



Equality in the Field

A Literature Review & Mixed Method Study of
LGBTQ+ Youth Participation in Sports

“The ageless cliché that everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others is not acceptable. No human being should be denied their human rights simply because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. No human being should be subject to discrimination, violence, criminal sanctions, or abuse, simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.”

*Navi Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights
18th December 2008, address to United Nations*



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	7
1.0 Introduction	8
1.1 Population of Research	9
1.2 Aim and Objectives	10
1.3 Methodology & Design Approach	11
1.4 Systematised Scoping Review	11
1.4.1 Inclusion criteria for publications included.....	13
1.4.2 Exclusion criteria for publications included.....	13
1.4.3 Additional criteria for inclusion.....	13
1.4.4 The data recording process	13
1.5 Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Investigation	14
1.6 Theoretical Framework.....	14
2.0 Systematic Scoping Review Findings.....	15
2.1 Narrative Syntheses of Identified Literature	18
3.0 Emerging Themes and Topics from Literature Review	21
3.1 Sexual Orientation & Gender Norms	21
3.2 Gender Differences in Sports Participation.....	22
3.3 Outness and Sports Participation	23
3.4 Barriers to Participation in the Literature.....	24
3.3.1 Avoidance and Structural Barriers	25
3.3.2. Clothing.....	25
3.3.3. Feeing Unsafe	26
3.3.4 Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Assault	27
3.3.5 Support, Intervention and Policy	29
4.0 Findings from Quantitative Survey Data	30
4.1 Profile of Survey Participants.....	30
4.2 Current Sports and Physical Activity Levels	32
4.3 Team Sport Preferences	35
4.4 Access & Satisfaction with Current Facilities	36
4.5 Barriers & Enablers to Participation in Sports Activity	37
5.0 Findings from Qualitative Focus Groups	41
5.1 Profile of Focus Group Participants.....	42
5.2 Current Sports & Physical Activity Levels.....	43
5.2.1 Sports and Physical Activity in Secondary & Third Level Education	44

5.2.2 Changes to Level of Activity in the last 5 years	45
5.3 Roles in Clubs and Sports Organisations	46
5.4 Experience of Structural Environment.....	46
5.5 Experience of Coaches, Trainers, & Instructors.....	47
5.6 Awareness of Local Sports & Physical Activity	48
5.7 Barrier & Enablers to Sports & Physical Activity Participation	49
5.8 Lived Experiences of Barriers to Participation	49
5.9 Management of Barriers by Sports Organisations and Facilities	50
5.10 Enablers of More Sports Participation.....	51
6.0 Integration of Findings.....	52
7.0 Discussion and Recommendations	54
References	57
References for glossary	59
Appendices	60
Appendix 1: Debrief Sheet 13-18 years	60
Appendix 2 Debrief Sheet 19-24 years	61
Appendix 3 Study Poster	62
Appendix 4 Participant Information Leaflet.....	63
Appendix 5 Work Package Search Strings.....	64
Figure 1 PRISMA For Systematic Review	16
Figure 2 Sports Participation by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity "outness"	24
Figure 3 LGBTQ+ Students Who Avoid Spaces at School Because They Feel Unsafe.....	26
Figure 4 Students Report on number of peers who use Homophobic remarks	28
Figure 5 Gender Identity of 13-18 Students.....	31
Figure 6 Gender Identity of 19–24-year-old participants	31
Figure 7 Gender of Educational Institute.....	32
Figure 8 13-18 Years Participation Levels	33
Figure 9 19-24 Years Participation Levels	34
Figure 10 Agreement with the Separation of Teams into Binary Norms (13-18 years).....	35
Figure 11 Agreement with the Separation of Teams into Binary Norms (19-24 years).....	35
Figure 12. I have experience /witnessed discrimination in a sport setting 13-18 years	36
Figure 13 I have experience or witnessed discrimination in a sport setting 19-24 years	37
Figure 14 I am Comfortable being "out" with.... (13-18 years).....	38
Figure 15 I am comfortable being "out" with (19-24 years)	39

Figure 16 I feel supported by my Sports Organisation or Activity	40
Figure 17 Top Suggested Improvement for LGTBQ+ Sports Inclusion (13-18 years).....	41
Figure 18 Top Suggested Improvements for LGBTQ+ Sports Inclusion (19-24 years).....	41
Table 1 Screen Process for Study Selection.....	12
Table 2 Summary of Eligible Studies.....	17
Table 3 Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation of Participants 13-18 years.....	42
Table 4 Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation of Participants 19-24 years.....	43

glossary

Agender: A person who has an internal sense of being neither male nor female nor some combination of male and female: A person whose gender identity is genderless or neutral

Ally: Often now used specifically of a person who is not a member of a marginalized or mistreated group but who expresses or gives support to that group

Asexual: Not having sexual feelings towards others: not experiencing sexual desire or attraction.

Binary-norms: The stereotypical cultural norms which recognises two genders, male and female only e.g., males are masculine and exhibit a natural inherent ability towards contact sport.

Bisexual: Relating to or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to people of one's own gender identity and of other gender identities.

Biphobia: Discrimination and/or negative attitudes towards bisexuals.

Body Dysmorphia: pathological preoccupation with an imagined or slight physical defect of one's body to the point of causing significant stress or behavioral impairment in several areas (as work and personal relationships)

Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds with the biological sex the person had or was identified as having at birth, i.e. Cis-female, cis-male.

Coming Out: To openly declare one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gay: characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to people of one's same sex – Often used to refer to men only.

Gender: A term used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. The term 'gender' is distinct from 'sex'.

"A clear delineation between sex and gender is typically prescribed, with sex as the preferred term for biological forms, and gender limited to its meanings involving behavioral, cultural, and psychological traits" – Merriam Webster

Gender Dysphoria: A distressed state arising from conflict between a person's gender identity and the sex the person has or was identified as having at birth.

Gender Expression: The way a person expresses gender to others through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, voice, and physical characteristics.

Gender-Fluid: Relating to, or being a person, whose gender identity is not fixed

Gender fluidity: The ability to freely and knowingly become one, or many of a limitless number of genders, for any length of time, at any rate of change.

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or some other gender. This may or may not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth.

Heterosexual: Relating to or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to or between people of the opposite sex, colloquially known as 'straight'.

Homophobia: Irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexual or gay people.

Homophobic Bullying: Refers to bullying of any form that has the added dimension of being based on actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Homosexual: Relating to or characterised by sexual or romantic attraction to people of one's same sex: Sexual activity between people of the same sex. Now sometimes disparaging & offensive.

Intersex stands for the spectrum of variations of sex characteristics that occur within the human species. It is a term used to describe individuals who are born with sex characteristics (chromosomes, genitals, and/or hormonal structure) that do not belong strictly to male or female categories, or that belong to both at the same time. 'Intersex' also stands for the acceptance of the physical fact that sex is a spectrum and that people with variations of sex characteristics other than male or female do exist.

LGB: An acronym for lesbian, gay, and bisexual.

LGBTQ: An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning.

LGBTQ+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, plus (others)

Lesbian: A woman who is sexually or romantically attracted to other women.

Non-binary: A person who identified with or expresses a gender identity that is neither entirely male nor entirely female.

Pansexual: Relating to, or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction that is not limited to people of a particular gender identity or sexual orientation

Questioning: Uncertain about or engaging in exploring one's own sexual or gender identity.

Sex: Refers to the biological status recorded at birth as male or female. The designation of a person at birth as male or female, based on their anatomy.

Sexual Orientation: A person's sexual identity or self-identification as bisexual, straight, gay, pansexual, etc.: the state of being bisexual, straight, gay, pansexual, etc.

Transgender: An inclusive term describing people whose gender identity, or gender expression, is different from the sex listed on their birth certificate (i.e., their assigned birth sex). The word 'trans' is commonly used by transgender people, and it is acceptable to use this shortened term when referring to a person who identifies as transgender. Some transgender people may undergo hormone treatment or surgery to change their bodies. Transgender identity is not dependent upon medical procedures.

Transgender woman: A woman who was assigned male at birth.

Transgender male: A man who was assigned female at birth.

Transphobia: Irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is widely accepted that participation in sport and physical activity is an enjoyable and positive experience. For young people regular physical activity is important for health and mental well-being. Sport participation and physical activity have a positive impact on academic performance, symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety and have a positive influence on long term health in general (Doull et al. 2018). However, in Irish schools 73% (n=788) of LGBTQ+ students report feeling unsafe, while 77% have experienced verbal harassment based on their gender expression or sexual orientation (BeLonG, 2019).

Even though this environment is unlikely to encourage sport and physical activity, 63% (13-18 years) and 47% (19-24-year-old) of the participants in this study indicated that they would like to increase their levels of participation in sport and physical activity. Recognising this positive indicator, this study explores the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students in Kilkenny and Carlow in relation to sport and physical activity. The findings from the study will help to inform planning and policy development for Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership.

The study was conducted between November and December 2022 and focused on two LGBTQ+ groups of students, secondary school students and university students. Having investigated the current literature in the areas, an independent quantitative and qualitative enquiry was conducted. In total 42 LGBTQ+ students attended focus groups and 41 completed the survey.

While infrastructure and the built environment were deemed to be a major barrier to participation, other findings were the need for non-discriminatory policies, inclusive language and staff and volunteer training. Finally, the need for an overall respectful, inclusive culture was identified, one where bullying and harassment are not tolerated and where diverse gender expression and sexual identity is acceptable.

Based on the above findings, it is critical that policymakers, stakeholders, and service providers understand the factors which influence sport participation among the LGBTQ+ youth community. The findings underscore the importance of considering the unique barriers LGBTQ+ students may face during sport participation and the need for supportive training to be provided for parents, coaches, educators, and sports providers. Considering that many of the study recommendations are low cost or no cost, the main challenge will be adopting appropriate practices which will support and guide intervention development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last decade there has been a major shift in societal attitude towards the inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community (Kuriakose and Iyer, 2020). Ireland has seen significant changes during this period with the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1993, the introduction of the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. The Marriage Equality and Gender Recognition legislation of 2015 represents a country moving forward. However, while there is little research available, the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ young people in school and in sports does not appear to reflect these constitutional changes (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2019).

To address the general gradients of sports participation, particularly at a local level, quality research and information is needed (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2018). Research must also be extended to understand and respond to the needs and experiences of the LGBTQ+ community, particularly in the school going population (Defoor et al., 2018, Denison et al., 2021a). What research has been conducted in Ireland, is focused on the School Climate Survey (age 13-20 years), and provides some insights into the levels of assault, harassment, isolation, and safety challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ students including the avoidance of certain spaces and sports facilities (Pizmony-Levy & BeLonG to Youth Services, 2022).

Globally sports organisations have responded to discrimination and prejudice in areas of gender, race, and disability, but there is little evidence that the same rigor and equality has been applied to policies and practices concerning LGBTQ+ athletes and sportspersons. While some research suggests that discrimination cases on the grounds of gender identity and/or sexual orientation are decreasing (Anderson et al. 2017), one of the largest studies conducted, which examined the experiences of the LGBTQ+ sports community across 34 European countries by Menzel et al. (2019), reported 82% of participants had witnessed homophobic or transphobic language in their sport in the past six months (Menzel et al., 2019). In more current research, 90% of respondents considered this an ongoing problem (Denison et al., 2021b). Reviewing the Survey of School Climate conducted by BeLonG to Youth (2019), it could be assumed that the Irish school sports experience is similar. A survey conducted in the general school settings across the 26 counties (n=1,206) found 76% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe in school, 69% of students heard homophobic remarks from other students, while 58% of LGBTQ+ students heard homophobic remarks from school staff (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022). Regardless of the trends in global and European research there is an identified gap found in the available literature, particular in the Irish setting. This gap includes identifying the barriers and enablers to young LGBTQ+ adults and teens engaging in sports and physical activity.

While sport often includes a competitive element, the engagement in physical and recreation activity carries long-term physical and psychological benefits for participants. In the research target population, sports participation was found to have

a positive effect on youth development, with evidence of improvements in physical health and academic performance, with reduced rates of anxiety, stress, depression and an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem (Doull et al. 2018). Despite these benefits, research in schools has also identified negative effects of sports participation among LGBTQ+ students, including social exclusion and feeling unsafe, which are associated with increased mental health challenges.

The timing of this research project is therefore considered judicious bearing in mind the lack of evidence-based research available to the Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership, as they seek to plan their inclusive strategy for 2022-2025. The research is also designed to provide baseline data for Sport Ireland participation, applying a methodology which is replicable, and a process which includes both the breath of quantitative data and the depth of qualitative lived experiences.

1.1 POPULATION OF RESEARCH

According to a publication by the House of the Oireachtas (2019) there is no official estimate of the size of the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland (Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2019). The range of estimates in fifteen other OECD countries for the adult population (aged 16 +) during the same period was between 1.2 - 3.8% (OECD, 2019). However according to an estimate by The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (Glenn), the LGBT+ population in Ireland was estimated at 5-7% (GLEN Gay and Lesbian equality network, 2016).

Although the population in Ireland continues to age, we are still one of the youngest countries in Europe. According to the 2016 Census almost one third (33.3%) of the population were under 25 years and the number of the population between 13-24 in the state was 702,796 (Central Statistics office, 2016). This age group represents 14% of 4,761,865, the total population of Ireland (Central Statistics office, 2016). If this percentage is applied to population of Kilkenny and Carlow, the number of LGBTQ+ teens between the age of 13-24 years (taking the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network estimate) could be 725-1,016 for Kilkenny ($103,685 \div 14\% \div 5-7\%$). The figure for Carlow could be 433-606 ($61,931 \div 14\% \div 5-7\%$).

In this age cohort two distinct groups have been identified, 13-18 years and 19-24 years. The 13-18-year age group will be recruited from existing LGBTQ+ youth groups in both Carlow and Kilkenny. It is expected that the 19-24-year age group will be accessed via the Inclusion Officer at the South East Technical University (SETU) in Carlow.

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

While the overarching purpose of the research is to understand the personal experiences and needs of the teen and young adult LGBTQ+ community in relation to sports and physical activity, the research will provide a comprehensive baseline for the planning and policy development for both the local Sports Partnership, Sport Ireland, and sports facilities in the Kilkenny area. The quantitative research will also identify,

- Current physical activity levels
- Current participation in sports/physical activity in schools and education
- What roles are played within sports in and outside school?
- Other sports activities outside of playing sport – volunteering, administration.
- What individual /personal exercise is undertaken and where
- Engagement and experience with activity providers, sports facilities, gyms, trainers, swimming pools?
- Level of awareness of sport and physical activities available near your home – how is it communicated, promoted, and advertised?

Through the qualitative examination of lived experiences, the barriers to participation and participation enablers will be identified. The consultancy team will work with stakeholders including the Southeast Technology University (SETU), Ossory Youth and the Foróige DRUM Youth Group, Kilkenny, as well as Carlow Regional Youth Services to establish and ensure that the research methodology is underpinned by a community participation approach, which will address the following research sub questions.

1. What are the experiences of members of the LGBTQ+ group in sports and physical activities in Kilkenny?
2. What can KRSP and SETU Carlow do to improve this experience and help to increase participation in sports and physical activity for members of the LGBTQ+ group in Kilkenny?
3. What can other agencies do to improve the experience and help increase participation?

1.3 METHODOLOGY & DESIGN APPROACH

The overarching methodology is grounded in the Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach which is ideal for the proposed research as it has been characterised as a research approach for helping researchers develop genuine partnerships within the community to help ensure a study is locally relevant and addressing true community challenges (Sharek, 2018). It also emphasises the importance of social action and sustainable change (Coughlin et al. 2017).

This also mirrors the central facet of the transformative paradigm in which the establishment of relationships with community members enables the study to be more “*culturally responsive*” (Mertens 2012: p.808). By comparison, traditional research is often investigator driven, with less community involvement. The CBPR approach could help assuage the LGBTQ+ community’s concerns and reduce any distrust in relation to the research. Reflecting the transformative paradigm, within a CBPR approach, the researchers work with, and for the community rather than doing research to or about them. Importantly, the approach also emphasises the participatory power and action of community members as agents not only in the research process, but also in their own lives and communities.

This mixed methods study has several elements including a systematic scoping literature review and a qualitative investigation into the lived experience of the focus group participants which when combined with a quantitative survey provides a comprehensive integrated overview of the research findings.

1.4 SYSTEMATISED SCOPING REVIEW

The chosen scoping literature review applies a systematic format. This method combines the flexibility and exploratory approach of a scoping review with the pre-specific eligibility criteria of a systematic literature review (SLR). This combination allows the research team to assess the extent of the available evidence and practices and to organise this evidence into groups, presenting the findings in a narrative format rather than a statistical method. In this format, the available publications, both empirical and grey, are screened to provide an evaluation of what is known about the topic of LGBTQ+ sports participation around teens and young adults and to ultimately answer the research aims and objectives.

The initial stage of the process identified and established the most common features and terminology used in LGBTQ+ Youth Sports Participation. Common search strings and common internationally applied terminology was discovered which ensured the widest possible scope was applied during the literature search. In addition to the empirical evidence, “grey literature” was also investigated and included to increase the breath of the reviewed documentation. The grey literature included, but was not

limited to, Sports Organisation Reports, Strategic Plans, LGBTQ+ Organisation websites, cited publications and surveys which advocated for LGBTQ+ rights and equality. Other supporting documentation and reports produced by international organisations and educational and advocacy groups were also included.

