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1 **What Do We Know About the Sporting Experiences of Gender and**  
2 **Sexual Minority Athletes and Coaches? A Scoping Review**

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11 **What do we know about the sporting experiences of gender and sexual**  
12 **minority athletes and coaches? A scoping review**

13 Scholarship on gender and sexual diversity in sport has advanced during the last  
14 decade and it is nowadays recognised that we need a better understanding of how  
15 to facilitate inclusive sport cultures that allow all people to participate as  
16 themselves. The purpose of this scoping review was to map research activity on  
17 the sporting experiences of gender and sexual minority (GSM) athletes and  
18 coaches, identify gaps in the literature and provide suggestions for future  
19 research, policy and practice. Our literature search in four different databases  
20 yielded 58 relevant studies. Based on their focal areas, five dominant  
21 interconnected themes were identified: (1) identity, (2) discrimination, (3)  
22 coming out, (4) the body and (5) strategies for social change. More research is  
23 needed on bisexual, transgender and intersex athletes, on GSM coaches and  
24 junior athletes, as well as on the intersection of gender and sexuality with other  
25 identities and social categories of difference. Combining anti-discrimination  
26 policy implementation with gender and sexual diversity education for all those  
27 involved in sport could lead to positive changes in some of the issues that GSM  
28 athletes and coaches face in sport.

29 Keywords: diversity; gender identity; LGBTIQ; sexuality; sport

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## 39 **Introduction**

40 Gender and sexual minorities (GSM) are ‘individuals who identify with a gender  
41 identity other than cisgender and/or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual’  
42 (Smalley, Warren, & Barefoot, 2018, p. 9). The term cisgender is used to describe  
43 people whose gender identity matches the sex that they were assigned at birth  
44 (American Psychological Association, 2015). Historically, GSM individuals have been  
45 relegated to the margins of our sporting cultures and their experiences have been  
46 underrepresented in the sport literature (Krane, 2019). This has been well documented  
47 by Brackenridge and her colleagues (2008), who reviewed the scholarship on sexual  
48 orientation in sport and found substantial gaps in what we know about the experiences  
49 of GSM people in sport. Particularly, the authors found that bisexual and transgender  
50 identities were underrepresented in sport research and there was limited knowledge on  
51 how anti-discrimination policies were implemented by sport clubs and organisations, as  
52 well as what was the impact of homophobia and transphobia on athletes and coaches  
53 (Brackenridge et al., 2008). Yet, over the decade following the Brackenridge et al.  
54 (2008) review, scholarship on GSM in sport has increased (e.g. Kokkonen, 2014; Krane,  
55 2019; Linghede & Larsson, 2017). Researchers have explored a variety of issues, such  
56 as attitudes towards gender and sexual diversity in sport (Anderson & Adams, 2011;  
57 Magrath, Anderson, & Roberts, 2013; Piedra, García-Pérez, & Channon, 2017), media  
58 coverage and online comments about GSM athletes and coaches (Coche & Le Blond,  
59 2018; Kian, Anderson, & Shipka, 2015), and the development and complexities of  
60 sport-related, GSM-inclusive events, spaces, programmes and policies (Caudwell, 2018;  
61 Shaw, 2018).

62         While some of these studies reveal an attitudinal shift towards greater  
63 inclusiveness in the Western sporting world (Anderson & Adams, 2011; Kian et al.,

64 2015; Magrath et al., 2013), others have found persistent prejudice, homophobia, and  
65 transphobia in sport (Coche & Le Blond, 2018; Hargie, Mitchell, & Somerville, 2017),  
66 often under the cover of a ‘pseudo-inclusive’ climate (Piedra et al., 2017, p. 1023). For  
67 example, derogatory humour targeted at gay people continues to exist in sporting  
68 cultures (Coche & Le Blonde, 2018) and transgender people continue to be excluded  
69 from sport in multiple ways (Hargie et al., 2017). Consequently, GSM people are more  
70 likely to avoid participation in organised sport (Doull, Watson, Smith, Homma, &  
71 Saewyc, 2018). Some scholars have also argued that, owing to their marginalised status,  
72 GSM athletes have higher rates of substance use (Veliz, Boyd, & McCabe, 2016) and  
73 are at higher risk for mental health problems (Kroshus & Davoren, 2016) than their  
74 heterosexual counterparts.

75         Understanding how to facilitate inclusive sporting environments is important, as  
76 the numbers of ‘out’ athletes and coaches are now higher than ever before (Krane,  
77 2019). Through providing better support and enhancing visibility for GSM athletes and  
78 coaches, we can establish sport cultures of openness and respect for everyone (Krane &  
79 Barber, 2019). This scoping review was conducted in order to provide an updated  
80 overview of the empirical scholarship on GSM experiences in sport. The aims were: (1)  
81 to describe the current state of the evidence-based knowledge, (2) to identify gaps in the  
82 literature, and (3) to provide recommendations for future research, policy and practice.  
83 Our scoping review was guided by the question: *What do we know about the sporting*  
84 *experiences of GSM athletes and coaches?* As noted recently by the International  
85 Olympic Committee consensus statement (Mountjoy et al., 2016), the experiences of  
86 GSM athletes remain largely unknown. To the best of our knowledge, even less interest  
87 has been shown in the experiences of GSM coaches, even though it is recognised that  
88 they play a key role in destabilising heteronormativity in sport (Kauer, 2009). As far as

89 we know, research on GSM athletes and coaches has not been comprehensively  
90 reviewed in recent years. Other scholars have reviewed the literature on GSM adults'  
91 engagement in physical activity (Herrick & Duncan, 2018) and on trans persons'  
92 experiences in physical activity and sport (Jones, Arcelus, Bouman, & Haycraft, 2017;  
93 Pérez-Samaniego, Fuentes-Miguel, Pereira-García, López-Cañada, & Devís-Devís,  
94 2018).

## 95 **Methodology**

96 In this scoping review, we followed the framework outlined by Arksey and O'Malley  
97 (2005) as it enables the comprehensive coverage of a body of scholarship as compared  
98 to other types of review (e.g. systematic reviews) that tend to focus on a narrow range  
99 of quality-defined studies and/or on particular study designs or methods. The Arksey  
100 and O'Malley (2005) framework comprises five phases: (1) identifying the research  
101 question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data and  
102 (5) collating, summarising, and reporting the results. In this review, we also considered  
103 methodological enhancements (e.g. the clarification of key terms described in detail  
104 below) proposed elsewhere (Daudt, van Mossel, & Scott, 2013; Levac, Heather, &  
105 O'Brien, 2010; Pham et al., 2014).

