

GENDER DISPARITY FOR WOMEN IN COLLEGIATE SPORT ADMINISTRATIVE
POSITIONS, EXAMINING CANDIDATE POOLS AND THE SELECTION PROCESS

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CAPSTONE ABSTRACT

Gender Disparity for Women in Collegiate Sport Administrative Position, Examining Candidate Pools and the Selection Process

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While Title IX has been monumental in creating more opportunities for females playing college sports, an unforeseen consequence of Title IX has been the decrease of women coaches and administrators at the collegiate level. Prior to Title IX, 90 percent of women's collegiate teams were coached by females; today that number is just 43 percent. What accounts for this decrease in the percentage of women coaches at the collegiate level? Research has suggested that there are cultural and social mechanisms in place, exposing the gender inequalities that women face in male dominate sport administrative positions. The focus of this inquiry is to examine the formation of candidate pools and the selection process and attempt to find solutions to a gendered balance workforce. Regardless of the cause, to what extent should college administrations be held accountable for responding to social influences on the gendered construction of their applicant pool, and what, if anything, should they do to incorporate changes to improve gender balance in athletic leadership?

INTRODUCTION

As a collegiate athlete in the 70s and 80s and now as a collegiate basketball coach, I find it interesting that, while there is widespread agreement that Title IX has been monumental in creating more opportunities for women playing college sports, its role in the simultaneous trend of a smaller proportion of administrative and coaching positions in collegiate sport held by women is less understood (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Collegiate sport is a multi-billion dollar industry where women no longer hold 90 percent of coaching positions for female teams, as they once did in 1970, prior to Title IX. This suggests that the significant increase in the number of female collegiate athletes has not changed perceptions that women in leadership positions are intruding on male domains. The challenges and obstacles for a gender balanced workplace and for the women seeking coaching and administrative positions in collegiate sport is the focus of this inquiry.

What accounts for the decrease in the percentage of women coaches at the college level since Title IX? R. Vivian Acosta, Ph.D. and Linda Jean Carpenter, Ph.D., JD, are Professors Emeritus, at the University of New York Brooklyn College. Their 2014 study, *Women in Intercollegiate Sport*, a longitudinal, national study solicits data from all National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member institutions that have a women's athletics program. According to their study, in 1972, 90 percent of all women's teams were coached by women; in 2014 that number was 43 percent, according to NCAA Research (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Title IX has opened doors for women sport through legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity, thus requiring collegiate institutions to provide

equal resources to both men and women's athletic programs. The result has been an enhanced interest and a significant increase in playing opportunities for female athletes. While men have become coaches of the increasing number of women's team, very few women have crossed the gender barrier to coach men's teams. So it appears, women have lost coaching opportunities, while playing opportunities have increased. Title IX was intended to eliminate gender discrimination in higher education and it has been favorable on the playing field for athletes, but ironically, in the coaching ranks the percentage of women coaches has sharply declined. Men are occupying the jobs once held by women. I will argue that these statistics are not unique to sport. The evidence suggests that there are underlying social and cultural mechanisms that contribute to this tendency since Title IX, not only in college athletics but in higher education generally. Great strides have been made for women's rights, and statistics show an increase not only in the number of women participating in college athletics but also as students in higher education. Today women earn more advanced degrees than their male peers (Higher Education Research Services [HERS]). Unfortunately, like athletics leadership positions, this also has not translated into more women in leadership roles in higher education institutions.

In order to examine the hiring of women for positions of leadership in what is or has come to be understood as, a mostly male domain, I will explore the formation of the candidate pool for coaching and administrative jobs, the hiring process, and the role that gender plays in these. Race can also be a significant factor in the hiring process, for the scope of this study I am delimiting my analysis to the gender of the applicant pool for collegiate coaching and administrative positions.

The academic disciplines of History and Sociology will offer different

perspectives. Examining the history of collegiate sport with respect to playing opportunities, coaching, and administrative positions will help to define the scope of changes. Understanding the social and cultural mechanisms will shed light on who gets into the applicant pool for coaching and administrative positions and who (and how) the selection process contributes to the declining proportion of women coaches and administrators. Regardless of the cause, to what extent should college administrations be held accountable for responding to social influences on the gendered construction of their applicant pool, and what, if anything, should they do to intentionally hire gender balanced athletic leadership?

HISTORY

On June 23, 1972, U.S. President Richard Nixon signed into law Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, this is Public Law No. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235 (June 23, 1972), codified at 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688. Title IX is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Title IX states that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Title IX has had a significant impact on females participating in sports.

Acosta and Carpenter’s *Women in Intercollegiate Sport* 2014 report, its thirty-seven year update (1977-2014), indicates that there are more intercollegiate female athletes than ever before. Participation in college sport is at an all-time high. In 1970, prior to Title IX, there were only 16,000 female collegiate athletes across the nation. In 2014 there were over 200,000 female athletes. In just the last 26 years (1998-2014) there were 3234 new collegiate athletic teams. That is, one out of three women’s collegiate teams existing in 2014 is new since 1998. The total of 9581 women’s teams is the highest to date (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Since 1970, when there were only 2.5 women’s varsity teams per school, the number of women’s teams has steadily increased. In 1980 there were 6.4 teams per school, 1990 7.24 teams per school, 2000 8.14, 2010 8.64, and according to Acosta and Carpenter’s *Women in Intercollegiate Sport* study in 2014 there were 8.83 women’s varsity teams per school.

Why is athletic participation in collegiate sport now so much more popular than before Title IX? Does society now embrace females as athletes? Has the legislation for

Title IX given women more opportunities due to the fear of lawsuits urging non-discriminatory treatment? Does the increase in media coverage allow young girls to aspire to also become an athlete? Answers to these questions are beyond the scope of my inquiry, but what is certain is that since Title IX there has been a tremendous increase in females participating in sport. One aspect that is obvious: With more varsity level sports offered to females today one would think that this would provide greater opportunity for women to fill these head coaching roles.

