

**THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF WOMEN
IN THE MALE-DOMINATED SPORT WORKPLACE:
PERSPECTIVES OF FEMALE COACHES**

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ABSTRACT

Previous literature has researched the underrepresentation of women as coaches and in other leadership positions in women's sports. This article adds to the literature by examining the nearly nonexistent role of women in the male-dominated workplace of men's sports. Currently, women represent 42.6% of the head coaches in women's sports while men represent 57.4% of the head coaches in women's sports. In contrast, women represent less than 3% of the head coaches in men's sports. This creates a double standard in which men are afforded greater coaching opportunities in both men's and women's sports. Conversely, coaching opportunities for women are limited in women's sports and are mostly absent in men's sports. Through in-depth, semistructured interviews, we explored how and why this phenomenon (i.e., the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball) is occurring. The results suggest that the perception of gendered opportunities, male-exclusive social networks, and pressures to overcompensate for being female were all strong, negative influences on the perceived opportunity of women to sustain and pursue careers in male-dominated workplaces such as that of men's college basketball.

The literature has suggested that women have been marginalized, discriminated against, and disregarded in terms of workplace leadership positions in sports

(Kane & Stangl, 1991; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). Such actions have resulted in a situation in which the lack of women in men's college basketball has become accepted as the norm (Cunningham, 2008). According to the *NCAA 2007–08 Ethnic and gender demographics of NCAA member institutions' athletic personnel* (DeHass, 2009), during the 2007–2008 season, 65.8% of the assistant coaches in women's basketball and 57.4% of the head coaches in women's basketball were female. This is in stark contrast to men's college basketball, where only 0.1% of the assistant coaches and 0% of the head coaches were female. As the data confirm, women have adequate representation in women's college basketball; however, they have almost no representation in men's college basketball.

Basketball is one of the few team sports in which the professional presence of women is widely marketed, publicized, and watched outside of the Olympics. As McCabe (2008) points out, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) has inserted women into a currently and historically male-dominated arena. In college basketball, women and men participate under nearly identical rules, with nearly identical techniques and equipment. Men routinely coach women; however, women are given much less access to coaching positions in the men's game (DeHass, 2009). While some argue that men's basketball and women's basketball are different sports, given that men play an athletically more intense game of high-flying slam dunks and blocks, this reasoning does not explain the lack of female coaches in men's basketball (Parker & Fink, 2008). Many successful men's basketball coaches do not have the superior athletic ability of the players they coach. An illustration of this is Lawrence Frank, former coach of the New Jersey Nets. Frank is five feet eight inches tall, was repeatedly cut from his high school team, and never played or coached college basketball, but he was given the opportunity to coach in the National Basketball Association (Berkow, 2004). The argument that women should not coach men's college basketball because they have not themselves played is weakened by the fact that there are men who coach professional and men's college basketball who have never played. Thus, the notion that a woman's lack of playing experience in men's college basketball is a legitimate excuse for her lack of access to men's basketball coaching positions can be refuted. Furthermore, if playing experience is not a barrier preventing men from coaching both men's and women's basketball, then, likewise, it should not be a barrier to women wanting to coach both men's and women's basketball. Neither are the working conditions of men's college basketball (e.g., salary, perks, compensation) acceptable reasons for the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball, considering that men's college basketball carries a much higher average salary than women's college basketball (National Collegiate Athletics Association, 2008). The notion that women do not want to be around sweaty men is refuted by the fact that women serve in much higher proportions as athletic trainers and physicians for men's sports than they do as coaches of men's sports (Lapchick, 2009). So if the lack of women

coaching in men's college basketball is not due to a lack of playing experience, onerous working conditions, or modesty, then there is very little left, besides discrimination and gender bias, to explain this phenomenon.

