An Endangered Species: Characteristics and Perspectives from Female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors of Both Separate and Merged Athletic Departments

Heidi Grappendorf, PhD, Texas Tech University
Nancy Lough, PhD, University of New Mexico

INTRODUCTION

The trend of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletic departments merging under one athletic director has been ongoing for over twenty years. Colleges and universities across the country have continually chosen to restructure their athletic departments under one athletic director, instead of retaining one for women's sports and one for men's sports. In September 2004, Brigham Young University became the latest on a long list of athletic departments that have succumbed to the financial, social, and institutional pressures to merge athletic departments under the roof of one athletic director (Harmon, 2004). This nationwide movement continues to effect women who have served as athletic directors' of separate women's programs at NCAA Division I institutions, as well as those females leading merged NCAA Division I athletic departments. The result has been an overall decrease in the number of female athletic directors at the NCAA Division I level.

The relationship between the passage of Title IX, the takeover of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) by the NCAA and the implications for female athletic directors has been well-documented (Acosta & Carpenter 1998, 2004; Cahn, 1994; Delpy, 1998; Diesenhouse, 1990; Fox, 1992; Patrick, 2001; Uhlir, 198). In 1972 more than 90% of all women's athletic programs were directed by a woman (Uhlir, 1987). Furthermore, according to the latest research by Acosta and Carpenter (2004), only 18.5% of all athletic programs at all levels in the NCAA are directed by women. Today, there are three universities at the NCAA division I level that have a separate athletic director for the men's and women's programs: University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, University of Tennessee, and the University of Texas-Austin. Additionally, of the merged athletic programs at the NCAA Division I level, there are only 20 women at over 321 schools who hold the position of athletic director (NCAA, 2003-2004). This is a decline of three female athletic directors of merged programs, since 2000 according to research done by Grappendorf and Lough (2004). Female representation in the athletic directors' position at the NCAA Division I level continues to deteriorate. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to investigate the continued decline of female NCAA Division I athletic directors of both merged and separate programs, while examining the characteristics of female NCAA Division I athletic directors of merged and separate programs. Additionally, through qualitative methods, the perspectives and insights of the women who have become athletic directors at the top administrative level in intercollegiate athletics was studied.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The storied history of women's participation and involvement in sport has been well documented (Hultsrand 1993; Miner 1993; Park & Hult, 1993; Swanson & Spears, 1995; Uhlir 1987). Throughout the 1900's women participating, and those involved in the oversight of women's sport participation, witnessed continued growth and development. As the United States was undergoing significant political and social changes and movements during the 1960's and 1970's, the push became even greater for a formalized organization to govern women's sports. With this growth came a need for a structured governing body to oversee the participation, finances, and competitions (Hultsrand, Park & Hult, 1993; Swanson & Spears, 1995). In 1971 the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) was formed to act as a governing body for women in collegiate sport. The AIAW worked to gain corporate sponsorships, television coverage, offer national championships and

competitions, and overall govern women in intercollegiate athletics. The formation of the AIAW provided for the first time a governing body that had the power to effectively run and enforce its policies (Hultstrand, Park & Hult; Tallant, 1997). Additionally, the women of the AIAW were involved in the efforts to pass laws that supported women's involvement in sport. Of course, the most significant role they played in getting a law passed was Title IX in 1972, which prohibits gender discrimination by any educational institution that receives federal funds.

Prior to the surge in participation and growth of women in sport (and Title IX), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) showed little interest in assisting the advancement of women's athletics or the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). This was partially due to the fact the NCAA had not considered women's athletics as profitable. However, after the passage of Title IX (which the NCAA opposed and attempted to become exempt under), the NCAA decided in 1980 to allow female athletes to compete in NCAA events (Hultsrand 1993; Park & Hult, 1993; Swanson & Spears, 1995). The NCAA begrudgingly acknowledged the role of women in sport, and was forced to face the reality that Title IX would eventually force athletic departments to increase their efforts to support women's athletics. Additionally, the NCAA viewed women's sports as a threat to men's sports, and thus sought control of women's sports. Knowing this, the NCAA began planning the takeover of the AIAW, by offering more money and television coverage to those schools that left the AIAW and joined the NCAA. The NCAA's resources proved to be too much for the AIAW to compete with, and in 1982 the AIAW folded (Cahn, 1994; Hultstrand, 1993; Parkhouse, 1990).

