

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of Arts and English Language



Racism in Sports:

The English Football League as a Case Study

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

Halima TOUAHAR

Zohra ZEGHDI

Supervised by:

Dr. Zohra MEHELLOU

Board of Examiners:

Dr. YUCEF Kouider

President

University of El-Oued

Dr. Zohra MEHELLOU

Supervisor

University of El-Oued

Dr. Asma NESBA

Examiner

University of El-Oued

Academic year: 2023/2024

Dedication

Halima TOUAHER

This dissertation is dedicated to my great family, my precious mother whose limitless love and encouragement have been the base of my academic journey. To my husband for his support and patience which were the motivation to continue my postgraduate studies, and my two princesses who taught me the importance of perseverance.

This piece of diligence is dedicated to all my beloved ones hoping to make them proud of me, in particular my dear father whom I lost months ago.

Zohra ZEGHDI

To my loving parents, whose guidance and support have shaped my present version.

To my family, whose unwavering support and love have been a constant source of strength.

To my husband whose encouragement and patience have made this journey possible, to my children

Ratil and Idris, you are my inspiration and motivation. This work is for you.

Acknowledgments

First of all, thanks to Allah who helped us to reach this stage.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our advisor, Dr. Zohra MEHELLOU, for her patience, guidance, and support throughout this work. Her insights and feedback have been the basis of constructing this dissertation and developing our knowledge.

Special thanks to our committee members for devoting their time to read this work and evaluated, their feedback, encouragement, and advice to improve our dissertation, and our teachers who taught us throughout our university studies.

We are so grateful to our colleagues for their assistance and their cooperation through the last two years, who without them, this work would not have been completed.

Finally, thanks to the limitations that made us stronger to achieve this position successfully.

Abstract

This dissertation addresses the topic of racism in sports which is an important issue that the majority of people interested in following. This work focuses on football, the sport that attracts a large number of fans. The research sheds light on the roots of racism in the history of sports, with a focus on its spreading to the English Premier League. This dissertation aims to define racism within the English football league, examining its emergence and evolution over time. The study seeks to provide a detailed understanding of some pervasive issues including the players' experiences and the surrounding responses. Besides providing a thorough examination of the prevalence and the impact of racism within the English football league, this dissertation offers an understanding of its manifestation and persistence in the sport. This research contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the complexities and the persistent existence of racial discrimination in football. Using the qualitative approach, the study employs a case study method by analysing incidents and cases of racial discrimination due to different reasons that make the Black players under pressure of various forms of discrimination in stadiums. It also evaluates the surrounding responses by the players' teammates and the league. Moreover, by examining their responses through the data collected from press meetings, the players' social media official pages, and their reported statements, the results highlight the contribution of the players in challenging discrimination and racism by raising awareness in addition to their activism. Besides the important role of sport in showing such sensitive social subjects like racism, the study concludes with reference to the major role of various organizations and anti-racist initiatives in combating this unethical phenomenon. The research advocates for implementing regulations that the people in the world and English societal scale should follow to eliminate such behaviors within stadiums and sports in general.

Keywords: Blackness, English Premier League, Football, Racism

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BAME	Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic
BLM	Black Lives Matter
EFL	English Football League
EPL	English Premier League
FA	Football Association
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
LMA	League Managers Association
MBE	Member of the order of the British Empire
PFA	Professional Football Association
PGMOL	Professional Game Match Officials Limited
UK	United Kingdom
UEFA	Union of European Football Association
UNSECO	The United Nations Educational Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
US	United State

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General Introduction

1. Background of The Study

Racism in English football has deep roots, with Black players facing discrimination since the early 20th century. The 1970s and 1980s were marked by severe racial abuse towards players. Despite progress with initiatives like Kick It Out in the 1990s, occasional incidents persisted into the 21st century, highlighting the ongoing challenge of eliminating racism in English football. A prominent and well-known case in English football involves Raheem Sterling, who, in 2018, was subjected to racial abuse during a Premier League match between Manchester City and Chelsea. These historical instances underscore the continued struggle against discrimination within the sport.

This dissertation focuses on racism in the English football league, examining key incidents and their impact on players. It will explore the extent of racism in the EFL and how organisations like Kick It Out and Black Lives Matter are working to combat it, supporting the ongoing fight against racism in football.

2. Research Problems

Racism is considered a serious issue in the English Football League (EFL). It has persisted over a significant period and continues to impact both players and clubs. When examining the current racial dynamics in English professional football, it is essential to take a quick look back at its history. Racism within men's football has been widely recognised over the last fifty years. Discussions often focus on specific periods and locations associated with instances of racism in the sport (Burdsey, 2021). In this research endeavour, the prevalence and patterns of racism in the EFL will be investigated, alongside an exploration of the role of Kick It Out (a prominent anti-discrimination organization in English football) and Black Lives Matter in combating racism in football.

It should be noted, however, that this dissertation focuses on Black male players in English Football League. While Black female players also struggle with racial discrimination, their case needs a deeper focus on both racial and gender discrimination.

3. Research Questions

To study how racism impacts Black players in EFL, the following questions need to be answered:

1. What are the reasons behind racism in sports?
2. How does racism affect the EFL?
3. How do players and clubs involved in the EFL deal with racism?
4. Within the realm of the English football league, what strategies and interventions can be implemented to effectively combat and eradicate instances of racism?

4. The Aims of the Study

This dissertation aims to define racism and racial discrimination within the English football league, examining their emergence and evolution over time. By exploring historical contexts, institutional responses, and the experiences of players, the study seeks to provide a detailed understanding of these pervasive issues.

5. Significance of the Study

The significance of this dissertation lies in its comprehensive analysis of the prevalence and impact of racism within the English football league. By delving into historical context, institutional responses, and player experiences, it offers a nuanced understanding of how racism manifests and persists in the sport. Furthermore, the study underscores the critical role of players in combating racism and highlights their activism. Despite numerous awareness campaigns, racism remains a significant issue in football, and this research contributes to the ongoing dialogue by illuminating the complexities and enduring nature of racial discrimination in the sport.

6. Literature Review

The literature review reveals several forms of racial discrimination in English football in fact, 25% of English league players come from Black or ethnic minority backgrounds and the previous studies analyse the motivations behind these practices in the field. Furthermore, they attempt to illustrate the biases of referees, supporters and different categories engaged in the game. Moreover, they display the efforts of the organizations against racism and the obstacles they faced in their mission. (Jeffery et al., 2013; Benchehib & Bouderbala, 2020).

In an article titled “A Statistical Study of Racism in English Football” (2013), Jeffery et al, investigated the presence of racial discrimination against non-white and non-European players during the 2011-2012 English league season. This study revealed various forms of discrimination with statistics which shows that despite non-white and non-European players scoring the highest number of goals, racism against them persists and remains prevalent. In the 2011-2012 EPL season, the findings suggest that minority and non-White players face discrimination in terms of appearances, fouls, cards from English referees, cards from non-English referees, and more. While there is no apparent pay discrimination, the observed differences may be attributed to factors like player aggression or deeper-rooted issues in skill and talent, raising questions about the role of racism in these disparities.