The purpose of the study is to set forth, through the perceptions of female college basketball coaches, potential explanations of how and why the phenomenon that is the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball is occurring. If a phenomenon truly exists, then the experiences of the individuals most closely related to the said phenomenon will add insight and understanding to the essence of the phenomenon (Crotty, 1998). According to Baumgartner and Hensley (2006), as well as Crotty (1998), the purpose of a phenomenological study is to describe the meaning or *essence* of an experience. Therefore, through the use of phenomenological inquiry we will look to answer the following questions, which will guide our research: What are the experiences of women coaching men's college basketball and how have these experiences affected their perceptions of women coaching men? As we investigate the elements surrounding the phenomenon, we will aim to explain to what extent female college coaches acknowledge this as a phenomenon, how female basketball coaches interpret the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball, and what female coaches see as the determinants and outcomes of this phenomenon.

The implications of this study could lead to an increase in the opportunities and access for women wanting to coach men's basketball, and eradicate the stereotype that women can only coach women. As we continue the inquiry into this phenomenon, we will search for reasons why women have not been able to infiltrate the realm of men's college basketball. The following section will review current and pertinent research regarding women in positions of leadership and authority.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In an October 5, 2009, "Big Shout" podcast for FIFA 10, there were discussions of whether successful coaches such as Hope Powell, a female and the winner of the UEFA Pro License, the highest coaching award available, could ever coach men's teams. The idea was met by comments such as "I think they will struggle to win the respect of the players"; "There is no reason why a woman can't coach men's teams [but] it would be a little awkward taking a post game shower/bath in front of them"; and "Women have broken through the glass ceiling in other fields but football [soccer] is unique to any other industry and therefore we should leave the most successful female coaches to do what they're best at, managing women" (Morgan & Broad, 2009). Like basketball, soccer is a sport in which many of the same rules, techniques, equipment, and tactics are used in both men's and women's competitions. The comments quoted above and the attitudes to potential coaching gender differences that they reveal demonstrate the

existence of masculine hegemony in soccer, and in sports in general. This concept of hegemony will be discussed in further detail below.

Although the recent example cited above may be discouraging with regard to the advancement of women in men's sports, there are cases where women have been welcomed. Bernadette Locke Mattox was hired in 1991 as an assistant coach for the University of Kentucky men's basketball team. She spent four years in this job, and she says, "It was a great experience" and "The respect started with Rick [Pitino, then head men's basketball coach at the University of Kentucky]" (Szostak, 2009: 1). Travis Ford, a former player under Mattox, commented that she was seen as "just like one of the guys, except that it is kind of nice to smell her perfume" (Szostak, 2009: 1). This example of Mattox conflicts with the thoughts expressed on the FIFA podcast, demonstrating that male athletes *can* respect and acknowledge the wisdom and expertise of female coaches. Nonetheless, we must curb our optimism considering the fact that Mattox is one of very few women who have had such an opportunity.

Women as Leaders in Sports

Title IX was enacted in 1972 to combat discrimination against women at all levels of the educational system, which includes athletics (Swaton, 2010). Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states that sex discrimination is banned from any education program or activity seeking to receive or currently receiving federal financial assistance (Rhode & Walker, 2008). Title IX has been a monumental catalyst for the increase in females' participation in sports (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010; Coakley, 2009). However, while Title IX has elevated women to new levels of participation in sports, it has done very little for the representation of women in leadership positions (Cunningham, 2008; Sagas & Cunningham, 2004; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007; Sartore & Sagas, 2007; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Since 1972, the percentage of women coaching women's teams has dropped from 90% to 43% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). The percentage of women coaching men's sports has stayed relatively stable since 1972, hovering around 2–3% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). Although Title IX has led to enormous progress in terms of the participation rates of girls and women in sports, "it fails to address discrimination in athletic leadership roles; therefore, many obstacles remain before women can attain true equal status in athletics" (Swaton, 2010: 8). The statistics mentioned above exemplify the duality: that is, that men can continue to coach and advance in leadership positions in women's sports, while the authority of women remains marginalized in sports as a whole. Additionally, this trend demonstrates that as women's sports have become more important, men have developed more interest in developing a career in women's athletics (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010; Coakley, 2009). This increase in the interest and participation of men in leadership positions in women's sports, coupled with the lack of representation of women and the negligible opportunities for women in

men's sports, can lead to decreased opportunities for women overall and the loss of a female voice in sports as a whole.

