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Investigating Multiplicity: Institutional Logics and Division II Commuter Student Athletes

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The primary purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of commuter student athletes who were thought to experience a multiplicity of institutional logics while competing at the NCAA Division II level. Second, if multiple competing logics were present, the authors intended to test a theoretical model of logic multiplicity development. Utilizing a case study methodology, the authors collected data from commuter student athletes competing at the Division II level. The study's findings indicated that commuter student athletes perceived the presence of multiple competing logics and that these logics indicated an aligned or minimally estranged organization. In particular, the high compatibility and high centrality of multiple competing logics signified an organization *aligned* between academic, athletic, and family values, whereas the low centrality and low compatibility of social identification and societal factors denoted an *estranged* organization for commuter student athletes. The implications of this research within sport management are presented herein.

Keywords: Institutional Logics, Logic Multiplicity, Commuter Students, Compatibility, Centrality

Introduction

A review of the sport management literature indicated an increasing scholarly interest in the institutional logics perspective (Carlsson-Wall, Kraus, & Messner, 2016; Cousens & Slack, 2005; Gammelsaeter, 2010; Gammelsaeter & Solenes, 2013; Gilmore, 2013; Martyn, Fowler, Kropp, Oja, & Bass, 2019; Nagel, Schlesinger, Bayle, & Giauque, 2015; Nite, 2017; Nite & Naauright, 2019; Nite, Singer, & Cunningham, 2013; Nite, Abiodun, & Washington, 2019). Institutional logics is defined as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material substance, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Sport organizations offer suitable conditions to analyze institutional logics, as these organizations operate with a magnitude of values, goals, and expectations, many of which may compete against one anoth-

er (Chelladurai, 1987; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002; Washington & Ventresca, 2008). Furthermore, Meyer and Rowan (1977) postulated that "institutional environments are often pluralistic . . . [A]s a result, organizations in search of external support and stability incorporate all sorts of incompatible structural elements" (p. 356).

Within the institutionalized sport setting, intercollegiate athletics in the US offer a fitting context by which to study the institutional logics perspective (Nite et al., 2013). Frey (1994) suggested that "the athletic department exists under the umbrella of the university, yet its operation and goals are inconsistent with those of the larger organization" (p. 120). Furthermore, scholars have suggested that college athletics must operate within both an academic logic and a commercial logic (Schulman & Bowen, 2001; Southall & Nagel, 2010). In particular, a key principle of the institutional logics perspective is the understanding that logics develop both within and across multiple levels of an organization.

However, thus far, sport researchers have approached logics from a macro-perspective. Nite and colleagues (2013) found that the logics of a faith-based university and its athletic department did not align, and Carlsson-Wall et al. (2016) reported that logics may be compatible not only between the field and organization, but also between situations within an organization. Southall and Nagel (2008) highlighted competing logics between the educational and commercial activities of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball. Lastly, Nite (2017) demonstrated how the NCAA utilized message framing to support institutional logics. Each of these studies, although advancing an understanding of logics pertaining to sport, lacked an emphasis on individuals in the field and their reliance on societal and institutional contexts. Thornton and Ocasio (2008) proposed that, "to understand individual and organizational behavior, it must be located in a societal and institutional context, and this institutional context both regularizes behavior and provides opportunity for agency and change" (p. 102). Therefore, the focus of this study is NCAA student athletes, specifically non-residential commuter student athletes, who may experience the competing logics associated with academics, athletics, and societal influences. This study highlights how such logics are experienced, perceived, and managed within and across multiple institutionalized forces.

Additionally, there is a scarcity of academic literature focusing on non-residential, commuter student athletes. However, non-residential student athletes are worthy of scholarly attention considering that of the 2,576 four-year institutions located in the US, 1,151 (45%) are primarily non-residential (Carnegie Classification of Institutions, 2019). Furthermore, commuter students face challenges relating to multiple life roles (e.g., parenting, full-time employment, community engagement), have problems integrating with social support systems, and may not feel a sense of belonging to their respective institutions (c.f. Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004; Keeling, 1999; Tinto, 1975, 1985, 1993). Lastly, when considering the lack of literature focused on non-residential commuter athletes, it is important to note that commuting students "may represent a small percentage of students at a private, residential liberal arts college or the entire population of a community college or urban institution" (Jacoby, 2000, p. 5). Further, current trends suggest that commuter

student proportions will continue to grow and become more diverse (Jacoby & Garland, 2004).

The purpose of this research was to understand if non-residential, commuter student athletes experience and perceive competing logics (e.g., those associated with athletics, academics, commuting, work, family, etc.), and, if so, to determine if these competing logics influence their tenure as student athletes. Another function of the study was to answer the scholarly call of Besharov and Smith (2014), who proposed a theoretical framework for exploring organizations that embody multiple logics and implored scholars to test and extend their theoretical framework in additional settings. Thus, we intended to test this framework within the sport management setting. Finally, as there remains a dearth of scholarly information pertaining to non-residential, commuter student athletes, the final aim of this research is to generate additional scholarly interest in a less-explored component of intercollegiate athletics.

Theoretical Framework

The institutional logics perspective was developed from the underpinnings of scholarly work evaluating institutionalism (Berger & Luckman, 1967; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977, Zucker, 1977), organizational environments (Salanick & Pfeffer, 1978; Selznick, 1948, 1949, 1957), and social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979). Institutional logics was introduced by Alford and Friedland (1985) to describe the contradictory practices and beliefs of institutions in western society. Jackall (1988) expanded the definition of institutional logics to include "the complicated, experientially constructed, and thereby contingent set of rules, premiums, and sanctions that men and women in particular contexts create and recreate in such a way that their behavior and accompanying perspective are to some extent regularized and predictable" (p. 112). Scott (1995) suggested a drawback of logics was focusing on singular and separate structural assumptions as coercive, normative, or cognitive pressures as proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983). In developing their definition of institutional logics, Thornton and Ocasio (1999) suggested the coercive, normative, and cognitive approaches must be integrated as one structural concept rather than separate, individualized entities. Furthermore, the authors advised that institutional logics must consider the link between individual agency and cognition, as well as socially constructed practices and rule structures (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Despite the varying concepts of institutional logics described above, one core link between these seminal scholarly works remains true – that logics must be understood both at the individual and societal levels (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

As institutional logics reflect the values, principles, and practices within an organization, these logics guide the actors' behaviors and ultimately predict success within a specific field (Friedland & Ashford, 1991; Lounsbury & Pollack, 2001; Nite, 2017; Nite & Nauright, 2019; Nite et al., 2013; Skirstad & Chelladurai, 2011; Southall, 2008; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012; Washington & Ventresca, 2004; Washington & Patterson, 2011). Moreover, scholars have

suggested that organizations are embedded in fields having diverse groups of stakeholders who may have competing or divergent sets of logics (Alvesson, 2002; Berger & Luckman, 1967; Granovetter, 1985; Kraatz & Block, 2008; Zukin& DiMaggio, 1990). Berger and Luckman (1967) posited that, to understand the societal influence of organizations, one must recognize that individuals and organizations are embedded within specific social structures, and Granovetter (1985) proposed that individual choices and actions are constrained by the networks within which they are embedded. Expanding on the postulations of Berger and Luckman (1967) and Granovetter (1985), Zukin and DiMaggio (1990) speculated that embeddedness occurs through either cognitive, cultural, or political processes. Cognitive embeddedness refers to "the ways in which the structured regularities of mental processes limit the exercise of economic reasoning; cultural embeddedness is the role of shared collective understandings in shaping economic strategies or goals" (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990, p. 20) and political embeddedness is defined as "the manner in which economic institutions and decisions are shaped by a struggle for power that involves economic actors and nonmarket institutions" (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990, p. 20).

As logics become embedded within an institution, a key component to understanding the organization's logics is the development of a collective social identification (Thornton et al., 2012), defined as "part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [*sic*] knowledge of his [*sic*] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1974, p. 69). Institutional logics have been shown to exert a significant influence on actors when they identify with a collective social group (Brickson, 2000; Kelman, 2006; Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Brickson (2000) proposed that individuals identifying with the social group to which they belong are likely to cooperate with that specific group, and Kelman (2006) indicated that actors who identify with a specific group are likely to abide by that group's norms and rules. Based on these scholarly assumptions, the combination of embeddedness and collective social identification will result in the development of an individual's logics.

As the institutional logics perspective is a metatheoretical framework used to analyze the interrelationships among institutions, individuals, and organizations within a social system (Thornton et al., 2012), multiple logics may be present and may compete for primacy (Herremans, Herschovis, & Bertels, 2009; Mattingly & Hall, 2008; Nite & Nauright, 2019; Nite et al., 2013; Southall & Nagel, 2010; Southall, Nagel, Amis, & Southall, 2008; Washington & Ventresca, 2008). Herremans et al. (2009) discussed how competing logics can influence the corporate environment, and Mattingly and Hall (2008) presented the competing logics of multiple stakeholders and the consequent challenges accompanying the decision-making process. Nite and Nauright (2019) reported that college administrators whom staff members accused of abuse were challenged by the values of the institution and of public opinion. Nite et al. (2013) postulated that the logics of a Christian university and its athletics department do not always align. These scholars concluded that the religious culture of the university often conflicted with the logics of winning and marketing for the athletics department and therefore, the logics of the institution appeared to contrast with

their respective athletics department (Nite et al., 2013). Southall and Nagel (2008) highlighted the complexity of competing logics within women's college basketball, and Southall et al. (2008) suggested that the NCAA men's basketball tournament faces competing logics in its presentation of March Madness. Both of these studies indicated the NCAA focused on a commercial revenue generation logic, which may at times be in direct conflict to the educational logics of the organization. Lastly, Washington and Ventresca (2008) discussed the contradicting logics present in the formation of collegiate basketball in the US. They concluded that the NCAA utilized its power and logics to remove institutions from the schedule who did not adhere to NCAA guidelines. When considering the presence of multiple logics, scholars have posited that logics can co-exist until a dominant logic reigns supreme (DiMaggio, 1983) or a hybrid version of an existing logic is adopted (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005). Also, multiple logics can co-exist for an extended period of time (Lounsbury, 2007; Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007; Reay & Hinings, 2005). Although these studies demonstrated the presence of multiple competing institutional logics, all lacked a framework within which competing logics could be examined as "a theoretical puzzle" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 364).

