific. When they divided and I had to play on the girls team it really upset me because I wanted to play on the boys team but couldn’t say anything. It got progressively worse as I got older and gender conflicts was one of the main reasons I stopped playing.”

In a few situations, sport was the environment where people felt most comfortable being out.

“I am still not out to my family and certainly not my workplace. But I am out in my team and they are wonderful.”

A small percentage of respondents (7.1%) participate in organised sport with a queer identified club or organisation. *Come Out to Play* reported the percentage of people

that participated in their main sport with a queer identified organisation as higher, at 16%. Individuals from queer identified clubs and organisations expressed acceptance and celebration of their sexuality or gender diversity.

“My sexuality was never an issue. I am out loud and proud and no one can get in my way.”

“Playing roller derby its not uncommon, and we have a team that celebrate being different. It’s never been an issue.”

Benefits

Participants were asked to identify the benefits they have received from their involvement in sport and recreation from a range of options. Obtaining general fitness, health and wellbeing benefits was identified as the main reason, followed by enjoyment of the activity/sport. Other benefits identified by the survey respondents included mental health benefits and the opportunity to travel and develop a career in sport.

Best sport and recreation experiences

Survey participants were asked to outline the best experience that they had in sport or recreation. A range of uplifting and positive stories were provided, that can be categorised under the following headings: achievement and winning both at the elite and grassroots levels, being part of a team or community, being accepted and welcomed, obtaining health benefits, opportunity to travel and broaden life experiences, fun and friendship, gaining confidence and providing a positive contribution.

“Representing the ACT and winning bronze at the 2013 Australian Championships.”

“Seeing the results of my hard workouts effect positive changes in my body – and therefore positive changes in my self esteem and confidence.”

“Have made wonderful lifelong friends.”

“I played cricket when I first moved to London as it was a way of meeting people. Some of those teammates are now my best friends. I was also lucky enough to get the opportunity to play county cricket in England and that gave me the opportunity to play at an elite level, travel around England and make more friends.”

“Representing Australia and being able to meet many people from all over the world, and playing at an elite level, then partying with the other teams, and winning bronze.”

“Winning the division 5 mixed grand final.”

“Got a goal had fun, etc.”

“Too many. The joy of teaching others to participate, develop their skills and enjoy the activity.”

“I always played team sports and thoroughly enjoyed the company of other players. I played at a high level in soccer and did some outstanding things during games, which will stay with me always. The sense of achievement, the pleasure of working in harmony with others, and being able to excel at something is possibly what makes my experiences so positive.”

“Having a team/community that accept you for who you are regardless of your race/gender/sexual preference, whose bond is for the love of the game is one of the best feelings you can have. It becomes a second family and home away from home, where giving back is one of the most rewarding things you can do.”

“When I was growing up sport was a fantastic outlet and even more so was one of the main reasons I believe I was able to handle my coming out in a positive manner. The overall fitness and wellbeing that results from engagement with sport meant that when I was working through my coming out process I had a positive outlet where I was just accepted for me as a human and participant. My team mates after my coming out process were really supportive and nothing changed in the way we interacted or related which was great.”

“Finishing my first half marathon to the cheers of family and friends and knowing I could overcome that physical and mental challenge.”

“Every experience has been above and beyond my expectations. Each time i hit the golf course i meet interesting people and they always treat me with respect and dignity and i return the favour.”

Respondents who identified with a queer identified club or organisation experienced acceptance and support from their club or within their sport. In retelling their best sport experiences, they were similar to those provided by the broader survey population, but also tended to include experiences of feeling safe and celebrating sexual and gender diversity.

“Joining roller derby, this year, has been such a rewarding experience. Training with such a diverse group of women, all with different backgrounds and goals, at different life stages, has taught me we can all do amazing things, regardless of age, background and career, marital status, sexuality, etc.”

“I love being involved in a roller derby league, where individually I feel safe to open about my sexuality, and where I can be open about my relationship with my same sex partner (who also plays in the league).”

“I won gold at the 2000 Gay Olympic Games. This was pretty major milestone in my life. I created a lot of friends from this event and still keep in touch.”

“The pink tennis club of Canberra you can play badly but they still love you. The club puts on this bush dance once a year and 700 or so people come. They are inclusive and kind.”

Many transgender people also provided their best sporting experiences. Again they were consistent with the broader survey population but tended to focus on being accepted and interacting in social situations. Issues that are unique to transgender people, such as use of change rooms, privacy and managing social situations, were also identified by transgender people.

“When I attended the dinner, I was quite feminine and the others (male and female) were very accepting of me – they had not realised just how naturally feminine I looked and interacted in social situations! It was very

pleasing to be acknowledged by people that had no association or prior exposure to transgender individuals. In essence, my sporting activity has lead to a social aspect that would not have occurred otherwise.”

“In the younger mixed team when I got to play with boys and people assumed I was a boy it was much more comfortable then when I got to join the girls later. Even though I couldn’t tell family members etc. how I felt, getting into the sport without having to worry about people seeing me as the wrong gender was much easier.”

“I have one male friend and we developed that friendship through sport. He knows and accepts my transgender status and sexuality. We even toured parts of Australia in what was a totally platonic relationship.”

“Sport has been a constant in my life. Since I grew up in a female body and was always told “girls can’t play football” it was affirming to my gender identity when I transitioned and was able to play (without outing myself) on a men’s team. I have got fitness and friendship and a sense of inclusion through sports, although because of my trans status, change rooms can be an issue!”

“When I was growing up, I wasn’t at all sporty. It wasn’t until I was well post-transitioned and joined a (non-queer) team that a friend was on that I discovered I was good at sport. It was the first time I realised I could be anything other than sucky. I have since played a fair bit of netball, some basketball, some volleyball, and do a little swimming and cycling.”

Discrimination

Participants were asked a range of open-ended questions in regards to whether they had experienced discrimination while involved in their sports or recreation activities and pursuits. In particular, they were asked if they experienced sexism, verbal harassment and bullying or physical assault. The following section of the report provides the findings in regards to discrimination.

Sexism

34% of respondents had experienced sexism in sport, compared to 42.7% reported in *Come Out to Play*. 9.7% of ACT survey participants experienced it once, 23.3% experienced it often and 1% experienced it always. Women experienced the most sexism, followed by transgender people and men (47.2%, 28.6% and 18.4% respectively). **Figures 9 to 12** provide a range of information in regards to the data obtained, including: the type of sport involvement or recreational activity, sites of sexism, what happened and what individuals who experienced it did about it.