The demise of the female athletic director is well-documented in the literature (Acosta & Carpenter, 1998, 2004; Cahn, 1994; Delpy, 1998; Diesenhouse, 1990; Fox, 1992; Uhlir, 1987). One of the main reasons for the diminished role of female athletic directors, was the merging of athletic departments. Prior to the passage of Title IX, athletic departments generally had a male athletic director in charge of men's athletics, and a female athletic director in charge of women's athletics. However, after the passage of Title IX, athletic departments began to merge, most often eliminating the women's athletic director position and replacing the former under the direction of the male athletic director. Many schools did this because they believed it would be more operational and would help them streamline their resources. Yet, it was generally the female athletic director who lost her job, as the male athletic directors were named to direct the newly formed merged departments (Cahn, 1994; Delpy,1998; Fox, 1992; Uhlir, 1987). Men were typically seen as more competent, and thus the logical choice of the higher education leaders making the decision was to merge the programs and hire males to direct them. In 1972, almost all athletic programs for women were directed by a woman, with only 6% of NCAA Division I programs merged into single athletic departments (Uhlir, 1987). As of September 2004, only three schools remain at the NCAA Division I level having a female athletic director in charge of women's athletics. Christine Grant, ex-president of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletic for Women (AIAW) and former women's athletic director at the University of Iowa commented:

> The NCAA fought Title IX through the 1970's. It's my feeling because (male administrators) lost in their efforts to dilute Title IX that they then did the next best thing: take control of women's sports and therefore control expenditures. It was a strategic move (Patrick, 2001, p. 1).

At the NCAA Division I level, the likelihood of finding a female athletic director is slim (Acosta & Carpenter 1998, 2004). Grappendorf, Lough and Griffin (2004) found in their study done in 2000-2001, only 23 out of a possible 318 positions were held by a female athletic director of merged programs, while five females held the title of athletic director of separate programs. Furthermore, it is almost twice as likely to find a female athletic director at the NCAA Division II level, and almost three times as likely at the NCAA Division III level (Acosta & Carpenter 2004). In over thirty years since the passage of Title IX, women have been trying to re-establish themselves in the athletic director's position in intercollegiate athletics. At times progress has been slow, and at other times non-existent. However, recent research indicates the number of women entering the ranks of athletic director at the highest level in NCAA Division I has not slowed or halted; it has actually digressed.

BARRIERS TOWARDS ADVANCEMENT

A reason discussed in the literature that may help to explain the under-representation of female intercollegiate athletic administrators is the concept of homologous reproduction, which "is a process whereby dominants reproduce themselves based on social and/or physical characteristics" (Stangl & Kane, 1991, p. 47). The process ensures the replication of "like" people of those making personnel hiring decisions, and ultimately, homologous reproduction asserts people tend to hire other people most similar to them. One of these like characteristics is often gender (Sagaria, 1993).

A majority of the research done on homologous reproduction has been done with athletic directors and the hiring of coaches (Acosta & Carpenter, 1994; Knoppers, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Knoppers (1994) reported whoever does the hiring is a common obstacle faced by women in athletics, when the person hiring is a man. Furthermore, Stangl and Kane (1991) found in their research on the under-representation of female coaches that homologous reproduction was an influential variable in the hiring practices in intercollegiate athletic departments.

The consequences of homologous reproduction are that women will not get the opportunity to be athletic directors if this practice is followed by college presidents. Stahura, Greenwood, and Dobbs (2004) found in their work on hiring patterns between intercollegiate athletic directors and head coaches, a relationship between the sex of the athletic director and the sex of the head coach. Considering the majority of people in colleges and universities making key personnel decisions are men, women systemically would be filtered out, according to homologous reproduction (Sagaria, 1993).

Another often cited reason in the literature as a barrier to the advancement of women in athletic administration is the discrimination in the hiring practices in intercollegiate athletics. Acosta and Carpenter (1988) found subtle or unconscious discrimination perceived by female athletic administrators as a barrier to women in administration. Other reasons cited by Acosta and Carpenter (1988) included: (a) lack of support systems for women, (b) failure of "old girls" network, (c) female burnout, and (d) failure of women to apply for job openings. Pastore, Inglis and Danylchuk (1996) also found that women perceive discrimination in the work environment within intercollegiate athletics, and suggested the need for discussion of new solutions to support and retain women in leadership positions. Furthermore, the "old boys club" and the lack of an "old girls club" have also been noted in the literature as a reason that may be contributing to the under-representation of women in the coaching and administrative ranks (Acosta & Carpenter, 1988; Carpenter & Acosta, 1992; Hart, Hasbrook, & Mathes, 1986; Hasbrook, 1988; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Lovett and Lowry (1994) concluded the "old boys club" was a thriving network in sport, while the "old girls club," had yet to effectively develop and assist women in the same way that it has historically worked for men.