Scholars have offered divergent conclusions about the processes that occur when multiple logics are present within a single organization. When evaluating the presence of multiple logics within organizations, researchers have suggested the occurrence of the following: contestation and conflict (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Zilber, 2002), coexistence (McPherson & Sauder, 2013), logic blending (Binder, 2007), innovativeness (Jay, 2012; Kraats & Block, 2008), organizational demise (Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011), or domination of a single logic with the others peripheral (Jones, Maoret, Massa, & Svejenova, 2012). In an effort to establish a baseline for understanding multiple logics within an organization and to delineate the types of logic multiplicity within organizations, Besharov and Smith (2014) proposed a framework having logic compatibility and logic centrality as its key dimensions. According to Besharov and Smith, compatibility refers to "the extent to which the instantiations of logics imply consistent and reinforcing organizational actions," and centrality is considered "the degree to which multiple logics are each treated as equally valid and relevant in organizational functioning" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 370). Based on the degree of compatibility and centrality between multiple competing logics, Besharov and Smith (2014) suggested four ideal organizational types: *contested*, *estranged*, *aligned*, and *dominant*. However, the degree of centrality and compatibility to multiple logics has not been considered. Therefore, when considering the logic multiplicity of commuter student athletes, the compatibility and centrality of logics should result in a contested, estranged, aligned, or dominant ideal type (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

In contested organizations,

> low compatibility leads actors to confront and grapple with divergent goals, values, and identities, as well as different strategies and practices for achieving

> those goals. High centrality leads multiple logics to vie for dominance, with no clear guide between them (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 371).

In an estranged organization,

> low compatibility means that logics offer inconsistent implications for organizational action, leading actors to grapple with divergent goals and divergent means of achieving those goals. Unlike in contested organizations, however, low centrality leads one logic to exert primary influence over organizational functioning (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 372).

For aligned organizations,

> the instantiation of multiple logics involves high compatibility and high centrality. High compatibility leads actors to draw on logics that offer consistent implications for organizational action, and high centrality leads multiple logics to exert strong influence over organizational functioning (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 373).

Lastly, dominant organizations

> exhibit multiple logics that have high compatibility and low centrality. As in aligned organizations, high compatibility leads actors to draw on logics that imply consistent goals for organizational action. As in estranged organizations low centrality leads to core organizational features that reflect a single logic (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 374).

In creating this framework, Besharov and Smith intended not only to understand if multiple logics can exist in an organization but also the levels of variation with which they do so.

Scholars within the sport sector (Carlsson-Wall et al., 2016; Nite et al., 2013; Washington & Patterson, 2011; Washington & Ventresca, 2008) have called for an increased focus into understanding how institutional logics develop. Furthermore, understanding how multiple logics relate to one another is vital to a richer understanding of the forces influencing organizations (c.f. Besharov & Smith, 2014; Suddaby, 2010). Thus, the purposes of the current study are the following. The first was to understand if non-residential, commuter student athletes experience and perceive competing logics (e.g., athletics, academics, commuting, work, family, etc.) and, if so, to determine if these competing logics influence their experiences as a student athlete; second, utilizing the Besharov and Smith (2014) framework, determine how non-residential, commuter student athletes manage a multiplicity of logics (i.e., contested, estranged, aligned, or dominant); and, lastly, as there remains insufficient scholarly information pertaining to non-residential, commuter student athletes, the final aim of this research was to generate additional scholarly interest in a component of intercollegiate athletics that has been explored to a lesser extent. To advance an understanding of the presence and development of logic multiplicity and in an effort to further develop the literature relating to a lesser explored population of the

sport community (i.e., commuter student athletes), the following research questions guided this inquiry:

> **RQ1**. How do non-residential, commuter student athletes view a college environment that may have competing logics and do these logics influence their careers as student athletes?

> **RQ2**. If logic multiplicity is present, how do logics develop (contested, estranged, aligned, or dominant) among non-residential, commuter student athletes?

Methods

To understand the logic multiplicity of non-residential, commuter student athletes, we utilized a qualitative case study design (Stake, 1995; VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007). Although findings from a case study are contextually bound (Stake, 2005), the results of this study provided insight into how non-residential, commuter student athletes perceived and developed in an environment where logic multiplicity was present. Furthermore, the results of this study may prove useful in similar settings or may be utilized for future hypothesis development, a key purpose for conducting case study research (Hodge & Sharp, 2017).

Participants

Primary data for this case study were obtained through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 11 commuter university athletes from multiple teams who competed at the NCAA Division II level. Data were collected, transcribed, and immediately assessed following each interview and additional data were collected, transcribed, and analyzed until no new information could be generated, or a point of data saturation was realized (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). The institution is located in a major metropolitan city in the Northwestern region of the US and no student housing is provided to the student body (see Table 1 below). The semi-structured nature of interviews allowed for follow-up questions and helped to produce deep and meaningful data (Kvale, 1996). Study participants were recruited through purposive sampling methods to ensure that all participants were full-time, non-residential student athletes. Additionally, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested purposive sampling allows for the selection of individuals who are knowledgeable about or experience the phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, as noted by Bernard (2002), purposive sampling ensures participants were willing and available to discuss opinions in an expressive and articulate manner. Lastly, purposive sampling allowed for the selection of participants from a small pool of potential participants and provided the best chance to obtain rich and descriptive information on the research topic (Jones, 2015).

Table 1
Participant Demographics

Participant	Year	**Gender**	Sport
Corey	Junior	**Male**	Soccer
Chris	Junior	**Male**	Basketball
Alex	Sophomore	**Female**	Softball
Devin	Sophomore	**Female**	Soccer
Bobbie	Freshman	**Male**	Baseball
Pat	Senior	**Female**	Track & Cross Country
Jamie	Junior	**Female**	Basketball
Jordan	Senior	**Female**	Volleyball
Kelly	Junior	**Male**	Baseball
Parker	Sophomore	**Male**	Tennis
Peyton	Senior	**Female**	Golf

Procedures

Interviews for all participants were conducted via face-to-face interaction at a location agreed upon by both the participant and the researcher. For the participant interviews, we developed an interview guide tailored from a review of the extant scholarly research pertaining to institutional logics and focused on how logics were perceived and developed (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Lounsbury & Pollack, 2001; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012). Furthermore, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed each participant to provide additional follow-up information to ensure a rich data-collection process that fully addressed the purpose of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Sample questions for the semi-structured interviews included the following: (a) What values have been instilled by your coaches, professors, and colleagues here at this institution?; (b) Are there certain behaviors you have to modify to adjust to the demands of academics?; (c) Do you feel you have to manage yourself differently in certain different situations, such as an athletic setting versus an academic setting versus a social setting?; (d) As a student athlete attending a commuter school, what are the most complex challenges you face? How do you successfully manage these challenges?; and (e) As a commuter student, what types of items do you have to balance in your life? Does this institution value your need to balance these items? Why or why not?

To ensure that the results of this case study were reliable and credible, a number of qualitative techniques were employed during the research process, including researcher transcriptions, member checking, and triangulation (Crotty, 1998). Additionally, all participants were provided a copy of their transcription, which had been transcribed verbatim from their audio-recorded interview to ensure an accurate

portrayal of the data. To safeguard the trustworthiness of the research, we adhered to the principles of credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was achieved through methods such as member-checking, peer-debriefing, and reflective journaling. Dependability was accomplished by completing an audit trail, which could be followed by future researchers. Confirmability was ensured through the researchers' logs and audit trails, which allows for neutrality in the findings and replication of the study. The current study provided rich description of the participants, methods, and analysis procedures, which allows for the transferability of the results to a population in a similar setting. Lastly, authenticity was achieved as we realistically conveyed the data and were transparent about the analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using a primarily deductive approach, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis procedure consisted of six strands. To begin the analysis, the researchers immersed themselves in the data with multiple readings of the transcripts. An initial set of codes were developed (e.g., time management, athlete identity, lack of community, academics and athletics, employment requirements, family values, and metropolitan lifestyle) based on data gathered from the interviews and the theoretical framework (i.e., the institutional logics perspective). In strand three, we grouped the codes into an initial set of themes, and, in strand four, these themes were reviewed against scholarly works pertaining to institutional logics to confirm their congruence with the data. Subsequently, we reviewed and defined the final themes, and this review involved comparing and contrasting the themes with the theoretical framework of the institutional logics perspective. This strand resulted in three themes: an alignment between athletics and academics logics, the influence of family logics on commuter student athletes' logics, and the direct influence of societal factors and the lack of community on the logics of commuter student athletes. In the sixth strand of the analysis, we selected "vivid, compelling extract examples" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87) to accentuate these themes. Through the process of data analysis, the research team was able to provide a depiction of how the multiplicity of institutional logics impacted non-residential, commuter student athletes.

Results

Our research team examined how logics developed (contested, estranged, aligned, or dominant) among non-residential, commuter student athletes. Generally, we discovered the presence of multiple logics including logics related to athletics, academics, family, social identity, and community engagement. Furthermore, we determined that commuter student athletes may operate in either an aligned (i.e., high compatibility and high centrality) or a marginally estranged (i.e., low compatibility and low centrality) environment. The interviews conducted for the current study led our research team to identify three distinct themes: an alignment between athletics and academics logics, the influence of family logics on commuter student athletes' log-

ics, and the direct influence of societal factors and the lack of community on the logics of commuter student athletes. Figure 1 displays the progression of first order categories to second order themes to our final aggregated themes from the data. Below we discuss each of these themes in detail and provide contextual examples to support the findings.