### 106 ***Identifying the research question***

107 As recommended by Levac and colleagues (2010), we used a broad research question  
108 combined with clear definitions of the concepts and study populations of relevance to  
109 this study. As previously stated, the question that guided our work was: *What do we*  
110 *know about the sporting experiences of GSM athletes and coaches?* In line with other  
111 feminist scholars (e.g. Scott, 1992), we see the project of making experience visible as a  
112 way of breaking the silence that has been enforced to GSM people in sport and exposing

113 (and showing the impact of) the challenges that they face due to heteronormativity.  
114 Since the Arksey and O'Malley (2005) methodology requires the identification of all  
115 the relevant literature regardless of the study design, we did not limit this review to any  
116 specific epistemological, theoretical or methodological approach. The umbrella term  
117 GSM was also purposefully selected as it includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and  
118 queer (LGBTQ) people and other lesser-studied minority groups, such as gaie (Ravel &  
119 Rail, 2006) and two-spirited (Jacobs, Thomas, & Lang, 1997). However, we use the  
120 term minority with reservations, not wishing to normalise hetero- and cisnormativity,  
121 but referring primarily to the unequal distribution of power and resources. On the issue  
122 of who counts as an athlete or coach, participants had to be described either directly as  
123 such by the authors of the original publications or as having participated in sport  
124 competitions or sport leagues.

### 125 ***Identifying relevant studies***

126 After identifying the research question and clarifying the key terms, we searched for  
127 relevant studies in four different electronic databases (ScienceDirect, SPORTDiscus  
128 with Full Text, PsycINFO, and ERIC) using the terms '(sexual minority OR gender  
129 minority OR LGBT\* OR gay OR homosexual OR lesbian OR bisexual OR transgender  
130 OR queer) AND (athlet\* OR sport\* OR coach\*)'. Owing to limited resources, we  
131 restricted our search to peer-reviewed, empirical journal articles written in English. In  
132 addition to the database search, we hand-searched the reference lists of 13 relevant  
133 papers (e.g. Anderson & Bullingham, 2015; Caudwell, 2014; Klein, Paule-Koba, &  
134 Krane, 2018; Ravel & Rail, 2008). The search for articles lasted from June 14 to  
135 October 23, 2018. As suggested by Daudt and colleagues (2013), all the references were  
136 imported into the web-based bibliographic manager RefWorks, which helped us to

137 remove duplicate citations.

### 138 *Study selection*

139 The selection process is shown in Figure 1 using a PRISMA flowchart (Moher et al.,  
140 2009). As in Pham et al. (2014), we used a two-level screening process to select studies  
141 for inclusion in this review. The first level consisted of screening the titles and abstracts  
142 of the identified papers. During this phase, we independently read 200 abstracts and (as  
143 suggested by Levac et al., 2010) met frequently to discuss and refine our decisions  
144 regarding the inclusion criteria, which were the following: in addition to being  
145 empirical, peer-reviewed journal articles published in English, studies had to focus on  
146 organised sport contexts. Thus, studies on leisure or physical education were excluded.  
147 Also, studies had to be based on personal accounts (e.g. interviews, narratives, stories,  
148 or surveys) given by GSM athletes or coaches. Consequently, participants had to self-  
149 identify as GSM and be described as athletes (elite or recreational, active or retired) or  
150 sport coaches, or as having competed in sport, or as having played in a sports league.  
151 Studies in which the participants' self-identification or sport role was not clear were not  
152 included (e.g. Cavalier, 2011; Johansson, 2018). However, studies on mixed samples  
153 (e.g. athletes and non-athletes, GSM and non-GSM populations) were included. We  
154 excluded studies based on the accounts or texts of others (heterosexual and cisgender  
155 athletes, coaches, parents, journalists, fans, and policy makers) in such domains as  
156 media and social-media studies and studies on attitudes towards gender and sexual  
157 diversity in sport. Although important, such studies do not necessarily include first-hand  
158 accounts of the experiences, perspectives, or points of view of GSM athletes or coaches.  
159 Finally, we excluded studies that did not focus on subjects' experiences per se, but  
160 instead assessed the health (mental or physical) or health behaviour (e.g. substance use,



161 motivation to participate in sport and exercise) of GSM individuals.

162           The second level of the screening process consisted of obtaining and reviewing  
163 the full texts of the articles deemed relevant after the screening of titles and abstracts.  
164 Full texts were initially read by the first author. In eight cases where the eligibility  
165 decision was difficult, the full texts were read independently by both authors who then  
166 met to discuss whether to include them or not.

### 167 *Charting the data*

168 All citations identified as relevant for inclusion were imported into Microsoft Excel.  
169 These articles were then read in full and assigned thematic codes according to the  
170 research focus. In addition to the thematic codes, the following data were charted on the  
171 Excel worksheet: author(s), year of publication, geographical location, study  
172 populations, sport context, methodological approach, theoretical framework, and  
173 important results (Table 1). The thematic codes were then grouped into primary themes  
174 that were subsequently used to organise, summarise and report the results. In the results  
175 section, we first describe the general characteristics of the included studies. Second, we  
176 present summaries of the primary thematic areas identified in the studies. At the end of  
177 this paper, we identify gaps in the literature and discuss the implications of these results  
178 for research, policy and practice.

### 179 **Results**

180 As shown in Figure 1, the database search generated 4 228 references. After omitting  
181 duplicates, 2 037 references remained for screening. To these, we added 22 papers that  
182 we identified in the reference lists of relevant articles. The first screening phase (reading  
183 titles and abstracts) yielded 176 articles for the second screening phase (reading full  
184 texts). Of these, 58 articles met our inclusion criteria (Table 1).

185           The earliest studies, focusing on lesbian athletes, were published by Krane  
186 (1997) and Riemer (1997) in the *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal*. More  
187 than half (34/58) of the studies were published after the Brackenridge et al. (2008)  
188 review. Methodologically, the dominant approach was qualitative and most frequently  
189 utilised interview data. Various theoretical frameworks and perspectives were  
190 employed, such as feminist standpoint theory (Bowell, 2011), poststructuralist and  
191 queer theories (Butler, 1990; Sykes, 2006), cultural studies (Fisher, Roper, & Butryn,  
192 2009), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), transfeminism (Enke, 2012), Anderson's  
193 (2009) theory of inclusive masculinity, Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic  
194 masculinity, and social identity theory (Krane & Barber, 2003). Lesbian athletes were  
195 the most commonly studied GSM population. Geographically, most of the studies were  
196 from the USA, UK, Canada and Australia. Various sporting contexts were investigated,  
197 the commonest being collegiate sports and women's soccer. Five primary themes were  
198 identified in the literature. Researchers have studied: (1) identity (i.e. the selves and  
199 subjectivities of GSM athletes and coaches), (2) discrimination (i.e. whether GSM  
200 athletes and coaches experience negative attitudes and stereotypes, and/or violence,  
201 harassment, and abuse), (3) coming out (i.e. experiences of disclosing GSM identities in  
202 sport), (4) the body (i.e. how social ideals about the body are linked to the experiences  
203 of GSM individuals in sport), and (5) strategies for social change (i.e. strategies for  
204 resisting and changing heteronormativity in sport). Below, we describe these areas of  
205 research and what they reveal about the experiences of GSM athletes and coaches. It is  
206 noteworthy that these content areas are interconnected and that many of the reviewed  
207 studies address more than one of the themes described below.

