"We were all just trying to stay afloat": The Career Experiences of NCAA Division I Female Swimming Coaches

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**"We were all just trying to stay afloat": The Career Experiences of
NCAA Division I Female Swimming Coaches**

**A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**Jessica Laing Siegele
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all coaches. Coaching is largely a selfless profession, working for the success of others and often receiving much of the criticism, but little of the praise. I had so many special coaches in my life that led me to pursuing coaching as a profession and later as a topic of study. This is dedicated to you.

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priorities. As happy as I am at the completion of my doctoral program, nothing can

compare to the happiness of having my family all in one place.

ABSTRACT

Although sport participation for women and girls is at an all-time high in the United States, female coaches are widely underrepresented. In the sport of swimming at the collegiate level, women hold just 18% of the head coaching positions of women's teams. A qualitative research design was implemented to examine the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches. Twenty-one current and recently retired Division I female swimming coaches were interviewed regarding their career experiences. Analysis of the data produced three themes: (a) Sexism, (b) The Career Path, and (c) Life as a Coach-Mom. These findings indicate that female coaches experience sexism from a variety of sources in their profession. Additionally, in a changing landscape of fewer opportunities available for female coaches, women are increasingly relying on mentoring and professional development to better position themselves in a competitive work environment. Finally, coaches with children need a wide support system, but also find balance through motherhood. These findings may help current coaches and potential coaches navigate their careers, as well as administrators who can provide support for the coaches' careers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Topic Relevance

Current State of Women Working in Collegiate Athletics

Women in Athletic Administration. Historically and in the modern era, the sporting landscape has been largely male-dominated. From youth sport to the national and international levels, both administrative and coaching positions are predominately occupied by men. Although this subject of the underrepresentation of women in these positions is an increasing field of academic interest, there has been little headway in improving the gender imbalance from a practical standpoint. To best understand the phenomenon, a careful examination of the status of women in sport is necessary at the administrative and the coaching level.

Starting at the very top of administration in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), men have historically and continued to dominate the leadership positions. There have been six presidents of the organization since the position was created in the 1950s; they all have been male. The other top leadership positions at the NCAA national office are the Senior Management Team and the President's Cabinet. Women hold six of 16 positions in these two leadership groups (NCAA Leadership Team, n.d.).

In additional to the top leadership positions at the national office, the current decision-making bodies within the NCAA governance structure are also extremely male-dominated. The Board of Governors, which is the highest governing body across all three

divisions, consists of presidents and chancellors from member institutions. Currently there is one female representative on the twenty-person Board of Governors (NCAA Board of Governors, n.d.). Representation is only slightly better on the Division I Board of Directors. Of the 24 members, three are women, and one of those positions is specifically designated for a woman in the role of Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) (Division I Board of Directors, n.d.). Representation by women improves tremendously at the governance level of Division I Council. Of the council's 40-member governing body, 15 members are women (Division I Council, n.d.). The Division I Council is responsible for more of the day-to-day decision making and is made up of subcommittees with specific roles in governance.

The numbers in NCAA Division II and III are slightly better for leadership and representation for women. In Division II, the Presidents Council, which is the highest governance office and is responsible for the strategic direction for the division, has five female members in its 18-member council (Division II Council, n.d.). Division III has the best representation with eight female members of its 18-member Presidents Council (Division III Council, n.d.). It is important to note that the Board of Governors, the Division I Board of Directors, and the Division II and III Presidents Councils are all comprised of university presidents and chancellors. Therefore, this representation may indicate more about the representation of leadership in institutions of higher education than the NCAA itself, nonetheless it does affect the gender composition of the NCAA leadership structure.

At the NCAA member institution level, similar statistics of gender imbalance are evident. Women hold less than 25% of athletic director positions across all divisions and less than 12% at the Division I level (Acosta & Carpenter 2014; Taylor & Hardin, 2016). There has been a slight increase of women in athletic department administration in the past decade with current percentages at about 36% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). A troubling statistic however is that 11.3% of athletic departments do not have a woman in the administration in any capacity, despite the NCAA requirement of a designated Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) on the senior or executive team (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). This requirement, although well-intentioned, is often ineffective for creating leadership positions for women. The SWA, as defined by the NCAA, is the highest-ranking woman in an athletic department. However, this role is often occupied by coaches or clerical and administrative staff, and duties are more communal (i.e. serving as a role model) rather than agentic (i.e. budget development), especially at the Division II and III levels (Tiell & Dixon, 2008).

A place where women have found relative success in attaining leadership positions within the NCAA structure is at the conference office level. Women currently occupy 11 of the 32 Division I Conference Commissioner positions. Although this is just over one-third of the total population, it is noticeably higher than the percentages for women in other administrative leadership positions. Women in these positions were better able to integrate their personal life into their work environment and develop mentoring relationships than campus athletic administrators (Taylor, Siegele, Smith, & Hardin, in press). Being removed from the campus environment also allows for

individuals to be hired free from the influence of wealthy donors who expect to have a say in the hiring of top administrative positions (Park, Ko, Kim, Sagas, & Eddosary, 2016).

Current State of Women in Coaching

While the statistics seem to be slowly improving for women in administration, for women in coaching at the collegiate level, there has been a long history of decline followed by stagnation of women in the percentage of coaching positions occupied by women. The most current statistics indicate that approximately 43% of women's teams in the NCAA are coached by women (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Prior to the inception of Title IX in 1972, 90% of women's teams were coached by women (Acosta and Carpenter, 2014; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Post Title IX sporting opportunities for women and girls have grown dramatically. Due to the increase in participation rates, many more coaching opportunities have become available. Although the percentage of female coaches has decreased, currently there are more than 4,100 female head coaches in NCAA sports, the highest number ever (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The noticeable trend that occurred with the influx of more and better paying coaching jobs is that most of the new positions were now being filled by men. The data show that since 2000, there have been 2080 new head coaching jobs in women's athletics, two-thirds of them have been filled by men, one-third by women (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014).

Current State of Women in Swim Coaching

Youth Swimming. To best describe the current state of women coaching swimming at the youth level, the data from USA Swimming is likely the most accurate and complete. USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for swimming in the United States. USA Swimming has a national membership of more than 400,000 people, including swimmers, coaches, clubs, and officials. The majority of the coaches work primarily with swimmers aged six to 18. Although some of these coaches may train college age or post-graduate swimmers, the vast majority work with youth athletes. Unfortunately, USA Swimming does not provide coaching demographics based on the age group receiving coaching.

According to the most recent data from USA Swimming, women represent nearly half of the registered coaches. In the 2016 annual membership report, there were 9,430 registered female coaches and 9,521 registered male coaches (*Membership demographics*, 2016). This statistic is rather surprising considering across all youth sports only 27 percent of adults who coach youth teams are women (*State of play*, 2017). The statistics are nearly identical at the high school level. Twenty-eight percent of high school coaches across all sports are female (Glenn, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, & Miller, 2006).

College Swimming. In swimming, the sport of interest in the present study, only 18% of Division I women's teams are coached by women, while the remaining 82% of women's team are coached by men ("NCAA Database," 2016). Women fair somewhat better in obtaining head coaching jobs for men's swimming teams than compared to some other sports. About seven percent of men's swimming teams at the Division I level are

coached by women, compared to the average across all other sports of about 2-3%
("NCAA Database," 2016). At the assistant coaching level, women in collegiate
swimming have far better representation. Nearly 28% of assistant coaches for men's
teams are women, while nearly 40% of assistant coaches for women's teams are women
("NCAA Database," 2016). Although, these statistics are better than perhaps expected,
especially for women coaching men's teams, the glaring indication is that women have
far better opportunities as assistant coaches than they do as head coaches. This
phenomenon of women attaining assistant coaching positions but not moving into head
coaching positions is part of the motivation for the present study.

There are some statistical differences in the percentages of female swimming
coaches in Division II and III than in Division I. In Division II, although women fair
somewhat better in leading men's swimming teams, with 13% of men's teams being
coached by women, the percentage is nearly identical to Division I for women coaching
women's swimming teams ("NCAA Database," 2016). Seventeen percent of women's
swim teams are headed by female coaches at the Division II level ("NCAA Database,"
2016). There is some divergence from DI and DII at the Division III level. More than
22% of men's swim teams are headed by female coaches and 27% of women's swim
teams are coached by women at the Division III level. Although these statistics are
merely descriptive, it could be inferred that there is more upward career mobility at the
Division III level for female swimming coaches.

National-Level Swimming. Although little academic research exists as to the
underrepresentation of women in coaching at the National Level, in the popular press, the

sport of swimming has received attention as of late for the lack of women chosen for high level competitions. The headline from Swimswam.com, popular swimming news website announced, "United States Names All-Male Coaching Staff for 2017 World Champs" (Keith, 2017). For the 2017 Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) World Championships held in Budapest, Hungary, four coaches for each the men's and women's team were selected from a pool of potential national team coaches. All eight coaches selected were male. The article's headline received much attention, although the context of the article itself did not focus on the gender of the coaching staff, but rather who was selected and for what reasons. Many of the public comments that followed the article seemed to be largely focused on the headline and speculation as to why there were not women on the coaching staff. Although nearly all commenters recognized the general lack of elite female swimming coaches, the comments for the reasons as to why that is fell into two distinct groups. Online commentators either speculated that women do not want to be elite coaches and self-select out of coaching or that social barriers, sexism, and discrimination inhibit a woman's ability to reach the highest levels of coaching. The argument could be made that both contentions could be right, and perhaps the reason that women do not want to coach and eventually leave the field is because of the social barriers, sexism, and discrimination that they encounter.

The article regarding FINA World Championships coaches was preceded by another article months earlier listing the potential national team coaches pool. This article explained that the national governing body for swimming designates a list of candidates that can be called on to coach the U.S. national team (Anderson, 2016). Of the 61 coaches

in the pool, there were only three women. Therefore, it should be no surprise when women are not selected as international games coaches when there are so few women who reach the elite status to even be considered for these positions. The article made no reference to the genders of the coaches and yet the first comments to appear once again discussed the lack of female coaches. Both articles, inclusive of the comments that follow, indicate that the issue of the lack of elite female coaches has not gone unnoticed by swimming journalists, consumers of such media, or the swimming community.

International Level. Hard data, specific to swimming is hard to come by, as far as the number of women coaching swimming at the highest international levels. Some countries self-report some gender data, but aggregate data, if it exists, is not accessible. FINA, the international governing body for aquatics, does not publish demographic information. However, data does exist on the overall numbers and percentages of female coaches at the Olympics, however this is not specific to the sport of swimming. In a report card from the International Council of Coaching Excellence (ICCE), 89% of the coaches at the 2012 Olympics in London were male, although female participation at the game was more than 44% of all athletes (*Gender and coaching*, 2014). Based on the ICCE data, there are some regional difference in the percentages of female Olympic coaches. North America had the highest representation of women with 16% of total coaches being female, while South America had the lowest percentage of female coaches with just 2% (*Gender and coaching*, 2014).

Barriers to Women in Coaching. Many barriers have been explored in relation to women in sport leadership positions. Women have long faced the glass ceiling, where

upward mobility is limited by an unseen and yet impenetrable barrier (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986). The glass cliff is another hindrance to women's career mobility. The glass cliff represents the increased likelihood of women to fail in leadership positions as they are hired in greater proportions to lead struggling or failing organizations (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). The glass wall presents a barrier for women as well, as they are often boxed into occupations based on traditional gender roles that limit opportunities (McCartney, 2016). Women also experience the sticky floor phenomena, where they occupy low-paying, administrative and clerical positions that limit upward mobility, but are essential to the operation of the organization (Laabs, 1993). While the glass ceiling prohibits women from rising to the top, the sticky floor prevents women from getting their careers off the ground.

The summation of these barriers creates the glass labyrinth. Women's struggle for advancement into leadership positions cannot be singularly explained by any one of these phenomena, but rather the complex expected and unexpected challenges they may encounter (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Beyond these "glasses," additional barriers to women's career mobility are examined in Chapter 2.

<center>**Value of Women in Coaching**</center>

Understanding the career experiences of women coaches can help explain the possible reasons for the gender imbalance that exists in coaching. With this understanding, athletic departments and administrators can make policy and strategic changes to improve the number and quality of opportunities for women. In addition, aspiring coaches and current coaches can use this information to inform their career

decisions and help guide their own careers. Having opportunities for women in the coaching profession is important for two main reasons. First, coaches are obvious role models in the lives of children and young adults. Currently, youth and college athletes are overwhelmingly coached by men which only serves to reinforce gender stereotypes which exist in sport and leadership. Secondly, coaching can be a viable career option for former athletes. After retirement, athletes often struggle with identity issues and lack of career opportunities (Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996). The coaching profession can alleviate the identity issues associated with retirement and provide a long-term career path for former athletes (Shachar, Brewer, Cornelius, & Petitpas, 2004).

Coaches provide critical leadership examples to their young athletes. Most youth athletes grow up mainly under the influence of male coaches. In a study from Messner and Bozada-Deas, results showed that at the youth level, men usually coach, while women serve as "team moms," taking on much of the administrative responsibilities, such as managing team snacks, collecting money for coaches' gifts, and managing logistics (2009). The researchers suggest that this reinforces traditional gender roles and thus has consequences for both male and female youth athletes (Messner & Bozada-Deas, 2009). Boys do not have the opportunity see women in respected leadership roles. Meanwhile girls have a lack of female role models in influential leadership positions.

The lack of female role models is especially important for girls, as research has indicated that same-sex role models matter. In fact, research from Lockwood, shows that girls benefit from same-gender models more acutely than boys (2006). According to Lockwood, female role models are "inspirational examples of success" and "guides to the

potential accomplishments for which other women can strive" (2006, p.44). Additional research from Everhart and Chelladurai, substantiates this, as women who have female coaches are more likely to become coaches than women who have male coaches (1998).

Research from outside of sport has confirmed this as well. Research from the STEM field, which is also extremely male-dominated, has indicated that the presence of female role models can improve performance by women in a math testing setting (Marx & Roman, 2002). Beyond performance measures, research from the STEM field, has also indicated the presence of female role models encourages retention and recruitment of other female employees (Drury, Siy, & Cheryan, 2011). If retention is affected similarly in sport, this is an important connection because although boys and girls participate in sport at the same rates at the youth levels, by age 14 girls drop out of sport by a factor of 2 to 1 (Sabo & Veliz, 2008). Preventing drop-out is important for girls in sport as many health, psychological, and psychosocial benefits are derived from sport participation. Girls who participate in sport have more positive body-images than non-athletes, are more satisfied with their home-life, feel enhanced self-images, and are less likely to experience future health problems (Miller, Sabo, Melnick, Farrell & Barnes, 2000; Staurowskly et al., 2009; Sabo & Snyder, 1993; Sabo & Veliz, 2008).

Having female coaches as role models also affects perceptions of leadership characteristics. Research has suggested that men and women tend to have different leadership styles, with women combining more characteristically feminine and masculine leadership traits, than men. Women tend to have a more transformational leadership style, while men to have a more "command and control" style (Avolio 2010; Bass,1998). If

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girls are only exposed to male leadership styles as coaches, they may falsely come to believe that they must adopt a similar leadership style, whether in coaching or in other leadership positions. If a girl's natural leadership style is dissimilar to this observed masculine style of leadership, it may dissuade her from pursuing coaching or other leadership roles.

Relevant Career Theories

According to Leung, there are currently five career development theories that have guided research during the last few decades (2008). The big five are (a) Theory of Work-Adjustment, (b) Holland's Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environment, (c) the Self-concept Theory of Career Development formulated by Super, (d) Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise, and (e) Social Cognitive Career Theory (Leung, 2008). These career theories were developed and used primarily by American scholars and therefore relevant to the population being investigated. I will explore these career theories, except for Gottfredson's, as it is newer and less established than the other four, in order to determine the most appropriate theory for examining female college career (Leung, 2008).

Theory of Work-Adjustment

The Theory of Work-Adjustment deals specifically with how the needs of an individual fit with the work environment, and how the requirements of the work environment are fulfilled by the individual. Satisfaction is then measured by the degree to which the individual is satisfied with the environment and vice versa (Dawis & Lofquist,

1984). The satisfaction of each will ultimately determine the length of tenure of the individual in the environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Broadly, this theory explains career development and satisfaction in terms of the correspondence between the individual and the environment. Although this theory could be applied to women in the coaching profession, there is little focus on the social environment that may affect the individual's career development. With the focus on gender as a moderating effect of career development, a career theory that more explicitly deals with social factors would be more appropriate.

Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environments

The second career theory to consider for this research as it is widely used and accepted is Holland's Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environments. This theory asserts that vocational interest of the individual is determined by one's personality and can be categorized into one of six typologies (Holland, 1997). The work environments can also be categorized by type, and thus the degree of congruence between the individual and the environment can determine the level of satisfaction and stability of the relationship (Holland, 1959). This theory would be more relevant for research with a wider range of participants and potential work environments. In the current study, all the individuals are already working in the same or similar work environments as collegiate coaches, therefore the benefit of using Holland's theory may not be fully realized without having diverse work environments to use within his typologies. Additionally, having these rigid typologies may be better uncovered through the use of quantitative means, such as a survey, rather than interviews as this studied is structured.

Self-concept Theory of Career Development

Self-concept Theory of Career Development takes a constructionist approach to career development. The theory asserts that the process of career development is mainly the development of self-concepts in work roles through the following stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement (Super, 1990). This theory largely focuses on the influence of life roles outside of the work context. The relevance of different life roles (e.g. child, student, parent, homemaker) change throughout life and therefore effects the different career stages due to role confusion and role conflicts (Super, 1990). This career theory is attractive due its focus on outside contexts that influence career development. However, with the focus on "life roles" outside of career, there seems to be a loss on the influence the work environment itself has on one's career satisfaction, stability, and tenure. A balance between the individual and the environment would best suit the population under investigation.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is a career theory grounded in the work of Bandura's self-efficacy theory. This theory recognizes the mutual relationship between individuals and environment. There are three main interlocking segments of SCCT that define the theory; they are: (a) development of career interest, (b) how individuals make their career choice, and (c) career performance and stability. In the segmental process of this career theory, career interest in influenced by self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Self-efficacy is defined as "a dynamic set of beliefs that are linked to particular performance domains and activities" (Lent, 2005, p.104). Outcome expectations are

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likewise defined as "personal beliefs about the consequences or outcomes of performing particular behavior" (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002, p. 262). This model suggests that a person will develop career interests in careers that they feel efficacious about and that they anticipate positive outcomes. Therefore, both self-efficacy and outcome expectations will influence an individual's career interest development. Additionally, SCCT emphasizes the effect of contextual influences and personal inputs that affect the segments in the model. Gender, race, health status, etc. are all personal inputs that moderate this model, while a contextual influence may be the environment in which the career exists. Personal inputs will influence career progression and career development differently based on the environmental context in which the career is situated. Therefore, this model is extremely congruent with the present study, as the effect of gender (personal input) in a male-dominated career field (contextual influence) is under investigation. The three segments of the career model, interest development, career choice, and career performance, are influenced by the personal inputs in a specific context.

SCCT has been tested and verified in quantitative studies, as well as applied to the coaching field. Cunningham, Bruening, Sartore, Sagas, and Fink (2005) found in research with undergraduate sport and leisure students, the barriers and support (contextual influences) influence an individual's self-efficacy rather than having a direct effect on career choice or career interest. Therefore, the researchers suggest that barriers or support, are internalized by the individual which affects their own self-concept, which in turn influences career decisions. This study among others also found that discrimination

and outcome expectations impede one's attitude toward the sport and leisure industry (Cunningham, 2004; Cunningham, Bruening, Sartore, Sagas, and Fink, 2005; Cunningham & Sagas, 2002). The implications here cannot be overlooked. This data is suggesting that the perception of discrimination may affect one's career choice before ever entering the field. Therefore, the sport and leisure industry may be losing young talent because of contextual influences before they have a chance to enter the profession. More positively, the supports of human capital and social capital have a positive correlation with self-efficacy (Cunningham, Bruening, Sartore, Sagas, and Fink, 2005). Human capital can be training and education, while social capital is often industry contacts. If an individual has better training and education, as well as industry connections, their self-concept improves and in turn will be less likely to drop-out of the career field. This data all point to the importance of professional development and mentorship in career fields, such as coaching, that have a reputation for sexism or discrimination.

Researchers has also investigated SCCT in the context of assistant coaches who are already participants in the career field. Cunningham, Doherty, and Gregg surveyed 66 assistant coaches across 15 different sports regarding their intentions on becoming a head coach (2007). Results indicated that male assistant coaches had greater coaching self-efficacy, anticipated more positive outcomes with becoming a head coach, and had greater intentions on becoming a head coach than female assistant coaches. An interesting result of this research, was that the researchers were not able to identify a difference in perception of supports and barriers for the male and female participants,

although previous research has shown that these differences indeed exist (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003; Ingles, Danylchuk, & Patore, 2000; Knoppers, 1992; Sagas, Cunnigham, & Ashley, 2000). Once again this could be evidence of coaches internalizing the external barriers and supports to affect their self-efficacy, rather than directly affecting their career decisions.