FIGURE 9: Type of sport involvement

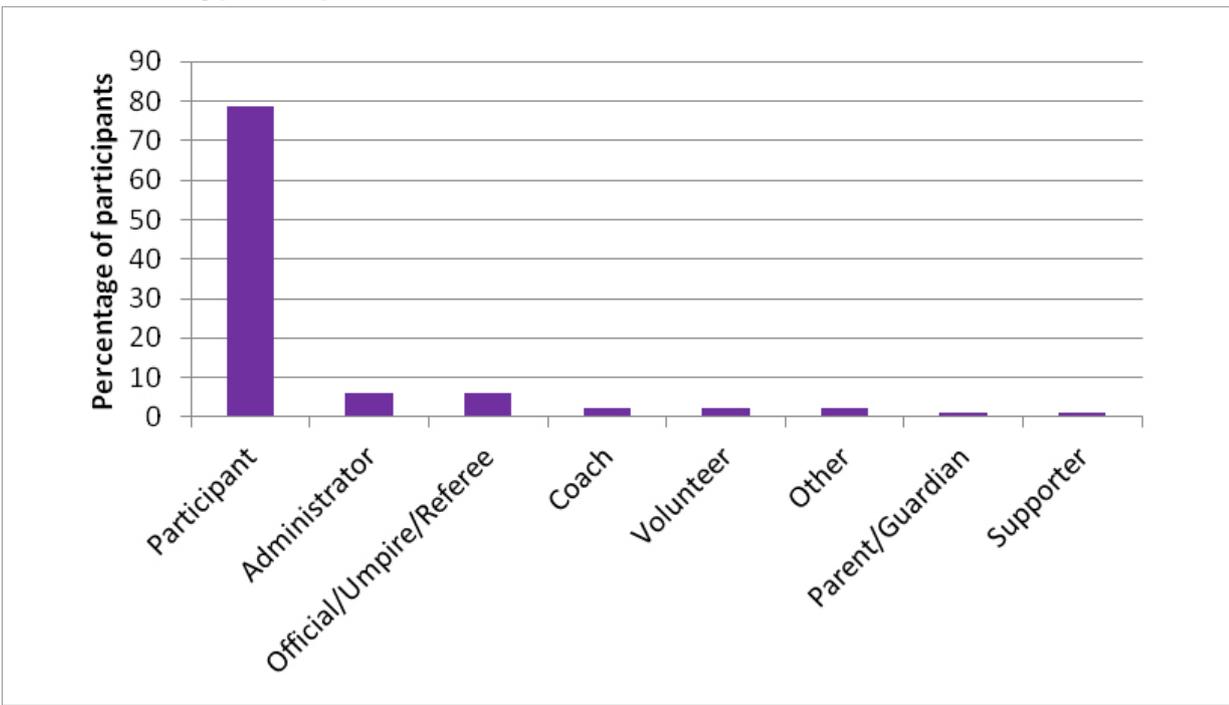


FIGURE 10: Site of sexist behaviour

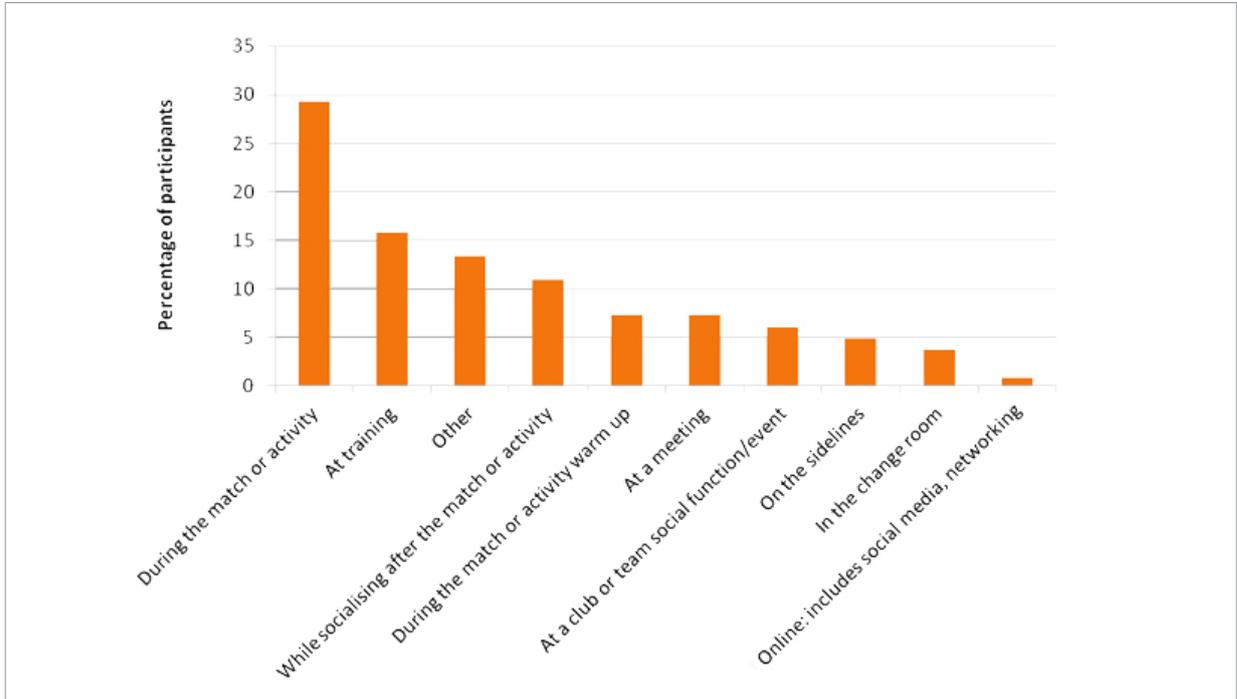


FIGURE 11: What happened

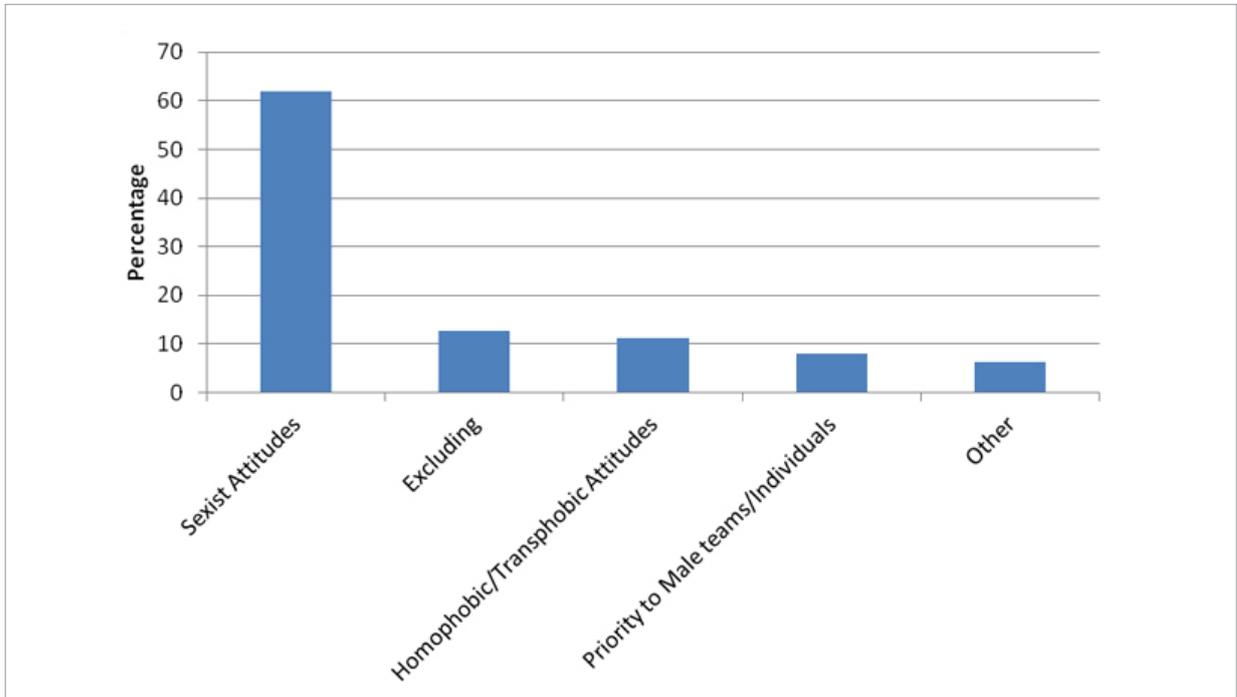
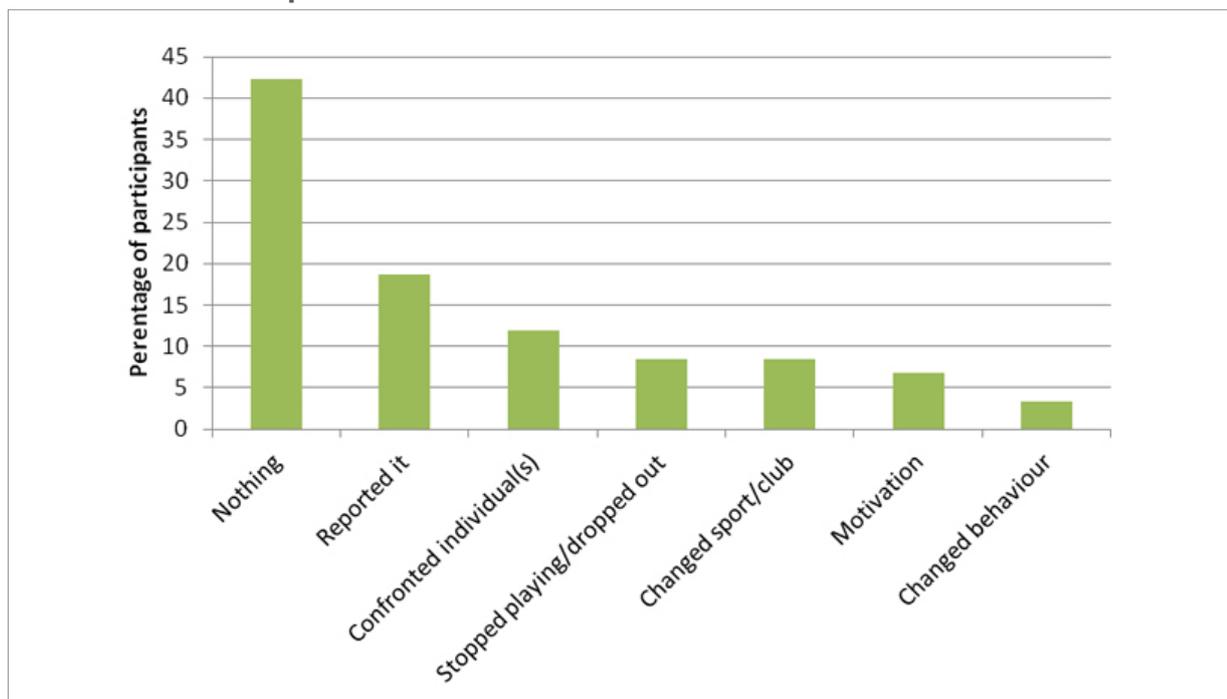


FIGURE 12: Participant reactions to sexist behaviour



The nature of the sexist behaviour experienced by participants included being excluded or being on the receiving end of sexist comments, and intimidating behaviour from coaches, members of the opposition and spectators.

“Called chick with a dick.”

“Name calling. Followed to my car. Nasty emails.”

“He said, ‘well, its’ only a women’s game, don’t get too involved, its not a real competition anyway. They shouldn’t even be playing the game’.

Mixed sports were sometimes identified as the site of the harassment, as were traditionally male sports such as the football codes.

“Mixed competitions and men on the opposing team making inappropriate comments to myself and the girls on my team.”

In some cases the behaviour was more ingrained and there was evidence of a culture of sexism at the top levels of the sport.