While Title IX has had a significant impact on females participating in sports, it appears that women are still faced with gender equality issues in coaching and athletic administration (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Title IX set out to provide more gender parity in higher education, although gender discrimination in sport participation has been greatly reduced, gender discrimination for leadership positions, and attitudes about female leadership has not seen similar results. Title IX simultaneously raised opportunity and the status of women's athletics, removing the "not real sports" stigma from the world of women's athletics, thereby altering the prestige of coaching women athletes. An unplanned consequence of Title IX has made it more attractive for men to coach women's teams.

According to the Acosta and Carpenter study, in 1970, prior to Title IX, 90 percent of women's teams were coached by women. In 1980 the percentage of women coaches dropped significantly to 54.2 percent. In 1990 that number continued to drop to 47.3 percent. With the new millennium in 2000, only 45.6 percent of collegiate women's teams were coached by women, and in 2010 the number hit an all-time low of 42.6 percent. A slight increase can be seen in 2014 with the latest report of 43.4 percent. This

should be disturbing to women today. Jobs, once held by women at a 90 percent rate, are now being filled by men, who are aggressively swarming to these jobs. In 2014 there were 4154 female coaches coaching women's collegiate teams while there were 5427 males coaching female collegiate teams. Males coach one-third more women's teams than do females and on the flip side only approximately 400 women are head coaches of the 8,500 men's teams (Lapchick, 2016).

What is even more surprising and alarming, is that since 2000 there were 2080 new women's collegiate teams, therefore 2080 new head coaching positions available. Of those 2080 positions, 1346 (64.7 percent) are now held by male coaches, and only 735 (35.3 percent) are held by females (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). These statistics should be upsetting to anyone, not just women, interested in or responsible for gender equity in higher education today. The NCAA.org reports that men's collegiate sports teams have also grown. In 1981 there were 6746 men's teams. That number grew to 6824 in 1990, 8057 in 2000, 8568 men's teams in 2010, and in the last report 8990 men's collegiate teams in 2014. Unfortunately, for advocates of gender balance in higher education, men have claimed these additional head coaching positions at a 97 percent rate.

Gender disparity at the administrative level of collegiate sport also has been affected since Title IX. Prior to 1972, 90 percent of female teams at the collegiate level had a female athletic administrator. The role of the athletic administrator for female teams was quite different from the role of the AD today. Most female athletic administrators worked in the physical education department and taught classes while also taking on the responsibilities of administering all of the women's programs. Many were also responsible for coaching a team or possibly two. By 1980 the number of female

athletic administrators dropped to 20 percent and by 1990 only 15.9 percent filled this role. Since 2000 there has been a steady increase in female leadership in administration at the collegiate level. In 2000, 17.8 percent of Athletic Directors were female and in 2010 that number grew to 19.3 percent. The Acosta & Carpenter report in 2014 indicates that 22.9 percent of women hold the title of Athletic Director. While these statistics appear on the surface to be trending in positive direction, the numbers are quite dismal and should make college administrators, presidents of colleges and universities, everyone, not just females, stop and take notice of the reality of the current situation for females who aspire, and have the qualifications, to be head administrators (athletic directors). The decrease in women athletic directors following the enactment of Title IX from 90 percent of women's teams to 22.9 percent of all athletic departments in 2014 was due to the elimination of separate women and men's athletic departments and the merging into just one athletic department for both men and women. This perhaps emphasizes the cultural notion that women have the ability to lead other women in athletics, but are viewed as unqualified or not preferred to lead male athletes. Females were about 57 percent of the students on college campuses in 2014. Females made up only 36 percent of the athletic administrative staffs and only 22.3 percent were Head Athletic Directors (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). To be clear this means that while 22.3 percent of Athletic Directors were female, 77.7 percent of Athletic Directors were male. Even more concerning is that 11.3 percent of colleges/universities have no female anywhere in their athletic administration. The history of sport and increasingly sport leadership positions are marked male.

Acosta and Carpenter argue that the ratio of male/female coaches is different if the Athletic Director (AD) is a male or female. In Division 1 if the AD is male there are 43 percent female coaches hired while if the AD is female that number jumps to 46.8 percent female coaches hired for women's teams. In Division 3 with a male AD there will be 44.4 percent female coaches, while with a female AD the number of female coaches increases significantly to 53.9 percent for women's teams.

Women's sport has come far, but how much longer will it take to obtain equality and a promising future for women who have the desire to work in sport administration?

Women's Collegiate Teams, Percentage Coached by Women v. Men 1972-2012

Figure 1. Graph of female and male coaches coaching women's collegiate teams. (From Chart: The state of women's athletics, 40 years after title IX)

Acosta and Carpenter's years of research capture the decline in the percentage of women in coaching and administrative positions at the collegiate level. Why have women lost

these opportunities at the college level? Gender equality seems to be a recurring theme in society.

History shows women's desire for equal status and rank in labor laws. The women's suffrage movement was the struggle for the right of women to vote and run for office and was part of the overall women's rights movement. In the mid-19th century, women in several countries—most notably, the U.S. and Britain—formed organizations to fight for suffrage (History Net, 2017). Women received the right to vote in 1920 but the struggles for equality under the laws for women were far from over. Until the 1960s, women in the work force were not paid equitably until the Equal Pay Act of 1963 required equal wages for men and women doing equal work. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination against women by any company with 25 or more employees (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). These represent legal and social changes positively affecting women. Title IX was another attempt to close that gap of gender disparity and discrimination for women in any federally funded education program or activity. It has the potential to continue the work to create equal opportunity and equitable pay in the work force, including athletic administrative positions.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Unfortunately, inequalities in career advancement for females continue to this day, especially in the realm of sport. There is a lack of women in leadership positions in all of sport. Joshua Senne, a doctoral student at the United States Sports Academy in Alabama, has examined gender equity and female participation in girl's sport. Senne (2016) suggests that sport institutions identify the need for masculinity, not only on the playing field, but also in coaching and administrative positions. These social attitudes that equate masculinity with athletic competence provides men a preferred status. This standard has become the norm within collegiate athletic departments (Senne, 2016).

