

# Examining Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics: A Content Analysis of NCAA Division I Athletic Directors

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the gender and race underrepresentation of women and minorities in intercollegiate athletic departments at the athletic director position. The human capital theory was used with focus on the personal human capital investments attained in career success. A content analysis was conducted and 21 variables observed of intercollegiate athletic director biographies published on the 348 NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) member institutions' athletic website. Results suggest that there was no statistical difference in the human capital investments on the basis of gender or race and that there must be other factors contributing to the underrepresentation of women and minorities in intercollegiate athletic departments.

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**Key Words:** *Human capital theory, hegemonic masculinity, athletic directors, intercollegiate athletics, NCAA.*

There is a need for an athletic director within each educational institution that supports intercollegiate athletics. At the highest level of competition of the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) member institutions in Division I, the athletic director's role is valued as most prestigious in an intercollegiate athletic department (Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009).

An athletic director oversees all sports functions within the individual institution's athletic department. The individual entrusted with this position oversees the events, as well as the logistics of each sports team associated with the college or university. S/he is responsible for the hiring and mentoring of all coaches, overseeing the facilities in which the sports are played, and managing the athletics department's budgetary needs and limitations (Wilson, Gilbert, Gilbert, & Sailor, 2009). The athletic director is the first contact if any media inquiries arise and are accountable to manage the communication to the public involving any aspect of the institution's athletic programs. The person in this leadership position must develop processes and procedures for the various programs (e.g., sports, units) in the athletic department and work to ensure those are met and followed within each program.

The director of athletics of an institution must have a good administrative staff and dedicated coaches to keep the program running smoothly. The athletic director is tied into every aspect of the athletic department like academics, budgetary needs, and disciplinary actions (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). The head of athletics position is often a very prominent and powerful position, particularly at the intercollegiate level, with a great deal of responsibility involved with managing the athletic function of each sport team in the athletic department. Acosta and Carpenter said about the influence of an athletic director, "Their experience, decision-making style, and their commitment concerning equity often have an impact upon the vision and goals of the program they administer and the people they hire" (p. 6).

According to Acosta and Carpenter's (2010) most recent examination of women in intercollegiate athletics, only 19.3% of athletic directors are female. As Acosta and Carpenter note in their study, when Title IX was enacted in June of 1972, a female administered 90% of women's intercollegiate athletics programs while almost no females administered programs that included men's teams. Most of the female directors of athletics had their roots in physical education and often continued to teach while serving as the athletic director of women's athletics program. In universities today, however, Acosta and Carpenter report that females represent over 57% of the students. The scholars note that females represent 34.9% of the athletics administrative staffs, but less than 20% of the head athletics director position. They add that in 2008, females held almost half of the administrative jobs in athletic departments and now 13.2% of athletic programs have no females anywhere in their administrative structures.

The opportunity to include females and members of varied ethnic groups in the athletic administrative organizations seems advantageous as well as increasingly easy to accomplish (Eagly, 2007). The average number of 3.78 female administrators per program is at its highest ever at the Division I level (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). Division I programs average 5.71 female members of their administrative staffs. These programs also average the lowest percentage of programs lacking a female voice in their administration. There are 4.2% of Division I programs that lack a female administrator compared to 18.0% in Division II and 12.6 % in Division III (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010). The female voice is more often present now than it was when Acosta and Carpenter first collected data on women in athletics in 1977, but it is often a single female voice. When looking at all divisions, there are at least 1.32 females per administration. It is disheartening to observe that in all divisions (i.e. Division I, II, and III) 201 programs has a female athletic director, a decrease of 23 since 2008 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010).

By collecting data on active athletics directors and analyzing their training, education and experiential background, there should be no visible difference in their human capital personal investments that would indicate that women or minorities would be less qualified or less desirable to hire than their male counterparts. Based on the Human Capital theory's personal investments necessary for career success, there should be more equality for those that have exemplified these investments at the athletic director position, regardless of gender or race.

## **Literature Review**

### **Human Capital**

Human capital, as defined by Cunningham & Sagas (2004), indicates that individuals who accrue job-related personal investments (e.g., education, experience, training, and competences) gain additional positive outcomes in their careers and jobs than those with a smaller amount of these investments (Becker, 1993; Nordhaug, 1993). Two of the most important human capital investments identified by previous research of the human capital theory an individual can make are in the form of (a) training and (b) education, both of which are believed to provide a great deal of knowledge and skills to those who possess them (Becker, 1993).