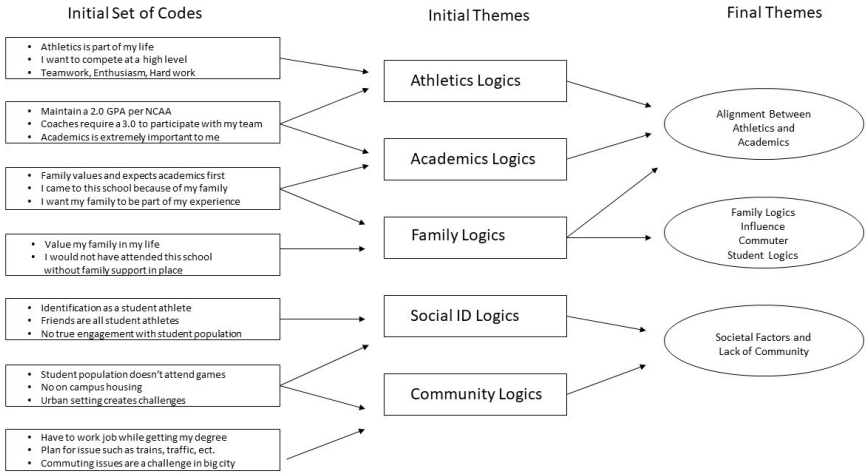

Figure 1: Data Structure

An Alignment between Athletics and Academics

We discovered that the logics of both academics and athletics appeared to align. In particular, all student athletes indicated that both the athletic department and their professors stressed the importance of such logics as "time management," "honesty," "integrity," and "respect." It appeared from the suggestions of the student athletes that, although coaches and professors did in fact operate in two distinct organizational environments, the logics instilled by their groups did align with high compatibility and high centrality. Moreover, all participants stressed the importance of achieving perfection both in the classroom and on the athletic field. Furthermore, the student athletes highlighted the significance of academic logics supporting and contributing to the athletics logics. According to nine participants, although the NCAA requires a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average to be eligible to compete in intercollegiate athletics, coaches required a minimum of a 3.0 for their student athletes. Furthermore, these nine participants indicated an alignment of athletic and academic logics through such contextual examples as their coaches emailing directly with their professors, mandatory academic sessions when traveling, and continued support of academics. Table 2 below provides contextual examples of alignments between athletic and academic logics.

Table 2
Aligned Athletic & Academic Logics Theme Quotations

Participant	Responses
Corey	My coaches honestly preach that you should be putting school first. They constantly tell us we should have all A's and B's and honestly, they won't even let us travel if you have a low GPA. So, it really makes me work hard in class or I will miss out on traveling and competing with my teammates.
Devin	My professors are really accommodating with my schedule. They understand we need to travel, so if I am honest and up front with them, they really will work with me. And my coach told me from day one, to develop that personal relationship with my professors, so we are all on the same page.
Alex	Our coach is really on top of our grades. I mean we have to sign into her office for each of our study halls. And when we travel on the weekends, I mean we play games on Friday and Sunday, so Saturday she requires us to sit in a room at the hotel and do our schoolwork. . . It isn't an option.
Pat	I think first and foremost, being a student athlete means the integration between academics and athletics and both being mutually beneficial and symbiotic. My professors and coaches have really helped me to become a better student and a better runner at the same time.
Chris	Teamwork, enthusiasm, accountability, and mental toughness were our team values this season. And in the classroom my professors really push accountability, honesty, and integrity in all your work. So, I think the message from both areas is really similar.

Family Logics Influence Commuter Student Logics

The second theme, *the influence of family logics on commuter student logics*, was emphasized by all study participants. In fact, all of the commuter student athletes who were interviewed chose their institution because it valued and supported family logics. One specific international student athlete suggested that he came to the US because his parents valued getting an education while participating at a high level of athletic competition, something not available in their home country. Moreover, eight participants suggested that having a local family support system in place was an important part of deciding to attend a commuter school. These eight participants

reported that their families attended both home and away games, that their families encouraged both athletics and academics, and that the locality of the institution provided an opportunity for student athletes to commute home when necessary. The study results indicated that the commuter student athletes looked for a high level of compatibility and centrality when selecting a school that would align with their family logics. Table 3 below offers contextual examples of family logics influencing commuter student logics.

Table 3

Aligned Family Logics Influencing Commuter Student Theme Quotations

Participant	Responses
Devin	If I stayed in [home country], it was either soccer or an education, but not both. My parents really pushed me to the idea of playing in the US at a college because it was important to them that I got an education and played soccer at a high level. I never would have made that decision without my parents. And now that I am here, I would do it 100 times again.
Bobbie	My mom is really important to me. I mean when I was a kid my grades were really bad and she pulled me out of sports. To this day, my grades are better because of that. I mean she really made me realize that sports are important, but school is equally as important as well.
Peyton	I mean part of the reason I chose to come here versus a campus away from home was so my family can come to my matches. I mean my parents made every single home and away match last season. My brothers come down and visit and they are really supportive. Plus, I get to go home about once a month during season and that is really important to me.
Parker	It was kind of challenging to come here because I am so far away from my family. I mean they are a phone call away, but they don't come to a lot of matches, and I mean family is important, so I wish they were a little closer. But I still do my best in both athletics and academics because it means so much to me and my family too.

Societal Factors and Lack of Community

The logic multiplicity experienced by the student athletes participating in this study presented a somewhat highly aligned organization with high compatibility and high centrality. However, participants also indicated elements indicating an estranged organization with low compatibility and low centrality. All of the commuter student athletes indicated the low compatibility and low centrality for societal demands with

which they were challenged. Specifically, all participants suggested that a lack of campus community impacted them as a student athlete because the campus community does not attend games. Oftentimes, these student athletes were required to have part-time jobs to support their education, a challenge to their time management skills. Furthermore, all student athletes suggested that time management was a requirement because they had to account for metropolitan traffic issues, parking concerns, or early morning practices. Additionally, two student athletes who previously attended residential campuses suggested that they could not just "roll out of bed and get to class or practice" but had to plan for train or bus schedules. All participant reports indicated that, although some of their intercollegiate experiences were aligned, others were marginally estranged within the institution. Table 4 below provides quotations describing the estrangement of the organization.

Table 4
Estranged Societal and Lack of Community Logics Influencing Commuter Students Theme Quotations

Participant	Responses
Jamie	Ya know, since we are located in a major city, there are a lot of things to do down here. And I think that really hurts our attendance at games. We don't get students to come and that is tough because you really want to get some excitement around what you're doing. So, it is really sad sometimes.
Jordan	It is really tough because we live in such an expensive city and I have to work a part time job, well actually two, but I had to quit one for my internship. And you really have to manage your time to meet the expectations of professors, coaches, and your family. I might have to choose in the near future to drop something and it might be athletics, just because I have so much on my plate and I can't make everything work all at once.
Kelly	It is fun living in a big city, but it is also a challenge because I don't live on campus and I don't have a car. I can't be late for practice or class, so I have to rely on other people and I was not brought up that way. I am very independent and I hate depending on other people for rides, it goes against everything I was taught growing up.
Pat	I think one of the biggest challenges is that we don't have a track on campus. So, I constantly have to manage traffic to make sure I make it to practice on time. Plus, we can't have classes before 11:00 because we have weight training, so it is really hard to manage expectations and balance schoolwork, athletics, and getting time to sleep. It is really frustrating sometimes.

Participants in the current study suggested that many of their personal logics did align with the logics instilled by their athletic and academic departments, suggesting a high level of compatibility and centrality residing within the intercollegiate institution. However, there did appear to be elements of an estranged organization for commuter student athletes as well, specifically with respect to societal demands and a lack of campus community. These results suggested possible low degrees of centrality and of compatibility in the logics of society and the campus community.

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to understand how Division II commuter student athletes perceive and manage an environment where the presence of logic multiplicity may influence their academic and athletic careers. Moreover, Besharov and Smith (2014) proposed that, in the presence of logic multiplicity, these logics will result in either an *aligned*, *estranged*, *dominant*, or *contested* environment. Based on the postulations of Besharov and Smith, we utilized their model in an intercollegiate environment, where student athletes are possibly confronted with multiple and oftentimes competing logics. Participant responses indicated that the logics of this specific university did in fact have elements of high compatibility and high centrality, resulting in an *aligned* organization. However, discussions also highlighted elements of an *estranged* organization comprised of low compatibility and low centrality when student athlete relationships to the general student population and such societal demands as employment, commuting complications, and balancing multiple time requirements are considered. The results of the study provide insight into the multiplicity of logics NCAA student athletes experience and the challenges faced by a specific population (i.e., commuter student athletes) and demonstrate the applicability of the Besharov and Smith model.

The findings of this study contrast and expand upon the findings of previous researchers. Sport scholars have suggested a singular dominant logic is difficult to obtain in college sport (Frey, 1994; Nite et al., 2013; Southall & Nagel, 2010) however, our results suggested that an alignment between logics is possible in the collegiate sport setting if both social groups value and identify with the organizations' institutional goals. The alignment of logics presented in this study appeared to be similar to Martyn et al. (2019) who reported NCAA Faculty Athletic Representatives, who are members of both the athletics and academics social groups, have an alignment of logics when facing a multiplicity of institutional logics. The current results advance the academic literature pertaining to institutional logics by focusing on the embedded actors who perceive and experience logics. Thus far, sport scholars have focused on the macro level of analysis and this study demonstrated logics can coexist as suggested by McPherson and Sauder (2013). It appears that the presence of multiple competing logics can result in an aligned organization where actors value and adopt a multiplicity of logics, as seen by coaches enforcing academic standards and professors valuing athletic participation, for all commuter student athletes. This

alignment of logics experienced by student athletes appears to support Besharov and Smith's (2014) hypothetical model of organizational alignment in which multiple logics result in high compatibility and high centrality.

A second significant finding of this study was the influence of family logics on commuter student athletes. The scholars who proposed the institutional logics perspective have suggested that the concept of *family* is central to the development of one's logics (Thornton et al., 2012). Our results supported this proposition and demonstrated the importance of family in a commuter student athlete's logic development. Specifically, participants indicated that family values directly impacted their decision to attend this particular institution. Furthermore, family logics discussed by participants indicated the importance of success in the classroom and on the field. The suggestions put forth by our participants provide evidence for the influence of family logics on commuter student athletes. This finding could have significant bearing on understanding the logics of embedded actors within the NCAA, as much of the previous research has approached logics from a macro level approach. Our results provide a micro level approach to understanding institutional logics, and the influence of family on commuter student athletes' logic. Additionally, the findings related to family logics could be significant as commuter student athletes who have strong family logics are more committed to balancing a multiplicity of logics. The results of family logics influencing commuter student athletes furthers the institutional logics literature and offers a new avenue to explore this phenomenon in greater detail.