Many researchers have identified factors that may deter women from obtaining, maintaining, and increasing their representation in leadership positions in sports (see Bracken, 2009). These deterrents have been identified as, but not limited to, a lack of mentoring and role models (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008), gender-role stereotyping (Burton et al., 2009), oversexualization and marginalization of women by the media (Duncan, 1990), intention-related variables such as interest and self-efficacy (Cunningham, Doherty, & Gregg, 2007; Cunningham, Sagas, & Ashley, 2003; Sagas, Cunningham, & Pastore, 2006), and homologous reproduction (Kanter, 1977; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991), which is examined below. Avery, Tonidandel, and Phillips (2008) examined sex-dissimilar mentor and protégé relationships in sports. Their results hint at attitudinal similarity as being more important than sex similarity in mentoring protégés (Avery et al., 2008). Therefore, while same-sex mentors are important, they are not highly influential in mentoring long-lasting careers in sport. Burton and colleagues (2009) investigated the influence of gender role stereotypes on the way individuals evaluated managerial sub-roles (e.g., those of athletic director, life skills coordinator, and compliance coordinator). The results of this study suggest that masculine managerial characteristics are "most strongly associated with the role of athletic directors" (Burton et al., 2009: 424). However, feminine managerial characteristics are associated with both athletic directors and life skills coordinators. Although feminine traits are just as much associated with the position of athletic director as they are with the position of life skills coordinator, women continue to be underrepresented in the athletic director position and overrepresented in the life skills coordinator position (Burton et al., 2009).

Many of the gender role stereotypes have led to the media portrayal of women in athletically marginalizing and stereotypical ways. Hilliard (1984) and Kane (1988) both suggest that gender stereotypes have been very influential in the media's portrayal of women as being overly involved in feminine sports, while men have been portrayed as being involved in masculine sports. Routinely, sports such as golf and tennis, which are deemed "sex-appropriate sports" for women, have received more media attention due to their feminine appeal than more masculine sports, such as softball. Fink and Kensicki (2002) suggest that these "sex-appropriate sports" are still favored for media representation of women. Fink and Kensicki (2002), in a content analysis of *Sports Illustrated*, the nationally recognized and most widely circulated sports magazine, and *Sports Illustrated for Women*, found that women are still underrepresented. Glenny (2006) suggests that women are also marginalized as well as underrepresented in the media. Although these studies may provide an explanation for the lack of women at the coaching level in women's sports, only a few studies have directly examined women in men's sports. Staurowsky (1990) and Kane and Stangl (1991) both

studied the lack of women coaching boys' teams in high school sports. Kane and Stangl (1991) found that of the less than 3% of men's teams that were coached by women, approximately 2.23% involved individual sports and .03% involved team sports. Therefore, by means of homologous reproduction in which individuals hire those who are most similar to themselves, women were being marginalized by being allowed to coach the less important individual sports and tokenized by the minute number of women as coaches in men's sports (Kane & Stangl, 1991). In both Staurowsky (1990) and Kane and Stangl (1991), the researchers gained the impression that society was quite content with the way things were. Fifteen years later, in a study using homologous reproduction theory, Sagas, Cunningham, and Teed (2006) also found evidence suggesting that the composition of the coaching staffs of women's teams is influenced by the gender as well as the race of the head coach. Overall, the results of Sagas, Cunningham, and Teed (2006) suggest that the gender of the head coach has an impact on the gender of the assistant coaches on staff. This finding supports the notion that the lack of women in leadership positions influences the representation of women in any nonparticipatory positions in sports. Cunningham and Sagas (2005) furthered the theoretically posited relationship between homologous reproduction and unequal treatment in the workplace by suggesting its presence in the racial composition of college coaches. The results of Cunningham and Sagas's study indicated that head coaches were more likely to have on their staff assistant coaches who were racially similar to themselves. The results also indicated that African Americans were significantly underrepresented as assistant coaches (33%), in comparison with the size of the viable pool of potential African American coaches (48%) (Cunningham & Sagas, 2005). This suggests that access discrimination may be taking place due to homologous reproduction. The implications of unequal racial access to coaching positions can be applied to the present study of gender. Considering that women are grossly underrepresented as head coaches in men's basketball and considering the evidence from studies such as that of Cunningham and Sagas (2005), similar access discrimination should be considered when we are studying women in male-dominated workplaces such as those in college sports.