The review process commenced with a search of MEDLINE (PubMed) and CINAHL (The Joanna Briggs Institute 2015). This initial scoping established the search strings, including the key concepts outlined in the research tender objectives. The key terms identified formed the basic concepts of the review and informed the basis of the rapid literature review search. Once the search strings were refined, and the key terms identified, the key concepts and index terms were searched across the following databases – PubMed (MEDLINE), CINAHL (Cinahl Headings) and PsycINFO (PsycINFO Descriptors), The outcome of the database search strategy formed the basis of the literature review analysis.

The search terms and eligibility criteria focused on the three key concepts of ‘LGBTQ+’, ‘Sports’, and ‘youths and Teens’ (Appendix 1). The screening process was led by the Principal Investigator (PI) who identified the MeSH terms and parameters of the initial search in line with the research objectives. The Senior Researcher then conducted the Title and Abstract screening before full-text screening was completed. Finally, extractions were approved by PI. Other ‘grey literature’ was identified by the team through websites, polices, organisations, frameworks, and citation searches. Following retrieval, this literature was also screened for eligibility, before being included in the review. The inclusive PRISMA Flow Chart Figure 1.1 outlines how many articles were screened by title and abstract, full text, and finally included in the final review for narrative analysis.

Each of the three database search results were imported into unique corresponding folder in the citation management software, Endnote X9, Clarivate Analysis (US) LLC. The discovered publications were then imported into Covident V1388 for screening, using a four-stage process of screening and extraction. Each database search was then imported into a corresponding folder in the citation management software, Endnote X9, Clarivate Analysis (US) LLC. The screening process of Covident V1388 is a four-step process as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Screen Process for Study Selection

Stages	Covident V1388 Review Process
Stage 1	Importation of publications from Endnote Library
Stage 2	Title and abstract screening
Stage 3	Full Text Screening
Stage 4	Extraction of relevant publications

A narrative synthesis and thematic analysis guided the analysis stage of the literature review (Mayes et al. 2005, Coughlan et al. 2013). The review also formed the basis of collective barriers and enablers of sports participation by this cohort.

1.4.1 INCLUSION CRITERIA FOR PUBLICATIONS INCLUDED

- Articles reporting on young adult (aged between 13-24 years) LGBTQ+ sports participation.
- Articles focusing on LGBTQ+ teen and young adult sports participation inhibitors.

1.4.2 EXCLUSION CRITERIA FOR PUBLICATIONS INCLUDED

- Articles reporting on adult LGBTQ+ sports participation.
- Articles focusing on LGBTQ+ youth community excluding sports participation.

1.4.3 ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION

Further eligibility criteria denoted by the scoping process also ensured that the content of the included studies was relevant to the research aims and objectives. Only articles were included where full texts in the English language could be accessed, either via electronic searching or by contacting the author, if necessary. The library of Trinity College Dublin was available to access and enhanced this process.

1.4.4 THE DATA RECORDING PROCESS

In the analysis the following data fields were recorded to provide a narrative synthesis of the selected publications as detailed in the PRISM diagram.

- Author(s) and Year of publication
- Country of publication or study
- Publication Title
- Population or Sample
- Research Design

1.5 EXPLANATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS INVESTIGATION

Following completion of the rapid literature review a pragmatic exploratory sequential mixed methods design will be adopted. This methodology provides an added value which would not be discovered if only one methodology was applied. The qualitative phase will provide a deeper insight into the lived experiences, barriers and enablers experienced by the focus group participants while the quantitative phase will provide structured evidence of the data for analysis. A purposive sample of the LGBTQ+ youth were recruited through partnership groups already established and through social media and other LGBTQ+ networks in Kilkenny and Carlow. In this study, 'young people' are defined using the distinction provided by the Irish Government as those under the age of 18 years (Ombudsman for Children 2016). The criteria for inclusion will therefore be young adults and teens from 13-18 (Group 1) and 19-24 (Group 2), young adults who identify as LGBTQ+ or have questions about their sexual orientation or gender assignment.

Qualitative Phase: During the qualitative phase, four focus groups were planned in The Drum Youth Centre, McDonagh Junction, Kilkenny, and OPEN DOOR, Ossory Youth, Kilkenny, Carlow Regional Youth Service, The Vault Carlow and via the Students Union in the SETU in Carlow. Thematic analysis was used to map the findings from the qualitative phase, which included seven hours of audio recordings.

Quantitative Phase: A statistically significant sample, based on national estimates, was not available as no such data is collected in the national census. Estimates for the adult LGBTQ+ population ranges from 5-10% with no data available for the younger population. A quantitative questionnaire was developed from the literature findings and made available online and was self-reporting, targeting the LGBTQ+ community.

Following the analysis of both data sets, the data is integrated in a Joint Display, providing a comprehensive understand of both the quantitative and qualitative findings and their congruency.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research will apply a transformative queer framework supported by gender affirmation theory, rejecting the notion that heterosexuality is the "*norm*" (Cammie,

2014). This theory also affirms that gender identity and sexual orientation lies on a continuum. Frameworks in this field of research usually applied either a modernist or a post-modernist approach. The postmodernist approach applies a queer lens which looks beyond minority politics and legal frameworks and is instead based on everyday lives and experiences of diverse communities under the LGBTQ+ umbrella (Kuriakose and Kylasam, 2020). The researcher's own belief system is reflected in the gender affirmative theory and model (Hidalgo et al., 2013, Edwards-Leeper et al., 2016). This theory and model are situated within the mental health domain and is a relatively new approach to understanding gender variant children and young adults and is still developing (Menvielle and Hill, 2010). The basis of the approach is that gender may be fluid and diverse, that gender development is complex, and that this is a natural, not pathological, phenomenon. Reflecting this approach, the PI believes that trans identities and expressions are a natural part of gender variance. While the research team acknowledge that LGBTQ+ identities may cause difficult feelings within some people, they do not believe a LGBTQ+ identity is something that needs to be 'fixed' to address these feelings. Similarly, within the gender affirmative approach, there is no need to attempt to convert or change a trans or gender variant child or young person, as there is nothing viewed as inherently 'fixable' as regards their gender identity (Edwards-Leeper et al., 2016). A more comprehensive debate and citation on the proposed theory is beyond the scope of the tender.

2.0 SYSTEMATIC SCOPING REVIEW FINDINGS

A total of 52 articles were retrieved from the database searches, of which 11 duplicates were removed, resulting in 41 articles for title and abstract screening. Following the title and abstract screening, 27 articles were disqualified as outlined in the PRIMA Diagram. The remaining publications was further assessed for inclusion at which point 8 articles were deemed eligible for inclusion. An investigation of the grey literature identified 18 documents which were also reviewed and included in PRISMA Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 PRISMA For Systematic Review

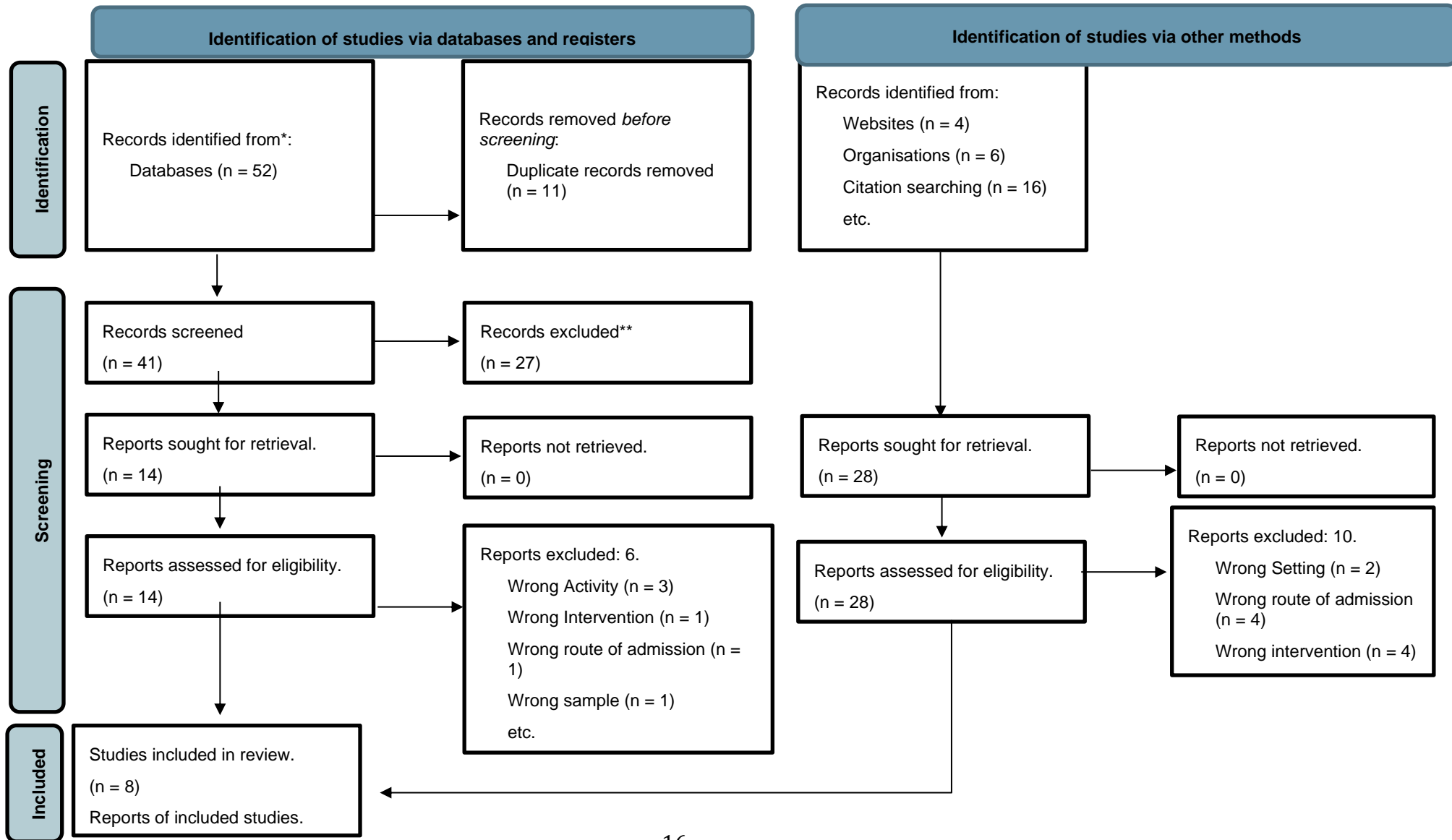


Table 2 Summary of Eligible Studies

Author Year Country	Title	Population - sample (n)	Study Design
Calzo, J., Roberts, A., et al 2014 USA	Physical Activity Disparities in Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Youth Ages 12- 22 Years Old: Roles of childhood gender nonconformity and athletic Self-Esteem	5,272 males & 7,507 females from 1999 – 2005 waves of the US Growing Up Today Study (ages 12-22 years)	Longitudinal Quantitative Study
Clark, C. & Kosciw, J. 2021 United States	Engaged or Excluded: LGBTQ Youth's participation in school sports and their relationship to psychological well-being	15,813 students between the ages of 13 & 20 with a mean age of 15.7 years from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. 56.7% identifying as cisgender and 41.3% identifying as gay or lesbian.	Quantitative Study
Denison, E. Jeanes, R., et al. 2021 Australia	The Relationship Between 'Coming out' as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual and Experiences of Homophobic Behaviour in Youth Teams Sports	1,173 participants between ages 15-21 years across six countries (United States, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland), to assess whether homophobic behaviour was experienced after 'coming out'.	Quantitative Study
Doull, M. Watson, R., et al 2018 Canada.	Are We Levelling the Field? Trends and disparities in sports participation among sexual minority youth in Canada	99,373 participants pooled at population level data from British Columbia between the years 1998 – 2013).	Age-adjusted logistic regression model
Greenspan, S. Griffith, C., et al 2019 United States	LGBTQ+ and Ally Youths' School Athletics Perspectives: A mixed- method analysis	71 participants from the LGBTQ+ and Ally population between the ages of 13-18 years.	Convergent Mixed Methods Study
Greenspan, S. Griffith, C., et al. 2017 United States	LGBTQ Youths' School Athletic Experiences: A 40-year content analysis in nine flagship journals	Publications across 40 years (1975 – 2015)	Systematic Literature Review
Greenspan, S. Griffith, C., et al. 2019 United States	LGBTQ+ Youth's Experiences and Engagement in Physical Activity: A comprehensive content analysis	Thirteen publications, published between October 1998 – October 2018	Systematic Literature Review

Kulick, A., Wernick, L., et al. 2018 United States	Three Strikes and You're Out: Culture, facilities, and participation among LGBTQ youth in sports	Approximately 1000, predominantly white, high school students in southeast Michigan. 71% reported sports participation and 21.6% identifying as LGBQ and almost one in ten identifying as trans (9.2%).	Quantitative Study
--	--	---	--------------------

2.1 NARRATIVE SYNTHESSES OF IDENTIFIED LITERATURE

Calzo et al. (2014) United States – The aim of this quantitative study was to explore team sport memberships, among adolescent and young adults by sexual orientation. Researchers examined time spent per week and level of physical activity (moderate/vigorous) and investigate contributions of gender nonconformity and low athletic self-esteem to possible sexual orientation differences. The Sample consisted of over twelve thousand young people, between the ages of 12 to 22 years whose data had been collected from the 1999 to 2005 publication within US Growing Up Today Study. Results showed that sexual minorities were 46-76% less likely to participate in team sports compared to cis-gendered individuals. Gender nonconformity and athletic self-esteem accounted for 46-100% of sexual orientation differences. Study concluded by stating that targeting intolerance of gender nonconformity may mitigate sexual orientation disparities (Calzo et al., 2013).

Clark & Kosciw (2021) United States – This quantitative study looked at an exceptionally large sample of 15,813 students between the ages of 13 and 20 years. Participants self-reported their age and gender and from these reports a relatively equal split was recorded between cisgender and those identifying as either lesbian or gay, with cisgender coming in with only a slightly higher representation (56.7%). The study wished to assess if sports participation varied depending on reported sexuality and gender and if positive effects seen on mental health due to physical activity was also seen as a benefit for sexual minorities. Results showed that transgender males and non-binary youths had the lowest likelihood of sports participation however LGBTQ+ participation in sport had increased well-being and a stronger sense of belonging within the educational setting (Clarke et al., 2021).

Denison et al. (2021) Australia – 1,173 participants between the ages of 15 – 21 years participated in this quantitative study. The sample was taken across six countries and looked to assess the experiences of those who had “come out” to their fellow team mates and if this disclosure was associated with homophobic behaviour. Results indicated that 41.6% of participants had felt discrimination in the form of homophobic behaviour after ‘coming-out.’ This behaviour included, but was not limited to, verbal slurs and physical assaults. This relationship between homophobic behaviour, assault and coming out as LGB within sports highlights the dire need to

enforce policies that create a safe space where all can participate in physical activity without the fear of encountering such experiences (Denison et al., 2021a).

Doull et al. (2018) Canada – This study aimed to look at the landscape of sports participation among sexual minorities in Canada. A large sample of 99,373 was used to examine trends among sexual minority and heterosexual youth in sport participation over a 15-year period, (1998–2013), using age-adjusted logistic regression models to note changes. An overall decline was seen in sports participation for all youth, regardless of sexual orientation, however data did show that sexual minorities were less likely to participate in sports compared to their heterosexual peers. The disparities in participation in informal sports (sports without a coach) between heterosexual and sexual minority youths have narrowed over time whereas formal sports (with a coach) seem to have widened. Researchers state further investigation is required into the differences seen between formal and informal sport participation (Doull et al., 2018).

Greenspan et al. (2019) United States – This mixed methods study took a sample of 71 participants from the LGBTQ+ and Ally population between the ages of 13-18 years and looked at their experiences in school athletics. Participants reported experiencing discrimination from their peers and this feeling of being an ‘outsider’ extended to the athletic staff as there was inaction on their part to intervene. This left those of the LGBTQ+ and Ally community feeling unsafe, either due to direct experiences or the witness of discrimination received by their peers and participants stated a preference towards individual sports as opposed to team sports. Results from this study highlight the marginalization that LGBTQ+ youths and their allies experience and how it may not be their enjoyment of sports that shows decline, but rather the behaviour they encounter when participating in team sports that is the reason for decline in participation (Greenspan et al., 2019a).

Greenspan et al. (2017) United States – Researchers examined publications within nine flagship journals, across a forty-year span (1975 – 2015) within this systematic literature review. Authors selected six LGBTQ-focused search terms and five athletic-focused search terms resulting in the identification of 8,048 articles published over this period. During the analyses phase, authors noted a trend that suggested those that engaged in physical activity demonstrated greater mental health, belonging within an academic setting and greater social skills. However, on reviewing the literature, students identifying as LGBTQ may not receive the same benefits and might feel deterred from physical activity. Authors conclude by stating further research is required however feel confident in stating that schools must foster an environment where positive physical activity is experienced by all, so that healthy lifestyle behaviours can continue through development (Greenspan et al., 2017).

