Sports, the Great Equalizer: Influencing Future Sports Professionals View of Disabilities: Sports Professionals View of Disabilities

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Human services, social work, and sport have shared goals of improving the quality and the meaning of life for individuals. Educating college-aged students about the intersection of the goals of sports and the goals of social work is one intervention to help influence positive change in our culture. This study represents one example of an intervention to affect change within college students who are taking a sport sociology class within the sport management program. These college students participated in sporting activities with participants with disabilities on a college campus. At the end of the activities, the students were asked to critically reflect upon their experience specifically related to their sociological understanding of the experience of individuals with disabilities in sport. The data was analyzed with respect to the concept of the other. The results of this study provide insights for exposing future sport professionals to diverse populations. The results also reinforce the goals of social work to develop and enhance a more inclusive world for people with disabilities.

Keywords: inclusion, sport management, applied learning

The benefits of sport, across populations, have been noted in research not only for physical wellbeing but social, mental, and emotional wellbeing, as well. For individuals with disabilities the research is no different (Baran et al., 2013; Crawford et al., 2015; Dinomais et al., 2003; Murphy & Carbone, 2008; Özer et al., 2012; Special Olympics, n.d.; Weiss et. al, 2003). However, one significant difference between individuals with disabilities and those without disabilities are the barriers to participation in sporting activities (Arbour-Nicitopoulos, et al., 2021; Coakley, 2017). The fallacy of sport as the great equalizer persists (Carpenter, 2000; Hartmann, 2000; Lawson, 1979; Lindsey, 2002), and without intentional, strategic efforts to encourage participation with historically marginalized groups, the goal of increasing opportunities and access to the benefits of sport is left unrealized. The following study offers one example of higher education providing an experience for reflection for students in the sport management class who are future sport professionals and inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Inclusion in Sports

Previous research is limited regarding disability sports in sport management literature (Shapiro & Pitts, 2014). Coakley (2017) stated that, historically, "… people with particular physical and intellectual impairments were denied access to sport participation because it was believed that vigorous activity would overexcite them and be dangerous for them and for others around them" (p. 292-293). Those and similar beliefs underlie systemic exclusion of individuals with disabilities from mainstream sporting experiences (Abbott, & McConkey, 2006; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Siperstein et al., 2003). The dominant ableist ideology identifies individuals with disabilities as the other and therefore inferior (Coakley, 2017; Fine, 1994; Schwalbe et al., 2000). The unique characteristics and abilities of individuals with disabilities do not align with the socially accepted understanding of normal and are viewed as abnormalities requiring unique considerations. Thus, access and opportunities in sport for individuals with disabilities primarily exist in limited and segregated spheres from mainstream sports (Coakley, 2017; Special Olympics, n.d.), and concurrently, the experiences were not studied with as much frequency as other experiences (Shapiro & Pitts, 2014).

The Special Olympics and Paralympics have been the primary vehicles for sport delivery to these populations (Coakley, 2017); but the criticism was that these programs provide for sport engagement only in limited intervals. Additional criticisms of sport programming for individuals with disabilities include lack of accessible facilities, insufficiently trained instructors, and incorporation of participants/instructors that engage often had negative attitudes or stereotypes of individuals with disabilities (Coakley, 2017; McGarty & Melville, 2018). The short-term impact of programming, while meaningful, did not transition well into long-term change. There was little to shape understanding, change public opinion, or stimulate additional inclusive initiatives. The participants still faced barriers to participation when they left the competitive sphere of these events (Coakley, 2017).

Unified Sports emerged as a model to address the structural issues of continual sport programming implemented by the Special Olympics that aimed to pick up where the Olympic programming stopped. The goal was to partner individuals who were "able" with individuals with disabilities in three sporting contexts – competitive, developmental, and recreational (Haas, 2012). The Unified Sports model intentionally brought integrated sports programs to local communities with the mission to remedy the identified structural barriers to participation