“An international federation told our organisation that no women could work at the event. I was most disappointed that our organisation agreed to that.”

“It was agreed by my organisation I would represent the organisation at an important international forum. Other people involved in a parent organisation decided that it would be more appropriate for the President (male) to attend and I was instructed to change all the arrangements and make the booking for him.”

Survey participants were asked what impact the behaviour had on them. Individuals who were subjected to sexist behaviour experienced a range of emotions including shock, disappointment, frustration, anger and sympathy for the offender. Others used the incident to motivate them to achieve success in their sports endeavours. A few were able to dismiss the incident (*“water off a ducks back”*); however, for others it impacted their feeling of self-worth and belonging, and in some cases the feelings were long lasting.

“It made me frustrated and left me feeling like a second-rate player.”

“Impacted my sense of self and sexuality development.”

“I was a complete mess, affected my education, socialisation skills, ability to believe in myself and have confidence in my strength and power. Giving up was the signal event of my teenage years. I was absolutely and utterly devastated.”

Participants were asked what they did about the incident. Many did nothing, but some defended themselves by verbally confronting the offender. Several discontinued their participation in the sport or activity. Some people reported the matter to another person or their sporting club or organisation.

Verbal harassment and bullying

32.2% of survey respondents reported experiencing verbal homophobia at some point during their sport or recreation activity, compared to 41.5% reported in *Come Out to Play*. 14.1% of respondents experienced it once, 17.6% experienced it often and 0.5% always

experienced it. Men experienced the most verbal homophobia, followed by transgender people and women (40%, 26.2% and 24.8% respectively). **Figures 13 to 15** provides information regarding the type of involvement in sport or recreation at the time of the harassment, the sites of the harassment and what the individual that experienced the harassment did about the matter.

FIGURE 13: Type of sport involvement

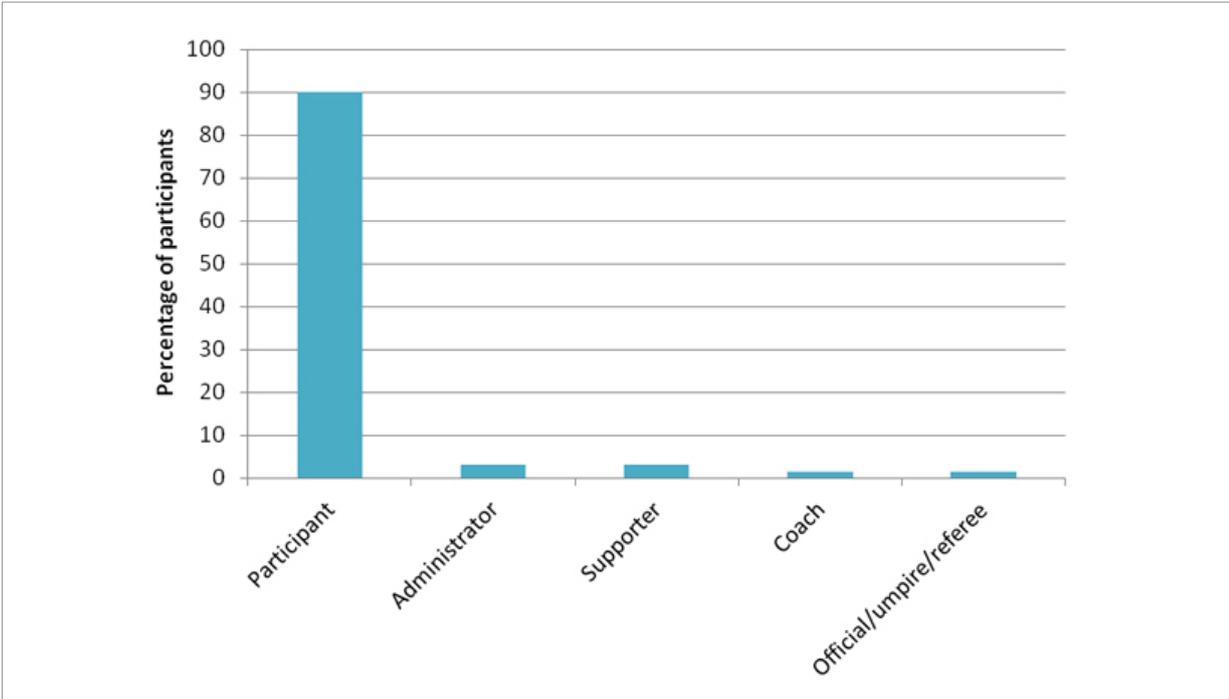


FIGURE 14: Site of the behaviour

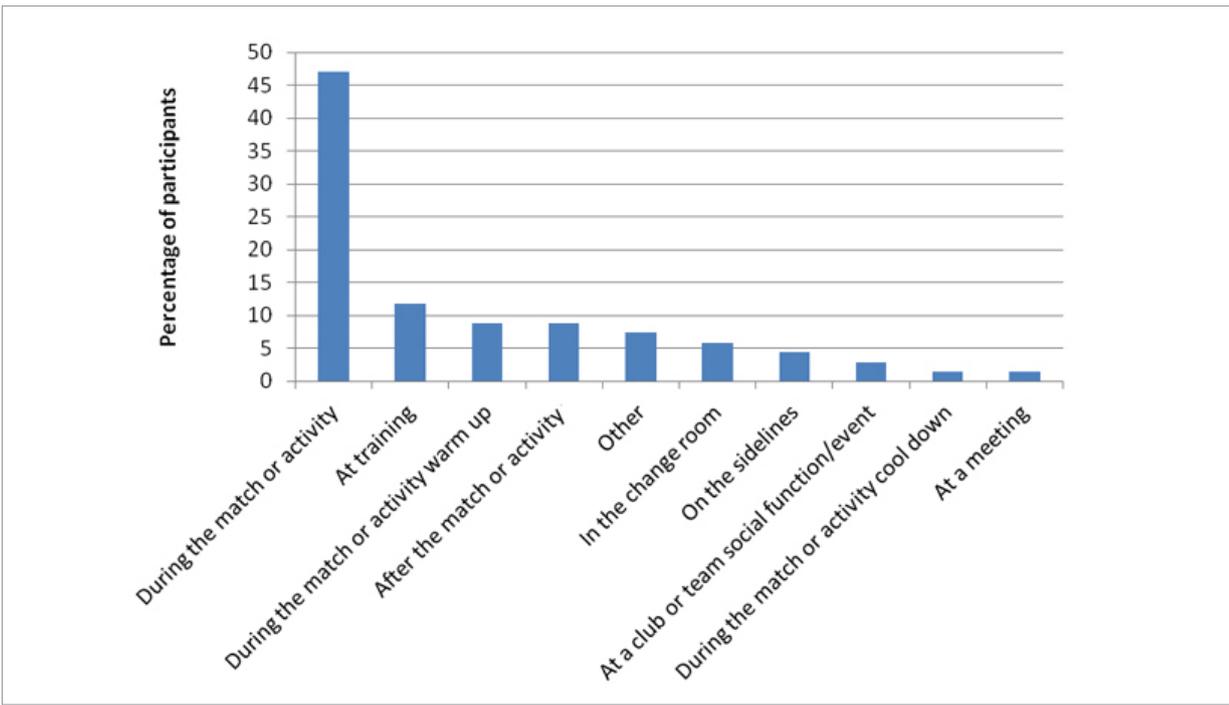
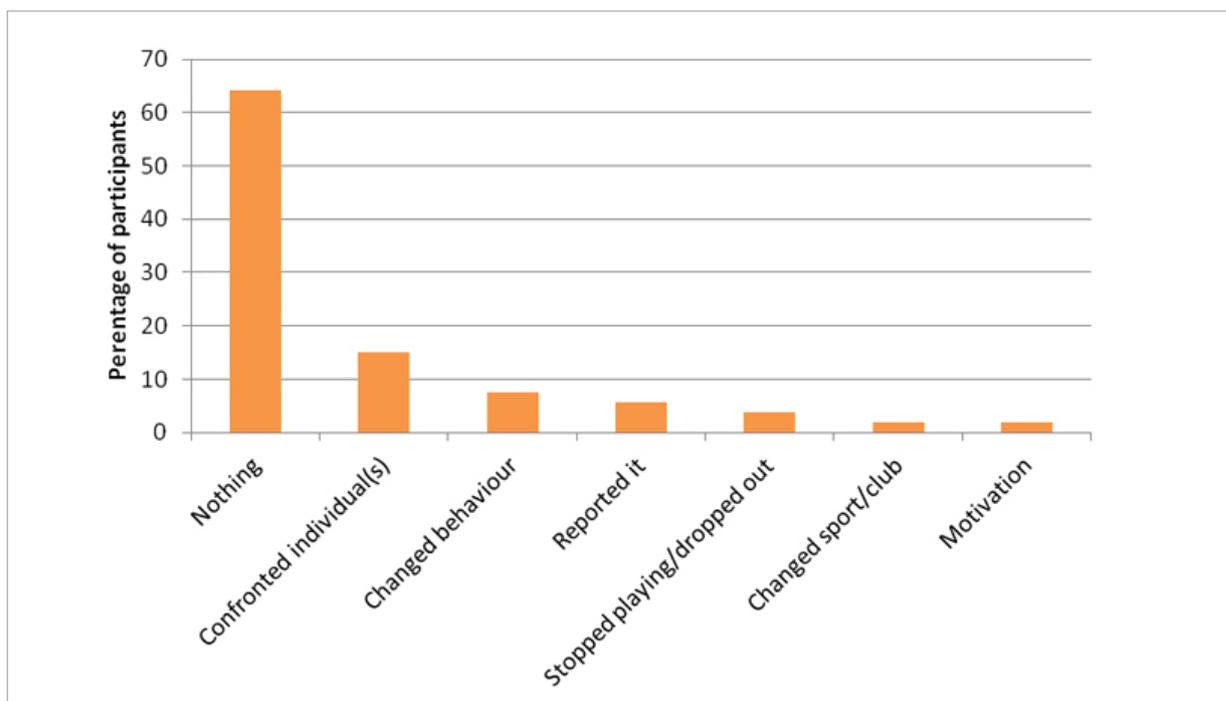
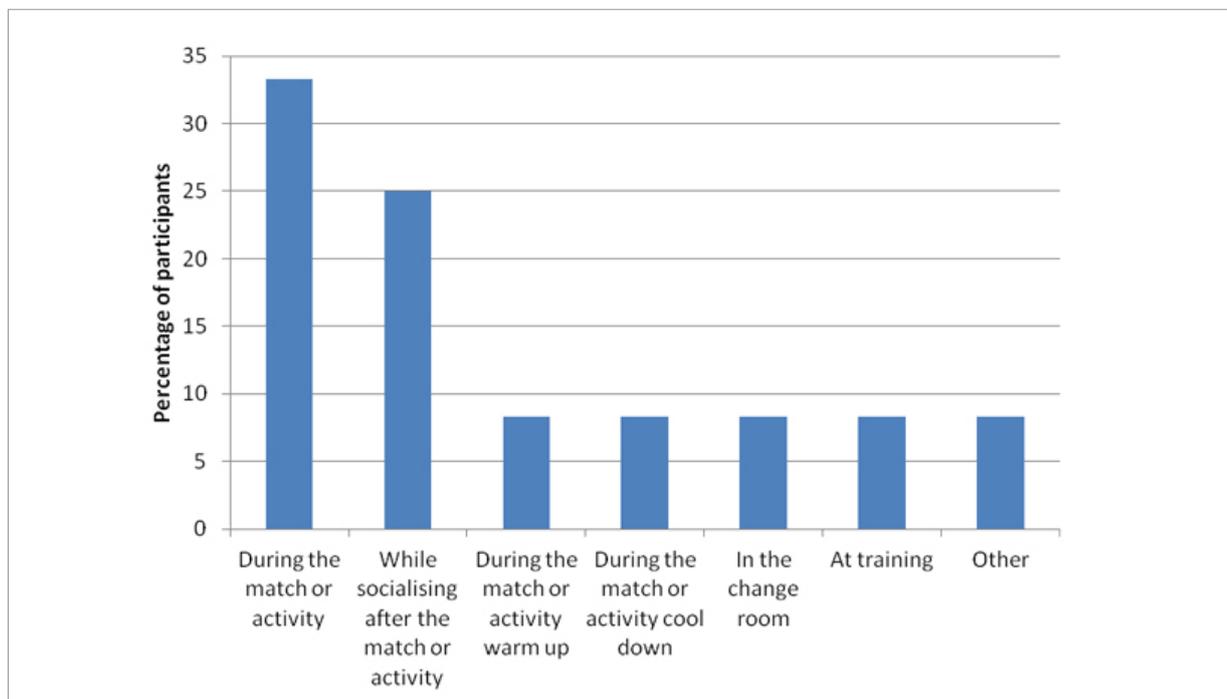