Senne (2016) proposes that initially young girls will experience gender inequality as athletes because sport is culturally coded as being masculine. This is due to long-standing gender norms that masculinity and femininity are two different concepts. He highlights that sport is essentially masculinized, through sexism, homophobia, and heteronormativity of sport and that women are constantly perceived as being less capable than men in athletics and not taken as seriously as athletes (Senne, 2016). His study has indicated that American boys, who play sports, enjoy high school status from their peers, while female athletes are judged by their peers to be of lower social status, especially if they play masculine sports.

While personal experience may be anecdotal, my family experienced just what Senne's research has concluded. My daughter Kristina played high school golf on the boys' team. There were not enough girls to have a separate girls' team so she played with and against boys. She was embarrassed and elected to have a friend carry her golf bag into school so she would not draw attention to herself. She was tired of peers coming up

to her and asking why she played golf, especially on the boys' team. She did not feel pressure being on the girls' basketball team but she told me one day when I questioned why she had a friend carry her bag to her locker, "I don't want people to know that I play golf, I don't want them to get the wrong idea about me. Golf is more a boys' sport." Senne argues that girls who play sports during adolescence are subject to direct, derogatory comments about their athleticism.

Senne's (2016) study also states that about three-fourths of the girls in his sample reported discouraging comments regarding their ability to compete in athletics compared with boys. While more and more girls are involved in athletics and families are investing time and resources, not only for the love of competing but the possibility of a college scholarship, many are taking pride in being an athlete. As Senne argues though, despite these positive strides, derogatory comments continue, related to a female's ability to play the game as well as males, and the acceptance of female participation especially in the more male dominated sports. These behaviors represent social attitudes that no matter how accomplished a female athlete, she is likely outside the norm and males are just "naturally" understood to be better athletes and sport leaders.

Females are not initially taken seriously as athletes and are faced with many more challenges than males when wanting to participate in sports. Senne (2016) acknowledges that while most female athletes want to be perceived as capable as male athletes, some do not want to be perceived as masculine or not following the out of date tradition and guidelines as to what a female should look and act like. If young girls are more discouraged than boys when it comes to participation in sport, then opportunities for coaching become less appealing. The data indicates that leadership is equated with

masculinity, therefore male dominance in leadership positions in sport is a mutually sustaining social attitude. Women that desire to become a coach, an athletic director, or move further up the ladder in sports administration could face continued gender bias.

Part of social acceptance can be measured by media coverage. Prior to the past ten years, many young girls never saw athletes on TV who looked like they did. Rarely did they encounter other girls who liked to do “boy stuff.” One piece of evidence supporting this is the amount of TV coverage and space allotted in the sports section of newspapers and magazines for women’s sports. The Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport at the University of Minnesota, in partnership with Twin Cities PBS-Minnesota, in a 2014 groundbreaking documentary, “*Media Coverage and Female Athletes*,” examined the amount and type of coverage that female athletes receive. “Forty percent of all sports participants are female, yet women’s sports receive only 4 percent of all sport media coverage” (Tucker Center, 2014). The graph below portrays the media spending per athlete of women’s athletics 40 years after Title IX. This continues to indicate status and rank and the gendered imbalance in athletics. It is generally understood and accepted that male athletes and male administrators are more prestigious, thus valued more.

Median Spending Per Athlete, NCAA Division I FBS Schools

Figure 2. Graph of Media spending per Athlete (From Chart: The state of women’s athletics, 40 years after title IX)

What this graph shows is that while “other men’s teams” and “all women’s teams” are getting the same media coverage, the significant amount of media coverage going just to football and all DI FBS schools helps to define what an athlete is and what an athletic leader really looks like. I speculate that this graph indicates the influence that football has on the athletic department. The high visibility of football provides rich resources. College athletics with its emphasis on football therefore is equated with the culture of the masculinity of sports.

Katie Simmons’ research, from St. John Fisher College, Sport’s Management Program, attempted to expose the inequalities that women face in male dominant sport administrative positions. She examined the Social Role Theory. She took a historical approach to start and wrote, “Women have had fewer legal rights and career opportunities than men over the past hundred years” (Simmons, 2011). She also argued that women’s social roles have been to be a wife and mother and have been stereotyped for years as being the weaker, less intelligent sex. Katie Simmons’ study focused on women currently working in the sport industry and explored their experiences. She based her theoretical framework of gender bias on three theories, The Feminist Theory, The Gender Theory, and The Social Role Theory. All three provide insight to the inequality between males and females in sport administration. “The Gender Theory and The Feminist Theory promote women’s rights, and focus on the challenges women have had to overcome because of their gender” (Simmons, 2011). The basic questions that the Feminist Theory asks are: Are women deliberately excluded? Why is this so? How can we change and improve the social world? What about differences in women? (Simmons, 2011).

Some of that data comes from Marie-Helene Budworth, PhD., who researches and teaches in areas of individual development and learning at the York University in Toronto Canada and Sara Mann, PhD., an Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Strategic Human Resource Management at the University of Guelph, Canada. Their article *Becoming a Leader: The Challenge of Modesty for Women*, in the *Journal of Management for Development*, examines the Social Role Theory, and argues that behavioral gender differences are caused by socialization with males being rewarded and encouraged at a young age for being goal oriented and outgoing, while females are taught to be reserved and emotionally oriented (Budworth and Mann, 2010). Simmons (2011) describes the concept of The Social Role theory that men and women are allocated different roles in society due to their gender, and that the male role includes strength and by extension athleticism. This in turn translates leadership and decision-making positions into gendered male domains. Men therefore are found to have male privilege thus “power” over women in the male dominated, lucrative industry, such as the world of sports (Simmons, 2011).