(Arbour-Nicitopoulos et al. 2021). Within the recreational sphere, there was no requirement for age and ability matching, but as the competitive level increases, the provisions for matching age and ability change. Haas (2012) wrote, "In all three models, social inclusion is promoted through a shared sports experience for people with and without intellectual disabilities" (p. 15). Over 4,500 primary schools have Unified Sports programs across the United States. Additionally, 215 American colleges and universities offer Special Olympics College Clubs according to the Special Olympics (2018). More than 1.4 million people participate in this type of programming. Sullivan and Glidden (2014) noted that with increased interactions between people with and without disabilities, comfort level of those without disabilities increased. The research consistently demonstrates that after engaging in such inclusive opportunities understanding shifts, acceptance shifts, and mutual benefits – social, emotional, and physical are gained by all parties (Special Olympics, n.d.). Di Palma, Raiola, and Tafuri also concluded that, "disabled athletes reach a level of self-esteem and autonomy significantly higher than those who do not practice sports, which significantly ease social inclusion and, as a result, 'economic' inclusion" (2016, p. 792). Thus, even if revenue generation is the primary motivator in the sport business model for the sport professionals, accessible sport opportunities for individuals with disabilities can be a revenue generator across industries and sectors. Yet, outside of Unified Sports, "… most people in the empire of the normal have no experience interacting with people with intellectual disabilities who have not had opportunities to participate in everyday activities.

To create those opportunities in sports requires a level of awareness and support that remains rare in most social worlds" (Coakley, 2017, p. 324). Higher education sport management programs can provide a platform to develop intentional learning opportunities structured to raise awareness for future sports professionals and administrators to consider the viability of inclusive sport opportunities (Shapiro et al., 2012) while diminishing othering. Additionally, research supports social workers and other human services professionals to engage in sport as a meaningful approach for those in need of social, emotional, or behavioral intervention (Lawson, 2005; Newman et al., 2021).

The aim of this study was to provide an additive (DePauw & Goc Karp, 1994) intentional interactive experience that partnered future sport management professionals, in the "empire of the normal" (Coakley, 2017, p. 324), with individuals with disabilities using the context of sport as an opportunity for critical reflection on marginalization as it relates to othering. The students in the sport management class would assess and evaluate and reflect on marginalizing as it relates to othering.

Theoretical Framework

Examining these issues through different perspectives and theoretical framework is critical to the understanding of the short- and long-term impacts. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Instructional Strategies, Othering, and Critical Reflection were utilized to develop the research methods and analyze the results.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Instructional Strategies

Vygotsky's sociocultural theories have been utilized in understanding the way individuals learn and construct meaning (Woolfolk, 1995). Learning happens when a less knowledgeable individual can interact with a more knowledgeable individual. Through imitative experiences,

direct instruction, and collaborative learning, the less knowledgeable individuals take in and process information into their schema, ultimately resulting in learning.

Vygotsky was a proponent for assisted learning (Woolfolk, 1995). Via assisted learning, activities are guided, and learners are provided appropriate individualized supports. The more knowledgeable other recognizes the challenges and roadblocks to success and adapts instruction and activities accordingly to help the less knowledgeable other experience success at each step of the process. Extensions for tasks are noted and provided as appropriate to each individual learner. Extensions up are provided when the task becomes rote, and extensions down are provided when the tasks are too hard (Woolfolk, 1995). Within this interactive approach, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is accessible. According to Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD is an area in which success can be achieved with the appropriate assistance.

Othering

Othering has been defined, sociologically, as an action through which groups or individuals create a separation between us and them and come to define them as different and/or inferior (Fine, 1994; Schwalbe et al., 2000; Jensen, 2011). Schwalbe et al. (2000) noted that othering is a way to define, "different as deficit" (p. 423). According to Powel and Menendian (2016), there is significant research to suggest that othering is both a physiological and psychological phenomenon which has allowed humans to process and make sense of their world. The issue lies in that the "us" and "them" categories are socially constructed; and, via social construction we come to understand – both unconsciously and consciously – which categories are valued. Those that are valued receive the attention, support, respect, and resource they require. Those that fall into the category of the other have a history of being marginalized.

While applying othering to higher education, VanderPyl (2017) addressed the concept in a case study matching paroled juvenile offenders with a class of university students. Additionally, VanderPyl (2017) sought to combat the perception that juvenile offenders were not necessarily, "'bad' kids or 'super predators' or even delinquents" (p. 16). The strategic partnership between the university students and the parolees encouraged a collaboration in which an understanding of both parties was deepened with the hopes of inspiring social change with two populations that did not have regular opportunities to interact.

In addition, othering is discussed in a number of professional arenas including social work and counseling (Chambon, 2013; Krumer–Nevo, 2002). The significant of researching and discussing the Other cannot be overlooked in the professional fields that work with the other every day, and for the purpose of this paper, people with disabilities as the other.