Social Cognitive Career Theory provides the best model for examining the career development and progression of female coaches. This theory is wide ranging in exploring career interest, career choice, and performance. With this theory as a guide, interview questions can be formulated to specifically ask about these segments of the model. Substantive data can be produced by asking interview questions related to how the personal input of gender in the contextual influence of a male-dominated environment has affected career interest, career choice, and performance. This theory lends itself to the qualitative method of narrative inquiry where personal stories and narratives can emerge during the interview process.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches. Only limited information existed on the career paths and progressions of female swimming coaches. Understanding the experiences of female coaches at various points in their professional career can provid insight into the underrepresentation of women in the field. These career experiences were analyzed through Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT).

Research Questions

(1) What are the career experiences of Early Career, Mid-Career and Experienced female swimming coaches?

(2) Using Social Cognitive Career Theory, how do female swimming coaches develop their interest in coaching, make their career choices, and ultimately obtain career success?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Development of Coaching Leadership Philosophy

The development of a coaching leadership philosophy for a coach can take on a variety of constructions. Some coaches have a clear vision of their leadership philosophy from the start of the career and will refine and improve it through the years. Other coaches may take the entirety of their career to continually develop the foundations and principles of their leadership philosophy. Some of the most successful coaches have developed leadership philosophies that have outlived the creator themselves and become part of the fabric of leadership beyond coaching. The leadership models developed by former University of California Los Angeles basketball coach John Wooden and former University of Tennessee basketball coach Pat Summitt have permeated leadership culture beyond the sporting arena. Pat Summitt's "The Definite Dozen" and John Wooden's "Pyramid of Success" are leadership models which both sportspeople and those outside sport alike look to for leadership guidance. Both models were developed through years of experience. John Wooden said it took him 14 years to design the ultimate version of his "Pyramid of Success" (Wooden, 2005).

Pat Summitt attributes the development of many of her leadership tenets to growing up in rural Tennessee on a farm where hard work was a highly regarded value by her family (Summitt, 1999). John Wooden also talked about his philosophy on coaching developing from his experience as a high school English teacher prior to his coaching career. Wooden approaches coaching as a teacher first (Wooden, 2005). Both revered coaches drew from their personal life experiences to develop their coaching philosophy.

Chelladurai and Saleh published some of the first research regarding the dimensions of leadership behavior in sport (1980). In this study, the five-factors of leadership in coaching were identified and became the Leadership Scale for Sports (Chelladurai & Selah, 1980). The five leadership factors tested by this scale include: training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback (Chelladurai & Selah, 1980). This scale was the standard for many years for evaluating the leadership styles of sport coaches.

In the current sport leadership landscape, several leadership philosophies have been dissected and analyzed. Previous researchers have even contested that attempts to apply leadership theory to coaching and sports has yielded minimal success (Horn, 1992). From this analysis, what has become clear is that leadership philosophies may not be systematically designed, but rather organically created through experience in the coaching field.

Transformative leadership is the specific leadership model that has been the most studied and found to be the most prevalent and effective in the coaching field. Much of the current research regarding coaching and leadership being conducted specifically focus on transformative leadership. Post-hoc analytical research is also often regularly conducted to understand the leadership philosophies that have proven successful for those coaches, however how coaches arrived at these philosophies seems to be of little concern, but rather the content of the philosophies itself.

Researchers have identified coaching elements of expert coaches who have built successful university programs. A qualitative study from Vallée and Bloom (2005) of

five expert Canadian university coaches revealed four elements for developing successful programs. This study directly relates to the present study as female coaches are the sample population and many of the coaches included in my study are considered "experts" in the field. The elements uncovered by Vallee and Bloom included: coaches' attributes, individual growth, organizational skills, and vision (2005). The attributes of successful coaches included the two subcategories of the coaches' commitment to learn and the coaches' characteristics. These characteristics included: open-minded, balanced, composed, caring, and genuinely interested in their athletes. The subcategories of life skills development and empowerment of each athletes further explained the element of individual growth. Planning and management/administration defined the third element of organizational skills. The last element of vision was defined by goals and direction, and coaching philosophy (Vallee & Bloom, 2005). The researchers in this study concluded that their four elements of expert coaches very closely resembled that four characteristics of transformational leadership (Vallee & Bloom, 2005). The research in this study was conducted inductively, so although none of the participants specifically mentioned the conscious implementation of transformational leadership as their chosen leadership style, these "expert" coaches seemed to engage in similar behaviors and practices nonetheless.

The four I's of transformational leadership as defined by Bass are: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). Some specific aspects of transformational leadership that are included in the above "four I's" are the following: raising awareness of moral standards, promoting cooperation and harmony, allowing freedom of choice for followers, and creating and

ethical climate. In addition, five personality traits of transformational leaders have also been uncovered. Individuals who display transformational leadership qualities score low on the neuroticism index, and high on the indices for extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leadership has been specifically analyzed in relation to the coaching staff of the New Zealand rugby team, the All Blacks. The All Blacks are highly regarded as one of the most successful national teams off all time. Hailing from the small country of New Zealand, the All Blacks compete on the international stage and often dominate the sport of rugby. Drawing from such a small population base it seems quite unlikely that such a team should have the level of success that they have had. In research conducted by Ken Hodge from the University of Otago, in which in-depth interviews were conducted of the head coach, Graham Henry, and the assistant coach, Wayne Smith, eight themes emerged that had some similarities to transformational leadership (2014). Specifically, the coaches believed that "better people make better All Blacks," which is consistent with the high moral standards of transformational leadership (Hodge, 2014, p. 64). The other themes that directly tied to transformational leadership were the "expectation of excellence" and "team cohesion." These two themes are reflected in the individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation components of transformational leadership (Hodge, 2014). Evidence of transformational leadership being foundational to the coaches of the All Blacks further supports the concept that leadership theories are integral elements to the success of coaches and programs, although they might not be consciously arrived at. Once again, these coaches did not articulate a specific leadership

model that they followed, but their behaviors and leadership actions reflected elements of transformational leadership theory.

Current coaches of the most successful teams in professional sport have begun to be studied, as the importance of coach leadership has taken on a more central role in team and athlete success. Steve Kerr, head coach of the NBA's Golden State Warriors, is a recent example of a leadership philosophy that draws comparison to transformational leadership. First, Coach Kerr gives all the credit for success to those around him- his players, assistant coaches, and management. Complimentary to this is that he empowers those around him, both his players and assistant coaches, and encourages them to step up and take on additional responsibility (Ballard, 2017). These two leadership strategies are analogous to the principles of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership theory. Additionally, Coach Kerr has consistently articulated the four core values of joy, mindfulness, compassion, and competition by which the team operates (Ballard, 2017). Much of Kerr's philosophy is developed from his former head coach, Phil Jackson, when he played for the Chicago Bulls. Jackson is known for his "Zen" leadership style (Jackson, 2012). Developing a coaching philosophy from mentors and previous teachers is a common practice in the creation of one's own leadership philosophy.

Although research is sparse as to how coaches ultimately develop their leadership philosophies a few consistencies can be drawn from the research. First, coaches develop their leadership style from early experiences in their lives or careers. Second, the most successful coaches have elements of transformational leadership weaved into their own

coaching philosophy, whether intentionally or organically developed. Lastly, coaches model their own philosophies after influential and successful teachers and coaches with whom they have been able to witness their personal coaching philosophy.

There are clear and substantial gaps in the literature on the method in which coaches come to their coaching philosophy. Current research focuses more on evaluating coaches' leadership style than dissecting how they came to such leadership philosophy. Through a more concrete understanding of the process by which coaches develop their leadership philosophy, new and future coaches could more intentionally develop their own philosophy. Although the leadership styles of the coaches in my study are not the specific area of focus, asking questions regarding leadership development may provide insight for early-career and aspiring coaches, especially when asked to the more senior and elite coaches.

Mentoring and Professional Development for Coaches

Coaches acquire their coaching knowledge in a variety of ways, largely through informal means. A common theme throughout numerous studies researching how elite coaches gain knowledge, is the perceived disparity in the importance of formal coach-education programs (Fleurance & Cotteau, 1999; Irwin, Hanton & Kerwin, 2004; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2004; Salmela, 1996). Although professional development opportunities for coaching education have become more prevalent, the most common ways coaches learn is through experience in coaching and observation of other coaches (Cushion, 2001). Therefore, many coaches gain their knowledge through alternate learning situations such as coaches' prior experience as players or through mentoring

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from more experienced coaches (Lemyre, Trudel & Duran-Bush, 2007). Cushion even asserts that novice coaches are essentially serving informal apprenticeships as they learn the profession through experience (2001). Despite the growing opportunity for professional development through coach education, these means are still regarded as "low impact" compared with the multitude of time spent as a player, assistant coach, and coach (Rossi & Cassidy, 1999). Therefore, incorporating experiential learning into coach education and professional development programs may be more effective.

Mentorship undoubtedly contributes to future success in any field. The field of coaching is no different. Current coaching research demonstrates that mentoring is already being highly operationalized at various levels of sport (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001). In fact, the importance of mentorship in sport cannot be overstated, as many coaches who would eventually become considered "high-performance coaches" have reported being mentored by a more experienced coach (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998). Additionally, mentorship has been identified as one of the major themes of how coaches develop their expertise (Fleurance & Cotteau, 1999).

Mentorship has a variety of definitions depending on the career area. One of the most popular definitions of mentoring is from Kram in which a mentor is defined as someone who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and career support to a protégé (1985). According to a survey of protégés, the five most valued qualities a coach-mentor should possess in rank order are:

effective communication skills, knowledge of their sport, experiences, approachability, and enthusiasm (Nash, 2003).

In a qualitative study of high-performance Canadian coaches, participants were asked a series of interview questions regarding her/his professional development as coaches. Participants reported having between 3.2 mentors for team sport coaches and 4.6 mentors for individual coaches. These coaches also reported first gaining access to mentorship during the early part of their coaching career, at 25.9 years old (Erikson, Cote & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). It is of value to recognize that these coaches came to find their mentors during the early development part of their career. Therefore, these mentors may have been previous coaches of the participants or other experienced coaches they worked with at the start of their coaching career.

The findings of this study suggest that the specific experience of having a mentor is necessary (although, not sufficient) for a coach to reach the high-performance level of coaching (Erikson, Cote & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). This study also suggests that mentorship provides a fundamental way of learning for the more junior coach, in which important learning outcomes are provided by the more experienced coach (Erikson, Cote & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). The researchers go on to say that during the early part of career development "the most pressing implication seems to be the pairing of these new coaches with a more experienced mentor coach" (Erikson, Cote & Fraser-Thomas, 2007 p. 314). The authors explain that most of these mentor-protégé relationships were the product of chance encounters and previous relationships, but perhaps a more proactive approach should be taken in pairing beginning coaches with more experienced coaches. When

examining the career progression of college swim coaches, understanding how and when the coaches made relationships with their mentors would provide insight into their career development.

In a separate study of high-performance Canadian coaches, the topic of mentorship was the main area of focus. Participants were interviewed regarding their experiences as protégés. The researchers identified different types of mentorship that occurred throughout a developing career. The progression of mentorship followed this sequence: being mentored as athletes, being mentored as a developing coaches, mentoring athletes, and mentoring coaches (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998). This sequence is not mutually exclusive, as it is possible for coaches to be in more than one category of this sequence simultaneously. This study was also early in the recognition of the importance of same sex mentors. One participant explained that novice coaches need mentors with whom they feel comfortable and with whom they can identify as coaches (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998). Similar to Erikson et al., the coaches in the study expressed the need for more formalized mentoring programs. However, as other research shows, formal mentoring programs are less effective than informal mentoring relationships.

Despite the obvious benefits of mentorship, a common criticism that befalls mentorship in coaching is the unstructured, informal, and perhaps uneven quality of the current system (Cushion, 2001). An informal mentorship relationship is one in which there is an unofficial, but natural pairing of two individuals based on mutual chemistry and trust. The systems remain rather informal, despite past research which demonstrates

that developing coaches found a formalized mentorship program the most important

factor in their development (Bloom, Salmela & Schinke, 1995). This criticism of the need

for a formalized mentorship system, however, has conflicting evidence from "expert"

coaches in the field, who reached the highest levels of coaching through informal

networking and mentorship (Nash & Sproule, 2009). Analyzing this apparent

contradiction of successful coaches having been informally mentored, while developing

coaches believing they need a formalized mentoring program, it may be deduced that

while informal mentoring is the most effective, developing coaches need assistance in

establishing those relationships and may believe that a formal program is the best way to

do so.

Another criticism of mentorship as a coach education method, is that it may

isolate coaches into smaller groups rather than spreading knowledge throughout a larger

network (Lemyre, Trudel & Duran-Bush, 2007; Trudel & Gilbert, 2004). Coaching and

sport is a social entity, where the knowledge is produced through the interaction of

players and coaches of all levels. When a protégé and mentor develop dyadic

relationships, knowledge may spread less extensively through the coaching and sporting

community.

There is increasing research into the role that gender plays in the mentor-protégé

relationship. In a study of NCAA Division I basketball coaches, coaches that received a

mentor that was similar to them in gender reported receipt of more psychosocial and

career mentoring. This study also indicated that the longer the relationship existed the

greater gender influenced the quality of the mentorship (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips,

2008). Another gender difference emerged in a study outside of the sport environment. In research conducted by Ragins et al. of a large sample of employees from various career fields, findings indicated that women who received formal mentorship from a woman were less satisfied the mentoring program than the men who received mentorship from men (2000). Scholars have suggested that this may be a result of experienced women being more reluctant to serve as mentors than their male counterparts. Women perceive more potential drawbacks to becoming a mentor (Ragins & Cotton, 1993). According to Wickman and Sjodin, this reluctance to mentor by experienced women may be because they fear being associated with failures of their protégés (1997). It is important to note that mentorship is not a one-way street with only the protégé receiving benefits. Research has consistently shown, that the mentor also gains from the reflective nature involved in the mentorship relationship (Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2007; Lee, 2007). As it relates to the current study, the participants vary in experience, so both mentors and mentees are part of the sample. Willingness of experienced female coaches to mentor was of interest with the sample. The more experienced female coaches were asked about their involvement in mentorship. The act of serving as a mentor for developing coaches has even been used as a criterium for identifying expert coaches (Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006). Therefore, if women are more reluctant to mentor it may also affect perceptions of their expertise.

Management and Leadership's Role in Mentorship

Mentorship can come in several different forms. Mentorship can be initiated by either the mentor or the protégé. Additionally, the mentorship can be a formal

relationship directed by superiors or management. Or a mentoring relationship can be a natural pairing of two individuals, not predicated by the management of the individuals involved in the relationship. Regardless of the type of relationship, research has consistently shown that mentoring plays a part in effective career development strategies (Kram, 1985).

An important area to investigate is the initiation phase of a mentorship relationship. Research has indicated that formal mentorship is better than no mentorship, but informal mentorship is most effective (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura & Williams, 2001; Viator, 2001). Even in a formalized mentorship program, protégés had more satisfaction when they had input into the matching process (Viator, 1999). A study from Allen, Eby, and Lentz, echoed these finding of the importance of the protégé having more input in the matching process (2006). This study indicated that protégés who perceived greater input in the matching process reported greater mentorship quality (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). This perception was not unidirectional, mentors also perceived a higher quality relationship when the protégé was given more input into the matching process (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). Researchers theorize that when protégés are given more input into the matching process, both parties may feel greater motivation to maximize the relationship (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). Additional research from this study indicated that geography may not play a role in the effectiveness of mentoring relationships, and therefore may not need to be a consideration when forming these relationships (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). As it related to the current study of female swimming coaches, this

is a substantive finding as the small population of coaches may dictate the need for long distance mentorships.

Another consideration from the field of management in initiation of the mentor-protégé relationship is the department from which the participants come. Results regarding this variable has been conflicting, with some research indicating that relationship are more effective when the participants come from different departments (Ragins et al., 2000), and other studies showing that matching mentors and protégés from the same department is more effective (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). For the present study, the application was whether the participants' mentors come from inside or outside their university and whether they were swimming coaches or professionals in another field.

Another variable for consideration is the difference in rank between the mentor and protégé. Greater differences in rank may not create a more effective mentoring relationship. As Kram theorized (1985), for role modeling to be effective, one must be able to identify with the mentor. If there is too much difference in rank the protégé may not be able to model from the mentor, as they may have trouble identifying with them. In fact, the most effective role modeling takes place when the mentor is similar in rank or slightly outranks the protégé (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). To apply this finding to coaching, developing coaches may be better served by mentors who are not too high above them in status. The best mentor may be someone who occupies the next higher position that coach aims to achieve.

When initiating a mentorship relationship, research has shown that both men and women, as well as mentors and protégés, are more likely to become a mentor if they had

previously been involved in a mentoring relationship as either a mentor or protégé

(Ragins & Cotton, 1993). Therefore, it is important to get younger people involved in

mentoring relationships, as that experience may influence them to become mentors in the

future.

Much of the early research regarding mentorship focused primarily on male

managers (Levinson et al., 1978). Continuing research has shown conflicting evidence on

the role gender plays in the mentor-protégé relationship. According to Ragins, gender

may affect the outcomes and efficacy of the mentoring relationship (1989, 1997). In a

study by Sosik and Godshalk, different gender dyads were investigated in mentoring

relationships as it related to role modeling, psychosocial, and career development

functions received (1999). Results of the study indicated male mentors were perceived as

providing more career development support than female mentors (Sosik & Godshalk,

1999). However, the gender dyad of female mentor and female protégé resulted in

protégés most agreeing with the idea that their mentor is a role model (Sosik & Godshalk,

1999). This confirmed previous research from Burke et al. on the superiority of female

dyads in providing psychosocial support (1996). More recent research has echoed these

findings. In a meta-analysis from 2010, these same findings hold true. Once again, males

are more likely to mentor than females and give more career development support, while

female mentors provide more psychosocial support (O'Brien, Biga, & Kessler, & Allen,

2010).

It is important to understand the context of the organization when examining

mentorship relationships. In a study that explicitly identified male-gendered industries,

there were significant benefits for women to have male mentors, specifically regarding satisfaction of career progress and return on compensation (Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz, & Wiethoff, 2010). Within male-dominated industries, sponsorship and legitimacy seem to be of need by women (Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz, & Wiethoff, 2010a). Legitimacy is the status one gains through the association with someone of higher rank, while sponsorship is where one is chosen by those more senior in rank toward upward career mobility. As coaching is a male-dominated career, specifically college swimming, a female protégé would benefit from the legitimacy and sponsorship that having a male mentor may offer.

Another study which highlights the context of the environment comes from the legal field. In a study of lawyers, female protégés who had male mentors had higher compensation, career progress satisfaction, and were more likely to be partners or senior executives than male protégés with male mentors (Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz, & Wiethoff, 2010b). Ragins also contends that a same gender mentoring relationship is most important when the protégé is in the minority based on gender (1990). Therefore, in a business or sport context, which is highly male-dominated, a same gender pairing of mentor and protégé may provide more psychosocial support for a female protégé. Allen and Eby also found that male mentors provide more career mentoring while female mentors provide more psychosocial mentoring (2004). Based on this research, protégés may benefit from having mentors of both genders. Specifically, for the present study, male coaches may provide more career development for their protégés, while female

coaches may provide more psychosocial support. It may be wise to inquire as to the specific needs the protégé when matching the mentoring pair.

Factors in Female Coaches Career Mobility

In the career field of coaching, women have struggled to reach the same levels of success as men. Barriers and supports exist that affect the career progression of women in coaching. Kilty (2006) has identified four external barriers to for women in coaching: unequal assumption of competence of women coaches compared to men, homologous reproduction, homophobia, and a lack of female mentors and role models. Other barriers to women in male-dominated industries in general may be systematic occupational sex segregation and Queen Bee syndrome (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011; Kanter, 1993).

Tokenism

Sociologist Rosabeth M. Kanter's framework of occupational sex segregation may provide additional explanation for the underrepresentation of women in coaching. Kanter asserts that women in male-dominated industries experience "tokenism" (Kanter, 1993). The token status can have several effects. The token individual may have trouble behaving naturally, fitting in, and gaining peer acceptance (Kanter, 1993). These effects may influence a woman's intention of staying within the organization and her overall satisfaction in the position. This token status may also cause the individual to turn against people of their own kind (Kanter, 1993).

Homophobia

Homophobia has been a barrier for women in the coaching field because of inaccurate and detrimental associations that come with being a lesbian coach. Often rival coaches will use the accusation of the other coach being a lesbian as a negative recruiting tool (Krane & Barber, 2005). Coaches therefore have felt the need to hide their sexual orientation from the public to protect their coaching position. Lesbian coaches may "pass" as heterosexual by dressing more feminine or wearing make-up to hide their sexual orientation (Krane & Barber, 2005). Inevitably this conflict between private and public identity will have a detrimental effect on these coaches and may lead to their exit from the coaching profession.