Hegemony

Although the term "hegemony" was first coined by Gramsci (1971) to explain political and economic strife in Europe, many scholars have applied the term to the explanation of gender and power issues. Masculine hegemony plays a role in the way we view women in workplaces such as those found in sport organizations. As proposed by Whisenant, Pedersen, and Obenour (2002), masculine hegemony is the acceptance, widely found in Western society, that men have "rights" to authority, and, therefore, it is only natural that men are overrepresented in positions of leadership. This argument legitimizes and naturalizes the role of

men as leaders in all realms of sport, including both women's and men's sports. Masculine hegemony is also used to justify the underrepresentation of women by suggesting that such underrepresentation is the "natural" state of sports. Accordingly, leadership positions in sport have become de facto for men only. The historical underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in men's sports suggests that masculine hegemony has discriminatory repercussions and outcomes in the treatment, access, and representation of women in the landscape of sports, and in particular in men's sports.

Norman (2010) explored the parallels between hegemony theory and feminist research. Feminist cultural studies have suggested that sport continues to support the ideology of male hegemony through the continuous marginalizing and trivializing of women in sport (Norman, 2010). The media have played a dominant role in marginalizing and trivializing women through an overemphasis on their physical characteristics, as opposed to their performance, and through the underrepresentation of women in media outlets in comparison with their male counterparts. Norman (2010) suggests that many of the inequalities suffered by women in sport are due to the hold that ideologies associated with male hegemony have on sport. As long as society continues to consent to the inferior role of women in sports, women will continue to suffer unequal representation in men's sports and in leadership positions in sports as a whole.

The statistics cited above regarding women in intercollegiate athletics (see Acosta & Carpenter, 2010; DeHass, 2009) demonstrate the existence of an obvious bias in favor of men in positions of leadership. However, little has been done to investigate exactly what factors contribute to the underrepresentation of women in positions of leadership in men's sports. This study will make a start by examining, in an exploratory fashion, one aspect of this issue. Through an inquiry into the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball, we believe we can do a great deal to help explain the lack of women in leadership positions in all of sport.

METHODOLOGY

It is necessary first to refer to the concept of theoretical perspective as it pertains to methodology. As Crotty (1998) states, theoretical perspective serves as an entrance into the logic and methods used in studying and researching in the social sciences. Theoretical perspective serves as an indication to the assumptions that guide the methods. The theoretical perspective of interpretivism gives insight into the phenomenological paradigm, which is at the very core of the methods used in our data collection. Interpretivism is often used to "explain human and social reality" (Crotty, 1998: 67). Therefore, in our study, interpretivism will be used as a lens through which to better understand the experiences of women working in men's college basketball and the barriers they meet in this area.

Participants

The participants were chosen via snowball sampling. The first couple of participants were recruited from a major southeastern NCAA Division I university. After the first participant had been chosen and had completed the interview, the participant was asked to suggest another participant who also coached men's basketball and would be a willing participant in this study. Since the population of women who have coached men's basketball is so small and tight-knit, snowball sampling was the best way in which to identify potential participants. Snowball sampling is a practical method of sampling in phenomenological studies, in which samples are small, unique, and difficult to identify (Lee & Koro-Ljungberg, 2007). The participants in our study ranged in age from approximately 27 to 61 years. The racial and ethnic background of the participants was diverse: Caucasian, African American, and Latina. The participants' experience ranged from 4 to 40 years. Following the phenomenological approach to research, we assembled a sample that was homogenous in respect to gender and in respect to the fact that the interviewees had all coached at the highest level of college basketball. Just as past researchers have learned about discrimination against female executives by interviewing those female executives who have cracked the glass ceiling (see Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis, 1998), we intend to achieve a better understanding of the postulated discrimination against women coaches in men's college basketball by interviewing those few women who have coached in this area.