FIGURE 15: Participant reactions to the behaviour



A small percentage of survey participants (7.1%) experienced verbal harassment or bullying on the basis of being transgender or intersex, with participants experiencing it once (4.9%) or often (2.2%). In all but one of the situations described the respondent was a participant. **Figure 16** provides information regarding the sites of the verbal harassment or bullying. Participants reacted to it by making a complaint, confronting the offender, dropping out of the sport or changing sports.

FIGURE 16: Site of the behaviour



The nature of the verbal harassment and bullying, which was based on sexuality or gender diversity, included derogatory and personal comments, name-calling, slurs and sledging. Sometimes it was used to put a person off their sport. Sometimes it targeted a specific individual, other times it was directed towards the team. The verbal comments were made by a range of people including team mates, other athletes or opposition players, coaches, spectators and parents.

“Running group had a rule no poofters.”

“Occasionally people (usually young males) would say things like ‘you punch like a girl’ or don’t be such a poof.’

“Spectators yelled out inappropriate comments to me on the field because of my skill, ability and appearance.”

“He (a fellow athlete) didn’t like me much. Decided to label me a ‘fag’ and alongside his team continued to harass me for the next few years.”

“In my childhood, name calling eg sissy, poofter, pansy, pervert, etc. This to a 6-8 year old and not just from other children but from adults as well.”

“An angry social conservative told me not to use the showers while he was around.”

Participants were asked what impact the behaviour had on them. For some it had no impact or they found humour in the situation. Others experienced a range of negative emotions, including: fear, shock, guilt, intimidation, embarrassment, isolation or feeling hurt or upset. Some felt that they were not good enough or became fearful in a sport setting. Some people decided to keep their sexuality or gender diversity a secret because of the behaviour they experienced.

“To be honest – mostly it made me laugh. I was just coming out and was the happiest I’d been in a long time. I can imagine if I was any younger, or less sure of myself, it would have had a great impact.”

“It was weird that I laughed about it but clearly the comment still resonates.”

“Was actually a positive as my team mates backed me up and it didn’t have a big impact overall.”

“Felt alienated, considered suicide, considered getting my own back on the abuses.”

“I grew up fearful of sports because of this. It is only now in my late 20s and early 30s that I am trying to embrace physical activity and tell myself that yes, I too am allowed to play sports!”

“It made me afraid to come out, it made me uncomfortable to be there.”

Participants were also asked what they did about the behaviour. The large majority of people ignored the behaviour or did nothing. Some laughed it off, sometimes with the support of team mates or loved ones. A few people confronted the behaviour, either aggressively or in a calm manner. Many people chose to leave the sport and a few reported the behaviour to the umpire/referee. Only one person reported the matter to the sporting organisation.

“Nothing. I stayed in the closet until I quit.”

“Nothing it wasn’t something I took personally it was ‘part of the game’.”

“Nothing as I felt awful.”

“Discussed it with my team who were supportive and against it. I also told the ref.”

“Ignored them. My coach had words though.”

“Made a point to smash her every time she got the ball and made sure there was always physical contact between us as much as I could – nothing inappropriate – just annoyed the hell out of her.”

“Talked to friends and counsellor.”

Physical assault

A small percentage (4.4%) of respondents experienced physical assault due to their sexuality or being transgender or intersex. 3.3% of respondents experienced it once and 1.1% experienced it often. In all instances, the individual was a participant in sport or a recreation activity and it occurred either during the match, during the warm up/cool down or while socialising. Individuals dealt with the incident by doing nothing, getting angry, talking the matter through with friends or with their partner, or dropping out of the sport or recreation activity.

Challenges for sport

Participants were asked if they would like to participate in a particular sport but do not due to their sexuality, gender identity or intersex status. 16% of men and 10.8% of women identified a sport or recreational activity in which they would like to participate but do not because of their sexuality. The most common sport male participants would like to play is Rugby League (45.5%), followed by martial arts and Rugby Union (both on 36.4%). The most common sporting activity female participants would like to participate in is dancing (33.3%), followed by ice hockey, netball and swimming (all on 11.1%).

10.9% of respondents identified a sport or recreational activity in which they would like to participate but do not because they are transgender or intersex. The most common sport in which transgender and intersex respondents would like to participate, by a significant portion, is swimming (70%), followed by dancing (25%) and a range of sports including, netball, football/soccer, basketball and weights training (all 20%).

Unsafe sporting environments

Individuals were asked if they have felt unsafe in a sporting environment. 40.8% of participants felt unsafe at sporting events (transgender and intersex = 50%; male = 47.5%; female = 31.3%). In comparison, *Come Out to Play* reported 37% of male participants and 20.6% of female participants felt unsafe in a sporting environment.

“Not when being seen as a lesbian female, however as a bisexual identified trans male I would feel unsafe in many sporting environments.”*

“Always! I don’t play team sports due to this concern. My exercise activities are generally solo in nature. I walk with friends. When I played squash or tennis it was with friends not in a competition.”

Several people did not feel unsafe but felt uncomfortable or cautious. They took steps to be ‘invisible’ in certain sporting environments or they avoided sporting environments.

“No, but I appreciate that I have been very lucky, and I’m a straight-seeming lesbian, which makes me invisible.”

“I’ve occasionally felt uncomfortable in hypermasculine environments (e.g. at the gym) but never unsafe per se.”

“Not unsafe but uncomfortable.”

“I have never felt unsafe because I never go swimming, that way nothing bad will ever happen. However I would like to go swimming, learn how to swim.”

For some participants the fear they felt whilst at sporting environments occurred as a result of them playing or umpiring, or was due to their small physical size or gender.