Acosta and Carpenter’s longitudinal research also shows that leadership positions in sport organizations are skewed towards male leadership, and this supports the notion that sport institutions have standardized masculinity as an implicit part of job descriptions for sport leadership (Senne, 2016; Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). There is an emphasis of heteronormative masculine behavior as acceptable leadership qualities that are required in sports. This type of discrimination impacts women in leadership positions in sport organizations. Women are not afforded the same opportunities as men in coaching and athletic administrative duties on college campuses. Women who are continually denied

organizational resources that they deserve, translates into legitimate lost job opportunities. When men are hired over women, denying women coaching jobs, it directly effects the opportunity to establish a strong resume. In turn, this negativity impacts a woman's ability to build skills that would allow her to move up the ladder in athletic administration. I propose that very few women have risen to the top in athletic administration, due to gender-based stereotypes and the "old boys" network.

Erin Buzuvis is a professor of Law at Western New England University School of Law. Buzuvis has done research about gender and discrimination in education and athletics, including such topics as Title IX. Her study *Barriers to Leadership in Women's College Athletics* (Buzuvis, 2015) highlighted that gender imbalance in coaching and athletic leadership is a social problem because it is rooted in the masculinity of sport. "The bias, stereotypes, role conflicts, and job constraints all operate to create the appearance that women are less qualified, and less interested in positions of athletic leadership" (Buzuvis, 2015). There is gender imbalance, not only for female athletes playing sports but also in the coaching profession and in leadership administrative positions.

The complexity of this social issue of gender imbalance in athletic leadership positions is evident in Deborah Brake's research in the *Indiana Journal of Law*. Brake (2013) focuses on the law's effectiveness in expanding athletic opportunities for girls and women. She argues that sport leadership is culturally coded as male, which makes coaching, and management a particularly tough field for women to infiltrate (Brake, 2013). Her research shows that many female athletes actually prefer to be coached by men. Studies of women in coaching find a preference among female athletes for having a

male coach. Today, not all female athletes feel this way, and the experience of actually having a woman as a coach could change this preference. Unfortunately, many women athletes have the experience of only being coached by men along the way. This is another of several social experiences inhibiting to women aspiring to be a coach or envisioning themselves as coaches entering the coaching profession. This becomes a significant problem in its own right, as it poses the problem that girls were not afforded the opportunity to have female role models.

Karen Borbee, Head Lacrosse Coach at Swarthmore University conveys this very idea (Personal communication, March 8, 2018). Karen co-founded the Snell-Shillingford Coaching Symposium that provides an opportunity for undergraduate female student-athletes in the Centennial Conference to explore career and leadership opportunities in athletics. The goal of the symposium is to expose young student-athletes to the world of coaching and athletic administration as a possible career path. In the first few years of the symposium, Karen was stunned to learn that the majority of the young women attending the symposium had never been coached by a female. Most were coached exclusively by men. “You are a girl and you have only been coached by men, therefore you don’t know that you can even coach, that this is a possibility, and an opportunity to choose to become a coach.” Their vision was socially constructed and Karen suggests it is constructed in a way that does not invite girls to see themselves as coaches.

Another attempt to uncover the influences limiting women in sport leadership was undertaken by Jere Longman, in March 2017 *New York Times* article. Longman interviewed various collegiate basketball coaches and administrators, investigating why the number of women coaching in college had plummeted in the Title IX era. He spoke

with Niole M. LaVoi, the co-director of the Tucker Center, who said, “My biggest concern is that young women are not often getting the opportunity to have a female coaching role model. That’s detrimental to development” (Longman, 2017). In a phone interview by Longman with Muffet McGraw, the women’s head basketball coach for Notre Dame, and a board member for the Women’s Basketball Coaching Association, McGraw said:

We seem to lose women, and so we’re looking to see: Is it because of a lack of work-life balance? It’s a demanding profession for men and women, but a lot of women have other responsibilities at home. The work-life balance, I think, is a bigger issue for women than it is for men. (Longman, 2017)

Having women as role models for female athletes allows them to aspire to possibly becoming a coach and seeing first-hand success at the work-life balance. While men also strive for a work-life balance, women typically take on more responsibilities at home. Kim Parker director of social trends research at Pew Research Center argues that women bear a heavier load than men in balancing work and family. A 2013 Pew Research Center survey found that mothers with children under 18 are three times as likely as fathers to say that being a working parent made it harder for them to advance in their job or career. Furthermore, 39 percent of mothers who have worked say they take off a good amount of time to care for a child or family member versus only 24 percent of working fathers (Parker, 2015).

Title IX has not only sparked new collegiate varsity sports teams, it has provided more resources and higher salaries for coaches. Women’s sport and coaching positions continue to become more lucrative, thus more prestigious. These positions have now become more appealing to men both economically and socially. Men not only have the

opportunity to coach men's teams but now the possibility of coaching women's teams is very enticing. It seems women do not have the same luxury of coaching across both genders. Women remain primarily on the women's side of athletics. California State University, Fullerton, Athletics Director Jim Donovan highlighted that the culture of men's sports is almost 100 percent of the coaches for men are men. "So that's the culture for men's sports. I don't understand why the culture for women's sports can't be that women coach and mentor women" (Stark, 2017). Clearly, he does not recognize the influence of social attitudes about sport leadership.