Critical Reflection

Critical reflection has been referred to as, "challenging the validity of presuppositions in prior learning" (Mezirow, 1990, p. 4). Data is taken in, interpreted, and then either accepted into one's schema or rejected. Engaging in this process can lead to a possible paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1970) and shape the way individuals understand and engage with the world in the future. Sociocultural distortions, based upon ideologies, heavily shape schema from youth through adulthood and critical reflection provides an opportunity in which the presuppositions can be challenged (Mezirow, 1990). The research has clearly identified that participation in these activities is not enough to promote change. For long term change and acceptance to occur, the

students in the sport management class will need to reflect on their experiences in a deliberate guided manner with the support of the Sport Management faculty.

Methods

Creating the Partnership

To frame the context of this study and understand the relationship for creation of the partnership, the Sport Management faculty recognized the opportunity for experiential learning on this small, liberal-arts college campus in the northeast region as the Human Services program offered an inclusion program with participants with disabilities. A collaborative discussion took place between a faculty member in Human Services (HS) and the researcher in Sport Management at this institution with approximately 750 students, overall. HS works closely with the community of adults with disabilities in the region. Over many years of programming, HS noted that general sporting activities were very well received by the participants in the Inclusion Program of which there were between four and 40 members per day. HS approached the researcher with the idea to have students in the sport management class, approximately 50 in the sport management program – the more knowledgeable others in this case – participate in sporting sessions with the participants with disabilities as part of the regularly scheduled weekly programming. It was deemed most appropriate to incorporate these experiences as applied learning activities within a class.

The 300-level sport sociology class provided the most appropriate environment and context in which to introduce the relevant material and provide the applied learning opportunity. Within the framework of the class, issues relevant to the marginalization of the "others" within sport were examined, and discussions regarding measures that; (a) have been taken, and that (b) can continue to be taken to influence change became strategic discussion points for each topic. Specifically, at least one class per week or more, depending upon student need, was spent reading and discussing the sociological underpinnings of the marginalization of various groups from sport opportunities thus providing the perfect opportunity for integrating the initiative.

Case Study Design

The qualitative, instrumental case-study was utilized to examine well-established theories within this specific course experience (Saldana, 2013). The case study methodology was appropriate as the primary researcher began the process with the concepts of othering and sought to examine it within a bound experience. The case study was embedded within the upper-level college course to address the intended learning outcomes of the course alongside the research outcomes relative to the theoretical frameworks (Yin, 2017). The documents used to assess and evaluate the outcomes were reviewed by experts in Human Services and Special Education for purposes of content validity.

Sport Management Class Students

The students (N = 25) were actively enrolled in the 300-level undergraduate class in the sport management program. The study received IRB internal approval prior to soliciting participants. All students needed to complete the project for a grade as part of the course

requirements, and 25 volunteered to participate in the study while acknowledging that they understood they were free to opt out or withdraw from the research project, specifically, at any time. The majority of the students were seniors (n=15) and juniors (n=9) and in the Sport Management program (n=11). Business Management, Accounting, Photography, Sport Management/Accounting double major, and Biology were other majors represented in the cohort. Additionally, the majority of students in the class self-identified as white (n=21) and male (n=17). Of the total number of participants, 12 individuals noted they had previous experiences interacting in/with/through sport with individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities was operationally defined through class lecture and discussions that took place during the teacher-centered part of the project. Still, most (n=16) noted that experiences with said population were rare, if non-existent. Even though the course was considered an upper-level course, most noted this was their first experience with specific content in sport sociology.

Participants with Disabilities

The participants with disabilities in the Inclusion Program were from a variety of backgrounds and demographics. Personal communication with Dr. M. Handley (personal communication, June 27, 2018) described the individuals with disabilities. The adults who participated in the group had a range of ages and abilities. The ages ranged from 20 to 58 years with some living at home and others living in a residential program through an agency. The disabilities included: autism, intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, blindness, Down syndrome and neurologic [sic] disorders. The participants were attending the inclusion program on the college campus prior to attending the sports activities.