“Only because of idiots trying to abuse me because of decisions made on the field, the usual umpire/referee abuse.”

“Yes but more because of my small body size and gender, rather than sexuality.”

Others did not feel unsafe but kept their sexuality or gender identity secret in a sport environment.

“No not really but not safe to disclose who I really am.”

Some people gave specific examples and reasons why they felt unsafe. In some cases the behaviours described included harassment and bullying.

“Yes – being followed hit on by men at events saying I can bat for there team etc.”

“As a spectator at football games I find remarks made mostly by men about “faggots or pooftas” insulting.”

“Yes. I have been harassed, riddicled, attacked and had my belongings stolen in sporting environments.”

“I generally feel unsafe in environments which involve sport because in my mind I associate sport with bullying and homophobia.”

Several people felt unsafe in particular sporting environments, for example in male-dominated sporting environments or where alcohol was consumed.

“Only around men. Never in female dominated sports and environments.”

“Yes because of excessive drinking.”

“Yes. Even as a spectator I don’t feel particularly safe at some events – where there is lots of drinking,

or where there can be a very 'boisy' vibe in the audience ... I have anxiety about being outed somehow and what might happen."

Inclusive sport

Participants were asked what sporting organisations need to do to be more inclusive of LGBTI people. Many people stressed the need for ongoing training and education to be provided, in both the school and sport/recreation sectors. Others identified the importance of sport and recreational providers implementing inclusive policies, codes of behaviour and effective complaint handling procedures. While policies and procedures are obviously important, several participants identified the need for organisations to openly, visibly and explicitly promote messages regarding LGBTI people being welcome, accepted and valued. Strong and visible leadership within sports and recreation providers was also identified as important to LGBTI communities.

"Education around that 16–21 year old age group, especially of parents and coaches, that it's okay to be gay is important. Its the parents who say the nastiest things, and don't want their kids to be 'turned'.

"There should be penalties for discrimination of all types at all levels of sport but educating people to accept others is the most important step I think. It would also be good to have greater visibility of the fact that clubs are accepting so people feel more confident to join them."

"I think it's essential that sports, individually, have anti-homophobia/anti-transphobia messages. This may involve participating in LGBTI – supportive events (mardi gras), showing anti-homophobia ads at games, or in publications (club newsletters). I think this kind of explicit, positive approach to issues surrounding sexuality and gender identity will make it easier for participants to be 'out', but also ensure that people that are considering playing the sport feel 'safe' to join. I think it is important to promote inclusivity at every level of sports – from community through to elite levels."

The contribution that LGBTI role models and ‘ambassadors’ provide was also highlighted as a way for sports to promote the opportunities within sport to LGBTI communities.

“Using media and well known, or not so well known, LGBTI athletes willing to share their story helps enormously. Keep chipping away, attitudes are changing.”

** “Everyone needs a Jason Ball. But we also need people that are unafraid of calling out, and questioning bullies.”*

Policies promoting safe and inclusive environments

Survey participants were asked a range of questions in regard to whether their club has an anti-discrimination policy and one that promotes safety and inclusion of LGBTI people. They were also asked if club members are generally made aware of these policies.

Figures 17 to 21 present the data in regards to the existence and promotion of these policies. A large percentage of people replied ‘don’t know’ regarding whether their club or organisation had an anti-discrimination policy and one that promotes safety and inclusion

of LGBTI people, which is interesting. Given the funding requirements at the national and state level, it would be expected that the vast majority of sporting clubs would have policies addressing anti-discrimination and promote safety and inclusion. There may be inadequacies in terms of how these policies are promoted, particularly beyond the state sports level to regional sport and clubs. Some recreation providers such as gyms and fitness centres may not provide policies addressing anti-discrimination or the safety and inclusion of LGBTI people, or they may not promote them effectively.



***Jason Ball is an openly gay AFL player from regional Victoria who has lobbied the AFL to tackle homophobia.**

FIGURE 17: Does your club have policies that promote the safety and inclusion of LGBTI people?

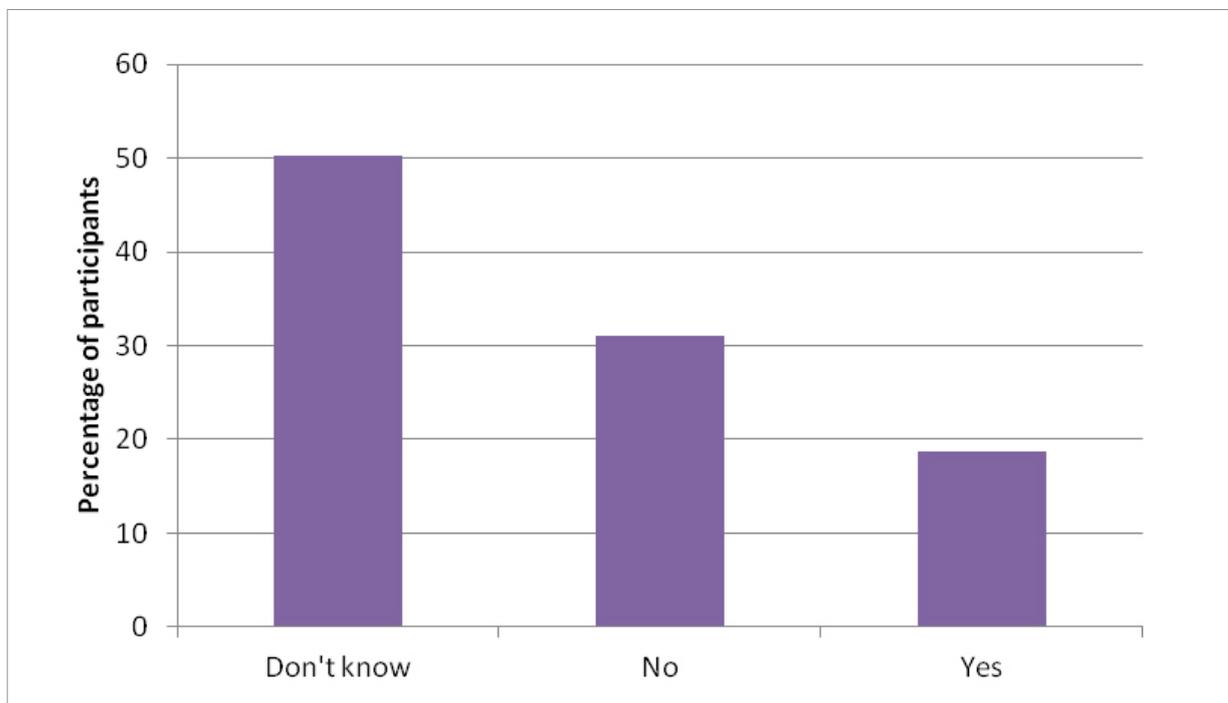


FIGURE 18: Are club members generally made aware of these?

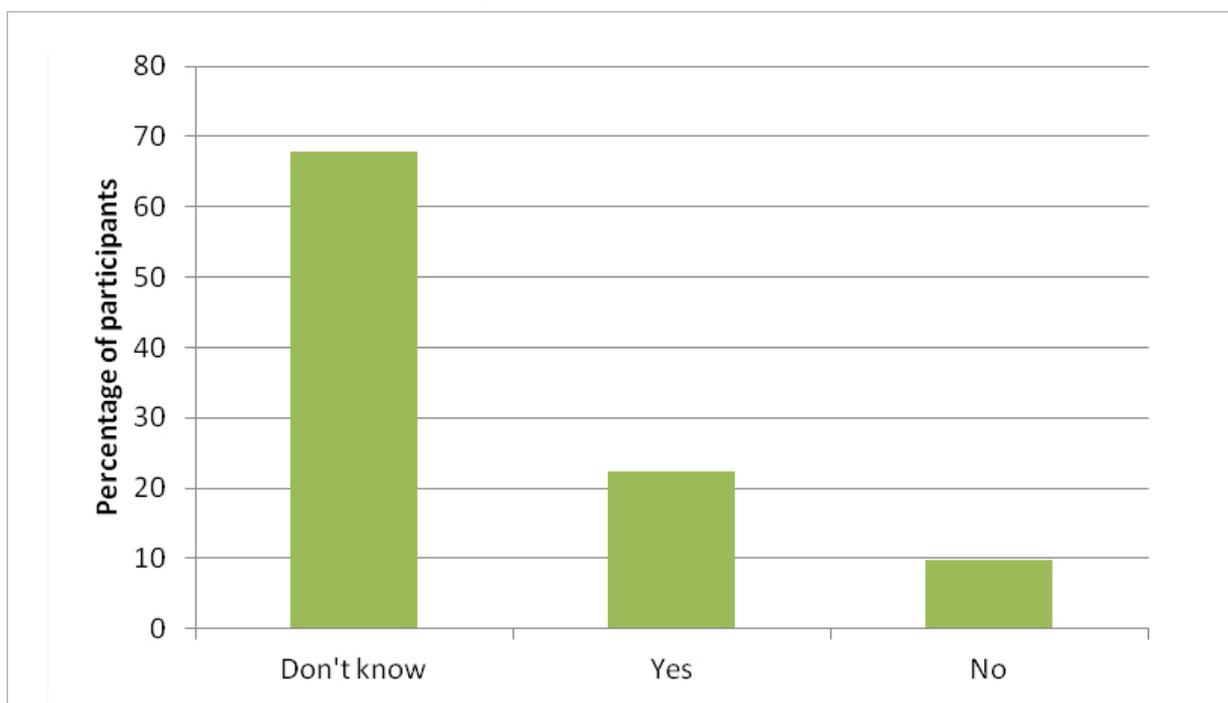


FIGURE 19: Does your club have anti-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity?

