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ABSTRACT

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its subsequent interpretations have created legal ground for gender equity in collegiate athletics departments. After 40 years of its existence, however, there are still fewer opportunities for women to be involved in athletics at the collegiate level at NCAA universities. While there are some general characteristics that appear to predispose universities to have lower compliance levels, little research has been done on institution-specific compliance. This study seeks to illustrate Title IX compliance levels of the Big South Conference and South Carolina Division I universities, using Coastal Carolina University

as the focal institution. Data was gathered from the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Analysis cutting tool based on 20 different categories of information per participant institution, then compared within their general populations. Rankings were tallied for each general population and compared to each other. The data illustrates that Coastal Carolina University's compliance levels are similar to other regional universities.

Introduction

A 2010 study on female participation in collegiate sports revealed that the number of women's teams offered at NCAA institutions was near its highest levels, with an average of 8.64 teams per school, and the number of intercollegiate athletic employees who were women was at its highest ever, with 12,702 women across all NCAA institutions (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). Yet, there is still a large gap in gender equity as females do not see the same opportunities as their male counterparts.

Since the passage of Title IX in 1972, the opportunities for female undergraduates to play sports have grown in such a way that they represented nearly half of all athletes at the turn of the century (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006). Opportunities for women to join in an administrative role, however, remain relatively low. At last count, only 34.9% of athletic directors, assistant athletic directors, and associate athletic directors were held by females (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). Because gender equity discrepancies still exist on the whole within the NCAA, more research must be done to determine where the problems are prevalent and to identify new solutions.

In order to do this, it is important to look at the individual institutions that make up the NCAA more closely. Previous studies have indicated that size of school, geographic location of school, and the presence of a collegiate football program can all be indicators of lower levels of gender equity (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006). As these indicators are often used to determine NCAA conference membership, it is easiest to use these pre-established groupings for researching and comparing individual NCAA universities.

The purpose of this research is to compare Coastal Carolina University athletics' Title IX compliance with both members of the Big South Conference and Division-I universities located in South Carolina. Coastal Carolina University is used as the central comparative school as it is the home university of this research, making it a familiar setting for comparison. It also serves to reason that the research results will be more effective for change if there is a more personal connection.

Using two general populations for comparison allows for a more complete picture to be drawn of Coastal Carolina University's Title IX compliance. Each of the two general populations, Big South Conference members and South Carolina Division I universities, offer commonalities between the school based on factors that have been found to be determinants of Title IX compliance levels. The Big South Conference offers common size of school and the presence of a collegiate football program, while South Carolina Division I universities offer common geographic location and the presence of a collegiate football program.

Because Title IX applies to all facets of collegiate sports programs, not just on-field participation opportunities, comparisons will be based on four primary sets of data:

- Overall compliance with the three-prong test;
    - Compliance test created by the Office of Civil Rights to measure adherence to Title IX: "1) participation opportunities for male and female students is 'substantially proportionate' to their respective full-time undergraduate enrollments, 2) the institution has a 'history and continuing practice of program expansion' for the underrepresented sex, or 3) the institution is 'fully and effectively' accommodating the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex" (OCR, 2003).
- Athletic participation rates of men versus women compared to the general student population;
- Salaries of male-team coaches versus female-team coaches (includes both head coaches and assistant coaches);
- Expenses for male athletes versus female athletes (includes athletic student aid, recruiting, and game-day operating).

These comparisons will provide a more complete picture of Title IX compliance at each participant institution, which will then allow for a better comparison of overall Title IX for the participant institutions and the general populations studied.

Literature Review

History of Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 states that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (United States Department of Labor, 2010).
This statute is predominantly cited in regards to allowing equal opportunities for both sexes to participate in athletics, although its initial inception was not intended for regulation of gender equity in sports. This study focuses on the implications of Title IX on intercollegiate athletics, and seeks to improve how a school is deemed compliant with Title IX.

The most common way to assess a university's compliance with Title IX is to utilize the three prong test as put forth by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in their 1979 Policy Interpretation. In order to be compliant with Title IX, the university must pass one part of the three-prong test: being proportional, having a history of progress, or be accommodating of student interests and abilities (OCR, 1979). The most common application for measuring a school's compliance is the proportionality prong, as the other two are difficult to prove. The Office of Civil Rights issued further clarification of the three prong test in 2003, urging universities to use all three prongs in trying to comply with Title IX.