Although an alignment of logics was prevalent in the current study, there did appear to be some components of low centrality and low compatibility experienced by these commuter student athletes. Participants in this study suggested they do face societal struggles. Unlike traditional residential students, these commuter student athletes were required to manage unique societal demands (e.g., traffic, train schedules, off campus practices, lack of community engagement, etc.) which may not be experienced by a residential student athlete. Participants noted a lack of a sense of community on their campus. Moreover, participants indicated a strong sense of social identification with other student athletes, in which these athletes strongly identify with their collective group as opposed to the collective general student population. Our results represent the importance of social identities within institutional logics of the Division II setting and how a lack of identification can result in an estranged organization. Moreover, the collective identity of commuter student athletes appears to align with the suggestion of Polletta and Jasper (2001) that an emotional connectedness may develop due to the common status among that particular group. The results of this study suggested that commuter student athletes support each other due to the lack of support from the general student population. According to Besharov and Smith (2014), when low compatibility and low centrality among competing logics are present, one logic will exert primary influence over organizational functioning. The findings of this study indicated commuter student athletes associate with fellow student athletes because of their similar experiences and do not adhere to the social rules and norms of non-student-athletes. This finding may prove significant for a

commuter institution because it appears that student athletes do not assimilate well with the general student population, essentially creating an us-versus-them mentality and possibly leading to challenges for campus administrators.

The findings of this study aligned with previous scholars who suggested that commuter students face challenges relating to multiple life roles (e.g., employment, community engagement), have problems integrating with social support systems, and may not feel a sense of belonging to their institutions (Braxton et al., 2004; Keeling, 1999; Tinto, 1975, 1985, 1993). As evidenced by the results of the current study, the low centrality and low compatibility of societal logics have a significant impact on a commuter student athletes' experience. Braxton et al. (2004) suggested commuter institutions lack structured social communities and the hurried nature of experience results in a lack of connection with the campus. Our results suggested one of the causes of disconnect lies in the lack of a social connection to the institution and general student population, and student athletes having to prioritize their schedules, goals, and values above social relationships and school work. This study advances knowledge pertaining to how commuter student athletes (i.e., actors) perceive societal logics and the impact societal logics have on those individuals, whereas others have focused on institutional norms, values, and goals. Furthermore, this study not only demonstrates the estrangement of logics, but also advances an understanding of the impacts of an organization with low compatibility and low centrality. This may prove significant because it appears that student athletes at commuter schools may withdraw from their athletic and academic commitments due to their societal requirements (e.g., employment, lack of identification, etc.).

The results of this study provided insight into the logics experienced by commuter student athletes and demonstrated how a multiplicity of logics established an aligned or semi-estranged organization on the campus. Scholarly attention should be attributed to commuter student athletes because almost half of college institutions in the US are primarily non-residential campuses (Carnegie Classification of Institutions, 2019). Furthermore, trends suggest that commuter student proportions will continue to grow and become more diverse (Jacoby & Garland, 2004). If these trends are correct and commuter student populations continue to rise, scholars should look to address the changing society in college sport participation. The results of this study demonstrated that commuter student athletes lack an identification with the general population. Therefore, attention should be given to elements of the estranged organization where student athletes do not feel a belongingness to their institution. Moreover, this study highlighted the importance of the family logic on commuter student athletes. As evidenced by our findings, family logics strongly impact a commuter student athlete. This may indicate that institutions recruiting commuter student athletes, both academically and athletically, need to incorporate family logics into the decision-making process. The results of this study advance the literature relating to institutional logics, specifically pertaining to the importance of family logics.

Practical Implications

The results of this study have multiple practical implications for the industry. First, the findings suggest that NCAA commuter student athletes perceive an aligned organization between academics and athletics due to practice and principles employed by coaches and professors. Athletic department administrators may employ similar tactics used by this institution's department to reinforce the academic standards of the whole institution. Second, commuter student athletes apparently do not identify with the student population of the commuter institution. Therefore, coaches and administrators may find contextual instances to incorporate student athletes into student body outings and the student body into athletic opportunities, thus making for a more unified campus despite the commuter style setting. Third, the significance of family logics could be utilized both for academic recruiting and athletic recruiting. If administrators understand commuter student athletes' family logics in greater depth, they may be able to recruit a higher quality student and athlete. Lastly, commuter student athletes are challenged with a magnitude of societal issues in their daily lives. If administrators, professors, and coaches understand the challenges associated with commuter student lives, they may be better able to incorporate a structure that is compatible with an environment containing a multiplicity of logics.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was not without limitations. The case study was bounded by time and space, and it therefore only provided the experience of a single institution. Also, this study captured the experiences of commuter student athletes and not a cross representation of athletic department managers and academic professors, and these viewpoints could provide further insight into commuter student athletes logics. Future research could continue to evaluate the perspective of commuter student athletes with regards to topics such as social identity, sense of community, belongingness, and other perspectives as these areas of scholarly research remain unexplored. The results of this study indicated that commuter student athletes do face issues such as identification and sense of community, and future research may shed light on these challenges experienced by commuter student athletes. Additionally, scholars could explore the experiences of commuter student athletes at the Division I, II, and III level as there may be contextual differences between these divisions, and future research could advance an understanding of these differences. Finally, scholars are encouraged to examine the institutional logics of NCAA actors from Division I, II, and III because while scholars have shown the presence of logics, there is a lack of an understanding of where and how logics develop. These logics could be examined from the student athlete, coach, mid-level employee, and athletics administrator level perspectives as an interinstitutional system encompassing these factors may reveal how logics form and are enforced by specific individuals. Results of future research could inform a deeper understanding of identification, culture, or other key factors of the metatheory of institutional logics. Thus far, academic inquiry has not focused on an interinstitutional system of logics, and a multi-level of analysis is necessary to explain the logic development of multiple actors operating within the NCAA framework.

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A Qualitative Exploration of Collegiate Student-Athlete's Constructions of Health

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Collegiate student-athletes are faced with unique challenges as they are often forced to negotiate between demanding social, athletic, and academic roles. These competing priorities put student-athletes at greater risk for experiencing physical and psychological health problems than their non-athlete peers. To better understand the behaviors and lifestyle factors leading to these negative outcomes, we must consider how they think about health. The purpose of this study was to examine how student-athletes in the Canadian context conceptualize health, and to examine how they formulate these understandings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 actively-competing student-athletes from nine varsity sports at two academic institutions, and data were analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. Participants constructed health holistically, with particular emphasis on physical and mental domains over social well-being. The quality of one's physical health was equated in many ways with athletic capacity, as was the quality of mental health to a lesser degree. Participants discussed many sources from which they drew health ideas, but sport experiences were cited as particularly significant and formative. Findings can inform future research into conceptualizations of health among other university student populations, and further inquiry into how health ideas manifest into behavior. Recommendations are provided for collegiate sport administrators including placing emphasis on mental health resources, and improving support while athletes acclimate to the demanding lifestyle of varsity sport.

Keywords: student-athlete; health; sport; student health; constructions of health

Health is a complex concept that can mean many different things to different people, resulting in ideas and perspectives that are infinitely varied, deeply personal, elaborate, and intricate (Crawford, 2006; Davis & Drew, 1999). The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization, 1948, p. 1). In the past few decades, scholars in the fields of health psychology, sociology, and behavioral medicine have become increasingly focused on everyday people's perspectives of health and illness (Backett, Davison, & Mullen, 1994; Herzlich & Pierret, 1985; Prior, 2003). Interactions with medical professionals and formal health education represent a significant portion of discourse informing these perspectives (Mackie & Oickle, 1997). There are also many social, cultural,

and lifestyle influences that can shape an individual's beliefs about health (Backett et al., 1994). To examine these influences, scholars have studied health discourse through the lens of social constructionism, which recognizes that conceptions of terms such as 'health' are constantly transformed through shifting social forces and conventions (Hibberd, 2005).

Conceptualizations of health, including individuals' perceptions of the promoters and detractors of health, undoubtedly influence health-related behaviors such as diet, exercise, and drug use (Lyons & Chamberlain, 2006). For example, Wright, O'Flynn, and Macdonald (2006) found that among young people, women discuss health with greater emphasis on body weight and shape whereas men put greater emphasis on utility for sport or exercise. These health discourses act as "powerful organizers of the ways (people) make choices about food and activity" (Wright et al., 2006, p. 714).

Collegiate student-athletes are a unique population in which to study how individuals' social, cultural, and lifestyle influences can inform the way they conceptualize health. The transition period from high school to university can be complex and challenging, as individuals are forced to quickly adjust to rigorous academic, social, and personal demands that are often quite disparate from their past experiences (Sevinc & Gizir, 2014). In the same setting, student-athletes are faced with the additional challenge of managing a demanding athletic role (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Jolly, 2007). As an illustration of this demand, in a survey of 921 NCAA Division I student-athletes, 82% reported spending more than 10 hours per week practicing their sport, and 40% reported spending an additional 10 hours per week playing their sport, all while maintaining their full-time academic studies (Potuto & O'Hanlon, 2007). Miller and Kerr (2002) found that Canadian student-athletes reported similar time commitments to sport as their NCAA counterparts, despite receiving significantly less media promotion and financial incentive. Athletic scholarships were not permitted in Canada's U-Sport system until 2006, and unlike the American NCAA system are limited to the value of annual tuition fees (White, McTeer, & Curtis, 2013). Despite this limit on financial compensation, first-year Canadian varsity football players have reported an expectation by coaches to invest up to 40 hours each week into their sport while maintaining a full-time course load to remain eligible to compete (Rothschild-Checroune, Gravelle, Dawson, & Karlis, 2012).