Homologous Reproduction

Regularly, studies have shown the existence of homologous reproduction, or hiring from a principle of similarity, in sport. Also termed homosocial reproduction, homologous reproduction is the theory that individuals make hiring decisions to keep the in-group in power (Stangl & Kane, 1991). In the context of coaching in intercollegiate athletics, this means that the people hiring coaches, usually male athletic directors or male head coaches, will hire people who are similar to them in appearance, background, values, and beliefs. For example, male sports information directors have been shown to participate in homologous activity (Whisenant & Mullane, 2008). This phenomenon is not isolated to male superiors, as research has also shown that female head coaches are more likely to hire female assistant coaches (Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006). However, with the hegemonic masculinity that exists in collegiate sport culture, men

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systematically retain more of the leadership positions as they are the group occupying most of the decision-making positions.

Queen Bee Syndrome

Although it has long been assumed that sex discrimination in work settings is mainly perpetrated by men, recent research has shown that women in male dominated fields play a negative role in the advancement of other women. Due to the male-dominated nature of sport women may experience this in the coaching field. In instances of Queen Been syndrome, female superiors legitimize the disadvantaged position of women within their organization. Although popular media outlets have suggested that this phenomenon proves that women are their own worst enemy (Dobson & Iredale, 2006), recent academic research has indicated that Queen Bee syndrome may be a product of the environment when working in a sexist organization (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011). Derks et al., argue that Queen Bee syndrome is more of a result of pervasive organizational gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes are persistent in the sporting community; therefore, it was important to recognize whether any instances of Queen Bee syndrome existed. And if it did, whether it was as a result of the male-dominated environment versus the individuals participating in discriminatory behaviors.

Unequal Assumption of Competence

Consistently in the literature evidence exists of there being an unequal assumption of competence between male and female coaches. One finding from a study of female coaches who coach male athletes was that female coaches had to be highly decorated

athletes or coaches to establish credibility from the athletes and administrators (Kamphoff, Armentrout & Driska, 2010). At the highest levels of coaching, women are more consistently highly-qualified than male coaches. Women are unable to achieve high-ranking positions without the highest levels of credentials, while men are able to achieve these levels with much greater diversity in their previous accomplishments (Kilty, 2006). Although, in the present study the resumes of female coaches were not compared to male coaches, it could be hypothesized that the highest achieving female coaches had very strong coaching credentials.

Others have investigated career experiences of coaches to explain the underrepresentation of women in coaching, as it relates to an unequal assumption of competence. Research from Cunningham and Sagas indicated a few fundamental differences between male and female NCAA Division I assistant basketball coaches (2002). Male and female assistant coaches had different experience in both playing history and previous coaching experience. Female coaches had significantly longer collegiate playing careers than male coaches and were awarded higher level honors, such as All-American and All-Conference (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002). Male coaches also had more diversified coaching experience than women. A greater proportion of men had coached as high school coaches and volunteer assistant coaches (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002). These results indicate that for women, personal athletic accomplishment may be more valued than diversified coaching experience, while the opposite may be true for men. Other results of interest in this study is that men spent longer time in the coaching profession and had greater intentions of becoming a head coach, while women had a

greater intent to leave the coaching profession (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002). The authors theorized that although women have greater human capital in the form of their playing careers, they moderate their own expectations of career progression through lower intentions of becoming a head coach and greater intent to leave the profession.

Other Factors

In addition to the career limiting factors listed above, there are several other factors that may contribute to female coaches' lack of career mobility. These include: low self-efficacy, nontraditional work hours, and lack of female role models. Cunningham, Doherty, and Gregg used Social Cognitive Career Theory to examine the careers of male and female coaches. In this study of assistant coaches of women's teams, there were indications that male coaches had higher self-efficacy relative to women (Cunningham, Doherty, & Gregg, 2007). Male coaches also anticipated more positive outcomes associated with being a head coach and more of an overall interest in becoming a head coach (Cunningham, Doherty, & Gregg, 2007). Researchers for this study could not speculate on the antecedents of these differing career experiences between men and women, although they suggested more research into social factors may shed some light on this issue.

The hours required of coaches may more adversely affect women than men, especially if they have children. Women were found to be less likely to have full-time coaching jobs if they were married, had marriage-like relationships, or if they children (Reade, Rodgers, & Norman, 2009). However, both sexes reported spending more time

with friends and family as the main reason for leaving the coaching profession (Pastore, 1991).

Role models may be influential in women developing their interest and desire to coach as a career. Positive female role models have been identified as an influencing factor in women's perceptions of coaching as a career path (Lee, 1999). Therefore, a lack of female role models is concerning in influencing the future generations of female coaches (George, 1989). In a study of both male and female collegiate basketball players, female players were less likely to perceive discrimination in coaching if they had a female coach versus a male coach (Everhart & Chelladurai, 1998). With so few women reaching the elite level of college coaching there may not be enough women established within the career field to adequately serve as role models for beginner and developing female coaches.

Supports. Despite the overwhelming structural and social behaviors that deter women from coaching and lead to the early exit of women in coaching, there are supports which encourage women to stay in the field. Support of athletic administration in achieving work/life balance influences retention of coaching mothers. That support can come in the form of administrators understanding the time demands of the profession, the option for more flexible schedules, and provision of adequate staffing (Bruening & Dixon, 2008). Familial support, both financially and in childcare, can influence the ability of a female coach to remain in coaching. In Bruening and Dixon's study of head coaching mothers (2008), participants could maintain their coaching job because they either had the financial resources to hire a nanny of have full-time childcare due to their

spouse/partner's job or their spouse/partner stayed at home and took on most of the childcare responsibilities (Bruening & Dixon, 2008). Clearly, single parents may not have the same resources for childcare which could affect their longevity in coaching. Additional support for mother coaches is necessary, and the most influential source career-wise after childbirth is the support of the athletic director. In fact, coaching mothers said that the support of their athletic directors was nearly as important as the support from their spouse/partner. These coaching mothers indicated no aversion to the long hours and travel required by the coaching career, but what they do need is assistance from their administrators, in terms of overall understanding, flexible scheduling, and adequate staffing (Bruening & Dixon, 2008).

There are both barriers and supports to women in the coaching profession. However, the barriers seem to be socially institutionalized while the supports are limited to individual programs with supportive athletic departments. Therefore, women must overcome challenges to establish and maintain a coaching career that men do not encounter. The present study examined some of these supports and barriers in the coaching experiences of NCAA female swimming coaches.

Feminism and the Feminist

Feminism has become a problematic term for some. Through the history of feminism and the feminist movement, the term's complexity and diversity has become troublesome for those wishing to gain a strong understanding of the concept. Throughout this paper, the term feminist/feminism relates to the modern Western conception of feminism. Depending on context, feminism means different things throughout the world

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where the struggles by women for equality are categorically different. Using this modern Western perspective does not mean defining the word itself becomes any more straightforward. There is no ideal voice or definition of feminism, however Delmar (1986), provides a broad definition which may be satisfactorily inclusive. Delmar says that a feminist is

> someone who holds that women suffer discrimination because of their sex, and they have specific needs that remain negated and unsatisfied, and that the satisfaction of these needs would require a radical change in the social, economic, and political order (1986, pp.8).

This definition provides a far-reaching standpoint, but an attempt at a more specific definition may silence more diverse voices. This definition also does not delineate between belief and action, which can be a point of contention in other definitions. A point underpinning any definition of feminism is the belief that gender hierarchy is socially constructed, meaning that it is historically "shaped by human social usage rather than simply predestined by God or nature" (Cott, 1987). This means that the male-dominated society in which we exist, is not predetermined by God or other natural order, but was created and is preserved by human society. Another presumption necessary for understanding feminism is that women's perception of themselves is broader than just their biological sex, but rather as a social group (Cott, 1987).

To understand contemporary feminism, exploring the history of feminism can lend a contextual framework. The feminist movement has undergone several manifestations throughout western history. First-wave feminism is the period in the

United States and many European regions during the mid-1800s until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1919 which granted women the right to vote in the United States. This period was termed "the woman movement." The usage of the singular "woman" was symbolic of the unity of the movement, that all women have one cause. Beyond suffrage for women, the women of this movement were advocating for "civic rights, social freedoms, higher education, and remunerative occupations" (Cott, 1987).

Second wave feminism emerged in the United States in the 1960s. The dating of the end of the first wave and start of the second wave does not mean feminism ceased to exist during this time. These clearly delineated periods may help the individual's understanding of historical feminism but may be somewhat misleading as to the true atmosphere of feminism throughout modern U.S. history. In fact, several scholars contend a more continuous feminist consciousness was prevalent throughout the time (Cott, 1987; Delmar, 1986). Second wave feminism became synonymous with the slogan, "The Personal is Political," coined by feminist activist Carol Hanisch (1969). Feminists of this movement saw the cultural and political inequalities of women's lives as inextricably linked. Hanisch also emphasized that the term "political" does not refer to a narrow definition of electoral politics, but a much broader conceptualization of power relationships (2006). Women of this movement even harkened their beliefs back to first wave feminism in that they agreed with Susan B. Anthony in that a woman needed to have "a purse of her own" to be free. It was essential for women to participate in the public workforce. In this vision of equality, feminists demanded the need for the restructuring of childcare and the workplace while insisting that men share the household

responsibilities (Hanisch, 2006). This conception of feminism, although more progressive and even termed "radical" by some, has a glaring shortcoming of inclusiveness. This conception assumes a white, upper-class, heteronormative identity of women. Clearly, this excludes a large population of women who do not fit this identity. It was from this exclusivity that gave rise to third-wave feminism.

Third wave feminism, developed throughout the 1990s and is considered by many scholars to be the current feminist position. Third wave feminists acknowledge that women of color, differing sexual orientations, and differing social class were left out of previous conversations in the feminist movement. Rebecca Walker first coined the term third-wave feminism to highlight the focus on queer and non-white women (1985). However, beyond this agreement, there is conflict within current feminists as to what it means to be a modern-day feminist. The division occurs between the feminist idea that men and women need to be treated identically versus the feminist concept that men and women are inherently different, and women's needs to be addressed specifically. This apparent dichotomy has not been resolved in third-wave feminism.

Feminist Methodology

Methodologically, feminism has largely been associated with qualitative research, and it should be noted that there has been a consistent biases throughout history for quantitative research in the United States. However, relatively recent research shows that much of research published in journals regarding women are conducted quantitatively (Cohen, Hughes, & Lampard, 2011). Yet when the research is specific to feminism, not women generally, more of the research is conducted qualitatively. According to Cohen,

Hughes, & Lampard, qualitative research positions women as the subject of the research rather than the object, which is inherently feminist (2011). The present study was conducted qualitatively which reflects the feminist position of the author.

Black Feminism and Womanism

The conception of *womanism* is an alternative ideology from feminism that seeks to be more inclusive. The term was coined by feminist author and activist, Alice Walker in 1983, as a uniting term for black feminists who had been neglected in previous feminist dialogue (Mankiller, 1999). Since then, the term has been used to include women of various identities other than the white, heterosexual, upper-class woman. The term was derived from a Southern black folk expression, that used the term *womanish* to refer to behavior by black women that was willful and courageous and was free from conventional behavior of white women (Collins, 1996). Walker emphasizes both race and gender are determinants of women's achievement and therefore both are critical in the conversation for resisting oppression (Mankiller, 1999). A point to note is that Walker herself uses the terms of "black feminist" and "womanist" relatively interchangeably.

Many African American women see little difference between the terms and acknowledge that they both support the common agenda of "a black woman's self-definition and self-determination" (Collins, 1996, p.10). According to Collins, two different interlocking components define the black women's standpoint on their oppression: (a) black women's political and economic status and (b) the type of work black women perform, the communities in which they live and the types of relationships they have (Collins, 1989). Because of these differences, black women's ontological

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perspective is created, and thus they experience a different reality than the dominant group, be that black and white men or white women.

A criticism by some of womanism is that Walker implies a superiority of womanism over feminism in her famous quote that "womanist is to feminist, as purple is to lavender" (1983, p.xii). The use of the term womanism distances black feminists from white women and appears to foster a stronger relationship between black women and black men (Collins, 1996). This perspective may allow black women to address gender issues without attacking black men (Williams, 1990). This point of divergence of the womanist and feminist identity was confirmed by a study from Boisnier (2003). Results partially supported that black women identify more with the womanist model while white women identify more with the feminist model (Boisnier, 2003).

Latina Feminism

Although Latina feminism has joined with the general feminist movement throughout history, just like black women, Latina women have faced discrimination unique to their ethnic group. And like black women, Latina feminists believe that traditional feminism benefits primarily middle-class white women (Lattore, 1999). Latinas perhaps feel exceptionally excluded from Latino or Chicanos ideology because of the machismo culture (Lattore, 1999). The most egregious difference is in the fight for reproductive rights for women. While white women have generally been concerned with abortion and supporting the "pro-choice" movement, Latina women have a long history of forced or coerced sterilizations in the United States (Hooten, 2005). Another difference in the Chicana/Latina feminist movement is the experiences of undocumented workers.

As Martinez (1995) asserts, "there is no more exploited, vulnerable person in the United States today than the undocumented woman worker of color" (pp.1027). Therefore, Latina women have had to advocate for themselves in a different context.

Feminism within the Latina culture may look different than mainstream feminism as Latina women face cultural norms that differ from other racial or ethnic identities. For example, in a study from Harklau, Latina feminists of immigrant families often choose to go directly into the workforce rather than attending college, as becoming a wage-earner in the family can immediately challenge engrained gender roles (2013). This is oppositional to other ethnic identities that emphasize the importance of a woman's education. This study is an example of the private and public feminist battles Latina women face. Not only do Latina women face the same public battles as black and white feminists, but they also face the feminist battles of the patriarchal community from which they come (Lattore, 1999).

Intersectionality

Feminism, black feminism, womanism, and Latina feminism eventually leads itself to the concept of *intersectionality*. Intersectionality is the place where multiple identities overlap or intersect. These identities can include, but are not limited to: race, gender, social class, ethnicity, sexuality, nation, ability, and age (Collins, 2015). Kimberle Crenshaw is regularly given credit for coining the term intersectionality, however her deeper contributions beyond naming the subject lie in her contributions to the field of study itself. According to Collins, Crenshaw first identified these issues relating to intersectionality of "social movement and community organizing sensibilities,

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the claim that intersectional frameworks were needed to address the social problem of violence against women of color, and the call for an identity politics to empower women of color" (2015, p.10). Although this work from Crenshaw works toward a definition of intersectionality, recent scholars argue that the ambiguity and open-endedness of the concept, is its greatest point of strength. Davis says that intersectionality is a good feminist theory, as it "encourages complexity, stimulates creativity, and avoids premature closure" (2008, pp.79).

Despite the obvious benefits of identifying multiple oppressive identities through intersectionality, it has been argued that the predominately white academic disciplines of women's studies and feminism has appropriated the movement, and therefore the need for black feminism and other feminist identities has become increasingly important (Carastathis, 2014). Sumi also argues that in academic and research contexts that intersectionality is best framed as an "analytic sensibility" (2013). An analysis is not intersectional by simply using the word "intersectionality," but through a genuine "intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference" as it relates to power (Sumi, 2012, p. 795).

In the aftermath of second-wave feminism of the 1960s, increasing attention has been paid to women's issues in the sporting context. Research and publications regarding women in sport have emerged in a variety of disciplines of sport studies. However, only recent scholarship has acknowledged the multiplicity of identities that may be represented beyond the male/female gender binary. It is important to examine the intersectionality of race and gender in the sporting context as women in general, and to a

greater degree, women of color have been historically underrepresented in leadership positions.

In the current study of female swimming coaches, identities beyond just gender are relevant. Therefore, addressing and continually reflecting on the intersectionality of identities of the participants is imperative. The underrepresentation of women of color is glaringly evident in the present study. All the women who agreed to participate racially identified as Caucasian. Swimming has a long history of excluding African Americans (Wiltze, 2007), and that history leads to fewer African Americans choosing to participate in swimming as a leisure activity (Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, & Noe, 1996). Undoubtedly, the eventual result is an underrepresentation of black women in the swim coaching profession. Also, as it relates to the current study, alternate identities may be underrepresented. Women in coaching have also been victims of homophobia, so although three women in the current study identified their sexual orientation as something other than heterosexual, their sexual orientation has not been linked to their pseudonym in order to protect their identity.

Career Mobility

In the most general terms, career mobility refers to the ability of an individual to move across jobs either upward or downward due to the choice of the employee or the choice of the employer (Sicherman, 1990). For the purposes of this study, career mobility specifically addresses upward career mobility of female coaches from both perspectives of the individual (coach) and the organization (athletic department/university).

The concept of career mobility has two important sides to uncover. First, several career theories give prime explanations to career mobility based on personal characteristics. These characteristics include: educational attainment, on-the-job training, and labor force participation (Allmendinger, 1999). These personal characteristics are undoubtedly important, but do not tell the entire story on one's career mobility. The other side of the career mobility coin is the social structures that allow an individual to capitalize on their personal characteristics. These social structures may include the characteristics, size, and structure of the organization, as well as an individual's membership in social classes (Allmendinger, 1999). As women are largely underrepresented in sports organizations in leadership positions, as well as in the coaching profession, this distinction of social class affecting career mobility is important. Another well-documented element of career mobility theory is the positive correlation of access to training and upward career mobility. Access to training and professional development was specifically addressed with the research participants in the current study due to this positive correlation with career mobility.

In an early study of career mobility of male and female collegiate coaches, results indicated that coaches had little desire or aspiration for upward mobility (Knoppers, 1991). However, at the time, moving into athletic administration was perceived to be an upward move as coaching was perceived as an entry level job. This research may not be relevant today, as collegiate coaching may be the ultimate goal in a career after spending time in other coaching positions. For example, in the present study, only two coaches had moved from collegiate coaching to collegiate athletic administration. One did not see this

as upward career mobility, as she took the role after losing her job as a coach. The other coach, designed her own role within the athletic administration after feeling pressured to commit more time to her coaching position than she felt capable of. One other coach was working in administration, but this was in addition to her coaching duties. The participants did not indicate moving into administration as a career goal.

In the occupational field of collegiate coaching the distinction of intrafirm versus interfirm career mobility is more relevant. Intrafirm mobility refers to an individual's ability to advance in their career within their current organization, while interfirm mobility refers to an individual's ability to advance their career through moving between organizations (Sicherman, 1990). Intrafirm mobility is determined by an employer's decision, while interfirm mobility is determined by the employee's decision on the optimal quitting time to pursue a position with another employer (Sicherman, 1990). Collegiate coaching is a unique field where positions for promotion rarely come available within the employee's current organization and to move up in the field coaches often must move to another athletic department or university.

Limitations to Career Mobility for Female Coaches

The greatest limitations to women's career mobility in coaching can be attributed to gender and race. Kanter provides seminal work on the interaction between career and gender. Kanter asserts that individuals who have few opportunities for career advancement will lower their expectations, experience greater dissatisfaction, and eventually leave a given profession or organization (1977). In the coaching context, this is relevant because of the relatively few women in head coaching positions, women may

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perceive a lack of opportunities. In turn, women may lower their career expectations to become a head coach, not be as satisfied while pursuing their career, and in the end, decide to leave the coaching profession. As mentioned race is an equally important factor in discrimination, however for the context of the present study, gender is the focus.

Gender and Discrimination

To understand gender discrimination in the United States, one must understand the history of the country. For two centuries, laws divided the nation into separate arenas by gender. Men dominated the public spheres, while women tended to the home and raised families. In the 1800s, it was believed that this unequal separation was the natural order or the will of God (Estrich, 2000). During the 1900s, the shift of discrimination moved from a religious justification to science and sociology. Laws were enacted to limit a woman's options for work based on the belief that she was physically less capable than men (Estrich, 2000). Discrimination based on gender in the workplace has been illegal since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, gender discrimination persists, as MIT professor Lotte Bailyn argues, "largely from unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into all of us, men and women alike" (as cited in Estrich, 2000, p.43).

Kanter also extensively discusses the outcomes of the skewed gender ratios in organizations. With skewed gender ratios, come tokens. Tokens are individuals who are not part of the dominant group. Considering the current statistics in collegiate sport, women in coaching and administration would be considered tokens. The effect of tokenism is that the token has higher visibility within the organization. Due to being more

visible, a polarization effect occurs between the differences between the dominant group and the token, and therefore the tokens' attributes are presumed to fit preexisting generalizations about the social group from which they come (Kanter, 1977). Therefore, female coaches in the male-dominated sport environment may experience tokenism, which can lead to performance pressures, heightening of group boundaries, and role entrapment (Kanter, 1977).