Greenspan et al. (2019b) United States – Conducting a further literature review, Greenspan and fellow authors looked at the relationship between declining physical activity membership within LGBTQ+ youths and the feeling of being both unsafe and

uncomfortable. Experiences of discrimination might deter LGBTQ+ youth from achieving physical, social-emotional, and cognitive benefits previously uncovered in their earlier 2017 systematic literature review. Ninety-one articles were identified within the initial search with thirteen meeting the inclusion criteria. Research indicated the reported discomfort felt by LGBTQ+ youths when participating in sports and authors state that there is a responsibility for coaches, counsellors, and teachers to ensure physical activity and sporting environments are safe spaces and are inclusive to all (Greenspan et al., 2019b).

Kulick et al. (2018) United States – This quantitative study, aimed to document the experiences of LGBTQ youths in sports. The sample consisted of predominantly white, high school students in southeast Michigan. Seventy-one percent reported sports participation and 21.6% identifying as LGBTQ and almost one in ten identifying as trans (9.2%). Independent variables consisted of LGBTQ identities and safety in sex-segregated facilities. Researchers found evidence that LGBTQ high school students play sports at a lower rate compared to cis-gendered students. Anti-LGBTQ language was also reported with the addition of bullying and harassment within sports spaces. Researchers state that safety using institutional facilities, divided by binary gender norms may play a significant role in the declining participation of LGBTQ youths in sports. Researchers expand by stating that existing and new anti-discrimination policies must be supported and implemented to decrease inequalities for LGBTQ youth in school-based sports (Kulick et al., 2018).

The identified research was primarily conducted in the United States (n=6) with two further studies being conducted in Canada and Australia. The research is broken down between literature reviews, including longitudinal regress modelling (Doull et al., 2018) and significant quantitative national and international studies (Denison et al., 2021b, Clarke et al., 2021). Sports participation was cited as one of the many areas where LGBTQ+ teens and youths experience, exclusion, discrimination, and feelings of discomfort (Greenspan et al., 2019). Despite the overwhelming evidence, there is little empirical research focused on LGBTQ+ youth athletes, predominantly those who are transgender and nonbinary (TGNB), and limited employment of supportive policy and practice recommendations to protect young LGBTQ+ athletes (Greenspan et al., 2019). Existing research finds that LGBTQ+ youth participate in sports at lower rates than their straight and cisgender peers with LGBTQ+ youth athletes reporting that they feel less safe in sports environments (GLSEN, 2013; Kulick et al., 2018, Calzo et al. 2014). Within sports environments, high levels of anti-LGBTQ+ harassment are reported on playing fields and in locker and shower rooms, with low levels of intercession. As a result, LGBTQ+ youth who are excluded from sports participation are unable to benefit from its positive effects. In addition to the overwhelming findings from the systematic literature review, a thematic analysis of the grey literature also discloses several reoccurring themes and topics of interest to the aims and objective of the research.

3.0 EMERGING THEMES AND TOPICS FROM LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide a context for the qualitative and quantitative findings and ultimately to compare the study findings with the findings in other research, a comprehensive analysis of the prevailing themes and topics is being provided. The analysis briefly explores the concept of gender norms, gender differences and sexual orientation in the identified literature. It also outlines the experiences of sports participation by gender and sexual orientation, where they are different. Common barriers and enablers including outness, sports structures and clothing, and the more challenging and extensive barriers of discrimination, harassment, and feelings of being unsafe. Finally, the themes of support, interventions, and policy are examined.

3.1 SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER NORMS

From a social science perspective sport is preordained to be a homophobic and trans-negative area of life, constructed by the characteristics of our social systems. The heteronormative "*sports specific mindset*" is reproduced and reinforced by our social norms and by sports processes themselves. Heteronormativity is based on three basis beliefs. First, that there are only two biological natural genders, male and female, second, that there is a natural attraction between men and woman, and third, there is a hierarchical order which places men and masculinity above woman and femininity. This assumption of heteronormativity in sports, shapes the stereotypical choice and interest in sports (Braumüller and Schlunsk, 2022) and leads to the assumption that a man's body has a physical advantage.

Considering this social construct, team sports can be a major opportunity for socialization and the reinforcement of homophobia due to our culture in the west, and the expectations in relation to athleticism, gender norms and sexual orientation (Calzo et al., 2013). Calzo et al. (2013) also found that for males especially, being involved in contact team sports was a primary means of establishing oneself as masculine and therefore participating in a more traditional gender normative activity (Calzo et al. 2013).

Interestingly research suggests that gender non-conformity in female sport participants was less likely to elicit victimization as the notion of masculine girls or 'tomboys' was more socially acceptable (Calzo et al. 2013). This is confirmed by Greenspan et al. (2019) who confirmed that anti-masculine remarks were frequently (36.2%) and often (20.7%) heard in school athletic settings verses anti-feminine remarks, which were heard far less frequently (22.4%) or often (12.1%). Similarly in traditional female sports, lesbian and bisexual females also report discrimination for not conforming to the stereotypical feminine appearance norms. Conversely girls and

woman, presumably cis female, participating in traditional male team sports were being stigmatised as lesbian and experienced discrimination (Denison et al., 2021b).

The grounding of these homophobic attitudes and behaviours in both male and female sports appear to have a dual purpose which includes enabling the participants to distance themselves from homosexuality, signalling their gender and sexual conformity, and secondly allowing them to bond with other team members through the adoption of derogatory jokes and homophobic behaviour (Dennison et al. 2020). Boys and young men of sexual minority who were not 'out' also participated in sports for this very reason, as it allowed them to assume a masculine identity (Clarke et al., 2021). Within educational institutes and other sports facilities heterosexuality and binary norms can exclude and marginalize LGBTQ+ students (Kulick et al. 2018). Sex segregated bathroom and changing rooms which only offer male and female options also enforces this binary form of gender identity.

3.2 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SPORTS PARTICIPATION

In line with the social construct of homophobia in sports as detailed above, the research also confirms, from a young age, boys identify more with sports and immerse themselves in formal and informal sports activity as a means of expressing their masculinity. Young girls on the other hand were found to be less physically active (Calzo et al 2014).

While bisexual females were less likely to participate in sports than heterosexual girls, there was no difference in participation rates between lesbian and heterosexual girls (Doull et al., 2018). In fact, gender differences in participating woman were less pronounced as there appears to be more sports accessible to woman, including the traditional male contact sports. Therefore, the differences among female sports participants were found to be smaller than among males (Calzo et al 2014).

These participation rates, however, are changing all the time with significant decreases noted in the rate of informal sports participation by heterosexual and bisexual males and females between 1998 and 2013. The same decrease was not witnessed in the gay male student population (Doull et al. 2018). Heterosexual and bisexual males were also less likely to report participation in dance and exercise classes during the same period.

In school, male students discussed their frustration with P.E. expectations, being linked to gender, with the expectation that male students would be faster and stronger than their female counterparts (Greenspan et al. 2019). This highly gendered sports environment makes such activity more hostile for non-cisgender youths (Clarke et al 2020). For the LGBTQ+ student, 37% avoided physical education classes, 22% avoided sports facilities, 24% avoided changing and locker rooms and 34%

avoided bathrooms (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2019). Interestingly during the transition to third level education there was a decrease in sports activity for sexual minority males (noted specifically for soccer and wrestling) and an increase in sport participation for sexual minority females (noted specifically for swimming, volleyball, and football). This would concur with previous research in the field which found that participation rates among sexual minority females are higher than that of sexual minority males (Greenspan et al. 2019).

While the research on sexual orientation and sports participation is growing, there is very little specific study in relation to transgender students experience of sports participation (Clarke et al 2020). According to available research transgender youths feel less safe in gender-segregated spaces as compared to their cisgender peers (Greenspan 2019). While this may be the case, research also suggests that transgender youth participated in sports to a similar degree as their cisgender counterparts.

Greenspan et al (2019) exploring the literature in this area, suggested that transgender students should have access to gender segregated sports opportunity in line with their gender identification. Greenspan further added that this should be regardless of medical intervention, either surgery or hormone therapy. According to The Trevor Project (2019) this is particularly valuable as transgender and gender-nonconforming youth are particularly vulnerable, and experience even poorer mental health than their cisgender LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) and non-LGBTQ peers (The Trevor Project, 2019). In relation to school policies, few schools have policies in place to help improve sports participation for transgender youths, those with policies require students to play on the team that matches their gender assigned at birth. This may leave a transgender student with only one choice, non-participation.

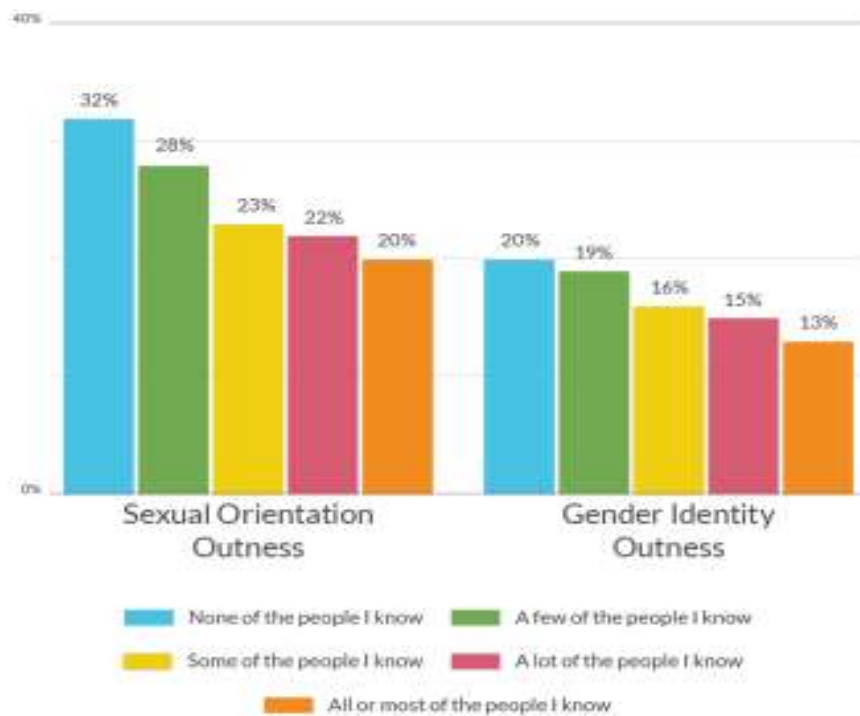
3.3 OUTNESS AND SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Clarke et al. (2020) discovered that the degree to which LGBTQ+ youth were 'out' about their LGBTQ+ identity, and to whom they were 'out' to, was a significant factor in their sports participation. Unfortunately, regression model research conducted by Denison et al. (2020) found that sports participants who "came out" as being LGBTQ+ to teammates were significantly more likely to report being a target of homophobic behaviour (Denison et al, 2020). The Australian study (n=1,173) indicated that 41.6% of participants had felt discrimination in the form of homophobic behaviour after 'coming-out.' This behaviour included, but was not limited to, verbal slurs and physical assaults.

“With regard to personal characteristics other than gender, age, being out to school staff, and being out to parents were also associated with a lower likelihood of sports participation” (Clarke et al. 2020)

These findings are supported by the research of The Trevor Project (2020) in the USA who found that one in three LGBTQ+ youth who were not ‘out’ to anyone about their sexual orientation, participated in sport (The Trejor Project, 2020).

Figure 2 Sports Participation by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity “Outness” (The Trevor Project 2020 p 1)



This quantitative cross-sectional study which surveyed over 40,000 LGBTQ+ middle school young adults found that many LGBTQ+ youth were in effect, forced to make a tradeoff between participating in sports and coming out as their authentic self (The Trejor Project, 2020). This is particularly true of young transgender and non-binary youth who reported reduced rates of sports participation compared to their cisgender LGBTQ+ peers. As the ‘coming out’ age lowers throughout Europe (the average age has lowered from 18 years to 14 years between 2002-2012), it can be assumed that the exclusion and non-participation in sports is happening at a younger and younger age (Englefield, 2012).

3.4 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN THE LITERATURE

While participation in informal sports decreases over time for all teens and young adults of all sexual orientation and gender, formal sports activity were found to be

particularly unwelcoming for sexual and gender minority teens, especially gay males (Doull et al., 2018). This environment leads not only to young people leaving and avoiding sports, but also to exclusion and negative developmental outcomes for this cohort (Symons et al., 2014). There are many external and internal barriers to participation in sports for this cohort which are outlined in the sections below.

3.3.1 AVOIDANCE AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

Because of the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ teens in sports many avoid sports and sports settings totally. Students who felt ridiculed and rejected by peers had chosen to remove themselves from school sports activity, engaging in avoidant behaviours to limit their exposure to stressors and feelings of being unsafe (Greenspan 2019). This ridicule by both peers and school staff became a barrier to participation. Students also wanted to avoid the conventional norms of masculinity which are embedded into sports.

Another common barrier to participation was the limited access to safe facilities including changing rooms, lockers rooms, showers, and bathrooms. These structural barriers were common across almost all studies and included a lack of privacy in changing rooms and feelings of being uncomfortable because of body image issues (Greenspan, 2019). Students sometimes developed elaborate strategies to avoid changing and showers. Additional structural barriers were presented for the transgender and non-binary students who received negative attention when selecting the restroom of their identifying gender (Greenspan, 2019). Research in Canadian high schools found that 89% of LGB students, who entered locker rooms or school sport environments, reported hearing homophobic language (e.g., fag, dyke) and nearly half (48%) heard this language 'frequently' or 'often' (Morrison et al., 2014). Students who reported hearing higher rates of anti-LGBTQ+ language also reported significantly less bathroom/locker-room safety (Kulick et al 2019).

3.3.2. CLOTHING

Another barrier presented in the literature which may not necessarily impact participation rates among cisgender heterosexual sport participants are, rules and regulations about sports attire. In Greenspan's (2019) literature conducted over a forty-year period up to 2015 found that not only were over 10% of students prevented from wearing sports clothing typically prescribed for another gender, nearly 7% were prohibited from wearing items of clothing which supported LGBTQ+ issues (Greenspan et al. 2019).

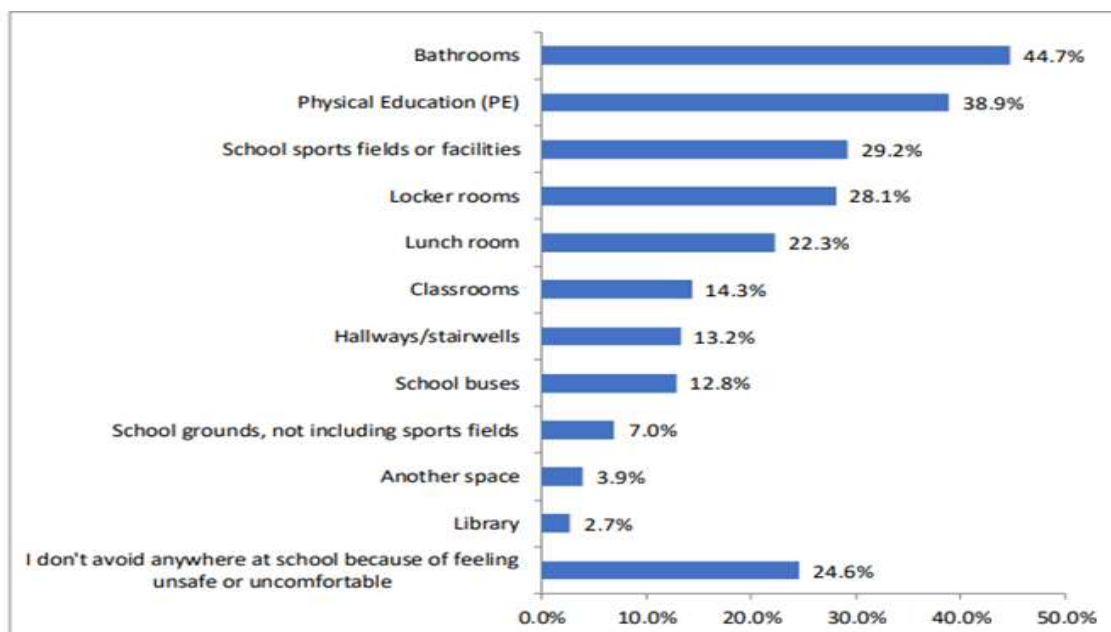
In this comprehensive review of the literature Greenspan et al. (2019) also discovered that the barrier around clothing and sports attire was also linked to body image and

dysphoria especially in school P.E. and athletics. Students also reported that they were required to wear sports uniforms in accordance with gender identity and change in front of classmates in open style changing rooms (Griffin & Carroll, 2010). The ridicule received because of LGBTQ+ students' choice of non-gender-conforming clothing resulted in them selecting sports activity which did not require undressing in locker rooms (Greenspan 2019). For transgender male and female students in the USA, the locker room presented a space, with the highest rate of gender related discrimination at 75% and 67.2% respectively (Kosciw et al., 2022). This is not surprising considering state funding of sports and its important in the school scholarship system. In fact, across the USA states continue to pass legislation banning transgender students from participating in school sports altogether (Kosciw et al., 2022).

3.3.3. FEELING UNSAFE

In the 2019 school climate report conducted across all counties in Ireland (n=788), 73% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2019). In 2022 (n=1,208) this figure increased to 76% (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022). The 2019 report indicated that 47% of LGBTQ+ participants stating this was because of their sexual orientation and 27% because of their expressed gender. This feeling of being unsafe increased in certain spaces and during certain activity especially sports. This is replicated across international studies regardless of policies and cultural differences.

