

Women Collegiate Sport Employees: Organizational Elements of Workplace and Job Engagement

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This study investigated the representation of women collegiate sport employees in the United States. As female representation in collegiate athletics increased overall, there has been a decline in pipeline roles to athletic director roles (Hancock & Hums, 2016). Previous research has explored women in collegiate sport with the focus of balancing work and family responsibilities (Dixon & Bruening, 2005, 2007; Taylor et al., 2019). However, the experience of women in collegiate sport organizations has yet to be examined through job engagement. Utilizing person-organization fit (P-O fit) and perceived organizational success to predict engagement, the relative neglect of identifying antecedents of job engagement for women sport employees was explored. The data was collected via Qualtrics and analyzed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling. The analysis revealed that American women collegiate sport employees' P-O fit influences job engagement; however, their perceived organizational success did not influence their engagement in the workplace. Moreover, the findings uncover how women sport employees' fit influences their job engagement in the sport workplace. The implications of this study indicate the approach for enhanced organizational performance and capacity of women sport employees.

Keywords: engagement, person-organization fit, perceived organizational success, women sport employees

The present state of workforces in the United States reveals that more than half of employees are disengaged due to stress, burnout, and an unhealthy work-life balance (Harter, 2019). Employees in the sport industry are further disengaged due to a double burden of producing successful athletic activities and operating proficient, self-conscious programs (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), while trying to balance work-family responsibilities (Dixon & Bruening, 2005, 2007; Taylor et al., 2019). Lower levels of employee job engagement can lead to a sense of decreased morale, job burnout, and workaholicism, which in turn stimulates high turnover rates that are highly concerning and expensive for sport organizations (Saks, 2019). Employees who are disengaged with their job roles may not identify with their organization or connect with their organizational goals (Attridge, 2009). To decrease undesirable employee competencies and create a competitive organizational advantage, sport organization leaders should aim to determine what impacts an employee's engagement. Thus, a need exists to highlight the antecedents that can contribute to positive employee competencies (e.g., employee job engagement) in the sport workplace that can then lead to an increase in employee growth and development. Oja et al. (2015b) called for further research into sport administrators in this context. In response, sport management scholars have recently noted employee job engagement is a construct that can have a meaningful impact on sport organizations through their employees (Paek et al., 2020; Schuetz et al., 2021).

Employee job engagement is described as one's active involvement or motivation in their job role from a physical, cognitive, and emotional standpoint (Rich et al., 2010). Though this construct emerges as a meaningful framework to emphasize the relationship between employee performances, motivations, and outcomes, there is a lack of understanding of what organizations can initially provide or do to increase employee job engagement (Shuck, 2019). Thus, one way to enhance the job engagement of sport employees and employee performance could be determined through the initial fit and perceived success of an employee to their organization (i.e., person-organization fit, perceived organizational success).

Person-organization fit (P-O fit) addresses the relationship between employees and their organization. P-O fit suggests the rationale for why employees prefer organizations where their personal characteristics and values are aligned with those of the organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). More related to the collegiate environment framing this study, Hazzaa et al. (2021) indicated P-O fit had a positive influence on intrinsic motivation and employee engagement among collegiate campus recreation employees, while Oja et al. (2015b) reinforced a potential disconnect with coaches and their respective sport organization. Uncovering the alignment of values between women collegiate employees and collegiate sport organizations may assist in representation in this male-dominated industry (Hancock & Hums, 2016). However, not all employees experience positive P-O fit or consider their organi-

zations as successful. Perceived organizational success is concerned with how employees are distinguishing their organization in terms of success (Berberoglu & Secim, 2015) and it is considered a precursor for enhanced job satisfaction and commitment to their respective roles (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004).

While the number of people interested in beginning a career in intercollegiate athletics increased, women face barriers and challenges to do so (Hardin et al., 2022; Weight et al., 2021). Specifically, scholars found that women face gender bias across various male-dominated industries—like intercollegiate athletics—that negatively affect numerous aspects of their careers (Diehl et al., 2020; Hardin et al., 2022). For example, though female participation in intercollegiate athletics is higher than ever before, men hold 67% of leadership positions across the three National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) divisions (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2021). Thus, a gender gap may restrict women from enjoying similar benefits when working in sport. In this study, we aim to build upon the existing research on sport employee job engagement (Paek et al., 2020; Schuetz et al., 2021; Svensson et al., 2021), by identifying antecedents for job engagement in women sport employees.