208 ***Identity***

209 The identities, selves, and subjectivities of GSM athletes and coaches was the most  
210 studied content area, accounting for 27 (47%) of the identified articles. With the  
211 exception of two quantitative (Higgs & Schell, 1998; Krane, Barber, & McClung, 2002)  
212 and two mixed method articles (Caudwell, 1999; Stewart, Oates, & O'Halloran, 2018),  
213 these studies were qualitative in nature and mostly focused on non-heterosexual women  
214 in sport. Various understandings of identity were adopted by different scholars, those  
215 drawing on poststructuralist and queer theories emphasising the fluidity of identity (e.g.  
216 Semerjian & Cohen, 2006), those drawing on feminist standpoint theory viewing gender  
217 and sexual identities as fixed (e.g. Krane, 1997) and those drawing on social identity  
218 theory viewing identity as the product of perceived membership in a social group (e.g.  
219 Kauer & Krane, 2006).

220         Several scholars explored women's teams as spaces that contribute to the  
221 development of same-sex relationships and lesbian identities (Davis-Delano, 2014;  
222 Mennesson & Clement, 2003; Riemer, 1997; Sanders, 2015; Shire, Brackenridge, &  
223 Fuller, 2000). In these studies, lesbian identity was understood as a construct that could  
224 be discovered or acted out in women's sports, as the social atmosphere of women's  
225 teams involves accepting, protecting, and even celebrating lesbian relationships and  
226 identities (Sanders, 2015). These studies framed sport as an empowering context for  
227 non-heterosexual women. For example, Higgs and Schell (1998) reported that lesbian  
228 Alaskan recreational softball players were silent about their homosexual identities in  
229 their workplaces but felt comfortable expressing their sexual orientation in the softball  
230 context. More recently, McGannon, Schinke, Ge, and Blodgett (2018) found boxing to  
231 be an inclusive context for GSM female athletes in Canada, allowing for the expression  
232 of a variety of sexual identities. Participation in the Gay Games was also found to be an

233 empowering experience with a positive impact on social identity (Krane et al., 2002;  
234 Lambert, 2009).

235         Other studies reported that negative stereotypes associated with a lesbian  
236 identity are a concern for many sporting women (Caudwell, 1999; Cox & Thompson,  
237 2001; Fynes & Fisher, 2016; Kauer & Krane, 2006; Krane, 1997). For example,  
238 Caudwell (1999) found that the butch lesbian label worries female athletes in the UK.  
239 According to Kauer and Krane (2006), homophobia affects all athletes regardless of  
240 their sexual orientation. Lesbian athletes might try to pass as heterosexual, and  
241 heterosexual athletes might try to disassociate themselves from lesbian teammates (Cox  
242 & Thompson, 2001; Krane, 1997). The homophobic nature of sport was also found by  
243 Krane and Barber (2005), who studied the identity tensions of lesbian coaches in the  
244 USA. Owing to the heterosexist climate prevalent in their professional contexts, the  
245 participants concealed their lesbian identities to some degree. While at times they found  
246 subtle ways to counter the heterosexist atmosphere in their sporting contexts, at other  
247 times they ended up reproducing the dominant social norms. The lesbian athletes  
248 studied by Fynes and Fisher (2016) also felt unable to be completely authentic in all  
249 spheres of their lives and had to negotiate their identities depending on the context.

250         A few scholars also examined the hierarchies between different minority  
251 identities. Walker and Melton (2015) studied the intersection of race, gender and sexual  
252 orientation and found that women with multiple marginalised identities may be viewed  
253 as a threat to the hypermasculine, heterosexist norms of intercollegiate sports. Similarly,  
254 Melton and Cunningham (2012) explored the experiences of lesbian and bisexual  
255 athletes of colour and found that in the sporting context certain aspects of an athlete's  
256 identity (i.e. sexual orientation) were less valued than others (i.e. athletic identity, race).  
257 Caudwell (2007) explored femme, butch and trans identities in an 'out' lesbian soccer

258 team in the UK. Based on ethnographic data, the author argued that while lesbian-  
259 identified teams challenge the heteronormativity of football spaces, hierarchies between  
260 different gender and sexual identities nevertheless exist, privileging certain players (e.g.  
261 femme lesbians) and marginalising others (butch lesbians). Similarly, Ravel and Rail  
262 (2006, 2007) and Drury (2011) drew on feminist poststructuralist theory to explore how  
263 subjectivity was constituted through discourses and social practices and how non-  
264 heterosexual female athletes positioned themselves along several discourses of sport,  
265 gender and sexuality. Participants in these studies constructed their sporting contexts as  
266 spaces of resistance to heteronormativity and homophobia. While a light version of  
267 lesbian sexuality was celebrated as a new norm, participants reproduced discourses that  
268 maintained the pre-existing hierarchical relations between certain identities (e.g.  
269 marginalise butch femininity; Rail, 2006, 2007).

270         While the identity tensions of cisgender non-heterosexual women have been  
271 widely researched, very few scholars have addressed the identity issues of other GSM  
272 individuals in sport. In an autoethnographic study, Carless (2012) found that a gay male  
273 athlete identity is viewed as disrupting the heterosexist culture of sport rather than as a  
274 product of it (as has been claimed for lesbian identities). Filiault and Drummond (2008)  
275 also considered the identity tensions of gay male athletes who experience the  
276 masculine/sporting body and their identities as male athletes as in conflict with the gay  
277 body and their identities as gay. Four studies investigated trans identities in sport  
278 (Cohen & Semerjian, 2008; Lucas-Carr & Krane, 2012; Semerjian & Cohen, 2006;  
279 Stewart et al., 2018). Lucas-Carr and Krane (2012) argued that transgender athletes'  
280 gender identity is constantly under negotiation. Stewart and colleagues (2018) found  
281 voice of central importance for trans women's identities and their integration in sporting  
282 settings. Using interviews, Semerjian and Cohen (2006) studied the multiple ways that

283 transgender athletes' gender identities were informed by and influenced their sport  
284 participation. The authors highlighted the critical concern of trans individuals 'to be  
285 recognised as they perceive themselves to be' (p. 41). Cohen and Semerjian (2008) also  
286 explored the experiences of one male-to-female transgender athlete's disqualification  
287 from an ice-hockey competition. The authors saw as problematic the ways through  
288 which decisions about this athlete's identity were ultimately 'left in the hands of the  
289 legal and medical community' (p. 138).

### 290 *Discrimination*

291 Several authors explored whether GSM athletes and coaches experience different types  
292 of discrimination (from negative attitudes and stereotypes, to violence, harassment, and  
293 abuse). This theme was predominant in 13 (22%) articles. Two of them were  
294 quantitative (Kokkonen, 2019; Vertommen et al., 2016), two employed a mixed  
295 methods approach (Hekma, 1998; Symons, O'Sullivan, & Polman, 2017), and the  
296 remainder employed qualitative designs. The majority of the studies were based on the  
297 accounts of non-heterosexual women and men, with the exception of two articles that  
298 discussed the experiences of transgender people in sport (Cohen & Semerjian, 2008;  
299 Tagg, 2012).