On the other hand, Benchehib and Bouderbala (2020) found that the roots of racism which appeared between the 19th and the 20th centuries, the period coinciding with football’s peak popularity, it characterised football with racism, discrimination, violence and hooliganism. The study explores racism and its different definitions, then emphasizes the pervasive nature of racism across various aspects of life. In sports, the study notes the intermittent occurrence of racist abuse influenced by specific contexts.

The research also defines the terms race and ethnicity and hooliganism, then examine the origins of racism in football. The study further explores the forms of racism which contains Impulsive Racism, instrumental Racism and Institutional Racism, followed by the reasons behind the racism such as immigration, colour blind racism and racism as a part of the game. In addition, it penetrated into different domains that affected by racism. The last chapter of the dissertation deals with the subject of fighting racism in England, including acts and initiatives such as the Kick It Out campaign, Foxes Against Racism, and other initiatives. It explores campaigns, projects, as well as cases of racist abuse and the surrounding responses and reactions.

In his book *Racism and English Football: For Club and Country* (2021), Daniel Burdsey explores the present-day manifestations, consequences, and importance of the strained relationship between English professional football and racial matters. He delves into the origins of racism within the game and explains its underlying factor. The book highlights football's role in raising diverse occupational cultures, fostering activism among Black players, and encouraging progressive engagement among fans. These facets collectively counteract societal divisions, presenting a promising prospect for a more inclusive and optimistic future. Additionally, he claims that we should know the history of racism. According to Burdsey, racism never truly left English football; it did not "return" because it persisted throughout. He claims that racism has always been present and systemic within football, not just a separate occurrence. The author of the book uses international examples and comparisons when relevant. He discusses the significance of global immigration and how the processes of defining borders impact the creation of national identity in the realm of sports.

7. Research Methodology

The qualitative approach enables the collection of data from different secondary resources including chosen interviews conducted with players who have encountered racism in sports. With a focus on the English Football League (EFL) as a case study, the research also

investigates the perspectives of (Black) players regarding instances of racist behaviour within the EFL. By adapting a thematic analysis, studying and exploring the players' reactions and experiences to being subjected to racism, provides valuable insights for understanding and addressing such crucial problem within the English League.

8. Dissertation Structure

The dissertation is structured into two chapters; the first chapter is entitled "Background of Racism in Sports." It includes an examination of key terms and it introduces the definition of the concept racism and its types then exploring the historical context and the root of racism in sport, various racial events and the psychological and emotional impact on players.

The second chapter "Racism in The English Football League" specifically addresses the issue of racism in the English Football League to illustrate broader issues surrounding racism in EFL. Additionally, players' perspectives are explored through interviews, highlighting their experiences along with their activism against racism. The chapter also evaluates current anti-racism policies, offering an insightful examination of the initiatives, movements and recommendations for improvement and the pursuit of getting rid of racist mentalities and eradicating the racist behaviours.

CHAPTER ONE

Background of Racism in Sports

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Introduction

This chapter addresses the issue of racism in sports, especially football. It aims to explore its historical roots, various forms and effects of racism in sports. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the historical background, providing a comprehensive definition of racism, and different ways racism manifests in sports. It then shifts focus to examine how racism specifically affects football, using examples and case studies to highlight its prevalence.

1 Background of Racism in Sports

The phenomenon of racism within the realm of sports has persisted throughout history, particularly in countries with large numbers of immigrants like the United States (US) and European nations (Dyer, 2023). This problem has been prevalent since the starting of sports even though racial segregation and discrimination in sports became prominent in the 1970s. The problem of racism which divides between individuals, also occurs in the stadium (Doidge, 2024). Experts' emphasis that addressing the issue of discrimination in sports involves focusing on distinctions made between players. Additionally, sport involves contradiction and "paradox," Sports are supposed to be inclusive accepting everyone based on performance alone, but racism still exists within sports, contradicting this idea of fairness and equality (Gasparini & Talleu, 2010). However, instances of racism in sports are usually ignored unless there is significant behaviour that brings attention to the issue (Anderson, 1996, p. 361).

1.1 An Overview of Sports

Sport is a physical activity which requires skills, it has existed for thousands of years, playing an essential role in the cultures and traditions of communities. It is considered as a means of communication between peoples and cultures with the ability to unite people.

In the document "European Sports Charter 1999," it was reported that:

Sport is any form of physical activity which is practiced, whether sporadically or in an organised way, aims to express or enhance physical fitness and well-being, to foster social bonds or to achieve results in competition at all levels, and can contribute to creating jobs and economic growth and recovery, especially in poorly developed areas. (as cited in Geosport for Society, 2018, p. 72).

Sports reflect society, often being seen as a smaller representation of its "microcosm of society" (Anderson, 1996, p. 361). However, with the widespread practice of sports, racism has also emerged.

1.2 Insight into Racism

Racism is the idea of judging individuals based on their skin colour, background, and religion (Vocabulary.com, n.d.). Racism has always been present in every aspect of life and is directed towards specific groups such as: indigenous people, Black communities, Asians and Arabs/Muslims. The emergence of the concept of 'race' occurred in the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries (Saeed, 2011, p. 601). In addition, racism as defined by Oxford dictionary, includes the failure to acknowledge an individual's rights, needs, dignity based on geographical origins. Additionally, it mentions how certain characteristics or intelligence traits are unfairly stereotyped as typical of particular ethnic groups (Mustad, 2021, p. 10).

Furthermore, racism can have various definitions. In the article "Racism in Sports: A Question of Ethics," the author defines racism as "the transformation of race prejudice through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior, by individuals and institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire culture" (Anderson, 1996. p. 358). This definition shows that racism goes beyond individual biases to include systemic structures that support discrimination. Although racism can manifest in diverse forms, including differences in religion,

nationality, and skin colour, the subsequent analysis will narrow its focus to explore racial discrimination directed towards Black individuals and communities in sports. Thus, it is important to understand this broader perspective to address racism effectively in sports, as it involves personal beliefs, institutional practices, and cultural values, and to understand current discrimination, it is essential to examine its historical roots.

2 Exploring the Root of Racial Discrimination in Sport

Racial discrimination in sports has deep roots emerging from social issues, with Black players facing aggressive racist taunts. Colonial history and slavery, economic factors, racial purity fear and immigration all contribute to the enduring presence of racism.

2.1.1 Colonialism and Slavery

Europeans use the term race to justify colonialism and slavery. Racism was used as a justification for colonial expansion and as a means of subjugating indigenous populations. Racism is considered as a result of colonialism, and it also had an impact on sports teams and organisations. Indigenous populations were often marginalised from participating in sports (viaSport, 2023).