Literature Review

Women in the Sport Industry

The sport industry is a gendered space (Burton, 2015; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021), as the reality of organizational culture in sport is mostly interpreted by the accounts of

men rather than women (Burton, 2015; Dixon et al., 2008). Previous scholars suggested women have been disregarded in workplace leadership within the sport industry (Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Walker & Bopp, 2011; Welch et al., 2021). Specifically, college athletic departments have been described as an old boys' club (Lovett & Lowry, 1994) and have potentially excluded certain individuals—such as women—from entering (Burton, 2015; Hardin et al., 2017, 2022).

The *Wall Street Journal* coined the term “glass ceiling” to describe the gender gap symbolizing the difficulties women face in the corporate industry (Gallardo-Pérez et al., 2021). Even with the progress made with women in male-dominated industries, women have been found to outperform their industry median companies on three measures of profitability: profits as percent of revenues, assets, and stockholders' equity (Adler, 2001). Particularly, women have been seeking leadership roles in sport (Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021) as well as tourism and hospitality (Nagar, 2020). Yet, women are still comparatively absent from leadership roles in collegiate and professional sport (Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021). This may be tied to women being “often held to different standards than the male colleagues” (Hardin et al., 2017, p. 40). Absence could also be attributed to higher leadership goals tabled at the Senior Women Administrator role as it “is perceived as the ceiling of career attainment for women in college athletic administration” (Smith et al., 2020, p. 120). These factors may reflect

organizational practices that affect the advancement of women in sport.

Due to the lack of representation of women sport employees, “sport is a site where social relations that underpin women’s experiences of social exclusion are persuasively reproduced” (Titus, 2011, p. 124). On various occasions, women do not pursue higher roles in their current job due to the internalized perception that one is not as qualified or that personal aspirations—such as building a family—could stand in the way (Diehl et al., 2020). With this perceived imbalance, sport serves as an ideal arena to further explore how women’s P-O fit and perceived organizational success influences their engagement in the sport industry.

Scholars have begun to examine individual’s engagement (Wu et al., 2020), P-O fit (Hazzaa et al., 2021; Oja et al., 2020) in sport organizations. However, investigating these aspects related to women in the workplace in the sport industry may potentially lend further insight into women employee competencies (Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021). Sport organizations with a higher percentage of women were found to have less organizational problems (Wicker et al., 2012). It is anticipated that women who feel their values and personality fit the organization, and who perceive their organization as successful, will become more engaged in their jobs. As women feel as they fit into a work group, the more likely emotional outcomes such as self-efficacy and perceived stress may play a role in career choices such as staying or leaving an organization (Young & Hurlic, 2007).

Accordingly, this study seeks to address the following question: Does person-organization fit and perceived organizational success influence job engagement of women sport employees?

Person-Organization Fit

Person-organization fit is a type of person-environment fit, which explores individual and organizational characteristics, and their inherent relationship (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The construct P-O fit is a product derived from the symmetry in characteristics, beliefs, and values between an employee and their organization (Follmer et al., 2018). If P-O fit is developed properly between an employee and their organization, beneficial outcomes such as quality of employment, productivity, and organizational commitment can arise (Saks & Ashforth, 2002).

In sport management, P-O fit is an emerging construct. Specifically, P-O fit was framed to explore the well-being of sport employees (Oja et al., 2019), the engagement of college recreation employees (Hazzaa et al., 2021), the desirability sport management students possess for jobs in the sport industry (Todd & Andrew, 2006), and the ability to assist college coach retainment (Oja et al., 2015a). Person-organization fit has been suggested to be advantageous for sport organizations, as this construct served as a significant predictor for the intention of sport volunteers to return (Kim et al., 2009). Additionally, the role of P-O fit can be valuable in collegiate athletic departments through the symmetry of values, which

can alleviate the stressors of organizational changes among sport employees (Welty Peachey & Bruening, 2012). This construct has been explored as a mediator for person-job fit and was found to be a positive influence on innovative work behavior (Nazari et al., 2019). Therefore, it has been suggested collegiate sport administrators may adjust hiring practices to ensure individuals more highly identified with organizational values are hired (Oja & Bass, 2020). The value of P-O fit can be extended to women in the sport industry who are facing gender bias issues. Specifically, women in male-dominant organizations, who were able to succeed in their careers found success due to taking a mentality of gender-blindness, an adaptive strategy to focus on similarities rather than differences between men and women, which was found to positively impact their confidence in various ways (Martin & Phillips, 2017). That said, differences in P-O fit between collegiate coaches of male and female teams have been noted. Coaches of female teams were more likely to remain in their current roles but placed a lower emphasis on elements of P-O fit (Oja et al., 2015b)