300         The earliest study (Krane, 1997) focused on the negative and discriminative  
301 attitudes experienced by lesbian collegiate athletes. According to Krane (1997) the  
302 lesbian label in sport is associated with negative stereotypes and is used to marginalise  
303 players who do not conform to gender norms. The interviewed lesbian athletes felt  
304 powerless to challenge these negative stereotypes and, to avoid prejudice and  
305 discrimination, often concealed their sexual orientation. Hekma (1998) reported  
306 resembling findings; most gay men and lesbians in organised sports in the Netherlands

307 kept silent about their sexual orientation, fearing that they might face discrimination if  
308 they came out. Similarly, gay male team sport athletes interviewed by Anderson (2002)  
309 disclosed a culture of silence and invisibility surrounding gay athleticism. They reported  
310 an absence of physical harassment or formal bans against gay athletes but a strong  
311 presence of homophobic discourses that were used to discredit homosexuality. Such  
312 subtle everyday inequalities were also experienced by female lesbian coaches in the  
313 UK, whose inferiorisation was strongly linked to the structural conditions prevailing in  
314 their sporting spaces (Norman, 2012, 2013). Norman (2013) argued that the problem  
315 centres on the lack of sociocultural and social justice education for coaches, the  
316 ‘absence of any strategic direction, action or guidance from the governing bodies at a  
317 national level’ (p. 1332), and other structural practices that ignore male privilege and  
318 homophobia. In this heterosexist working environment, lesbian coaches felt that they  
319 were treated as paedophiles and predators (because of their sexual orientation), and as  
320 less capable coaches (because of their gender). Fletcher (2014) studied the experiences  
321 of LGBTQ sporting people in Australia, foregrounding the role of language in processes  
322 of inclusion and exclusion in sport.

323         Extreme homophobic sentiment affected the experiences of lesbian and gay  
324 athletes in the Muslim context of Tunisia (Hamdi, Lachheb, & Anderson, 2016, 2017),  
325 where homosexual athletes seemed to fear the social stigma of homosexuality and lived  
326 in a culture of silence. Tagg (2012) examined the lived experiences of two male-to-  
327 female transgender netballers in New Zealand. The author argued that, in theory, the  
328 netball context is now less transphobic than it used to be and that gender-conforming  
329 female transgender players have a range of choices about how they can engage in  
330 competitive netball. However, the barriers remain enormous since transgender players  
331 are required to prove their eligibility to compete in one of the two gender categories by

332 undergoing various medical and bureaucratic procedures (see also Cohen & Semerjian,  
333 2008). For those who do not conform to the gender binary (i.e. gender-transforming  
334 transgender players) there still appears to be no possibility to openly participate  
335 anywhere (Tagg, 2012).

336 Vertommen et al. (2016) surveyed over 4 000 adults from the Netherlands and  
337 Belgium about their childhood experiences of organised sport. LGB athletes reported  
338 significantly more experiences of interpersonal violence than their heterosexual  
339 counterparts. A few scholars also studied the impact of discrimination experienced in  
340 sport on the well-being of GSM individuals (Kokkonen, 2019; Symons et al., 2017).  
341 Symons and colleagues (2017) surveyed 294 non-heterosexual sporting people in  
342 Australia and found that participants experienced sexism and homophobia, with women  
343 reporting more experiences of sexism and men reporting more homophobic events. The  
344 most often mentioned impacts of discrimination were negative emotions (e.g. sadness,  
345 anger, distress and shame), followed by negative engagement with sport (e.g. disliking  
346 sport, or avoiding or leaving sport). Kokkonen (2019) surveyed 155 GSM sport  
347 participants in Finland. This was one of the few studies that included children and  
348 young people (10,3% of the participants were minors) and the results revealed a  
349 relationship between harassment by a coach and psychological ill-being for male but not  
350 female participants. The more frequently male GSM sport participants were harassed by  
351 their coaches, the more frequently they experienced depressive symptoms,  
352 psychosomatic symptoms, and stress. The author concluded that male gay athletes are in  
353 a more vulnerable situation than their female counterparts and that coming out in sport  
354 might be more psychologically demanding for them.



355 *Coming out*

356 Much research has focused on the experiences of coming out in sport. This theme was  
357 predominant in 11 (19%) articles. All employed qualitative designs. Five studies  
358 focused on the coming out experiences of non-heterosexual women in sport (Anderson  
359 & Bullingham, 2015; Fink, Burton, Farrell, & Parker, 2012; Iannota & Kane, 2002;  
360 Ravel & Rail, 2008; Stoelting, 2011), five on male gay athletes (Anderson, 2011;  
361 Fenwick & Simpson, 2017; Gaston, Magrath, & Anderson, 2018; Gough, 2007; Mullin,  
362 Leone, & Pottratz, 2018), and one on a trans male athlete (Klein et al., 2018).

363 Iannota and Kane (2002) found that lesbian coaches used alternative strategies  
364 for coming out, other than linguistically naming oneself lesbian. Ravel and Rail (2008)  
365 challenged the linearity of the coming out process and the idea that one is born with a  
366 fixed sexuality. Participants in their study constructed their sexuality as fluid (i.e. they  
367 could be non-heterosexual on some occasions and heterosexual on others) and  
368 ‘downplayed the idea of coming out as a “once-and-for-all” process’ (p. 21).  
369 Nevertheless, sport appeared to play a crucial role in the coming out process, certain  
370 sport contexts being more inclusive than others. The presence/visibility of other non-  
371 heterosexual athletes was linked to positive experiences of being out in sport (see also  
372 Fink et al., 2012).

373 Stoelting (2011) discovered that collegiate lesbian athletes were motivated to  
374 come out by factors such as ‘the desire to be, and to be perceived as, honest people,  
375 self-acceptance, and an attempt to normalise their identities’ (p. 1193-1194). Anderson  
376 and Bullingham (2015) found that most of their interviewed collegiate lesbian athletes  
377 experienced little resistance to their coming out in sport and felt supported by their  
378 teammates, although a few reported experiencing direct hostility after coming out to

379 their teammates. The authors concluded that athletic capital influences the experiences  
380 of coming out in sport.

381 Anderson (2011) compared the experiences of gay male athletes who came out  
382 during 2008-2010 to those of gay male athletes who came out during 2000-2002. The  
383 author concluded that homophobia is decreasing in sport and that gay athletes are  
384 having more positive coming out experiences than in the past. In another comparative  
385 study, Gaston et al. (2018) investigated the coming out experiences of the world's first  
386 two openly gay active professional soccer players: Justin Fashanu who came out in  
387 1990 and Anton Hysén who came out in 2011. While Fashanu faced overt homophobia  
388 and ridicule that eventually resulted in the termination of his career and his life, Hysén's  
389 experience of coming out was mostly positive and he was praised for his courage in  
390 disclosing his sexual orientation. Based on these findings, the authors argued that a  
391 generational shift was occurring in the coming out stories of athletes, due to a decline in  
392 homophobic attitudes in the Western sporting world. Gough (2007) also found that  
393 coming out in sport is difficult but rewarding for gay male athletes. More recently,  
394 Fenwick and Simpson (2017) revealed that gender stereotypes and rigid definitions of  
395 masculinity in sport affected the experiences of gay athletes from the USA, who felt  
396 fear of rejection during the coming out process. Mullin et al. (2018) explored the  
397 coming out experience of a male gay volleyball player and argued that coming out  
398 could affect positively athletes' confidence and performance in sport.