Data Collection

Semistructured interviews were conducted with 10 female coaches who either were previously or are currently involved with women's and men's college basketball. The interview questions were developed based on the exploratory nature of phenomenology and focused on females' experiences in coaching men (Lee & Koro-Ljungberg, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). The items in the interview guide were constructed based on previous literature regarding the underrepresentation of women in sports. The interview questions focused on the following: the role of women in college basketball (both men's and women's); the barriers that may exist to the employment of women in men's college basketball; the inequalities and discrimination that women may experience; the perceptions of women who are coaching men's college basketball; and women coaches' personal experience.

Analysis

In order to maintain methodological consistency in analyzing the data, Moutsakas's (1994) method for analyzing phenomenological research was utilized. In accordance with Moustakas (1994), the following data analysis steps were taken.

Each interview was first transcribed. Next the data underwent the following process: (1) listing and preliminary grouping; (2) reduction and elimination; (3) clustering and thematizing of invariant constituents; (4) final identification of invariant constituents and themes by application (validation); (5) construction of an individual textual description of the experience for each participant (including verbatim examples from the transcribed interview); (6) construction of individual structural descriptions of the experience based on individual textual descriptions; (7) composition of a textual-structural description of the “meanings and essences of the experiences, incorporating the invariant constituents and themes” (Moustakas, 1994: 121); and, finally, (8) compilation of a composite depiction of the meanings and essence of the phenomenon.

Moustakas’s methods have been successfully applied to interdisciplinary research in many fields (Creswell, 1998). The importance of using the method outlined by Moustakas (1994: 52) is that the perceptions of the interviewees, which are “regarded as the primary source of knowledge, the source that cannot be doubted,” are filtered and organized so that the essence of the phenomenon can be easily identified and discussed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study is to describe, through the perceptions of female college basketball coaches, potential explanations of how and why the phenomenon that is the lack of women coaching in men’s college basketball is occurring. Specifically, what are the experiences of women coaching men’s college basketball and how have these experiences affected their perceptions of women coaching men? The results revealed the primary themes to be a glass wall effect, an old boys’ network versus an old girls’ network, influences on coaching intentions, issues of fit and overcompensation, and respect. Together these elements maintain an environment of male hegemony in college sports. The notion that women are nearly nonexistent in men’s sport was commonsense to many participants. Although they were not content with the position of women in sports, they still believed that it was “expected” and “just the way things are.” As one participant put it, “I just think that’s the way that society is; it’s just expected in men’s sports that men coach men. It’s just like that. That’s just the way it is, and no one’s tried to change it and do anything about it.”

The sport industry’s acceptance of the unequal positioning of women in comparison to men in sports was exemplified through participants’ experiences with the glass wall, an old boys’ network, issues of fit and overcompensation, and respect, all of which influenced their coaching intentions. These results add credence to Norman’s (2010) findings that elite women coaches suffer from the negative outcomes resulting from male hegemony. The themes emerging with regard to the underrepresentation of women in men’s basketball are discussed below.

“The Glass Wall”

Many of the participants felt that women have fewer opportunities than men and experience limited access to men’s sports because of their sex. The participants described their experiences as women’s basketball coaches as having to look through a glass wall into the men’s side of college basketball. Kane and Stangl (1991) provided an explanation for this lack of access by suggesting that women were no more than tokens in men’s sports. Many participants recognized the presence of the glass wall:

Men have different choices. So if you’re a woman and you get fired at the collegiate level, the only opportunities you have are to coach at women’s high school or [women’s] college. If you’re a man, you can slide over to the women’s side. You have twice as many opportunities to succeed. You can just go over to the other side.”

Many of the women felt as though their participation in leadership positions in men’s basketball was not welcomed. Participants spoke of an “old boys’ club” that was exclusive and many times off limits to women. One participant explained her frustration by saying, “Yeah, it’s an old boys’ club. They discriminate [against] women and aren’t thinking of hiring a female to be a coach. On the men’s side, it’s more like the women are the administrative assistants.” Comments such as these resonate with the suggestion made by Kane and Stangl (1991) that women with opportunities to play active roles in men’s sports are often marginalized, shunted into less important roles such as coaching individual sports. Individual sports (e.g., tennis, golf, track and field) are typically far less sensationalized by the media and are less of a commercialized commodity (Kane, 1988). Thus, our research provides added evidence of women feeling marginalized in their roles in sport, and in men’s sports more specifically.