The historical formation of racial ideologies during colonialism was closely tied to the exploitation of African slave labour, leading to the development of racist beliefs and social hierarchies. Anthony Bogues, Professor of Humanities and Critical Theory and Professor of Africana Studies, as well as the Director of the Center of the Study of Slavery and Justice, in an interview (2014) stated:

When people begin to think about race, what you are calling upon is an understanding that has been historically formed, so when colonialism... The first phase of colonialism—in the 1400s emergence, it had a slave labour, African slave labour. In that process of using African slave labour, colonialism

and developing racial slavery, developed notions of racism and racial hierarchies to suit the racial slavery that they had in part as a justification.

Colonialism played a significant role in shaping racial ideologies by relying on African slave labour, which facilitated the emergence of racial slavery. This exploitation justified the subjugation of Africans and reinforced the belief in racial superiority among colonial powers. As a result, racial hierarchies were established, with Europeans at the top and African slaves at the bottom.

Moreover, slavery is considered one of the major reasons for racism. Throughout history, the British Empire was involved in slave trading around the mid-1500s and did not eliminate slavery until 1833. The British Empire involvement in the slave trade is a significant factor contributing to racism (Mustad, 2021, p.11). Therefore, the historical context of colonialism and slavery has contributed to deeply ingrained racial prejudices and discriminatory behaviours that continue to manifest in various sport contexts.

2.1.2 Economic Factors

Limited access to money and resources in underprivileged countries make it hard for people to access sports. They may not have good facilities or be able to afford to join teams. Additionally, the cost of participating in sports leagues and travelling to competitions can be a barrier for families with lower incomes (Orima Research, 2021).

In a student research paper titled "It's No Secret, It's Racism," Duffey (Rowley & Graham, 1999, quoted in 2018) emphasises that the influence of socioeconomic factors is very important for the sports participation of individuals, especially among young athletes. This highlights the impact of economic disparities on the accessibility of certain sports for different racial groups and stresses that a person's economic situation strongly influences the sports they can participate in. Consequently, economic barriers intersect with systemic racism in sport, continuing

disparities and limiting opportunities for participating and advancement among racial minorities (Duffey, 2018).

2.1.3 Immigration and Racial Purity Fears

The phenomenon of racism is also influenced by immigration, where economic factors playing a significant role. Immigrants from various countries migrate to the west including the United States and Europe, often migrate in search of better job opportunities and social advancement (Canoy et al., 2006). However, within this migration process, athletes from different ethnic backgrounds may encounter racial discrimination. This issue has historical roots, as seen in the shift from viewing immigrants as nomads to recognising migration primarily as an economic matter rather than a cultural one, particularly evident after the 1930s. This shift coincided with increased population movements from continental and colonial areas to industrial centres (Silverstein, 2005, p. 370). For instance, athletes like Patrick Vieira, a retired professional footballer from Senegal who immigrates to Europe with hopes of joining a professional team, he was subjected to racial abuse in his career, particularly during his time playing for Italy. This exemplifies how racial discrimination can affect individuals within the realm of sports despite their talents.

Moreover, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a journalist and writer, suggests that immigration can cause fears about racial purity and cultural blending, leading to tensions seen in race riots, she has asserted that:

Behind such uprisings [race riots], a fear of pollution of alleged racial purity circulates, an age-old discourse that always sees the other as a threat to the bloodlines of the national stock, and racial mixture and hybridity, one result of the meeting of different peoples, as an inevitable degradation of the nation (Mustad, 2021, p. 12).

Alibhai-Brown's idea shows how immigration can make people anxious about mixing cultures and races, which can lead to conflicts like race riots. This highlights the importance of addressing immigration issues in a way that promotes unity and understanding. By recognizing the impact of immigration on racial tensions.

3 Racial Discrimination in the World of Sports: Forms of Racism

In sports, racism takes on various forms like discrimination, verbal abuse, and insulting chants. These instances highlight the persistent problem of racial prejudices in sports. Systemic racism, on the other hand, goes deeper as when this discrimination is built into the very structures, policies, and practices of sports organisations. This leads to unfair treatment and fewer opportunities for certain racial groups, making it harder for them to participate and succeed in the sporting world.

3.1.1 Unequal Opportunity and Treatment

Throughout the history of sports in the United States, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian athletes have faced barriers that prohibited their participation and limited their opportunities in accessing sports due to incidents of racism. For instance, both Jack Johnson and Jackie Robinson faced unequal opportunity and treatment due to their race, Jack Johnson made history as the first African American heavyweight champion in 1908, overcoming significant racial barriers in the sport (Garcia,2023). Moreover, Black athletes were prohibited from joining professional and white teams until Jackie Robinson broke the barrier in 1947 by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers (Jackie Robinson, n.d.). Therefore, this discrimination in sports, highlighting the widespread segregation and racist attitudes prevalent in both sports and society during the 1870s and 1880s, as evident in the banning of Black players from playing on white teams (Horton, 2014).

3.1.2 Racist Insults and Slurs

Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) players have been subjected to racist comments, verbal abuse, and insulting cheers from fans and media. For instance, after the

African American boxer Marvin Hagler won against the British boxer Alan Minter on September 29, 1980, opposing fans expressed their discontent by throwing trash at the ring (Dyer, 2023, p. 53).

Additionally, in 1992, Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott made a racial comment towards Black players such as "million-dollar niggers" and added that she would "rather have a trained monkey working for me than a nigger" (Anderson, 1996, p. 362). These incidents show the pervasive nature of racial discrimination in sports. Moreover, a French footballer Lilian Thuram shares instances from his personal experience of being subjected to racial abuse and monkey noises while playing (Gasparini & Talleu, 2010, p. 6).

3.1.3 Exclusion from Positions of Leadership

In 1970 Black individuals faced barriers in accessing leadership roles, like coaching and management in sports organisations. Despite desegregation on the playing field, it did not translate into equal opportunities for Blacks in the command levels of power within these organisations (Phillips, 1997). This systemic discrimination continued although Black athletes were allowed to compete with white athletes, they still encountered exclusion to hold positions of power and decision making within these organisations.

3.1.4 Racial Stereotypes

Racial stereotypes also persist, highlighting the continued existence of racism in sport. In 1988, on Martin Luther King Day, during an interview, CBS football commentator Jimmy "The Greek" Snyder was inquired about the role of Blacks in football, Snyder stated that Black people are naturally better athlete because of their breeding, like their big thighs and size (Anderson, 1996, p. 362). Snyder's statements reflect rooted stereotypes in sports, attributing athletic powers to inherent racial traits and preserving discriminatory beliefs. In addition, he commented that the lack of Blacks in coaching was because "all the players are Black; the only thing that the whites' control is the coaching jobs" (p. 362). Moreover, in his book *Sport and Discrimination in Europe: The*

Perspectives of Young European Research Workers and Journalists (2010), William Gasparini highlights the stereotypical characteristics of individuals of different races. According to Gasparini (2010):

Racism is based on two dimensions: the inferiority of persons belonging to what are claimed to be different races, and the specific intellectual, physical and emotional characteristics of persons of different “races.” People often say that “Blacks are good at sport,” which is a racist opinion, but does not prevent “Blacks” from being invited to join sports clubs. (p. 14)

3.2 Football

Football, or soccer in the American context, is a collective sport played in a stadium roughly 7000m² in size. It involves a referee, supporters, and two teams. Each team wears unified coloured suits, with about 7 substitute players and eleven main players. One player serves as the goalkeeper to prevent the opposing team from scoring goals. The other players are divided into defence, midfield for playmaking, and strikers for goal attempts. The game lasts ninety minutes, divided into two halves, with a few additional minutes for substitutions and stoppage time. The final matches or ranking matches in the champions; if they end in draw, go to the additional halves each of them lasts for fifteen minutes and it may go to penalty kicks to determine the winner team. There are national, continental, and international federations who manage the game and rules to regulate the way of playing (Twinkl, n.d.).