In applying this to an athletic context, researchers have recently advanced another relevant human capital variable in one's prior collegiate athletic playing experience (Bruening & Dixon, 2008). Particularly, researchers found that for athletic coaches evidence suggests that playing experience could represent

the most substantial human capital variable in how it is related to a coach's professional socialization, occupational commitment, and occupational turnover intent (Cunningham, Sagas, & Ashley, 2001; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007).

In previous research on intercollegiate coaches, there has been empirical support for the inclusion of playing and coaching experience as important human capital variables in the career progression and promotion of intercollegiate athletic administrators. These researchers found that 80% of the athletic directors surveyed had competed as a collegiate student athlete, and 65% had coached a collegiate sport prior to obtaining an athletic administrative position (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002). Therefore, research substantiates that prior collegiate playing experience or coaching experience represent important contributions to what human capital theorist Nordhaug (1993) termed "industry competences," which enhance an existing managerial skill base attained through education, training and on the job experience (i.e., tenure) (Atwater, Brett, Waldman, DiMare, & Hayden, 2004).

Many researchers have investigated the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic coaching (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003; Knoppers, 1992; Stangle & Kane, 1991). However, there is limited research dedicated specifically to Division I athletic directors and the application of these human capital personal investment variables. Hall, Cullen, and Slack (1989) pointed out that the issues of power and sexuality needed to be examined in order for there to be any understanding of the male dominated gender structuring of sport organizations. Through the observation of these concepts the point is to have a better comprehension as to the underrepresentation of women and minorities at the athletic director position in intercollegiate athletic organizations.

## **Hegemony**

The concept of hegemony has evolved from its original definition of direct political and economic control by one state over another state to an idea that now involves cultural factors that give the term conceptual foundation (Whisenant, 2008). The modern concept of hegemony includes not only the expression of the interests of a ruling class, but also embodies the idea of acceptance as "normal reality" and rational by those subordinated to it (Williams, 1985). As a social theory, hegemony is the condition in which certain social groups within a society wield authority (i.e., through imposition, manipulation, and consent) over one group or another (Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002). It is not only the preservation of power by force, but it is the preservation of power by consent to what seems to be inevitable (Hartley, 1982). It is the simple unquestioned acceptance of the status quo in our society (Whisenant, Miller, & Pedersen, 2005).

## **Hegemonic Masculinity**

Sport is one of the most prominent and hegemonic social institutions and cultural practices in society today (Sage, 1998). Sport has been so associated with men and boys throughout history that one could say that athletics and masculinity have become synonymous (Kane & Disch, 1993). Sabo and Jansen (1992) wrote that sport, as a hegemonic social institution, naturalizes men's power and privilege over women. This is most evident in administration of sport organizations today.

Hegemonic masculinity is a particular culture's standard of manhood at any particular time in history (Connell, 1987). Hegemonic masculinity is the acceptance of masculinity as the founding characteristic of our society and unabashedly places women in a lower social station within that society. Hegemonic notions of masculinity (e.g., dominance over women and other men, physical strength, aggressiveness, bravado, exclusive heterosexuality, emotional detachment, competitiveness, viewing women as sex objects) are evident in societal institutions where men attempt to separate themselves from, and maintain power over women (Connell, 1990; Kane & Disch, 1993; Whisenant, Miller, & Pedersen, 2005).

Women are subject to much discrimination in our hegemonic masculine society and sport organizations are large communities in support of this way of structuring. Women are kept out or limited in access to sport, because sport in general affirms men's power and control through its emphasis on masculinity and male domination (Theberge, 1987). For participants and administrators alike, sport is considered the generic preservation of this male dominance (Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002). These implications are indicative of the disproportionate hiring of women and minorities in the athletic director or any athletic administration position in athletic departments.

## **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this content analysis was to examine the background of all active Division I NCAA member institution athletic directors and compare and contrast variables that have been identified as human capital theory personal investments and see if the lack thereof, based on gender or race could be a contributing factor to the low hiring rates of women and minorities at the athletic director position. This study covers new ground because it applies the human capital theory's most important investments to all NCAA member Division I athletic directors (e.g., education, experience, training, competences and playing experience).