THE EMPLOYMENT POOL

These cultural and social mechanisms are at work for why the percentage of women coaching at the collegiate level has dropped significantly since Title IX. College sport leadership today, perhaps due to the enormous role of football in many collegiate athletic departments, continues to remain strongly masculine with men being the primary controller of sport. Dr. Laura Burton Associate Professor of Sport Management in the Department of Educational Leadership at the Neag School of Education, located at the University of Connecticut, has focused her research on the underrepresentation of women in sport leadership positions at all levels of sport. She argues that the depth of the research and the examination of the underrepresentation and inequities that women face in leadership positions of male dominated sport organizations, illustrates the complexity of this issue (Burton, 2015). Burton argues that despite increased participation opportunities for girls and women in sport, they continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions such as in the coaching and athletic administration ranks. Her research discusses career advancement and solutions for how to best increase the number of women in leadership roles. Burton attempts to break it down by identifying reasons for the underrepresentation of women in sport leadership. Her research identifies areas of concern: a) stereotyping of leaders, b) issues of discrimination against women, c) gendered organizational cultures and d) self-limiting behavior. All of these reasons, identified by Burton, are contributing forces that keep women out of the pool for coaching and athletic administration.

Stereotyping women is the perception that women are not as capable as men in their ability to lead and manage in sport organizations. Men, and the preference for

masculinity, dominate senior management and leadership roles. Only the employment roles that are less valued in sport organizations, such as scorekeeper, announcer, or event coordinator, are associated with women and femininity (Burton, 2015). Gender stereotypes begin at birth where women are not socialized to lead and are expected not to possess dominating “manly” traits.

Discriminating behavior is often seen when women coaches have to encounter and interact with their male counterparts. Burton (2015) indicates that women’s barriers to coaching were not always the result of organization or structural constraints, and that maleness is possibly preferred to femaleness in sport leadership positions. Female coaches often feel as though they have to prove themselves as effective coaches to men who may question or trivialize their presence (Burton, 2015). They also struggle to prove themselves against the imaginary “male” that is often assumed a better option. This all contributes to the barriers women must overcome if they want to advance in the administrative world of sport organizations.

Another barrier that Burton identifies is gender organizational culture, such as the politics and the structure of governance in sport organizations. Burton argues that power is linked to gender, as men are overrepresented in higher status jobs with higher pay within the organization. Power is also demonstrated through social attitudes that perceive men as powerful and women as complacent (Burton, 2015).

Self-limiting behavior is present with women in sport organizations. Women regularly face an emotional and cognitive process of dissimilar acceptance and treatment with the male dominant sport domain (Burton, 2015). Burton further argues “this is a result of the construction of sport as a masculine domain and the lack of recognition of

women's contributions to the field of coaching" (Burton, 2015, p.162). This type of apparent emotional gender discrimination of acceptance and treatment experienced by women in coaching positions results in limited aspirations of moving up the administrative ladder. Women can become less inclined to remain in coaching.

Self-limiting behavior is not exclusive to sport. Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer at Facebook and ranked on *Fortune's* list of the 50 Most Powerful Women in Business and as one of the *Time's* 100 Most Influential People in the World, highlights in her book *Lean In* that women are going to have to take down barriers that prevent them from getting to the top. Sandberg agrees with Burton that women have to prove themselves to a far greater extent than men do and that women face real obstacles in the professional world including blatant and subtle sexism and discrimination. Sandberg noted a 2011 McKinsey report showing men are promoted based on potential while women are promoted based on past accomplishments (Sandberg, 2013). These different analyses are examples of sexual discrimination in the work place.

Sandberg also argues, much like Burton's self-limiting behavior, that women hold themselves back. That women are hindered by external barriers erected by society and that they internalize the social attitude (Sandberg, 2013). Many women lack self-confidence in male dominated organizations and Sandberg insists that women "need to raise our hands." Even though society tells women it is wrong to be outspoken and aggressive, Sandberg argues that women should not pull back but instead "lean in". She presents that women internalize the negative message that men are more powerful than women, that fewer women aspire to senior positions and that men deserve leadership positions. This all contributes to the self-limiting behavior.

Career advancement often depends on risk and females advocating for themselves, all traits that girls and women are often discouraged from exhibiting (Sandberg, 2013). Sandberg also suggests that the pipeline that supplies the educated workforce is chock full of women at the entry level, but as far as the leadership positions few are getting to the top. This is true for coaching at the collegiate level. The Acosta and Carpenter Study (2014) reveals that there are 13,222 paid assistant coaches serving women's team. Of these 13,222 assistant coaches, 7503 or 56.7 percent are females. According to the 2016 NCAA Racial and Gender Report Card, there are 45,344 assistant collegiate coaches for both men's and women's teams. Of that total only 12,487 are women. Women account for only 27 percent of all collegiate assistant coaches. Women assistant coaches for men's collegiate teams account for less than 9.9 percent of the total number of assistant coaches. Having the opportunity to serve as an assistant coach provides and enhances the training ground for the development of future head coaches. Even more important is that if the head coach is a female it provides a female role model from which to learn. "It provides a professional path of considerable value" (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The question then is; why are these female assistant coaches not found in the applicant pool for head coaching positions? Are these female assistant coaches even considered as possible candidates for open head coaching positions? Also, do they consider themselves possible candidates, on the same terms that a male assistant coach might?

Karen Borbee indicated that many assistant coaches are more than capable but do not apply. She argues that many are possibly burnt out before they get to the next level. "They realize just how much you have to give up to coach and it interferes with life

balance.” Females that want to have a family may find it difficult to juggle society’s idea of a woman’s role and what it takes to be a head collegiate coach. While a male’s desire to have a family and career are not similarly hindered. Muffet McGraw discussed how she recently had an opening for an assistant coach at The University of Notre Dame. She stated that the portion of male applicants compared with women was about 70 percent to 30 percent. “I don’t think it’s generally about the money and business part of it, the work life balance, I think, it is a bigger issue to women than it is for men” (Longman, 2017).