3.2.1 Is This Game Always Peaceful and Amusing?

Since football is the most popular game in the world this means that it captivates millions of fans around the world. As the fans are keen on football; they choose their favourite team to represent them in the different leagues and champions.

In each game, there are two groups of spectators who have an equal number of seats in the stands, each group supports their preferable team. These biases, intense enthusiasm and the strong will to win lead to negative behaviours in the stadium like hooliganism, physical and verbal violence and various kinds of racism towards the players by the referees or the fans especially when their team loses. Football is an industry driven by emotions. Fans experience many different emotions related to their teams. Therefore, emotions shape fan behaviour (Shakina, Gasparetto, & Barajas, 2020).

Racism affects all societal fields, including sports, with football being one of the most significant examples. Players in football have suffered racism throughout history and continue to face it in recent years.

3.2.2 Contradictions in Football

According to a report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2015), football presents a paradox regarding racism and discrimination. While FIFA's (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) expansive representation highlights global cultural diversity, football also serves as merit-based platform where individuals can present their ability regardless of background. Despite the sport's promotion of fair play and mutual respect through consistent enforcement of rules and penalties, incidents of racism and discrimination persist.

The report points out that football's ability to present diversity and provide equal opportunities contrasts with the ongoing problem of racism and discrimination within the sport. It stresses the need for continuing efforts to address and overcome these issues.

3.2.3 The Beginnings of Racism in Football

Racism is an old phenomenon that has raised with football since the beginning of its popularity in the early 20th century. It has been always a hot topic in football: "Discrimination on

racist grounds has existed in football since the sport started becoming globally popular during the nineteenth and beginning of twentieth century. Discrimination was expressed, mainly in countries where ethnic diversity was a daily and visible phenomenon” (UNESCO, 2015).

With the foundation of Football Association (FA) in 1863 in England, the white race was the dominant one since the game was followed by the white working-class men mostly from the increased number of the created industrial cities. White people secured their dominance of professional football, as the presence of the Black players was very limited. However, notable figures such as Arthur Wharton in the late nineteenth century, Walter Tull in the early twentieth century, and Charlie Williams in the 1950s emerged as exceptions to this trend, challenging racial barriers and making significant contributions to the sport (Cleland & Cashmore, 2013).

The UNESCO report (2015) claimed that one of the main reasons which makes the presence of discrimination and racism stronger in football than other sports is its unique existence in the media and “visibility” or “echo” to groups and individuals who seek public outlets for discriminatory and racist attitudes; some of these groups might shift to other sports if these guaranteed a similar or even higher level of resonance.

The most common and easily identifiable forms of racism in football are those directed at Black players. Other issues include abuse on the basis of background directed at, for example, Muslims, Jews or the Roma community. It is also mirrored in football through the lack of equal representation of minorities in the game; the systematic exclusion of Roma communities at all levels of the game is one example. (UEFA, 2006)

In an interview made with the French footballer Lilian Thuram, when he was asked about the difference between racism and discrimination, he replied: “People may suffer discrimination for being short, tall, Italian, black, female, etc., and not just for their skin colour.

Discrimination is more general, but, like racism, it applies a hierarchy and separates out certain population groups regarded as inferior” (Gasparini, W. & Talleu, C., 2010, p .8).

3.3 Racism in Professional Football and Some Famous Cases Around the World

Since football is a worldwide popular game, it is evident that it is played through different events that can be international, continental or national which take place in all the world’s countries and continents, these events or games comprise local clubs and national teams. Therefore, it includes multiple cultures and believes; it is also a space of different positive and negative views and attitudes including the most significant phenomenon which is racism, especially in the popular strongest leagues in the world such as: the Italian league “Serie A,” the Spanish league “la Liga,” the German “Bundesliga,” and the English “Premier League.”

3.3.1 Incidents from World Cups

In the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, the game between Germany and Ghana in the context of international sports events highlights the persistence of racial discrimination, as evidenced by reported incidents of German supporters painting their faces black, revealing a lack of awareness or consideration for the offensive nature of their actions (UNESCO, 2015, p. 24). The incidents of German fans painting their faces black during the game are worrying examples of racism in sports. It is important to realize how wrong these actions are and teach people to stop them.

In the 2022 World Cup final in Qatar, France lost to Argentina on penalties. After the match, French Black players of African descent, including Kingsley Coman and Aurelien Tchouameni who missed penalty kicks, and Kolo Muani who missed a crucial scoring chance, faced racist abuse on social media by their supporters. Some commentators even called for Kingsley Coman to "go to Africa," using derogatory language like "monkeys" and "slaves." The players had to remove the offensive comments from their accounts themselves (Hill, 2022).

This event reminds us that racism is still a big problem and never left the sport till now and sports organizations, governments, and society should work together to make sure everyone can participate in sports without facing discrimination or abuse.

3.3.2 Famous Cases from European Leagues

In La Liga, the cases of the Brazilian players Dani Alves and Vinicius Junior both exemplify incidents of racism in football. Dani Alves's reaction to a banana being thrown at him by a Villarreal fan during a match showcased defiance and garnered widespread support. His decision to eat the banana symbolized resilience against racial abuse (legal 500, 2020). Similarly, Vinicius Junior faced racial acts from three fans, they were fined 5,000 Euros and banned for a year for making racist gestures during a match between Real Madrid and Valencia on May 21, 2023 (BBC, 2023).

In Serie A, the Kalidou Koulibaly case exposed the persistent issue of racism in Italian football. The racial chants directed at Koulibaly during a match between Napoli and Inter emphasized the widespread occurrence of discrimination in stadiums. Serie A's decision to punish Inter by playing in an empty stadium for subsequent home fixtures demonstrated the seriousness of the incident and the league's commitment to tackling racism (legal 500, 2020). These cases stress the need to keep working to end discrimination and make football more inclusive.

Conclusion

The first chapter of the dissertation goes into the deep-rooted history of discrimination and racism. It highlights these issues in sports, specifically in football, with examples from different leagues and World Cups. The chapter also explores the impact of racism in the sporting world and the efforts made to address these challenges before moving to the focus of this dissertation which is racism in English Football League.

CHAPTER TWO

Racism in The English Football League

Chapter Two: Racism in The English Football League

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Introduction

The second chapter of this dissertation explores the prevalence of racism in English football, comparing recent incidents with those from previous seasons. It examines discrimination against, non-English Black players such as Paul Pogba and Wilfried Zaha as well as English Black players like Raheem Sterling and Marcus Rashford. The chapter also discusses barriers faced by Black players in coaching roles. Furthermore, it addresses the role of institutions and organisations such as Kick It Out and Black Lives Matter movement that have a significant impact on combating racism in English football.