Based on the results of previous research on human capital theory, within such hegemonic masculine climates (i.e., intercollegiate athletic departments)

one's job-related personal investments are not applicable to those in minority groups (i.e., women and minorities). If there were differences in the human capital personal investments, then the disproportionate hiring and retention of female and minority athletic directors would be nonexistent. The research questions seek to observe these human capital personal investments in all active athletic directors in NCAA membership Division I institutions. Given the inconsistency with the human capital theory personal investments and the lack of female and minority athletic directors, the following research questions were examined with these two minority groups considered:

1. Is there a difference in training (i.e., playing experience, coaching experience) defined by the human capital theory in Division I NCAA member institutions athletic directors?
2. Based on gender of the athletic director, is there a difference in training and previous experience?
3. Based on the race of the athletic director, is there a difference in training and previous experience?

The researchers' hypothesis regarding these research questions is that there will be no statistical difference amongst the active Division I athletic directors' human capital personal investments and that there must be other internal societal impediments considered for the low hiring, promotion and retention of women and minorities in the athletic director position at this level.

## **Methodology**

The population used for this study was all Division I NCAA members' sites (N = 348) from the website (NCAA.org) of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Content analysis was used collecting variables from the biographies of each of the athletic directors in Division I of the NCAA member institutions. A coding protocol and codebook were developed to assist with operational procedures necessary to gather the data efficiently. The study collected data on 349 Division I NCAA athletic directors from 348 Division I NCAA institutions athletic director biographies' published on their athletic website (N = 348).

## **Measures**

In order to determine what information to collect from each athletic director's biography a coding protocol was designed specifically for this study. The variables that were coded for each biography include: school name,

school state, school region, college/university size (based on Carnegie Classification), gender, full name, year of undergraduate completion, race, school attended for undergraduate degree, undergraduate major, playing experience, graduate degree, highest degree achieved, marital status, children, the athletic director's NCAA APR rating, coaching experience, and tenure.

Each school that is a part of the NCAA Division I membership was identified by the NCAA website. The schools on this website are listed in alphabetical order. The coders were trained to enter each institution's site and locate the biography for the athletic director from the main page (for a copy of the codebook, please contact the lead author).

### **Coders**

Two independently trained coders were used for the data collection of this study; the lead researcher (a female who has a graduate degree in sport management) and an assistant (a female with a graduate degree in sport management). The two coders had experience in coding through their involvement in other content analysis research studies, and both had backgrounds in sport. A single coder or several coders can be used for content analysis studies and if multiple coders are being used, it is more ideal to find coders with experience in content analysis studies and with similar academic backgrounds, although this might not always be easy to accomplish (Stempel, 2003). Coders should be familiar with the materials that are to be analyzed in order to make all coders comfortable with the material and give them an indication of the amount of energy that will be necessary to comprehend the content (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005).

### **Reliability**

In accordance to Riffe et al. (2005), after specifying the population and sample for a content analysis study, the next step is to establish reliability procedures. As Riffe and his colleagues note, this three-step process includes the definition of the categories and sub-categories to be used in the study, training coders to apply these definitions to the content at hand, and finally using coder reliability tests to determine the reliability. Wimmer and Dominick (2006) claim when repeated measurement of the same material results in similar decisions or conclusions constitutes a reliable study. In content analytic studies, reliability is measured through a process called inter-coder

reliability, in which reliability of the coders is examined to ensure that the data interpretation is the same for each coder with little or no variation. It is important when using content analysis to establish inter-coder reliability to ensure that all coders are interpreting the data the same way.

Between 10% and 25% of the total sample should be tested for inter-coder reliability in a content analysis (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). For this study, 69 of the 348 schools were chosen and both coders used the coding protocol and codebook in order to code these biographies independently of each other. The percentage of agreement was used, which is the simplest of inter-coder reliability tests. The percentages of agreement between the two coders were calculated. In order to confidently report the results of the study, the coders should have achieved at least 80% agreement of each variable (Riffe et al., 2005). This test was done twice in this study. Each coder was not 80% or better for the variables and another set of 69 schools were chosen for inter-coder reliability. The coaching experience variables were collected but not analyzed and excluded from the final codebook due to variation in inter-coder reliability.