Pilot of the Concept

A preliminary version of the plan was put in place to test the feasibility of programming within the course timeline for the semester. Students in the sport sociology class were broken into small groups and asked to "develop sport activities" that lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour. They were introduced to their academic counterpart, a student serving as an assistant to the HS faculty with experience with the Inclusion Program and disabilities. This HS student could help them with ideas for appropriate activities for this population and would liaise to coordinate logistics with the participants with disabilities. The primary researcher assessed areas of strengths and weaknesses in content knowledge and structure for future iterations of the project. Four groups of students ran a total of four sessions with the participants. With consideration for ZPD, notes were taken about additional prerequisite knowledge required and structuring the in-class, homework, reading, and activities for the college students, as well as logistical structuring for the sport activities themselves. Informal assessments were done with the college students to gather preliminary feedback on both the structure of the collaborative experience and their understanding of the purpose of the experience. Internal data was collected and used to shape the framework for the project and the study.

Implementation of the Applied Learning Experience

The theory of ZPD was again considered in shaping the educational experience for the students in the sport management class. The teaching methods for the sport management class

progressed from teacher-centered instruction, from the more knowledgeable other (Woolfolk, 1995), to student-centered learning over three class periods to ensure the students grasped relevant content knowledge. The introduction of all class topics on marginalized sport populations begins with a lecture on the social and cultural experiences of the historically marginalized group, in this case, the individual with disabilities. Special attention was paid to historical underpinnings and remaining sociological barriers to participation thus addressing the phenomenon of othering in sport. For homework, students had to find a news article and explain the connections between the article and the theory and content discussed in class. Those who felt comfortable with the theory and content were invited to talk about their articles and/or their personal experiences.

After presenting important theory and content in class, and connecting with the material for homework, the students were engaged in a small-group class activity to research the mission and structure of organizations and that encourage sport participation of individuals with disabilities. Then, they came together and assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the options as a class. Finally, the students were asked to synthesize a model which would better fit the needs of the marginalized community and evaluate what it would take to create such a model. Through this process, they noted the systems influencing participation, or lack thereof. Once a basic understanding was established, the reflection and stimulus for change was introduced. Each student was asked if and how many times they have had the opportunity to interact (in sport) with an individual with disabilities.

Another class period was devoted to connecting the faculty liaison of the Inclusion Program with the class to explain the purpose and role of the college in providing opportunities for engagement with individuals with disabilities. The HS faculty coordinates the weekly inclusion program and has specific, detailed knowledge related to the participants with disabilities in the inclusion program. HS faculty also answered any questions the students in the sport management class had about individuals with disabilities, in general, and provided additional insights about the participants with disabilities, specifically. After this session to deepen understanding of the program and participants, specific expectations and instruction were discussed.

One more class was devoted to discussing the theory of ZPD for application to their projects, and information on appropriate scaffolding. The students in the sport management class that were broken into groups of three or four utilized class time to collaborate and ask questions to shape an hour-long sport session. Additional time outside of class was necessary to complete the group projects and get them up to professional and academic standards.

Once the activities were created, activity sessions were coordinated with the schedule of the Inclusion Program and the participants with disabilities. Each of the sport students in the groups was required to have a role during the activity. Minimally, three of the roles had to be active participation in the sport activity while one was to be an observer taking memos and observation notes about the experience for the purposes of enhancing critical reflections. In total, there were six individual sessions scheduled over five days within a single week in October. The sessions were held in at either a morning or noon hour and each lasted for an hour. The number of participants ranged from four to approximately 40 and some self-selected to participate for varying lengths of time. Many of the participants with disabilities participated in more than one session because of their level commitment to the program. The activities were held in campus facilities in which all were familiar to all involved.

After the session, the members of each of the sport management groups were to share observation notes and write a critical reflection paper on the experience. Specific prompts for the critical reflection were included to address othering as well as the sociological issues discussed earlier in class lectures and through readings. A sample question asked, "How has this experience shaped your group's understanding of ability-related sport experiences?" Students were also asked to consider how the experience addressed the needs of the participants with disabilities relative to sport engagement and participation.

Data Analysis

Data was systematically collected and triangulated from multiple sources to construct themes. First, informal oral feedback was collected from the human services liaison, students in the sport management class, and the participants with disabilities and put into written record by the researcher throughout the semester in which the study took place. Then, formal critical reflections were submitted by students in the sport management class. Finally, observation notes from the researcher were written and analyzed. The data points were reviewed and coded using an inductive coding process to generate themes for deeper analysis. Printouts of all the materials were made and key words were identified and highlighted during the initial review. The researcher then ensured intra-rater reliability in coding by reviewing the materials again using clean printouts. Consistent codes were maintained, and inconsistent examples were examined again and determined, within the specific context, whether they applied.