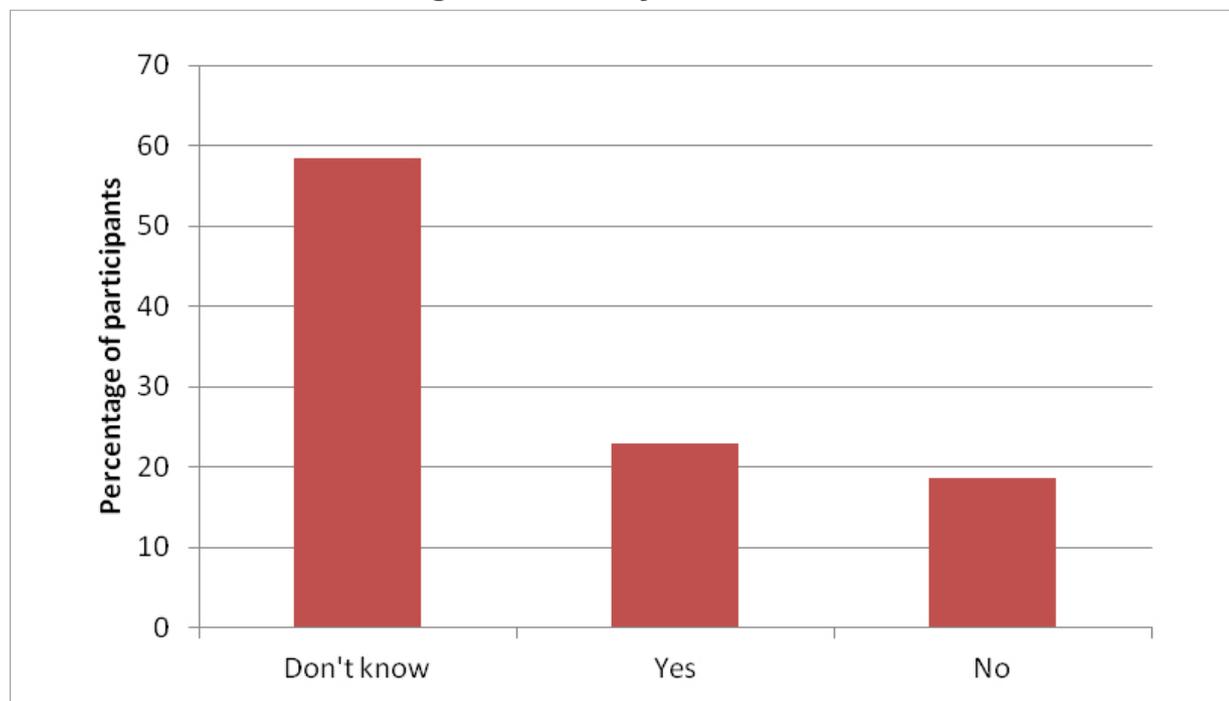


FIGURE 20: Which policies does your club provide?

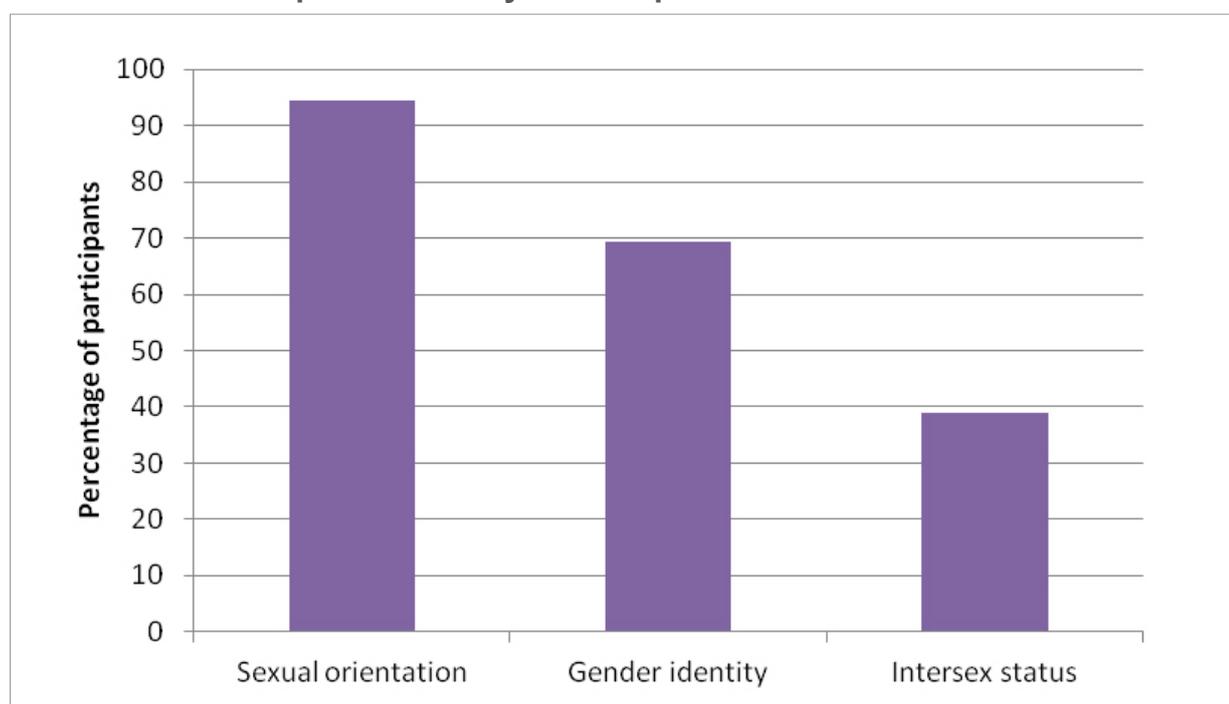
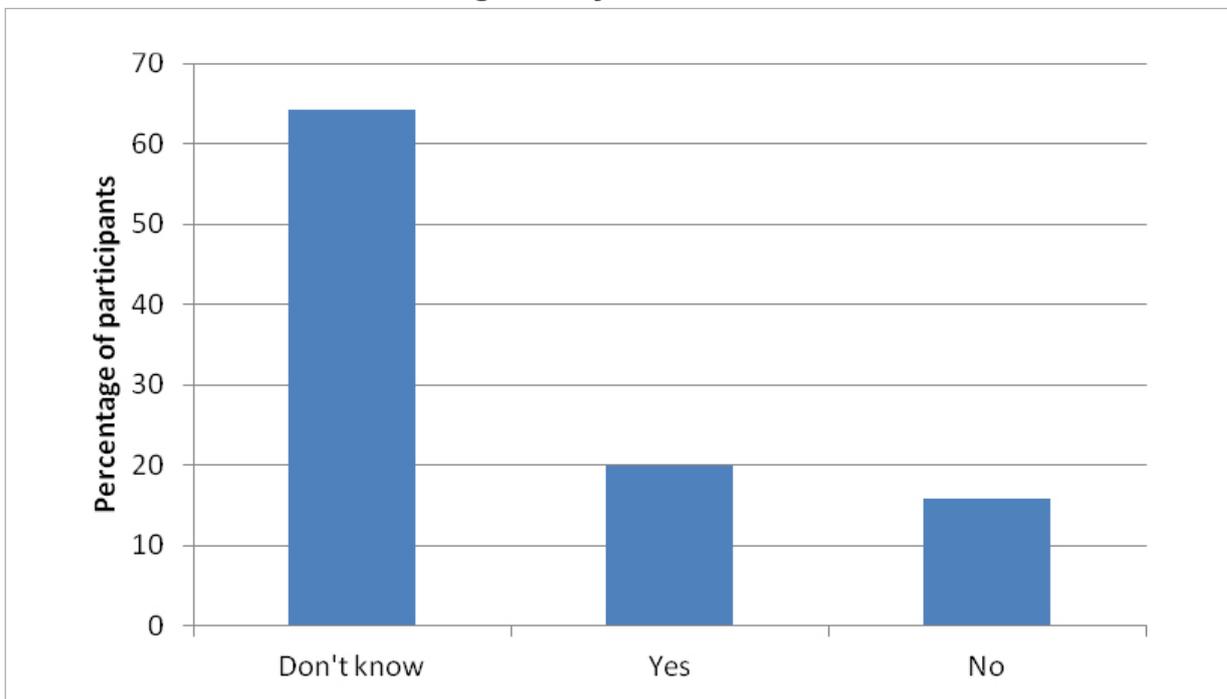


FIGURE 21: Are club members generally made aware of these?