In the sport industry, women do not fit the male stereotype of leadership in their appearance or tone of voice (Smith et al., 2020; Whisenant et al., 2015). Scholars found that women perceive to have less fit in a predominantly white male environment due to different perceptions of appropriate work-family balance and communication styles (Schwartz, 1989). In contrast, current scholars found that women's work-family balance did not in-

terfere with their P-O fit (Merecz-Kot & Andysz, 2017). Women do, however, feel they need to work harder and prove themselves in order to fit in within the sport industry, while being held to different standards than their male counterparts (Hardin et al., 2022; Walker & Bopp, 2011; Welch et al., 2021).

Part of an organization's success as well as how one fits within an organization depends upon its diversity (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Roberson & Park, 2007). In this case, women were found to perceive diversity, within an organization, with a higher value than their male counterparts (Kundu & Mor, 2017). Moreover, an increase in diversity may aid in creative thinking and could lead to higher productivity levels (Welch et al., 2021). Overall, the employees' perceptions of effective diversity management can impact the organization's performance (Armstrong et al., 2010; De Meuse & Hostager, 2001; Kundu & Mor, 2017; Soni, 2000; Van Knippenberg et al., 2020; Welch et al., 2021). Therefore, individuals feel more comfortable working for an individual (i.e., woman) who values diversity. Previous scholars also found that when diversity is supported, employees' perceptions of organizational performance also improved (Allen et al., 2007; Bakir, 2017; Brewer & Pierce, 2005).

Perceived Organizational Success

Perceived organizational success is a subjective measure of perceived organizational performance that is observed by employees (Berberoglu & Secim, 2015). Within sport, perceived organizational

success is tied to the success that an organization's sports programs have on the field of competition (Oja et al., 2015a). Employees that perceive their organization to be outperforming its competition tend to enjoy and relish in its prestige (i.e., past success) and status-driven by their performance (Cialdini et al., 1976). Specifically, employee perceptions within an organization connect attributes of their respective organization to their own as external stakeholders may ascribe these attributes to them as well. Part of an individual's self-concept and self-esteem stems from the status and prestige attributed to the organization in which they are employed (Carmeli et al., 2007). How an individual recognizes the perception of their organization with its status and success may play a role in employee outcomes. In sport, organizational perceived prestige is connected to employee outcomes such as well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004).

Perceived success serves as an important organizational antecedent for identification in the sport industry (Cialdini et al., 1976; Oja et al., 2015a). Essentially, employees exhibiting high levels of perceived organizational prestige are linked to higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004). Thus, employees may be more identified or perceive higher alignment with their organization if that organization is regarded as more prestigious. Perceived organizational success can influence the morale and sustainability of an organization (Cummings & Worley, 2001). In par-

ticular, an enhanced perception of organizational success can enhance employees' motivation, dedication, and, overall, can increase the preferred behaviors of employees (Boga & Ensari, 2009). Further, it has been noted that perception-based organizational success can be utilized rather than economic-based measures that may not be available or consistent (Boga & Ensari, 2009). As the sport industry is engendered, further perspectives of perceived success in sport organizations may gain further insights from both men and women sport employees. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Women sport employees' perceived organizational success will influence their person-organization fit.

Job Engagement

Job engagement is defined as "a multi-dimensional motivational concept reflecting the simultaneous investment of an individual's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in active, full work performance" (Rich et al., 2010, p. 619). Job engagement is supported by employee engagement serving as a significant predictor of psychological well-being in paid staff across sport organizations (Schuetz et al., 2021; Svensson et al., 2021). Within the academic discipline of sport management, job engagement research is scarce (e.g., McDowell et al., 2018; Paek et al., 2020; Svensson et al., 2021). Since engagement is indicated to be an important variable in sport organizations (Schuetz et al., 2021; Svensson et al., 2021), further research on job engagement of women professionals in the sport industry may enhance women

and organizational performance. Scholars have explored the concept of engagement from an organizational level and have expressed the importance of research at the individual level of engagement (Maslach et al., 2001). Therefore, understanding women employee's level of engagement may facilitate improved organizational work climates related to attitude, objectives, and behavior (Harter et al., 2002; Kahn, 1990).