Figure 3 Percentage of LGBTQ+ Students Who Avoid Spaces at School Because They Feel Unsafe (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022)



Current research in the USA reports that 68% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school specifically because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Kosciw et al., 2022) and this figure also depended on the physical spaces with sports related environment scoring the highest percentage as per figure

“Negative experiences were cited within unsupervised sport environments when physical assault would ensue, when being selected last for teams, or when feeling unwelcome within locker rooms or perceived as if they were seeking sexual connections with other students” (Greenspan, 2019, p 21)

These feeling of being unsafe are justified considering the evidence of bullying, harassment, and actual assault outlined in Section 3.3.4

3.3.4 BULLYING, HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND ASSAULT

In the literature bullying, harassment and discrimination can take many forms, and are common across all countries (Clarke et al., 2021). Greenspan et al. (2019) found that in a sample (n=1,614) of LGB British students, 23% reported experiencing bullying during school sports (Greenspan, 2017). PE or physical education classes appears to be a prime environment for discriminatory activity. Denison et al (2021) study in Australia (n=1,703) found this figure to be 41.6%, with students advising that they had been the target of homophobic behaviour, which included verbal slurs, bullying and assaults (Denison et al., 2021a). In the United States research indicated that over 50% were harassed in PE class because of their sexual orientation and gender expressed, while playing school team sports was almost 30% (Kosciw et al., 2022, Doull et al., 2018).

Irish research found 68.5% of LGBTQ+ students hear homophobic remarks from other students, indicating that these remarks were made by peers. A shocking 58.2% of LGBTQ+ students in Irish schools reported hearing homophobic remarks from teachers and school staff and a further 77% reported being verbally harassed (e.g. name calling or being threatened) based on their sexual orientation, gender, or gender expression (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022).

This harassment can also become physical, and assaults were reported as not uncommon. Pushing and inappropriate touching was reported by 36.2% of participants in a UK study, while a further 20% were subject to severe forms of physical violence (Torrance, 2022). BeLonG To Youth Services reported in their School Climate Survey of 2022 (n=4,087) that 12% of LGBTQ+ students were physically assaulted. This included kicking, punching and injury with a weapon.

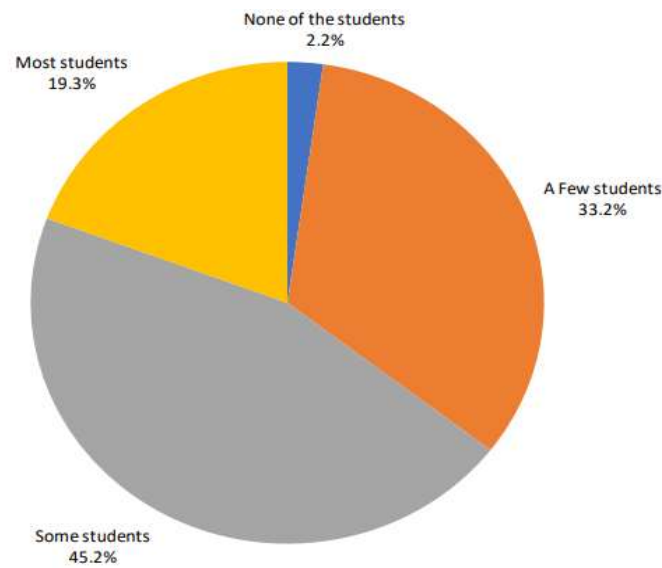


Figure 4 Students Report on number of peers who use homophobic remarks.

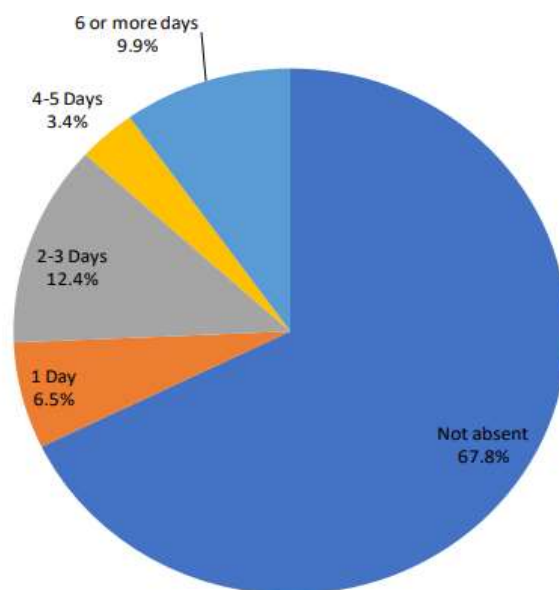


Figure 5 Frequency of Missing days of School in past month because of feeling unsafe.

In addition to this most severe forms of assaults, verbal threats and cases of intimidation also occurred via social media in 40.2% of cases (Braumüller and Schlunsk, 2022). Approximately the same rate of e-bullying or cyberbullying was reported by Irish LGBTQ+ students in the last twelve months. Irish students (37%) also reported having their personal belongings stolen or deliberately damaged at school (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022).

The consequence of this constant bullying, harassment, discrimination, and feelings of being unsafe effects both academic performance and mental health according to Irish research. Nearly 60% of LGBTQ+ students reported being extremely / or pretty upset by homonegative remarks and over one third of second level student had no plans or aspirations to attend third level education (BeLonG To Youth Services, 2022). Experiences of harassment and assault by LGBTQ+ students as also linked to absenteeism from school to avoid the hostile school environment.

The evidence would suggest that sport, in particular, is identified as *“a hostile environment for LGBT persons where little real progress is being made compared to other areas”* (Council of Europe, 2019). Despite all the benefit of sports participation and physical activity, if sports activity and sports facilities are unsafe and hostile for LGBTQ+ youth, the benefits of participation typically seen in other general youth populations may not be transferable. Worse still, participation may have a negative and lasting effect on development (Clarke et al., 2019 p 3)

3.3.5 SUPPORT, INTERVENTION AND POLICY

Despite the findings in the above sections, the literature revealed how support received by LGBTQ+ students can lead to a greater sense of belonging, being more likely to feel accepted by their peers and be less likely to miss school to avoid victimisation. To this end, it is critical that professional development is provided for school coaches and PE teachers on how to create a more supportive and welcoming sports environment for LGBTQ+ students (Clarke, 2021). This is especially important in the context of a recent Irish study which found that nearly 60% of LGBTQ+ students did not report instances of harassment or assault as they did not think the school staff would do anything about it. Almost the same number, 58%, felt the handling of the report by the staff member would be ineffective (BeLonG to Youth Services, 2022). Of those who did report instances of harassment or assault 37% were advised by school staff to ignore it, and a further 33.5% did nothing.

In relation to support, some students expressed a desire to receive more solidarity from school stakeholders and peers and cited the notion of “Champion Behaviour” as indicated in sports management literature (Melton and Cunningham, 2014). This champion could provide opportunity for cross training, P.E., and Health, which could be co-delivered by LGBTQ+ students.

Interventions are also an important part of building inclusive environments. The research suggests that school staff, coaches and administrative staff can create policies and practices, but they must also enforce them (Clarke et al 2020). Teachers and parents can either mitigate or contribute to the homophobic culture by either ignoring witnessed behaviour or responding (Calzo et al 2014). In the Irish study

conducted in 2022, LGBTQ+ students reported that 48.6% of staff and 58% of student never intervene to stop homophobic remarks. The figure for teachers and students who intervene all the time was as low as 3.5% and 1% respectively (BeLonG to Youth Services, 2022). There was a direct correlation between feelings of belonging and the levels of intervention by staff when biased language was used. This lack of, or infrequent intervention by school and university authorities, send a message to students that discrimination and homophobia is tolerated. The lack of intervention and support also legitimizes the hostile behaviour.

4.0 FINDINGS FROM QUANTITATIVE SURVEY DATA

To address the aims and objectives of this study and to provide a foundation for the qualitative focus groups a concise quantitative questionnaire was developed. The internal validity was not scientifically tested due to the timeframe and access to potential participation, but the Vice President of the Student Welfare (SETU) and a small sample of LGBTQ+ students face-tested the questionnaire prior to its distribution. The survey was distributed to focus group participants and distributed to those who could not attend focus groups. Posters about the survey (Appendix 4) were also distributed by supporting organisation on their social media pages and circulated among LGBTQ+ students. The questionnaire could be accessed via smart phone, laptop, and PC. In total, 42 students and young people completed the five-minute survey. The quantitative data is reported by the two population categories, 13 to 18 years (secondary school students) and 19 to 24 plus, (university students).

4.1 PROFILE OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the survey were broken down evenly between the younger and older cohort of students.

Of the students between the age of 13-18 years, 27% identified as non-binary, with 22% identifying as transgender (Figure 5), versus 21.5% and 10.5% respectively for the 19–24-year-old cohort (Figure 6). The younger group of participants described their sexual orientation as gay (31%), bisexual (27%) or asexual (22%) with a further 4.5% describing their sexual preference as pansexual or queer. Nearly 10% of participants indicated that they preferred to use none of the listed options. The third level student group (n=19) described their sexual orientation as predominantly bisexual (31.58%) with 21% and 16% stating their sexual orientation was queer and pansexual respectively. This is a considerable difference between the younger age group although the same percentage choose to not select any of the available choices.

Figure 5 Gender Identity of 13-18 Students

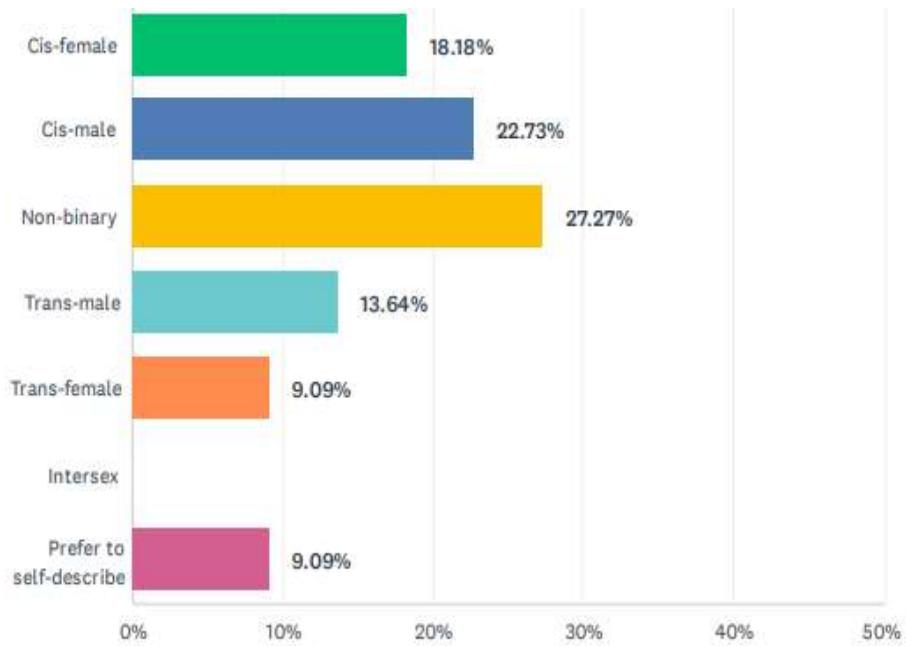
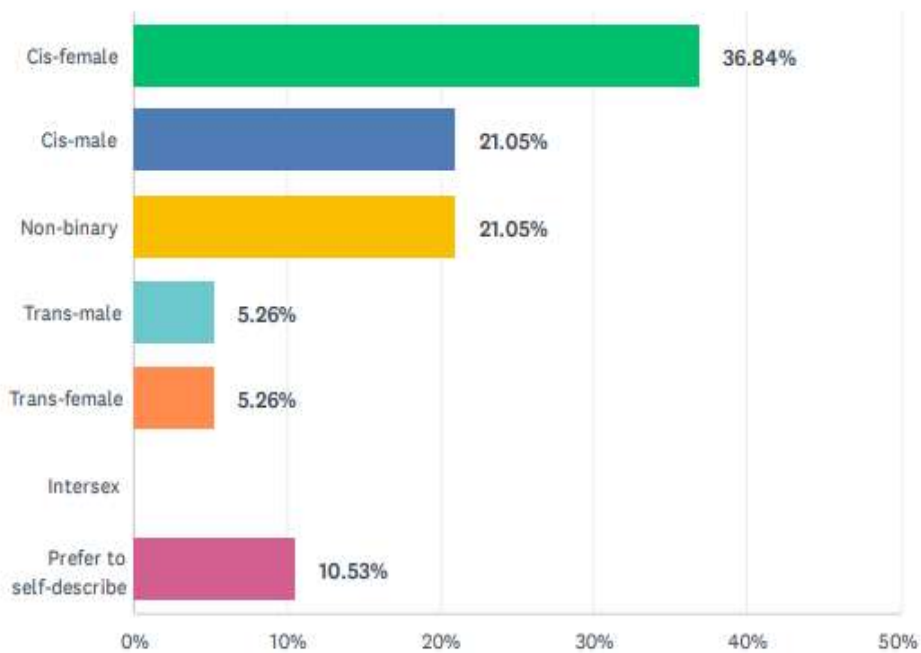


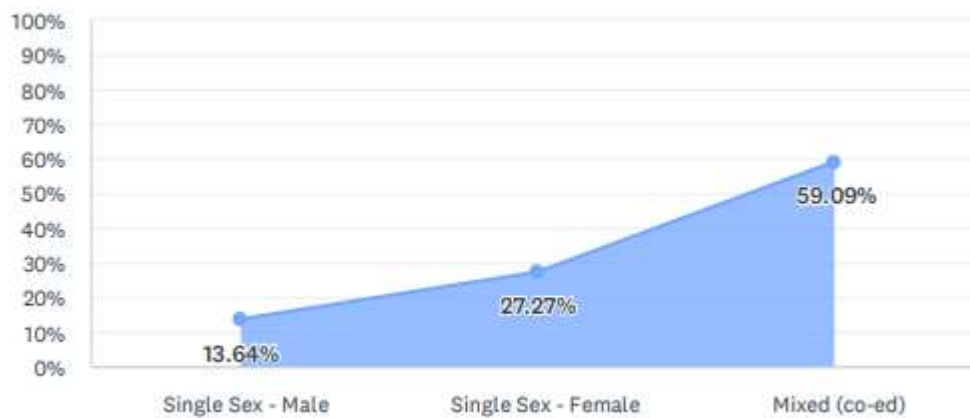
Figure 6 Gender Identity of 19-24 student



The mean age of the younger cohort was 16 years, and the older cohort was 20 years. Of the younger group 50% were 16 years, 15% were 15 years and 10% were 14 years, with 25% being 17 years. The older group had a wider spread of age groups with 19 and 20 years being the largest age group at 25% each, with 15% of the participants being 21 years.

Secondary school was stated as the educational institute for 82% of the 13-18 years old with 18% attending third level. Of those between the age of 19- 24 who completed the survey nearly 90% were in third level education. The literature has shown the impact that access to non-binary and transgender toilets and changing facilities yet 41% of 13–18-year-olds attended a same sex school. Access to toilets, changing rooms etc will immediately be limited to the predominant gender of their school (Figure 7)

Figure 7 Gender of Educational Institute



4.2 CURRENT SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

Across both age groups participants were asked to indicate their current levels of sports and/or physical activity from; none, to informal, regular, and competitive. Most participants in both age groups never participate in sports or recreational activity. Those who did participate did so mainly on an informal basis. While swimming and changing rooms present as one of the most challenging physical environments for the LGBTQ+ student, swimming was one of the top two activities for both groups as was cycling. The reported activity across each age group is reported below in Figures 9 and 10.

Regardless of current levels of activity, 63% of the younger age group ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that they would like to participate in more sports and physical activity while only 13% ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’. For older students 47% agreed or strongly agreed that they too would like to participate in more sports while a higher percentage were unsure (36%). This presents an opportunity to provide

sports and physical activity to this underactive group of students. The low numbers of participation in activities at a competitive level may also indicate the motivation factors contributing to activities in general.