399 Klein and colleagues (2018) reported that the experiences of a transgender male  
400 athlete when coming out to his team were mostly positive. Authors identified two  
401 factors that can impact emotional states during the transition and coming out process  
402 (and should be provided by athletic departments and sport institutes): social support and  
403 financial resources.

404 *The body*

405 Several scholars focusing on the body as a site for experiencing and performing gender  
406 and sexuality explored how social ideals about the body are linked to the experiences of  
407 GSM individuals in sport. The body was the focus of 6 (10%) articles. All employed  
408 qualitative designs. Four studies focused on the experiences of male gay athletes (Bridel  
409 & Rail, 2007; Filiault & Drummond, 2008, 2009, 2013) and two on the transgender  
410 body (Caudwell, 2014; Cohen & Semerjian, 2008).

411         Bridel and Rail (2007) combined autoethnography with interviews to explore the  
412 bodily practices of male gay marathon runners in Canada. Participants constructed their  
413 bodies ‘as a vessel used in the achievement of personal goals’ (p. 136). These goals  
414 were related to marathoning and to being perceived as good looking. However, their  
415 discursive constructions of the marathon body conflicted with the beauty ideals  
416 circulating in the gay culture.

417         Filiault and Drummond explored the body image of gay male athletes,  
418 particularly in relation to body ideals (2008), hair removal practices (2013) and clothing  
419 (2009). Gay male athletes seemed to idealise the natural body, marginalise the un-  
420 natural, modified body, and resist the depilatory practices that are widespread among  
421 gay men (Filiault & Drummond, 2013). By constructing the masculine athletic body as  
422 natural and useful and the gay body as unnatural and useless, gay athletes themselves  
423 reproduce hegemonic masculinity (Filiault & Drummond, 2008).

424         Two studies looked at the embodied experiences of two transgender men in the  
425 UK (Caudwell, 2014) and one transgender female in the USA (Cohen & Semerjian,  
426 2008). Both studies showed that the gendered body remains central to processes of  
427 exclusion, rejection, and objectification in sport. Transgender and transitioning bodies  
428 are marginalised at the institutional and policy level, as well as at the level of individual

429 interactions. Transgender participation in sport continues to be surrounded by ignorance  
430 and prejudice (Caudwell, 2014).

### 431 *Strategies for social change*

432 The strategies employed by GSM athletes and coaches to enhance queer visibility  
433 and/or bring about change in the heterosexist world of sport was a central topic in 10  
434 (17%) articles. With the exception of Krane et al. (2002), all studies employed a  
435 qualitative design. The majority of studies included non-heterosexual sporting women  
436 in their samples, with three including non-heterosexual male athletes (Eng, 2006, 2008;  
437 Gough, 2007) and two discussing transgender issues (Caudwell, 2007; Travers & Deri,  
438 2011).

439         One of the strategies employed to subvert the heterosexist sport culture has been  
440 the development of queer alternative spaces (Caudwell, 2007; Eng, 2006, 2008; Krane  
441 et al., 2002; Litchfield, 2011; Travers & Deri, 2011). Travers and Deri (2011) studied a  
442 lesbian soft-ball league with a radical trans-inclusive policy and argued that such  
443 leagues, despite their complexities, can offer a model for ‘a less sex-binary-based  
444 sporting future’ (p. 503). Krane and colleagues (2002) showed that participation in the  
445 Gay Games can enhance the participants’ motivation for social change activities. Eng  
446 (2006, 2008) found that while creating queer alternative spaces was a strategy often  
447 used by female sexual minority athletes in Norway, male athletes used other strategies,  
448 such as acting openly as homosexual in ways that disrupt hegemonic beliefs about  
449 homosexuality. For example, doing masculinity as openly gay in sport makes it possible  
450 to tear down powerful myths about gays as non-masculine and non-athletic men (Eng,  
451 2006). A few other scholars (Kauer, 2009; Kauer & Krane, 2006; Gough, 2007) also  
452 discussed how coming out publicly can facilitate social change. Yet, while the coaches

453 (Kauer, 2009) and athletes (Kauer & Krane, 2006) in these studies could be open about  
454 their lesbian identities and engage in social change activities in some contexts, in others  
455 they themselves reproduced the existing status quo and the presence of the lesbian  
456 closet. Gay male athletes in Gough's (2007) study were 'galvanised by their [coming  
457 out] experiences into becoming more political within and through their sport' (p. 167).  
458 While queer visibility is not possible for athletes who live in the Muslim context of  
459 Tunisia, lesbian athletes in Hamdi et al. (2016) employed other strategies, such as  
460 developing silent social networks.

## 461 **Discussion**

462 The purpose of this scoping review was to map the empirical scholarship on the  
463 experiences of GSM athletes and coaches, to identify gaps in the literature, and to  
464 provide recommendations for future research, policy and practice. Five content areas  
465 were identified as dominant in the 58 reviewed studies, namely identity, discrimination,  
466 coming out, the body, and strategies for social change. Consistent with the Brackenridge  
467 et al. (2008) review, our findings indicate that identity remains the most researched  
468 topic. One of the strengths of this area of research is the spread of fluid understandings  
469 of identity that have helped to disrupt binary systems of sex, gender, and sexuality (see  
470 also Waldron, 2019). Disrupting these binary categories is important, as the reviewed  
471 scholarship shows that gender stereotypes and rigid perceptions of masculinity and  
472 femininity are the antecedents of homophobia and transphobia in sport. In addition, the  
473 sporting experiences of GSM athletes and coaches are shaped by social ideals about the  
474 body, which are often linked to the marginalisation of transgender people in sport. In  
475 the face of visible lack of institutional structures for tackling homophobia and  
476 transphobia in sport, GSM athletes and coaches themselves have played a key role in

477 mobilising change. Through being open about their GSM identities in sport and creating  
478 queer alternative spaces and social networks, they have instigated positive change  
479 towards inclusion and diversity in sport.

480 In sum, the present review shows positive developments regarding GSM  
481 acceptance in sport, at least in the Western world. However, findings on the levels of  
482 inclusion are conflicting, some minority groups (e.g. LG athletes) reporting more  
483 positive experiences than others (e.g. trans athletes, LG coaches). For example, research  
484 with lesbian coaches shows that they experience discrimination owing to both their  
485 gender and sexuality (Norman, 2012, 2013), while research with transgender athletes  
486 reveals that they encounter enormous barriers to competing in sport (Cohen &  
487 Semerjian, 2008). In general, there is evidence that certain contexts are far more  
488 inclusive than others, and thus the sporting experiences of GSM people can differ  
489 substantially. Even in the most tolerant contexts, where direct forms of discrimination  
490 are absent, homophobic and transphobic discourses seem slow to change. Research  
491 shows that GSM sporting people themselves are so subjected to these discourses that at  
492 times they even end up reproducing them (e.g. Kauer, 2009; Ravel & Rail, 2007).  
493 Overall, it seems that despite the progress made in the inclusion of GSM people in  
494 sport, intolerance and hostility towards GSM athletes and coaches has not been  
495 eradicated in all areas.