Currently, sport industries are encouraging collaboration to sustain entrepreneurial ecosystems (Ratten et al., 2021). Part of our focus on women should be due to their engagement in collaborative opportunities, which exceeds their male counterparts (Tartari & Salter, 2015). Sport is a largely collaborative industry; thus, including more women may increase organizational alignment and ultimately performance. Within the sport industry, women have risen to the top management positions (Hindman & Walker, 2020). Women managers and professionals who experienced recognition and value fit were found to have higher levels of engagement in addition to the lowest levels of burnout (Koyuncu et al., 2006; Weight et al., 2021). Accordingly, the following hypotheses were generated:

Hypothesis 2: Women sport employees' person-organization fit will influence their job engagement.

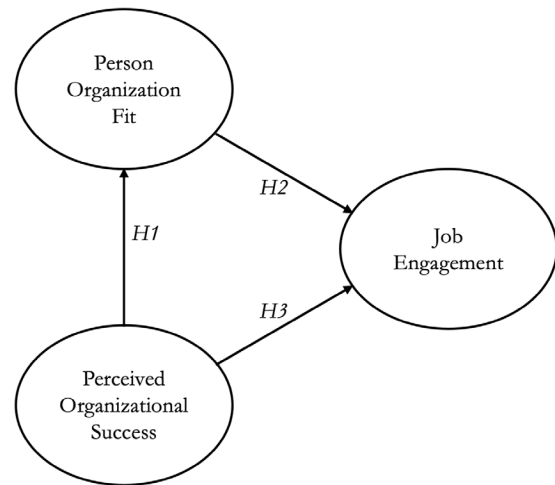
Hypothesis 3: Women sport employees' perceived organizational success will influence their job engagement.

Methods

Participants and Data Collection

After Institutional Review Board ap-

Figure 1
Hypothesized Model



proval was granted, a purposive sampling technique was employed to reach American women sport employees (e.g., Assistant Director of Events, Director of Marketing, Associate Director of Compliance) from all three NCAA Divisions in 2023 that had publicly listed emails in their online staff directories (Johnson & Christensen, 2017) similar to Oja et al. (2015b). Email communication was utilized for recruiting and data collection (Fowler Jr., 2014), which included a Qualtrics survey to collect participants' responses. The Qualtrics survey included informed consent (established before the research questions), research constructs, and demographic questions.

This approach resulted in nine organizational areas categorized by participants' response to their job title, including Athletic Academic Support, Athletic Administration, Development/Fundraising, Communications, Compliance, Marketing, Operations and Events, Support Staff, and Ticket Office. The survey received a total of $N = 269$ (deemed usable based on completeness) and a response

rate of 7.2%. The average age of these participants was 37, with a range of 20-70. The highest education level varied among respondents: 1 holding a high school degree, 3 with some college, 5 with an Associate's, 55 with a Bachelor's, 171 with a Master's, and 23 with a Doctoral degree. Moreover, the participant's average industry tenure was just over a decade ($M = 12$), while the average current position was 7 years (ranging from 0.5-34 years). Of the 269 female respondents, 204 identified as white, 25 identified as African-American, 14 Latino or Hispanic, 2 Native American, 1 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 9 identified as two or more, and 14 preferred not to say.

Measures

There were three instruments used to measure the constructs in the research model, all of which consisted of Likert-type scales with 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) anchors. Participants were asked to evaluate their own P-O fit, job engagement, and perceived organizational success. The P-O fit construct was measured with Judge and Cable's (1997) instrument, which has demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity metrics. Job engagement was measured with Saks (2006) instrument, which has demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity metrics. Perceived success was measured with Wann and Dolan's (1994) instrument. The instrument was used to evaluate a team's perception of past, present, and future performance; each demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity metrics. The perceived success measure was adopted by Oja et al. (2020) who examined per-

ceived organizational success within sport organizations, which also demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity metrics. All of these constructs have been used in previous research studies related to sport (i.e., Hazzaa et al. 2021; Schuetz et al., 2022).