Findings

The purpose of this case study was to assess and evaluate the critical reflections of an intentional initiative integrated with students in the sport management class and participants with disabilities relative to othering. The findings represent three themes that emerged consistently after analyzing the data relative to othering: teaching to vs. playing with, contagious joy, and future thinking**.**

Teaching to vs. Playing with

Within the sessions, the most notable difference in interaction was in the approach the students in the sport management class took with implementation of the activities. Those groups that used words like "teach", "clinic", "session", kept a very rigid, structured format and applied scaffolding in a very strategic and individual-focused manner. The interaction within these sessions was more instrumental to skill development and task completion. Listed within the goals for the activities, the majority noted skill development and skill knowledge as important outcomes. This approach organically created a context for othering. Within their reflections, the students in the sport management class identified their skills as superior and their role was to help the less knowledgeable other become better. They did not engage in the activities readily as participants but held more firmly to the role of coach/teacher dispensing knowledge. The students were able to identify lack of access and opportunity to participate in sport as likely factors in the lack of skill development and not a lack of interest or effort, but they took it as their responsibility to "help normalize them" (Student A). Another student wrote that the more opportunities and access "they" had to sport would allow them to "get better and be like us".

The students in the sport management class, encompassing a mix of those with experience and those without experience with the participant population, who applied their scaffolding earlier in the activity to adjust task difficulty deviated to (a) more free play activities, and/or (b) more common playground-type activities (ex. cornhole, basketball P.I.G.) engaged in more interpersonal interactions. This fostered less instances of othering and more shared experiences. They played with and competed with the participants with disabilities. Conversations included more sport jargon and they utilized sport as a common topic of interest. One student, for example, was noted talking about the National Football League and various players on the teams with one of the individuals with disabilities. Additionally, competition became a uniting force. For example, within a half hour of the first session, a "guys versus girls" cornhole match was organically arranged in which the emphasis became not letting the "girls" beat the "guys". The shared objective encouraged intragroup belonging. The integration of students in the sport management class and participants with disabilities was clear, conversation wasn't task-, skill-, or goal-oriented, and all played various rounds together.

Contagious Joy

The students in the sport management class frequently identified moments of joy within the experience. "Fun," "happiness," and "enjoyment" were noted during the coding process in the responses. One of the primary expressions of joy was the observation of joy in the participants with whom they interacted. One student observer noted the following experience with an adult using a wheelchair and a HS student:

> [HS] was explaining to XXX how one of her students was going to help him hold the bat, so he could have a chance to try the station. I happened to glance up at just the right moment to notice that XXX immediately after the explanation looked up with the biggest smile I have ever seen on someone's face. I perceived this giant smile as this was the first time XXX has had the opportunity to participate in an activity involving batting practice.

The observation of the smile on participant XXX's face was mentioned in the critical reflections of the other students in the sport management class in that group. Students in other groups had similar experiences of observing expressions – body language and oral expressions – linked to joy. Observations of smiles, laughs, cheers, and high fives were common and led to the articulation that sport experiences can be joyful experiences for everyone. In addition to noting joy in the participants, students also expressed joy. One student observed, "Also, notice a mood change in us – the happier they are the happier we are."
Last, students in the sport management class reflected in the meaning of the joyful experience to their own lives.

> I was happy to be able to take part in this activity because in a way it motivated me to push through a tough time… playing soccer for the college. I wasn't playing as much as I was the year before, and seeing these individuals work hard and had such desire to succeed at the stations made me work harder in my practices with soccer. This [sic] activities with the individuals helped me a lot and was able to play more games with my team.

Another wrote,

> Hearing them all say how they learned teamwork or how fun basketball can be really just melted my heart because it brought back how enjoyable basketball is for me and I was just so happy I was able to share that with them.

Future thinking

Overall, the critical reflections noted positive elements of this experience. A consistent note on the formal papers was a wish for more opportunities like this in the future. The majority, both those with and without previous sport experience with the population, reflected that it would have led to improved interpersonal relationships as well as improved sport skill development. Suggestions ranged from adding more sessions to this specific class to pursuing alignment with a formal organization within the college (Special Olympics affiliation or Sport Management Club initiative) through which regular programming could take place. A sport management student wrote,

"In the future, I would personally love to help out at events such as this one because I think it is important that everyone gets to participate in sports. If I become someone that eventually has social power or influence one day I would love to sponsor or create an event in my hometown that is similar to this activity."