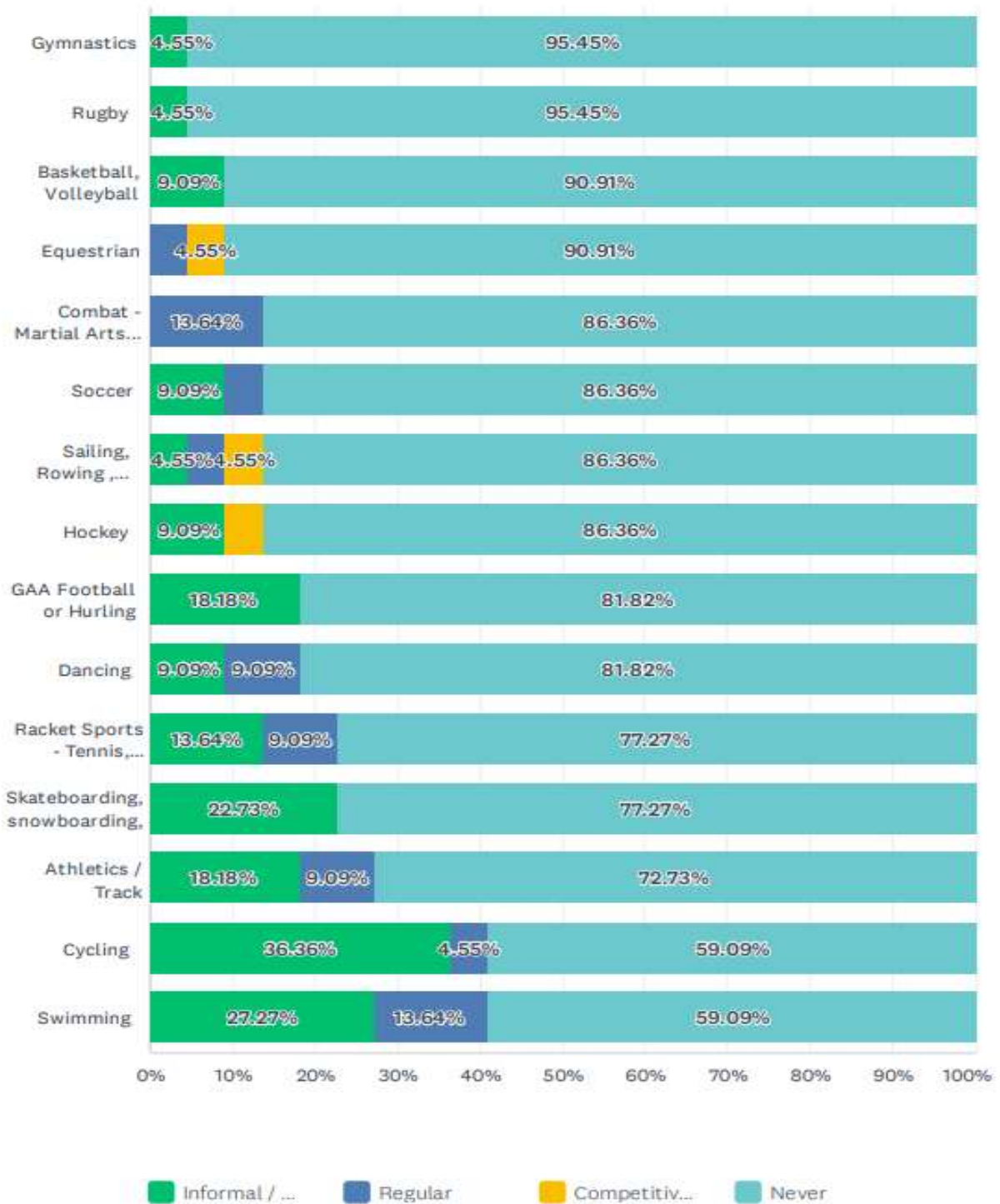


Figure 8 13-18 Years Participation Levels

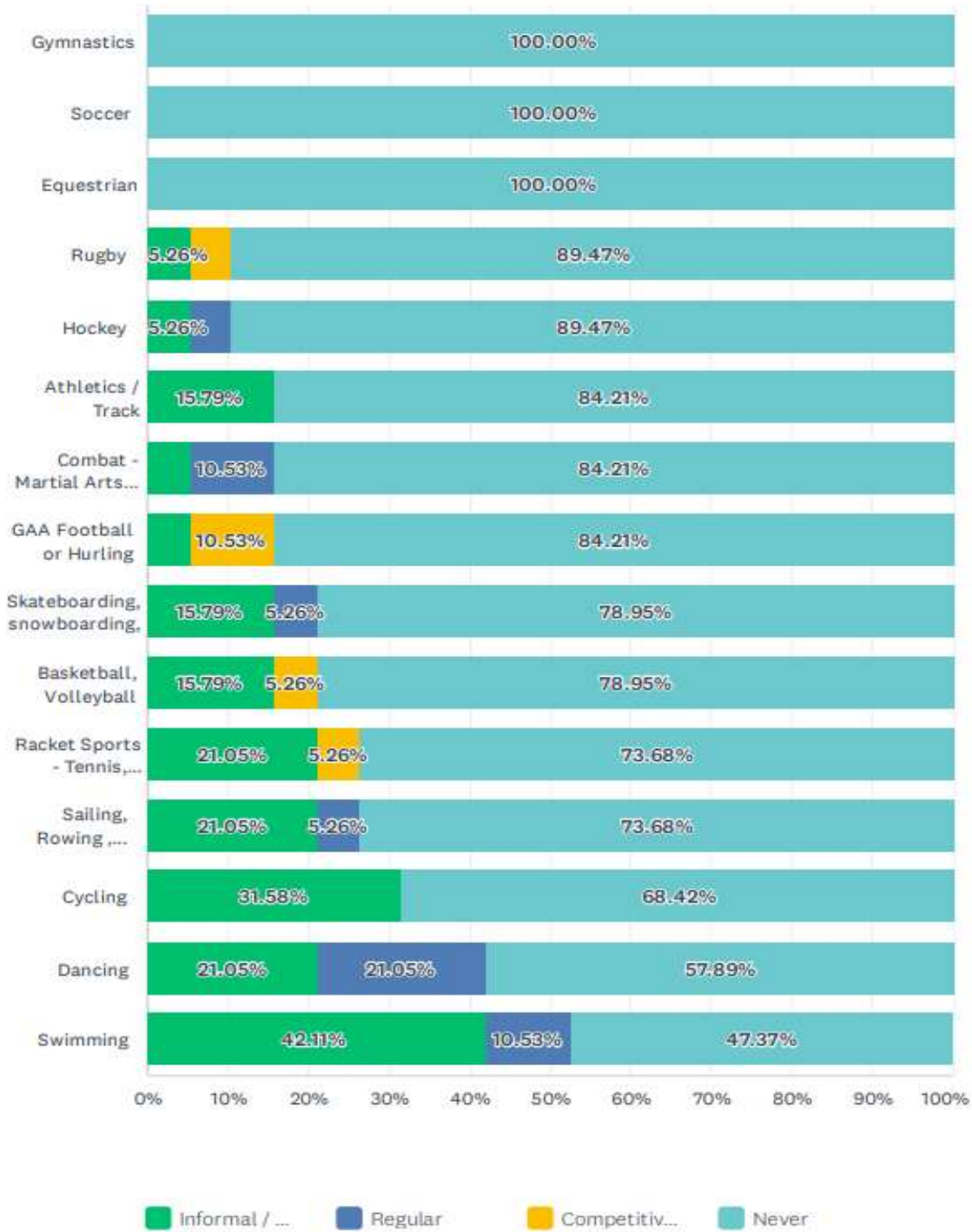


Figure 9 19-24 Years Participation Levels

4.3 TEAM SPORT PREFERENCES

Both groups of students were also asked about their preference for the makeup of sports teams in relation to gender norms and the separation of teams and players into a binary format (Figure 10 & 11).

Question 9 on the survey asked students to indicate their agreement with the following statement, “I prefer when sports are separated into binary gender norms”.

The difference in responses by age group is indicated below in Figures 10 and 11.

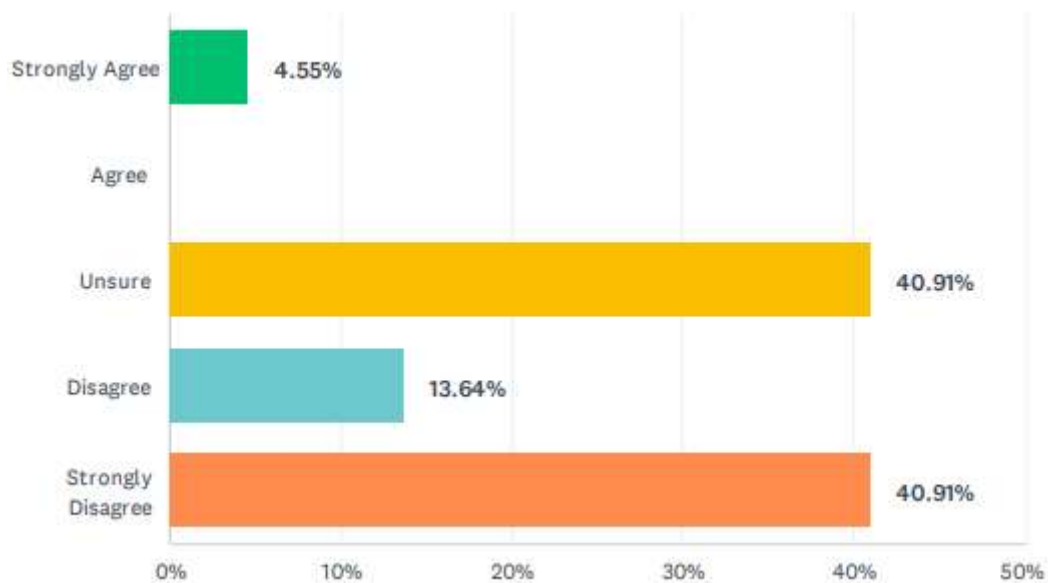


Figure 10 Agreement with the Separation of Teams into Binary Norms (13-18 years)

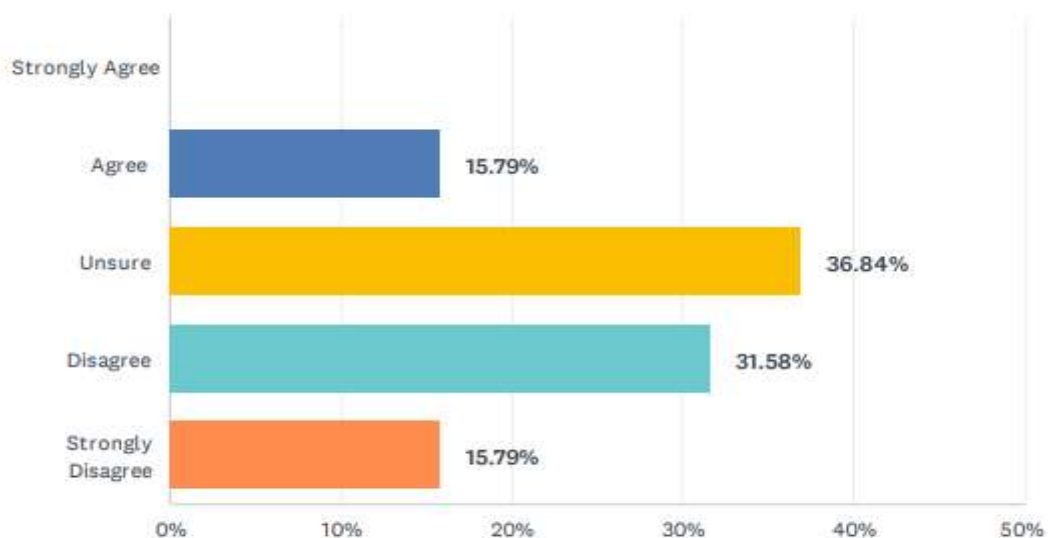


Figure 11 Agreement with the Separation of Teams into Binary Norms (19-24 years)

While the difference between the groups in relation to the levels of disagreement (disagree and strongly disagree) is not material, 47% for the 19–24-year-olds and 44% for the 13–18-year-old, the percentage of the older group which agree could be influenced by the higher number of these students who identify as cisgender. The younger cohort also indicated that they liked when sports team were mixed and were not confined to two gender norms (68% agreed or strongly agreed). The older group’s preference for gender mixed sports teams was significantly lower at 47%. This may be influenced by the lived experiences of the group who had a higher number of participants playing competitive team sports than the younger group, including GAA, rugby, basketball, and volleyball (Figures 8 and 9).

4.4 ACCESS & SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT FACILITIES

The literature has indicated that access to LGBTQ+ inclusive sports structures and facilities impacts the safety and therefore the participation of LGBTQ+ students in sporting activity. Our findings indicated that 54% of secondary school students did not have access to unisex sports facilities, with a further 31% indicating that they did not know if it might be available to them, indicating the level of sports facilities used. In the older group, access to unisex sports facilities was much higher with nearly 73% of students saying they had access to unisex sports facilities. Only 5% of this group indicated that they did not have access to unisex sports facilities and just over 20% indicated that they were ‘unsure’.

However, in contrast to this positive structural access for university students, nearly 57% (agreed or strongly agreed) that they had experienced or witnessed discrimination in a sports setting (Figure 12). Without the appropriate structurally supports sports environment are very discriminatory for the LGBTQ+ community (Figure 14).

Figure 12. I have experience /witnessed discrimination in a sport setting 13-18 years.

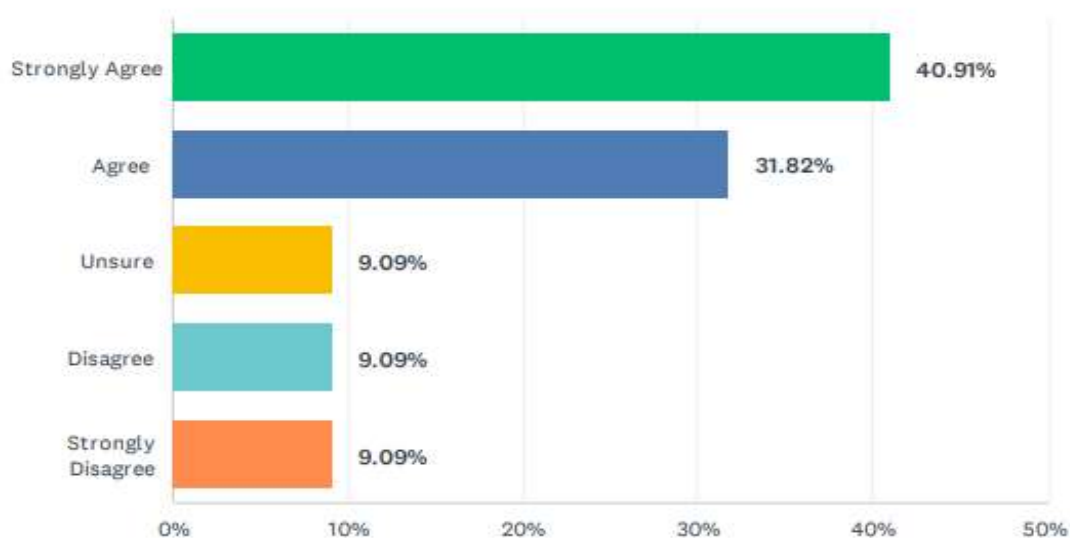
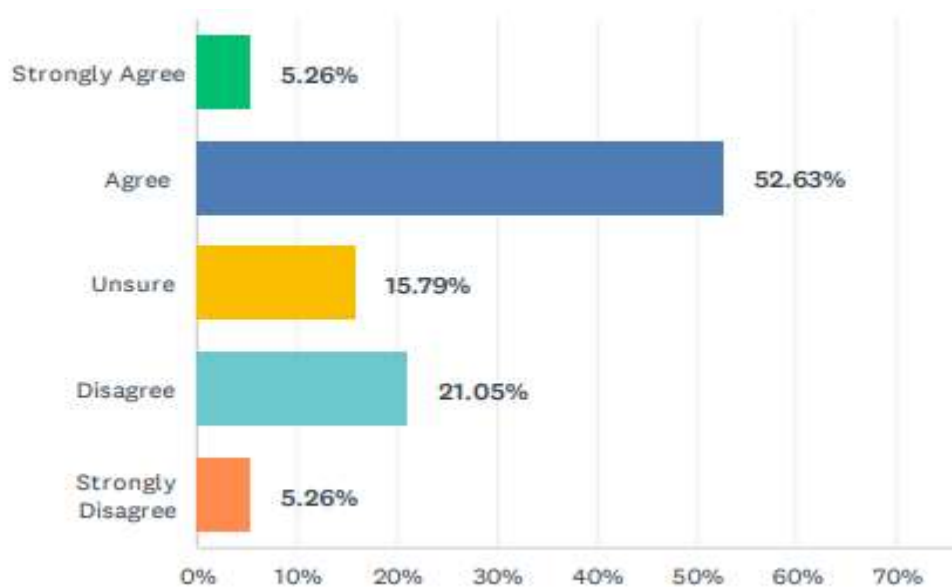


Figure 13 I have experience or witnessed discrimination in a sport setting 19-24 years



In addition to these findings, question 12 on the survey found 55% of secondary school LGBTQ+ students, agreed or strongly agreed, that they did not feel comfortable using male/female specific bathrooms. Considering the number of younger students who attended same sex schools this is an ongoing challenge. In addition, almost one third of students, agreed or strongly agreed, that they did feel comfortable using binary specific bathroom or changing rooms, while 13% remained undecided. For the university students, 36% felt uncomfortable using binary specific toilets and changing rooms. This groups also reported higher levels of access to non-binary facilities. These students also had a higher number of participants who identified as cisgender, which may be a reason for the higher number (52.5%) who indicated that they were comfortable using binary specific bathrooms versus 32% of the younger group which had a higher number of transgender participants.

4.5 BARRIERS & ENABLERS TO PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS ACTIVITY

The barriers and enablers to participation in sports activity for LGBTQ+ students are outlined in the literature in Section 3.3 above. Most of these findings are replicated in the quantitative finding in this section and in the qualitative findings in Section 5. Regardless of the geographical or cultural norms, the findings suggest that the barriers and enablers are universal. They are more influenced by gender identity and sexual orientation of the research participants rather than the geographical location of the study. The main barriers and enablers are.

- ✓ the levels of access to structural facilities which are LGBTQ+ inclusive (Section 4.4),
- ✓ the degree to which LGBTQ+ students are “out”,
- ✓ the levels of support they receive in their organisation or activity.
- ✓ the level of knowledge and education coaches, peers and teammates have on gender and sexual minority matters.