Hegemony is the concept that focuses on the conditions of particular groups having dominance and influence in society (Sage, 1998). Coakley (2001) notes this power is done through consent to a particular ideology. According to Sage (1998) an example of hegemony in American society is how men's power over women is reflected through sport. Hegemonic masculinity is evident in sport where women's opportunities have been limited because sport is thought of as a masculine domain where power is asserted. Because sport has traditionally been viewed as a male bastion, men are viewed as more capable and apt to be leaders. It is apparent in the upper ranks of athletic administration that hegemonic masculinity is a factor in the under-representation of women (Sage, 1998; Stangl & Kane, 1991).

Due to the diminishing numbers of female athletic directors of separate women's programs and the decline of female representation in the director of athletics role of merged programs, a study examining the plight of women as intercollegiate athletic leaders was undertaken. With so few female athletic directors, particularly of separate programs remaining at the NCAA Division I level, it was imperative to include them in this study. The literature specifically addressing this small, yet crucial population of athletic directors and their personal

perspectives has been sparse. Additionally, studying the commonalities and differences among female athletic directors from both merged and separate programs will provide perspective from two similar, yet distinct entities. Therefore, the purposes of this study were to: 1) Examine the characteristics of female athletic directors of both merged and separate programs, 2) describe characteristics of female NCAA Division I athletic directors of merged and separate programs, and 3) qualitatively examine the perspectives and insights of the women who have become athletic directors at the top administrative level in intercollegiate athletics.

METHOD

Survey research was used to collect data from female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors of both merged and separate programs. Due to the small sample size, qualitative data was collected in addition to descriptive quantitative data to add depth, detail, and meaning to the data (Patton, 1987). According to Baumgartner and Strong (1994) qualitative research can be utilized to further explore people and their environments. The analysis of the qualitative data collected for this study allowed for a more complete understanding of a small population that the quantitative data may not have provided alone (Patton, 1987). In 1999-2000, there were five women who held the position of women's athletic director of separate programs, and 23 women who held the title of athletic director of separate programs (NCAA Division I Directory 1999-2000). Due to the limited number of women in these positions (N = 23), all were included in the study. For clarity, merged programs are defined as those which have combined the men's and women's programs or departments into an organizational unit with one administrator chiefly responsible for the unit. Separate programs are those which operate with two separate and distinct programs or departments, one for men's athletics and one for women's athletics, with one separate administrator chiefly responsible for each of the units (Cuneen, 1988).

The questionnaire was developed by the researchers based upon a review of literature and the research questions. It was then examined by a jury of outside experts, and then given to a pilot group of female athletic directors at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II and National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) level, and then examined by the researchers separately to ensure validity and reliability. Variations in the content of the data were also examined for comparable results for reliability (Berg, 1998). Face, construct, and content validity measures were utilized to determine the overall validity of the questionnaire. Content validity refers to the completeness and thoroughness of the instrument (Adams & Schvaneveldt, 1991; Babbie, 1995). "Face validity refers to the common-sense content of the assessment device" (Adams & Schvaneveldt, p. 96). Construct validity refers to the logical relationships within the questionnaire and whether a particular measure relates to other measures consistent with the content being examined (Babbie, 1995).

The questionnaire included sections inquiring about the personal, educational, and career history of the athletic directors. In the "Personal" section participants were asked a total of 19 questions. The questions inquired about demographic information including: age, marital status, children, place of birth, and ethnicity. Other questions were (a) Who was the greatest influence on your choice of career? (b) While growing up (before high school/in high school/college) did you play organized sports? (c) While growing up (before high school/in high school/ college) did you participate in any other organized activities? If so, please indicate which. (d) Did you receive any athletic awards playing sports in high school and college? Please indicate. (e) Did you play professional sports? Please indicate which sports.

In the "Educational" section of the questionnaire participants were asked to: (a) Indicate all terminal degrees, majors, college/university attended, and years attended. (b) Indicate the states and athletic classification of the school in which your degrees were obtained. (c) While enrolled in a graduate program, did you hold any assistantships? Check all that apply. (d) Did you complete an internship at the undergraduate/graduate level? (e) Do you feel your college education adequately prepared you for your current position? If not, what degree or academic preparation do you think would have better prepared you?

In the "Career" section of the questionnaire, the following questions were asked: (a) List all work experience in chronological order, number of years in that position, location, and division of the job held. (b) How long have you been in your current position? (c) If you were an assistant or associate athletic director, what were your primary areas of responsibility? (d) How did you get your first full-time job in athletic administration after completing your undergraduate degree? (e) How many other NCAA Division I athletic director jobs did you apply for before you obtained your current position? (f) Was obtaining an NCAA Division I athletic director's position your ultimate career goal? (g) If obtaining an athletic director position was not your ultimate career goal, what was? (h) How many varsity sports (men's and women's) are offered at your institution? (i) What is your approximate budget for the year? (j) What is your current salary range? (k) Please indicate how many female assistant/associate athletic directors are on your staff. (l) How important is having coaching experience in preparation for becoming athletic director? (m) At what age were you appointed your first athletic administration (non-coaching) position? (n) At the time of your hiring, was there a male or female president of the institution? (o) How many male coaches and how many female coaches have been hired under your tenure as athletic director?