Old Boys’ Network v. Old Girls’ Network

The next element that emerged was networking. Lovett and Lowry (1994) and Stangl and Kane (1991) provide evidence of a prominent old boys’ club, which was established through the tendencies of coaches and athletic directors to hire individuals who look most like them, a practice also referred to as homologous reproduction. Many of the women believed that this old boys’ network was detrimental to their acceptance into men’s basketball. One participant believed that “if people know you, and they like you, they’re going to want to be able to help network you. Women need to network more and increase social networks . . . old girls’ clubs.” Although this participant was very optimistic, the reality is that most women are unable to establish a network in men’s college basketball because the old boys’ club is too exclusive and too influential. Acosta and Carpenter’s (2010) statistics provide evidence that there are simply not enough women coaching in men’s college basketball to provide an old girls’ club. Thus, there is

still a dearth of women available to act as mentors and to open doors for other women in men's basketball. This lack of mentoring was found to be a critical issue in the view of many participants. The problems involved are revealed by the following participant's response:

It could be two-sided. It could be that they [women coaches] don't think they're going to get it, so they don't apply. Or it could be that in reality they're not available, because men might make them feel that they don't have the proper experience. But how do you get the experience? Again, it's the chicken and the egg. So, it becomes a tremendous excuse. They say she's not qualified. Guys don't come out their moms' bellies knowing how to coach; someone has to mentor them, teach them, and give them an opportunity. Women need that too.

This quotation reveals the frustration of many of the participants sampled in this study. Despite confidence in their competency and knowledge of the game, the participants complained that women are not mentored and given the same opportunities as men to coach men's basketball, that they are not given a fair chance. One participant suggests that women are "not able to get hired, seen as weaker candidates, all because of being a woman and having no exposure to the men's game." Although experience or exposure to the men's game is needed, as many participants pointed out, it is very difficult for women get experience if they are never given an opportunity. Norman (2010) found a similar situation in her study involving elite women coaches in the United Kingdom. Women felt that the lack of support and opportunities was due to the dualism of occupations in sport: the integration of men throughout and the segregation of women. As Norman (2010: 96) described it, "equal opportunity policies do not apply to men's sports. Instead, men maintain an involvement in the running of women's sport, but this right is not returned to women in men's sport."

Issues of Fit and Overcompensation

It was clear that participants felt that in order to be successful, they had to overcompensate for being women and work harder to "fit in" with the team and players. The participants were concerned with how well an all-male team would accept women:

I think the biggest thing is her getting in there and making those kids feel like they are going to benefit with her being in the program, benefit from her just being their coach. She needs to find a way to relate to those guys and experience what they're going through.

This comment suggests that the gendered structure and the gender inequities in college sports facilitate and maintain the segregation of women in men's sports. Sartore and Cunningham (2007) describe this as a cycle perpetuated by social roles, gender roles, and institutionalized practices. Over time, women and men

come to believe that since men usually and historically have coached men, male characteristics and stereotypes are associated with men's basketball coaches. Therefore, women coaching men must be more concerned with being male-like and fitting in than with portraying the natural qualities of being a woman and a coach. As one participant stated, "I probably had to prove myself more to them than a male would have. I think they would've listened to a male faster and not really questioned his knowledge or ability as much." So again, the ability of women to coach male teams is questioned until proven. Women have to go above and beyond men to prove themselves to be capable and worthy coaches (Norman, 2010).

Respect

The final theme that emerged from the data involved respect for female coaches. Participants stated that players or male coaches on their men's basketball staff did not disrespect them. However, they did feel the need to work harder to prove that their position was warranted.

Respect is respect. Honestly this is not an issue with the players. Players just want to know that you can make them better. It's always been great and so have the guys that I have been around because they know my talent. There is respect.