Once inter-coder reliability was achieved on all remaining variables, one coder received 139 schools and the other coder received 140 schools to be independently coded and analyzed.

## **Data Analysis**

The research questions were concerned with the differential returns of overall human capital and job evaluation (NCAA violations) based on the personal investment variables. The data were coded in an Excel spreadsheet compiled from the two coders. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to examine the possible differences between gender and race as they pertain to all other data collected for the human capital personal investment variables.

## **Results**

Within the population of the 348 NCAA Division I schools (N = 348) that were coded, there were 349 athletic directors. One institution had two athletic directors; one male and one female. The results yielded that all 348 athletic sites were visited and there was coding for all 348 schools, but –because some of the information in the biographies either was missing or unable to be identified by the coders– variables were not coded for all schools. Overall, however, the study revealed that there were 316 active male athletic directors, 27 female athletic directors and five athletic directors whose gender

could not be determined. For the athletic departments that had male directors, 204 of the schools were public institutions and 112 were private institutions. Regarding the women, 19 schools were public and eight were private. Furthermore, the results of the study revealed that there was one university that had both a male and female athletic director. This institution has a female that runs the female athletic department and a male that runs the male athletic department. There were also different athletic websites for the male and female sports at that institution.

The results found that the average birth year of the athletic directors' biographies used in this study was early 1970s and that was concurrent with the findings that the average graduation years were in the middle to late 80s.

Regarding the race of the various athletics directors, while the race of six of the athletic directors could not be determined, the study found of the remaining female athletic directors, 14 were White, six were Black, and one was Hispanic. Regarding males, while the race of 53 of the athletic directors could not be determined, of those who could be determined it was found that 230 were White, 30 were Black, and three Hispanic. The female athletics' academic achievement and degrees obtained was of no statistical difference than that of the males (See Table 1).

**Table 1.** *Measures of Personal Investments (Training [T] and Success [S]).*

Variables	N = 348 Male (N = 316)		Female (N = 27)		Minority (N = 40)	
	Measure	V	Approx. Sig. (2-sided)	V	Approx. Sig. (2-sided)	
Undergraduate Degree (T)	—	.268	.000	.827	.000	
Grad. Degree (T)	—	.101	.470*	.817	.000	
First Job (S)	—	.520	.000	.422	.000	
Tenure (S)	—	.809	.000	.781	.000	
Violation (S)	—	.290	.000	.205	.000	

Note, \*p < .5; p < .01, 2-sided, Chi-Square Tests and Symmetric Measures.

The results for variables concerning education level and graduate degrees showed that 160 out of the 316 male athletic directors had achieved their master's degree. Thirty-seven of those men went on to obtain their PhD,

EdD, JD, and/or MD. The results showed that 13 of the 27 female athletic directors had received their master's degree and two and continued on for their PhD, EdD, JD, and/or MD. Sixty male and female athletic directors' biographies were unknown pertaining to what degree the athletic director achieved.

Regarding biographical information concerning marital status and children it could be determined from the biographies that 258 of the 348 athletic directors were married. Out of the 316 male athletic directors, the results found that 230 male athletic directors had children. The results also found that 18 of the 27 female athletic directors identified had children.

The variables pertaining to the athletic director's first job as an athletic director and tenure at the athletic director position found that 204 males and 17 females were in their first position as athletic director. The tenure at that position found that 68 males were in the one-to-three year range, 92 males were in the four-to-seven year range, 32 males were in the eight-to-ten year range and 62 males had 10 years or more in their athletic director position. For females, six were in the one-to-three year range, seven were in the four-to-seven year range, one was in the eight-to-ten year range and five had been at their position for 10 or more years. Sixteen males had been in their position for less than a year and three females had been in their position for less than a year.

The last variable of data collected showed that on the basis of gender, there were 25 active male athletic directors and four active female athletic directors that had incurred NCAA violations during their tenure. On the basis of race, 27 White athletic directors, two Black athletic directors and one Hispanic athletic director had incurred NCAA violations during their tenure. There were 53 athletic directors whose race was unknown.

The results of the study also addressed the research questions noted above. There is no statistical difference between (Table 1) the athletic directors in Division I membership institutions amongst each other or on the basis of gender and race when observing their human capital personal investments. The findings support the first research question examined in this study. For an athletic director position to be obtained, those who are employed or retain this position more than likely have similar human capital personal investments (i.e., training, education).