The next section included the following open-ended questions: (a) What was your primary motivation for seeking the position of athletic director? (b) What barriers, if any, did you face in becoming athletic director? (c) What barriers, if any, do you now face as an NCAA Division I athletic director? (d) Why do you believe there are so few female NCAA Division I athletic directors? (e) What advice would you give to other women who aspire to be NCAA Division I athletic directors? (f) Do you have any other information you would like to share about your personal, educational, or career path that would contribute to this study?

Quantitative analyses using descriptive statistics were calculated using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 9.0. A profile of athletic directors of both separate and merged programs emerged from the data. Additionally, an open-ended section was also included to allow for the respondents to freely share their insights and perspectives regarding the athletic directors' position, going beyond the numbered and exact set of quantitative questions. This approach, incorporating Bogdan and Biklen's (1992) concepts, as well as Adams and Schvaneveldt's (1991) and Patton's (1987), is useful in providing a richer understanding of the data. The researchers felt by providing an open-ended section, the data collection could be enhanced by gaining an understanding of the thoughts and experiences of the athletic directors in their own words. Analysis of the open-ended section included the transference of the exact responses being typed out and then sorted into like groups where content analysis looking for themes and patterns were identified (Patton, 1987). The content of the responses were then analyzed for themes and then coded into category headings created by the researchers (Babbie, 1995; Patton, 1987).

RESULTS

Four of the five women (n = 5) who held the position of athletic director of separate programs responded to the questionnaire for an 80% response rate. Of the questionnaires mailed to the female athletic directors of merged programs, 20 (n = 23) were returned for an 86% response rate. Nineteen usable questionnaires (n = 23) were returned by the athletic directors of the merged programs, however two of those nineteen did not complete the open-ended section.

PROFILES

Findings from this research indicated similarities among the female athletic directors of both separate and merged programs. The female athletic directors (n = 4) of separate programs were a mean of 52.2 years of age, while the mean age of the female athletic directors of merged programs (N = 19) was 50.21 years of age. Additionally, 50 % (n = 2) of the female athletic directors of separate programs reported being married/ living with partner, while 42.1 % (n = 8) of the athletic directors of merged programs reported being married/ living with partner. Regarding ethnicity, 100 % (n = 4) of the athletic directors of separate programs reported being European/American Caucasian, while 94.7 % (n = 18) of the athletic directors of merged programs

reported the same. Overall, there were no significant differences in the demographic profiles of the female athletic directors of separate and merged programs.

With regards to athletic involvement, the athletic directors of separate programs, 50 % (n = 2) participated before high school in athletics, while 78.9 % (n = 15) of the athletic directors of merged programs participated (see Table 1). During high school, 100% (n = 4) of the athletic directors of separate programs participated in athletics, compared to 84.2 % (n = 16) of merged programs whom participated. While in college, 75 % (n = 3) of the athletic directors of separate programs participated in sport, while 89.5 % (n = 17) of the athletic directors of merged programs participated in collegiate sport. Regarding their participation in other activities before high school, in high school, and in college, the numbers were equally as impressive for both groups (see Table 2). Before high school 100% (n = 4) of the athletic directors of separate programs and 84.2% (n = 16) of the athletic directors of merged programs participated in other activities, with Girl Scouts being the top choice for both with 75 % (n = 3) of the athletic directors of separate programs participating and 68.8 % (n = 11) of the athletic directors of merged programs taking part. During high school and college, both groups of females were also heavily involved in activities such as student government, clubs, and sororities.

Both groups of female NCAA Division I athletic directors were highly educated. All (n = 4) of the female athletic directors of separate programs had a Masters degree, while 94 % (n = 18) of the athletic directors of merged programs had obtained a Masters degree. Furthermore, 36.8 % (n = 7) of the athletic directors obtained their doctoral degrees, although none of the athletic directors of the separate programs had obtained a doctorate.

With regards to career information, there were some notable similarities, as well as some notable differences between the athletic directors of both merged and separate programs. The female athletic directors of separate programs oversaw an average of 11 varsity sports, while the athletic directors of the merged programs were in charge of the oversight of an average of 10 women's sports and 9 men's sports. An interesting finding was that the athletic directors of separate programs had an average budget of $9.47 million for their women's programs to manage, while the average budget the athletic directors of merged programs directed was $8.2 million for *both* the men's and women's programs.