Although most women felt they were well respected once they become coaches in men's basketball, many still believed that as a whole the male-dominated workplace of men's college basketball marginalizes their presence and that becoming a head coach is an unattainable goal:

I think a woman would get looked over for a head coach like she's a joke. I think that's how she would be looked at. I don't even know how much respect a female could get in that position on that side of sports.

Again, the barriers faced by women coaching in men's college basketball seem to be institutionalized and embedded in access discrimination as opposed to overt, individualized discrimination. Once these individual women were "in," so to speak, they felt very comfortable and welcomed. However, the situation remains that the vast majority of women have not experienced and will never experience men's college basketball from within.

Influences on Coaching Intentions

As seen in the previous sport management literature, there are many factors that influence the intention of women to coach college sports (Cunningham et al., 2003; Cunningham et al., 2007; Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006). Many participants in this study felt that an accumulation of a lack of role models, a lack of opportunities, noninclusive networking systems, and other discriminatory

practices have been very influential in the underrepresentation of women coaches in men's college basketball. Participants were hesitant to comment on whether women coaches overall had the intention of coaching in the field of men's college basketball, but a few admitted to having future intentions to coach men's college basketball again. However, participants displayed hesitation about women having such potentially unrealistic intentions, given the barriers to women:

I think it's two sided. There might be a lack of interest because they don't feel there are opportunities. So if there are not opportunities, why should I show interest? They may not be up for that battle. If a woman can get a head coaching job on the women's side, why wouldn't she do that?

Researchers have hinted at the idea that women have less intention to coach than men or that women express less self-efficacy in their ability to become head coaches than do their male counterparts (Cunningham et al., 2003; Cunningham et al., 2007; Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006). Although these self-limiting behaviors may be occurring, they do not occur without reason. As one participant states, "I don't know if there are many women who really have the desire to coach men. They're not interested because they feel they're not going to get the opportunity, that it's already a closed door." Another participant states that men's college basketball is "dominated by males, and women are probably less likely to pursue those positions knowing a male is not likely to hire a female." The participants voiced these opinions, suggesting that women as a whole may shy away from pursuing positions in men's basketball, because pursuing such positions is simply not a rational approach to upward mobility in their careers. One participant went as far as to say that "It's discrimination. I don't think a woman would get a second look if she were to send in an application. I don't even think they're looking at qualifications." As revealed by many of the women in this study, there is a direct perception that unfair treatment and discrimination is taking place in the men's college basketball workplace. Sex becomes a qualification for access to the profession, which in this case leaves women as naturally and biologically unqualified candidates. Although the glass wall in college basketball may allow for visibility, crossing over to the other side is still anomalous, generally unexpected, and not accepted as a norm in society.

CONCLUSION

Our investigation into the lack of women coaching in men's college basketball has added insights into the phenomenon that is the underrepresentation of women in men's sports. As stated throughout this study, women are severely underrepresented in the male-dominated sport workplace (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010; DeHass, 2009). Many reasons for the underrepresentation of women have been discussed in the previous literature. These explanations include, but are not limited to, the following: gender role and gender role attitude (Burton et al., 2009),

perceptions revealed by the media, such as oversexualization and marginalization (Duncan, 1990), discrepancies in coaching intentions between men and women (Cunningham et al., 2003; Cunningham et al., 2007; Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006), and hiring biases explained by homologous reproduction (Kanter, 1977; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Although these explanations are certainly valid, there has been very little research in recent years on the underrepresentation of women in the male-dominated sport workplace of men's college basketball. Therefore, this study has sought to describe the experiences of women coaching men's college basketball, a sport in which women as coaches are very rare (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010).