These results also indicate the data collected from the athletic director biographies observed had similar human capital personal investments regardless of gender or race, thus addressing research question two and three. There must be some other impediments that are rendering women and minorities less desirable to hire as the athletic director of an intercollegiate athletic department. These impediments or reasons to not hire women or minorities as an athletic director must be explored and identified.

## Discussion

Overall, the research of the biographies on Division I athletic directors proves evident that there is a lack of women and minorities at the head athletic director position. The analysis of the content within those biographies also proves that the human capital theory may apply to the women and minorities who respectively have their head athletic director position, but also lends itself to there being some other phenomena at work for the disproportionate number of women and minorities as opposed to men being in the athletic director position.

Coakley (2009) pointed out seven reasons why it is believed that women are under-represented in major decision-making positions in sport. Several of those reasons were that men have solid sports connections with other men through established networks and they often have more strategic professional connections than women. Subjective evaluation criteria in job searches that make women appear less qualified by certain wording exist in sport organizations, as well (Hovden, 2000). Sport organizations have created a culture unwilling to accept the unique perspective on sport offered by women (Pastore, Inglis, & Danylchuk, 1996).

Furthermore, there are issues surrounding sexual harassment and issues concerning insensitivity for women and family responsibilities in sport organizations (McKay, 1999). While each of these issues may individually act as a barrier to the entrance and promotion of women in athletic administration, the effects of these limitations suggest that until adequate changes are made in the hegemonic masculine culture of sport organizations, gender equality will never be accomplished in athletic administration.

Researchers have examined the masculine nature of sport organizations and suggested that changes must occur in the hiring and advancement practices of these organizations (Hall, Cullen, & Slack, 1989). Sport organizations tend to be attracted to those candidates who resemble present members in style, assumptions, values, and beliefs that make it hard for women and minorities to penetrate the mold (Schein, 2001). While organizational culture may be strengthened by the recruitment and selection of a homogeneous group of people that fits the organization's mission and goals, such practices are problematic as they can exclude women and other minority groups from higher administrative positions (Slack, 1997). These homo-social barriers have limited women in their advancement into upper management positions in sport organizations (Fink, 2008).

Since the results indicated that there was statistical difference in the human capital of all active athletic directors in Division I, there are implications that the adverse effect of the hegemonic masculinity may be present in the minority community as behavioral self-handicapping.

Behavioral self-handicapping is a self-protective strategy used when people care about their performance but doubt the likelihood of their success, especially in new endeavors such as obtaining an athletic director position (Berglas & Jones, 1978). Behavioral self-handicapping is achieved by actively creating an obstacle that impedes one's performance at a task. Self-handicapping provides an opportunity to diminish the threat of failure by obscuring low ability, or other impediments as the reason for failure. While this reduces internal attributions in the event of failure, it also makes failure more likely to occur. Behavioral self-handicapping could be present in the way in which women and minorities apply effort for advancement within a sport organization. Since the steady decline in the hiring of women since the implementation of Title IX, a woman being confident in the successful attainment of a head athletic administration position could be that this strategy is used to protect themselves from the self-fulfilling prophetic ideals of hegemonic masculinity (i.e., male dominance).

## Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the background of all active Division I athletics directors and compare and contrast variables that have been identified as human capital theory personal investments to see if there was a difference in the achievement of those personal investments between men, women and minorities at the head athletic director position.

The results found in this study supported the research questions that there was no statistical difference in the human capital personal investments in Division I on the basis of gender or race, in their respective community population size. The results suggest that men are rewarded at a greater rate with employment and promotion for their human capital personal investments than women and minorities. By observing the main investments such as education and training there was no evidence that showed that men were superior to women or minorities in such areas. The social undertones of hegemonic masculinity in the workplace could be causing adverse affects on women and minorities in intercollegiate athletic departments and there could be self-inflicted behaviors or factors contributing to their underrepresentation in athletic departments and at the athletic director position. Previous researchers have proposed that women should not just adapt, but they should challenge the hegemonic masculinity found in sport organizations (Schein, 2007).

