

STUDY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR IN SPORTS

Anju bala Thakre

Research Scholar

Department of Physical Education

Kalinga University.

AnjubalaThakre124@gmail.com

Dr. Arun

Assistant Professor

Department of Physical Education

Kalinga University.

Introduction

Violence against women is a global issue that affects, to varying degrees, all areas, nations, civilizations, and cultures. Regardless of their wealth, class, color, or ethnicity, it impacts women. The UN General Assembly's 1993 adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women's Platform for Action are the most comprehensive international policy pronouncements on gender-based violence. Both texts describe gender-based violence as a type of discrimination that violates women's human rights and prevents them from reaching their full potential as people. Here, we may include the field of sport. The UN General Assembly include sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and intimidation at work and in educational institutions among the many types of violence that women experience.

According to the WHO, the research on violence against women are as follows:

- The perpetrators of violence against women are almost exclusively men
- Women are at greatest risk of violence from someone they know

Women's physical and emotional health suffers significantly as a result of violence against them, according to the WHO. Additionally, it places an excessive strain on the healthcare system and has negative effects on society. It depletes the economically useful workforce and fosters an atmosphere of dread and uncertainty.

What about sport, though? Can these conclusions be extended to sports leagues or are they still applicable to sport? Given the significance of sport in many societies, it is reasonable to wonder whether there are any offenders or victims of crime who are involved in sports. However, one might also ask the opposite of this question: might sporting organizations, for instance, contribute to a decrease in violence against women and girls? For instance, by encouraging and boosting women's engagement in fitness and sport while simultaneously having a policy to safeguard women in sport. One can wonder whether greater aggression in society as a whole might be prevented by the enhanced self-esteem received through fitness and sport (Fasting, Brackenridge, and Sundgot-Borgen 2003).

Research on the many forms of sexual exploitation, its consequences on victims' lives, and its costs to society has just recently, during the past 20 to 30 years (Stockdale, 1996). These studies may be broadly categorized into two categories internationally: those involving minors (more often focused on sexual abuse) and those involving adult women (more frequently focused on sexual harassment and rape).

Studies on child abuse have relied more heavily from research on abuse in private, familial

settings (Brackenridge 2000), and as a result, some literature from the viewpoints of clinical and social work has also been added (Brackenridge 1997b, 2001). Since this is the area with the largest prevalence of abuse, the bulk of the study done outside of sports has focused on intra-familial abuse, which includes physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect (Fisher in Morrison et al. 1994). While institutional sexual assault is reportedly a significant problem for policymakers, practitioners, and the general public, it is evident from the literature that very little attention has been dedicated to this area. Gallagher (1999, 2000). However, subsequent research has focused on other areas as a result of public concern about "stranger danger," "date rape," and community-based abuse (Parrot and Bechhofer 1991; Gonsiorek 1995; Benedict 1998). Several significant investigations on institutional abuse of children in residential homes, boarding schools, and special schools are particularly important in this respect (La Fontaine and Morris 1991; Brannan et al. 1993; Corby et al. 1998).

Even little study has been done on sexual and other forms of abuse in the volunteer or non-profit sector, including amateur sport, and extra-familial abuse. To determine if certain situational elements are connected to abuse and whether institutional abuse is similar to or different from abuse in the home setting, further study on extra-familial abuse is needed, among other things.

First, studies on sexual harassment were conducted in settings like the workplace and the educational system, where it seems to be pervasive. According to Fitzgerald (1993), several polls show that as many as half of all American women may experience harassment at some point in their academic or professional careers. This suggests that of all sexual victimization behaviors, harassment is the most pervasive.

Early studies in the public contexts previously stated, where it was problematized as a problem of job circumstances, gender relations, and "organization sexuality" (Hearn et al. 1989), led to the development of research on sexual harassment in sport. Thus, compared to studies on sexual abuse in sports, the literature on sexual harassment in sports has a tendency to adopt a more organizational approach.