Data Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to evaluate the hypotheses as it allows for the simultaneous examination of relationships between latent variables. The statistical software program R version 4.0.4 was used to perform the analyses. A bootstrapping technique was utilized due to the presence of non-normal data (Hutchinson & Olmos, 1998; Lei & Lomax, 2005). The bootstrapping method resamples the data to produce a realistic estimation of the total sampling distribution (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993). A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the items constructs based on a correlation matrix of the items. The CFA analysis is a measurement model that detects one-dimensionality which determines construct validity. The latent variables (i.e., job engagement, P-O fit, perceived organizational success) were observed as reflexive, which specifies that the items are representative of the overall construct. Poorly performing indicators (i.e., $< .5$ factor loading) with the other items are subject to removal (Hair et al., 2010). Composite reliability (CR; Bagozzi & Yi, 1998), average variance extracted (AVE; Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and latent variable correlations were examined to determine reliability and construct validity metrics.

Table 1
Statistical results from the measurement model

Constructs	Est.	SE	T	Ave	CR
Job Engagement				0.52	0.80
I really “throw” myself into my job.	0.71	0.11	4.46		
Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.	0.72	0.09	7.48		
This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.	0.78	0.18	4.01		
I am highly engaged in this job.	0.64	0.11	6.25		
Person-Organization Fit (P-O fit)				0.54	0.75
To what degree do your values, goals, and personality “match” or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization.	0.91	0.15	1.93		
To what degree do your values and personality prevent you from “fitting in” this organization because they are different from most of the other employees’ values and personality in this organization.	0.50	0.21	9.63		
Do you think the values and “personality” of this organization reflect your own values and personality?	0.85	0.18	3.19		
Perceived Organizational Success (POS)				0.53	0.77
My organization’s teams are outstanding.	0.85	0.14	3.66		
My organization’s teams are performing below expectations (R).	0.60	0.17	8.60		
I generally consider our teams to be “good”.	0.76	0.14	4.37		

Note. All factor loadings (Est.) and t-values are significant at the <.001 level.

After confirming the acceptability of the measurement model, SEM was used to test the hypotheses, assessing the parameters of the structural model. The models were examined with goodness-of-fit indices including: Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR).

Results

Measurement Model

The measurement model was constructed to evaluate the performance of

all the indicators. The model had acceptable model fit ($\chi^2 = 71.818$, $df = 32$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .939$, $TLI = .949$, $RMSEA = .068$ [.049-.087], $SRMR = .066$). No item-level errors were correlated. One job engagement item indicator was deemed appropriate to remove based on poor statistical performance (Hair et al., 2010) and issues commonly arising with reverse-coded items (Weem & Onwuegbuizie, 2001). The job engagement item removed was “My mind often wanders, and I think of other things when doing my job”. Overall, the constructs indicated acceptable reliability, along with convergent and discriminant validity thresholds.

Hypothesis Testing

Once the acceptability of the measurement model was confirmed, a structural model was created. The structural model retained acceptable model fit statistics ($\chi^2 = 109.256$, $df = 41$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .942$, $TLI = .922$, $RMSEA = .079$ [.061-.097], $SRMR = .066$). Figure 2 illustrates the results of each hypothesis tested. Perceived organizational success was positively related to P-O fit (H1). Furthermore, women’s P-O fit directly impacted their job engagement (H2); however, perceived organizational success did not influence women’s job engagement.

Table 2

Statistical results from the structural model

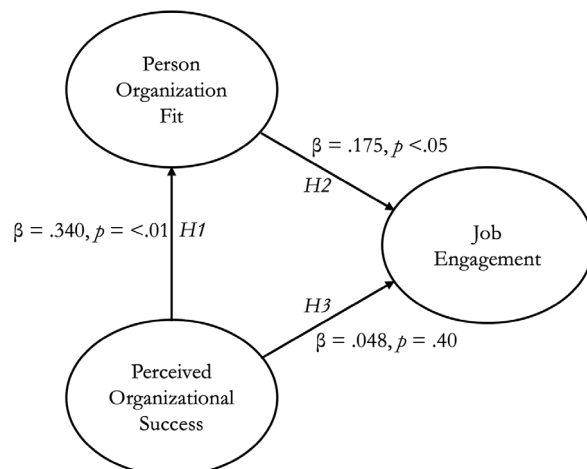
Constructs	β	p
POS \rightarrow P-O fit	.340	<.01
P-O fit \rightarrow Job Engagement	.175	<.05
POS \rightarrow Job Engagement	.048	.395
Job Engagement		
P-O fit		