This study has revealed that there are many gendered barriers that have discouraged women from pursuing coaching positions in men's college basketball. Although most participants believed they as individuals they were respected once they were a part of men's basketball, they believed there was still a lack of overall acceptance of females' abilities and potential contributions to the team and the organization. They believed that most women felt they had to prove that they deserved their position in men's college basketball by working harder and going "above and beyond" their male counterparts (Norman, 2010). The results of this study suggest there are not many cases of overt discrimination that can be pinpointed. Instead, it appears that biased ideological and structural beliefs against women are very much entrenched in the organization as a whole (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). The organization of men's basketball and the networks established by years of male domination are not welcoming to women (Lovett & Lowry, 1994). A double standard in sport exists in the segregation of women in men's sports and the integration of men in women's sports. This double standard is supported by the proportions of women and men in the sport workplace (see Acosta & Carpenter, 2010; Norman, 2010). The limited extent of female coaching intentions is also an outcome of the institutionalized segregation found in the sport workplace. This self-limiting behavior of women in the sport profession seems to be a direct outcome of barriers, lack of support, and pressures of social norms. These factors influence the intentions of women and send the message that women should "stay in their place," which, as Norman (2010: 99) noted, was often "second-best." Overall, women believe that societal, structural, and organizational changes need to be set in place in order for women to actively pursue and successfully obtain positions in this male-dominated workplace.

Change needs to be implemented in order to abolish the institutionalized access discrimination that women face in men's sports. This study suggests two ways to increase women's representation in leadership positions. First, policies should be developed to ensure that women are offered a fair opportunity for employment in men's sports. For example, policies could be established along the lines of the National Football League's Rooney Rule, by which teams are required to interview at least one minority candidate for any head coaching vacancy. In fact, the Black Coaches and Administrators (BCA) have strongly

urged the NCAA to adopt such a policy; they suggest naming it the Eddie Robinson Rule after the late head coach who did so much to positively impact the lives of and opportunities for many African American men (Lapchick, 2007). The NCAA's Acceptable Standards constitute a policy already in place to assist African American candidates to gain opportunities to be interviewed during the hiring process in collegiate football (Swaton, 2010). Swaton (2010) proposes a policy requiring that universities wishing to participate in the NCAA-regulated championship tournaments be required to interview at least one female candidate. The effect of a policy of this nature would be twofold: (1) it would encourage women to apply, since they would have a chance of being interviewed; and (2), as suggested by Swaton (2010), it would give women a chance to meet athletic directors and other individuals who participate in the old boys' network, thereby increasing women's own networks. First, we suggest implementing a policy stating that if universities do not interview at least one female from the applicant pool for every men's sports leadership position, then their federal funding will be reduced. Second, we suggest rewarding those schools that hire women for leadership positions in men's sports, such as men's college basketball, with additional scholarships. Third, we suggest the NCAA and its constituents work to create a more established and vocal movement for the fair and equitable treatment of women wanting to coach in men's sports. Opportunities for women to coach in men's basketball are lacking, yet no one seems to be leading the charge to remove this blatant partiality. The BCA represents and supports African American coaches and administrators as they battle for equality. Some such group needs to become active in the push for women's equality. Thus, our last suggestion is that legislation such as Title IX should be revisited and revamped with regard to women in intercollegiate athletics at the present and in the future. Tremendous strides have been made with regard to women's participation in intercollegiate athletics, but the aim of policy change must now be extended into the realm of coaching and other leadership positions as well.

These policy suggestions have the potential to force universities to question their current operations, just as Title IX forced universities to demonstrate their concern for fair and equal opportunities for participation (Rhode & Walker, 2008). Our policy suggestions are intended to provoke discussion: we believe they would increase the representation of women in leadership positions in men's sports as a whole and in men's college basketball in particular.

Future Implications

This research leaves many doors open for future studies. This research gathered only the perspectives of women and did not consider the perspectives of men who coach men's college basketball. The perspectives of these men would be very helpful in determining the biases that come into play when decisions are made whether or not to hire women for coaching positions. Furthermore, this study did

not consider the perspectives of male college basketball players. It might prove beneficial to interview college basketball players to gain insight into their attitudes toward being coached by a woman. Finally, more research needs to be done to study the ways in which hiring practices may be biased against the hiring of women. The literature provides evidence that women are not being given opportunities to be hired (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). This study adds to that literature with findings that demonstrate the continuation of structural and institutionalized biases within sport organizations. Studies exploring the hiring practices in male-dominated sport workplaces would be very useful in pinpointing where and how these barriers to women have been able to survive.

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