The incidence, reasons, traits, and effects of sexual harassment in sports are all poorly understood. However, according to studies on sexual harassment in the workplace and educational settings, sport organizations and even sport sciences may represent cultures where sexual harassment can easily happen. This is because gender ratios, sexualized environments, and organizational power have been found to affect both the incidence and maintenance of sexual harassment in the workplace and in academia (Hotelling & Zuber 1997). Additionally, research demonstrates that prevalence rates are greatest in settings where women have historically been underrepresented (Gutek & Morasch 1982) and lowest in settings where women are predominate (Grauerholz 1996). Sexual harassment is especially prevalent in male-dominated industries like the military in the United States, according to researchers (Sagawa & Duff Campbell 1992). The topic of whether sport is a particularly unsafe environment for sexual harassment is raised by the fact that males, masculinity, and conventional male values substantially control most sport organizations and the majority of the sport sciences.

What is sexual harassment and abuse?

Being a "difficult term" to define, sexual harassment calls for some explanation. Sexual harassment is often seen as a prohibited behavior under labor or equal rights legislation in

many western nations, including the USA, Canada, and Norway. These laws may or may not apply to sporting groups.

Quid Pro Quo and hostile environment are the two types of sexual harassment recognized by US law. Quid Pro Quo is a Latin legal word that refers to situations in which benefits are given or withheld as a consequence of an athlete's willingness or unwillingness to accede to a person in authority's requests for sexual favors. A coach may remove a player from the squad, for instance, if she refused to consent to sexual approaches. When a participant's behavior is widespread or severe enough to bother an athlete and impair his or her performance, it is considered to be a hostile environment. A hostile atmosphere may have an impact on those outside of the target. For instance, a team member may also be deemed a victim of sexual harassment if she or he repeatedly sees instances, even if they are not aimed at them.

No one definition of sexual harassment is recognized everywhere. But the commonality across all definitions is that it involves unwelcome sexual attention. This implies that what is referred to as "gender harassment" also includes generalized sexist remarks, behavior intended to convey insulting, demeaning, or sexist attitudes toward women, seductive behavior that is unwanted or inappropriate, and offensive sexual advances that include a subjective component. Although it might differ according to culture and surroundings, sexual harassment often happens when one person is in a position of authority over another.

The Netherlands Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sport's (1997) definition of a sport organization serves as an example of a European concept. In the code of conduct that it adopted, it is stated that "sexual harassment" is defined as any sexual behavior or suggestion, whether deliberate or not, that is seen as unwanted or forced by the person experiencing it. (p. 3)

Examples of behaviour that are covered by such a definition would be:

- Derogatory or demeaning jokes and comments of a sexual nature
- Non-verbal behaviour such as whistling, sexual staring or leering
- Unwanted sexual suggestions about one's body, clothes or private life;
- Unwanted telephone calls, or letters with sexual content;
- To be shown or receive pictures or things with unwanted sexual content;

There is undoubtedly a blurry line between sexual assault and harassment. It is tough to tell the difference between the two. While some writers make a distinction between the two, others include abuse along with sexual harassment. An example of such a "inclusive" definition is the one from the Netherlands. Others (Brackenridge 1997) make an effort to address this definitional issue by emphasizing the continuum that exists between sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual abuse. When attempting to comprehend the interactions that sometimes occur between coaches and young athletes, this difference may be quite helpful. A youngster or young person may be gradually won over to the person in power before having their social defenses gradually broken down as part of a process known as grooming. It may start off quite innocently, as when the coach offers free transportation home or other perks. Young athletes risk being stuck because threats like being removed from the team or receiving or not receiving privileges are used to ensure compliance.

It's also vital to note that most sexual harassment and abuse have power as their primary

motivation rather than sexual content. authority, or the desire for authority and control over another person, is often the driving force behind sexual harassment. This power problem is especially pertinent to and obvious in the sporting context, where males often hold the most prominent positions and where coaches and other leaders have significant influence over players, especially young athletes.