Another important finding from the career responses was in the area of entry point into their careers. Both the female athletic directors of both the separate and merged programs, 100% began their careers as a teacher or teacher/coach combination. For the athletic directors of the separate programs 75% (n = 3) started at the high school level, but only 26.3% (n = 5) of the athletic directors of merged programs started at the high school level. Additionally, 100% for both entered the collegiate level at the NCAA Division I level. Lastly, it was reported that 50% (n = 2) of the athletic directors of separate programs were not actively applying for their position when they obtained it, and that 73.7% (n = 14) of the athletic directors of merged programs also were not actively applying when they obtained the position.

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

Within the questionnaire an open-ended section with five questions was included. In response to the first question of: "What was your primary motivation for seeking the Athletic Director position?" the answers were very similar (see Table 3). Of the female athletic directors of the separate programs 75% (n = 3) responded it was their career aspiration to lead, while 76.5% (n = 13) of the athletic directors of merged programs reported the same. Specific responses included 1). "I wanted to run my own show. I was tired of cleaning up messes and as an achievement oriented person I had always wanted to move to the top of my profession and it was just a natural move from assistant to associate to athletic director;" 2). "I wanted to lead. I wanted to implement my own ideas. I wanted a personal challenge," 3). "I was already doing the majority of the job and had been involved in many areas of the department. I had a personal stake in continuing to improve things and I felt I could make a difference," 4). "I wanted to lead a program instead of manage one."

The second open-ended question was "What barriers do you believe exist in becoming in an athletic director?" (see Table 3). Seventy-five percent (n = 3) of the female athletic directors of separate programs responded that gender bias/discrimination was a factor, while 64.7% (n = 11) of the female athletic directors of merged programs reported the same. Examples of quotes included: 1). "Having to be better than male counterparts. Having to move often to advance career. Having to not have a life. Have to make sacrifices," 2). "Typical male "old boys" and their refusal to accept a woman," 3). Too many to list. Prejudice, had to prove (and still do) that I work harder and longer than others," 4). "Lack of football experience. Not being taken seriously," 5). "Being female," 6). Gender discrimination. Stereotyping."

The third open-ended question asked was "What are the current barriers you face as a female athletic director ?" (see Table 3). Of the athletic directors in charge of separate programs 25% (n = 1) reported the perception that a woman cannot lead, while 25% (n = 1) reported a lack of support/network. Of the females in charge of merged programs 76.5% (n = 13) reported the perception a woman cannot lead as a barrier. Specific quotes included: 1). "The perception that women do not know quite as much about intercollegiate athletics," 2). Too many to list! Some coaches feel like they can only talk sports with a male swearing and the sexist jokes are tough to curb. Some boosters are old school- only men know business and athletics. Some high-level administrators mistrust and lack of faith in women," 3). "You must continue to prove you know your stuff- every day someone tests you," 4). "Lack of respect. Feeling you have to be twice as good as your male counterparts. Public perception and stereotype," 5). "Legitimacy- have to prove I know what I am doing."

The fourth question asked "Why do you believe there are so few female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors?" (see Table 3). Of the females in charge of separate programs 75% (n = 3) reported stereotypes to be the primary reason, while 25% (n = 1) reported that time/difficult job was the reason. Responses were similar for the athletic directors of merged programs as 47.1% (n = 9) reported stereotypes as the reason, and 41.1% (n = 7) reported demands/difficult job as the reason. Quotes regarding stereotypes included: 1). "Not given a chance. Judged on different things than males," 2). "There is no "old girls" system to provide mentors. There still is a majority of male presidents who will NOT support a female," 3). "Because of the mentality of men Presidents and Vice Presidents," 4). "There was and still is a perception that women can run athletic programs, but not I-A football. There is also a question for some reason about women being able to run a big time men's basketball program" (questions come primarily from men, but also from women!). Quotes regarding the demands/difficult job included: 1). "It is hard work-monstrous time commitment. Many scenarios limit your ability to be successful- one needs to understand that there will be folks who are unhappy with you. I know many talented, qualified women with 20-30 years of experience who do not want the job," 2). "The job is extremely time consuming and it can compete with family time. It takes a real understanding family," 3). "It is a difficult job and can be all consuming. Difficult to have a life outside of the job. Still exists perception that females do not belong in job in many people's views," 4). "I can only speak personally. The two things that I most dislike are the huge time commitment: I want time for my family, and I don't like being pressured by male boosters to take the program in a direction I don't want to go."