Another employment difficulty that women must overcome is that women are judged more harshly, especially those who do not fit the society’s gender norms, specifically about ambition. Sandberg offers that professional ambition is expected from men but it is optional or even negative for women and that there is a true leadership gap in social attitudes between men and women and their expression for professional ambition. Sandberg argues that when jobs are described as powerful, challenging, and carry a high level of responsibility, that they appeal more to men. Collegiate head coaching positions could also be described this way.

Sandberg identifies fear as the root of many barriers that women face: fear of not being liked, fear of making the wrong choice, fear of drawing negative attention, of being judged, of failure, and fear of overachieving. Women are also afraid of falling short or of the harsh judgments and consequences (the social reprimands) that follow if they do fall short. Are these some of the reasons why the candidate pool is not gender balanced? If there are actually many more males applying for these head coaching positions, why are women holding themselves back and choosing to watch from the sidelines? Have they witnessed all too often what happened to the women that were not fearful and went for

the job, being a qualified candidate, but fell short and saw the job given to a male?

Sandberg also offers that when a woman negotiates her compensation on her own behalf she violates the perceived gender norm. She is perceived as being demanding if she asks for more money. She is considered selfish by putting herself first and that she is not a team player, worried only about herself and not of others. This behavior is not consistent with cultural and social attitudes about women. Men can and are expected to be forceful and focused on their achievements without appearing disloyal or selfish. Men are also more likely to chase a growth opportunity even before it is announced, while women are more cautious changing roles and seeking out new challenges (Sandberg, 2013).

Further evidence comes from an internal report from Hewlett-Packard, a multinational enterprise information technology company that revealed that women only apply for open jobs if they think that they meet 100 percent of the requirements. Men apply if they have 60 percent of the requirements (Sandberg, 2013). Karen Borbee also suggests that women hold themselves to a standard that inhibits their entry into the employment pool. Borbee offers that many believe they need to be perfect and 100 percent qualified before pursuing advancement. Men also have a tendency to take on high-visibility projects while women tend to hang back. I suggest that these social and cultural mechanisms are very likely at work when it comes to women and men applying for head collegiate coaching opportunities. If men are banging down the door to opportunity and women are cautious, it is not surprising that when coaching women's sport teams became more prestigious and more lucrative, that more men would flock to these interviews.

Critics of Sandberg say that it is not just self-limiting behavior, that preference for male leadership in the sports world is enormous. Women will continue to face an uphill battle for equal opportunity to play and equal representation in the coaching ranks due to social attitudes of gender and leadership. Changing this circumstance in competition for leadership positions will require that women are equally assumed to be as likely a candidate as her male cohort. This is not only true for American sport culture but also higher education in general and corporate America.

Although women in today's society have more athletic playing opportunities, this does not translate into receiving the same opportunities for career advancement to leadership positions in athletic administration. The gender imbalance in coaching and athletic leadership is an important social issue because it is rooted in masculinity, not just in sport but the patriarchal nature of society (Buzuvis, 2015). Buzuvis' work on social attitudes succinctly states:

The stereotypes, the role conflicts, and the job constraints all operate to construct the appearance that women are less qualified, and less interested in positions of athletic leadership, so that the narrow associations between sport, leadership, and masculinity remain unchallenged. (Buzuvis, 2015)

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

I recently sat down with Karen Freed, the Associate AD for recreational services at the University of Delaware (Personal communication, March 16, 2018). Karen's previous title was the Assistant AD and Senior Women Administrator at Rutgers-Camden. Karen shared some of her early hiring experiences when applying for an athletic administrative position. At the time of her first job interview she had recently become engaged and she reluctantly admits that she removed her ring for the interview. She was aware of the potential stereotyping, "They may have assumed that if I were planning for my wedding that I would have little time to start a career." She was also told later that even though she was hired, someone on the search committee commented that her appearance and attire did not represent what they thought an assistant athletic director should look like. Since then Karen has sat on many search committees and although she attempted to find the best coach, the best fit for that particular women's program, regardless of gender, she admits that there were few women who applied. She would anxiously wait for women coaches to call and apply. "It is hard to find a good female applicant at times. The girls deserve a good female coach, a good role model." Karen reinforces the social influences on the gendered construction of applicant pools and the need for gender equity in athletic leadership.

Lynn Tighe is the Senior Associate Athletic Director and the Senior Women Administrator at Villanova University. She is also Villanova's Title IX coordinator. She has been at Villanova for twenty years. Lynn shared with me some of her experiences in sport administration and highlighted much about women and coaching and the changes over the years (Personal communication, March 18, 2018). Lynn has been on numerous

search committees for coaching positions for both male and female teams at Villanova. She indicated that there is “significant” disparity with the number of women and the number of men applying for women’s coaching positions. “Last year we were hiring a women’s head soccer coach and of the 100 or so applications, only about 13-15 were women. Out of those 13-15 women only about 2-3 of the applicants were qualified on paper.” She indicated that most of the men had significant experience. Lynn admits that she has never been on a search committee that hired a female for a men’s team. Lynn does not feel that qualified men should not be coaching women. Though she does feel that the applicant pool needs to have more qualified women so that a female coach becomes a viable option.

Lynn expressed that she has no problem with coaches like Harry Parretta, who has coached Villanova women’s basketball for 40 years, and Geno Auriemma, the longtime successful coach at Connecticut. “Both Harry and Geno got into coaching when they were young and grew up coaching women. That is where their passion is.” Unfortunately, women do not have the same opportunity to coach both men and women nearly as often.”