There are several reasons why it is important that women are visible and equally represented in athletic director positions. Equity in administrative hiring and advancement is simply a matter of fairness and equality. Whether on the playing field or in the administrative offices, equity should be clearly

evident to all those involved with the sport organization. Also, young females need to see women in decision-making administrative positions to encourage them for participation as well as inspire aspirations of a career in sport (Coakley, 2009). Some may conclude from the majority of men in leadership positions, that our society values the contributions and abilities of men rather than women (Garcia-Retamero & Lopez-Zafria, 2006). As Ligtom-Kimura (1995) established, the conclusion to devalue women in this way stifles the progress toward gender equity in sports. The gender influenced career choices and employment practices in our culture increases the lack of female role models in sport and may negatively impact the perceived efficacy in employability by potential female sport administrators (Bandura, 1997).

A self-imposed removal for consideration from candidacy for open athletic director positions by females reaffirms and entrenches hegemonic masculinity in sport. There is also a trickledown effect in the hiring decisions from the head position in an athletic administration to the rest of the athletic department. As Acosta and Carpenter (2010) revealed in their study of intercollegiate athletics, the women's programs that had women athletic directors had a higher proportion of women coaches. Finally, Lumpkin, Stoll, and Belier (1999) stated that an increase in female representation is needed because of what they can contribute to athletic departments in the form of traits that are more characteristic of females such as unique perspectives, styles, and skills by their ability to build nurturing relationships through encouragement, flexibility, and delegation.

While there is a spirit of optimism that equality in athletic departments is an attainable goal, few claim that equitable hiring of female athletic directors is something that will happen soon. Hegemonic masculinity will continue to control intercollegiate athletics until women are given a chance for more proportionate hiring and retention (Pedersen & Whisenant, 2005). Self-handicapping will also become a permanent adverse affect of the hegemonic masculine climate in sport for those viewed as minority communities (i.e., gender, race) in athletic administrative positions and sport in general.

## **Limitations**

As with any research study, it is important to specify limitations of the research as well as offer suggestions for future research and inquiry. In this study, one limitation involved the available biographical information provided on the websites of the various athletic directors. While the biographies were different and although the coders were specifically trained to find the information collected for each biographical variable, some sites did not have an athletic director biography. While all sites had the first and last names for

their athletic directors, the biographies for some sites ( $n = 53$ ) were either non-existent or lacked information necessary to make conclusions on certain variables (e.g., race, gender). Another limitation of the study was the exclusion of the coaching experience variable due to low inter-coder reliability percentages. The coaching experience variable had become a salient personal investment in the human capital theory that would have been important to analyze and should be examined in the future.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

From the findings of this research study, there is no statistical difference in the human capital personal investments of men, women and minority athletic directors. The results imply that there are other reasons for the disproportionate hiring of these minority communities in sport organizations. There is a psychological phenomenon that lends itself to further evaluate the residuals of hegemony and hegemonic masculinity on women and minorities in the sport organization. Self-handicapping is a concept in which the oppressed community (i.e., women, minorities) have been desensitized to the status quo of male supremacy in society and in fact behaviorally self-handicap in personal, interpersonal and situational circumstances.

Future research on the different strategies used by minority communities in sport organizations to self-handicap could be another factor that affects the desire to hire people of these minority communities for athletic administration positions. There has been research done on the differences in gender and self-handicapping in effort toward success (Hirt, McCrea, & Kimble, 2000) that could be applied to sport organizations and effort put forth in career success or promotion in such organizations based on gender and race. There has also been research on the use of self-handicapping in athletes' performance, but not applied to the administration of the sport organization at the intercollegiate athletic department level.

In conclusion, the results of this study provide evidence that even though there is no statistical difference in the human capital theory's defined personal investments among all athletic directors' biographies observed, there is a difference in the hiring and retention of women and minorities in athletic director positions in intercollegiate athletic departments. This study shows that there was no statistical difference between male, female, and minority athletic directors in the active position of athletic director in the NCAA Division I membership institutions based on the main human investments (i.e., training and education) defined by the human capital theory. Women and minorities –who do not hold proportionate leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics– deserve equitable leadership opportunities and, therefore, the inequitable distribution of power in college athletic leadership needs to be examined and addressed. Research to identify and define these reasons or

factors that are contributing to the underrepresentation of women and minorities in intercollegiate athletic departments is necessary.

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