The final question asked "What advice would you give to other women who aspire to be NCAA Division I Athletic Directors?" (see Table 3). The female athletic directors appear to agree and feel very strongly about this question as 75% (n = 3) of the females in charge of separate programs expressed the need for women to get relevant experience, while 70.6% (n = 12) of the female athletic directors of merged programs offered the same advice. Specific quotes included: 1). "Learn the politics. Learn marketing, fundraising. Be tough. Be better than your male counterparts," 2). "Be aggressive in looking to move up. Get into the right areas- marketing, fundraising- stay out of ones that don't lead up- academic advising, compliance. Network, network, network. Get on committees; be visible," 3). Experience is crucial, strong will, and thick skin," 4). "Get as much experience in a variety of areas even if they do not fall within your job description," 5). "Work in football, know how to fundraise and learn the NCAA rules completely."

DISCUSSION

At the time of data collection, there were five (n = 5) female athletic directors of separate programs, and twenty-three (n = 23) of merged programs. It is significant to note that not only is the representation of women holding this position limited, but that the numbers have actually *declined* since the original data was collected. Currently, there are three female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors of separate programs, and only 20 women who oversee the athletic programs of merged programs. Though the numbers are limited and the sample size is a limitation, research should not ignore this population. If the current trend continues, it appears inevitable that eventually there will be no female NCAA Division I athletic directors of separate programs left. If women whom are athletic directors of separate programs are a dying breed, and the numbers of female athletic directors of merged programs is also declining, more research should focus on the reasons for the decline and what can be done to reverse the trend. Researchers should be studying other potential causes for this latest decline in female NCAA athletic directors, as well as developing viable solutions or recommendations to alleviate the situation. Additionally, the characteristics and further insights of the women who are currently NCAA Division I athletic directors can prove to be beneficial to other women who may aspire to be athletic directors. With the lack of a network or role models, women who initially show interest in pursuing a position as an athletic director may forsake those plans. Interviews with athletic directors may be needed to provide insight regarding the current status of women in intercollegiate leadership roles. Additionally similar in-depth interviews with current women athletic directors at all NCAA levels and Senior Woman Administrators may be insightful. Interviews regarding the issues that were examined and discussed from this study are warranted and could add to the body of knowledge regarding female NCAA athletic directors.

It is significant to note that not only is the representation of women holding [the athletic director] position is limited, but that the numbers have actually declined since the original data was collected.

Overall, in previous research athletic directors could be described as a very homogenous group consisting primarily of Caucasian males. The literature regarding intercollegiate athletic directors has been consistent with regards to their demographic profiles (Fitzgerald, 1990; Goodloe, 1978; Grappendorf, Lough & Griffin, 2004; Williams & Miller, 1983). This study found not only under-representation of women, but under-representation of ethnic and racial minorities. Hegemony, as it relates to both gender and race appears to be thriving at the intercollegiate athletic directors' rank. The dominance of the Caucasian male within leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics must be addressed. Pro-active measures that identify and recruit females and ethnic minority candidates should be taken by those doing the hiring.

The findings of this study were similar to previous research regarding the likelihood of a female athletic administrator obtaining an advanced degree. Furthermore, not only are women obtaining advanced degrees, they are more likely to have a higher degree than their male counterpart in sport (Cuneen, 1988; Fitzgerald, 1990; Goodloe, 1978; Grappendorf, Lough, Griffin, 2004; Williams & Miller, 1983). It is not unusual to find women in traditionally male dominated fields that have higher academic degrees. However, it appears that having an advanced degree or more education is not an effective tool for women wishing to advance in the intercollegiate administration ranks. Thus, more emphasis should be put on those experiences and positions that have been identified in previous research as steps up the ladder in athletic administration (Cuneen, 1998; Fitzgerald, 1990; Grappendorf, Lough, & Griffin, 2004).

It is crucial for the women who are in these positions to take an active role in the promotion and recruitment of other women who aspire to the athletic directors' position. Networking with other women in athletic administration will help increase the number of female colleagues (Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002). The limited numbers of women in these positions have an incredible opportunity to share their insights and experiences, but more importantly their contacts, networks, and support resources to other women. However, as discovered in the qualitative responses, the female athletic directors feel their time is already quite limited. Inglis, Danylchuk, and Pastore (2000) reported similar findings regarding female administrators' attempts to

find time and balance work with family time and other commitments. Thus female athletic directors could still assist by devoting less time by utilizing email to forward job openings, listservs, and to stay in touch with other women in the field. Ideally, if they could find the time they could assist in organizing forums, workshops, attend conferences, create networking opportunities and groups, become guest speakers, and get involved with mentoring programs.

The budget differences the athletic directors manage is something noteworthy. It is interesting the schools that still have separate athletic directors also happen to be powerhouses in women's intercollegiate athletics. All have won national team or individual titles. Donna Lopiano, Executive Director of the Women's Sports Foundation, former athletic director at the University of Texas, and also a past AIAW president believes the issue is not about being merged or separate, but rather the issue is about commitment to women's sports (Patrick, 2001). A study further examining the power associated with programs operating with higher budgets and the rationale for fewer female athletic directors in charge of such programs would be insightful.