Karen Freed and Lynn Tighe are two female collegiate sport administrators that would like more opportunities to hire women coaches but they have been stymied. Both agree that women who want to become coaches or athletic administrators need to be part of women and sport coaching associations for professional development. They need to come into interviews and be as prepared if not more prepared than the male candidates, due to the cultural bias that coaching and leadership is labeled male. Both also agree that women need to create a network and then call on that network when applying for jobs.

Lynn Tighe made an interesting observation in her many years as an athletic administrator at Villanova:

Men spend more time building relationships around themselves so they then have more allies. Women go about their job, come in, do their job well, then they are out, they have kids to pick up, dinner to make. They don't have the time to hang around to build relationships; they have outside responsibilities that many men do not have. (Personal communication, March 18, 2018)

While Karen and Lynn both have proactive suggestions for applicants, what can or should colleges and universities do to promote a more gender balanced candidate pool?

It is clear that individual efforts may not be enough; institutions have a responsibility to incorporate changes to improve the gender balance of candidate pools. The yearly report of *Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams* is a longitudinal research series that began in 2012 and is now in its sixth year. It is a partnership between the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sports at the University of Minnesota and the Alliance of Women Coaches (LaVoi, 2017). This research documents the percentage of women coaches of women's collegiate teams and each college or university is given a grade A-F. Institutions with 70-100 percent of women coaching women's teams receive an A, 55-69 percent receive a B, 40-54 percent with women coaches of women's teams receive a C, 25-39 percent receive a D, 0-24 percent receive and F. The hope is that this information will provide evidence that will help recruit and retain women coaches and thereby increase the percentage of women in coaching. The hope of this study is to bring awareness to this important issue of women in coaching. This report card is making a difference in institutions, athletics administrations, and sport coaching associations by holding universities accountable for how they recruit, hire, and retain women coaches. The number of women coaching men's teams though, is not

addressed, suggesting that an accountability check documenting the percentage of women coaching men's teams is not needed. This study can and should open discussions and shift the focus away from blaming women themselves for the lack of women coaches. The question then becomes, how do you get experience if you are not being hired as either an assistant coach or a head coach? Women are also blamed in that they don't apply, or that they are not interested in coaching and therefore 'opt out' (LaVoi, 2017).

This national report card, in its first four years examined Division I athletics, but currently provides data on the Division 3 level, which is the largest NCAA division. In the D3 report, employment patterns of head coaches in all women's athletic programs and institutions and conferences are provided (LaVoi, 2017).

Longitudinal distribution of grades by D1 institutions for percentage of women head coaches by year

Figure 3 (From The Tucker Center, A Report on Seven Selected NCAA Division-I Conferences 2017-2018)

This table indicates that from 2012-2018 only 1.3-4% of D1 institutions received an "A" grade, and 7.9%-19.8% received a "B" grade. A "C" grade was given to 31.4%-38.4% while a "D" grade was given to the highest percentage of 33.7-40.8% of D1 institutions. And an "F" grade was given to 10.4%-12.9% collegiate institutions. Most of

the improvement can be seen in getting to a B grade (an increase from 7.9 percent in 2012-13 to 19.8 percent in 2017-18). But clearly influences are at work making it harder to get an A.

Grade by sport for percentage of female DI head coaches of women's teams for 2017-18

Figure 4 (From The Tucker Center, A Comprehensive Report on NCAA Division-III Institutions 2017-18)

Grade by sport for percentage of female DIII head coaches of women's teams 2017-18

Figure 5 (From The Tucker Center, A Comprehensive Report on NCAA Division-III Institutions 2017-18)

These two tables break down the grading of DI and DIII head coaches according to sport. Field Hockey, Equestrian, and Lacrosse all received an A in DI and DIII, while in DI golf also received an A. Interesting though; golf for DIII received an F. This can be attributed to the fact that at the DI level there is usually a separate men's and women's golf teams, while in most DIII schools they are combined men's' and women's' team.

Women will be hired to lead women, but women are less likely to be hired to coach and lead men also. Sports such as squash, water polo, golf, triathlon, track, cross-country and wrestling, received a grade of “F” in DIII. Many of these sports are combined gender sports in DIII. In D1 beach volleyball, cross-country, swimming, water polo track, diving, alpine skiing, and triathlon all received an F. Many of these DI sports are not offered at the DIII level. This yearly report of *Head Coaches of Women’s Collegiate Teams*, available for all to see, is an attempt to hold universities accountable to their hiring practices.

Dr. Richard Lapchick is the Director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES). His yearly report *Racial and Gender Report Card: College Sport (CSRGRC)* also attempts to hold universities accountable for gender hiring practices. This comprehensive report grades the NCAA and its member institutions for gender hiring practice and racial hiring practices (Lapchick, 2018). Gender hiring practices in Collegiate Sports received a grade of C+ for 2017. The following is the criteria for grading:

For issues of gender an A would be earned if 45 percent of the employees were women, B for 38 percent, C for 31 percent, D for 24 percent and F for anything below 24 percent. However, in the case of women’s head and assistant coaches of women’s teams, it should be expected as a minimum that women hold at least half of the positions. Thus, in that category, 60 percent earned an A, 52 percent would earn a B, 44 percent earned a C and 40 percent would earn a D. (Lapchick, 2018)

The good news related to this subject is that women are participating more in athletics than they once were, and are receiving better treatment in athletics as a whole. Unfortunately, the data shows that they are still outnumbered by males in employment and sport participation. Changing this circumstance for women who appear less qualified

or less interested in positions of leadership in sport administration will require that in competition for these positions, women are taken seriously as viable and equal candidates. Sheryl Sandberg's book is a strategy for individual women on breaking the barriers of gender bias in corporate leadership and might offer some advice for women in collegiate sport. I suggest that institutions also have a responsibility to incorporate changes to amend the circumstances so that women can become likely candidates in hiring pools.