In the absence of a scholarship incentive, one contributor to Canadian student-athletes engaging in varsity sport may be the commonly-held belief that sport participation is a means of improving health. Parents frequently cite health and well-being as an anticipated benefit of their children's' sport participation (Neely & Holt, 2014), and sport promotion is justified by many governing health institutions as a means of reducing physical inactivity and thus inactivity-related illnesses (Eime et al., 2015). However, scholars have called into question the accepted positive relationship of sport and good health across many aspects of well-being (Robertson, 2003; Waddington, 2004; Young, McTeer, & White, 1997). Athletes often demonstrate a willingness to play through pain and injury, and this 'culture of risk' has been discussed as problematic in the context of sport and general athlete well-being (Cur-

ry, 1993; Hughes & Coakley, 1991; Theberge, 2008). The unquestioned equating of healthiness with an athletic body image, or with athletic capacity, can manifest into overtraining and body dysmorphic disorders, in addition to harmful normalization of pain and injury (Bridel, 2013). The pursuit of elite performance in sport has also been connected to particular risks of poor mental health (Rice et al., 2016) and family health (Bean, Fortier, Post, & Chima, 2014).

In the context of university sport, the competing academic, athletic, and social priorities faced by student-athletes can place them at greater risk for experiencing physical and psychological health problems than their non-athlete peers (Etzel, 2006; Nattiv, Puffer & Green, 1997). These problems include excessive alcohol consumption (Barry, Howell, Riplinger, & Piazza-Gardner, 2015; Grossbard et al., 2009; Martens, Dams-O'Connor, & Beck, 2006), disordered eating (Greenleaf, Petrie, Carter & Reel, 2009; Sundgot-Borgen & Torstveit, 2004), hazing (Diamond, Callahan, Chain & Solomon, 2016), doping (Bents, Tokish, & Goldberg, 2004), and committing sexual violence (McCray, 2015). Mounting evidence has also demonstrated that student-athletes are at particular risk for consequences such as burnout (Dubuc-Charbonneau, Durand-Bush, & Forneris, 2014), depression (Weigand, Cohen, & Merenstein, 2013; Yang et al., 2007), poor academic performance (Levine, Etchison, & Oppenheimer, 2014; Riciputi & Erdal, 2017), and poor sleep quality (Mah, Kerizirian, Marcello, & Dement, 2018). It has also been noted that, despite exhibiting significant psychological distress (Blacker, Sullivan, & Cairney, 2017), student-athletes seek professional support less often than their non-athlete peers (Watson, 2005).

Although this considerable body of literature exists critiquing the relationship between sport and health, research specifically investigating athletes' constructions of health remains scarce. In an investigation of elite athletes' perceptions of the relationship between health and sport participation, Theberge (2008) found that they often construct health in accordance with their immediate competitive careers, discussing their bodies in similar fashion to a piece of equipment. Bridel (2013) extended this work to recreational athletes involved in Ironman triathlons, finding similar constructions in a less competitive sporting environment. Bridel found these recreational athletes commonly referenced one's ability to be physically active as a measuring stick for health, reflecting their ability to finish an Ironman as indicative of being 'healthier' than those who could not. Taken together, Theberge and Bridel's research demonstrate that athlete identity plays a major role in shaping constructions of health.

Although there exists a large body of research examining student-athlete experiences, such as their academic attitudes (Eitzen, 1987; Martin, Harrison, Stone, & Lawrence, 2010) and their social life (Chen, Snyder & Magner, 2010), very little research has specifically addressed how student-athletes define and conceptualize health. In their college years, students see substantial change in their health-related beliefs and behaviours (Haas, Baber, Byrom, Meade, & Nouri-Aria, 2018), and it has been suggested that this transitional period of being responsible for one's own

health may have critical long-term health implications (Jackson & Weinstein, 1997; Nelson, Story, Larson, Neumark-Sztainer, & Lytle, 2008).

In summary, conceptions of health may differ vastly based on social, cultural, and lifestyle factors. Within specific social groups, such as a sports team, there is constant diffusing of health information (and misinformation), along with normative pressure to engage in certain health-promoting or health-degrading behaviors. This normative pressure continually shifts individuals' perceptions and biases toward health information (Institute of Medicine, 2004). Individuals who strongly self-identify with the social group in question, such as athletes who strongly identify with their athletic role, may be particularly susceptible to these influences (Hinkle, Smith, & Stellino, 2007). For example, if sport performance is considered a primary metric of one's health, this may influence one's opinion of the healthiness of performance-enhancing substances. The aim of this research is to explore Canadian university student-athletes' perceptions of health and how they develop to these perceptions. As such, the research questions guiding this study were:

RQ_1: In the context of Canadian university sport, how do student-athletes conceptualize health?
RQ_2: In the context of Canadian university sport, how do student-athletes define a healthy state of being?
RQ_3: From where do student-athletes draw their ideas about health?

Methods

Paradigm

The research questions presented above are situated within, and best inquired into, using a constructivist paradigmatic lens. Constructivism represents the view that knowledge is contingent on human practices and is developed and transmitted within social contexts (Crotty, 1998). This paradigm fits the aims of this research well, as it has been identified that health-related beliefs and behaviors are largely socially constructed (Courtenay, 2000; Sharf & Vanderford, 2008) and can differ considerably between demographic groups (Wright et al., 2006). By investigating Canadian student-athlete constructions of health, we hope to better understand common shared experiences that influence their ideas of health in specific ways.

Participants

To be eligible for this study, participants were required to 1) speak English, 2) be at least 18 years of age, 3) be actively competing as student-athletes in any sport at a Canadian university, 4) have already completed at least one full season as a university student-athlete, and 5) have lived away from their parents or guardians for at least the two most recent academic terms.

Sixteen participants were recruited through varsity-specific social media groups at two Canadian universities. Snowball sampling took place after this, where the remaining four participants were contacted by the initial participants. Of those who

expressed interest in the study, participants were purposively selected to ensure a diversity of sport backgrounds and an equal amount of male and female participants. Participants were also prioritized from sports that are typically more time-demanding and travel intensive, as the busy schedule resulting from this may have amplified their need to modify health behaviors. For example, athletes from sports with full-time training and competition for the majority of the Fall and Winter academic terms, such as competitive swimming, were sought more so than those finishing competition in the Fall, such as baseball. Participants were continually recruited until data saturation was reached, which was deemed to be true for this sample representing a broad variety of varsity sports, at 20 participants.

Procedure

Data for this study were collected using semi-structured, one-on-one, face-to-face, audio-recorded interviews lasting between 42 and 75 minutes, with an average length of 62 minutes. All interviews were conducted in private rooms at the participants' institution. The interview guide started with broad conversation concerning participants' history in sport and experience as a student-athlete, before progressing to discussion around their ideas of health. Each participant was asked "How would you define being healthy?", and then a series of questions specific to the three domains of health present in the World Health Organization's definition (physical, mental, and social well-being). Recognizing health as a social construct, participants were also asked how they came to their understanding of health, and what they perceived as having the largest influence on their ideas. As each interview drew to a close, participants were prompted to contribute any remaining ideas or experiences they felt were relevant.

Data Analysis

Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) synthesizes concepts of phenomenology and hermeneutics to form a methodology intended to be both descriptive and interpretative (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Phenomenology involves suspending assumptions, and searching for fundamental meanings that are essential to understanding a phenomenon (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Hermeneutics concerns the theory of interpreting meaning from text, which involves comprehending a person's mindset and language in order to translate their experiences (Freeman, 2008). In combination, it becomes the researcher's responsibility to represent the data in a meaningful way, while also providing accurate and useful interpretation of those data to ultimately convince the reader of its significance (Smith et al., 2009). IPA also emphasizes studying phenomena with respect to social and historical contingencies (Eatough & Smith, 2017), making it ideal for studying socially-constructed phenomena such as one's ideas about health.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and de-identified by the primary investigator (PI), Smith, Flower, and Larkin's (2009) framework for IPA was then used. All transcripts were initially read once by the PI to familiarize themselves with the full data set, followed by three subsequent readings where NVivo 12 software was

used to form notes to summarize participant experiences, and codes to highlight key points, notable language, and to form connections between transcripts. At this point, a critical friend (Sparkes & Smith, 2014, p. 182) with a background in varsity sport, and otherwise uninvolved with the study, read the marked transcripts and met with the PI to provide a competing perspective on data interpretation. Once this process was complete for all transcripts, a fifth and final reading of each transcript was completed by the PI where prevalent themes were noted, supported by previous markings and transcript excerpts. Prevalent themes from all transcripts were then listed and organized, with some being clustered based on shared meaning or references. Clusters were given labels meant to represent the essence of all themes within them, and all clusters and themes were cross-checked with original transcripts to locate specific excerpts lending to their credibility. During this process, some less prevalent themes that didn't fit well within the emerging structure of the analysis, or that weren't supported by rich evidence within the transcripts were discarded. The list of prevalent themes was then assessed by the critical friend who again provided a competing perspective on selected themes.

In line with the traditions of IPA, the general format of the results section for this study will be to introduce key themes, supplement these themes with excerpts direct from transcripts, and provide insightful interpretation. It should be noted that the overall categories of physical health, mental health, and social well-being are all components of the World Health Organization definition of health (World Health Organization, 1946) that informed our design of the interview guide, and as such it is unsurprising that many key themes fit within these dimensions.

Results

The participants for this study were 20 collegiate student-athletes (age range, 18 to 26 years; mean = 20.2 ± 1.1 years) from two Canadian universities. The athletes were 10 men (50%) and 10 women (50%) representing volleyball ($n = 2$), swimming ($n = 5$), soccer ($n = 2$), rugby ($n = 1$), hockey ($n = 3$), baseball ($n = 1$), football ($n = 2$), track & field ($n = 3$), and artistic swimming ($n = 1$). The athletes' present year of varsity eligibility ranged from 2nd to 5th year, with 3 athletes in their 2nd year, 7 in their 3rd year, 6 in their 4th year, and 4 in their 5th year of varsity sport. The athletes represented four faculties of study, including arts ($n = 9$), science ($n = 7$), business ($n = 2$), and engineering ($n = 2$). Eighteen of the athletes were in undergraduate programs (90%), and the remaining two were in the first year of Master's programs (10%). Participants were not asked to identify their race or ethnicity for this study, though from appearances the majority were white.