#### 496 ***Research gaps and suggestions for future studies***

497 Despite the increasing number of studies on GSM in sport, many of the weaknesses that  
498 Brackenridge and her colleagues (2008) identified in the literature seem to remain  
499 unchanged. For example, knowledge on the topic continues to be largely based on the  
500 experiences of lesbian and gay athletes, while bisexual, transgender and intersex  
501 identities continue to be underrepresented in the literature. Moreover, calls to examine

502 how GSM identities intersect with other categories of socio-cultural difference (e.g.  
503 race, ethnicity, age, class, disability) remain largely unanswered, with the exception of  
504 two studies that looked into the experiences of sexual minority athletes of colour  
505 (Melton & Cunningham, 2012; Walker & Melton, 2015). It was also evident in our  
506 review, that different questions have been studied with different minority categories.  
507 For example, identity research was primarily based on the study of lesbian athletes and  
508 research on the body primarily based on the study of male gay athletes. Among coaches,  
509 a few studies investigated the experiences of non-heterosexual women, whereas  
510 knowledge on the experiences of gay male and transgender coaches remains lacking.  
511 Additionally, our review revealed a significant research gap on the experiences of GSM  
512 children and youth in sport. This gap is particularly problematic as children and youth in  
513 sport are regarded more vulnerable in experiencing discrimination (including  
514 harassment and abuse) and are having great difficulties in reporting such incidents  
515 (Kirby, Demers, & Parent, 2008). Furthermore, this gap in the knowledge makes it  
516 difficult to evaluate the impact of heteronormative sporting cultures on GSM children  
517 and youth and we would like to press the need for research on this topic.

518         Given that most studies so far have drawn on interview or survey data only, we  
519 believe that future research could benefit from mixed method designs. Combining  
520 different methods and looking at a variety of cultural contexts could help us to  
521 understand the paradoxes and contradictions in research findings (e.g. some studies  
522 show high levels of GSM acceptance, while others reveal climates of hostility and  
523 discrimination). On the use of theoretical frameworks, we agree with Waldron (2019)  
524 that researchers could use multiple approaches to explore GSM experiences in sport, as  
525 long as they recognise that certain approaches aim at disrupting the existing systems of

526 sex, gender, and sexuality, while others frame GSM sporting experiences within these  
527 systems.

### 528 *Implications for policy and practice*

529 The present findings have several practical implications. Many of the reviewed studies  
530 have seen the culture of silence that surrounds GSM athletes and coaches as problematic  
531 and argued that raising awareness of issues related to GSM identities in sport can  
532 enhance inclusivity and bring about social change. Sport organisations could achieve  
533 this through adopting and communicating GSM-inclusive values and using inclusive  
534 language, symbols and imagery. Raising awareness and visibility is particularly  
535 important for the identities of those who are only now getting on the radar, such as  
536 transgender, intersex and bisexual athletes and coaches, and for GSM sporting people  
537 from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Currently, scholarship, media,  
538 and policy focus disproportionally on white, able-bodied, middle-class and western  
539 GSM sporting people and, as Krane (2019) recently argued, this carries the risk of  
540 reinforcing western ideals in our efforts to promote GSM inclusion in sport.

541 Furthermore, all actors involved in sport (coaches and coach educators, athletes,  
542 sport-administrators, sport-leaders, referees, sport psychology consultants, physicians  
543 etc.) should be provided with education on how to avoid reinforcing heteronormativity  
544 and how to facilitate supportive climates for those who are out. These actors play a key  
545 role when it comes to translating policy into practice in the field and thus should be well  
546 equipped to prevent, recognise and deal with prejudice and discrimination. Many of the  
547 participants in the reviewed studies reported that sport organisations are lacking both  
548 expertise in dealing with homophobia and transphobia in sport and protective structures  
549 and procedures. Bringing the elements of education, policy, infrastructure and expertise



550 together more effectively could lead to positive change in some of the issues that GSM  
551 athletes and coaches face in sport.

552           Nevertheless, as argued by Krane and Barber (2019), the cultural change that we  
553 are hoping for will not be realised while the organisation of sport is based on binary  
554 understandings of sex and gender. Reconstructing the sexed and gender norms that have  
555 been the pillars of sport for centuries is a necessary step if we aim to achieve equality in  
556 sport.

### 557 *Limitations and conclusions*

558 Our review was limited to English language articles, and thus most of them were based  
559 on accounts given by white Western participants from Anglo-Saxon countries. The  
560 experiences of GSM athletes and coaches in other (non-Western, non-Anglo-Saxon)  
561 cultural contexts are missing from this review (and international scholarship) with the  
562 exception of the two studies by Hamdi and colleagues (2016, 2017) conducted in the  
563 Muslim context of Tunisia and a few studies conducted in non-English speaking  
564 European countries, such as Finland (Kokkonen, 2019), the Netherlands (Hekma, 1998;  
565 Vertommen et al., 2016), Belgium (Vertommen et al., 2016), France (Mennesson &  
566 Clément, 2003) and Norway (Eng, 2006, 2008).

567           Another limitation of this scoping review is that it was limited to peer-reviewed  
568 journal articles. Future reviews could take into account book chapters and grey literature  
569 on gender and sexual diversity in sport as those might offer additional insights on this  
570 topic. In addition, we assessed neither the quality of the identified studies nor the risk of  
571 bias. While these steps would strengthen this review, they are considered optional in the  
572 Arksey and O'Malley (2005) framework. Moreover, the critical appraisal of this paper  
573 was limited to identifying gaps in the existing empirical literature and briefly  
574 considering its strengths and weaknesses. Future reviews could apply more quality-

575 defined (e.g. systematic review) or critical frameworks (e.g. meta-study) in analysing  
576 and synthesising the GSM literature in sport.

577           Despite its limitations, the present review furthers our knowledge on GSM  
578 issues in sport by summarising the growing body of empirical studies on GSM athletes  
579 and coaches, identifying persisting gaps, and offering suggestions for research, policy  
580 and practice. Clearly, the different groups that were discussed in this paper under the  
581 umbrella of GSM have unique needs and thus more research is needed to better  
582 understand how to ensure safe and inclusive sporting environments for all. However,  
583 despite the many differences in the populations that make up the GSM sporting  
584 community, they also share certain commonalities, such as a historically marginalised  
585 social status that is linked to prejudice. Overcoming this marginalisation in our sporting  
586 settings and scholarly work is a critical goal if we wish to eliminate some of the  
587 disparities discussed in the reviewed studies.

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Table 1. Included studies

No	Authors	Date	Country	Sample	Sport	Focus	Methodological Design	Theoretical Framework	Important Results
1	Krane	1997	USA	12 lesbian athletes	Various collegiate sports	Homonegativism and stereotypes experienced by lesbian athletes	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist standpoint epistemology, Krane's theory of lesbians in sport	Lesbian athletes experienced negative stereotypes and felt powerless to challenge homonegativism.
2	Riemer	1997	USA	24 women	Softball	Lesbian identity formation in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Krane's theory of lesbians in sport	The softball context provided social support for forming positive lesbian identities.
3	Higgs & Schell	1998	USA	165 women	Softball	The presentation of frontstage and backstage selves (self at work and self at leisure)	Quantitative (survey)	Goffmanian theory	Participants silenced their lesbian identities at work, but felt comfortable to express them in the softball context.