Gender equality in work environments can enrich the experience for both male and female employees of sport organizations. Burton emphasizes that there is a need to further explore the effectiveness within an athletics department when it places a value on gender equality. There has been much research on women in coaching and many barriers to equal opportunity have been identified. Deborah Brake, Associate Dean for research and faculty development at the University of Pittsburg School of Law, and Harvard Law graduate, is nationally recognized expert on Title IX and gender equality in sports, and on gender discrimination more broadly. Her article, *Discrimination Inward and Upward: Lessons on Law and Social Inequality from the Troubling Cases of Women Coaches*, argues that the hiring process and the nature of the job favor men, suggesting that the culture of sport and of coaching are deeply masculinized. She identifies the barriers to equal opportunity as: closed hiring networks, the absence of well-developed standards, and qualification for coaching, a lack of mentoring, anti-lesbian bias and homophobia, and work demands that are incompatible with a balanced life (Brake, 2015). These are legitimate concerns that institutions need to address in order to change the male oriented culture of leadership positions.

Laura Buzuvis (2015) argues that the field of sport administration needs to continue to work towards a level of quality that truly treats women as equals, offers them equal opportunity, and permits them to feel equal in sport management and administration. She suggests that institutions have a responsibility and that efforts must continue to expose and suppress the bias and stereotypes that affect hiring decisions and that there is a strong need to eliminate double standards and job constraints, and address and compensate for women's greater family demands and unique vulnerability to homophobia and negative recruiting. Finally, she conveys that there is the need to compensate for women's lack of existing power and social capital that is necessary for advancement and success in athletic leadership (Buzuvis, 2015).

In order to make organizational practices more gender equitable, institutions need to expose and suppress the bias and stereotypes in the hiring decisions. There is also a strong need to identify new research areas that will provide additional recommendations for how best to increase the number of women in leadership positions in sport. Dr. Laura Burton has provided some recommendations for increasing the representation of women in sport leadership roles. She proposes that understanding how both men and women use gender as an organizing principle around issues of power is an important tool. She also offers the importance of understanding how gender is used as an organizing principle, influencing organizational practices, and that it is crucial to enhancing our understanding of how to make organizational practices more gender equitable (Burton, 2011).

Tara Van Derveer who won two national women's basketball championships at Stanford and coached the American women to a gold medal at the 1996 Olympics spoke out against the decline of women coaching in college, "I want to think sexism is too

simple of an answer, but what is it if it's not that? Anytime someone hires a male coach and says, 'Coaching is coaching, well, why aren't more women in men's basketball?'" (Longman, 2017).

Holding institutions accountable for creating a gendered balance applicant pool is the first step in overcoming gender disparity in collegiate sport administrative positions. Universities must do more to ensure that women have an equal opportunity to lead as coaches and athletic administrators. Anucha Browne, the NCAA's vice president for women's basketball championships, also argued that it is vital for both male and female coaches and administrators to give women more coaching opportunities. I suggest that:

1. Universities agree on a series of matrix in order to improve the gender balance of the athletic department, the percentage of women coaching women's teams, men coaching men's teams, men coaching women's teams, and finally, women coaching men's teams.
2. Another strategy that I recommend is teaching and preparing assistant coaches (both male and female) for the next level as head coaches. Administrators and head coaches need to expose assistant coaches to all areas of responsibilities that administrators take on each day. Assistant coaches need to be cultivated into the coaching and athletic administrative business so that assistant coaches are seen as viable candidates in the hiring process.
3. Universities should consider providing compensation packages with annual fees for at least two professional organizations. Teaching and encouraging networking assists in building relationships within sport institutions. Universities should be cognizant in providing the time and money for their coaching staffs to belong to professional organizations.
4. I also recommend that athletic departments establish annual programs discussing cultural and social attitudes around implicit gender notions. Learning how to evaluate people equally would neutralize gender stereotyping. Having open discussions within the

university search committees identifies gender differences in how women seek employment. Also implementing a study on the matrix of candidate pools works toward a gendered balanced candidate pool.

5. I advocate the posting of jobs not only on NCAA and college websites, but also on non-traditional venues such as women's coaching periodicals and on women's sport websites, which could increase the number of females in the applicant pool.
6. I propose that universities utilize the yearly report card by the Tucker Center for Research in order to be held accountable for recruiting and hiring practices.
7. Finally, I suggest that universities perform a self-analysis of the "material culture" found within the university's athletic department. Whose pictures are displayed in the lobby and the offices? What trophies and banners are showcased? Is this gender equitable?

University leadership, starting with the President of the University, must value and support the efforts in promoting gender equality within athletic departments.

CONCLUSION

Title IX has had a significant impact on athletics for the past forty years. There has been an enormous amount of research conducted on gender inequality in sport. Through research conducted since the inception of Title IX, and attempts to uncover inequalities, recent results demonstrate that slowly females are overcoming the gender barriers to athletic participation, which is a step in the right direction for overcoming social and cultural bias toward female athletes. While girls and women are participating in record numbers and producing remarkable athletic accomplishments, women's sport has a long way to go in terms of obtaining equality not only in participation but also in coaching and administrative leadership.

Anucha Browne said, "It is critical that we need to do something to stem the decline of women in the coaching profession" (Longman, 2017). Acosta and Carpenter (2009), *Are We There Yet? Thirty-Seven Years Later, Title IX hasn't fixed it all*, argue that just because we are moving toward equality for women, this does not translate to mean full equality. More work needs to be done. Acosta and Carpenter conclude that it will depend on the strength and the will of those in the offices of college presidents and athletic directors. It must come from the top in order to assure gender equality; and this is not an easy task. "Finally, once we get there we will know it because, equality rather than excuses will become the norm for women in collegiate athletic administrative positions" (Acosta & Carpenter, 2009).

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