Female college coaches also recognize the existence of the "glass wall" in coaching. Specific to female basketball coaches, they know they have fewer opportunities than male coaches in basketball. Male coaches can coach both men's and women's basketball, while female coaches are limited to coaching women's basketball (Walker & Bopp, 2010). A participant from this study commented that if a male gets fired from a job coaching men's basketball he can look to coaching vacancies within women's basketball, however because a woman is limited to coaching women's basketball, if she gets fired from her coaching position, she has limited opportunities of where to find another coaching position, as she will not be considered for a coaching position with men's basketball (Walker & Bopp, 2010).

Women also face family and child-rearing obligations that their male counterparts may not. In a study of female Canadian coaches, all sixteen women in one sample were childless and results indicated that "the absence of children provided a context in which mobility aspirations develop" (Theberge, 1992). Female coaches from a second sample in the same study all had children. These women discussed the challenges of motherhood and coaching, specifically managing a "double work day" of both coaching and parenting

(Theberge, 1992). These two samples of female coaches show that having children may be a more limiting factor on female coaches' career progression than it may be on male coaches. There is an assumption that a man will work harder to support his family while women will work less to be with her family (Estrich, 2000). Susan Estrich (2000) describes this phenomenon in *Sex & Power*. She says that,

> It is way too difficult to take time off to have a family and then come back and have a chance to fulfill your potential. The problem with the 'mommy track' isn't that it represents a detour. A detour would work. The problem is that it's a dead end (Estrich, 2000, p.28).

Another study regarding sexism and coaching from Aicher and Sagas examined if one's gender stereotypes impact their impression of coaches (2010). The hypothesis was that traits assigned to successful head coaches would be more consistent with masculine traits than feminine traits. Results indicated that masculine traits were more associated with head coaches. Compounding this is that sexism predicts masculine leadership stereotypes. Also, unsurprisingly in this study, higher levels of sexism predicted a preference for a male head coach (Aicher & Sagas, 2010). The connections here are obvious. Masculine stereotypes are more associated with successful head coaches; therefore, even a successful female coach may not be perceived as such if she displays stereotypical feminine traits. This contradiction of gender stereotyping and perceptions of an individuals' competency or success leads us to the theory of role congruity.

Role Congruity Theory

Leadership positions have historically been dominated by men, so prejudice and stereotyping of women's capabilities limit their ascension to managerial roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Eagly & Karau (2002) highlighted this prejudice towards women as leaders through role congruity theory. Role congruity theory is expanded from social role theory, which explains that all societal norms cause individuals to associate certain attributes or characteristics with each gender such as caring, sensitive, and sympathetic for women, and assertive, confident, and dominant for men (Eagly, 1987). These stereotypes are deeply embedded, observable through every day gender role activities, and form perceptions of capability in the workplace (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Dickman, 2000).

Role congruity theory takes gender norms found in social role theory a step further explaining that women are perceived less desirable than men in leadership positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women encounter issues with leadership due to the tension between qualities perceived as necessary leadership (e.g., masculinity, dominance, aggression, self-efficacy) and female gender norm attributes ingrained in society (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This conflict leads to suspicion of competence, commitment, and causes a lack of support for female leaders (Konrad & Cannings, 1997). Ultimately, these norms and values found in society lead to women's lack of ascension to leadership roles, i.e. head coaches, or a less favorable evaluation of skill and behavior compared to their male peers (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Design

When choosing a research design methodology, the researcher must consider what information will best answer the research question and what is the most effective way to elicit that information (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). I have chosen a qualitative research design, using narrative inquiry, for numerous reasons for this study. A qualitative research design is best when desiring to gain understandings that are best communicated through examples and narratives (Yates, 2003). Moreover, the purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of the participants; it is not an attempt to predict or find causation (Van Manen, 1990). The lived experiences as told through the participants' own voices can best capture the meaning constructed around the individuals' career experiences. Qualitative work attempts to "achieve an in-depth understanding and detailed description of a particular aspect of an individual, a case history or a group's experience" (Yates, 2003, p.138). Qualitative research data is also considered 'richer' than quantitative research for several reasons. First, the data collection methods do not place as many restraints on the form and content of the data as quantitative data would (Yates, 2003). Second, with a wide range of data sources, all meaningful human actions and social practices can be legitimate sources (Yates, 2003). Lastly, qualitative research allows for the investigators to get closer to the true perspective of the participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013).

A quantitative research methodology would not be appropriate for the present study for several reasons. The quantitative data describing the phenomenon of the

underrepresentation of women in coaching already exists, however there is little data on the lived experiences of the female coaches' experiences in the field (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; NCAA.org, 2016). In addition, the methods of quantitative research would be inappropriate for the research questions I am attempting to answer. For example, in quantitative research, surveys with closed questions impose the researcher's models and theories by providing only limited responses to what may be complex questions (Yates, 2003). To best answer my research questions, I need the participants to have the ability to speak freely and without restriction to understand their experiences.

As the researcher, I am approaching this study from a constructivist perspective. I believe there is no single truth, and it is my responsibility to act as the interpreter and communicator of meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Additionally, from a naturalistic approach, I am researching the meanings imbedded in the actions, discourse, products of individuals and societies, in this case, female collegiate swimming coaches (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Yates, 2003).

Narrative inquiry was the qualitative method with which I approached this research. A central goal of narrative inquiry is to elicit the personal narratives or stories of the participants. Narrative inquiry provides idiographic data, where the goal is a detailed description of particular circumstances (Yates, 2003). Narrative inquiry is also appropriate for researchers who wish to use their work for social change. With the growing underrepresentation of women in coaching, qualitative research can provide the "urgency of being heard", the "urgency of collective stories," and the "urgency of public dialogue" to facilitate social change (Chase, 2013, p. 69-72). Regarding the "urgency of

being heard," storytelling from marginalized groups serves to "amplify" the voice of the participant and allow those from outside the community to hear their story (Reissman, 2008). One could argue that female swimming coaches are not a marginalized group, however with the male-dominated environment of the sports industry and coaching, female coaches do not have the same influence as their male counterparts. Regarding the "urgency of collective stories," the individual stories of the women in the current study, when reported collectively, will hold more sway in the movement for social change (Chase, 2013). Lastly, regarding the "urgency of public dialogue," storytelling through narrative inquiry may help initiate broader conversations. According to Gamson, "storytelling facilitates a healthy, democratic, public life" (2002, p. 197).

Historically some social scientists have been critical of qualitative methodology, as quantitative, positivist research had long been the academic standard. The 1970s and 1980s was a period of conflict between the positivist and postpositivist-constructivist paradigms (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). The publication of Egon Guba's *The Paradigm Dialog* in 1990, indicated a changing attitude in the conflict. By the early 1990s, many qualitative research studies were being published and journals emerged dedicated to qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). However, the criticism for qualitative research still exists. Hard scientists may dismiss qualitative research as unscientific or subjective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). This division between quantitative and qualitative methodologies is furthered by the political landscape which rewards experimental sciences. These "hard" sciences are assumed to produce "truth," and rise above biases and opinion. Qualitative research also faces criticisms due to its link to colonialism and

European imperialism in ethnographic and anthropological research. Qualitative research has its roots in these methods which treated indigenous, usually dark-skinned people, as "other" (Smith, 1999). Despite these criticisms, I believe there is no better way to uncover and find meaning among the participants in my sample than through qualitative methodology. As a qualitative researcher, I acknowledge the criticisms of biases, and thus address them explicitly throughout my research. Additionally, operating from a constructivist paradigm, I reject the belief that a universal truth can be produced from either qualitative or quantitative research.

Studies Using this Methodology

A seminal piece of literature in qualitative research is Belenky et al.'s, *Women's way of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind* (1986). Through 135 interviews the authors discovered the ways in which women view themselves in relation to knowledge. Although this piece is much broader in scope than my research project, it justifies the application of interviews and qualitative research specific to women. Two more recent studies that are more directly related to the current project are from Larsen (2016) and Greenhill, Auld, Cuskelly, and Hooper (2009), both which use qualitative methodology to interview female coaches. Larsen's study examined the career experiences of NCAA black female assistant basketball coaches, while Greenhill et al.'s study looked at the impact of organizational factors on career pathways for female coaches. Both studies address relevant issues for women in coaching that relate to the present study.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this research focused on the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches. The participants represented a variety of experiences and expertise levels; therefore the research questions seek to cover the entire sample.

(1) What are the career experiences of Early Career, Mid-Career and Experienced female swimming coaches?

(2) Using Social Cognitive Career Theory, how do female swimming coaches develop their interest in coaching, make their career choices, and obtain career success?

Site and Sample Characteristics

All interviews were conducted over the phone. Although in-person interviews were the preferred method of data collection, due to the geographically dispersed sample, it was not a practical option. Conducting the interviews over the phone allowed the participants to choose the location from which they do the interview, whether that was from their office, home, or another location. Seidman asserts that the location of the interview should be convenient, private, and comfortable (2013). Phone interviews provided these conditions for the participants. I was cognizant of the inability to establish the same kind of relationship and rapport over the phone as in-person, and therefore I took a thoughtful approach that would "honor the interview process" (Seidman, 2013, p. 114). Participants were given the opportunity to choose the time of the interview that was most convenient for them. It was important to strive for equity in the interview scheduling process between me and the participant, as they were providing a service to

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me in the way of their interview data, I needed to be as flexible as possible in scheduling the interview (Seidman, 2013).

In selecting the participants for the sample, I used purposeful criterion sampling, specifically aiming for maximum variation of the sample participants (Patton, 2002; Seidman 2013). It was necessary for me to include participants who fit the criteria for inclusion, but also represented a broad enough sample to "be fair to the larger population" (Seidman, 2013, p. 56). The inclusion criteria for the sample was swimming coaches who identify as female and have coached at the NCAA Division I level. In job title, the participants included head coaches, associated head coaches, or assistant coaches. Recently retired coaches were also included in the sample. Potential participants were identified through their university's athletic department website. In total, 35 potential participants were contacted via email. Twenty-five female coaches responded to the inquiry and fit the inclusion criteria. Interviews were scheduled with 21 participants, as no further interviews were necessary because saturation was achieved. Sufficiency was determined at the point where enough participants have been interviewed to accurately reflect the greater population (Seidman, 2013). Saturation was determined at the point where subsequent interviews provided no new data, and I heard similar data repeated through the interviews (Seidman, 2013). The participants included coaches from various NCAA conferences and geographic regions, with a wide variety of athletic success. The coaches represented both public and private institutions, with varying academic reputations.

The participants were grouped into three demographic categories: Early Career, Mid-Career, and Experienced. I chose to group the participants in this way, in order to give more context in the analysis and when reporting the findings, without being overly specific and jeopardizing the anonymity of the participants. The coaches with less than five years of experience coaching Division I are the coaches with surnames beginning A through D; they are termed Early Career (Bazeley, 2003). The coaches with more than 5 years, but less than 10 years of Division I experience are Coaches E through K. The final group of coaches, with surnames L through U, are the Experienced coaches with more than 10 years of Division I experience (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Included in the final group are women who are considered "expert" coaches (Saury & Durand, 1998). Expert coaches have been defined in previous research using the following criteria: (a) at least 10 years of collegiate coaching experience, (b) be a current or previous college head coach, (c) developed an athlete who had competed in international competition (e.g. Olympics), and (d) won national and/or conference titles (Vallée & Bloom, 2005). Although the expert coaches are included in the Experienced group because of the small population of female coaches in collegiate swimming, they are not specifically identified to protect their anonymity. However, I believed it was important for the readers to know that the sample did include these expert coaches, as it adds context and significance to their responses.

I also felt it was important to pseudonymize the participants with the title of Coach and a surname. The practice of using first names for pseudonyms did not lend the amount of respect the participants deserved. Additionally, using surnames may help the

reader to bracket any bias they may have toward women. For example, reading quotations from "Coach Adams" versus "Amy" may invoke different responses from the reader. No demographic table has been provided due to the small sample size. Any information beyond what has already been provided may make the participants identifiable.

Instrumentation

The method of instrumentation for this research was in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews emphasize the search for meaning in which the interviewer and the participant develop a shared understanding of the topic (Yates, 2003). Qualitative interviews can take the form of structured, unstructured, or semi-structured interviews. For the targeted purposes of uncovering meaning in the career experiences of the participants, semi-structured interviews were used. The interviews focused on getting a detailed account of a participants' understanding, feelings, and knowledge on the research topic (Yates, 2003). Using in-depth interviews was an attempt to understand the topic from the participants' perspective. In addition, when using a feminist framework, hearing the emic voice of the participants was critical (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013).

There are many benefits of undertaking a qualitative methodology and using interviews as the research design. Interviews allow for more flexibility. Follow-up questions and probes can elicit further details than a survey or questionnaire (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Interviews also have the advantage of being privy to spontaneous answers. Unlike a survey, the participants' initial responses are recorded, and they cannot go back and erase and change an answer (Bailey, 2007). Another benefit of interviews, is the

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ability to access participants' attitudes and subjective experiences that would be otherwise inaccessible through empirical materials (Perakyla & Ruusuvuori, 2013). However, a challenge arises when using in-depth interviews in a sample population which includes elite individuals in the field. Elite individuals are used to being in control and therefore may try to direct the course of the interview and impose their own agenda (Seidman, 2013). Additionally, due to their busy schedules they may not have the time necessary to complete an in-depth interview (Seidman, 2013). Several of my participants are considered experts in the field, and therefore I had to approach the interview with the expectation that they may behave in an "elite" manner. All the expert coaches I interviewed were able to give me the amount of time necessary to complete the interview. Therefore, although there were times where they seemed to take over the interview, I had enough time to redirect and get the most substantive questions answered. Two interview guides were developed based on the amount of experience of the participant (Appendix A). This was necessary because of differences in career goals, mentor/mentee status, and amount of previous experience of the participants.

The researcher as the data collection instrument is also important to address. Several studies have shown that differences in the interviewer and participant's physical or social characteristics can influence the quality of data received. As gender is of interest in this study, it should be noted that men and women may give more favorable responses when interviewed by someone of the same gender (Bailey, 2008).

Dependability and Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability cannot be aspired to in qualitative research, like it can in quantitative research because the role of the human instrument must be contended with. In fact, it is the duty of the researcher to grapple with her own influence in the research process (Patton, 2002). I recognize that the meaning produced was product of the interaction between the participant and the researcher. Therefore, I approached this research from the perspective of building dependability and trustworthiness rather than validity and reliability. It was my aim that the participants' narratives were presented authentically in the findings and I used several strategies to best promote this authenticity.

First, my research questions were neutral in nature. The questions do not lead the research in a bias direction or presuppose anything. This neutral environment allowed for multiple and perhaps contentious perspectives to be shared (Given, 2016). Next, my sampling method drew on the necessary population to provide sufficient data and ultimately result in sufficiency and saturation (Given, 2016; Seidman 2013). Additionally, I continually tracked and reviewed my data to maintain its integrity. I also took notes during interviews and wrote memos of my analytical processes and decisions. I practiced reflexivity with my own biases and subjectivities to present the data as accurately as possible (Patton, 2002). A statement of subjectivity follows later in this chapter, which is a method for dealing with researcher biases. In this statement, I named and attempted to understand my biases to analyze how it affected my study.

Trustworthiness can also be built through member-checking of the data, which is described below in regarding the data collection protocol.

In contrast to a quantitative methodology, where validity and reliability is determined by generalizability, the aim of this study is transferability. The project is designed to be transferable to similar populations, contexts, and settings (Given, 2016). For example, transferability may exist to female coaches in similar contexts, such as NCAA track and field coaches.

Data Collection Procedures

The first step in the data collection process was obtaining institutional review board (IRB) approval from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (Appendix B). Approval was granted prior to the start of the interviews and the participants were asked to sign an informed consent document (Appendix C). The participants were also reminded that the interview was being audio recorded. The data from the telephone interviews was directly recorded onto my password protected computer using audio recording computer software. Additionally, a backup recorder was used in the event of a technology malfunction. The backup recording was immediately destroyed after confirmation of the success of the primary recording device. Notes were taken during the interviews to assist me in pacing the interview and remembering additional questions to probe or follow-up with (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The average length of the 21 interviews was just over 44 minutes.

I immediately reviewed the recordings after the interview to determine if there were any necessary changes to be made to the interview protocol (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Following an initial review of the recording, I transcribed the interview. This immediacy allowed me to recall anything that may not have been clear on the recording (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). After the transcription process was completed, the transcriptions were sent back to the participants for member-checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member-checking gave the participants the opportunity to review the transcription and change, delete, or amend any data they wished. Giving the participant this opportunity to review the data contributes to the trustworthiness of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Several of the participants responded by retracting sections of their transcriptions. Any retracted data was not used in the analysis. Upon completion of member-checking, the final transcriptions produced 215 single-spaced pages of data.

Data Analysis Procedures

The first step in my data analysis was to become intimately familiar with my data by reading and rereading the transcripts, as well as any notes and memos I had taken. After sufficient reading, I began analyzing the data using constant comparative method. I started by coding the data, using the open coding method of in-vivo coding. Open coding means coding all the data without restriction and the process is entirely provisional (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldaña, 2016). It is also termed initial coding. In-vivo coding means labeling the data with words or phrases from the participants' themselves (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldaña, 2016). I chose in-vivo as the coding method to keep the codes in the participants' own words to honor their voice (Saldaña, 2016). Through the coding process, I was continually comparing new codes to previous codes in the same transcription and across transcriptions. From the 215 pages of transcriptions, 819 initial

codes were developed. From comparing these codes, I created categories or buckets in which to classify the codes. After the initial coding process, 12 initial categories were identified. These categories were then further grouped together, based on "connecting threads and patterns" among the data (Seidman, 2013). These categories were then narrowed to six categories. Eventually the six categories were further reorganized into three themes.

A key to developing these themes was to use an inductive approach which allowed the data to speak for itself, with an attempt not to bring my own presumed thoughts or themes to the research (Seidman, 2013). Despite these efforts, bracketing biases and subjectivities in qualitative research is not entirely possible (Ahern, 1999). Each analytical step, from creating codes to eventual theme development, is influenced by the researcher. Much of the analytical process includes researcher-generated constructs, such as the naming of codes, categories, and themes (Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele, 2012).

Limitations in Methodology

Limitations exist in using qualitative methodology. Largely, a limitation in qualitative research is that sample sizes are too small to be generalizable to a larger population. The analyses can only uncover findings specific to this sample. Additionally, securing representative participants was a challenge. Potential participants declined to be interviewed because of the time commitment necessary for a narrative interview. I also encountered a respondent bias, due to the sensitive nature of the topic, in which participants choose to participate or not based on their interest level in the topic (Knox &

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Buckard, 2009). Several of the participants expressed to me their specific interest in this project and admitted they thought this was an "important conversation." Additionally, the participants may have feared a loss of anonymity or confidentiality, and therefore censored their responses (Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor, & Dogra, 2007). Limitations based on the selectivity of the participants chosen for interviews also needs to be recognized (Patton, 2002). Therefore, Patton says that "keeping findings in context is a cardinal principal of qualitative research" (2002, p. 563).

Another limitation of qualitative research is the impact the researcher's biases may have on the study. My positionality is specifically addressed in a later section, however these biases effect everything from the choice of the research question, to the style and content of the interview, to the analyzation and reporting of the findings.

Ethical Safeguards and Considerations

Protecting the rights of the research participants is of greater value than the research itself, therefore every safeguard was implemented to protect the participants (Bulmer, 1982). By nature, in-depth interviews explore personal aspects of the participants' lives. Therefore, it was my responsibility as the researcher to ensure a safe environment where the participants felt that they could speak honestly and express their opinions without feeling exploited or uncomfortable. (Yates, 2003). There are several key ethical issues to address when using this methodology.

The first ethical consideration I addressed was gaining access to the participants. By contacting the participants directly, rather than through their athletic department, they had the agency to decide whether to participate or not and therefore did not feel any

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unnecessary pressure to participate. Another ethical consideration is informing the participant about the nature of the research and the interview. I was completely transparent with my participants prior to collecting their data through two methods. First, each participant signed an informed consent document which explicitly laid out the nature of the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Second, during the recruitment process, verbal and written communication between me and the prospective participants further outlined the nature of the study and associated risks. Another ethical consideration is the participants' right to privacy. Therefore, the participants were given pseudonyms and all identifying materials regarding their participation in the research were kept confidential (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Any data with participants' identifiable information was excluded in the reporting of the data. Signed consent forms were stored electronically on my password protected computer. The interviews were recorded on a digital recorder and were immediately erased after being transferred to my password protected computer. The participants were also given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point. Additionally, if the participants wished to retract any data from their interview, they were given the opportunity to do so during the member-checking process.

Researcher Subjectivity

In this qualitative research process, as in all research, subjectivity by the researcher is inevitable. According to Peshkin, the researcher needs to seek out their subjectivity regularly throughout the research process (1988). It is not enough to simply address my biases pre- and post-research, but to regularly check-in with my own biases and subjectivities. The purpose of this reflexive process for researchers is to "be aware of

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how their own subjectivity may be shaping their inquiry and the outcomes" (Peshkin, 1988, p.1). Peshkin also argues that not only will reflexivity make the researcher aware of personal qualities that may affect the data and analysis, but it also allows for the researcher to disclose to the reader the ways in which the subject and the researcher have become intertwined (1988).