The barriers described by the female athletic directors implores that the hiring practices of NCAA Division I institutions should be examined. Gender bias/discrimination was mentioned by 75% of the athletic directors of separate programs and 64.7% of merged programs when asked about barriers in becoming an athletic director. Additionally, the fact that so many of the athletic directors reported the perception that a woman cannot lead as a current barrier, reinforces the idea that sport is still viewed as a male dominated and controlled field, and stereotypes regarding women's abilities to lead continue to create limitations. Further research may want to focus on the attitudes and perceptions of college and university presidents and those making the hiring decisions. This type of research could contribute to an understanding of the recruitment, or lack thereof among institutions. Additionally, information and educational material should be provided to those hiring as to how to actively seek and recruit qualified women candidates.

The benefits in early athletic participation are well documented within the research. The female athletic directors in this study were actively involved in activities that provided them various opportunities to not only participate, but to lead. Before high school, during high school, and in college, the women in this study were engaged in groups such as Girl Scouts and student government that could have possibly impacted their leadership abilities. Further research appears warranted to study the activities and/or groups female athletic directors are involved with in their current positions that may be assisting in the development of their careers. "Professional development and training should be exploited by women to enhance their credentials" (Whisenant, 2003, p. 182). Such programs, even later in life like NACWAA/HERS and national conference/convention attendance and participation, as well as their perceived benefits should be examined.

REFERENCES

Acosta, R. V. & Carpenter, L. J. (1988). *Perceived causes of the declining representation of women leaders in intercollegiate sports- 1988 update*. Unpublished manuscript. Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY.

Acosta, R. V. & Carpenter, L., J. (1998). *Women in intercollegiate sport: A longitudinal study- twenty-one year update*. Unpublished manuscript. Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY.

Acosta, R. V. & Carpenter, L. J. (2004). *Women in intercollegiate sport: A longitudinal, national study- twenty seven year update*. Unpublished manuscript. Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY.

Adams, G. R. & Schvaneveldt, J. D. (1991). *Understanding research methods*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Baumgartner, T. A. & Strong, C .H. (1994). *Conducting and reading research in healthand human performance*. Dubuque, IA: Brown & Benchmark.

Berg, B. L. (1998). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods (2nd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Cahn, S. K. (1994). *Coming on strong: Gender and sexuality in twentieth century woman's sport*. New York: Macmillian.

Carpenter, L. J. & Acosta, R. V. (1992). *Job stasis: Reflections of immobility and resistance to job change among senior women athletic personnel*. Unpublished manuscript. Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY

Coakley, J. (2001). *Sport in society: Issues and controversies* (7th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Cuneen, J. (1988). *A preparation model for NCAA division I and II athletic administration*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

Delpy, L. (1998). Career opportunities in sport: Women on the mark. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 69* (7), 17-21.

Diesenhouse, S. (1990, December. 11). More women are playing but fewer are calling the shots. *The New York Times,* pp. 13, 25.

Fitzgerald, M. P. (1990). *The career patterns of male and female NCAA Division I, II, and III athletic directors*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus.

Fox, C. (1992). Title IX & athletic administration. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 63* (3), 48-52.

Goodloe, N. R. (1978). *A study of the perceived qualifications of women athletic directors*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, Eugene.

Grappendorf, H. & Lough, N. (2003). *Profiles and perspectives of female NCAA Division I athletic directors of both merged and separate programs*. [Abstract]. AAHPERD Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Grappendorf, H., Lough, N., & Griffin, J. (2004). Profiles and career patterns of female NCAA Division I athletic directors. *International Journal of Sport Management, 5* (3), 243-261.

Hart, B. A., Hasbrook, C. A., & Mathes, S. A. (1986). An examination of the reduction in the number of female interscholastic coaches. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 57* (1), 68-77.

Hasbrook, C. A. (1988). Female coaches: Why declining in numbers and percentages? *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 58* (2), 59-63.

Hultstrand, B. J. (1993). The growth of collegiate women's sports: The 1960's. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 64* (3), 41-43.

Inglis, S., Danylchuck, K. E., & Pastore, D. L. (2000). Multiple realities of women's work experiences in coaching and athletic management. *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal, 9* (2), 1-14.

Knoppers, A. (1994). Gender and the coaching profession. In S. Birrell & C. L. Cole (Eds.), *Women, sport & culture* (pp. 119-133). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Lovett, D. J. & Lowry, C. (1994). 'Good old boys' and 'good old girls' clubs: Myth or reality? *Journal of Sport Management, 8* (1), 27-35.