Title IX Today

There have been over 190 alleged Title IX violations involving athletics since the inception of the statute in 1972, with nearly half of those cases being filed since the year 2000 (Anderson & Osborne, 2008). Of these recent cases, 57% have involved claims of violation at the college level. This increase in litigation has helped raise female participation opportunities to nearly record levels (Carpenter & Acosta, 2010). As more people become familiar with the legalities of Title IX, more lawsuits are being filed against university athletic departments for non-compliance with the statute. Universities are increasing participation opportunities for women in an attempt to come into compliance prior to facing a complaint or even a lawsuit from the Office of Civil Rights or a lawsuit.

Title IX compliance is not relegated to gender equity for athletes. The second most popular claim for lawsuits with a possible Title IX violation is against employment discrimination (Anderson & Osborne, 2008) which generally involves coaching positions. There has been no increase in the number of female coaches at the head of most women's sports since the inception of the statute (Lapchick, 2010; Carpenter & Acosta, 2010). There is some discussion that this is because of the low number of females in upper-level athletic positions such as athletic directors, associate athletic directors, and assistant athletic directors (Schneider, Stier, Henry, & Wilding, 2010). Senior Women's Administrators (SWAS) are 98.3% female in Division I athletic departments (Lapchick, 2010), yet they feel as if they cannot move up in rank because they are suppressed by the "old boys' club" (Schneider, Stier, Henry, & Wilding, 2010). The barriers women face as coaches and administrators bears closer examination, particularly at the Division I level, something which this study aims to do.

Related Research

Recent studies have shown that there are several determinants of how compliant or noncompliant a university will be with one part of the three-prong test. In a 2006 study based on the proportionality prong, it was found that universities located in the south tend to have higher levels of disproportionality (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006). Private institutions, schools with lower tuition/fee costs, universities with higher numbers of female undergraduates, and football programs tend to be indicative of larger proportionality gaps as well (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006). Several of these factors can be seen as characteristics of various Division I universities in South Carolina, as well as members of the Big South conference. There is currently little research to compare these factors on a regional level, which will give a better picture as to how influential various determinants can be when one determinant is held constant.

There has been some research done based on compliance levels by conference membership. Kennedy (2006, 2007) evaluated all 31 conferences that are able to participate in the NCAA Division I basketball tournament to see which conferences exhibit the highest and lowest levels of compliance. His research was based on the Kennedy Index, which grades universities on allocated scholarship funds, coaching salaries, operating expenses, recruitment budgets, and participation rates. The 2006 study, based on just 10 conferences, found that the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Southeastern Conference ranked eighth and ninth lowest respectively in compliance (Kennedy, 2006). When the study was expanded, six of twelve Division I

universities in South Carolina were found to belong to the "Bottom Ten of the March Madness conferences" (Kennedy, 2007; National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2006). One South Carolina Division I university belonged to a conference in the top ten in compliance levels, while the remaining universities belonged to conferences in the middle. The Big South conference was found to be neither the best in Title IX compliance nor worst in Title IX compliance, yet member universities only average six women's teams (Kennedy, 2007). More research needs to be conducted into the compliance levels of the member institutions of the Big South conference to determine why they seem to be moderately compliant with Title IX regulations, yet field so few opportunities for female athletic participation.

While regional factors can affect the Title IX compliance levels of universities, sports media coverage provides visible indicators as to whether or not universities are dedicated to improving gender equality (Cooper, 2008; Huffman, Tuggle, & Rosengard, 2004). Research has shown that coverage by college broadcasting and college newspapers continues to be dominated by male sports, but the coverage that is given to women's sports is the same quality as the men's (Huffman, Tuggle, & Rosengard, 2004). Electronic media coverage on university athletic departments' websites, however, favors women's sports teams over comparative men's teams (Cooper, 2008) when football is not considered in the study. Since football has been found to be a determining factor in lower compliance levels (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006), it will be important to further research the impact of football media coverage on gender equity in intercollegiate athletics.

Purpose Statement/Hypothesis

The purpose of this research is to examine the Title IX compliance of the Coastal Carolina University athletics department, a Division I member institution of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in South Carolina and a member institution of the Big South conference. Coastal Carolina University athletics' compliance with Title IX will then be compared to the compliance of the other member universities of the Big South conference and the other Division I NCAA institutions in South Carolina. The primary comparisons will be on coaching salaries, athletic participation, expenses, and compliance with the three-prong test. It is believed that Coastal Carolina University athletics will rank in the middle section of both regional universities and conference universities.