I acknowledge that my personal experiences in the subject at hand undoubtedly influenced my research process. Until, just three years ago I was a member of the population that I am studying. I spent eight years as a swimming coach at various levels. Six of those years in coaching were at the collegiate level. During my coaching career, I spent three years coaching Division II, 2 years coaching Division III, and one year coaching Division I swimming. My own experiences directly impacted my desire to study this subject. As I spent many years on pool decks across the country, I often mentally surveyed the gender composition of the coaches. I consistently noticed that I was part of the gender minority in coaching. My consciousness of the gender disparity in coaching was heightened in the Spring of 2014. I attended the NCAA Women Coaches Academy (WCA). The other conference attendees and I were required to attend a session on the history of women in NCAA coaching and Title IX. This session was enlightening for me as I learned that the underrepresentation of women in coaching which I had personally observed was a post-Title IX phenomenon. It was at this point in my coaching career that I was considering leaving coaching to pursue academics. This experience was seminal in directing me towards my eventual research interests.

In addition to my education at WCA, my post-graduate education at the University of Central Florida under Dr. Richard Lapchick shaped my perception on the place that sport holds in society. We were taught about the transformative power that sport holds in global society and how social change often starts on the sport platform before it reaches the masses. My experiences at UCF and the tutelage I received there shaped my perception that sport has a critical role in society and choosing to research social issues from a sport perspective is of value.

Lastly, my career in sport as an athlete and as a coach has had perhaps the biggest influence on my subjectivity. Growing up as a youth athlete, I had very influential female coaches, usually in the role of the assistant coach. My very first swimming coach from when I was six years old, was a woman who taught me the fundamentals and who I credit with developing my love the sport. Throughout the rest of my training years, I never had a female head coach, but I always had influential women in supporting roles. I do not remember gender being a factor in my perceptions and experiences with these coaches. I also remember being recruited by one of the few NCAA female head coaches during my senior year in high school. The gender of the coaches recruiting me did not play any role in my eventual college selection. I swam collegiately at the University of Kentucky. During the first year I was on the team, we had five male members of the coaching staff and no women. I remember thinking that it would be nice to have a female presence on the coaching staff. I also remember feeling as though the men on my team were favored or allowed to behave in ways towards the women's team that would be less acceptable if

there was a woman with authority on the pool deck. My last three years of eligibility, we did have a female assistant coach, which helped to moderate some of these issues.

When I became a coach, I never felt like it was a long-term career. I always thought that eventually I pursue a different path. Upon reflection, I think the main reason for having a different career path in mind was that I did not see how it was possible to have a family and be a collegiate coach. I had known quite a few women who had retired from coaching after starting a family. I did not have any female role models to show me that it was possible to both coach and raise a family. I also had an ongoing conflict with the schedule of coaching. I have lots of outside hobbies that take time and training. From traveling to competing in athletic events, coaching did not give me the balance that I desired in my life. Lastly, coaching jobs at the collegiate level are very dependent on geography. With a spouse who had career goals of his own, I needed to give him the opportunity to pursue his career without being tied by location to wherever I could find a coaching job.

During the research process, I found that many of the women I interviewed had similar experiences to me, both professionally and personally. I heard similar stories of lack of female role models, conflicts between work and life, and spousal or family obligations. Recognizing my positionality in the research was important as I proceeded through the research process to attempt to bracket my own biases as best as I could (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to describe the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches. Furthermore, the study sought to describe the experiences of a wide-range of coaches from early-career assistant coaches to long-term head coaches in order to examine the underrepresentation of female swimming coaches at the NCAA level. Findings are based on the analysis of 21 semi-structured interviews with female NCAA Division I swimming coaches. Participants represented head coaches and assistant coaches. The coaches have been classified into three groups based on experience. The coaches with less than five years of experience coaching Division I are the coaches with surnames beginning A through D; they are termed Early Career (Bazeley, 2003). The coaches with more than 5 years, but less than 10 years of Division I experience are Coaches E through K. The final group of coaches, with surnames L through U, are the Experienced coaches with more than 10 years of Division I experience (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Included in the final group are women who are considered "expert" coaches (Saury & Durand, 1998). The definition of an expert coach is operationalized in Chapter 3. The categorization of coaches by experience serves to give context to the quotes and stories, not as a method of comparison. The career experiences of the coaches were more similar than they were different even when specifically looking for group variation.

Not all participants' experiences can be represented in all themes. However, in order to provide a rich description, the most representative quotes were selected to illustrate the themes that emerged during the data analysis (Creswell, 1998). It has been

indicated throughout the findings when a sample quotation is representative of the larger group or unique to the individual (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Three themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) Sexism, (b) Career Path, and (c) Life as a Coach-Mom. A chart is provided to show examples of each theme and subtheme (Appendix D). The theme of Sexism includes a variety of ways women experience and perceive discrimination based on their gender. Women may experience sexism from male colleagues, their male and female athletes, parents of their athletes, and their administrators. These women also experience sex discrimination because of pregnancy or having children. Included in this theme is the isolation that these women feel and the token role they may occupy on a coaching staff. The theme of Career Path explains the changing landscape of women in coaching from the perspective of the coaches. The participants explain the causes of dwindling opportunities for women and the importance of mentorship and professional development in combatting these losses. Lastly, Life of the Coach-Mom illustrates how the experiences of motherhood interact with female coaches' careers. The participants discuss the support systems needed for coach-moms and the sense of balance that having children brings to their lives. Finally, the themes are analyzed through the lens of Social Cognitive Career Theory to explain development of career interest, making career decisions, and ultimately performance attainment.

Sexism

The most robust theme identified is that female coaches experience sexism. In the present study, women experienced a variety of sexist behaviors in the collegiate swimming environment. The sexism experienced by the women could generally be

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explained as subtle sexism. Subtle sexism is "unequal and unfair treatment of women"

that is "perceived to be normative, and therefore does not appear unusual" (Swim,

Mallett, & Stangor, 2004, p.117). The findings of this theme will be presented in the

subthemes of (a) Misidentification, (b) Sexism from coaches, athletes, parents, and

administrators, (c) Sexism and motherhood, (d) Isolation, and (e) Tokenism.

Misidentification occurs when female coaches are assumed not to be the coach of the

team and mistaken for athletes, athletic trainers, or other staff. The coaches in this study

experienced sexism from numerous sources including colleagues, their own athletes (both

male and female), parents of their athletes, and their administrators. Female coaches may

also experience sexism based on their status as a parent or being pregnant. Female

coaches may also experience isolation and tokenism due to being a woman in a male-

dominated career field.

Misidentification

The participants commented that they are sometimes mistaken for one of the

student-athletes or an athletic trainer, and not as a part of the coaching staff. When these

misidentifications happen, the less experienced younger coaches often assume that it is

because of their age and not because of their sex, although this misidentification happens

to even the most experienced coaches. Coach Evans described a situation where she was

not assumed to be a coach. She said,

> I was standing with another female coach at our conference meet and [a
>
> member of the meet staff] walks up and is like, "Where are your coaches
>
> at?" And it's two female coaches, one is the interim head coach and me.

And I'm like, "We are the coaches. What are you thinking?" Sometimes as
a female, you're either someone on the team or you're the trainer. Nobody
knows you are the coach. If you are the head coach, they are still going to
go to your male assistant, treating him like he's the head coach.

Coach Isaac had similar experiences of being mistaken for an athlete. She commented,

I feel like sometimes I am not taken seriously. And there are times when officials are like,

"What are you swimming?" I'm like, "No I'm the coach. Do you not see the stopwatch?

I'm like one of the only people dressed in clothing." I don't look old, when I am with a

bunch of athletes some people just think I am an athlete, but they never say that to my

guy friends. They never say that to the other male coaches, they only ever say that to

younger females.

Coach Davis was also assumed not to be the coach in a situation with a team bus

driver. She described a time, when on a training camp session, she instructed the bus

driver that all the swimmers were on the bus and they were ready to go. She said the bus

driver responded by saying they had to wait for the coach. She had to explain that she

was the coach. She says, "it's certainly frustrating as a young coach." Again, this is an

example of the female coach attributing the assumption to be based, at least in part, to her

age, rather than her sex.

The assumption of the female coach, being a staff member and not a coach

extends beyond the younger coaches. This would suggest that the misidentification is

more a product of sexism than ageism. Coach Ullman recalled a story of her male

assistant and male director of operations being mistaken for the coaches. She said a

younger male on the meet staff walked right past her and handed the meet line-up to her male assistant and male director of operations as he says, "Here you go, Coach." She reacted by informing this individual of his subconscious biases. She said to him, "Do you realize that you just assumed that the men were the head coaches and that I wasn't the coach? You just probably want to check-in with that."

Even as a more established coach, Coach Ullman has several similar stories. She said when she is out to dinner with her team the serving staff will give the check to her male assistant who is 20 years younger than her. She also said that when her team was in Hawaii on training trip, the women on the team were playing on the beach. She said when people were curious who they were, they would go up to her male assistant to ask. Coach Ullman also retold the story of her encounter with a female meet referee at a top-level national meet. Coach Ullman's institution has separate women's and men's swimming programs. When there was an issue with one of the female swimmers, the meet referee came to Coach Ullman and asked to speak with the head coach of the men's team. Coach Ullman said to the referee, "That's bullshit. This is a female, and this is a women's issue. Why are you going to him? You're a woman; you should know how hard this has been." Coach Ullman proceeded to tell the meet referee some highlights of her coaching resume, to which the referee responded with, "I'm sorry." Coach Ullman said she "was dumbfounded" at the encounter. Lastly, in her many years of coaching, Coach Ullman said she has regularly been misidentified by meet security as a parent. She says she has been directed towards spectator seating by meet security. She says she does not see her

male counterparts misidentified in this way. As a woman she is assumed to be a mom of one of the athletes, whereas the male coaches are assumed to be coaches, not the dads.

This misidentification of female coaches as athletic trainers, athletes, or parents shows the deep-rooted bias individuals may hold, in which the assumption is that a woman is not the leader. The younger female coaches attributed this misidentification to their age, however, as this still happens to older women who are well established in their careers, it is likely to be more a product of sexism. In addition, younger men associated with the program, such as assistants or directors of operations, are assumed to be the coaches over both younger and older female coaches. This is another indication that what the female coaches are experiencing is sexism and not ageism. It is also notable that it is not only men that misidentify the female coaches, as women are guilty of this as well. This finding aligns with previous research in collegiate athletics that found that men are assumed to be the most likely to lead athletic departments, regardless of the individuals' qualifications (Burton, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2011). Further research confirmed the assumption that women could not lead athletic departments because "females are not qualified to manage football programs" (Taylor & Hardin, 2016). Just as men are assumed most likely to lead athletic departments, they are also assumed to be the coach of swimming teams.

The stereotypes surrounding gender and leadership create biases that lead to the misidentifications. Gender stereotyping has influence on who is perceived as a competent leader. Women are stereotyped as kind, warm, and gentle. Although these are positive traits, when it comes to leadership, they can have negative consequences because the

stereotypical masculine traits of confidence, assertiveness, and independence are perceived as the preferred leadership qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In sport, these stereotypically male leadership qualities may be even more ingrained because of the long history of male dominance.

Sexism from Coaches, Athletes, Parents, and Administrators

Sexism can also occur from a variety of sources within and tangential to the swimming program, be it other coaches, athletes, parents, and athletic administrators. Coach Davis witnessed varying levels of respect for the coaches on the pool deck based on their gender. In her conference, there were both male and female head coaches. She said,

> I think they [female head coaches] had to work a lot harder to get respect on the pool deck than the men did. Men just kind of had it when they walked on the pool deck, or had it for each other by default, whereas the women didn't get the benefit of just being respected for their position.

She also said that to be hired, a female coach has to show the administration "that your personal life and you coaching life can exist perfectly happily together. People seem not to worry about that when looking to hire a male. That's an interesting thing and obviously discriminatory."

The swimmers on the team may also have a sexist view on who should be coaching them. Coach Evans tells another story of a female coach who had an athlete leave her program when she was promoted from the assistant coach to the head coach. The female swimmer said she did not want to swim for a female head coach and

questioned what would happen to the team if that coach got pregnant. This female coach had been the group coach for this swimmer prior to her promotion and had been quite successful in developing this swimmer. It could be inferred therefore, that the swimmer recognized the coach for her coaching acumen but could not accept her as the leader. Coach Owens said she had personally faced sexist attitudes from female athletes. She said,

> Some females don't want to be coached by females, they do better with males, and they have told me that, which I am like, "Gender has nothing to with it. It's personality; it has nothing to do with gender." But I can't educate the world on that.

Coach Foster said when she first started coaching she perceived sexist attitudes from the men's team she coached. However, she thought their disrespect might be attributed to her age rather than her gender. She "thought that the men's team didn't respect me as much as the women's team, or listened to me on coaching… I was a lot younger, too." She said she has also been mistaken for an athlete on the team rather than one of the coaches. Again, she attributed this to age rather than gender. She thought "that's just because I look young." Coach Adams also asserted that the disrespect she encountered from the men she coaches was more of a result of ageism than sexism. However, her words confirm that she was experiencing sexism. She said,

> I don't think it was my gender, definitely my age, but it definitely was hard for me to garner respect of the athletes. I think I really had to work hard to get the men's respect. Given that the other three swimming

coaches were male, it was sometimes difficult for them to take me seriously.

There is also the perception that male athletes need a male coach. Coach Morris said that "a lot of places will not hire a woman to coach a combined program, because they think a male swimmer needs a male coach." Parents, during the recruiting process, may even question the ability of a female coach to coach their children. Coach Owens said that early in her career, parents "were worried that I wouldn't discipline their daughters… That's all the stereotypes you are going against." She said, "it always shocked me when that happened" because in her family, "my mom was the one disciplining me… that's not how I was brought up, that is not what I believe."

Coach Davis said she desired to be a head coach, but she was concerned about parent and athlete attitudes she might encounter as a female coach for a combined program. She said, "as the head coach, women have to address it and be like, 'Yes, I am a female, but I can still coach you. And I can still coach your son, or I can coach your athlete.'" The implication that Coach Davis is making is that male coaches do not have to prove to parents or athletes that they are capable of leading and being the head coach, while women do.

Gender may also be used against female coaches in recruiting situations. Coach Knight said that after a recruiting a female swimmer for several months, the prospective student-athlete eventually told her that she thought she needed a male coach. After questioning this student-athlete on why she felt this way, the athlete told her that a male coach who had been recruiting her to another institution suggested this. This particular

student-athlete, wanted to study engineering, and Coach Knight eventually won her over, by explaining that she had "some perspective on being a female in a male-dominated industry." She explained that this negative recruiting against female coaches "is out there, it gets used against you."

Only one participant, Coach Johnson, contradicted the idea of male athletes having sexist attitudes towards women. Coach Johnson said that in her experience "most swimmers have grown up with female coaches and swimming with girls, to them it's not a big deal if they have a woman coach. And they don't really treat them very differently than the male coaches." She continued that "it's not the athletes that have a problem with female coaches; it's the people doing the hiring." Coach Johnson' statement shows that even if female coaches do not perceive sexist behaviors or attitudes from their athletes, they are still on the receiving end of sex discrimination from their administrators.

Female coaches also face discrimination when they act in stereotypically masculine ways. Coach Evans said that when a female coach enforces the rules she is a bitch. She said that the expectation is that the "female is supposed to be the complete nurturer." Female coaches are also disparaged by their male colleagues according to Coach Lewis when they do not act in stereotypically feminine ways. She said that she has heard, on several occasions, male coaches on the pool deck talking negatively about a highly successful female coach. She said, "people talk about how she's a bitch, and she's crazy. And it's like, what about these other guys, they're crazy too." She said this "is not very encouraging to women, especially if you are younger. You are hearing these people that you trust and see as a role model or idol, and they are talking that way."

Coach Ullman said she regularly faces this double standard of being a female coach who is tough. She says,

> If you are a female coach and you are direct, and you have expectations and you make people work hard, I'm a bitch. But if I'm a guy and I do that, I'm a good coach. I'm a bitch because I might yell or say that needs to be better, or that's not okay here, but if I do that as a male coach that is a positive quality.

She goes on to say that she tried to help her female athletes understand this double standard. She tells them, "So bitch means you know what you want and you're going to be passionate about getting it and you're willing to speak up for yourself, and yes, I'm a bitch, so I hope you'll be a bitch too."

At the center of the sexism experienced by female coaches is perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is the system in which men's dominant role in society is legitimized, which in turns makes women the subordinate gender (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). When the women discuss the various ways in which they experience sexism, whether from other coaches, athletes, parents, or administrators, they continually repeat the notion that the men are presumed to be the natural leaders. In a male-dominated sporting context, where stereotypical masculine behaviors are rewarded, this is especially true. When athletes say, "they prefer a male coach" or administrators think they need to hire a male coach for male athletes; they are constructing or reconstructing the gender hierarchy and perpetuating hegemonic masculinity. As a result of this perceived inferior role that women occupy in sports,

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women continue to experience underrepresentation in leadership roles (Walker & Bopp, 2010).

When female coaches are perceived as a bitch because they exhibit tough or demanding standards with their athletes, they are experiencing the "double bind" of role congruity theory. Role congruity theory asserts that prejudice toward female leaders exist when they exhibit behavior inconsistent with their genders' stereotypical leadership characteristics (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women are supposed to be sensitive, gentle, and nurturing, which are not considered leadership traits. When women exhibit stereotypical masculine traits of leadership, such as direct communication, they are perceived to be a bitch. There is evidence that women in historically male-dominated environments, such as sport organizations experience this double bind more acutely. Women have expressed femininity had little chance to move into leadership roles within their sport organization because they were not taken seriously by their male colleagues, however women who expressed masculinity were also excluded from leadership positions because they were perceived to be "bitchy" (Shaw & Hoebner, 2003). This study also specifically examined masculine and feminine discourses in coaching. Once again women were perceived to be unable to fulfill coaching roles because "of some intrinsic inability to be tough" (Shaw & Hoebner, 2003, p. 369). Of particular interest in the current study was that Coach Ullman embraced her "bitch" status and has turned what is typically seen as a negative into a positive. She wears her "bitch" status proudly, recognizing what it really stands for and celebrating it almost as a status symbol. It is almost as if she is saying that if you are not being labeled as one, you probably are not coaching to your best ability.

Sexism and Motherhood

Sexist attitudes towards female coaches can also come from having children or being pregnant. Coach Evans described a conversation she overheard between two male head coaches. One of the men was considering hiring a specific female coach for an open assistant position. The other male coach had previously worked with this female coach. The first male coach asked the other if he would ever hire the female assistant again. His response was, "I would if she didn't have kids." Coach Adams also expressed concern regarding getting pregnant. She thought her administrators might express some concern. Although she did not have children, she imagined telling her administrators she was pregnant and the reaction she might get. She said, "they would be like, 'Oh my gosh, now is she going out on maternity leave? Is she going to come back, or should we just try to replace her right now?'" Coach Isaac echoed a similar sentiment about the impact having children might have on her career. She wondered "if they [her administration] would be supportive? Or would they just push me out? I don't know." This concern over discrimination regarding having children or pregnancy extends to women who have no intention on having children. Coach Davis said,

> I fall into the category of women who don't have any interest in having children. Because you are female people think you're going to be having babies someday, and that probably means you're not going to be interested in doing this forever.

Coach Nelson told a story of interviewing for a head coach position at another institution when she was visibly pregnant. She said she saw reactions from the hiring

committee when she came to the interview "showing quite a bit." This job also ended up going to a male coach. She does not say that her pregnancy was the reason she did not get the job, but she was aware of the hiring committee's reaction.

Since the passage of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in 1978, it has been illegal to discriminate women on the basis of pregnancy. However, that does not mean it may not still occur. Research has indicated that pregnancy can be a source of job discrimination in the hiring process. In a study from Masser, Grass, and Nesir (2007), while a pregnant job candidate was seen as warmer and more competent, ultimately, she experienced more discrimination than non-pregnant job candidates. Outside of sport, but in another field dominated by men, female engineers in the workplace who did not have children were perceived conceptually as men. However, once these female engineers had children or became pregnant they were now perceived as mothers before engineers, and to their coworkers these two identities were incompatible (Ranson, 2005). A similar analogy could be applied to the coaching environment. Female coaches working in a male-dominated environment are more accepted before they become mothers, but once pregnancy or motherhood occurs, the two identities of coach and mother may be incongruous. In the current study, eight of the 21 participants were mothers or mothers-to-be. These women have most likely experienced or will experience discrimination based on their parental status. Arguably, the impact of pregnancy discrimination on these women or others who may have exited the field, may contribute to the struggle for women to advance in coaching.