Holistic Definitions of Health

When asked to define 'being healthy', participants responded with conceptions of health ranging from relatively simplistic definitions of health as strictly physical, to holistic definitions of health touching on all three constructs present in the World Health Organization's definition of health: Physical, mental, and social well-being

(World Health Organization, 1946). The vast majority of participants identified physical and mental well-being in their definitions of health, placing these at the forefront of 'being healthy.' Conversely, social well-being was initially recognized by only three participants, though all participants recognized that relationships could be beneficial to health once prompted.

> Being healthy can be looked at as mentally healthy and physically healthy. Mentally healthy in my opinion is having purpose every single day, having a goal that you're going for no matter how you feel. If you feel down sometimes, you know how to pick yourself up, and not to drown in it. For physically healthy, just taking care of your body as an athlete so you're not injury-prone. Eating well so you're both lean, still strong, and to make sure you don't have any toxins going into your body, you're nourished, no problems or risks of anything, so you can do what you need to do.
>
> Christine, Swimming, 5th year

In recognizing health as multifaceted, many participants further expressed that 'being healthy' necessitated a good state of being in all dimensions of health, and that being exceptionally healthy in one aspect could not compensate for poor health in another.

> I think being healthy is about having balance with everything. I think it's really important to not be stuck in just one facet of your life. It's the same thing with food right, if you just have steak everyday you're not healthy. You need a variety of things to keep you going. A balance between athletic life, academic life, social life. You can get stuck in focusing on just one of those things at times, and that's not healthy.
>
> George, Track & Field, 4th year

Following from this construct of health, the majority of participants generally recognized themselves as exceptionally healthy only if they were succeeding in both their athletic and academic roles. The following excerpt came in response to the question "To what extent are student-athletes healthy?".

> I think most of our lives are very healthy just based on the amount of stuff we have going on in our lives. The balance plays into every day as a student-athlete. In order to succeed you have to take care of everything in your life, and I don't think the majority of other people could handle that. We do handle it, and I think we drive each other to be healthier by being successful in balancing everything.
>
> Timothy, Swimming, 4th year

It is worth noting that some participants questioned this belief as well, recognizing that despite succeeding to some degree in athletic and academic roles, student-athletes could still be unhealthy.

> I know some varsity athletes that are very healthy, and I also know some varsity athletes that are not healthy. I know some of them, when they're going out with friends they will do drugs recreationally, they'll smoke, they won't exercise a whole lot. I don't know how those guys are able to play, like how they do cardio for a whole game. So there are definitely athletes that are not healthy, but then there are athletes going to the gym every day, they're huge, they probably eat well too. I'd say for the most part they are healthy, but there are definitely athletes where like, I don't even know how they make it as athletes with their lifestyles honestly.
>
> Oscar, Baseball, 4th year

When asked to describe unhealthy behaviors, participants generally listed behaviors destructive to bodily health, such as excessive alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, an unhealthy diet, and smoking. Some participants also touched on things they perceived to either lead to negative mental health outcomes, or to be the result of poor mental health, such as laziness and oversleeping.

> I guess smoke, drink, eat garbage. Fast food and stuff, which is fine, you can eat fast food like once or twice a week, it's totally fine, but not every day. One of my roommates, he eats at a restaurant at least once every day. He's not healthy. Not doing sports, obviously. Sports are very important, lucky me. And that's it, smoke, drink, eat fast food.
>
> Ryan, Football, 4th year

> Binge-drinking is unhealthy, don't binge-drink too much. Oversleeping I think is bad too, if you sleep too much and stay inside all day that's bad for mental health. Not working out. I think those are the big ones.
>
> Ian, Rugby, 3rd year

Participants recognized that nearly every aspect of their lives involves decisions with 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' consequences, referring primarily to their bodily health or mental health. Participants frequently extended discussion of these consequences by stating the impact they may have on athletic or academic success, constructing these as a perceived measuring stick for holistic health.

Physical Health

Three dominant themes were identified in participants' conceptions of physical health: having an acute awareness of your body, fulfilling your body's needs, and functional capacity, meaning one's ability to perform physical tasks.

> Physically, it's about listening to your body. If something's not feeling right, you should take care of that. Eating properly, that's something I've always struggled with. Basically giving your body what it needs to do your daily activities.
>
> Claire, Soccer, 4th year

> For physical, it's all about ability. If you can move around, and lift stuff, and not be tired all of the time, then you're physically healthy. The degree of that I don't know, like I don't know how strong you need to be, or how good your cardio needs to be to be fit, but the more of that you have the more healthy you are. Obviously as an athlete we need a lot of that, so to be healthy like we need to be able to lift a lot and run a lot.
>
> Ryan, Football, 4th year

Conceiving of health as functional capacity extended to many participants gauging their own physical health in accordance with their capacity to perform in sport at any given time.

> I think I assess and realize how healthy I am more because I practice every day. If I have a good practice I feel great, I feel energized, I feel focused, and that really reflects how healthy I am in pretty much every aspect. The next day, I might go through my whole day thinking I feel great, then at practice I'll feel exhausted and I can't focus, and that's when I know that I'm pretty unhealthy then. So it's about finding a way to make that great feeling in practice sustainable over multiple practices and games and things, and I think that's what health really is.
>
> Rebecca, Volleyball, 5th year

> My sport is where I end up noticing my health the most. In the off-season, I can eat whatever I want. I won't look great, I won't feel my best, but I'm not going to see that until I jump in the pool and try to swim a few kilometers, and realize that I don't feel like a swimmer anymore, I feel like a gigantic lump. Or I'll get a stomach ache after a few laps. That's when you really see it the most.
>
> Natasha, Artistic Swimming, 3rd year

Other participants expressed that their experiences in sport generally led to different standards of acceptable physical health, again typically defined in terms of functional capacity.

> When I wasn't an athlete, I felt that if I walked ten thousand steps in a day, that's healthy. Now, I think ten thousand steps is like nothing, I could get that done in like two hours, that wouldn't make me healthy. Am I injured? No. So if I'm not injured, good I'm healthy. Am I foam-rolling all of the time? Am I able to lift weights without being in pain? Good, then I'm healthy.
>
> Danielle, Track & Field, 3rd year

Participants' made frequent reference to athletic experiences when discussing health, often discussing physical health as a means to sport performance. In this regard, student-athletes generally perceived themselves as exceptionally physically healthy, as long-term sport participation provided them with heightened body-state

awareness, and an improved ability to perform physical tasks within and outside of the context of sport.

Mental Health

Mental well-being was recognized as an equally, and in some cases more, important dimension of health than physical well-being by all but two participants. Two dominant themes of mental health were identified: Life satisfaction, and having a feeling of purpose.

> I'd say joyful. Someone that I see enjoying their life, or always seems happy. Sometimes it might not be that inside, but just being happy and showing that can help your mental health. Obviously mental is inside, so we can't always see it, but if you express it outside that you're a person that enjoys your life, wants to go to hockey, wants to go to school, then that might help you in the long-term with your inside self.
>
> Lauren, Hockey, 2nd year

Many participants constructed physical and mental health as co-dependent, indicating poor mental health would likely manifest itself into poor physical health, and vice versa in the cases of injury or considerable fatigue.

> I think it's the pillar of physical health, because I think our physical health is really just a manifestation of what we think, what we want. I think if your mentality isn't there, your body totally reflects it.
>
> Emma, Track & Field, 5th year

> If you aren't in the right presence of mind to perform, you just won't be able to perform. You need to be in a state where you're able to focus, able to feel comfortable and get yourself into a relaxed state of just feeling energetic. If you don't take care of yourself mentally, you're not going to be able to do anything physically.
>
> Natasha, Artistic Swimming, 3rd year

As seen in the excerpt above, mental health was also linked with performance in sport, going as far as describing mental health in terms of one's possession of sport-related mental skills.

> For student-athletes, mental health is something I'm generally more concerned for than physical health. I still believe that your mental health is probably 70% of your result in sport, 30% is the physical aspect. If you want to get far, you need to be mentally tough, and like I said if you have issues outside of the sport, then it's going to affect your physical aspect as well. So to me it's the biggest part. It encompasses how you do the physical aspects, as well as your ability to perform.
>
> John, Swimming, 4th year

Similar to the link participants made between physical health and their capacity to perform in sport, mental health was also described by some as measurable in sport performance, though less explicitly than the links drawn between physical health and sport performance. It is also notable that, in contrast to how they describe physical health, mental health was commonly discussed in the context of broad life experience, rather than referring almost exclusively to sport experiences.

Participants also recognized inherent stigma surrounding mental illness and general mental well-being, both in the context of sport and the broader social context.

> It's just a tough issue to talk about, because no-one really understands it, and if you don't necessarily have mental health issues, then it's hard to talk about because people could say that you don't know what you're talking about. So I could talk to a hundred people with mental health issues, and I probably have, but that doesn't mean I'm an expert, and so I would just say yes it's important.
>
> Peter, Hockey, 3rd year

> I also think that mental health is a huge part of overall health. A lot of people tend to ignore that, especially, I think, for student-athletes because again, there's such a culture of being strong, of being tough. Mental health is not a visible injury.
>
> Shannon, Swimming, 5th year

The notion of sport contexts being particularly prone to mental health stigma was shared by many, who attributed hesitance towards mental health help-seeking to a culture of toughness, time constraints, and a poor reputation or lack of available resources.

When asked what could be improved to benefit student-athlete well-being in the Canadian university sport context, the most common element touched on by participants was a need for wellness resources specific to student-athletes. They described a particular need for general wellness information and resources in their earlier varsity years, and mental health resources throughout their time as varsity athletes.