NCAA. (1999-2000) *Directory of the National Collegiate Athletic Association*. Indianapolis, IN: Author.

NCAA. (2003-2004). *Directory of National Collegiate Athletic Association*. Indianapolis, IN: Author.

NCAA. (1999-2000) *Division I Manual of the National Collegiate Athletic Association*. Indianapolis, IN: Author.

Parkhouse, B. L. (1990, March). A time to speak: You've come a long way, baby…dancing backwards and in heels. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 61, (3), 72-76.*

Pastore, D. L., Inglis, S., & Danylchuk, K. E. (1996). Retention factors in coaching and athletic management: Differences by gender, position, and geographic location. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 24,* 427-441.

Patrick, D. (2001, September 27). Some departments separate, yet equally committed. USA Today. Retrieved September 28, 2001, from www.usatoday.com'sport/college/2001-09-27-women-departments.htm

Patton, M. Q. (1987). *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Sagaria, M. A. D. (1993). Administrative mobility and gender: Patterns and processes in higher education. In J. Glazer, J., Bensimon, E. M.., & Townsend, P. K. (Eds.) *Women in higher education: A feminist perspective*. Needham Heights, MA: Ginn Press.

Sage, G. H. (1998). *Power and ideology in American sport: A critical perspective (2nd ed.)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Stahura, K. A., Greenwood, M.., & Dobbs, M.. E. (2004). Hiring patterns in intercollegiate athletics: An introductory investigation into the relationship between athletic directors and head coaches. *International Journal of Sport Management, 5* (3), 197-214.

Stangl, J. M. & Kane, M. J. (1991). Structural variables that offer explanatory power for the under representation of women coaches since Title IX: The case of homologous reproduction. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 8* (1), 47-60.

Swanson, R. & Spears, B. (1995). *The history of sport & physical education in the United States*. Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw-Hill.

Tallant, M. (1997, October). Women's Athletics: The top 25 people & events since 1972. *Athletics Administration,* 15-20.

Uhlir, G. A. (1987, July-August). Athletics and the university: The Post-Woman's Era, *Academe 73,* 25-29.

Whisenant, W. A. (2003). How women have fared as interscholastic athletic administrators since the passage of Title IX. *Sex Roles, 49* (3/4), 179-184.

Whisenant, W. A., Pedersen, P. M.., & Obenour, B. L. (2002). Success and gender: Determining the rate of advancement for intercollegiate athletic directors. *Sex Roles, 47* (9/10), 485-491.

Williams, J. M. & Miller, D. M.. (1983). Intercollegiate athletic administration: Preparation patterns. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 54,* 398-406.

TABLE 1
Sport Participation Before High School, During High School & in College

Participation	%	n=19	%	n=4
Before High School	Merged	Merged	Separate	Separate
None	21.1	4	50	2
Organized Sport	78.9	15	50	2
High School				
None	15.8	3	0	0
Organized Sport	84.2	16	100	4
College				
None	10.5	2	25	1
Organized Sport	89.5	17	75	3
Total	100	19	100	4

TABLE 2
Activities Participated In By Female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors

Merged	%	n=19
Participated in Organized Activities Before H.S.	84.2	16
Girl Scouts	68.8	11
Participated in Organized Activities in H.S.	89.5	17
Clubs	76.5	13
Student Government	70.6	12
Participated in Organized Activities in College	73.7	14
Clubs	57.1	8
Sororities	57.1	8
Separate	**%**	**n=4**
Participated in Organized Activities Before H.S	100	4
Girl Scouts	75	3
Participated in Organized Activities in H.S.	100	4
Student Government	75	3
Band	100	4
Participated in Organized Activities in College	100	4
Clubs	75	3

TABLE 3
Qualitative Responses

Merged	%	n=17
Primary Motivation		
Career Aspiration to Lead	76.5	13
Barriers in Becoming Athletic Director		
Gender Bias/Discrimination	64.7	11
Barriers That Currently Exist		
Perception Women Cannot Lead	76.5	13
Why Do You Believe There Are So Few Female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors		
Stereotypes	47.1	9
Demands/Difficult Job	41.1	7
Advice to Other Women Who Aspire to Be An NCAA Division I Athletic Director		
Get Relevant Experience	70.6	12

Separate	%	n=4
Primary Motivation		
Career Aspiration to Lead	75	3
Barriers in Becoming Athletic Director		
Gender Bias/Discrimination	75	3
Barriers That Currently Exist		
Perception that a Woman Cannot Lead	25	1
Lack of Support/Network	25	1
Why Do You Believe There Are So Few Female NCAA Division I Athletic Directors		
Stereotypes	75	3
Advice to Other Women Who Aspire to Be An NCAA Division I Athletic Director		
Get Relevant Experience	75	3