Research on sexual harassment and abuse in sport

Although there is little research on sexual assault and harassment in sports, it has been progressively growing since the mid-1980s. It is not unexpected that there are a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches to the topic given the recent history of study in this field. Feminist and pro-feminist, psychological, constructivist, sociological, medical/health, and philosophical/ethical theoretical views have all been utilized. The use of quantitative surveys, tests, and scales, qualitative interviews, documentary content analysis, biography and narrative analysis, and discourse analysis are only a few examples of the variety of methodologies and measurements. However, despite all this diversity, there are certain themes that are shared. This area of agreement is seen in feminist activism and politics. In other words, the transformation of sport via praxis is a shared goal of all scholars working on this topic to date. Both qualitative investigations and quantitative surveys are included in these studies on sexual harassment and abuse in sports. To collect accounts of harassment and abuse encounters and their consequences, qualitative research have been employed. Risk factors have been identified from these. Additionally, theoretical frameworks and hypotheses based on athletes' experiences have been developed. These studies mostly focused on former athletes who had experienced coach abuse, often while they were still very young, such as during or just after puberty. Brackenridge (2001) has identified risk factors under the three main categories of the coach, the player, and the sport based on these qualitative interviews and non-sport studies. There are two types of risk variables for sports: normative risks (related to corporate culture) and constitutive risks.

Prevalence of sexual harassment and abuse

There haven't been many extensive quantitative research investigating the frequency or prevalence of these encounters in athletics. The limited quantitative studies in sport, like those on sexual harassment in the general population, are also challenging to compare because of variations in definitions, sample, ethics and consent, validity and reliability, underreporting/non-response, and other factors.

There is also very little information available about variations in the frequency and prevalence of sexual harassment and abuse inside and outside of sports. Without such information, it is impossible to verify claims that sport is "worse" than other activities in life, that it is relatively immune from the issues of sexual harassment and abuse, or that playing sport is beneficial in preventing sexual harassment and abuse in general.

Kirby and Greaves (1996) sent a questionnaire to the whole population of Canada's high-performance and recently retired Olympic athletes as part of the first-ever national level assessment of sexual harassment and abuse in sport. Of the 266 respondents, 22% acknowledged having sex with someone in a position of power in the sporting industry. Nine percent of respondents said they had been raped or coerced into sexual activity with such people. 23 responders, or those who suffered child sexual assault, were under the age of 16 at the time of the incident.

Another Canadian survey of 1024 student athletes, both male and female, indicated that 57% had encountered sexual harassment in some way (Holman 1995). The majority of these incidents may be classified as gender harassment, such as sexist jokes or remarks, but there have also been reports of seductive conduct, coercion, and physical intrusion or attack.

According to a 1998 research by Toftegaard Nielsen of 250 male and female undergraduate sport science students in Denmark, 25% either knew about or had personally seen situations in which a coach had sexually harassed a participant in a sport who was under the age of 18 years. Four of them admitted having experienced sexual abuse. In a further research from 2004 Toftegaard Nielsen examined 160 Danish court cases involving sexual misconduct in sports. Two thirds of the victims in these legal proceedings were boys, with an average age of 12 at the time the abuse had occurred. Despite the fact that women make up 37% of all sport coaches in Denmark, all of the culprits in this case were males.

Leahy (2002) revealed that 31% of female athletes and 21% of male athletes who participated in a screening questionnaire of 2,118 Australian athletes reported experienced sexual abuse at some point in their life. Of them, 41% of girls and 29% of males had experienced sexual abuse in a sporting setting.

Low response rates (22 and 19%, respectively) plagued both the Kirby and Greaves (1996) and Leahy (2002) surveys. This raises concerns regarding data bias and underreporting. They do, however, provide criteria for more research.

All of the research mentioned here were conducted in Australia, North America, or Scandinavia. The rest of the globe, then, what? At women's conferences in sport, many heartbreaking individual accounts of physical and sexual abuse of female athletes have been shared, but there are no formal studies on the subject. A number of sexual harassment instances that have occurred throughout Asia during the last few years have upset the Japanese sports community. Under Japan, a criminal prosecution for alleged sexual harassment is now under progress. A manager of a track and field club and former instructor has been detained on suspicion of indecent assaults.