Women in this study faced discrimination based on being a mother and becoming pregnant. Additionally, women who did not intend to have children also faced discrimination based on the presumption that all woman intend to have children. Therefore, women who pursue coaching as a career may leave the profession when they have children, or they may decide that having children is not compatible with their career goals. Coach Ullman said that it was "quite sad" and a "disappointment" that she never had children because she was so focused on her career during that period of her life. Coach Smith, also from the most experienced group, retired from coaching after having her second child. She said that she wants to "be all-in" in everything that she does. She did not feel like she could give coaching the proper attention necessary when distracted by the needs of motherhood. Coaching is a uniquely demanding profession, perhaps more so for women than men, add to that the expectations and responsibilities of motherhood, it may be an unmanageable lifestyle for some (Bruening & Dixon, 2008). Although the parenting role for men has increased over time, historically fathers could simply provide financially for the family and discipline the children to fulfill their parenting expectations. Therefore, the burden of parenting still largely fell on the mother in many households (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). Male coaches do face work-life challenges as well, but they may be contextually different than women (Graham & Dixon, 2014).

Isolation

Both more and less experienced coaches discussed the isolation that occurs due to working in a male-dominated profession. Isolation can occur in two different ways: within a coaching staff and in the swimming community at large. The assistant coaches

interviewed often discussed being the only woman on the coaching staff. The head coaches discussed isolation in the larger swimming community, where the participants describe being one of very few women on pool decks, at professional meetings, or in other potential networking situations. Isolation seems to be present at every stage of these women's careers. From the start of their careers, as young assistants, the women are usually the only female coach on a five-person staff. When they begin to pursue networks at professional development events, they are met with a "good 'ole boys" club that is unwelcoming and find it difficult to connect with other women. If they choose to have children, they once again struggle to find peers experiencing similar challenges. Once the women have a well-established career in their 30s and 40s, they find that many of the female coaches who were once their peers have left the profession. Lastly, if the women reach the highest coaching levels, they are now one of very few head coaches.

Coach Nelson expressed how she experienced isolation in the college coaching environment. She said, "in my life, I always felt like a freak. I was this female balancing being a DI coach, being married, recruiting, going away. My community, they just hadn't seen anything like that." She went on to say, "when I became the head coach I thought, 'I'm 26 years old, I'm pregnant, and I am a head coach, and I don't know who to turn to.'" She also discussed the isolation occurred in professional situations that were supposed to be for networking and career development. She said that there was a time at College Swim Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) conferences when "basically the men would all go out and play golf, and some of the women were there and we would sit out by the pool and talk or go to dinner." The isolation Coach Nelson was

experiencing was two-fold. She was coaching and raising a family, which was unique in her community, and she was also not part of a larger female coaching community professionally.

The isolation that Coach Nelson was experiencing at a professional development convention may be a form of sexism, as the male coaches, either intentionally or unintentionally, did not include women. Although this is a subtle form of sexism, it is still prevalent and impactful on a woman's career. This may suggest that male coaches do not see the female coaches as their peers, coworkers, or friends; the female coaches are fundamentally different than them. As a result, women are excluded from the normal dialogue and social interaction that develops between the male coaches. Ultimately, this exclusion from the networks and social interactions, could negatively affect the career mobility of women. Career mobility is enhanced by having a large, sparse network of informal ties for acquiring information and resources (Podolny, & Baron, 1997). Without the opportunity to build a network, due to the isolation that occurs in what should be a networking event, female coaches struggle to advance their careers. This isolation also may keep women from finding mentors. The importance of female coaches finding mentors, both male and female, is discussed further in the Career Path theme.

Other coaches discussed the isolation they experienced as a coach with a family. Coach Lewis discussed how being a female coach with a family was isolating. She said, "I think I felt isolated for a long time as a mother trying to coach." In addition, she said that she lacked peers. She could name only two other female coaches in her age range with children. She said, "so there's not very many of us. I don't think I felt like I had any

peers that I could talk to." While Coach Lewis did have a few female colleagues, the added responsibility of motherhood increased her isolation. She said there is a specific age group of unrepresented female coaches. She said there are some established older female coaches and quite a few young female assistants, but there are very few women in the mid-30s to mid-40s age range. She said, "Women look around, and sure it's great when you are young, but they look around and like, 'What do you do when you're in your mid-30s?' There's not very many women left, so they see it."

The observation of a missing demographic of female coaches is evident of limited career mobility. As Kanter suggested, individuals with fewer opportunities for career advancement will lower their career expectations, experience greater dissatisfaction, and eventually leave a given profession or organization (1977). This may be precisely what women in coaching are experiencing. The missing demographic may be the result of women reaching a point in their coaching career where they are frustrated with limited opportunities for advancement and therefore leave the coaching field altogether.

Isolation can occur even when there is the opportunity to connect with other female coaches. Coach Harris said she experienced isolation from female coaches as well and her attempts to connect with other female coaches have not been successful. She recounted a time at a coaching conference where there was a women's cocktail hour. She said she "was introduced to some of these women, but that was it. I just didn't feel, as women in the industry, we weren't doing a great job of helping each other out because we were all just trying to stay afloat."

Coach Harris' perception that women are not helping other women because they are all just trying to "stay afloat" is result of working in a male-dominated environment. In a male-dominated work environment, "Queen Bee" behavior may emerge among some women. Because of negative stereotypes of women, some women will choose to distance themselves from other women (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011). An example is when a woman says, "I'm not like other women" or "I am more like a guy." For female coaches, this may mean not building networks with other female coaches, and rather building a stronger network with male colleagues. Only one participant in the current study was perceived by the researcher to be exhibiting Queen Bee attitudes. She seemed to look down on other women who could not manage motherhood and coaching. As a mother of two, she said motherhood "was an excuse for women" to leave the coaching profession and that there "wasn't any reason you couldn't coach and have children." As the only participant in this study to exhibit these types of attitudes, she may be an anomaly in the swim coaching community. However, what may be more likely is self-selection bias of the sample (Morse, 1991). Women not interested in helping further the career of other women would have been less likely to agree to an interview.

The isolation these women are experiencing can have other effects, as well. The women expressed difficulty in building networks and identifying female role models. Research has shown the importance of female role models for women. A female career-role model proves to be more inspiring for women than does a male role model for a man (Lockwood, 2006). As Lockwood says, female role models are "inspirational examples of success" and "guides to the potential accomplishments for which other women can

strive" (2006, p.44). Additionally, positive female role models influence women's perceptions of coaching as a potential career path (Lee, 1999). Current female coaches have extremely limited numbers of high-achieving female coaches to emulate. Without this source of inspiration, young coaches or potential coaches, may lose interest in the career field. If current female swimmers do not have positive female role models, they may not consider coaching as a potential career path.

Tokenism

Several of the coaches provided examples of times they have felt like a token in their careers. The token role that these coaches occupy effect how their head coaches interact with them and effect their ability to move into higher status coaching positions. Coach Morris said she feels like "the reality is that you have to better than the men coaches to be perceived as good." She said she still hears comments like, "She is the best *female* [emphasis added] coach I know," and that she is "still trying to get that clarification [female] out of the sentence." Being one of few female coaches inevitably brings more attention to her as a coach, but at the same time highlights her gender as different from the majority.

Participants in this study acknowledge that their gender may assist them in getting their first positions in college coaching. However, the benefit of gender ends there, as many women then struggle to ascend the coaching ranks. Coach Smith summarized this perception saying, "So I feel like it [her gender] does open doors, but I feel like there will be a time when it hinders me from obtaining opportunities. I have this perception that administrations would rather have a male in a head coaching role."

Coach Evans acknowledges that being a female coach in a male-dominated industry makes her a token. She said,

> It's okay to get a job if you're a female to get your foot in the door, but then stop being the token. With that, I know that there is someone who applied for my job when I applied, and they didn't get it and I believe them to be more qualified than I am, and they were a male… And in my head, I am like "hey, did I get this job over someone who I find to be more qualified than me?"

The idea of overcoming token status was echoed by Coach Smith. She said,

> I do think that sometimes it's easier for a woman to get a job because a lot of programs always want that token female… but if you think that you are that token and all you are going to do is organize travel and get food at meets, if that's what you think your role is, then that's what your role is going to be.

Coach Lewis acknowledged that being a female probably helped her get her first coaching job. The program was a women's only team with a male head coach, so she perceived the program was intentional about hiring a woman. She said, "I think it [being a woman] gave me my opportunity when I started. There's a woman's program, there's a male head coach, you need to have a woman and I had some experience at Division I." However, she thinks the advantage of her gender ended there. She went on to tell the story of interviewing for the head coach position at the institution she was working as an assistant. She was told by the administration after her interview that she had the best

interview, yet the job went to a male coach. She could provide no explanation as to why the job when to a male candidate when she was specifically told by the hiring committee that she had the best interview.

Coach Morris also discussed the combined men's and women's programs where the male head coach is seeking a female assistant. She said this does help women get their start, but this perception of "I have to hire a woman, is still negative." Coach Davis reiterated the attitude these male coaches may have in hiring a female assistant. She said that male head coaches "feel like they need a female on a staff" and are "setting up her position to be at the bottom of the totem pole." She furthered her point saying, "they [male coaches] don't really care about who she is and aren't interested in her contribution" and "creating a space for her to actually want to be there." She says this is an "exceptionally huge hurdle in a coaching career." She continued addressing the impact that this tokenism may have on female assistants. She said,

> Why would you stay in coaching if that seems to be the attitude about the
> majority of positions available to you? I guess I don't really think that
> head coaches these days have a ton of respect for young women coaches.

Coach Isaac summarized several of the themes in her discussion about assistant coach job openings in the Power Five Conferences. She said when there is an assistant coach opening,

> They're really just looking to hire that token female position. And
> apparently that's a thing, where it's like a token female that will do all the
> admin work and just recruit the women. If a position opens, I don't want

to be stuck in that position my entire career. But say an assistant position opened at a Power Five program, but it's a guy and he leaves, I'm most likely not going to get that job because I don't know any Power Five programs that have more than one female on deck.

The token female role on a coaching staff does not work in the favor of female coaches. Coach Smith explained how head coaches are resistant to hire more than the one female coach they deem necessary to have on their staff. She said that she wanted to apply at a program that had multiple assistant openings when they hired a new head coach. Her mentor called the newly hired head coach to put in a good word for her and the "coach of the college told him, 'No, I'm going to retain the girl that was on staff, so we don't need any more women coaches. We're just going to hire guys.'"

Coach Harris said there were positives and negatives about the token role women occupy in college swim coaching. She said,

> I feel like I would get more interviews [than a man] because there are less women to choose from, so that's an advantage for me. There are disadvantages as well, maybe you don't make the final hire, or I have been witness to and have been in the trenches of, not sexual assault or sexual misconduct, but sexual inappropriateness.

Coach Harris went on to explain that a former female swimmer of hers with very little coaching experience was recently offered two assistant coaching positions and accepted a job at a Power Five program. She explained the reason she believes female assistants get interviews and offers easier than men. She said, "Not only is there not a pool in the

number of candidates, the qualified candidates aren't there either… I think there is high demand [for female coaches], but we are not entering the field."

The sexism female coaches experience by those associated with her program can create a hostile working environment. As Coach Davis said, if "I felt like this was going to be a very miserable existence, I would leave." She said that she thinks it's "a choice a lot of women unfortunately have been making across all types of sports, dealing with their various male-dominated cultures." When women regularly experience sexism, it may eventually lead to her decision to leave the career field. Moreover, a female athlete considering the career path may choose not to enter initially enter the field if they are witness to the sexism experienced by female coaches.

This token status that female assistant coaches appear to occupy in the minds of their head coaches or administrators may result in fewer opportunities for on-the-job training in the technical areas of coaching that will most likely lead to head coaching opportunities. The coaches in the current study used terms such as "secretary-coach," "admin-coach," and "operations-coach" to describe the token role of that these female coaches occupy. Coaches receive most of their coaching education through their closest coaching contacts, for assistant coaches this most often is the head coach. Therefore, the assistant coaches are highly dependent on the ability of their head coach to educate and train them to learn the necessary skills that will be required at the level of head coach. Unfortunately, in the current study, both head coaches and assistant coaches discuss the lack of training female assistant coaches receive from their head coach. Additionally, new assistants are assigned administrative duties which will not help them advance into head

coaching roles. Coach Owens clearly explained her philosophy on training assistant coaches. She said,

> It's important that head coaches understand that they are role models, not only to their athletes, but they are also role models to their assistants. You [have to] support them to grow. I know one coach that couldn't tell her head coach that she was looking at another program, because he would fire her. I'm like, "For the love of God, that's what we are supposed to be doing." I don't like hiring assistants coaches every four years, it's a pain, but that's what our job is to do. Just like it's our job to raise kids and send them out the door. It has nothing to do with loyalty, it has to do with that's your job as a head coach.

Coach Nelson explained the attitude that head coaches have in not training their assistant coaches to become head coaches. She said that they want someone who is "not going to overstep her boundaries," that the head coach will "still get to do all the coaching," and that the female assistant will "almost be like the secretary coach, do all the travel, do all the paperwork, do the expense reports, do all that stuff, instead of actual coaching." Coach Adams, a former assistant coach, attributed her decision to leave the coaching profession, in part, to the lack of training and responsibility given to her by her head coach. She said,

> I was the most junior coach on the staff. I felt like a lot of times I didn't have a place to help with any major decision making. I didn't have a place to exercise my opinion with any of the athletes. And then at the end of the

year, I had my review with the head coach and I said, "I'm dying to get some more responsibility." And he agreed that it would be great to give me more responsibility, but he couldn't come up with a way that he could find that for me.

What is particularly discouraging about Coach Adams's decision to leave coaching after a negative experience with her level of responsibilities, was that she had the desire to become a head coach. She said, "I definitely wanted to have my program and be a head coach at some point." The token position Coach Adam's felt she occupied on her coaching staff limited her opportunities to develop skills that would advance her career.

Coach Lewis echoed the sentiment that female coaches often have more administrative duties due to their token status. She said that she takes on administrative tasks sometimes because she knows the duties need to be accomplished and she can get them done. However, she then resents that the men on her staff aren't contributing in the same way. She said, "We're [women] very task-oriented. We get shit done, but after a while, I was like, 'What is this crap? Why am I doing this and the other guys on the staff aren't doing any of it?'" She said when female coaches are in administrative roles and not given autonomy their jobs aren't as rewarding as they could be. According to Coach Morris when women are put in these more administrative roles, "maybe they are a valued part of the program, but they are not taken seriously as a coach." Coach Evans took personal responsibility for the fact that she does more of the administrative work. She said she gets "wrapped up in all the administrative stuff" because she is "trying to get stuff done" but that "it's at no fault to [her head coach]."

A further impact of tokenism leading to lack of training is that assistants can become disillusioned with the program when not given more responsibility. Coach Davis said that at one institution where she worked as an assistant coach she was only "allowed to write the practices that the head coach didn't care about, an occasional recovery practice here and there." She explained the effect this had. She said,

> So that was unfortunate for me, especially because that's one of the things I love, it's one of the reasons why I coach. That was very frustrating. It was very hard to have responsibility or feel like I had ownership at all in the program.

There may be some differences on the amount of administrative work based on the reputation or standing of the conference. Coach Isaac's impression was that female coaches at Power Five schools experienced a perhaps stronger degree of tokenism. She would hesitate to take an assistant job at a Power Five school because of what she has heard about the roles female assistants have in those positions. She said,

> The female position from what I heard [at Power Five programs], is an administrative position, where they do the female recruiting, they're travel coordinator, they do official visit set-up, they're the primary administrative assistant. And I don't want to do that anymore. I don't want to get stuck in that role. So, I haven't applied for those positions because I know exactly where I am going to stand. It's unfortunate.

Tokenism, while opening the door for some of the women in the current study, eventually has negative outcomes. As Kanter suggested in her work on sex segregation in

the work place, an individual who is in a token role may have trouble behaving naturally, fitting in, and gaining peer acceptance (1993). The coaches in the current study reported some degree of all three of these negative outcomes. Kanter also suggests that tokenism can lead to role entrapment (1977), which is exactly what the women are experiencing as the "admin-coach."

Evidence of women being stereotyped into certain career functions or "role entrapment" has been shown in college athletic departments. Women tend to be funneled into careers that do not lead to the highest leadership positions. Gender-role entrapment means that the minority gender is pushed further into the stereotypical roles and behaviors of their gender (Johnson & Schulman, 1989). There is evidence of this in the coaching environment as women are pushed into the "secretarial" or "administrative" duties, as they are stereotypically associated with women.

Due to the token role many female coaches perceive they fill in which they perform exclusively administrative job duties, they are not being prepared to move onto higher positions of leadership, specifically the head coaching role. In other fields this phenomenon has been labeled "the sticky floor." In a sticky floor situation, the entry level position becomes a "trap" rather than a "stepping stone." A sticky floor never allows a woman to advance high enough to even encounter even the glass ceiling (Reskin & Pavadic, 2006). The sticky floor may explain the limited career mobility that contributed to the missing age group of female coaches noted by Coach Lewis. There may be very few coaches in the mid-30s to mid-40s age range because early in their career they are subject to the sticky floor and leave the field before encountering the glass ceiling.

Beyond administrative duties, token coaches are also pushed into recruiting roles. As witnessed in men's and women's collegiate basketball, the black assistant coaches are often pigeon-holed in the recruiting roles. Black female basketball coaches are "designated recruiters" who are perceived to not necessarily understand the X's and O's of the game (Borland & Bruening, 2010). Therefore, when these assistant coaches interview for head coaching positions, they are only considered competent in the recruiting aspect of coaching. Some of the coaches in this study mentioned the same issue. They are given recruiting duties for strictly the women's team. The other effect that tokenism has on individuals in the minority group is diminished self-esteem (Jackson, McCullough, & Gurin, 1997). This sentiment was echoed nearly verbatim by one of the participants when she questioned whether she was deserving of her position or whether she got her job "just because she was a female."

These sources of sexism encountered by female coaches, whether from athletes, other coaches, parents, or administrators, can create an environment that is less than hospitable for female coaches. While every coach may not experience sexism from every source, most have experienced sexism to some degree from at least one of the sources. When these coaches feel disrespected from a variety of sources it could impact their career experiences to the point where they consider leaving the field.

The Career Path

The theme of the career path describes the previous and current conditions in the collegiate coaching atmosphere that have contributed to the challenges of female coaches. The subtheme of Changing Landscape describes the female coaches experience with

decreasing opportunities for coaching when men's and women's athletic departments or swim teams are combined. Changing Landscape also describes the limited numbers of female athletic directors in position to make hiring decisions. The Importance of Mentors examines the positive career outcomes resultant from having mentors. Lastly, the subtheme of Professional Development explores the ways in which female coaches advance their careers through both unique and standard professional development avenues.

Changing Landscape

Several of the more experienced coaches advocate for single gender teams to keep more opportunities for women. Coach Nelson said that she believes women have more opportunities for leadership when there are separate teams. She said, "If you look, all the combined teams, almost every single one of them has a male coach, so it just takes away another opportunity for women." Coach Lewis also describes the benefit of separate men's and women's programs. She said that the team she swam for collegiately had separate programs and that "there was very much a focus on women's sports, coached by women, run by female administrators, and that just had an impact on me." She goes on to reiterate what Coach Nelson said about the loss of opportunities for women. She said, "when the program combines, there's less opportunities in general, and less women's head coaching opportunities, and so probably less opportunity for women." She said because of the combining of programs, it has made her reconsider her career path "because it's harder to become a head coach."

Coach Nelson got her first head coaching position when the men's and women's athletic departments at her university were separate. She said her athletic director, "was a big-time founder in women's athletics." This AD hired women for several head coaching vacancies of women's teams. Coach Nelson said, "I mean she hired all women. She believed in hiring women."

Coach Morris, who started her career pre-Title IX, recognized the changing landscape of college coaching as well. She said, "When I started out, there were quite a few women coaching because at that point women didn't make anything and the men didn't want the jobs. As women's athletics got in a better position, as Title IX started to make a difference in college athletics, the pay became better and a lot of the men wanted those jobs. I do think that competing for a job has in general been harder for women."

Other coaches attributed the dwindling opportunities for women from the lack of female athletic directors. Coach Owens, who was hired as a head coach by a female athletic director, said, "Males are still doing the hiring. I was lucky. I was lucky that I had a female AD that was invested in giving women opportunities." As a head coach, she now tries to hire female assistants. She says, "for the most part my assistant coaches have been women. Because who else is going to hire them?" Coach Smith also attributed the underrepresentation of women in coaching to hiring practices. She said that because historically men have held the head coaching jobs, "it's a bigger leap of faith [for an athletic director] to hire a woman." She also thinks that men and women market themselves differently when applying for jobs. She said, "if a guy applies for a job, he

has how many different people call that AD? Whereas that is not necessarily as much in a female's nature, for most of us."