1 Discrimination and Racism in English Football League (EFL)

Discrimination and racism in the English Football League have deeply affected the Black players. This section explores the historical context, changes over the years, recent incidents and the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reducing racism within the league.

1.1 History of Racism against Black Players in English Football since the 19th Century

According to Preston and Szymanski (2000), the existence of the Black players in English football goes back to the 19th century, until the 1970s they were rare in England. Even other foreign players were not attracted to engage in the English game, apart after the 1978 World Cup for a short period. Thus, the number of Black players started to increase in the English game due to the immigration policies in the 1950s and 1960s:

The playing environment began to change, however, with an increasing number of black players from the late 1970s and early 1980s. British-born black footballers including Viv Anderson, Garth Crooks, Cyrille Regis, Laurie Cunningham and John Barnes became prominent figures, but they were not well received by sections of the largely populated white supporter base (even by some of those

supporting the team they played for). Although some supporters accepted black players, other sections of the football crowd – at the time including those affiliated with neo-Nazi and National Front organizations – were less welcoming with frequent monkey noises, overt racial chants and the throwing of bananas aimed in their direction. (Back, Solomos, & Crabbe, 2001; Garland & Rowe, 2001 as cited in Cashmore and Celand, 2013, p. 3)

1.2 Impact of Racism on Players of the English Football League

Racism in EFL has a significant impact on players. It effects players in various ways, from affecting their psychological and mental health to performance, and overall well-being.

1.2.1 Psychological Effects on Players Experiencing Racial Abuse

Experiencing racial abuse in the realm of sports, particularly within the English football league, impacts players' psychological well-being. The discrimination and mistreatment that players face lead to psychological problems such as depression, sadness, anxiety and stress and this may affect their performance, resulting in some athletes leaving the sport and not returning (Brown et al., n.d., p. 34). For example, in a recent interview, the Tottenham defender Danny Rose mentioned he is looking forward to retiring due to ongoing racist abuse (Arab News, 2024).

1.2.2 Impact on Mental Health and Well-being

Racism in the English football league has significantly affected the mental health and well-being of players, leading some to drop out of sports and suffer emotional harm. Racial discrimination causing isolation damage for marginalized athletes and turning to substance abuse due to their traumatic experiences (Robinson & Smith, 2024).

A football player – who used Galatasaray as pseudonym in the interview – expressed a loss of motivation to face racism in sports, he said: "I'm a little tired of being vocal and fighting. I'm burned out on that... I'm not going to spend my personal time where I need to de-stress, stressing...

I don't put up a fight anymore" (Brown et al., 2021, p.35). His statement sheds light on the effect of racism on athletes' well-being, and reflects his experiences of feeling exhaustion from being subjected to and combating racism in sports.

1.3 The Persistence of Racist Abuse in EFL in The Recent Years of the 21st Century

The English football was and still a home of different racist abuses since its beginning and throughout its history up to the recent years despite the widespread initiatives against racism, the sanctions, penalties' rules, strict laws, interaction of cultures and dissemination of tolerance culture because of the media and the new technologies. According to the UK Parliament (2021),

Racist abuse continues to blight English football. The three England players [Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka] who missed a penalty in the UEFA Euro 2020 final were subject to online racist abuse from supporters after the match. To mark Black History Month 2021.

According to *The Guardian* (2020), statistics indicate that there were over 150 reported incidents of racist abuse during the 2018/2019 season. Home Office figures indicate an increase of over 50 % on the last year (2019) and the number has doubled compared to the statistics from the last three seasons.

The figures, revealed by Home Office minister Susan Williams, show three years of increases in reported incidents across England and Wales, with a sharp rise from 98 to 152 between the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 seasons. Previously, there had been a decline in reported incidents of racially charged non-violent abuse, such as chanting or verbal intimidation, decreasing from 99 incidents in the 2013-14 season to 78 in 2014-2015, 68 in 2015-2016, and 70 in 2016-2017 (*The Guardian* 2020).

1.4 Do Racial Incidents' Statistics Recently Become Better or Worse?

The discriminatory behaviours' incidents, which have been reported to Kick It Out charity during the 2022/2023 season, raised to 65%, and racism was the most common type of discrimination which reached 49.1% about, this represents almost the half of all reports. On the other hand, online abuse reports raised from 74 to 281 (up by 279%).

The report was released one day after the second anniversary of the Euro 2020 final. In that match, England players Marcus Rashford, Bukayo Saka and Jadon Sancho faced online racist abuse after missing spot kicks in the final game against Italy, which England lost in a shootout (BBC, 2023).

2 Discrimination against Black Players in EFL

Discrimination against non-English Black Players is a persistent issue that has attracted significant attention in recent years. These players experience racial abuse, including online and on-field incidents, as well as unfair treatment in media coverage and opportunities.

2.1 Discrimination against Non-English Black Players

Non-English Black players have been exposed to the racist abuse during or after the matches of the EPL, Paul Pogba and Wilfried Zaha exemplify these incidents

2.1.1 Paul Pogba's Response to Racial Abuse in Football

French footballer Paul Pogba, aged 31 and of Guinean descent, who used to play for Manchester United, shared his views on racism in an interview: "I've experienced it and it's really sad to see that on the football pitch. The fans that do that, they have even Black people in their team, so to do something like that is really low" (Davey, 2019, para. 7). Pogba expressed sadness at witnessing racism on the football pitch, highlighting the paradox of fans displaying such behaviour despite having Black players in their own teams.

During a game against Fiorentina, Pogba shared an incident where fans made racist gestures. However, instead of reacting with anger, Pogba gave his shirt to one of the fans, leading to applause from the crowd (Davey, 2019).

Reflecting on his diverse cultural background, Pogba emphasised his contentment with embracing different cultures throughout his life. He said: "I'm sad about it, I'm not angry. I'm happy with myself. I have a Chinese friend, an Italian agent, a Brazilian lawyer, a Bolivian wife, I'm French and Guinean. All my life it's a different culture" (Davey, 2019).

In August 2019, when Paul Pogba was playing for Manchester United, during Manchester United's match against Wolverhampton F.C., he faced racial abuse on Twitter (now X) after missing a penalty. Pogba responded to similar abuse by sharing a photo on social media featuring himself, his son, his late father, and Martin Luther King Jr., conveying a message of solidarity against racism. The player wrote on his Instagram account:

My ancestors and my parents suffered for my generation to be free today, to work, to take the bus, to play football. Racist insults are ignorance and can only make me stronger and motivate me to fight for the next generation (Stad Al Doha, 2020).

This incident created a wider conversation about racism in sports, with English Sports Minister Nigel Adams agrees that social media platforms should do more to prevent racist attacks, "We have been clear that social media companies must do more and the government will hold them to account" (Negley, 2019).