> I think being more informed about what athlete well-being really is. We do know what it is sort of, but we're never really told how we should act differently than regular students. So maybe having presentations on health for student-athletes specifically.
>
> Lauren, Hockey, 2nd year

> I would say if we needed more support, it's for mental health. Things like body image, managing that with our sport. Concussion protocol is very specific as to what to do, but anything else mental is not. At the beginning of the year we have seminars for hazing, nutrition, varsity information, but there's no seminar on mental health or how to manage everything. That's the thing that's severely lacking and nobody ever mentions it.
>
> Charlie, Football, 5th year

These recommendations by participants shed light on their attitudes towards aspects of health in general, as well as what they perceive to be the most pertinent threats to student-athlete well-being in the present Canadian context. Many participants expressed a need for mental health resources, both in terms of counseling services and health education, which reaffirms the value they place on mental health as discussed previously.

Social Well-being

The majority of participants did not include social well-being in their initial definition of health or 'being healthy', however when prompted all participants recognized that relationships could be beneficial to one's health. Social well-being was commonly connected with positive mental health.

> In general, there's a baseline for what a healthy relationship should be like, and how to socialize in a healthy way. I think that's important to overall health because of the way it affects your mental health. If you're not in a healthy relationship, or your friends aren't treating you properly, or you're not treating them properly, that can really hurt you . . . if you're isolated, that's unhealthy.
>
> Lauren, Hockey, 2nd year

In addition to its relationship with mental health, participants also discussed social well-being as beneficial when relationships drove them to make healthier decisions. This was mentioned as either by means of social support to make healthier decisions, or from pressure to enact a healthy lifestyle in fear of judgment or embarrassment.

> Well, sometimes it can encourage you to live your best so that you don't feel embarrassed to be around other people. I want them to see me as a healthy person. I guess that would be it from a positive stance. If there are other people trying to make positive changes to be healthy that your friends with, then that's also good.
>
> Natasha, Artistic Swimming, 3rd year

Of the three domains of health ascribed by the World Health Organization, participants discussed social well-being with the most brevity. It's notable that although many participants identified connections between physical health and sport performance, as well as mental health and sport performance, no such connections were made between social well-being and sport performance, even amongst those in team sports.

Determinants of Health Ideas

Participants recognized multiple discursive sources that have impacted their conceptions of health, including formal education, family (parents in particular), media, and sport experiences. Sport experiences, and varsity sport in particular, were recognized by most participants as being exceptionally significant in shaping their ideas of health.

> Team sports have really influenced what I think it means to be healthy. I really believe a team environment is healthy, well it can be unhealthy but I think a good team environment is healthy, and I've been in good environments. I think that has definitely played into how I feel about that, how I feel about exercise, how I feel about not laying in bed and being outdoors a lot. So I think my past experience as an athlete have really shaped what I call healthy right now.
>
> Ian, Rugby, 3rd year

> Varsity sport definitely makes you more mindful of what you're doing, what you're eating, the choices you're making, and the people you have around you. Before I didn't really care if people smoked around me, now I really care.
>
> Emma, Track & Field, 5th year

Emphasizing sport experiences in their discussion of health is rather unsurprising given that the majority of participants have been participating in their respective sport consistently since early childhood. However, it is notable that despite a wealth of youth sport experience to draw from, many senior participants expressed that their ideas surrounding health shifted primarily from their experiences in university sport.

When elaborating on ways in which varsity sport shaped their ideas of health, participants described establishing a deeper understanding of what it takes to succeed in their athletic and academic roles, and this ultimately leading to better health.

> They have developed way more since becoming a student-athlete. I started to think more about it as a student-athlete, so I won't crash. Doing well in school, doing well in sport, everything, finishing my degree, I have to be always thinking about that. So yeah, definitely, being a student-athlete helps me figure out how to be healthier, and to just be ready to succeed in general.
>
> John, Swimming, 4th year

> If there's one thing that university has changed is that I didn't realize how hard it was to be healthy, like to make these everyday changes in your life to be better. Like I didn't know it took so much discipline. That's a big thing I've learned here, it's all about discipline. Maybe a part of me thought it was just natural before, like some people are just meant to be healthy and some aren't, but it's really not that. There's people that get up every day and do things that other people aren't willing to do, that's what makes the difference. I think that's what I've really learned being in university, from sport and the education part.
>
> Charlie, Football, 5th year

These excerpts re-affirm participants' connection between health and performance in both their athletic and academic roles. It is also worth noting that some participants expressed that university experiences outside of the varsity context also played a significant role in shaping their ideas of health, such as moving away from home, and encountering more people in general.

> I've realized that there's a lot of ways to be unhealthy, I would say. Before I came here I just went to school, went home, played hockey, hung out with my friends, no major adversity came out of that. I essentially just looked to the media to see what was unhealthy, which was people who were super, super thin or pretty overweight. Nobody talked at all about being mentally healthy. Then I got here, and I met people who aren't mentally healthy, another person who isn't physically healthy, a person who smokes a lot of weed. So I would say my definition, or understanding of the word health, and the concept of being healthy, has definitely broadened and I've synthesized it a bit more since I've come to university.
>
> Lauren, Hockey, 2nd year

Many participants felt their most impactful experiences, in terms of shaping their conceptualization of health and healthy behavior, came from times of difficulty or adversity. In the context of being a student-athlete, this was frequently discussed with reference to balancing demanding athletic, academic, and social roles.

> If you're faced with a problem, how do you deal with it, how do you move forward, and through our sport we learn ways to deal with those problems. We've all had conflicts, we've all been really tired, we've all been faced with tough decisions that other students haven't had to deal with. In being exposed to these tough decisions in university, that's truly helped us understand being healthy.
>
> Peter, Hockey, 3rd year

The vast majority of participants described the most difficult period of their university experience, and for some the most difficult period of their lives, to be in their first years as university student-athletes. The transition from high school to university, and from high school sport to university sport, was frequently characterized by feelings of stress, confusion, and being overwhelmed.

> I think [student-athletes] are not equipped. It's not something you're taught, it's something you're expected to learn, which I believe is an issue with varsity sport. It's really dependent on what your experiences were growing up as an athlete in high school. There's no structured teaching of proper organization for sport and class, they don't teach that in school, you need to learn it yourself. Some people pick that up quickly, but a lot of people make it work at a significant cost to their mental health, some people can never make it work.
>
> John, Swimming, 4th year

Participants recognized that, as a result of these stressful experiences, student-athletes learn to cope by shifting their approach to fulfilling their athletic and academic roles, and ultimately learn to modify their behaviours towards more proficient time management. Teammates were commonly discussed as role models for

successful strategies to manage both athletic and academic commitments, as well as for how to maintain a healthy lifestyle more broadly.

> Depending on the team you're on, every team has different people that are good at different things, and there's a lot of help you can get within that peer group. The more you use them the better. Especially for us, there are guys that are really good in the pool, and there are guys that are really good at school, then there are a couple that are really good at doing both. You can look to each and every one of those people to figure out how you can manage, and you're around them every day so if you're in a bad spot they can tell you what you can do.
>
> Timothy, Swimming, 4th year

It is evident that student-athlete experiences, both from their own perspective and vicariously through their teammates, play a significant role in sculpting constructions of health and healthy behaviour in our participants.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how student-athletes construct health in the Canadian context, and to identify discursive sources they draw these ideas from. The student-athletes of this study constructed these concepts in various ways, both supporting and challenging past findings drawn from athletic and general populations. Drawing from the World Health Organization's definition of health (World Health Organization, 1946), participants generally highlighted the importance of physical and mental well-being, while putting less emphasis on social well-being. Participants discussed multiple sources of information impacting their conceptualization of health, with a particular emphasis on the role of their experiences and relationships as varsity athletes and in sport more broadly. This affirms the notion of studying perceptions of health as a social construct, as participants derive its meaning from an "ensemble of social relations" (Parker, 1998, p. 2). Experiences involving adversity or negative outcomes were particularly emphasized by participants as shaping one's conceptualization of health, aligning with the idea of healthiness as the ability to self-manage in the face of challenges as proposed by Huber et al. (2011).

Student-athletes' conceptions of good physical health as being 'in tune' with the state of your body, fulfilling your body's needs, and functional capacity, both support and add to past findings in similar populations. Conceiving health as one's capacity to perform physical tasks is by no means unique to athletic populations (Makoul, Clayman, Lynch, & Thompson, 2009; Schatz & Gilbert, 2014), and using performance in sport as a measurement of one's health has been recognized previously in elite and recreational athletes (Theberge, 2008; Bridel, 2013). As discussed by Bridel (2013), the equating of health and athletic capacity may contribute to problematic trends amongst athletes such as the normalization of pain and injury, overtraining, and body dysmorphia. Similar connections are reflected in our findings, as participants noted that some levels of physical pain are not unhealthy when in the context

of sport, and that injuries are unhealthy on the basis that they limit one's ability to participate in their sport. Conceiving of health as a capacity to do one's sport may also contribute to troubling perspectives on some health-related behaviors, including classifying behaviors as unhealthy only so much as they impair sport performance. A particularly problematic example of this was described by Oscar, a fourth-year baseball player, in the context of alcohol consumption: "When they [athletes] do go out they don't really drink beer, they just chug vodka, which probably is the most healthy option for them. In terms of carbs and that stuff it's more worth it for them."

Physical health constructs of being 'in tune' with one's body, and to fulfill bodily needs, were discussed as contributors to participants' performance in sport, but additionally as guidelines for health more broadly. It's notable that in surveys of the general American population in 1995 and 2002, 'sensitive to physical state' was among the least prevalent conceptions of physical health (Makoul et al., 2009), whereas this concept arose quite commonly amongst our participants. Athletes' heightened awareness of physical state, gained from years of intensive sport participation, may produce a perceived proficiency in evaluating their physical health at any moment in time, explaining their emphasis on this aspect of physical health. Participants generally discussed fulfilling bodily needs in terms of effective coping with their demanding lifestyle, such as getting enough sleep, or eating enough healthy foods.

Participants identified life satisfaction, and having a feeling of purpose in life to be primary tenets of mental health. Mental health was discussed with consistent reference to mental illness, similar to recent findings with elite divers (Coyle, Gorcynski, & Gibson, 2017). In contrast to Coyle et al.'s findings, participants generally demonstrated confidence in describing their understanding and experiences of mental health. Consistent with previous research, participants also perceived stigma, both specific to athletes and in the broader social context, as a barrier to discussing mental health or seeking help (Gulliver, Griffiths, & Christensen, 2012). Recent mental health awareness initiatives may be contributing to more comfort in student-athletes discussing aspects of mental health, at least in a one-on-one conversational setting. Although our findings indicate progress in this regard, the consistent recognition of mental health stigma by participants demonstrates that there remains work to be done in this area.