Coach Smith is describing a phenomenon known as homologous reproduction, in which individuals are likely to replicate themselves in positions of power (Stangl & Kane, 1991). Hiring someone like yourself is easier and more comfortable, which is why this is also termed "hiring from a principle of similarity." Therefore, the male athletic directors are more likely to hire male coaches. Homologous reproduction has been observed in several areas of sport, including the hiring of coaches, athletic trainers, and sports information directors (Regan & Cunningham, 2012; Whisenant, & Mullane, 2007). With the overwhelmingly majority of athletic directors being men, it is no surprise then that most coaches are also men. Coach Smith admits that she makes a point to hire female assistants for her program. She too is participating in homologous reproduction. In fact, female head coaches are more likely to hire female assistants than male head coaches are to hire male assistants (Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006). Although female coaches are more likely than male coaches to participate in homologous reproduction, the overall impact is minimal as there are very limited numbers of female head coaches. The trend of decreasing percentages of female head coaches seems unlikely to improve as the percentage of NCAA Division I male athletic directors remains close to 90% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Female assistant swimming coaches may fair only slightly better as the percentage of female head coaches in Division I is just under 18% (NCAA Sport Sponsorship, 2016).

The coaches' observations that there are decreasing opportunities for women in coaching are confirmed in quantitative research. Pre-Title IX, 90% of women's teams were coached by women, the percentage is just more than 40% in 2014 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Before the inception of Title IX, women's sports teams were often part of the physical education department in many schools. When Title IX was passed, the men's athletic departments took control of women's sports. The eventual result was women lost leadership positions and coaching positions to men. Many of the women in this study are facing the consequences of these changes (Crowley, Pickle, & Clarkson, 2006). Several of the most accomplished and longest tenured coaches in this study started coaching as Title IX was beginning to have its effect on women's sport participation, but before men's and women's teams were combined or before coaching women's programs became more desirable for men. These coaches built their careers under much different circumstances than the current environment, in which most athletic departments and swimming teams are co-ed.

Female coaches may also have fewer opportunities because they are not given second chances after being fired. Coach Smith said when women get head coaching jobs if "they fail or struggle, then they are out… They get their chance, it doesn't go well, they get fired, and their male assistant gets the new head job next season." She said that she tells male assistants who work for female head coaches, "Your job is to make her successful because this will be her only chance. You'll have another chance; this will be her only chance. You better help her."

Coach Smith's observation, that women do not receive second chances in leadership positions, has a direct impact on career mobility. Research is limited in the context of female coaches and their chances of being hired after being fired. However, research has indicated that other minorities, black football coaches, for example, do face the discrimination of not getting second chances after being fired. Additionally, when a black football coach is fired, the program is less likely to hire a black coach to replace him (Gordon, 2008).

Importance of Mentors

Mentorship proved important for the participants, regardless of the mentors' gender. Participants had a wide variety of mentors, both male and female. The participants named their former coaches at the club at collegiate level as mentors, as well as, coaches they have worked for as assistants, and in a few instances their own family members who were coaches and teachers. Many of the participants' interest in coaching and decision to pursue coaching as a career came as the result of influence from mentors.

Many of the coaches in the study did not plan to pursue coaching as their primary career when attending college or making initial career decisions. Mentorship proved integral for some of the participants in developing an interest in coaching and eventually making the decision to pursue coaching as a career. Coach Evans explained how her college coach gave her a push to pursue coaching. She said,

> We had a new head coach step in and he made a comment to me about how I could be a college swim coach and he started directing me toward that career. I had a lot of free time on my hands and was kind of

struggling to figure out what's the next step. He was just like, 'Come in

my office, I got these projects you can help me with.'

Coach Lewis, whose mentors were her female coaches, also accredits them with encouraging her towards a career in coaching. She said, "I had never really thought of coaching as a career, but in college I had two female coaches. I guess that had an impact on me. At some point, I just thought, I could probably be pretty good at this and there needs to be more women coaching."

Coach Davis also said, "it was entirely due to my coaches that I had in college" that led her to pursue coaching as a career. She cited a male and female coach from her days as an athlete that led her to coaching. She commented that her coaches "were great people and very inspiring and I saw the tremendous amount of impact that they were able to have on myself and my teammates on a day to day basis." Another of her mentors was a male head coach she worked with while pursuing her masters. She said he "challenged me to rethink things, or think outside the box, and pushed me to be uncomfortable, which is a really positive thing."

Coach Adams said she had no intention of being a coach when she started a graduate assistantship as a coach. She said, "I never thought in a million years it [coaching] would be something that would catch on for me." She was using the position to pay for graduate school, with eventual plans of going on to get her PhD. She points to her experience with the head coach, as influencing her to pursue coaching as a career. She said,

I was working under this amazing coach. She's so highly respected by the

professors, the athletic staff, the alumni, within the conference and within

the NCAA. She's got a wide network of people who respect her, and I am

not surprised at all after working with her because she's so poised and

unflappable.

She continued her praise of her mentor, commenting that her head coach, "was wildly

successful, and had been doing it for so many years, but once she learned that she could

trust you, she had no hesitation in just throwing me anything." Coach Adams said she

was permitted to manage numerous facets of the program, including recruiting, travel,

and meet line-ups. She said, "She [her head coach] was just an amazing partner. She

allowed me to learn so much."

Coach Harris also accredited her decision to pursue coaching as a career to the

head coach and mentor she was working with during her graduate assistantship. She said,

the fact that he loved coming to work every, and is having an influence on

these girls' lives, I think that inspired me to take this leap of faith and kind

of change my whole outlook on what I was going to do in life.

Having female mentors or role models can assist women in forming their

professional goals. Coach Davis said, "I would really like to give back to the swimming

community in a similar way to some of these tremendous women that I've had the

opportunity to meet. I hope to follow their lead and be a great head coach." She said her

ultimate career goals was to be a head coach at a combined men's and women's program

at a Division I or a "powerhouse" Division III school.

For some, strong female role models came from family members. Coach Foster's mother was a swimming coach, so she said she "was around the pool growing up all the time." As a result, she knew she "wanted to get into some sort of coaching." In addition to her mother, she said her female club coach, "was really influential on me wanting to become a coach." However, once she began her professional career, she was surrounded exclusively by male mentorship. She named three male coaches she currently considers her mentors.

The importance of mentorship was best summarized by Coach Gordon, a long-time head coach, who is still in regular communication with her mentor of more than 30 years. She said,

> I think when you have a good mentor who constantly tells you that you're doing a good job and gives you that responsibility right away, I think you have a mentor that teaches you right and helps you build that confidence knowing you are doing things right, I think that goes a long way.

Mentors also give mentees confidence in their roles. Coach Isaac said her head coach at her second coaching job helped her "develop more of a voice." Coach Knight, reported that she was being groomed by her head coach to eventually take over for him. She said, "He knows I want to be a head coach, and helps me get there, whether it's providing access to professional development opportunities, helping me network." She goes on to say that is the duty of the head coach. "That's the function on the head coach to their assistants, to help their assistants get where they want to go."

Coaches receive much of their education through the influence of mentors (Fleurance & Cotteau, 1999), therefore it is important for the early career coaches in the present study to secure mentors. Additionally, coaches who have reached the level of "high-performance" have reported being mentored by a more experienced coach (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998). Most of the coaches in the present study could identify more experienced coaches they considered their mentors. The mentors they reported having were both male and female coaches. There is evidence that same sex mentorship is advantageous for women (Lockwood, 2006), but with few female coaches at the top of the profession, securing same-sex mentorship may be a challenge. However, any mentorship regardless of the mentors or mentees gender is better than no mentorship. It has also been suggested the impact of mentorship for female mentees becomes stronger the longer the relationship exists (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008). With the psychosocial and career benefits of same-sex mentorship, the early career and mid-career coaches in the present study, would be wise to seek out a more experienced female coach as a mentor.

A few of the Early-Career coaches could not identify a single mentor, while all of the Experienced coaches had several mentors throughout their career. This finding is concerning as research from Erikson, Cote, and Fraser-Thomas suggest that the specific experience of having a mentor is necessary for a coach to reach the high-performance level of coaching (2007). The present study would confirm that mentorship is necessary to reach the highest levels as all of the Experienced coaches had mentors. Therefore, it is

concerning that women early in their career development did not have mentors. This may limit their overall career mobility.

Professional Development

Research shows that coach education comes mainly from interactions with other coaches and not formal educational experiences. Coach Evans confirms this concept when she said she is "watching and learning from the head coaches around me and the struggles they have and trying to pay attention and know that it is not going to be easy." It is relevant to note that the head coaches Coach Evans is around are generally men. Although, she may be learning coaching skills from these men, she cannot learn about the unique challenges faced by women in coaching.

Generally, the head coaches with more experience were more immersed in the swimming community than the younger assistants. However, some assistants were proactive in finding professional development opportunities and service opportunities. Coach Foster has been to several CSCAA conventions. In addition, she is on the CSCAA Top 25 polling committee, attends small group professional development retreats, and is a part of the Alliance of Women in Coaching. She said the benefits she gains from being so actively involved in her professional community include, learning "from the best coaches in the country," the opportunity to "meet women in coaching… and connect with them and share experiences," and the opportunity to network.

Coach Davis, in her relatively short career has been quite involved in professional development opportunities. She attends events with the Alliance of Women Coaches, she attends the CSCAA conventions yearly, and she attends a small-group professional

development retreat yearly. She says these events and opportunities are critically important to her career advancement and development. She explained that she will go to her professional development events, "even if I have to fund it out of my own pocket and savings account, because I've gotten so much out of those experiences over the past couple years."

A few of the assistant coaches had trouble identifying any activities in which they partake that connect them to their professional community. Coach Johnson said that she was not involved in professional development "because of the expense." She said her program's "budget is so small" and "there isn't any room for professional development." She said she does "her own kind of professional development like reading a lot and looking at websites." Although this may be educational for her, it does not connect her with the swimming community and allow her to build a network.

The amount of professional development or service a coach participates in may be an influencing factor in their desire and ability to remain in the field of coaching. Professional development and career service creates networking opportunities and can build support systems with other coaches. The most experienced coaches in this study, all had significant involvement in these types of activities. It could be presumed that it is necessary to be involved in your sport community beyond just your program, at the conference or national level to have sustained career success.

Coaches need to assert themselves in asking for professional development money. Coach Knight said she had plans of attending the CSCAA convention. However, she said their "budget is beyond tight," so she is only "comfortable asking for one [professional

development event]." Coach Harris also reported that funds were a limiting factor to the professional development she participated in. She said, "half the time she was spending her own money doing that [attending conferences]."

The professional development opportunities provide access to networks for the female coaches. "As women coaches, we need to learn to work together, and not in isolation. I think sometimes because we are a minority, you don't see a lot of people like you, you tend to protect your territory," Coach Morris commented. Working together to alleviate the isolation is exactly what many of the most successful coaches in this study have done. The participants fought their isolation by finding support within professional development and networking opportunities, both with other women in the field and in the broader swimming community. Coach Nelson said that now when a female is hired in a head coaching position "we call each other, 'welcome to the profession,' we are really good at that." The most experienced coaches were deeply immersed in the swimming community. They all made efforts to involve themselves in their professional organizations, service to their sport, and/or professional development activities. The coaches with lesser experience had a wide range of involvement in their sport community. Some participants were highly involved, while others had essentially no involvement in their professional community.

Coach Morris was largely involved in the swimming community from a service standpoint. She was a member of ASCA and "went to those conferences for years." She served a term as the president of CSCAA and currently serves on the board of directors. She also belongs to the Alliance of Women Coaches and has served as the chair of the

coaches' council for the conference her school is in. She explained that when she first started coaching there was only one female coach older than her to look up to, but she has found a community of coaches, both male and female, through her professional development and service. She has also started a women's coaching leadership group at her institution for female coaches of all sports. She said that this group has allowed "the women coaches to feel a real connection now and really reach out to help each other with issues." She says, "the collaboration and networking has been really positive."

Coach Owens was also highly involved in both professional development and service. She has been on the board of CSCAA and served on the NCAA swimming rules committee. She regularly attends ASCA conventions, CSCAA conventions, and small group professional development retreats. She explains that from her small group, she connects "with people going through the same experiences." She said, they all "know how difficult it [coaching] is and how much support you need."

Head coaches are not always supportive of using the program's money for these opportunities. Coach Davis said this regarding her previous head coach,

> He wasn't super enthused about the idea of spending money from our team budget on professional development… to him it wasn't a priority or an area he wanted to set aside funds for. That makes it tough, when people are put in that situation.

Many of the women in the current study used professional development and coaching education opportunities, in part, to network with other women. Beyond the obvious learning outcomes achieved at these events, the women discussed building their

network with other women in the field. However, networking does not seem to be the best word, as what these women are doing goes beyond networking. Nearly half of the participants mentioned participating in a small-group female coaches' retreat. They described these events as two to three-day long events, with no more than 10 women. These retreats appear to focus on more of the issues and challenges of coaching, and more specifically, being a woman in coaching, rather than the x's and o's of the sport. The women said through these events they built a support system, rather than a network. This relationship building through discussion for mutual advancement has been termed "deep talk" in the women's basketball coaching community (Borland & Bruening, 2007). Deep talk is rooted in West African culture and has found a place in black women's professional networks. Deep talk means discussion or "dialogue that leads to a deeper level of self-discovery, mutuality, and trust" (Borland & Bruening, 2007, p.417). This definition is what these women are achieving in their small-group retreats.

These small-group professional development retreats may also be a way in which these women go beyond networking and form a community of practice. Wenger's community of practice (CoP), is a group of people who share a profession and create a shared identity through contributing to the practices of their community. The structural characteristics of a CoP are "a domain of knowledge, a notion of community, and a practice" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). As it relates to the women in this study, the" domain of knowledge" is coaching swimming; the "notion of community" is the small-group retreats which facilitate the learning; and the "practice" is the specific topic around which the CoP exists, in this case issues specific to female swimming

coaches. A CoP ultimately facilitates learning and builds social capital for the participants. Because of the sexism female swim coaches encounter, they may struggle with both of these things; therefore, the CoP that these coaches have formed outside the traditional professional development environment, may help in career mobility and advancement.

Life as a Coach-Mom

The theme of Life as a Coach-Mom theme identifies two subjects of what female coaches experience with the dual-identities of coach and mom. The subthemes of (a) Support for the coach-mom and (b) Kids create balance are explored. Support for the coach-mom discusses the ways in which coach-moms find support to maintain their coaching career while raising children. Kids create balance describes the ways in which being a coach-mom enhances their lives rather than detracts from their careers.

Support for the Coach-mom

Achieving success for the coach who is also a mother seems unlikely without significant support, either familial or institutional. As Coach Lewis said, without this support, "Most women, a lot of women who have young kids, especially, left the profession." She continued that, "to be a coaching parent, and I think, especially a mother, you have to have someone else in your life that's willing to pick up where you can't provide." Support can come from a spouse, other family, or the institution for which the coach works. All the coach-mom participants in the current study discussed the sources of support which have assisted them in their career. Coach Gordon explained it

was necessary to have external support as a mother and a coach. She said, "it's very hard, you have to rely on people to help you."

Coach Nelson commented about how support was necessary for her to balance being a mom and a coach. She found support through her family, husband, and community. She said,

> I lived in a town where I had a lot of family. I had a wonderful, wonderful daycare. I had a forward-thinking husband, who loved that I was a coach and supported that and wasn't afraid to be at home with the kids when I was gone.

Coach Lewis also talked about the support she received from her husband to pursue her career. She said, "he has sacrificed his career in a lot of ways. But it allows me to do what I'm doing with travel, and us to be able to raise or family the way we wanted to, which was really for one of us to be with our kids most of the time." She went on to say that their family doesn't have traditional gender roles. "My husband wants to be very involved in raising our kids," she said. She explained that, "I had to work, and I enjoyed what I was doing. And I had this husband… he'd make lunches, he would give out the breastmilk, he would do all of that during the day."

Coach Lewis' and Coach Nelson's experiences of their husbands taking on more of the domestic duties in order for them to pursue the career is reflective of the evolving gender roles in society. Through the 1990s, research indicated a greater acceptance of women in professional roles outside the home and to a lesser degree an acceptance of men taking on more familial duties (Willinger, 1993). Additionally, the imbalance of

household labor has decreased as men/fathers have taken on more household duties (Gershuny, 2000). Coach Lewis and Coach Nelson may not have been able to achieve their career goals without the changing gender roles their families appear to have embraced.

Coach Nelson discussed how times have changed as far as the institutional support available to coaching parents. She said,

> Now if you have a child, the child can go on the road with you, you can pay for a sitter to go with you; it's so much different. You don't have to hide that you're a mom, not that they ever told me that I had to hide, but my kids were not allowed on deck, they were not allowed around… It was fine that you were a mom, but don't bring them around here.

Coach Gordon spoke of the institutional support she received as a coach-mom. She said that there was a child care center connected to her college, which her institution helped get her child into. In times when her child could not be at the child care center, "she was pretty much on deck with me. She kind of grew up on the deck."

Coach Harris who was pregnant at the time of the interview was very optimistic that the values of her institution would support her as a mother. She said, "It [her institution] is very family oriented. That kid can be on the pool deck at any time, breathe as much chlorine, I guess." In addition, she said that her husband would be added support, saying "he is going to take care of the kid this summer."

Coach Morris who had small children while coaching questioned her ability to maintain her career without the support of her husband. She said, "I think one of the

things that made it easier for me is that my husband didn't always work full-time. I think

it made it possible for us to have good parental interaction with our kids, even if it wasn't

always with me. If we had both been full-time with the same sort of schedules – wow, I

don't know!" Additionally, she had support from the institutions she worked for as well.

She said that she wasn't restricted from taking her children on the road with her as well.

Coach Smith also had familial support, but in the way of her mother and mother-in-law,

as her husband had an equally time demanding profession. She said, "Our mothers are

amazing. We definitely couldn't have done it without them, that's how we made it work."

Some women find themselves concerned about balancing work and family life

before children are even a part of their family. Coach Adams, who was single and

without children, said that, "she had all these great female role models, who were coaches

of their own programs, who couldn't spend enough time with their families or had their

spouse doing most of the childrearing. That always kind of made me worried." Coach

Knight had similar concerns about having children and coaching. She said, "I don't have

kids, but I think in the future, we will have kids, when I think about trying to balance

being a head coach and being a parent, that seems overwhelming to me."

Being a parent in a working environment with non-traditional hours, travel,

recruiting, high performance expectations, and a history of male-dominance can be

particularly challenging for a coach-mom. Women choosing this career field may

anticipate some level of work-family conflict based on her personal inputs and the work

environment. The experiences of the participants in the current study indicate some

degree of work-family conflict, where the responsibilities in one domain, work or life, is

not compatible with the other (Boles, Howard, & Donofrio, 2001). Life as a coach-mom highlights the need for both support from both the institution for which the coach works and from family and community sources. As compared to their male counterparts, who rely almost exclusively on their wives for support with childcare (Graham & Dixon, 2014), the women in this study cast a wide net for support. Female coaches maintained their careers through supports from their athletic departments, spouses, other family members, and daycares (Bruening & Dixon, 2007). Research has shown that without these supports, women may revise their career expectations, or they will eventually leave their institution or the coaching profession (Bruening & Dixon, 2008; Theberge, 1992).

Not all institutions have the same level of support for their coaches. In athletic departments with the most resources, coaches may have the ability to bring their children on the road and even have a childcare professional travel with the team. However, programs with fewer resources may not be able to offer these incentives to their mom-coaches. Assistant coaches may feel the brunt of childrearing more severely than head coaches, as they do not have the authority or autonomy to decide whether they can bring their children to practices or on the road. These coaches may even feel intimidated to ask their head coach for permission to bring their children on the road, especially if that head coach does not have children or have seen family-life modeled by their head coach.

For coach-moms to excel in their coaching position, they must feel that the needs of their children are being met by their support system. Mary Wise, the longtime head coach for the Florida Gators women's volleyball team recently addressed the support her

institution makes available for parents in athletics at a press conference following her team's loss in the National Championship. She said,

> for any parent, until your childcare works, you're not at work because that's [points somewhere in the distance] where your thoughts are. And he [her athletic director] helped us get a spot in there [on campus daycare]. And the boys got to go through Baby Gators. The boys got to travel during those early years. My husband was able to travel with us and the boys were with me. They were on the road, but he [her husband] was able to take care of them. They [her athletic department] provided that opportunity.

> You have to think outside the box, if you want women to stay in a profession, you have to throw away the rules and help them through that time because if they can get through it, it works! But man, those years are hard, they're really hard. And when I was going through it, I couldn't ask anyone. There was no other female coach at this level that I could ask, "How are you doing it? How does it work?" (Wise, 2017).

The coaches in this study showed that coaching and motherhood could be compatible with the right support. A female coach who is considering starting a family could take steps to assist her in navigating the work-life interface. The coach-mom could inquire to her athletic department on any support they may be able to offer. This may include assistance in getting into an on-campus daycare to childcare assistance when

traveling with the team. The coach-mom may also need support from her partner, spouse, or other family members. Many of the women in this study had spouses with more flexible work schedules, which enabled the coach-mom to maintain her coaching position. Other support from the community came from daycares with flexible schedules and other relatives that lived in the area. Coaching is not necessarily incompatible with having a family, in fact, the women in this study are proof that with the proper support, a coach-mom can have long and successful careers at the Division I level.