4	Hekma	1998	Netherlands	18 men and 18 women interviewed; 185 men and 98 women surveyed	Various sports	Discrimination experienced by gay men and lesbians in sport	Mixed methods (interviews and survey)	Not clearly mentioned	Participants did not experience much discrimination in sport because they silenced their sexual orientation.
5	Caudwell	1999	UK	14 women interviewed and 437 surveyed	Football (soccer)	Unpacking the butch lesbian identity	Mixed methods (interviews and surveys)	Poststructuralist theory	The butch lesbian image was a concern for all players.
6	Shire et al.	2000	UK	26 women	Field hockey	The shifting composition of a field hockey team from predominantly heterosexual to lesbian	Qualitative longitudinal (interviews)	Feminist poststructuralist and queer theory	Women's sexual identities were fluid. The culture of the team contributed to the sexual identities of female players.

7	Cox & Thompson	2001	New Zealand	16 elite female players	Football (soccer)	Discourses of sexuality in sport and how they manifest in a woman's team	Qualitative (interviews and participant observations)	Feminist poststructuralist theory	Homophobia affected the interactions and experiences of all players.
8	Krane et al.	2002	Most participants were from USA, UK, and Canada	123 non-heterosexual female athletes	Various sports	Impact of Gay Games participation on social identity and self-esteem	Quantitative (survey)	Social identity theory	Gay Games participation increased self-esteem and participants' motivation to work towards social change.
9	Iannotta & Kane	2002	USA	13 lesbian coaches	Various collegiate sports	Strategies of lesbian coaches to resist homophobia	Qualitative (interviews)	Narrative approach	Non-linguistic strategies of coming out can also resist social injustice.
10	Anderson	2002	USA	26 male openly gay athletes	Various sports	How openly gay athletes experience sport and negotiate gender	Qualitative (interviews); Grounded theory approach	Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity	Participants did not experience physical harassment but a culture of silence.

11	Menesson & Clément	2003	France	18 professional female players	Soccer	The effects of team sociability on the ways that female players constructed their gender and sexual identities	Qualitative (interviews and observations)	Becker and Goffman's theories	The homosociability manifested in the studied teams facilitated players' involvement in homosexual practices.
12	Krane & Barber	2005	USA	13 lesbian coaches	Various collegiate sports	Lesbian coaches' experiences and identity negotiation	Qualitative (interviews)	Social identity theory	Participants experienced homonegativity and identity tensions. They acted towards social change in some situations, but reproduced the existing norms in others.
13	Eng	2006	Norway	18 LGB athletes	Various sports	Discourses of sex, gender and sexuality in sport and how they	Qualitative (interviews)	Queer and poststructuralist theory	When queer existence in sport appeared as something deviant, it did not have the ability to

						shaped LGB athletes' experiences			threatened the dominant discourses of heteronormativity.
14	Semerjian & Cohen	2006	USA	4 trans athletes	Various sport	How gender identity influences (and is influenced by) sport participation	Qualitative (interviews)	Queer theory	Gender identity was unstable and constantly (re)written through embodied performances.
15	Kauer & Krane	2006	USA	15 female student-athletes	Various collegiate sports	Female athletes' reactions to stereotypes about women in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Social identity theory	Both heterosexual and lesbian athletes had to learn how to cope with negative stereotypes of female athletes being gay or manly.
16	Ravel & Rail	2006	Canada	14 non-heterosexual women	Various sports	Discursive constructions of gender and sexuality	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist poststructuralist theory	Participants constructed "gaie" sexuality as a more feminine and less disturbing sexuality,

									reproducing lesbo-butcher phobic ideas.
17	Bridel & Rail	2007	Canada	12 gay male athletes	Marathon running	Discursive construction of the body	Qualitative (autoethnography combined with conversations and written- stories)	Foucauldian theory	Participants at times resisted and at others reproduced dominant bodily discourses.
18	Ravel & Rail	2007	Canada	14 non- heterosexual women	Various sports	Discursive constructions of sporting spaces	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist poststructuralist theory	Participants constructed their sporting spaces as inclusive, yet they marginalized certain forms of sexuality (e.g. butch).
19	Caudwell	2007	UK	Players of a lesbian- identified team	Soccer	Exploring the spatiality of sexuality	Qualitative (ethnography)	Feminist-queer theory	Certain identities were privileged (e.g. femme) and others marginalized (e.g. butch, transsexual).

20	Gough	2007	Participants were from USA	8 gay male athletes	Various sports	Coming out	Qualitative (online accounts)	Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity	Coming out to the team is difficult but rewarding
21	Filiault & Drummond	2008	Australia	3 openly gay male players	Tennis	Implications of body ideals for gay male athletes' sense of body and self	Qualitative (interviews)	Phenomenology; Social identity theory; Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity	The masculine athletic body was seen as natural and useful, while the gay body as unnatural and useless.
22	Ravel & Rail	2008	Canada	14 non-heterosexual women	Various sports	The coming out process and the expression of nonconventional sexualities in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist poststructuralist and queer theory	Sexuality was not fixed and participants positioned themselves differently depending on the context.
23	Eng	2008	Norway	18 LGB athletes	Various sports	The subversive effect of queer visibility in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist and queer theory	Lesbian athletes created queer sporting spaces, while male athletes challenged

									heteronormativity by being openly gay in sport.
24	Cohen & Semerjian	2008	USA	1 male-to-female transgender athlete	Ice hockey	One transgender athlete's disqualification experience from Ice Hockey	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist theory	The participant did not have the power to assert her gender identity, but ultimate decisions were left in the hands of the medical community.
25	Kauer	2009	USA	8 lesbian coaches	Various collegiate sports	How lesbian coaches engaged in social change through coming out	Qualitative (interviews)	Cultural studies praxis, feminist poststructuralist and queer theory	While in some contexts participants could be open about their lesbian identities and engaged in social change strategies, in others they reproduced heteronormativity.
26	Lambert	2009	Australia	5 non-heterosexual women	Soccer	The intersection of sexuality, sport, and space	Qualitative (interviews,	Queer theory	Participating in Gay Games was an empowering experience.

							poetic representation)		
27	Filiault & Drummond	2009	USA, Canada, Australia	16 elite gay male athletes	Various sports	Body image and clothing	Qualitative (interviews)	Phenomenology; Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity	There are hegemonic aesthetics related to clothing, based upon the setting. Clothes can impact a person's body image.
28	Stoelting	2011	USA	16 lesbian athletes	Various collegiate sports	Disclosure of sexual orientation	Qualitative (interviews)	Disclosure as an interaction	Participants disclosed their sexual orientation because they wanted to be perceived as honest, achieve self-acceptance, normalize their sexual identities, and establish close relationships with teammates.