In response to the abuse suffered by Pogba, Manchester United denounced the abuse as "disgusting" and demanded action from social media sites. The club promoted its "#allredallequal" campaign on Twitter and reiterated its commitment to combating racism and discrimination on its

website, stating: "Manchester United has no tolerance for any type of racism or discrimination" (Negley, 2019).

2.1.2 Wilfried Zaha from a Victim to Fighter

Crystal Palace forward of Ivorian descent Wilfried Zaha, released a video in which he called out Instagram and Twitter to oblige their users to provide their real personal information in order to create accounts on their platforms, enabling the identification of those people who dare to display racism and harm others with these unethical behaviours, saying:

Social platforms like Instagram and Twitter, to make change for people to not to do stuff and be held accountable for the stuff, they send everyone should put their proper details, to be able to create an account, so people don't get these messages. (Sky Sports Premier League, 2020)

New measures have been adopted by Instagram and Twitter in order to continue their efforts for combating the cases of abuse related to soccer in Britain. On the other side, Zaha responded: "I'll always be BLACK AND PROUD" said Crystal Palace's left winger, challenging racists, showing pride of himself, and disregarding the obstacles he faces in his career (Espn, 2021).

Wilfried Zaha has manifested that he wants to make a difference during his playing career in football, as he spoke openly about his charitable association and the impact that it has made around the world. He said: "Since I started playing when I got a proper, decent contract I've been giving 10% of my wages back [to charity]," he also talks about taking care of his sister's orphanage in addition to helping widows and kids with school clothes and school equipment when needed. additionally, Zaha has been transforming the lives of the youth in south London too through his academy of football, he said: "I've got a little football Academy that I've started here," he said. "Kids can come down and just enjoy playing football. It's every half-term or Easter break. Every now and then I'll pop by to see the kids as well" (FC, 2022).

This part shows that racism is directed at Non-English Black players, but the following part illustrates that it can occur even among English ones because of their skin colour.

2.2 Discrimination against English Black Players

Also the Black players with English nationality have not been spared from the racial discrimination the cases of Raheem Sterling and Marcus Rashford are among the most prominent ones.

2.2.1 Raheem Sterling Confronting Racism in Football

Raheem Sterling, 30 years old a professional footballer of Jamaican descent currently playing as a winger for Premier League club Chelsea, faced racial abuse during the Euro 2020 qualifier at Wembley in September 2019, as reported by Sky News. A Bulgaria supporter was ejected from the stadium after reports of discriminatory language, confirmed by an FA (Football Association) representative who stated that the individual was subsequently arrested for the abuse (Sky News, 2019). Sterling expressed his disappointment, pointing out:

It's a real shame to be coming somewhere to be reminded of what skin colour you are, or what you resemble. I know what colour I am. It's just a shame that some people think it's cool to make fun of you for it. (Sky News, 2019)

This honest reflection reveals Sterling's personal experience with racial discrimination and his determination to challenge such attitudes and behaviours.

Following the incident, Sterling called for consequences, resulting in UEFA's (Union of European Football Association) Control, Ethics, and Disciplinary Body ruling that the Football Association of Montenegro's upcoming match must be played behind closed doors (Sky News, 2019).

In an interview with the UN Human Rights Office, Manchester City football star Raheem Sterling shared his experience with racism. He described how, upon moving to Liverpool, he experienced racial abuse during a school football game when someone used a racial slur towards him. This incident led to a confrontation, marking his first shocking experience with racism at the time (Sterling, 2020).

Sterling (2020) emphasised the universality of discrimination, stating, "Discrimination is discrimination. It doesn't matter if it's your sexuality or your colour; you shouldn't discriminate at all." Sterling highlights his belief in the fundamental principle of equality and his stance against all forms of discrimination, regardless of the basis on which it occurs.

Moreover, during England's 4-0 World Cup qualifying victory against Hungary in September 2021, Raheem Sterling faced unsettling moments as certain sections of the Puskas Arena reportedly directed monkey chants towards him (Robson, 2021). The situation escalated when, after scoring the opening goal for his team, Sterling encountered a barrage of plastic cups thrown towards him (Maltby, 2021).

Subsequently, the Football Association (FA) issued a statement expressing deep disappointment regarding reports of discriminatory behaviour towards England players. They announced their intention to seek an investigation by FIFA into the matter and reaffirmed their full support for the players and staff in their collective effort to address and combat all forms of discrimination (Robson, 2021).

Raheem Sterling responded with a resolute message on his Twitter account, displaying his determination and strength in the face of adversity: "HEADSTRONG." Raheem Sterling's short message shows how determined the players are in standing up against discrimination.

2.2.2 Marcus Rashford is More Than a Footballer

Marcus Rashford is an EPL's English player who suffered racism abuse repeatedly. One in 2021 after missing a penalty kick against the Italian national team during the final match of the Euro 2020 at Wembley stadium. (Morse, 2021). Rashford wrote on his Twitter account: "At least 70 racial slurs on my social accounts counted so far. For those working to make me feel any worse than I already do, good luck trying" (Rashford, 2021).

Rashford MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) is a football player who plays as a forward for Premier League club Manchester United and the national team of England. Besides being a professional player, he formed the Child Food Poverty Taskforce, a group of more than 15 organisations including FareShare as a founder. As an activist, Rashford leads a new task force on child food poverty in collaborative agreement with supermarkets and suppliers after he successful attempts to force the Government into a U-turn on free school meal voucher (BlackLivesMatter.UK, n.d.).

After being attacked on social media with racist messages and comments. Hundreds of people gathered on the street to support Rashford and repaired a mural of him that was defaced (after Euro 2020 final match) and removed racist graffiti. Marcus fans post supportive and love messages on his mural.

2.3 Racism against Blacks in Coaching and Managing

Black coaches are significantly lacking representation in the top league of England, although there have been a few remarkable instances who managed to reach significant achievements in coaching and managing level. The first Black manager in EFL history was Tony Collins, where he was the trainer of Rochdale in 1960 and he made a significant achievement when he led them to the 1962 League Cup final and that was their only appearance in the final. Since then, and after more than fifty years, Black managers continue to be the minority in English football,

including the Premier League, particularly when taking into account the large number of Black professional players who play football at the highest level of English football.

The number of Black managers that have coached Premier League clubs is low. Just about breaching double figures. As of the 2023/24 campaign, the total number was just 11 black managers in the history of the Premier League, and this number is exaggeratedly little (Goal, 2023).

2.3.1 Ricky Hill: The Underrated Talent

Ricky Hill, the player who used to play for the English national soccer team is habituated to making sacrifices and moving far in order to catch a rare chance of managing, he dreamt of creating his coaching career, an effort that has been stymied because he is Black, said Hill (Robson, 2024).

Racism has deeply penetrated the world's most popular sport, with players subjected to racist chants and slurs online. Although football governing bodies like FIFA and UEFA have made efforts to address player abuse, the lack of diversity in the high positions and making it restricted to a certain group at major clubs; keeps the problem unsolved (Robson, 2024).