As indicated in the literature the level of outness may indicate the level of support or indeed discrimination experience by LGBTQ+ students participating in sports. This question of comfort levels with students being “out” across their network was also posed in the survey. Student networks included teammates, friends, coaches, competitors, and family. Levels of comfort were highest among friends for both age groups strongly agreeing at 65% and 68.5% respectively (Figure 14 & 15). Almost the same number felt comfortable around their family at 60% and 58% (agree or strongly agree). Unfortunately, 20% of the younger group and 37% of the older group did not agree with the statement “I am comfortable being out with”. The research suggests that while LGBTQ+ students hide their gender identify and /or sexual orientation they are more likely to continue to participate in sports activity (Clarke, 2021).

Figure 14 I am Comfortable being "out" with.... (13-18 years)

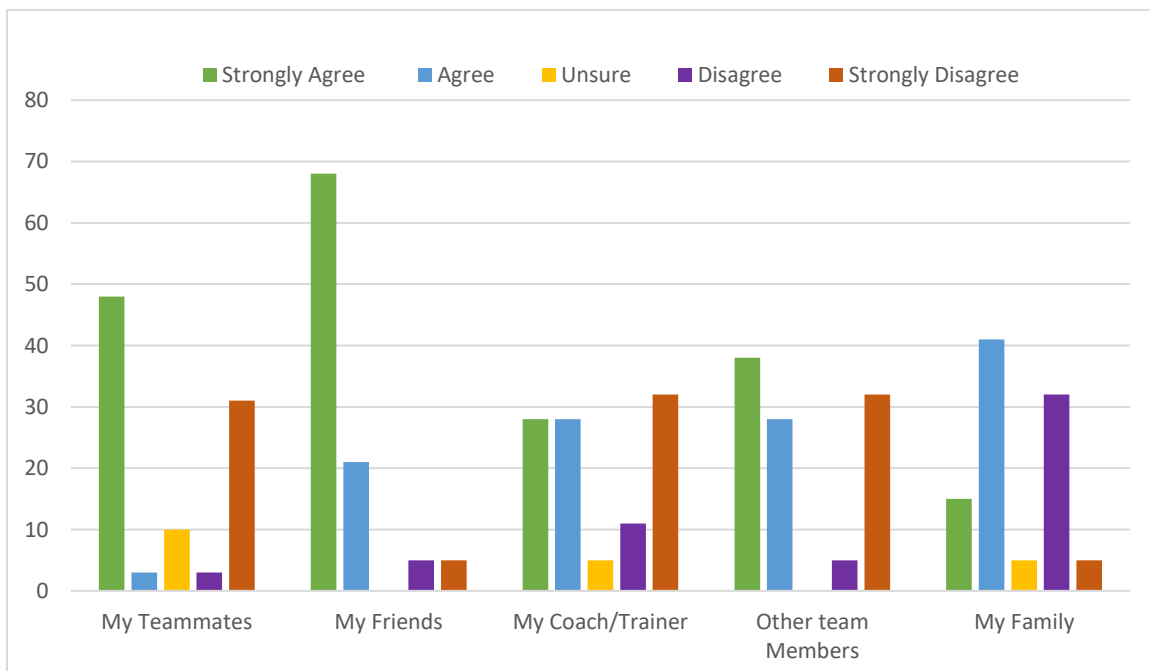
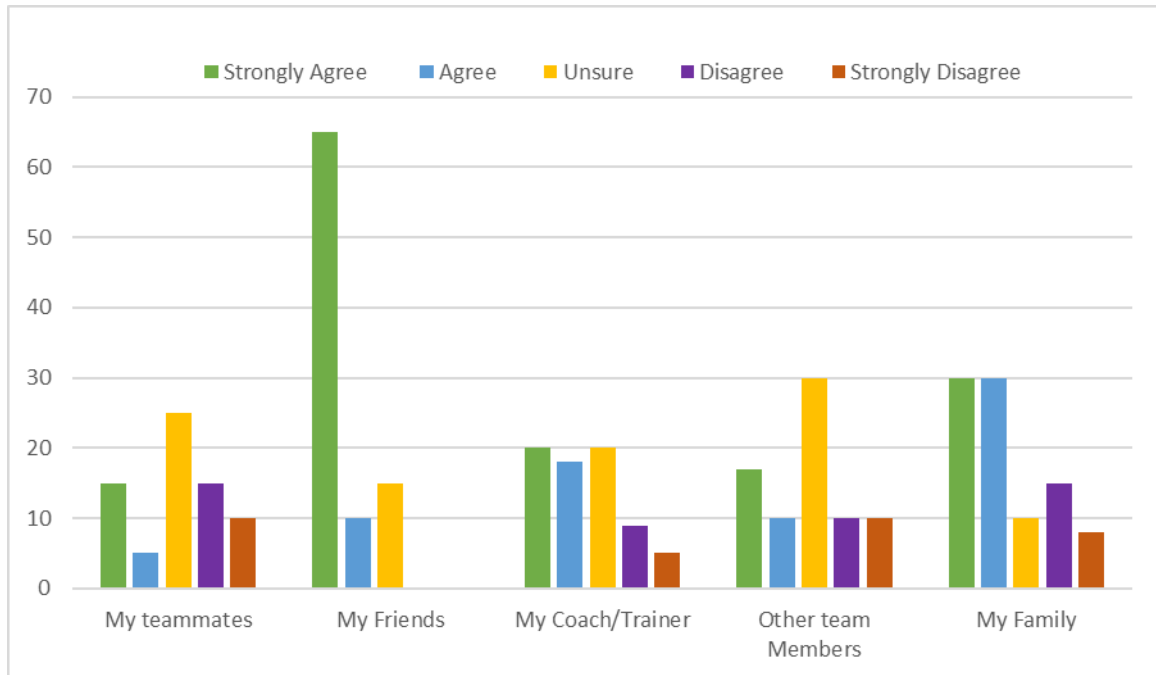


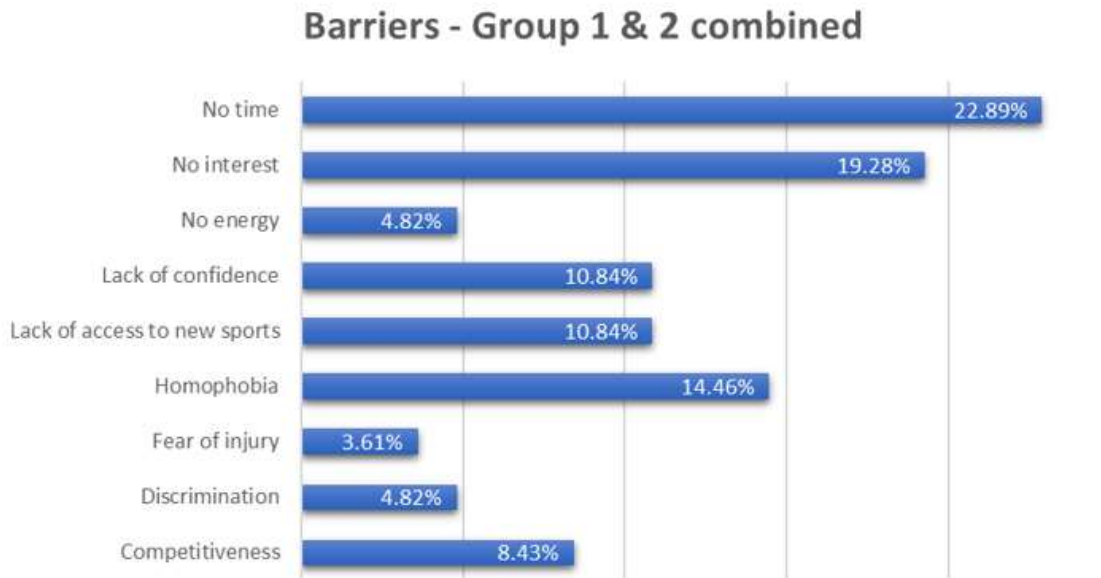
Figure 15 I am comfortable being "out" with (19-24 years)



When LGBTQ+ students come out to their coaches, peers, and teammates they are no longer protected from homophobic harassment, discrimination, and abuse, with high levels of bullying and name calling experienced or witnessed. The level of support can also act as a barrier or a positive influence in students' levels of sports participation. Support can come in many forms including nurturing a safe and inclusive environment to intervention in the instance of bullying or harassment. When students were asked how supported they currently felt in their sports organisation or activity a high percentage of students from both age groups were unsure (Figure 17).

For a personal point of view, participants were also asked to list their own top reasons for non-participation in sports (Figure 16). Having the time (23%) and the motivation (20%) was cited as the top two barriers. Participants also suggested that the lack of access to new sports (10%) and a lack of confidence also contributed to their non-participation. During a very busy first term (Oct-Nov 2022) during which time the research was conducted participants also cited a lack of energy as being a personal barrier (4.8%), fear of injury was also mentioned as an inhibitor (3.6%).

Figure 16 Combined Personal Barriers to Participation



The final section of the quantitative survey asked participants to indicate the top facilitators which would support or increase their sports participation levels, both groups were provided with a free text option in the survey, which resulted in the following findings as reported in Figures 18 and 19.

Figure 17 I feel supported by my Sports Organisation or Activity

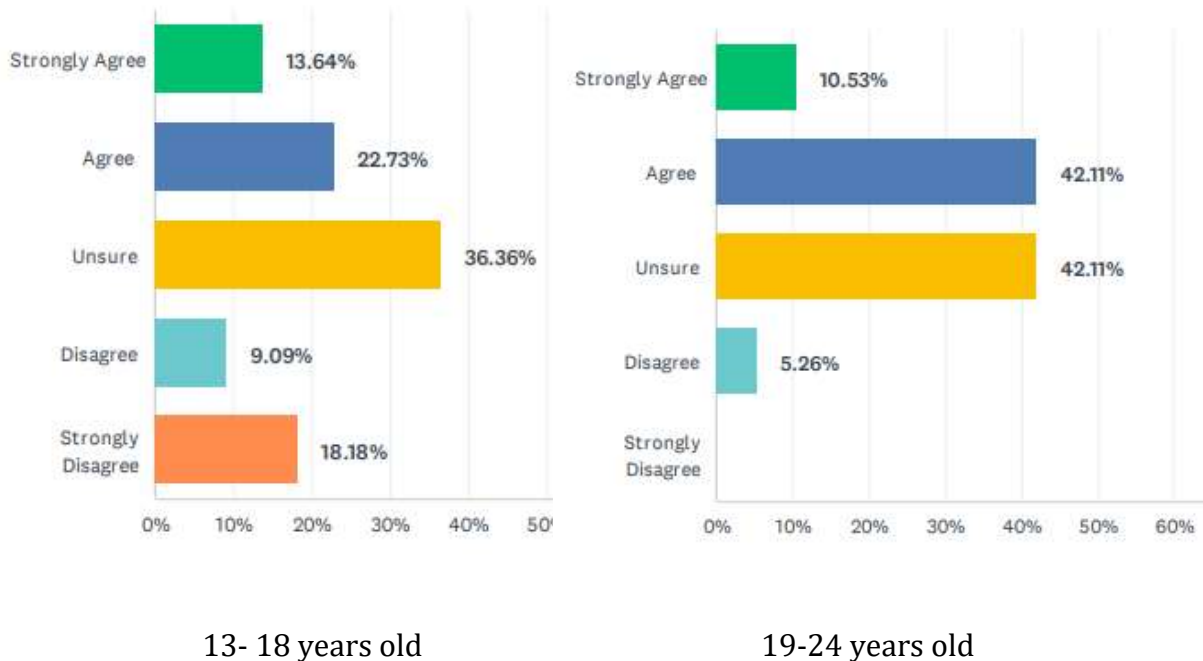


Figure 18 Top Suggested Improvement for LGBTQ+ Sports Inclusion (13-18 years)

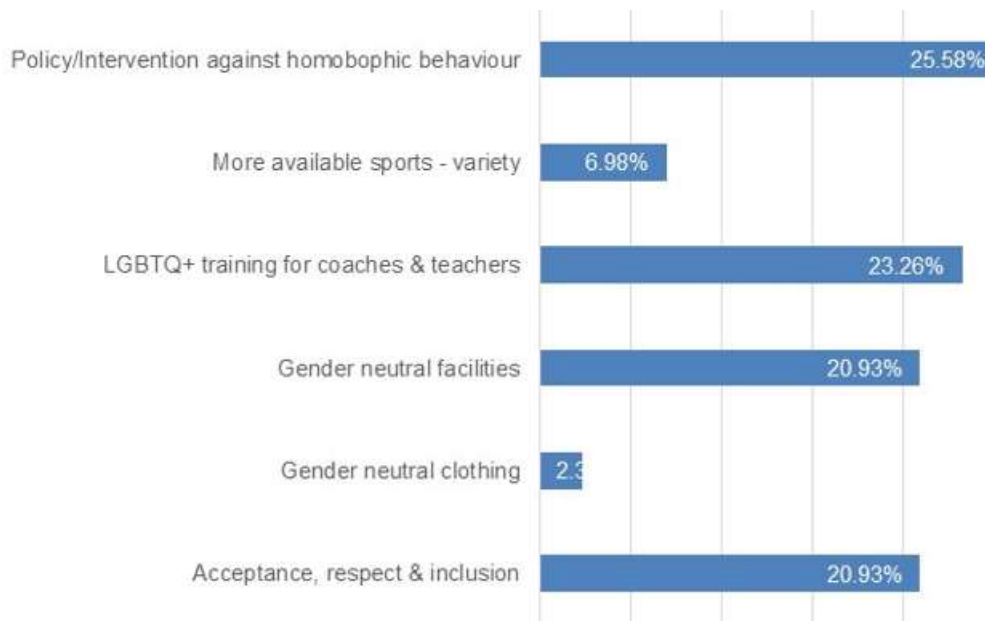
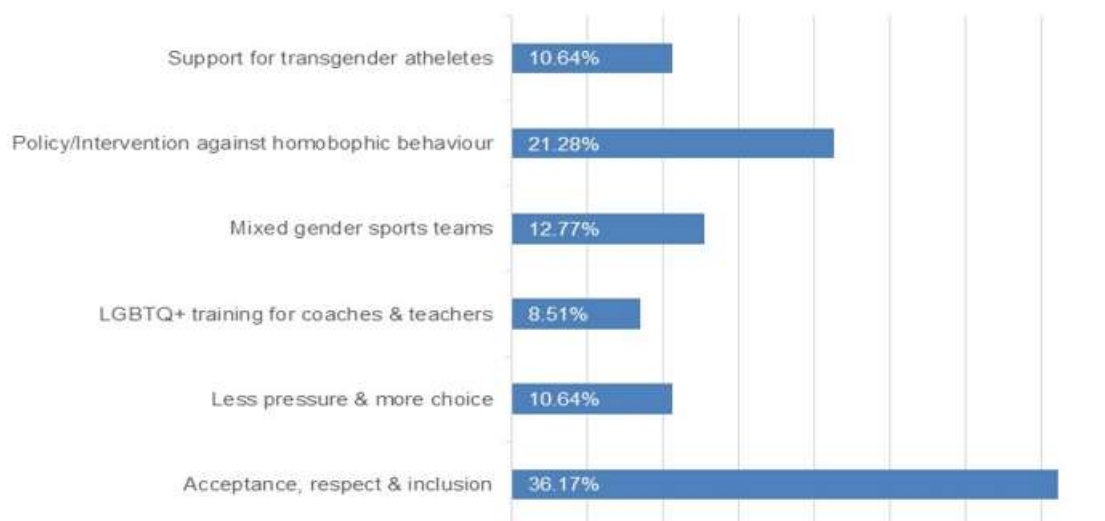


Figure 19 Top Suggested Improvements for LGBTQ+ Sports Inclusion (19-24 years)



5.0 FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUPS

The qualitative focus groups were conducted between 15th November 2022 and 30th November 2022. Most LGBTQ+ groups normally meet on Tuesday evenings which limited the time available to the researchers. The period of research also coincided with mid-term break and the publication of the national junior cycle examination results. The swapping of group coordinators also impacted on the access to one group but in total 4 focus groups were scheduled and a total of 42 participants attended. One group was conducted at Carlow Regional Youth Service and the other at Kilkenny at Ossory Youth (both 13-18 years). A third focus group was schedule for An Foróige

group in Kilkenny, but this did not take place due to only one person attending. A second date was offered, as was the opportunity to participate in an online focus group. The group instead opted for participation in the quantitative survey, as their numbers were very small (n=2-3). These sessions were conducted by the senior researcher, who has more experience communicating and facilitating with younger people.

The fourth focus group was coordinated by the Diversity Officer, Southeast Technical University. The group (n=17) profile is outlined below, and their ages ranged from 18-25 years. This older group was facilitated by the PI. All focus group discussions were digitally recorded for audio transcription using encrypted software. No individual participating in the focus groups were identified or identifiable, as all data was anonymized.

5.1 PROFILE OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

As with the quantitative data the findings from the qualitative element of the research were divided into two separate groups, group 1: 13-18 years and group 2: 19-24 years. The breakdown of group 1 by gender expression and sexual orientation is detailed in Table 3 and 4. The highest proportion of participants identified as cisgender, female 47% and male 23%. The non-binary cohort accounted for 18% and transgender participation was reported at 6% (male and female).