29	Anderson	2011	USA	26 openly gay male athletes	Various sports	Coming out experiences	Qualitative (interviews)	Inclusive masculinity theory	Athletes who came out between 2008-2010 had more positive experiences than athletes who came out between 2000-2002.
30	Travers & Deri	2011	USA	12 transgender people	Softball	Transgender participants' experiences in lesbian leagues	Qualitative (interviews and participant observation)	Feminist, queer and transgender theories	Most participants reported positive experiences of inclusion. Trans women had more positive experiences than transmen.
31	Drury	2011	UK	5 female players	Football (soccer)	How women resist homophobic discourses in a lesbian-identified club	Qualitative (interviews and participant observations)	Feminist poststructuralist and queer theories	Lesbian identities were normalized, but hierarchical relations between certain identities were maintained.
32	Litchfield	2011	Australia	8 women	Field hockey	Lived experiences of inclusiveness in women's sports	Qualitative (interviews)	Critical feminist framework	Participants experienced their club as an inclusive and empowering context.

33	Norman	2012	UK	10 lesbian coaches	Various sports	Lived everyday experiences of homophobia	Qualitative (interviews)	Theory of everyday gendered homophobia	Participants experienced discrimination due to their gender and sexuality.
34	Fink et al.	2012	USA	14 LB athletes	Various collegiate sports	Factors that influence coming out	Qualitative (interviews)	Feminist standpoint theory	Athletes who had come out before them and acceptance of teammates were important facilitators. Participants experienced stereotypes, lack of departmental support, and a culture of silence.
35	Carless	2012	UK	1 gay male	School sport	Negotiating and developing sexuality in school sport	Qualitative (autoethnography)	Storytelling approach	Sexuality was independent of sociocultural factors, intruding the heterosexist culture of sport, rather than being a product of it.

36	Tagg	2012	New Zealand	2 male-to-female transgender retired players	Netball	The lived experiences of transgender netballers	Qualitative (interviews)	Critical feminist interpretive framework	Netball has become more inclusive for gender-conforming transgender participants. Yet, enormous barriers remain.
37	Lucas-Carr & Krane	2012	USA	3 trans athletes	Various sports	How do transgender athletes experience sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Queer-feminist framework	Lack of official policies on transgender inclusion. Trans athletes had to advocate for themselves and (re)claim their identities.
38	Filiault & Drummond	2013	USA, Australia, Canada	17 male openly gay athletes	Various sports	Body image and perceptions of body hair	Qualitative (interviews and questionnaires)	Phenomenology	Participants shared a lack of concern regarding body hair and view depilation as unnecessary, idealizing the natural body.

39	Norman	2013	UK	10 lesbian coaches	Various sports	Lived everyday experiences of homophobia	Qualitative (interviews)	Theory of everyday gendered homophobia	Everyday inferiorizations of female coaches were connected to structural practices.
40	Melton & Cunningham	2013	USA	13 LB student-athletes	Basketball and softball, collegiate sports	Experiences of lesbian athletes of color	Qualitative (interviews)	Minority stress theory	Certain aspects of the athletes' identity (i.e. sexual orientation) were devalued while others (athletic, race) were more welcomed in sport.
41	Caudwell	2014	UK	2 trans men	School sports (football, hockey, tennis)	Transgender experiences in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Queer theoretical approaches, critical paradigm	Lack of understanding on transgender issues. Sport and PE are not safe spaces for trans people.
42	Davis-Delano	2014	USA	56 women	Various sports	Factors that hinder or nurture same-sex attractions in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Grounded theory approach	Sport nurtured same-sex attractions of women.

43	Fletcher	2014	Australia	26 male and female sport participants	Various sports	The experiences of sexual minorities in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Languaging lens	The process of languaging (i.e. constructing realities through talk) can either enable or constrain inclusivity in sport.
44	Anderson & Bullingham	2015	USA	12 lesbian athletes	Various collegiate sports	Experiences of lesbians in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Anderson's homophobia theory	Athletes with athletic capital had an easier time coming out.
45	Sanders	2015	Australia	8 female players in	Australian football	Homosexual practices in a woman's team	Qualitative (participant-driven visual methodologies and interviews)	Homosociality	Women's same-sex interactions manifested in various ways. A gendered hegemony impacted social bonds.
46	Walker & Melton	2015	USA	15 lesbians who worked in sports	Various collegiate sports	How sexual prejudice affects racial minorities	Qualitative (interviews)	Intersectionality	Racial minorities had a more difficult time working in college sports.
47	Vertommen et al.	2016	Netherlands and Belgium	4000 adults	Various sports	Prevalence of interpersonal	Quantitative (survey)	Not clearly mentioned	LGB athletes reported significantly more

						violence against children			experiences of interpersonal violence in sport.
48	Hamdi et al.	2016	Tunisia	3 lesbian elite athletes	Various sports	Experiences and coping strategies of lesbian Muslim athletes	Qualitative (interviews)	Not clearly mentioned	Due to the extreme homophobia, lesbian athletes adopted various defense mechanisms such as self-policing their identities and establishing silent networks.
49	Fynes & Fisher	2016	USA	10 lesbian athletes	Various collegiate sports	The congruence of identity	Qualitative (interviews)	Postpositivist paradigm	Participants felt that they could not be completely authentic or integrated in their sporting contexts.
50	Fenwick & Simpson	2017	USA	6 gay male athletes	Various sports	Experience of coming out in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Phenomenology	Homophobia affected participants' decision to come out. Their coming

									out resulted to a positive change in the climate.
51	Hamdi et al.	2017	Tunisia	1 closeted gay male athlete	Bodybuilding	The construction of stigma in the Muslim context and how it affects the experiences of a gay athlete	Qualitative (interviews)	Anderson's homophobia theory	Due to extreme homophobia in the Islamic context, the participant had a difficult time identifying as gay.
52	Symons et al.	2017	Australia	294 non-heterosexual participants	Various sports	Discrimination experienced by LGB people in sport	Mixed methods (survey with some open-ended questions)	Minority stress theory	Women experienced more sexism, while men more homophobia. Discrimination was linked to negative emotions and negative sport engagement.
53	McGannon et al.	2018	Canada	10 elite female athletes	Boxing	Intersecting identities	Qualitative (mandala)	Cultural praxis, social constructionism	LGBT identities could be openly expressed in boxing.

							drawings and interviews)		
54	Mullin et al.	2018	USA	1 gay male athlete	Volleyball	Coming out experience	Qualitative (interviews and social-media posts)	Social identity perspective, athletic identity theory	Coming out was beneficial for performance.
55	Gaston et al.	2018	UK	1 gay male athlete	Football (soccer)	Measuring the progress towards the acceptance of homosexuality in sport	Qualitative (interviews)	Anderson's inclusive masculinity theory	A gay athlete who came out in 2017 had positive experiences, while an athlete who came out in 1992 was ridiculed.
56	Klein et al.	2018	USA	1 trans male athlete	Cross country, track and field	Coming out and transition experiences	Qualitative (interviews)	Transfeminism	Coming out in sport was a positive experience. Social support and financial resources influenced the participant's emotional states during transition.



57	Stewart et al.	2018	Australia	20 trans women	Various sports	Experiences of voice use in sporting environments	Mixed methods (interviews and survey)	Phenomenology	Trans women perceived their voices to be the main barrier to their participation in sport.
58	Kokkonen	2019	Finland	155 LGB participants	Various sports	Harassment by a coach and psychological ill-being	Quantitative (survey)	Not clearly mentioned	A relationship between harassment by a coach and psychological ill-being was found for males but not for females.

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