Hill was among the first generation of Black players in England when he was young in the 1970s, and claims that he routinely faced racist abuse from fans when he played for Luton Town as he said: "You would hear songs about you, see people spitting, that kind of vitriolic behaviour", he affirms that racism has prevented his continuous pursuit to achieve his top-flight coaching dream, moreover, he believes that as Black and diverse individuals, suffered the absence of chances which create a difficulty for them to show their actual worth as coaches or managers. On the other side, the diversity in boardrooms is lacking, and this may be the root of the problem (Robson, 2024).

A leadership diversity code launched in 2020 by the English FA, it set hiring targets in order to tackle inequality. However, its latest report in November 2023 said workforce representation still does not display the diversity among players. The report said, 9% of senior

leaders, 11% of team operations, 16% of coaches and 9% of senior coaches were Black, Asian or of mixed heritage as of the previous season hires (Robson, 2024).

3 Institutions/Organizations Combating Racism

Organizations fighting racism aim to end discrimination and promote equality, creating inclusive environments for everyone.

3.1 Kick It Out

Kick It Out was founded by Lord Herman Ouseley in 1993 with the primary goal of combating racism in football. In 1997, their scope expanded to address all forms of discrimination, including homophobia, ableism, sexism, and misogyny (Kick It Out, n.d.). Kick It Out has played a pivotal role in encouraging inclusivity and combating discrimination within English football. Paul Elliott, Chairman of the FA's Inclusion Advisory Board, commented: "Kick It Out have been a catalyst for the change in English football both on and off the pitch and we're delighted to celebrate their inspirational work in promoting football for all" (Kick It Out, 2018). Moreover, to show widespread support and acknowledgment within the football community for the organisation's efforts, players frequently wear branded t-shirts supporting the organisation, which is backed and funded by the FA, Premier League, and EFL (Kick It Out, 2018).

Kick It Out organisation has five main objectives to achieve. These objectives include promoting awareness of the advantages of implementing equality, inclusion, and diversity policies and practices in football. Additionally, they aim to expose and confront all forms of discrimination and unjust behaviour across all levels of football. Another goal is to share examples of effective strategies aimed at achieving equality and fair results. Kick It Out also provides assistance to individuals, groups, clubs, and authorities to take action themselves to promote equality and fairness. Lastly, they strive to increase awareness and acceptance of Kick It Out's initiatives and its supportive role as a positive influence in football (Kick It Out, 2018).

For the past thirty years, Kick It Out has collaborated with the EFL, EFL clubs, and other stakeholders in the football community to instigate change within the sport and society at large (EFL, 2023).

Kick It Out focuses its efforts on four main areas: policy, reporting, education, and grassroots, with dedicated teams for each to achieve their goals, all driven by data (Kick It Out, n.d.). The organisation has actively advocated for important changes in football policies, including amendments to the Online Safety Bill and they have also emphasized the importance of culture and representation in football policies and called for more transparency in the industry to promote diversity and inclusivity. Their reporting team actively fights discrimination in football across stadiums, online platforms, and grassroots settings. They partner with the UK Football Policing Unit to investigate reports and work with football authorities to hold individuals accountable through legal actions, bans, and educational efforts. In the area of education Kick it out leads in delivering bespoke restorative justice programs to hundreds of fans yearly and reaching thousands of Academy players nationwide. Their online education platform, The Academy, targets learners of all levels, from school-age to politicians and club management. Additionally, Kick It Out's expanding grassroots team is supporting an important aspect of football and raising awareness through their Equality Charter program for clubs and leagues (Kick It Out, n.d.).

3.2 Black Lives Matter Movement

In response to the tragic death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black American, who died under the knee of a white police officer for nearly nine minutes in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 25, the Premier League made a unified decision. This decision was to express solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and the broader movement for racial equality (Sky Sports, 2020).

On its official website, the EPL expressed its stand on the matter, stating that in an extraordinary gesture, players from all 20 Premier League clubs joined forces to express solidarity

with the message of Black Lives Matter. The Premier League promoted its request to replace players' names on the back of their uniforms with 'Black Lives Matter' and to display the Black Lives Matter logo on their match shirts. This decision was made to demonstrate support for the Black community, as well as to raise awareness of the inequalities and injustices faced by this community, as stated by the FA Staff (The FA, 2020).

Furthermore, in line with the Black Lives Matter movement, the Premier League released a statement announcing: "The Premier League stands alongside players, clubs, the FA, EFL, PFA [Professional Football Association], LMA [League Managers Association], PGMOL [Professional Game Match Officials Limited] and all those who oppose discrimination in any form" (Ogden, 2020). Additionally, the Premier League has approved the display of "Black Lives Matter" on the back of shirts instead of players' names. Moreover, the group of Premier League captains issued a statement voicing their determination to stand for equality and inclusion: "We, the Players, stand together with the singular objective of eradicating racial prejudice wherever it exists, to bring about a global society of inclusion, respect, and equal opportunities for All, regardless of their colour or creed" (Ogden, 2020). This symbolic gesture marked the beginning of the league visible commitment to the cause.

Subsequently, the campaign continued to evolve as the league introduced a slogan logo on the right side of the uniform, further solidifying their stance against racism. Moreover, the EPL steps in supporting Black Lives Matter were clear and effective. They began by changing player names on jerseys, then added a logo, and encouraged players to kneel in solidarity (Yubel & Reuspatyono, 2022). These actions showed their commitment to fighting racism in football.

Raheem Sterling sees the Premier League's approval of the Black Lives Matter demonstrations, such as players and officials taking a knee before games, as a significant move towards shifting the country's awareness on the matter and sees it as a positive sign of progress and

suggests that change is happening, step by step, "It's a massive step for the Premier League to allow something like that to happen. It shows we are going in the right direction. Little by little, we are seeing change" (Sterling, 2020).

4 How to Fight Racism as Individuals?

People around the world can make changes in the matter of racism through following the suggested recommendations and solutions.

4.1 Recommendations to Tackle Racism

According to the historian Ibram. X. Kendi (2019), "ANTIRACIST: One who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea," he added: "being an antiracist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination." Fighting racism is an important issue that all people must combine in order to make this work successful and effective, since these actions help in creating a better environment including: quality among people, spreading justice and peace in the diverse and inclusive communities, building a tolerant and cohesive society and encouragement of innovation and progress through the collective work by individuals from different backgrounds. Here are some suggestions and recommendations to do so.

4.2 Five Ways to Fight Hate and Discrimination

According to the UNICEF organisation, one of the effective ways is to celebrate other cultures by expressing support for the different ethnic groups and encouraging diversity in your community. In addition to calling out bigotry and hate speech that means if you overhear someone tell a racist joke, speak up and let them know stereotyping is harmful. Encourage children and push them to uphold the truth with a loud voice. If you are a parent or responsible for children in any way, teach them kindness and how to talk about differences. That is to be a good example. The process of tolerance and countering negatives with positives begins at an early age by talking about

differences in a good way without bullying, these do not increase prejudice in children. It will be helpful if you act in solidarity, and intervene if it is safe to do so. Hence, if you see someone being harassed or exposed^v to a physical attack, it is important to help if you can do so safely, make your presence as a witness known. Furthermore, people should support human rights organisations like UNICEF, all people must live in solidarity. Human rights are a collective promise made by all countries of the world; every person deserves to be treated as human and feels that their existence is valuable (Ferguson, 2023).