Discussion and Limitations

Within this class-aligned experience, students in the sport management class were able to acknowledge if and how the lack of experience with the population led to a desire to do more with the population in the future. Acknowledging deficit and lack of knowledge about the participant population within personal schema was a critical element upon which to build additional opportunities for engagement and integration to continue to shift the schema aligning with Mezirow (1990) and the value of critical reflection for encouraging change. While there were instances of othering, they were more evident when the students in the sport management class felt compelled to teach sport skills rather than focus on free play, viewing the different as a deficit (Schwalbe et al., 2000)–in this case, sport skills. Such a structure led to task-oriented behaviors versus person-oriented behaviors. Overall, the experience was noted as an enjoyable one that brought forth positive emotions and encouraged students to think about future opportunities. The biggest challenge faced by the students in the sport management class was not really knowing what to expect athletically due partly to the limited experience with individuals with disabilities, in general, and this group, specifically, before the sessions. This was not dissimilar to the findings of Sullivan and Glidden (2014). As interactions increased between groups, comfort level increased. As noted, the lack of physical sport skill was, in part, due to systemic (sociological) and organizational issues (formal sport offerings) (Coakley, 2017), and the students were made the connection that additional opportunities could help both improve interpersonal relationships and sport skills. The students in the sport management class were also encouraged by the fact that the individuals with disabilities held a similar interest level for sports and enjoyed sports in the same ways that they did. Finding common ground is critical for attitude change (Sullivan and Glidden, 2014).

While the implementation of the single interactive experience was important, it was not enough and only contributed to awareness of an issue (DePauw & Goc Karp, 1994). Noting the lack of diversity in sport management, the lack of diversity in curriculum (Brooks & Althouse, 2007; Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008), and the lack of programming an intentional pedagogical strategy to dispel othering, more must happen to discourage othering and encourage belonging not just regarding disabilities, but in other areas of historical marginalization and at the intersections. Being able to consistently implement programming within the ZPD is important to shape understanding and nurture change.

An overarching concern that remains is the transferability of this experience to allied experiences in sport. Many students in the sport management class noted that the growth potential existed in adding opportunities for physical activities to current sport structures/models. Not many sports management students noted opportunities for engagement with individuals with disabilities within their desired sport career paths like ticket sales, marketing and promotions, sponsorships, and sport agency. Aligning with the research of Di Palma, Raiola, and Tafuri (2016) is the recognition that sport experiences for individuals with disabilities can generate business-related benefits for organizations as it addresses another consumer group not typically addressed. One student; however, did write:

> This activity has also changed my mind about the Inclusive students in the dinning [sic] hall during lunch time, I used to get easily annoyed with them during lunch. I am a very timely person and have very little patients [sic] at times especially if I have somewhere to be, so getting in line behind someone who is trying to get their own lunch but clearly needs help and will not accept the help used to bother me. However, after working with these students, I understand why they do not want the help making their own plate and find myself patiently waiting in line behind them while they slowly help themselves. These students just want to be able to do something as simple as make their own plate without assistance.

Such statements reflect a level of understanding that grows through repeated opportunities for engagement and are promising in relation to extending the experience, developing additional programming, and transferring awareness of the experiences of individuals with disabilities within other contexts.

Conclusion

Future research should extend both the frequency and duration of this experience along with diversification of the engagement experiences and the methods of assessment and evaluation. A longitudinal-case study with the current sport management cohort could be of interest to assess continued consideration for participants with disabilities as it extends to life experiences (the permanence of othering) for the remainder of their college years and beyond. Understanding the human condition and human experience through this lens can help to reduce instances of othering and help encourage belonging. Institutions of higher education that have sport management programs can expose students to diverse populations and be intentional in integrating inclusive content and practices to inspire greater awareness and belonging.

There is growing literature regarding ways that social work, counseling, and human services can use sport more effectively as a change agent for inclusion and making a difference

in people's lives, including athletes, people with disabilities and college students (Kelly, 2011; Moore, et al., 2018; Beasley, et al., 2021). If sport is not currently the great equalizer, can we do more in the hopes that it could be one day?

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