The participation of girls and women in athletics seems to be hindered in Africa by sexual harassment and abuse. Prisca Bruno Massao conducted interviews with 13 leaders from various sport organizations, 10 of whom were women and three of whom were males, for her master's thesis, *Women in Sport: Feminist Analysis of the Sport Development Policy of Tanzania* (2001), in which they were all female. Although the topic of sexual harassment was not included in her interview requirements, it was brought up during the interviews as a barrier to girls and women participating in sports.

Policy and prevention

In the last ten years, a number of nations—including the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, to name a few—have adopted laws and codes of conduct for preventing sexual harassment and abuse in sports. However, from a global viewpoint, sexual assault and harassment in sport is mostly a taboo subject in many nations. Denial appears to have been a common response from sport leaders and organizations, but as more and more information has come to light, ignoring the evidence has become impossible, especially in the wake of some major scandals. One such incident occurred in the UK in 1993, when Paul Hickson, a former Olympic swimming coach, was accused of sexually assaulting former teenage swimmers under his care. The longest jail term

for rape ever issued by an English court was 17 years for him.

The 9th Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Sport was held in May 2000 in Bratislava. The ministers from every nation in Europe convened to examine sexual assault and harassment in sports for the first time in history. A resolution was approved at this conference to stop sexual assault and harassment of women and children in sports. The following was one of the elements related to sport policy: To create a national strategy that would:

- make a clear statement about the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and women in sport;
- define harassment and abuse of women and children in sport, and provide specific guidance on what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;

This gathering occurred a few months after the IOC's second global women and sport conference in Paris in March 2000. If executed, the IOC decision would have global significance.

Urges the International Olympic Committee, International Sports Federations, National Olympic Committees, and National Federations to develop and implement a sexual harassment policy, including codes of conduct for athletes, coaches, sport leaders, and other Olympic parties, and to include this theme in all International Federation and National Olympic Committee workshops and conferences.

Sexual harassment being discussed at these sessions is good. They are useless if not implemented. They might become an excuse for inaction. These resolutions tend to be ignored. Norway's Culture Ministry hasn't done anything. A recent letter to the IOC said that they were unaware of any National Olympic Committee or International Sport Federation that has implemented the Paris meeting's sexual harassment resolution. This means what?

How do we comprehend? Why are governments and sports organizations resisting these resolutions? It might save athletes from harassment and abuse.

Is policy effective? Bringer et al. (2001) concludes that abusers are more likely to go undetected when sport governing organizations and clubs lack child protection and sexual harassment regulations.

Coach behavior guidelines should include genuine instruction-based touching, training sessions, team travels, back rooms at training centers, and private automobiles, which have been the backdrop for sexual assault. Alcohol lowers coach and player inhibitions, resulting in abusive circumstances (p 12).

According to Pryor, La Vite, and Stoller (1993), visible, proactive leadership changes workers' attitudes and creates "local" standards that eliminate sex and harassment. This and other research show that sport's structural and material circumstances cause sexual harassment. These circumstances may be remedied with political will. Targets, quotas, minima, rule modifications, co-chairing, and other methods may influence organization gender distribution. Changing the organizational culture and sports milieu is harder, but educational work, such as developing and implementing codes of conduct, mentoring, and using sanctions and rewards for good and bad behavior, can help. Sport organizations and leaders must work to make sports more woman-friendly and safer for girls and women.