Methodology

Participants

The first step to be completed in this research was to determine what university athletic departments to use for comparison against Coastal Carolina University. It was decided that two general groups of schools should be used—members of the Big South Conference and NCAA Division I (D-I) universities located in the state of South Carolina (SC).

There is some overlap, as several schools that are located in South Carolina and fall in the D-I category are also members of the Big South Conference. The information gathered on each of these schools will have to be processed twice, once in the Big South Conference division and

once in the South Carolina D-I division, to maintain accurate results for comparison. Information for Coastal Carolina University will also be considered in both comparisons for accuracy purposes.

Both (Big South Conference and South Carolina D-I)

- Coastal Carolina University
- Charleston Southern University
- Presbyterian College
- Winthrop University

The Big South Conference was chosen as a general category for comparison because it is the NCAA mid-major conference that recognizes Coastal Carolina University as a member (Big South Sports, 2010). As such, there should be some distinct similarities between the member institutions, such as number of competing athletic teams, full-time enrollment, status as a Division I university, and budget. The member universities used include the schools listed in Table 01 and the following (Big South Sports, 2010):

Big South Conference (only)

- Gardner-Webb University
- High Point University
- Liberty University
- Radford University
- University of North Carolina Asheville
- Virginia Military Institute
- Stony Brook University

The second general category for comparison is NCAA Division I universities located in South Carolina. Such a category holds members of many different NCAA conferences, varying school enrollment sizes, private versus public universities, and budget sizes. The common factor between the 12 universities is geographic location, which has been found to be a determinant of proportionality (Anderson, Cheslock, & Ehrenberg, 2006). Along with Coastal Carolina University, Charleston Southern University, Presbyterian College, and Winthrop University, the following schools were included in this research category (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2006):

Table 03: South Carolina Division-I Universities (only)

- College of Charleston—South Carolina *(Southern Conference)*
- The Citadel *(Southern Conference)*
- Clemson University *(ACC)*
- Furman University *(Southern Conference)*
- University of South Carolina, Columbia *(SEC)*
- South Carolina State University *(Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference)*
- University of South Carolina Upstate *(Atlantic Sun Conference)*
- Wofford College *(Southern Conference)*

Data Collection

After selecting schools, information was gathered about Title IX compliance from the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Cutting Tool at ope.ed.gov/athletics/. This website was chosen because it is based on data provided to the Office of Postsecondary Education to fulfill the requirements set forth by the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (Office of Postsecondary Education, 2010).

The EADA for each of the selected schools was obtained for the 2009-2010 school year (Office of Postsecondary Education, 2010). The EADA supplied key information regarding participation opportunities, number of coaches, average coaches' salary, available athletic student aid, and expenses. Demographic information on each university was also gathered as a part of the research, which can be taken from the reported information to the Office of Postsecondary Education, but is also supplied on the EADA.

Instrumentation

The form in Figure 1 was completed for each of the selected schools using the EADA.

Data Analysis

After the data was compiled, it was sorted into the given divisions (Big South or South Carolina Division I) where the schools were compared internally. The schools were ranked within their given divisions based on the categories of information found with the instrumentation form. Once completed, the four category rankings for each school were added together in order to give each school a composite score. The lower the composite score, the more equitable the school is in its athletics programs.

Subsequent to the individual schools being compared within the Big South Conference division and within South Carolina's Division I programs, it was noted where Coastal Carolina University fell in each category as a comparison.

Results

When examining the data collected for the Division I universities in South Carolina, it was found that the University of South Carolina—Upstate (USC-Up) holds the lowest composite ranking score at 11 points. In the four categories examined, USC-Upstate was first in equitable coaching opportunities and salaries as well as first in equitable recruiting expenses. The interesting point, however, is that USC-Upstate ranked in the lower 50th percentile in terms of proportionality.

Coastal Carolina is ranked 7th out of the 12 Division I universities in South Carolina with a composite ranking of 27 points. In terms of proportionality, student aid and recruiting expenses, Coastal Carolina was consistently an average contender, but ranked in the lower 25th percentile in terms of equitable coaching opportunities. Table 1 illustrates the complete composite ranking system for South Carolina Division I schools:

The football category indicates whether or not each of the selected universities fields a varsity football program. With the exception of the College of Charleston (South Carolina Division I) and Stony Brook University (Big South Conference), the schools that do not have a football program have smaller composite scores than those universities that do have a football program. This supports earlier research that suggests the existence of a football program is an indicator of a school with gender equity problems.