4.3 The Role of Education in Tackling Racism in Sports

Firstly, education in sports should show to young athletes that talent knows no boundaries by promoting the achievements of athletes from diverse backgrounds this sends a powerful message. Secondly, athletes and coaches should take compulsory anti-racism training if they are part of a sports club. By doing so, individuals will figure out and appreciate the existed differences in culture within sports teams and fan bases as well as challenging racism in all walks of life. Thirdly, it is commonly known that media influences the public understanding, including the representation of sports. Education programs for sports journalists, broadcasters and even fans, can help them identify and confront their unconscious biases. Fourthly, sports organisations in the UK should actively engage with anti-racism campaigns and initiatives by striking partnerships with organisations like Kick It Out and Show Racism the Red Card, which are dedicated to eliminating racism in football and other sports. Schools and sports clubs can support these initiatives through educational workshops and awareness campaigns. Fifthly, organisations of sports should collaborate with local communities, aiming at promoting diversity and inclusion. This can be achieved through activities, workshops (online and in-person), and events that push underrepresented groups to take a part in sports and feel that they are not less important than others in sporting environments. Finally, sport clubs should reinforce a zero-tolerance policy for racism in sports. They should build mature

athletes, coaches, and fans aware of the results of racist behaviour, that can be fines, bans and suspensions (Rhys, 2022).

Conclusion

The second chapter of the dissertation provides a detailed analysis of racism within the Premier League, showing case studies of players who have faced and endured racial discrimination. It explains the impact of movements like Black Lives Matter and organizations such as Kick It Out in raising awareness and making change against racism in football. The chapter concludes by offering insightful suggestions and strategies aimed at tackling racism effectively within the Premier League and the broader football community, emphasising the importance of education and collective actions to enhance equality in sport.

General Conclusion

Racism in sports is a deeply rooted and complex issue especially in the English Football League that represents one of the top leagues in the world of football which gathers players from different parts of the world with diverse backgrounds. This phenomenon needs to be further studied with significant attention and concentrated efforts in order to come up with a valuable change.

This dissertation explored various aspects of racism in EFL, went in depth of the historical roots of this phenomenon in the past in the different areas of life and then in sports in general ending with the English Football League examining recent racial incidents and the efforts of several initiatives, organizations and associations to tackle these inhuman actions.

The analysis of the chosen case studies, interviews, and previous researches showed evidently that racism, in the realm of sports, is directed at athletes for several reasons. It affects English football continually despite the progress in different areas, footballers of diverse backgrounds, particularly Black players and players from various ethnic minorities receive racial abuse and slurs in forms of gestures, chants or other discriminatory expressions.

The findings illustrated the widespread nature of racism, and highlighted that it deeply affects the players' careers, well beings, and performance, leaving harmful stereotypes and oppressive practices within the game and beyond the field to affect the fans and the communities. Furthermore, the study elucidated some incidents that well-known players were exposed to, during their careers in Premier League focusing on the cases of Black players whether they are English or Non-English, using the qualitative method to analyse their activism, responses to the racist incidents, their fans support and interactions. This method helped in exploring how each player react and made public posts to illustrate the racist behaviours they experienced, and to raise their voices against racism in addition to the support of their teammates, it also addressed how fans react with those unethical behaviours that negatively affected the players and the league, which led them (fans)

to sympathize with their idol players for what they gave to the English Football and society through their charity and works with the initiatives.

Case study method penetrated into the perspectives of the players in addition to their role in addressing this issue and combating it, besides that the study provided insights within broader societal and institutional contexts, shedding a light on those players' experiences, reactions, their role as models and activists.

In the field of coaching and management, the dissertation focused on exploring the promotion of reform Black players as managers in the Premier League and the lack of opportunities for them to show their talent and qualification, showing how they prevented from being at the head of the top-listed clubs, because of making these positions limited to specific people rejecting the idea of "talent knows no boundaries" which can help empower the positive diversity.

The study directed the attention to how the world is fighting racism both individually and through the different organizations, initiatives and movements. The focus of the study was on Kick It Out initiative and Black Lives Matter movement, exploring their roles and how they work to be effective and able to make change in the world and in football in particular as well as the idea of adopting that issue by the fans and the other categories of people especially by white players, officials and managers who are considered as great influencers in the world of football. Additionally, the study investigated the recommendations that are proposed by international organizations and groups of experts focusing on the role of the adults in being good examples along with the education to build an aware generation that believes in equity, accepts inclusivity and supports diversity.

In conclusion, this study analysed racism in English football, focusing on the experiences and activism of players like Wilfried Zaha, Raheem Sterling, Paul Pogba, and Marcus Rashford. Despite the continuous efforts have been made incidents still occur. The study's

limitations were the focus on choosing limited number of players. Future researches ought to broaden the study, use various methodologies, and investigate the long-term impact of anti-racism campaigns and initiatives to generate more effective interventions.

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ملخص

يتناول هذا البحث موضوع العنصرية في الرياضة، وهو قضية ذات أهمية لغالبية الناس، وتركز بشكل خاص على كرة القدم، الرياضة التي تجذب عددًا كبيرًا من المشجعين من كلا الجنسين. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على جذور العنصرية في تاريخ الرياضة، ثم تخصص الدراسة للتركيز على انتشارها في الدوري الإنجليزي الممتاز. تستخدم الدراسة منهجية نوعية وتوظف أسلوب دراسة الحالة، حيث تحلل الحوادث والحالات التي تعرضت للتفرقة لأسباب مختلفة، مما يجعل اللاعبين تحت ضغط أشكال متنوعة من التمييز في الملاعب، بالإضافة إلى فحص ردود أفعالهم من خلال البيانات المجمعة من المؤتمرات الصحفية، والصفحات الرسمية للاعبين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وتصريحاتهم المبلغ عنها. تبرز النتائج مساهمة اللاعبين في تحدي التمييز والعنصرية من خلال رفع الوعي ونشاطهم أيضًا. بالإضافة إلى الدور المهم للرياضة في إظهار مثل هذه المواضيع الاجتماعية الحساسة كالعنصرية. تقيم الدراسة ردود الفعل المحيطة من زملاء اللاعبين والدوري الإنجليزي، لتختتم بإبراز الدور الحيوي للمنظمات والمبادرات المناهضة للعنصرية في مكافحة هذه الظاهرة غير الأخلاقية. علاوة على ذلك، تدعو الدراسة إلى تنفيذ القواعد التي يجب أن يتبناها الناس على الصعيد العالمي والمجتمع الإنجليزي للقضاء على هذه السلوكيات أو تحسينها داخل الملاعب والرياضة بشكل عام.

كلمات مفتاحية: البشرة السوداء، العنصرية، الدوري الإنجليزي لكرة القدم، كرة القدم.