Note. * significant at the <.05 level,

** significant at the <.01 level

Figure 2

Results model



Discussion

This study explored potential antecedents (i.e., P-O fit and perceived organizational success) to job engagement for a sample of managerial and qualified women working in the sport industry (i.e., collegiate athletics). As P-O fit has been associated with commonality of purpose in employees (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) and the intended retention of volunteers (Kim et al., 2009), the current study addressed this construct with under-represented stakeholders in sport—women employees. Considerations for the perspectives and retention of these vital stakeholders should carry weight for the optimization of sport organizations as women employed in the sport industry, both in NCAA affiliated programs and elsewhere, have faced significant obstacles such as the glass ceiling effect (Gallardo-Pérez et al., 2021; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021) in developing careers as well as having pathways for advancement.

The objective of H1 was to investigate the relationship between the perception of organizational success and an employee’s P-O fit in women sport employees. The present study yielded noteworthy findings, indicating that women sport employees’ perceptions regarding organizational success significantly impact their P-O fit, acting as a positive stimulating influence. This suggest that women sport employees who perceive their organization as successful are more likely to experience an alignment between their characteristics, beliefs, and values and those of the organization. For example,

when women sport employees perceive their organization as successful, they are more inclined to identify with and internalize the organizational values, creating a sense of compatibility and harmony (Welty Peachey & Bruening, 2012). This alignment contributes significantly to the development of women's positive P-O fit, as the shared values foster a mutual understanding and connection between the individual and the organization.

Furthermore, the positive stimulating influence observed in the relationship between organizational success perception and P-O fit suggests that women sport employees who perceive their organization as successful will likely exhibit greater engagement, commitment, and satisfaction in their roles. These findings are consistent with the idea that a positive perception of organizational success can contribute to a conducive work environment, influencing employees' attitudes and performance (Boga & Ensari, 2009; Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004). Understanding how women perceive organizational success and its impact on P-O fit offers valuable insights for leaders in sport organizations. This knowledge can guide them in crafting a work environment that promotes alignment and positive engagement among women sport employees.

In addition to addressing the escalating organizational and job-related challenges within the sport industry (Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Schuetz et al., 2021), it is advisable for sport organizations to explore strategies facilitating the job engagement of women employees. As women occupy an increasing role in the employment

community, the ability to gauge and understand factors affecting their employment decisions carries increasing importance (Nagar, 2020). Therefore, the current study illuminated the influence and interaction of two factors—P-O fit and perceived organizational success—on job engagement among women collegiate sport employees. The extent to which women in collegiate sport organizations perceive alignment between their perceived values and organizational values can significantly influence their job engagement.

In accordance with H2, women's P-O fit was found to significantly influence job engagement in the sport industry. This is similar to previous findings of increased P-O fit indicating higher attraction to their organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) and increased value fit indicating higher engagement (Koyuncu et al., 2006). As previously mentioned, the concept of P-O fit arises from the congruence in characteristics, beliefs, and values shared between an employee and their organization (Follmer et al., 2018). Therefore, this study suggests increased engagement results from women feeling more aligned with their organization's characters, beliefs, and values. This alignment can contribute to effectively utilizing physical, cognitive, and emotional resources in the workplace (Rich et al., 2010). For example, as women tend to engage more collaboratively (Tartari & Salter, 2015), the quality of work productivity increases (Saks & Ashforth, 2002). The collaborative nature of engagement among women in the sport industry may lead to a more effective and efficient work environment,

ultimately translating into greater overall job engagement. This also translates into a competitive advantage for sport organizations (Schuetz et al., 2021). Moreover, the significance of P-O fit in influencing job engagement emphasizes its critical role in shaping employees' attitudes and commitment to their organizational roles (Saks & Ashforth, 2002). Therefore, understanding and leveraging the positive outcomes associated with P-O fit can be instrumental for sports organizations aiming to foster an engaged and productive workforce, particularly among women employees.

Furthermore, to address H3, perceived organizational success, defined as the subjective evaluation of an organization's achievements and effectiveness, holds considerable significance in shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors (Berberoglu & Secim, 2015). However, unlike the findings with perceived team performance (Wann & Dolan, 1994), women's perceived organizational success does not significantly influence job engagement in the college sport industry. This suggests that a women's positive, active mental state of motivation (Kahn, 1990) is not impacted by their perceived organizational success. Thus, women's active roles in their job, team, and organization will continue to reflect their positively persistent motivational state of fulfillment and well-being.