References



1. Bart, P.B. (1981). A study of women who were both raped and avoided rape, *Journal of Social Issues* 37, 4, 123-137.
2. Benedict, J. (1998) *Athletes and Acquaintance Rape*. London: Sage Series on Violence Against Women
3. Brackenridge, C.H. (1997) "He owned me basically": Women's experience of sexual abuse in sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 32, (2), 115-130
4. Brackenridge, C.H. (2000) Exposing the 'Olympic family': a review of progress towards understanding risk factors for sexual victimisation in sport. Paper presented to Victimisation of Children and Youth: An International Research Conference, University of New Hampshire, USA, June 25-28th
5. Brackenridge, C.H. (2001) *Spoilsports: Understanding and preventing sexual exploitation in sport*. London: Routledge
6. Brannan, C., Jones, J.R. and Murch, J.D. (1993) *Castle Hill Report: Practice guide*. Shrewsbury: Shropshire County Council
7. Cense, M. & Brackenridge, C.H. (2001). Temporal and developmental risk factors for sexual harassment and abuse in sport, *European Physical Education Review*, 7(1): 61-79.
8. Corby, B., Doig, A. and Roberts, V. (1998) *Inquiries into child abuse*. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 20, 4, 377-95
9. Crosset, T. (1986). *Male coach/female athlete relationships*, paper presented at the First international conference for Sport Sciences, Sole, Norway, November 5-6.
10. Fasting, K., Brackenridge, C. and Sundgot Borgen, J. (2004). Prevalence of Sexual Harassment among Norwegian Female Elite Athletes in Relation to Sport Type, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 39,(4), 373-386
11. Fasting, K., Brackenridge, C. and Sundgot Borgen, J. (2003) Experiences of sexual harassment and abuse amongst Norwegian elite female athletes and non-athletes. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 74,(1), 74-97
12. Fasting, K., Brackenridge, C. and Walseth, K. (2002). Consequences of sexual harassment in sport for female athletes. *The Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 8 (2), 37-48
13. Fasting, K., Brackenridge, C., & Sundgot-Borgen, J. *The Norwegian Women Project*.
14. *Females, Elite Sports and Sexual Harassment*. (2000). Oslo: The Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sport.
15. Gutek, B.A., & Morasch, B. (1982). Sex-Ratios, Sex-Role Spillover, and Sexual Harassment of Women at Work. *Journal of Social Issues*, 38(4), 55-74.
16. Fisher, D. (1994) Adult sex offenders: who are they? Why and how do they do it?. in T. Morrison, M. Erooga and R.C. Beckett (eds) *Sexual Offending Against Children: Assessment and treatment of male abusers*. London: Routledge
17. Gallagher, B. (1999) *Institutional abuse*. In N. Parton and C. Wattam (eds) *Child Sexual Abuse: Responding to the Experiences of Children*. Chichester: Wiley.
18. Gallagher, B. (2000) The extent and nature of known cases of institutional child sexual Abuse. *British Journal of Social Work*, 30, 795-817
19. Gonsiorek, J.C. (ed) (1995) *Breach of Trust: Sexual exploitation by health care professionals and clergy*. London: Sage
20. Grauerholz, E. (1996). Sexual Harassment in the Academy: The Case of Women Professors' in M.S. Stockdale (ed) *Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. Perspectives, Frontiers and Response Strategies*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
21. Hearn, J., Sheppard, D., Tancred-Sherriff, P. and Burrell, G. (eds) (1989) *The Sexuality of Organization*. London: Sage
22. Hollway, W. (1996) Gender and power in organizations. In B. Fawcett, B. Featherstone, J. Hearn and C. Toft (eds) *Violence and Gender Relations: Theories and interventions*. London: Sage
23. Holman, M. (1995) 'Female and male athletes' accounts and meanings of sexual harassment in



Canadian interuniversity athletics', PhD thesis, University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

25. Hotelling, K. & Zuber, A. B. (1997) *Feminist Issues in Sexual Harassment*. In O'Donohue, W. (ed) *Sexual Harassment. Theory, Research, and Treatment*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 99-112
26. *International, Regional, and National Developments in the Area of Violence against Women 1994-2003 (2003) Addendum 1 to the 2003 Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, E/CN.4/2003/75/Add 1 (Feb 2003)*
27. Kirby, S. & Greaves, L. (1996) 'Foul play: Sexual abuse and harassment in sport', paper presented to the Pre-Olympic Scientific Congress, Dallas, USA, 11-14 July.