Conclusion

According to the *Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Annual Report*, the ACT is the most active of all states and territories in Australia. Canberrans appreciate the health and social benefits physical activity provides as well as the opportunity for personal and sporting success and being part of a community. Canberrans participate in a range of sporting and recreational activities from traditional team based sports, to individual pursuits, to strength and fitness training at gyms, to more unique sports such as roller derby and quidditch. Many enjoy the opportunities provided in structured, organised sport, while others prefer less formal and competitive sport and recreation opportunities that focus on participation, fun and the opportunity to form and enjoy friendships.

For many gay people in Canberra, sport is an important part of their lifestyle and something from which they gain enjoyment and personal satisfaction. Their sexuality is not a significant issue in their sporting experiences, if at all. For others; however, they experience harassment and bullying while involved in sport, or fear the possibility of it occurring. Many gay people are uncomfortable or do not feel safe in sporting environments. As a result, many choose to hide their sexuality, which can result in

feelings of fear, self-loathing and alienation, or they choose to not participate in particular sports or in sport and recreation generally. It is clear that for some gay people there are no barriers to them participating in sport and recreation; however, for others barriers do exist and in many cases are very difficult to breakdown.

Transgender people face specific issues in relation to participation in sport. Their issues appear to have been inappropriately swept up with homophobia, which has created misunderstandings in regards to issues of gender identity and sexuality. It also creates confusion in regards to the issues

“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair.”

(Nelson Mandela; Laureus World Sport Awards, 2000)

faced specifically by transgender people in a sport setting. Very limited research has been obtained on the experiences of transgender people in sport, partly because their population is difficult to access and is small (although as a group they are gaining confidence and increasing in numbers). It is therefore very positive that a significant sample of survey respondents who identify as transgender or intersex participated in the survey.

Most individual and team sports have traditionally been organised and structured according to sex/gender roles (girls, boys, women, men), which presents significant difficulties for transgender people in regards to accessing sport. When they do participate in sport they encounter a general ignorance and prejudice from the wider community. A fear of being harassed or bullied in the sport setting is not uncommon for transgender people and a lack of policies in relation to the participation of transgender and intersex people in sport exists. Many transgender and intersex people have concerns in regards to whether their privacy will be respected and in relation to the handling of practical matters such as the suitability of uniforms, the use of change rooms and toilet facilities and accommodation arrangements if travelling. All of these factors contribute to many transgender people feeling excluded and unwelcome in the sport environment and, as a result, most choose to not participate, particularly in organised and gender based sport.

For most people their first sporting experiences take place in the school setting. Students who have positive sport experiences at school were more confident and more successful applying their sporting skills (Symons, C; p79). There is opportunity for work to be done with schools to ensure that same-sex attracted and gender-diverse youth are supported and feel safe during physical education lessons and school sport experiences. There is also opportunity for sporting organisations and schools to work together to improve the school sport environment for LGBTI young Australians and address the participation rates and experiences of LGBTI young people in sport and leisure activities. *Fair go, Sport!*, a program developed by the Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission, aims to celebrate sexual and gender diversity and support LGBTI people in the sport setting. The program has gained momentum in several Australian states and territories and a schools version of the program was recently launched.

Another important Victorian initiative is the *Come Out to Play* research project. It is a benchmark study and the first of its type in Australia to provide insight into the sport experiences of LGBTI people in Australia. The findings of the ACT study build on *Come Out to Play* and reinforce the need for sporting organisations to consider the potential barriers that exist for LGBTI people in sport and recreation. It is important when dealing with confronting issues such as harassment, discrimination and bullying in sport,

to ensure that the many benefits of sport participation are remembered. It is equally important to celebrate the diversity that the LGBTI communities bring to sport and the wider community.

At the national level, the Australian Sports Commission has developed a Member Protection Policy template that provides a framework from which sporting organisations can develop a policy that outlines requirements under the various anti-discrimination and equal rights legislation that exist around Australia. In addition to adopting a Member Protection Policy or equivalent, sporting organisations should implement a range of additional initiatives to ensure the policy remains current and is effectively implemented and promoted from national through to club level. In *A Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport*, Brackenridge has listed a range of initiatives that a 'model' organisation could implement above and beyond policy implementation. These are listed in **Attachment A**.

A sport that implements a Member Protection Policy, does this so it can continuously work towards maintaining ethical and informed decision making and responsible behaviours that promote inclusive, safe and fair sport. The policy should provide policy statements addressing a range of unethical behaviours including harassment and discrimination, codes of behaviour and complaint handling procedures. All funded national sporting organisations are required to develop an approved Member Protection Policy or equivalent which must be implemented across all levels – national, state and club – within their sport. This requirement is also applied to all territory sporting organisations that receive ACT Government funding.

Internationally gay sport has grown significantly since the first international Gay Games in San Francisco in 1982, and Australia has not been left behind. Sydney hosted the Gay Games in 2002 and in 2008 Melbourne hosted the 1st Asia Pacific Outgames. Later this year, Darwin will host the 3rd Asia Pacific Outgames. Recently, in conjunction with the launch of Australia's *You Can Play* campaign by *Play by the Rules*, Australia's five professional sports (rugby union, rugby league, aussie rules, football/soccer and cricket) announced



David Pocock from the ACT Brumbies is part of the *You Can Play* campaign. www.youcanplay.com.au

they would develop an Anti-Homophobia and Inclusion Policy aimed at stamping out homophobia throughout their sports. The development of the policy coincides with Sydney hosting the 2014 Bingham Cup, known as the gay Rugby World Cup. Policies of this nature and programs such as *You Can Play* and *Fair go, Sport!* are complimented by a range of other national and international programs and resources that address and promote LGBTI sport participation, which are listed at **Attachment B**.

Locally, the *ACT Discrimination Act* (1991) ensures that everyone in the ACT can enjoy fair treatment and equality of opportunity. Under the Act, discrimination means to treat someone unfavourably in public life because of a particular 'protected attribute' or 'ground'. A range of protected attributes and grounds are stated in the legislation and these include sex, sexuality and gender identity. In addition, the legislation also protects Canberrans against vilification (inciting hatred through a public act).

In October 2013, the Government introduced same-sex marriage legislation, the first of its kind in Australia. Shortly after being passed, the legislation was overturned by the High Court of Australia, after it ruled that the ACT's Marriage Equality Act could not operate concurrently with the Federal Marriage Act of 1961. In March 2014, the ACT Government also introduced changes to birth certificate laws that allow people in the ACT to change the sex listed on their birth certificate, and introduced a new third category, "X". Such progressive actions put Canberra on the national stage as a truly diverse, inclusive and broad-minded city.

While the ACT Government continues to work to provide legislation that is inclusive for LGBTI people, the sport and recreation industry must also work cooperatively to provide a supportive and welcoming sport environment for all Canberrans. The benefits of providing such an environment to LGBTI people also extend beyond the sporting field and fitness club to the wider community. A truly welcoming and inclusive sporting organisation is created, in which broad and meaningful health and well-being outcomes are provided, and a fun, safe, respectful and fair sporting environment is provided to all members and supporters.

Recommendations

Come Out to Play is the first Australian survey to investigate the sport experiences of LGBT people in Victoria. The Inclusive Sport Survey had a very similar purpose to *Come Out to Play* and structured its questions in a similar manner, which provides opportunity for comparison of the Victorian and ACT data. *Come Out to Play* provided a series of recommendations and these are listed in **Attachment C**. Based on the findings of the Inclusive Sport Survey, the ACT Government should support the recommendations provided in *Come Out to Play*. In addition, the Inclusive Sport Survey provides the recommendations listed below.

1. Investigate potential partnerships with government, education institutions and sport, recreation and fitness industry agencies, so that national research can be conducted and opportunities, programs and resources that promote acceptance, understanding and inclusion of LGBTI people can be developed in a broad and coordinated manner.
2. Provide additional support and resources to assist sporting organisations to effectively implement and promote their Member Protection Policy, so it remains an effective, current and accessible document.
3. Investigate opportunities and provide guidelines for sport and recreation providers to facilitate sport and recreation participation for transgender and intersex people.
4. Build on the resources available on the Play by the Rules website and implement a range of practical and effective strategies and initiatives, to ensure that LGBTI people feel safe from harm, abuse and bullying behaviours at sporting venues.
5. Support sporting organisations that actively seek out opportunities to host sporting events and tournaments specifically for and inclusive of the LGBTI community, so that Canberra is recognised locally, nationally and internationally as a welcoming, inclusive and progressive city that acknowledges and celebrates its diversity.

Attachment A

A model sports organisation...

(From *A Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport*.)