Kids Create Balance

Although women discussed the challenges of having children and coaching, many of them also said that having children required them to have balance in their lives. Coach-moms were observed to display two characteristics as a result of motherhood: role enrichment and low levels of saliency in the role of coach.

Coach Owens also said that having a child helped model a work-life balance to her assistant coaches and her athletes. She said, "the team can live without you. Two mornings a week, I could not go to practice because I was taking her [my daughter] to school." She said to her team, "this is what happens when you are raising a family, there are concessions and I'm here for you, I'm available for you, but not these two mornings." She says, "this [coaching] isn't my life, but it is what I do, but it's not my life." Coach Owens is describing low levels of coaching saliency, which is surprising for a coach of her status and accomplishments. Rarely do collegiate coaches express low level of coaching saliency for their role as a coach. Typically, it is the inverse, where allowing the

family to interfere with work would be unacceptable, except in the direst of situations (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Having children also precluded Coach Nelson from becoming too immersed in her work. She said, "thank God I did have kids, or you'd just live [at work]." Work addiction is a real issue in collegiate coaching. Lumpkin and Anshel (2012) found NCAA Division I sport coaches to exhibit behaviors consistent with work addiction. Based on work habits, lack of involvement with family, and poor self-health issues, many coaches at the Division I level may be addicted to work. Although it was beyond the scope of the current study, children seemed to contribute to lower levels of work addiction. In fact, Coach Thomas, who never had children, commented that she sometimes wished she had children as an excuse to leave work.

Coach Harris, who was expecting her first child, said she had seen examples of children creating more balance in coaches' lives. She spoke of a male head coach who "is bringing is family and is involving his family, and I think it creates a better work/life balance. When you have outside distractions that becomes just as much of a priority as your job does. Hopefully."

Coach Owens was even more positive about the relationship between being a mother and a coach, and the positive impact that had on her daughter. She said, "She [her daughter] saw why I was away, she saw why I was on the phone, I think that was really important, who wouldn't want their daughter to be surrounded by thirty hard-working, goal-oriented kids that go to [her institution]?" She said her "daughter was part of it."

However, some women see being a coach and a mom inconsistent with their priorities. For women with strongly engrained ideas of traditional gender roles, coaching and motherhood may be in conflict. Coach Adams said that "if your priorities are family over work, then I feel like I would be limited as to what I could achieve or what roles I could hold." She said when you are a mom and a coach "the partner is going to be the one responsible for taking the kids to soccer games and making sure their lunch is packed and giving them a ride to a slumber party, whereas that would not be for me." Coach Adams seems conflicted between what she would feel expected to do as a mother (i.e., traditional mothering roles) and the role she would need to embrace as a coach (i.e., co-parenting).

The finding that women felt that having children required them to have more balance in their lives was unexpected. In previous research coach-moms, who have left the coaching profession, felt "distracted" by motherhood (Kamphoff, 2010). The coach-moms in this study saw motherhood as more compatible with coaching and considered it more of a "welcomed distraction" than a "distraction." These coach-moms welcomed the times that motherhood took them away from coaching as it prevented them from becoming too immersed in their careers. When coaches become too immersed in their careers, they risk career burnout. Historically, female coaches have experienced burnout to a greater degree than their male counterparts (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984; Felder & Wishnietsky, 1990). As counterintuitive as it might seem, having children may provide balance and avert career burnout for female coaches.

Furthermore, the coach-moms felt that they were good role models, for both their own children, and for the women they were coaching. Previous studies have also

concluded a more negative relationship between career and family than the current study. None of the women expressed that they felt like they their work performance suffered, or their family life was negatively affected, as previous research has suggested (Bruening & Dixon, 2007). The difference between this study and Bruening and Dixon's (2007) study, is that the latter interviewed women who had left the coaching profession. Their experiences as a parent and coach may have influenced their decision to leave. The participants in this study were currently working as a coach or recently retired. Any work-life conflict that may have existed was not influential enough for the participant to end their coaching career.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) informed the research questions, the interview guide, and ultimately the analysis of the current study. The way in which an individual develops their career interest, decides to pursue that career, and how career success is achieved is central to SCCT. In addition, the environment in which one pursues their career coupled with the individual's personal inputs influences career interest, career decision making, and career success.

The sexism the female coaches in this study experienced was undoubtedly the result of the personal input of being a woman and working in the male-dominated environment of collegiate swimming. While many of the women in this study had long and successful careers, the sexism these women experience could influence career interest, career decision making, and how one experiences career success. When a collegiate swimmer is exploring potential career interests, if she is witness to sexist

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behavior in the college swim coaching environment, her interest may not develop, and she may explore other career options. The limited opportunities available to women, because of sexism in swimming, may also limit the career success of women when compared to their male peers. If a female coach is given mainly administrative duties, as seen in the tokenism subtheme, she may not feel the same level of career success as her male peers. As presented in the SCCT model, career attainment becomes a feedback loop of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. If a female coaches' outcome expectations are not met or her self-efficacy is not strengthened by the feeling of career attainment, she will not continue to build her interest in the career field.

As SCCT relates to the theme of the Career Path, mentorship and role modeling proved integral in the interest development and eventual decision for the participants to choose coaching as a career. Many of the coaches in the current study did not plan to pursue coaching during their schooling or at the start of their careers. Several of the participants were graduate assistants using college coaching to pay for a master's degree or school teachers who were coaching part-time. Eventually, through the influence of mentors, both male and female, the participants in this study decided to pursue coaching as their full-time career. Coaches may not be aware of the influence they have in their assistants, specifically graduate assistants, decision to pursue coaching. Some of the participants had specific memories of mentors telling them they should consider coaching as a career because they would be good at it. This is an explicit example of an individual building their self-efficacy which led to interest in the field and the decision to pursue coaching as a career.

Learning experiences are also critical in the development of outcome expectations and self-efficacy. Therefore, participation in professional development opportunities are necessary. The female coaches in the current study had varying levels of participation in professional development opportunities. The coaches who had achieved career longevity were extremely involved in their professional community. However, several of the Early Career coaches were dissatisfied with the amount of professional development that was financially supported by their head coaches or athletic department. Without that support, these coaches are not having the learning outcomes that build their self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

SCCT was an appropriate model to analyze the data because it specifically addresses the personal inputs of the individual. Nowhere is this more relevant than in the theme of Life as a Coach-Mom. The personal input of being a mother in a male-dominated industry has a clear impact on a female coach's career experiences. Coach-Moms encounter barriers in the career field that women and men without children do not. However, with the right support system these barriers can be overcome. The Coach-moms that had institutional support from their athletic departments, local family to serve as caregivers, and/or flexible childcare centers could maintain their careers at the level that they desired. However, if women felt that these supports did not exist or were insufficient for their needs, they may not continue to pursue a coaching career. When women are developing their career interests in college, if they are witness to a coach-mom struggling to find the necessary support to care for her children, their interest may wane.

Implications for Practice

Due to the continued male-domination of leadership positions in sport, women cannot simply wait for a change in culture to advance their careers. Therefore, female swimming coaches must act with agency to progress their own careers. The early-career coaches need to model the actions and behaviors they witness from the most successful coaches. Meanwhile, female head coaches need to continue to model the behaviors and strategies that led them to their positions.

Female swimming coaches looking to advance their careers need to be involved in their professional community, whether that is attending professional development events or volunteering on conference-level committees, NCAA committees, or within professional organizations. This involvement helps coaches in a variety of ways. First, there are clear educational benefits to attending professional development events. Second, attending these events and participating in the professional community can build and strengthen much-needed networks. A common concern for coaches is the lack of funds to attend professional development events. Another recommendation for practice for these coaches is to negotiate professional development funds into their contracts. If funds are still unavailable, coaches should consider funding these events for themselves. Although it would be in the best interest of the athletic department to fund these activities for their coaches, if budgets do not permit coaches should consider whether using their own money is feasible. The women in this study, had also gone outside the traditional professional development establishment to find support that would better serve them.

Coaches may need to find or even create the professional development that works best for them, even though it may be outside the traditional ways.

Together with professional development and service to the sport, all coaches regardless of level need mentorship. The most successful coaches in this study still called upon their mentors for guidance and support. Due to the largely male-dominated nature of swimming coaching, women may have trouble finding female mentorship, however any mentorship regardless of gender is better than no mentorship. There is some benefit to same sex mentorship for role modeling and social support, so if possible, women should seek same-sex mentorship, but the male mentors are also important for networking.

Coaches trying to build their careers need to discuss their career goals with their head coach. The head coach then needs to train and develop their assistant coaches in tangible skills that will be marketable for head coaching positions. This means assistant coaches need to assert themselves in asking for duties other than administration. Assistant coaches need to be able to develop season plans, write workouts, recruit, and fundraise, among numerous other coaching skills. These are the skills that will help them climb the ladder to their next career move. Head coaches may be reluctant to develop their assistants, as it may result in them losing that assistant. However, head coaches need to see the bigger picture, in that the better assistants are developed and trained, the more the sport and the athletes progress.

Female coaches should not automatically discount the compatibility of coaching and motherhood. Although athletic departments may be able to provide resources for its

coach-moms, it is recommended that coach-moms be proactive in seeking out the resources athletic departments may be able to offer. Athletic departments may be able to assist coach-moms in securing spots for their children in on-campus daycare. Athletic departments may also be able to financially support a babysitter or caretaker to go on the road with coaches. Children may even be welcome on the sideline or courtside during practice and games. Coach-moms should initiate conversations with their administration to discuss their needs as a coach-mom and to identify in what ways the department can assist. Assistant coaches should also have similar conversations with their head coaches. Beyond the athletic department, coach-moms can also explore what assistance may be available from spouses, other family members, and community daycares. Head coaches can encourage a balanced lifestyle of their assistants. Head coaches who have children themselves, can model how parenting and coaching can work together. If they do not have children, they can communicate in what capacities and to what degree children can be involved in the program.

Female coaches may not be able to rapidly change the culture of sexism that exists in sport and coaching. However, they can contribute to their own success and the success of other female coaches through purposeful and strategic mentorship, professional development, as well as a commitment to balancing life as a coach and a mom.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations to this study. This study is limited most by selection bias of the participants, the biases of the researcher, the inability to generalize to larger contexts or populations, and the volume of data produced.

Most of the participants in the study were women who were currently in the field or recently retired, meaning they managed relatively successful careers. Only two of the 21 participants exited the field early. One of which was perceived to do so on her own volition and not necessarily because of disillusionment with the career. Therefore, the women in this study may have had more positive experiences in the coaching field or exhibited more resilience than women who exit the field under other circumstances. Therefore, the data may be somewhat skewed toward more positive career experiences than what most women experience. Additional interviews with women who left the field under less positive circumstances, may have produced different findings.

An additional result of selection bias of the sample, as discussed previously in the Findings, is that the women in this study may identifier higher with being a woman in a male-dominated field. The women who chose to participate in the study may have done so because of the opportunity to help other women. This would suggest that they identify strongly with being a woman in a male-dominated field, and therefore exhibit less of a "Queen Bee" attitude (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011). There may be no way to practically overcome this limitation, as "Queen Bee" women would not be interested in participating in female-centered research.

This study is also limited by my personal biases, as the researcher is the main instrument for data collection in qualitative research. As a former collegiate swimming coach, I have had my own set of experiences in the field that have influenced the research process. All facets of the research process may have been influenced, from the selection of interview questions to the data analysis and interpretation. Although, I regularly interrogated my own biases throughout the research process, there is no way to completely remove the researcher from the research in qualitative work.

Perhaps the most commonly cited limitation in qualitative research is the inability to extend the findings to a wider population. Although data analysis produced specific findings for this group of female swimming coaches, without the ability to statistically test findings, some outcomes may be anomalies or due to chance. A mixed-methods or quantitative study could provide more conclusive findings that could be generalized to a larger population.

The volume of data produced proved to be a limitation, as well. I chose to interview a large sample of coaches to get a sufficiently broad sample. The interviews produced 215 pages of transcribed data. Although it was necessary to interview a larger sample in order to achieve saturation, the byproduct was a large amount of data. A smaller amount of data may have allowed for a deeper analysis.

Based on the findings in the study, further research should be conducted with women who have left the swim coaching field. Research with this population could explore if the themes from the current study played a role in the decision for these women to pursue careers other than coaching. Another avenue for further research could be to

pursue a longitudinal with the Early Career and Mid-Career coaches in this study to examine how their career has progressed. This study could also be further expanded to sports outside of swimming. Collegiate sport is widely underrepresented by female coaches. A similar study should be implemented with female coaches across all sports.

Conclusion

The current research project sought to understand the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches. Analysis from qualitative interviews with current and recently retired swim coaches at various points in their careers produced the themes of (a) Sexism, (b) The Career Path, and (c) Life as a Coach-Mom. The women in the current study experienced sexism from a variety of sources and in a variety of contexts. These female coaches were often misidentified as not being a coach, they experienced isolation and tokenism, and they experienced sexism from peer coaches, athletes, parents and administrators, and due to pregnancy. Additionally, the coaches were able to identify the decreasing opportunities available to them. Despite these limited opportunities, or perhaps because of them, the women were able to navigate the profession more successfully by immersing themselves in professional development opportunities and taking advantage of mentoring relationships. Lastly, women with children discussed the wide net they must cast for support with childcare. However, with this support a successful career is achievable and possibly more balanced than their childless peers. These findings add to the body of literature on the underrepresentation of women in coaching and career mobility of women who coach. Athletic administrators, current coaches, and prospective coaches could benefit from these findings to improve the current career status of women in coaching.

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APPENDICES

Interview Guides

Interview Guide (Coaches w/ More Experience)

1.) In your own words, can you describe how you got to your current position at University of X?

2.) Why did you choose coaching as your preferred career? What developed your career interest?

3.) What is your level of involvement with professional organizations such as CSCAA or ASCA? What type of other professional development opportunities do you take part in?

4.) Who has been influential in your career progression as a role model or mentor? In what ways were these individuals influential?

5.) Who do you personally mentor any coaches?

6.) What advice do you give to your mentees or what advice would you give to women just starting their coaching career?

7.) Do you perceive that your gender has ever been a limiting factor in your career progression, in what ways?

8.) Why do you think there aren't more women in coaching that reach the elite level?

9.) In what ways do you manage a work/life balance? How is this different from when you were an assistant? How does your family life impact your career progression?

Interview Guide: (Early Career Coaches)

1.) In your own words, can you describe how you got to your current position at University of X?

2.) Why did you choose coaching as your preferred career? What developed your career interest?

3.) What is your level of involvement with professional organizations such as CSCAA or ASCA? What type of other professional development opportunities do you take part in?

4.) Who has been influential in your career progression as a role model or mentor? In what ways were these individuals influential?

5.) What are your career goals in coaching? At what level do you want to coach?

6.) Do you perceive that your gender has ever been a limiting factor in your career progression, in what ways?

7.) If you become a head coach one day:

      a.) what challenges/pressures do you anticipate?

      b.) how will it be different from being an assistant coach?

8.) Why do you think there aren't more women in coaching that reach the elite level?

9.) In what ways do you manage a work/life balance? Do you think this gets easier/harder as a head coach? How does family life impact your career development?

IRB Study Approval Letter

August 25, 2017

Jessica Laing Siegele,
UTK - Coll of Education, Hlth, & Human - Kinesiology Recreation & Sport Studies

Re: UTK IRB-17-03928-XP
Study Title: NCAA Division I Female College Swimming Coaches: Career Progression and Development

Dear Jessica Laing Siegele:

The UTK Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your application for the above referenced project. It determined that your application is eligible for expedited review under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1), categories (6) and (7). The IRB has reviewed these materials and determined that they do comply with proper consideration for the rights and welfare of human subjects and the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects.

Therefore, this letter constitutes full approval by the IRB of your application (version 1.2) as submitted, including Female Coaches Informed Consent (v1.0), Recruitment email (v1.0), Recruitment Email Follow Up (v1.0), and the Interview Guide (v2.0). The listed documents have been dated and stamped IRB approved. Approval of this study will be valid from August 25, 2017 to August 24, 2018.

In the event that subjects are to be recruited using solicitation materials, such as brochures, posters, web-based advertisements, etc., these materials must receive prior approval of the IRB. Any revisions in the approved application must also be submitted to and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. In addition, you are responsible for reporting any unanticipated serious adverse events or other problems involving risks to subjects or others in the manner required by the local IRB policy.

Institutional Review Board | Office of Research & Engagement
1534 White AvenueKnoxville, TN 37996-1529
865-974-7697   865-974-7400 fax   irb.utk.edu

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Flagship Campus of the University of Tennessee System **ur**

Finally, re-approval of your project is required by the IRB in accord with the conditions specified above. You may not continue the research study beyond the time or other limits specified unless you obtain prior written approval of the IRB.

Sincerely,

Colleen P. Gilrane

Colleen P. Gilrane, Ph.D.
Chair

Informed Consent

**INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR
FEMALE SWIMMING COACHES STUDY:**

INTRODUCTION
Hello, my name is Jessica Siegele and I am a third-year doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the department of Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport Studies. You are invited to participate in an interview for a dissertation research project I am conducting regarding the experiences of female college swimming coaches.

The overall purpose of this project is to understand the career experiences of female college swimming coaches.

PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY
You will be participating in an approximately 60 – 120-minute interview and will be asked a series of questions focused on your career and relevant experiences as a female swimming coach. Interviews will be audio recorded for accuracy and transcription purposes. I may take notes during the interview. Participants will be asked to review the interview transcription for accuracy purposes, as well. Only one interview is expected to be needed, however I may contact you for follow up questions. If so, I will contact you by phone.

RISKS
There are minimal risks involved in the research. Participants may recall personal experiences in the past that were negative in nature and that may cause stress and discomfort. Your identity will be concealed, however there is a risk that your confidentiality may be compromised. Someone could find out you were a part of this study, however the study procedures used by the researchers minimize this risk. If at any time there is a question that you would like to skip, simply say so, and we will move on.

BENEFITS
There are no direct benefits to the participant stemming from participating in this research project. However, by participating in this project you have the opportunity to express your experiences and thoughts regarding your position as a coach.

CONFIDENTIALITY
No references or personal identifiers will be made in written or oral reports about the research which could link you to the research. Data will be stored securely on the researcher's password protected computer. The data will be made available only to me

and my supervising advisor, Dr. Rob Hardin. All audio recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Jessica Siegele, PhD student at the University of Tennessee, at 1914 Andy Holt Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37996, and (865) 974-3340. You may also contact Dr. Rob Hardin, faculty advisor on this project, at robh@vols.utk. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-7697 or utkirb@utk.edu.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this project is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Example of Themes

Theme	Subthemes	Example Quote
Sexism	Misidentification	*Sometimes as a female, you're either someone on the team or you're the trainer. Nobody knows you are the coach.*
	Sexism from coaches, athletes, parents, and administrators	*I think I really had to work hard to get the men's respect.*
	Sexism and motherhood	*Because you are female people think you're going to be having babies someday, and that probably means you're not going to be interested in doing this forever.*
	Isolation	*I'm 26 years old, I'm pregnant, and I am a head coach, and I don't know who to turn to.*
	Tokenism	*And apparently that's a thing, where it's like a token female that will do all the admin work and just recruit the women.*
The Career Path	Changing landscape	*When the program combines, there's less opportunities in general, and less women's head coaching opportunities, and so probably less opportunity for women.*
	Importance of mentors	*She [her head coach] was just an amazing partner. She allowed me to learn so much.*
	Professional development	
Life as Coach-Mom	Support for the coach-mom	*The collaboration and networking has been really positive.*

Kids create balance

Our mothers are amazing. We definitely couldn't have done it without them, that's how we made it work.

Thank God I did have kids, or you'd just live [at work].

VITA

Jessica Siegele is originally from Pittsburgh, PA. Jessica focuses her research on the underrepresentation of women in coaching and athletic administration. Jessica earned her Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Kentucky with majors in Management and Marketing. While at the University of Kentucky, Jessica was a member of the varsity swimming team, where she was an NCAA qualifier, team record holder, captain, and All-American. Jessica earned a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Sport Business Management from the University of Central Florida in the DeVos Sport Business Management Program. After completing her masters degrees, Jessica spent eight years coaching collegiate swimming at Ashland University, University of Pittsburgh, California University of Pennsylvania, and Colorado College. During her tenure at Cal U of PA, Jessica completed her third master's degree in Exercise Science and Health Promotion with an emphasis in Sport Psychology. Jessica will graduate from the University of Tennessee in May of 2018 with a Doctorate of Philosophy in Kinesiology and Sport Studies. She has two publications, one accepted manuscript, five publications under review or currently in process, and over 25 international, national, or regional presentations.