Table 3 Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation of Participants 13-18 years
(Secondary School Students)

Gender Identification	Cis female	15%
	Cis male	25%
	Non-Binary	25%
	Trans-male	15%
	Trans-female	10%
	A gender	10%
Sexual Orientation	Gay	37%
	Bisexual	32%
	Asexual	16%
	Questioning	10%
	Queer	5%

Table 4 Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation of Participants 19-24 years (University Students)

Gender Identification	Cis female	47%
	Cis male	23%
	Non-Binary	18%
	Trans-male	6%
	Trans-female	6%
	A gender	0%
Sexual Orientation	Gay	21%
	Bisexual	43%
	Asexual	7%
	Questioning	0%
	Queer	29%

5.2 CURRENT SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

Both groups were asked to describe their current physical activity levels. While some participants were actively involved in formal sports like pole vaulting, running and archery as part of a club, a lot of the daily physical activity of both groups were informal. Group 1 outlined their currently levels of daily activity.

"I walk every day and go swimming or go to the gym on the weekends, but I don't really participate in sports."

"I love to dance and make up different choreography, but that's just for fun. I would like to join a group though but there aren't many around"

"I like to walk, mostly for health reasons. It gives me time to myself, but I don't really do anything else"

"I never got into sport."

"There isn't anything local that I want to try, it's always the same, just like football and basketball and other normal ones that I think are boring"

"I liked sports when I was younger. I wanted to get into them again, but I always got hassled at any clubs I joined so I just left and got really disinterested in sports."

Group 2 participated in a range of activities including some formal team sports, but mainly activity was undertaken alone including running, skateboarding, and cycling.

"I run a few times a week, I used to run with a club but now I run on my own."

"I have nine years of dance experience, it's something they did not have at my last college, but they have here, so yes it's a group, I have formal training"

I used to play basketball as part of a team, but that stopped during covid, and I never took it back up"

"I used to play basketball in secondary school also but not now"

5.2.1 SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SECONDARY & THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION

All focus groups were asked to discuss their sports and physical activity in their educational institute. Activity varied from school to school, and from secondary to third level. Secondary school students did not always have positive experiences of school sports activity and PE class, which confirms the evidence from the literature reviewed.

"It's known for sport. A lot of people go there just for the big sport and facilities and want to play sports for the school. A lot of them are like a much higher level of like physical capabilities. And it's like I'm just me, standing there and I don't fully know what to do. It's never great to be the last one at the wall and standing there waiting to be picked for a team."

[Cis-male, gay, 16, speaking about their own school]]

"I hate PE. I'm probably one of the smallest, especially in my class. I'm the smallest height wise, weight wise, the whole lot. Going up against all these girls who are placed ahead of me, double the weight, like it's dangerous. I've been shoved against walls; I've been pushed to the floor. It's not the safest place for me to be."

[A-gender, Lesbian, 16]

"I hated PE in primary school. In secondary, I really didn't like it either. Because they always had a schedule for us. Lately, like at the end of third year, they kind of started being a bit more lenient. They asked us what you want to do. I like when they let us decide what we want to do. We have a gym upstairs in our school and they've recently got equipment put into it. So sometimes I'll go up there for some peace and quiet and I'll just walk on the treadmill or do a bit of rowing. I like that way better. I like being able to choose what I want to do."

[Cis female, questioning, 16]

“There is like school trips for swimming. It’s one of my favourite things to do, but I can’t do it with school anymore because I’m not comfortable. Everyone in school sees me as a boy, because I haven’t come out to most people as trans. Like not fully to my school. Some people know. But like my teachers don’t know and the other boys would ask why I want to wear a t-shirt”.

[Non-binary, Asexual, 14]

The older group, when asked about their physical activity in the university, only one person indicated that they had used the gym once.

“The experience was not like negative; I don’t really like stumbling into anything uncomfortable, but I’d say most people were minding their own business.”

[University Student]

“I’ve actively chosen not to join the gym every year, because our gym is specifically all glass and it’s all a common space. There are no separate rooms and there’s no separation between equipment. Because we’re like such sports orientated university, a lot of the sports people will go there and they take selfies and it’s usually like, I’m kind of like stereotyping here, but like when you think of the people that go to the gym in this university, they are all like cis and heterosexual.”

[University Student]

Team and other sports activity in the university were considered very competitive and not necessarily played for enjoyment only. None of the focus group members participated in sport as part of a team or club. All activities were undertaken alone or with a friend.

“I get anxious around new people, so like, joining a whole new club for like, volleyball or something, would be really like difficult for me because I feel like I don’t fit in.”

[University Student]

5.2.2 CHANGES TO LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

Students in both groups indicated that their level of activity had changed considerable over the last five years. University students suggested that their level of activity increased between primary school and secondary school. The competitive nature of most sport activity was cited as one of the reasons for this reduction in activity.

“My activity increased originally, if we’re talking five years ago, because, you know, I had more time, and then it decreased because of COVID and then it’s kind of decreased again, because of the leaving certificate and I think it will increase again.”

[University Student]

I used to do gymnastics, but I stopped, and I haven't had that chance to pick it up again and now everyone is so advanced. It is too advanced for me now, so going back now I would be so behind the rest of the class and a beginner. It's embarrassing and it pushes me away from it. It is all too competitive."

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

5.3 ROLES IN CLUBS AND SPORTS ORGANISATIONS

Across the findings very few participants (Group 1) indicated they had a mentoring / training role in their chosen sports activity. This would suggest that there is certainly scope for the development of a leadership program for young LGBTQ+ leaders. This is in line with the LGBTQ+ National Strategy (2018).

"I really love rowing and I wanted to volunteer so I am going to start training, how to be a coach."

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

"For An Gaisce I am going to be teaching the younger years how to play badminton. I really like 4th year because you can do more things to help and make clubs."

[Agender, bisexual, 16]

However, when Group 2 (19-24 years) were asked about their role in clubs or sports organisations, none of them indicated that they had any leadership roles. This may be more challenging for third level students who have just arrived in a new institute in the first term. This may also indicate an opportunity for this group to champion sports activity and actively engage in leading roles.

5.4 EXPERIENCE OF STRUCTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Without exception sports facilities and the built environment presented the greatest barrier to participation for both groups, although the older group had more opportunity to access non-binary facilities. Participants in the younger group (13-18 years) were very open and honest about their experiences and the feelings that inhibited their participation.

"Would a girl go and change in a guy's changing room with a bunch of guys? When your gender is, you know, invisible, and they don't know, I just worry how it would feel if they knew that they were changing with someone who was different". [Trans-female, bisexual, 16]

"I'm not out to a lot of people. I present feminine, and I love my femininity, but I don't like changing with people. But that has a lot to do with my body image as well, because I'm a bigger person. I remember in first year, changing in the girls' changing rooms, it just felt so horrible. I just don't feel like I should be in here".

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

"I would feel uncomfortable changing in the same room as men. But in my school, they have a gender-neutral bathroom, that's usually where I get changed if I must get changed. I think there should be something like that like a gender-neutral area, maybe with stall doors or something like that. Because for me, I don't feel comfortable changing with men or with women".

[Trans-female, bisexual, 16]

While transgender and non-binary students certainly contributed the most to this aspect of the discussion, their experience was not unique. Gay students also voiced their fears in relation to their own safety and voiced consideration for their fellow students.

"Guys can be a bit more confrontational. If you're openly gay, and you're going to change and there's no teachers, and only lads, like you could be putting yourself in danger. I don't care what other people think but it can be like a dangerous place."

[Gay, cis-male, 16: Speaking of an all-boys school vs. an all-girls school]

"I'm also completely comfortable with my body. And, you know, I'm not one of those people who are like, gay or bi, and completely obsessed with straight people, but it is still a strange situation. I don't want a 'gay men's' changing area, but a non-binary changing room might help some people".

[Gay, cis-male, 16]

5.5 EXPERIENCE OF COACHES, TRAINERS, & INSTRUCTORS

Another open question in the focus group asked the participants about their experiences of those who supported or provided sports coaching or facilities. Group 2 indicated that they did not feel they needed the support of coaches or teachers in relation to their gender identity or sexual orientation at this stage in their education. They did indicate however that in secondary school they wished that teachers had been more informed about how hurtful other students were to LGBTQ+ students. The younger group were more impacted by the support and engagement they had with PE teachers, coaches, and trainers including correct use of pronouns and names.

“My school is like literally like 1972. It's ridiculous. They don't know anything about LGBT and just ignore bullying, so you don't want to go to anyone when something happens”.

[Cis-female, bisexual, 16]

“I came out to my school, and they outed me to my parents. I was bawling my eyes out in the deputy Principal's office as she held the phone to my face and made me tell my parents. It was a shitshow. It was completely taken out of my hands. My school just didn't understand that it was my choice!”

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

“Sometimes teachers step in but most of the time they just think its messing. Like they wouldn't see it as a homophobic kind of thing. If I did say something they would just tell them to stop, and it would just go on.”

[Cis-male, gay, 16]

“Some teachers take it seriously, but I have mostly teachers that did just turn a blind eye to anything”.

[Trans-female, bisexual, 16]

“We have a teacher that just acts normal. There will be LGBTQ+ things that just pop up in class and it isn't a big thing, but there are other teachers that don't do that at all. I don't think they know much”.

[Cis-female, bisexual, 16]

“If someone is comfortable telling people, it would be nice for teachers to use their pronouns”

[Non-binary, bisexual, 16]

“Use your real name, and not your dead-name. It makes me sad and uncomfortable hearing my dead-name”.

[Trans-male, Gay, 15]

5.6 AWARENESS OF LOCAL SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Across both age groups students were only aware of the activity that they were currently engaged in. While participants expressed an interest in being more active, they would like to try new activities including, paddleboarding, kayaking, and canoeing. Dancing was also very positively mentioned by some of the younger group, but there was a general lack of awareness or dissatisfaction with the current provider. For university students balancing a social life and being physically active was also a challenge.

5.7 BARRIER & ENABLERS TO SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

The barriers and enablers which inhibit and facilitate sports participation of LGBTQ+ youths are almost universal. The evidence from the literature is borne out by the lived experiences of the university student participants.

“The big problem is the teacher would never be there to see the harassment, because if it were to happen, it would happen in the changing rooms, and they wouldn't be in the changing rooms with minors in PE class. I went to a same sex school. So, we just had all girls. I think they knew how hurtful. The language was. And that they shouldn't use it, but they didn't care. And that was just because of the culture around where I lived”.

“I find it tough getting down to the place. As well. like I used to go to my sport in a different county like every week, but I don't have that time to do that now so it's hard so it's also about the location and access to the sports that you want to be”

“Having the money is a challenge. Having to buy like appropriate kits or clothing or binders are very expensive stuff like that. Stuff that would make you feel comfortable in a sport setting and just money in general”.

“The gym clothes like, you know, you need to like have a big bum and stuff if you're a girl or to have muscles if you're a guy otherwise what are you doing? It's terrifying, especially for a non-binary person because they're looking at you are thinking, what you are doing”.

5.8 LIVED EXPERIENCES OF BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

The lived experiences of the study participants are replications of what was discovered in the literature. While there are some topics which are cross cutting the experiences of individuals who participated and shared is important as a record and as a reminder of the all-too-common challenges that was experienced across all participants.

“It's not safe! People can hurt you more during sport because it is an excuse because you are gay. It's like a place they can legitimately bully”.

[Non-binary, gay, 17]

"I used to like swimming, but I don't feel right in guys swimming suits, and I get called names and get embarrassed when I wear a t-shirt. I could never wear a swimming suit. I just stopped going".

[Trans-female, bisexual, 18]

"I don't like playing on all-boys teams. It's hostile. It's just not for me."

[Cis-male, Questioning, 17]

"Yeah, I find it toxic. All the guys are trying to impress the girls. I felt like I didn't fit in. I want to go back to it but there are a lot of things that just make me not want to do it. Maybe if I could play with the girls, I would feel better, but I don't know."

[Cis-male, gay, 15]

"There were two boys on the team that just laughed at me. I tried to be careful and not be too feminine, but it didn't make any difference, and this was in front of teachers. So, it just turned me off it."

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

"You always hear people calling people names like 'gay', 'fag', 'sissy', faggot'. It still happens. It doesn't matter where you are. They think it's just a laugh, but it isn't."

[Cis-female, bisexual, 16]

"I am good at running, and I like PE. If I tell someone that I'm gay, they'd be like, 'what, but you're good at PE?'. Like, it's a weird thing that people have in their brains that if you're gay, you can't even catch a ball. You see it on TV with gay men that hate that kind of thing and people just think that's what you are like".

[Cis-male Gay, 16]

5.9 MANAGEMENT OF BARRIERS BY SPORTS ORGANISATIONS AND FACILITIES

Participants felt very strongly that there was a lot that sports organisations and clubs could do to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ students. The display of the pride flag or poster would be a great start to show inclusivity. Organisations and facilities should have a displayed policy about their "LGBTQ+ Charter" and their zero tolerance of homophobic behaviour and language. Participants felt there was no consequence to bullying or homophobia.

Student said there could be a “LGBTQ+ Champion” in the facility or organisation (maybe the inclusion officer), who could oversee the implementation of the policy and ensure that LGBTQ+ students felt welcome and safe. Where there are more than two toilets, one could be assigned a gender neutral or non-binary facility. Similarly, to family changing rooms in swimming pools, one area with doors, which is private could be assigned as a non-binary changing space. This could be temporary or even during assigned sessions.

Above all student participants suggested that all public facing staff, coaches, trainers, and teachers should receive mandatory training. Particularly in secondary school it is not enough that the training is, when available, limited to PE teachers. If teachers, coaches, and trainings are to support the LGBTQ+ student they must have the correct language and the proper training.

“They need to have someone come in and speak to the teachers. They don’t have the right training or even know what to say. Like, LGBT is more common than people think, and we are just forgotten about”.

[Trans-male, Pansexual, 16]

5.10 ENABLERS OF MORE SPORTS PARTICIPATION

There were several generic enablers proposed by the study participants which can also be seen in other sections of the report (Section 4.4.3 and Section 5.9). Students suggested brighter lighting on pitches and walking tracks which they felt in general was safer than walking on the streets. They also felt it was important to have LGBTQ+ sports professionals visible in schools and sports facilities, this would show other student, that LGBTQ+ people can be successful in sports. When questioned specifically about what the Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership and the Southeast Technical University could do to promote sports participation in the two distinct groups, the following recommendations came from the third level students who were primarily focused on the gym, considering the other activity too competitive.

“It would really help if you had separation like different equipment for the different genders. and, like having a separate room for LGB or like trans people if they felt unsafe because it’s all glass up there it’s just like a big glass box”.

[University Student]

“I don’t think it would be necessary to have allocated time in the university gym for LGBTQ+ students, maybe like one more private room. Introverted and quiet people would gravitate more towards that room than it could have a kind of a multipurpose”.

[University Student]

“You know, the way like supermarkets do, like sensory friendly hours, I think if there was like say even an hour and a half session during the week that the gym would advertise as being LGBTQ+ inclusive. It would help people just to go in there, obviously other people could still go in. but just advertise it like that or so it's like even as this is slightly, we could organise ourselves to go in there together as a group if people were interested so that at least we would know there would be other people from the society would be there and they would like to know our pronouns. And I feel it would just be a safer space. Unlike, the gym wouldn't even have to contribute any additional costs to that”.

[University Student]

“I can imagine with non-competitive, non-gender team sports there would be a huge funding barrier because there's no funds for mixed gender teams. They only care about the big boys, the big leagues. Big sponsorship”.

[University Student]

In relation to proposed Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership activity several suggestions were made by the 13–18-year age group.

“A dedicated session at the swimming pool for LGBTQ+ people – where we could wear what we wanted and be safe”.

[Trans-female, bisexual, 16]

“It would be good if there were more teams for people starting out instead of trying to be at the same level as everyone else. Coaches don't seem to be interested in training new people. They just want the winners.”

[Non-binary, bisexual, 15]

“Group activity like paddleboarding or other water sports which are fun, and we could do as a group, trying new things like taster sessions would also be good, but certainly nothing competitive more like activity days”

[Cis-gender, Gay, 16]

6.0 INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

The integration of the quantitative and qualitative data in this mixed methods study suggests that those who have established competitive sporting skills and club support will continue to participate in sport throughout their teens and into their twenties. For our study participants this included field and track, pole vaulting, running, and martial arts. However, in this more competitive realm, personal confidence starts to play a more substantial role in participation, as does strength of performance.

When the findings from both data sets are compared it is evident that the qualitative narrative provided the participating students with an opportunity to explore their lived experiences. This provided stark and honest examples of the barriers faced by LGBTQ+ students who wish to participate in sports as outlined in the quantitative findings. One of the central barriers identified across both age groups was the challenge presented by the built environment in both schools and universities. Access to gender neutral bathrooms and changing rooms was cited in all aspects of the findings. This is also reflected in the literature and appears to be a barrier that could be easily addressed. While third level students have more access to nonbinary bathrooms and toilet facilities, additional barriers were raised by this group in relation to privacy. One transgender university student recalled being escorted to a staff toilet in secondary school, being the only female toilet available in the school, a situation which was described as equally unacceptable.