- Has written a policy on equality/diversity that bars discrimination and explicitly mentions SO*
- Offers 'gay-friendly' inductions
- Has a working group on diversity that encompasses LGBT issues
- Names a lead individual for SO issues at executive/board level
- Has set up an LGBT support and consultation network group
- Conducts regular audits to monitor compliance with Employment (SO) Regulations and the Civil Partnership Act
- Offers diversity awareness training that refers explicitly to 'sexual orientation' and gives practical, context specific examples
- Provides support for and sponsorship of LGBT organisations or events such as the Gay Games
- Runs organisational campaigns highlighting inclusion and safety for LGBT members and staff, through materials, intra- and internet sites and so on
- Enforces SO equality policy compliance
- Uses LGBT media to place ads for staff, volunteers or members
- Includes SO-related questions on all member/staff/supporter surveys and other monitoring tools
- Provides targeted mentoring on LGBT issues, especially in relation to performance lifestyle programmes for elite athletes
- Gives opportunities for LGBT leadership training and resources, sourced internally or externally
- Celebrates key LGBT individuals within the organisation. Especially those at senior levels

- Ensures that all members feel accepted and comfortable by avoiding assumptions about SO and partner status or partner gender, e.g. references to “wives and girlfriends”, gender-specific gifts such as ties for men or headscarves for women, describing “wives’ events” on conference programmes...
- Integrates equality and diversity into all role specifications and performance management or appraisal systems

* Sexual orientation

Attachment B

Useful resources and websites

Play by the Rules

A website that provides news, resources and free online training to assist sport and recreation clubs and administrators, officials, coaches, players and spectators to keep sport safe, fair and inclusive. www.playbytherules.net.au

Member protection policy template (2012–13)

The Australian Sports Commission's Member Protection Policy template outlines the information and requirements that national sporting organisations must include in their Member Protection Policy which is then adopted at state and club level. Every funded national sporting organisation and triennially funded ACT based state sporting organisation is required to adopt a Member Protection Policy.

www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/integrity_in_sport/resources/national_member_protection_policy_template

Harassment-free sport: guidelines to address homophobia and sexuality discrimination in sport (2000)

Provides guidelines, legal information and examples of discrimination to assist sports to understand and address homophobia and sexuality discrimination in sport.

fulltext.ausport.gov.au/fulltext/2000/ascpub/homo_sexuality.pdf

Australian Sports Commission transgender information sheet

Provides historical information on transgender issues in sport, the IOC position and additional reading.

www.ausport.gov.au/participating/women/resources/issues/transgender

ACT Human Rights Commission Information

Provides information on the Discrimination Act and how it protects gender diverse people. www.hrc.act.gov.au/content.php/content.view/id/342

Fair go, Sport! (2013)

Program that aims to increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity, promote safe and inclusive environments and develop a model of engagement that can be adopted for other sporting codes.

www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/fair-go-sport-home

You can play

A campaign that aims to ensure that athletes are judged on ability, attitude and effort and not on the basis of sexual orientation or other discriminatory factors. The program provides video messages, educational programs, and other resources, and includes a Captains Call and pledge to which individuals can sign up. An Australian version of the campaign featuring Australian athletes has been launched.

www.youcanplay.com.au (Australian campaign)

www.youcanplayproject.org (International campaign)

‘No to homophobia’ campaign

Victorian Campaign that aims to challenge all forms of harassment and discrimination faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (GLBTIQ) people and to reduce the incidence of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment in Victoria (and beyond) by empowering both GLBTIQ people and the broader community to respond to and speak out against this harassment. www.notohomophobia.com.au

Changing the game (2011)

A comprehensive American education and advocacy program focused on addressing LGBT issues in K–12 school-based athletic and physical education programs, delivered by GLSEN – Gay, lesbian & straight education network. www.sports.glsen.org

On the team (2010)

An American report that provides sport and education agencies with information to make policy decisions regarding participation of transgender student athletes in high school and college athletics programs. www.sports.glsen.org/on-the-team/

Athlete Ally

An American website and campaign with the mission of educating, encouraging and empowering athlete allies to combat homophobia, transphobia and anti-lgbt bullying in sport. It includes a pledge to which individuals can sign up. www.athleteally.org

Attachment C

Come Out to Play recommendations

1. The findings of this research provide support for the initiative of the Australian Sports Commission Sports Integrity Program which is promoting inclusive practice and challenging homophobia and sexism through a few national sporting codes. This work should be supported and expanded.
2. It is clear that homophobia and sexism pervade many sporting environments which are either hostile or conditionally tolerant to LGBT people. This limiting of options for participation of a significant number of Victorians is unacceptable, and requires more proactive measures to be undertaken at the club level to create more inclusive environments that are sustainable in both rural and urban communities.
3. The importance of early experiences of physical education and school sport in shaping participants' future enjoyment of sport is strongly suggested in this study. In addition, coaches and other volunteer and professional sporting mentors have the opportunity to foster a love of sport any time. The need for proactive inclusive practices wherever sport is played should be an essential element of both the pre-service and in-service training of physical education and sports teachers and other human movement professionals. This training should also be included in courses for coaches and other volunteers in sporting clubs.
4. This research focussed on participants over 18 years of age whose early experiences of physical education and sport at school were not current and commonly occurred at some time in the past. It is important we know more about same-sex attracted and gender-questioning young people in terms of their current experiences both of school sport and sports participation in their communities. Additional research should be carried out to explore this often vulnerable group and their access to community connectedness through sport.
5. There is little collected in official data sets to provide accurate statistics about LGBT participation in sport and physical activity in Australia. It is recommended that wherever data is collected on participation in sport and physical activity (for example, the Sweeney report of in ABS data sets) that data on sexual orientation and gender identity (beyond male/female) be part of that data collection

6. This research was carried out in Victoria with relatively few resources. The study lends itself to informing a larger Australia-wide research project which extends the survey data with interviews of participants and stakeholders including members and leaders of sporting associations. Such a project should be funded by the main research funding bodies of health, sport, physical activity and social inclusion within Victoria and Australia, as a matter of priority.

Attachment D

Different Strokes Transgender Swimming

(Following is an extract from the Scottish *Out for Sport* Report which describes a swimming program for transgender people.)

One successful initiative has been the *Different Strokes* Transgender swimming sessions held at Glenogle Swim Centre by the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing in partnership with Edinburgh Leisure.

In January 2010, the LGBT Centre facilitated a consultation workshop with 19 transgender people in partnership with the STA, with the purpose of finding gaps in service and support needs. One outcome was a call for transgender exclusive swimming opportunities. Edinburgh Leisure agreed to provide a session at Glenogle Swim Centre, specifically catering for the transgender community and closed to the general public. Importantly, they also committed staff time for the LGBT Centre to deliver preparatory transgender awareness training. This was designed to educate, break down barriers, dispel misconceptions, and provide a forum for staff to ask questions. The staff members at Glenogle were eager to contribute to the discussions and gave positive feedback afterwards.

The '*Different Strokes*' swimming sessions launched in July 2010, and have taken place on a number of occasions since, twice monthly within quarterly sessions. Each session has been well attended with participants travelling from as far as Dumfries to take part. An LGBT Centre staff member is present at the beginning of each session to welcome attendees, receive feedback and check in with Glenogle staff. Robust engagement with the transgender community has allowed for effective promotion of the initiative.

Different Strokes filled a gap in the needs of the transgender community. The sessions have produced a number of benefits, including the provision of a social opportunity and the promotion of physical activity. The feedback demonstrates the personal impact of the swimming for many members of the transgender community has been extremely powerful:

“For me being taught to swim at Glenogle, at the age of 56, is like being given a wonderful gift that turns out to be even more exciting and more life-changing than I had ever anticipated. Apart from the child-like joy of being in the water, it gives me a real sense of achievement and increases my self-esteem. I have had gender dysphoria all my life and so could never allow myself to wear a female swimming costume even as a child. I am now able to use a public swimming pool for the first time in my life in a safe, supportive environment where I can wear whatever feels comfortable to me. It is also very moving to be swimming in a group with other transgendered people, all of us enjoying together an activity which is so often inaccessible or unavailable to us.”

“I hadn’t been swimming for nearly 10 years and this helped me reconnect with the experience. It has improved my confidence and I’ve even managed to use some hotel pools. Without the trans swimming sessions, I couldn’t possibly have tried this.”

“It made a huge difference not having people staring at me and I felt a lot more confident and comfortable in my body. I’m going to try to make swimming a regular thing.”

“I used to swim all the time and even completed a Swimathon event for charity but felt I could not go swimming in a public pool owing to being in transition – MTF. The Glenogle sessions have been wonderful and I am so pleased to be swimming again. My feedback is 100% positive.”

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2013. *Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Annual Report*. Canberra.

Brackenridge, C; Allred, P; Jarvis, A, Maddocks, K & Rivers, I. 2008. *A Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport*. Edinburgh, SportScotland, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport England, UK Sport. Edinburgh, Scotland.

Challenging Homophobia in Sport Initiative (CHISI), 2009. Submission to the Health and Ageing Independent Sport Panel. Melbourne, Victoria.

Hillier, L., Jone, T., Monagle, M., Overton, N., Gahan, L., Blackman, J., Mitchell, A. 2012. *Writing Themselves In 3*. The third national report on the sexual health & well-being of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people. Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, LaTrobe University. Melbourne, Victoria.

Laureus. (2012, December 5). Nelson Mandela, Laureus World Sports Awards 2000, Monaco [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdopyAFP0DI> [Accessed 6/3/2014].

Play by the Rules. 2014 You Can Play [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youcanplay.com.au/> [Accessed 10/4/2014].

Smith, M., Cuthbertson, S., Gale, N. 2012. *Out for Sport*. Tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport. Equality Network Scotland. Scotland.

Symons, C; Sbaraglia, M; Hillier, L; Mitchell, A. 2010. *Come Out to Play: The Sports Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People in Victoria*. Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living and the School of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University. Melbourne, Victoria.

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. 2012. *Fair go, Sport! A Game Plan: a flexible model for changing your sport*. www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/our-projects-a-initiatives/fair-go-sport [Accessed 12/6/2013]



ACT
Government