Looking at the compiled results for member universities of the Big South Conference shows that Coastal Carolina is again rated average in terms of gender equity. With a composite total of 24 points, their total is twice that of the most equitable school in the Big South Conference, Radford University. The composite score differs from the Division I SC comparison score because of different rankings based on the different regional schools.

The least equitable school in both the Big South Conference and amongst Division I South Carolina schools is Charleston Southern University, with a total of 36 points when ranked against the Big South and a total of 35 points when ranked against fellow South Carolina Division I universities. Table 2 illustrates the total composite scores for the 11 member universities of the Big South Conference.

Conclusion

The current problem in collegiate athletics is equitable opportunities for both males and females at an on-field participation level and at an administrative level. The purpose of this research is to provide a look at regional Title IX compliance, using Coastal Carolina University as the central institution. Two general populations, the Big South Conference and NCAA
Division I universities in South Carolina, were used for comparison.

One of the most common forms of looking at equity is the proportionality of opportunities for athletes to the general student population make up. This leaves out key information about the actual workings of an athletics department. As illustrated by the research, some institutions that rank high when looking at proportionality score quite low in terms of student aid. This means that, while there are open opportunities for both sexes, the amount of money spent on each gender is not anywhere near as equitable. Equity cannot simply be defined by the number of open roster spots, but must be defined with the quality of the spot taken into account.

Equity must also take into account the opportunities and funding available for quality coaching experiences. Just as the literature states, this research found that coaching opportunities and operating budgets differ greatly based on the school. While Title IX does not directly address this, its value cannot be overlooked. Who a coach is and what they can do for their teams must be taken into account when looking at the equity of an athletics department. Providing equal opportunities for both sexes must also be taken into account in order to foster an equitable atmosphere.

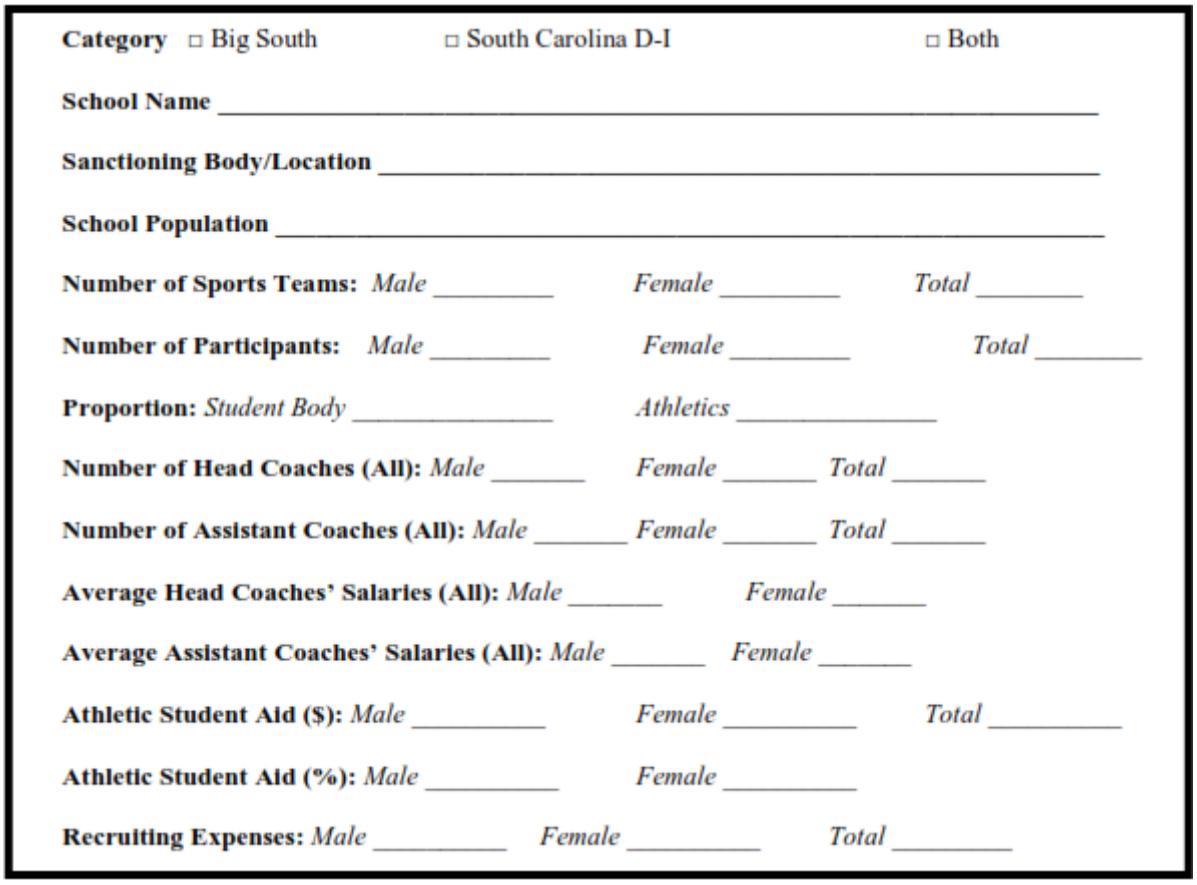
By taking a more overall look at equitable opportunities and comparing those findings in a regional fashion allows for more widespread equity increases. As the law stands now, very few factors are considered when labeling a school compliant or noncompliant according to the 3-

