Culturally Competent and Racially Aware: Athletic Training and Equitable Care

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Abstract

Collegiate student-athletes rely on athletic trainers to support and care for their physical and mental health, ultimately contributing to athletic success and holistic development (Stokowski et al., 2020; Thomas et al., 2017). Connection, rapport, and trust are vital for athletic trainers to effectively guide conscientiousness and accountability for one's own injury and illness prevention. It is essential for healthcare providers, such as athletic trainers, to exemplify cultural competence and awareness to equitably harmonize care among the vast cultural diversity represented by student-athletes (Mitchell et al., 2022).

Informed by the Critical Race Theory (CRT), this research aims to examine participant cultural awareness. Through purposeful sampling strategies, 49 athletic trainers representing 18 different sports completed a questionnaire including demographics, the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAs; Neville et al., 2002), and the Critical Race Theory Measurement tool (CRTM; Campbell, 2014). The majority of participants were aged 26-35 (45%), followed by under 25 (25%), 36-45 (22%), and 46+ (8%). There were similarly representative among females (59%) and males (41%). Participants identified as White (51%), Black or African American (37%), Asian (10%), and Mixed-Race (2%).

This study explores racial awareness and cultural competency of male and female athletic trainers. It is framed by two research questions. RQ1: Does awareness of social issues involving race (racial privilege, institutional discrimination, blatant racial issues) differ between males and females? RQ2: Does racial competency (endemic racism, race as a social construct, differential racialization, convergency/determinism, racial narratives, intersectionality) differ between males and females?

The MANOVA for the first research question was run to determine the difference between men and women in racial awareness. Three factors were measured and assessed: racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues. Data, expressed as mean ± standard deviation, showed that male participants averaged higher levels of unawareness (2.59 ± .18, 2.40 ± .14, 1.78 ± .13) than female participants (2.03 ± .15, 1.78 ± .12, 1.43 ± 1.1) on the respective factors. Results showed statistically significant differences between male and female participants on the combined dependent variables, $F(3, 45) = 3.918$, $p = .014$; Wilks' $\Lambda = .793$; partial $\eta2 = .207$. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs showed significant differences based on gender for racial privilege ($F(1, 47) = 6.113$, $p = .017$; partial $\eta2 = .115$), institutional discrimination ($F(1, 47) =$

11.831, p = .001; partial η2 = .201), and blatant racial issues (F(1, 47) = 4.725, p < .035; partial η2 = .091).

The second research question ran a MANOVA to determine the difference between men and women in racial competency. Six factors were measured and assessed: endemic racism, race as a social construct, differential racialization, convergency/determinism, racial narratives, and intersectionality. Results showed statistically significant differences between male and female participants on the combined dependent variables, F(6, 42) = 2.857, p = .020; Wilks' Λ = .710; partial η2 = .290. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs showed significant differences based on gender for convergency/determinism (F(1, 47) = 8.767, p < .005; partial η2 = .157) and racial narratives (F(1, 47) = 9.899, p < .003; partial η2 = .174). The other four constructs did not indicate significant differences endemic racism (F(1, 47) = 2.366, p = .131; partial η2 = .048), race as a social construct (F(1, 47) = .030, p = .863; partial η2 = .001), differential racialization (F(1, 47) = .001, p = .976; partial η2 = .0), and intersectionality (F(1, 47) = .521, p = .474; partial η2 = .011).

Discussion of the analysis will be provided in the poster presentation. This can be used to understand cultural competence among collegiate athletic trainers better. Further, university athletic departments may consider adding various trainings with specific emphases on factors producing the lowest levels of awareness and/or competence. As Mitchell et al., 2022 expressed, cultural insensitivity or biases must be addressed to limit adverse care from providers.