While there is evidence of a natural “teen fall off” in sports activity as teams become more competitive and students become more body conscience in general, there was an expressed desire to try new sports and physical activity “just for fun”. Swimming was cited as being very popular across both groups and in both qualitative and quantitative data. This activity also presented as one of the most challenging as it usually involved non-private undressing, revealing swimwear and the need for extra privacy measures, all which students felt could be accommodated in LGBTQ+ specific swimming groups.

Things which contribute to sports participation
Access to non-binary Facilities
Support from coaches
Competitive levels
Gender Orientation
Outness of student
Body Image
Confidence
Competitive level of participation
Barriers to Sports Participation
Harassment & Bullying
Assault & feeling unsafe.
Discrimination & exclusion
Homophobic peers and teachers
Lack of privacy
Lack of non-binary toilets and changing rooms
Clothing regulations and costs

Enablers of Sports Participation

Access to non-binary toilets & changing rooms.
Relaxed flexible sportswear policy.
LGBTQ+ trained teachers and coaches
Support and intervention to challenge discrimination.
Zero discrimination policy which is enforced.
Visual signs of inclusion / better lighting
LGBTQ+ specific activity
Sports / physical activity for fun and exercise

In conclusion the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative investigation mirrors the literature in the field, with almost universal experiences reported. While the sample is not statistically significant, data saturation was reached, and the researchers confirm that additional focus groups or a larger sample would not have yielded findings which were any more reliable or explanatory.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All the evidence recommends that a sports organisation or sports facilities can be considered LGBTQ+ inclusive if they have policies and practises in place to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have access to and feel safe and respected participating in sports. These policies must then be implemented. Some specific elements that can make a sports facility LGBTQ+ inclusive includes.

- Non-discriminatory policies that protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Inclusive language and signage, such as providing gender neutral bathrooms and changing room or providing private changing rooms.
- Staff and volunteers who are trained in LGBTQ+ inclusion and are responsive to the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals, including having the skills to intervene and support.
- Resources such as LGBTQ+ specific programming or sport groups, including inclusive programmes and activity
- A respectful and inclusive culture for all participates with zero policy of harassment and bullying.
- Accommodation of diverse gender expressions and identification.

It's also important to note that being LGBTQ+ inclusive is not a one-time action. It is a continuous effort, and it should be part of the overall culture in an education institute or a sports provider. While the Council of Europe (2019) reported on several positive developments in policy in member states in the last ten years (including Ireland), they also noted a distinct lack of implementation of these policies in some countries. Training and education are an important sustainable part of making sports activity and facilities more LGBTQ+ inclusive. This includes using appropriate language and having the skills to intervene when homophobic events are witnessed.

about the authors

Dr Debra. O Neill, PhD, M.B.A, MMII- Principal Consultant, has worked on complex multilevel change projects and research programs with several local and national organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sector. Debra's main areas of research interest include healthcare policy and reform, evidence-based practices, and transformative mixed methodologies particularly in social justice. Debra is an award-winning author who obtained her doctorate from the Faculty of Health Sciences, Trinity Centre for Practice and Healthcare Innovation, Trinity College Dublin, having received a coveted Trinity scholarship. She is currently a member of the Population Health and Behavioural Research Group, Trinity College Dublin (Project Lead). Debra is an Executive Board Member of the Mixed Methods International Research Association and founder of their European Chapter. She also holds a first-class MBA and is a certified EQi licensee and mediator.

Mx Dany Elamin, MS Psy, MA - Senior Researcher and Projects Manager, studied with King's University Aberdeen, primarily focusing on the fields of, Abnormal Psychology, Psychopharmacology, Social Psychology and Developmental Psychology. Their areas of research interests include gender and sexual identity, substance misuse, complex post-traumatic stress disorder and abnormal psychology. PRINC2 qualified, and previous Global Commercial Analyst in the corporate sector, Dany is also a Childline Counsellor and a Mentor to volunteers and has enjoyed this work for several years.

acknowledgements

The authors wish to acknowledge the support and cooperation of Mr. Seamus Nugent, Sports Inclusion Development Officer, Kilkenny Recreation and Sport Partnership. Thank you to the youth workers at Ossory Youth (Rita and Mike) and Foróige Kilkenny, in particularly Rebecca and Ciela. The researchers would also like to thank Theresa at Carlow Regional Youth Services, who facilitated access to the focus group participants in the Carlow area and to Dani Fly, Vice President for Welfare and Equality, South East Technical University who supported and facilitated the third level focus group. Finally, a massive thank you to the LGBTQ+ youth community across Carlow and Kilkenny who shared their lived experiences and knowledge with us, you were awesome. The participants were also responsible for the selection of the name for this report.

REFERENCES

- BELONG TO YOUTH SERVICES 2019. The 2019 School Climate Survey Key Findings. Dublin.
- BELONG TO YOUTH SERVICES 2022. The 2022 School Climate Survey Key Findings. Dublin: BelonG
- BRAUMÜLLER, B. & SCHLUNSK, T. 2022. Theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches for studying LGBTQ+ experiences in sport. In: HARTMANN-TEWS, I. (ed.) *Sorts, Identity and Inclusion in Europe The experience of LGBTQ+ People in Sport*. Routledge.
- CALZO, J. P., ROBERTS, A. L., CORLISS, H. L., BLOOD, E. A., KROSHUS, E. & AUSTIN, S. B. 2013. Physical Activity Disparities in Heterosexual and Sexual Minority Youth Ages 12–22 Years Old: Roles of Childhood Gender Nonconformity and Athletic Self-Esteem. *The Society of Behavioural Medicine*, 47, 27.
- CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE. 2016. *Census of Population 2016 Profile 3 An Age Profile Ireland* [Online]. Available: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp3oy/cp3/assr/> [Accessed 2022].
- CLARKE, C. M., KOSCIW, J. G. & CHIN, J. 2021. LGBTQ+ Students and School Sports Participation Research Brief. New York: GLSEN Research Institute.
- COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2019. Combating discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in council of Europe member states. *A review of the recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the committee of ministers*.
- DEFOOR, M. T., STEPLEMAN, L. M. & MANN, P. C. 2018. Improving Wellness for LGB Collegiate Student-athletes through sports medicine: a narrative review *Sports Medicine Open*, 4, 48.
- DENISON, E., BEVAN, N. & JEANES, R. 2021a. Reviewing evidence of LGBTQ+ discrimination and exclusion in sports. *Sports Management Review*, 24, 389-409.
- DENISON, E., JEANES, R., FAULKNER, N. & O'BRIEN, K. 2021b. The Relationship Between 'Coming Out' as Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual and Experiences of Homophobic Behaviour in Youth Team Sports. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 18, 765-773.
- DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS 2018. LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020: LGBTI+ young people: visible, valued and included. Dublin.
- DOULL, M., WATSON, R., SMITH, A., HOMMA, Y. & SAEWYC, E. 2018. Are we levelling the playing field? Trends and disparities in sports participation among sexual minority youth in Canada. *Journal of Sports and Health Science*, 218-216.
- EDWARDS-LEEPER, L., LEIBOWITZ, S. & SANGGANJANAVANICH 2016. Affirmative Practice With Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Youth: Expanding the Model. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 3, 165-172.
- ENGLEFIELD, L. 2012. *LGBT inclusion in Sports*, Brussels Council of Europe.

- GLEN GAY AND LESBIAN EQUALITY NETWORK 2016. Being LGBT in School A Resource for Post-Primary Schools to Prevent Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying and Support LGBT Students. Dublin: GLEN.
- GREENSPAN, S., GRIFFITH, C., HAYES, C. & MURTAGH, E. F. 2019a. LGBTQ+ and ally youths' school athletics perceptions: a mixed methods analysis. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 16, 403-434.
- GREENSPAN, S., GRIFFITH, C. & MURTAGH, E. F. 2017. LGBTQ+ Youths' School Athletic Experiences: A 40-Year Content Analysis in Nine Flagship Journals. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counselling*, 11, 190-200.
- GREENSPAN, S., GRIFFITH, C. & WATSON, R. 2019b. LGBTQ+ youth's experiences and engagement in physical activity: A comprehensive content analysis. *Adolescent Research Review*, 4, 169-185.
- HIDALGO, M. A., EHRENSAFT, D., TISHELMAN, A. C., CLARK, L. F., GAROFALO, R., ROSENTHAL, S. M., SPACK, N. P. & OLSON, J. 2013. The Gender Affirmative Model: What We Know and What We Aim to Learn. *Human Development*, 56, 285-290.
- KOSCIW, J. G., CLARK, C. M. & MENARD, L. 2022. The 2021 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in our nation's schools. New York: Glsen Research Institute.
- KULICK, A., WERNICK, L., MARIO ALBERTO V. ESPINOZA, NEWMAN, T. J. & DESSE, A. B. 2018. Three strikes and you're out: culture, facilities, and participation among LGBTQ+ youth in sports. *Sports, Education and Society*, 24, 939-953.
- KURIAKOSE, F. & IYER, D. K. 2020. LGBT Rights and Theoretical Perspectives In: HARTMANN-TEWS, I. (ed.) *Sorts , Identity and Inclusion in Europe The experience of LGBTQ+ People in Sport*. Routledge.
- KURIAKOSE, F. & KYLASAM, D. 2020. LGBT Rights and Theoretical Perspectives. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedias*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MELTON, E. N. & CUNNINGHAM, G. B. 2014. Who Are the Champions? Using a Multilevel Model to Examine Perceptions of Employee Support for LGBT Inclusion in Sport Organizations. 28, 189-206.
- MENVIELLE, E. & HILL, D. 2010. An Affirmative Intervention for Families with Gender-Variant Children: A Process Evaluation. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 15.
- MENZEL, T., BRAUMÜLLER, B. & HARTMANN-TEWS 2019. The relevance of sexual orientation and gender identity in sport in Europe. Findings from the Outport survey. Cologne: German Sports University, Institute of Sociology and Gender Studies.
- OECD 2019. Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- OIREACHTAS LIBRARY & RESEARCH SERVICE 2019. LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IN IRELAND A STATISTICAL PROFILE. Dublin: Houses of the Oireachtas.

- SHAREK, D. B. 2018. The design, development, and evaluation of an education programme for families of trans young people : a community-based participatory research study / Danika Burke Sharek.
- SYMONS, C. M., O’SULLIVAN, G., BORKOLES, E., ANDERSEN, M. B. & POLMAN, R. C. 2014. The impact of homophobic bullying during sport and physical education participation on same-sex-attracted and gender-diverse young Australians ‘depression and anxiety levels The Equal Play Study. <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bw0236.pdf?%20sfvrsn=2>.
- THE TREJOR PROJECT 2020. The Trevor Project Research Brief: LGBTQ Youth Sports Participation. New York.
- TORRANCE, H. 2022. Policies of inclusion and experiences of LGBTQ people in sports in the UK. In: HARTMANN-TEWS, I. (ed.) *Sport, Identity and Inclusion in Europe, The experiences of LGBTQ People in Sport*. London: Routledge Research in Sport, Culture and Society.

REFERENCES FOR GLOSSARY

Glossary references Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>. Accessed 23 Jan. 2023

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: DEBRIEF SHEET 13-18 YEARS



PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF SHEET

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. We understand that some of the information we have discussed may have been sensitive. If any issues emerged because of participation, please do not hesitate to reach out for support.

Below are contact details of support groups which may be able to support.

National LGBT Helpline: 1800 929 539,

LGBT Ireland: 01 685 9280, www.info@lgbt.ie

LGBT Ireland Instant Messaging Support Service: <https://lgbt.ie/instant-messaging-support-service/>

LGBTI+ Telefriending Service: 01 437 1209, www.lgbt.ie/telefriending

BeLonG To: 01 670 6223, www@belongto.org

BeLonG To 24/7 Anonymous Test Support: Text LGBTI+ to 0861800 280

Jigsaw: www.jigsaw.ie/help

Your Mental Health: www.yourmentalhealth.ie

Childline (for those ages 18 and under): 1800 11 11, www.childline.org.uk

The Samaritans 24-hour helpline 116123, www.samaritans.org

If you ever feel like your life is in danger, please phone 999, or visit your nearest A&E for assistance.



PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF SHEET

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. We understand that some of the information we have discussed may have been sensitive. If any issues emerged because of participation, please do not hesitate to reach out for support.

Contact the Student Services Offices to Book and Appointment: 059 9175600 or email counselling.cw@setu.ie.

Below are further contact details of groups which may be able to support.

National LGBT Helpline: 1800 929 539,

LGBT Ireland: 01 685 9280, www.info@lgbt.ie, LGBT Ireland Instant Messaging Support Service: <https://lgbt.ie/instant-messaging-support-service/>

BeLonG To: 01 670 6223, [www@belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org), & 24/7 Anonymous Test Support: Text LGBTI+ to 0861800 280

Jigsaw: www.jigsaw.ie/help

Your Mental Health: www.yourmentalhealth.ie

Childline (for those ages 18 and under): 1800 11 11, www.childline.org.uk

The Samaritans 24-hour helpline 116123, www.samaritans.org

If you ever feel like your life is in danger, please phone 999, or visit your nearest A&E for assistance.

all participation is confidential and no individual will be identified



Having your say.....

LGBTQ+



SPORTS

PARTICIPATION

Are you aged between 12-24?
We would like to hear your views on
sports & physical activity participation



Survey takes 5 minutes and your views are really
important . Please scan QR Code



LinkAge Consultancy
Linking People, Practice & Policy



KRSP

**KILKENNY RECREATION
& SPORTS PARTNERSHIP**
— SPORT IRELAND —



PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT: LGBTQ+ Sports Participation Research

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Debra O’Neill, Principal Consultant, Linkage Consultancy, Ireland

RESEARCHERS: Mx Dany El Amin;

Data Controller: Dr. Debra O’Neill, Linkage Consultancy

Data Processors: Dr. Debra O’Neill; Mx. Dany El Amin

General

Thank you for choosing to participate in this research project which is being carried out by Linkage Consultancy on behalf of Kilkenny Recreation & Sport Partnership (KRSP).

The study is designed to capture the experiences of members of the LGBTQ+ group in sports and physical activities and, to understand what KRSP and South East Technical University can do to improve the experience and help to increase participation in sports and physical activities for members of the LGBTQ+ group. The research will consist of a 40 – 60-minute focus group with your members, followed by a short survey which will either be presented in hard copy or in the form of a on-line.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participants may decide to withdraw at any time during the focus group. You don't have to give a reason for not taking part.

No information will be collected or saved which could potentially reveal your identity. All data is collected and analysed anonymously in compliance with GDPR.

Funding

This research is being funded by the Kilkenny Recreation Sports Partnership in association with Sports Ireland and in partnership with the South East Technical University.

Further Information

If you have any concerns or questions, you can contact:

- Principal Consultant: Dr. Debra O’Neill, debra@linkage.ie
- Senior Researcher: Mx. Dany El Amin, dany@linkage.ie

APPENDIX 5 WORK PACKAGE SEARCH STRINGS

Work Package 1: Sexual Orientation

PubMed (Medline) (AB "LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male")

Cinahl (Cinahl Headings) (AB "LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male"

PsycINFO (PsycInfo Descriptors) AB "LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male"

Keyword Search of non-controlled vocabulary

"LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male"

Work Package 2: Population

PubMed (Medline) (AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children" OR "young person" OR "student*")

Cinahl (Cinahl Headings) (AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children" OR "young person" OR "student*")

PsycINFO (PsycInfo Descriptors) AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children" OR "young person" OR "student*")

Keyword Search of non-controlled vocabulary

AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children" OR "young person" OR "student*")

Work Package 3: Activities

PubMed (Medline) (AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*")

Cinahl (Cinahl Headings) (AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*")

PsycINFO (PsycInfo Descriptors) AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*")

Keyword Search of non-controlled vocabulary

AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*")

Database	Terms	Results	Totals	
PubMed (Medline)	S1: AB ("LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male")	7,568		
	S2: AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children OR "young person" OR "student*"	396,963		
	S3: AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*"	265,189		
	S4: S1 AND S2	1,357		
	S5: S3 and S4	19		
	S11: 2002- To Present	19		
	S12: English Language	19	19	

Database	Terms	Results	Totals	
Cinahl	S1: AB ("LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male")	5,179		
	S2: AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children OR "young person" OR "student*"	166,503		
	S3: AB "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*"	113,903		
	S4: S1 AND S2	676		
	S8: S3 AND S4	12		
	1980- To Present	12		
	English Language	12	12	

Database	Terms	Results	Totals	
PsycINFO	S1: AB ("LGBTQ+" OR "lesbian*" OR "gay*") OR "homosexual" OR "bisexual" OR "bi-sexual" OR "transgender" OR "queer" OR "sexual minority" OR "transsexual" OR "transsexual female" OR "transsexual male")	17,499		

	S2: AB "young adult*" OR "teenager*" OR "teen" OR "adolescent*" OR "youth" OR "young people" OR "children OR "young person" OR "student*"	335,553	
	S3: "Sport*" OR "physical activity" OR "physical exercise" OR "physical training" OR "physical education" OR "PE" OR "sport or physical activity" OR "GAA" OR "sports clubs" OR "sports team*"	82,854	
	S1 AND S2	2,526	
	S3 AND S4	23	
	2002- Present	21	
	English	21	21
Database	Terms	Results	Totals
International Journal of Sports Physical Therapy	Via PubMed	N/A	N/a