Taking into consideration the position and role women hold within intercollegiate athletics (e.g., Athletic Academic Support, Ticket Office), there might be an understanding that not everyone's involvement in the sport organizations has a direct

influence on the organization's success. Consequently, one's subjective perception of the team's performance is not reflective of one's professional role within the organization. As a result, one's perceived organizational success has no influence on one's job engagement in this instance. Although perceived organizational prestige (i.e., past success) influences job satisfaction and organizational commitment, overall organization success (i.e., past, present, and future) does not play a role in shaping employee engagement.

Overall, the factors that contribute to the success of managers—specifically women—are essential for economic development (Nagar, 2020) and the reduction of organizational costs (Inglis et al., 1996; Saks, 2019). The recognition of these factors is essential not only for fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment but also for strategically positioning sport organizations for a competitive advantage (Schuetz et al., 2021). In this context, exploring factors such as P-O fit within sport employees emerges as a potential avenue for sports organizations to enhance the overall well-being and engagement of their workforce.

Implications

The results of this study imply the prospective for enhanced organizational performance and capacity through the advanced understanding of women sport employees. Improved women sport employee job engagement and P-O fit are considered as positive features that can contribute to competitive benefits for sport organizations (Oja et al., 2019; Paek

et al., 2020; Schuetz et al., 2021). For example, as discussed previously, women tend to work more collaboratively (Tartari & Salter, 2015) and as such may also benefit from setting team goals to further achieve organizational goals (Barnhill et al., 2021; Schuetz et al., 2022). Another key implication of this study suggests if sport organizations seek to increase women's P-O fit they may increase their measures of profitability (Adler, 2001) due to their engagement. Additionally, sport organizations should take the time to better identify the fit of a prospective employee. Developing a comprehensive, yet specific list of values important to a sport organization or athletic department may assist in the recruitment and subsequent hiring of employees.

With the shifting features of the sport workplace (Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021), women sport employees and the subsequent relationships with the positive effects on job engagement and P-O fit, are expected to be a strength for sport organizations due to the advantages of having engaged and organizationally fit employees. Also, this study uncovered that although perceived organizational success has been linked to well-being (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004), it may be suggested that an individual's well-being can be influenced by other organizational aspects such as P-O fit (Oja et al., 2019) and does not require an individual to perceive their organization as successful. Furthermore, while perceived organizational success in this instance did not influence job engagement, other factors such as creating a supportive net-

work and social group might be worth investigating further. Sport organizations should focus more on women employee's well-being than their perceived success by other stakeholders.

Lastly, to continue to support women's collaborative work and foster their career paths and overall development, it might be of interest for sport organizations to create specific training or developmental programs for women. Implementing such programs would allow to focus on this underrepresented population to enhance one's PO-fit and increase one's job engagement to also better understand other factors that could contribute to the sport organization's overall success.

Limitations and Future Research

As with any empirical research, the current study is not without limitations. Therefore, the limitations of this study should be measured alongside its contributions. This study is the usage of only one employee outcome. Other potential antecedents could be examined in relation to women sport employees. Some of these employee variables could include job satisfaction, job crafting, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. An emerging scale in sport management research is Sport Employee Identification (SEI; Oja et al., 2015a). This SEI scale could add more psychometric insights into organizational identification among sport employees. The insights of employee outcomes related to job engagement may be assisted through a qualitative study, which can add context to the quantitative findings of this study and

the other suggestions for future research. Additionally, future studies could examine women sport employee job engagement and P-O fit within other sport contexts such as professional sport organizations, national governing bodies, NCAA Division II and III, as well as international non-profit sport organizations.

Conclusion

The findings in this study highlight the positive relationship between P-O fit to job engagement in women collegiate sport employees. As professions in sport have largely been represented and directed by men (Burton, 2015; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Turner, 2008; Welch et al., 2021), it appears women have made progress in closing the gender gap in college sports. While strong identification with an organization may be important, perceived organizational success does not necessarily predict job performance. Rather, an emphasis should be placed on the integration of employees into an organizational system (Carmeli et al., 2007). Thus, the non-significance of perceived organizational success suggests this construct may not carry as much importance for recruiting, training, and retaining diverse, talented employees. Finding employees that align with organizational goals and outcomes as well as better connecting to their values may assist in the increased, productive engagement of sport employees.

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