prong test. By using a ranking system and more quantitative categories, it is easier to show which schools are truly fostering an equitable athletic atmosphere and which schools need improvement. It also allows for improved overall gender equity at a state level, a conference level, and an institutional level.

In the future, the results of this study should be used to alert the NCAA and the participant institutions of possible improvement areas for Title IX compliance. It should also inspire a more composite data collection system in all areas of Title IX compliance. If the data is used to its full advantage, opportunities for females in collegiate athletics should increase.

A limitation of this study is that the data collected was self-reported by the member institutions. There is very little opportunity to determine that the data is both valid and reliable. Another limitation is that the research was only conducted with 19 participant institutions that were a part of two small general populations. Future research studies should focus on other general populations (other states or other conferences) to create a more complete picture of gender equity in collegiate athletics amongst NCAA member institutions.

FIGURES



Category □ Big South □ South Carolina D-I □ Both

School Name _____

Sanctioning Body/Location _____

School Population _____

Number of Sports Teams: *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Number of Participants: *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Proportion: *Student Body* _____ *Athletics* _____

Number of Head Coaches (All): *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Number of Assistant Coaches (All): *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Average Head Coaches' Salaries (All): *Male* _____ *Female* _____

Average Assistant Coaches' Salaries (All): *Male* _____ *Female* _____

Athletic Student Aid ($): *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Athletic Student Aid (%): *Male* _____ *Female* _____

Recruiting Expenses: *Male* _____ *Female* _____ *Total* _____

Figure 1: Study Instrument

RETURN TO TEXT

TABLES

Schools	Proportionality	Coaches	Student Aid	Recruiting Expenses	Composite	FB
University of South Carolina--Upstate	7	1	2	1	11	N
Winthrop University	9	2	3	3	17	N
University of South Carolina	3	6	5	5	19	Y
South Carolina State	8	8	1	4	21	Y
College of Charleston	4	12	7	2	25	N
Clemson University	2	11	4	9	26	Y
Coastal Carolina University	5	9	6	7	27	Y
Furman University	11	4	9	6	30	Y
Presbyterian College	6	3	12	11	32	Y
The Citadel	1	10	11	12	34	Y
Wofford College	10	5	10	10	35	Y
Charleston Southern University	12	7	8	8	35	Y

Table 1: Composite Rankings for South Carolina Division I Schools

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Schools	Proportionality	Coaches	Student Aid	Recruiting Expenses	Composite	FB
Radford University	1	7	1	3	12	N
Stony Brook University	2	6	4	4	16	Y
University of North Carolina--Asheville	4	2	9	1	16	N
Winthrop University	9	4	2	2	17	N
High Point University	6	3	3	8	20	N
Coastal Carolina University	5	9	5	5	24	Y
Gardner-Webb University	11	1	6	6	24	Y
Presbyterian College	7	5	8	10	30	Y
Virginia Military Institute	3	10	10	11	34	Y
Liberty University	8	11	7	9	35	Y
Charleston Southern University	10	8	11	7	36	Y

Table 2: Composite Scores for All Members of the Big South Conference

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