Social well-being was identified as an element of health, unprompted, by only three participants, and was discussed primarily in terms of benefiting mental health and enacting social pressure to make healthier decisions. Participants largely recognized social well-being as beneficial to health once prompted, but it remains notable that social factors, such as social stability and positive relationships, did not consistently arise when student-athletes described necessary conditions of being healthy. This conforms to findings from a survey of the American public where social aspects arose in very few participants' conceptions of health (Makoul et al., 2009). Although public discourse has seemingly shifted towards holistic ideas of health (Engebretson, 2003), it seems social well-being continues to emerge less regularly as a prominent tenet of health.

It is clear from these findings that no single informational source distinctly accounts for the majority of health ideas in student-athletes, which is unsurprising given the complex manifestation of health concepts in essentially every facet of life (Crawford, 2006). A wide variety of discursive sources were indicated by participants as contributing to their understanding of health, with sport experiences commonly identified as very significant. This conforms to findings from Michaelson, McKerron, and Davison's (2015) research with Canadian adolescents, where it was suggested that personal experiences accounted for shaping health ideas more so than didactic learning. Sport experiences account for a significant part of student-athletes' life experience in general, both during and prior to university, signified by athlete identity often outweighing academic identity in collegiate athletes (Adler & Adler, 1991; Potuto & O'Hanlon, 2007). In this population, conceptualizations of health seem particularly vulnerable to change in sport contexts, and therefore interventions looking to address holistic health in athletes should consider integrating their messages directly into positive sport experiences when possible.

Limitations and Future Research

In the context of this study, participants may have considered some thoughts and experiences pertaining to health to be sensitive information, and as such they may have felt some discomfort in disclosing these to the interviewer. Participants' right to abstain from answering any question was maintained, though it is notable that no participants decided to exercise this right at any point. There also exists the possibility that participants felt obligated to represent a stereotypically busy, stressed, resilient student-athlete to a higher extent than their lived experiences reflect. To minimize this, the interviewer refrained from prompting participants with any discursive norms or expectations of student-athletes, and refrained from overtly affirming or degrading participant responses during the interview.

The transferability of the findings from this study are limited by the inclusion of only English-speaking athletes from two academic institutions in the Canadian U-Sport system. These two schools were selected to capitalize on the researchers' existing connections with athletics programs, and English-speaking participants were used as the interviewer is only fluent in English. Although no consistent differences emerged in the findings between participants as a result of their academic institution, it should be acknowledged that these findings may not fairly reflect the entire Canadian collegiate sport system, and this should be addressed in future research.

Another limitation of this study relates to health ideas stemming from a variety of discursive sources. Participants of this study had many significant lifestyle factors in common related to balancing varsity sport with full-time academic studies, however they are also subjected to vastly different influences in the form of distinct gender discourses, distinct sport discourses, and distinct cultural discourses among others. Significant differences in health ideas based on gender or sport were not noted in this study, however this should be tempered with the acknowledgment that detecting such differences was not a significant focus during the data analysis process. Future

research investigating student-athlete constructions of health should consider focusing on a specific gender, specific sports, and extending to other geographic contexts.

Future research is also needed to establish how conceptualizations of health manifest into behavior, and ultimately how they influence health outcomes. Equating health with athletic capacity, as discussed in this manuscript, may result in excellent adherence to physical activity, but may also lead to acceptance of substance use to better performance at the expense of long-term bodily health. Student-athletes are an interesting population through which to consider the relationship between health ideas and behavior by way of their demanding lifestyle and related health concerns.

Practical Implications

With regard to practice, findings from this study support two recommendations for athletic administration servicing Canadian academic institutions. First, many participants of this study indicated experiencing debilitating stress, unrealistic athletic commitment expectations, and resultant poor academic performance during their first year of varsity sport. This conforms to past findings with student-athletes in American contexts (Tracey & Corlett, 1995; Saxe, Hardin, Taylor, & Pate, 2017). Participants of this study attributed their negative experiences in this regard to misjudging the extent of their athletic and academic commitments throughout their first year, and having little means to learn to navigate these demanding commitments except by trial and error. In a system where academic scholarships, athletic scholarships, and future career aspirations are contingent on maintaining a competitive grade point average, struggling through this first year can have significant financial and long-term career implications. Our recommendation to address this issue is to make use of structured peer-mentoring programs, or group educational sessions, led by senior or recently graduated varsity athletes to set appropriate expectations and provide direction to incoming varsity athletes.

A second practical application stems from many participants of this study calling for increased mental health support, both in the form of counselling access, and mental health education sessions. As discussed in the literature review section of this document, a significant body of research has suggested student-athletes may be especially predisposed to high levels of mental distress (Blacker, Sullivan, & Cairney, 2017), and mental illness (Greenleaf, Petrie, Carter & Reel, 2009; Weigand, Cohen, & Merenstein, 2013; Yang et al., 2007). Participants of this study felt dissuaded from seeking information, or seeking help at times, due to issues of stigma, accessibility, and time constraints from their demanding roles. Our recommendation to address these concerns is to invest into student-athlete-specific mental health resources, including counselling and general mental health education, that cater to the unique lifestyle factors and schedule constraints of student-athletes. This recommendation is tempered by acknowledging the stringent financial resources permeating the Canadian collegiate context, particularly when compared to our American counterparts.

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A Deficiency of Donors or an Abundance of Barriers? Title IX Fundraising Challenges from the Perspective of Athletic Department Fundraisers

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This paper explores how athletic development personnel perceive the influence of Title IX within athletic fundraising, particularly how fundraisers view the interests of donors and barriers that are created for non-football/men's basketball programs. Using distributive justice as a theoretical lens, we examined the perspectives of athletic department fundraisers working at NCAA, Power Five athletic departments. Interviews from participants gleaned insights into only meeting the minimum legal requirements of Title IX, fighting between non-revenue programs for remaining resources, elevated requirements for program success for non-football/men's basketball programs, and more. This paper provides insight into a distinct context of fundraising, which often avoids Title IX scrutiny, but is the primary source for athletic departments to raise additional funds for their sport programs.

Keywords: Title IX, College Athletics, Fundraising

There is a constant struggle for Olympic sports to receive the same level of resources and facility improvements that are provided for football and men's basketball (Francis, 2016; Rubin & Lough, 2015). Universities are often willing to substantially increase funding for football and men's basketball for a litany of reasons, such as hiring a new coaching staff, keeping up with rivals, or even trying to increase on-field success (Huml, Pifer, Towle, & Rode, 2019). When resources are not reciprocated to other sports, different and more challenging requirements may be created before the university is willing to increase budgets and begin fundraising initiatives to support these programs. This creates a disadvantage for sports outside of football and men's basketball and is especially challenging for female sports.

Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) provides equal access to any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance, but critiques have been levied about the lack of Title IX oversight pertaining to certain resources, such as coaching salaries (Thelin, 2000). While coaching salaries are often publicly available, concerns are raised about other funding sources that are either private or informal. Some examples include fundraising efforts, and how such efforts are shaped and influenced to better

support football and men's basketball to the detriment of women's sport programs. Title IX and fundraising are important areas of future study within sport for a number of reasons. With philanthropy to universities at an all-time high, but women's sports receiving so little of these donations (Longman, 2019), the current context raises important questions on why there is such a disparity among contributions. Understanding whether barriers are external (i.e., lack of donor interest) or internal (athletic departmental politics) or both would create important insight into non-revenue-generating sports, fundraisers, and athletic departments as it relates to complying with Title IX. Lastly, revenue generation has been previously mentioned as a "blind spot" for Title IX (Grimmett-Norris, 2015); there is a need to examine this oversight and detail any disparities that may occur, such as fundraising disparities.

Philanthropy is one of the leading sources of athletic department revenue, and currently there is a dearth of research regarding philanthropy and Title IX in sport. The purpose of this paper is to explore the perception of Title IX by athletic department fundraisers. Specifically, we investigate how athletic fundraisers work with prominent athletic donors in guiding or restricting their donations towards specific sport programs or prioritized projects.

Literature Review

Distributive Justice

Organizations have finite resources that may be distributed to the various programs and departments in order to operate (Friedman, Parent, & Mason, 2004). Deciding how to distribute these resources can be complex and troublesome for budgetary managers. As context for this article, the theory of distributive justice has largely been defined as the principle underlying the distribution of resources and the outcomes and rewards to separate parties in an organization (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994). The three key principles of distributive justice are: need, equity, and equality (Deutsch, 1975a).

In need-based distributions, the organizations who exhibit the greatest need for resources are allocated the largest portion of resources or receive the smallest reductions (Deutsche, 1975b). Mahony, Hums, and Reimer (2005) identified three ways for determining need: (a) Those with less of a resource can be perceived as having the greatest need, (b) other groups may be deemed more needy if their unit has higher costs due to the nature of the activity, and (c) maintaining a competitive foothold may be more costly in their area than with others. When apportionments are made on the basis of equity, distributors allocate resources based on contribution to the organization (Törnblom, Jonsson, & Foa, 1985). This means individuals or groups who contribute more will receive a larger input, or the perceived equivalent amount of their contribution (Dixon, Turner, Pastore, & Mahony, 2003). On the basis of equality, groups and individuals receive an equal allocation regardless of contribution. Törnblom et al. (1985) noted the principles of equality include: (a) equality of treatment, (b) equality of results over the long term, and (c) an equal opportunity to receive distributions. Equality of treatment means the distributions are dispersed

equally in a given situation, while equality of results over the long term indicates distributions are equal over a period of time. Under equal opportunity, everyone has an equal chance to receive resources but scholars have rejected this notion in other settings (Mahony, Hums, & Reimer, 2002; Mahony & Pastore, 1998).

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. § 1681). However, it is important to note that sport was not originally included in the amendment. In 1974, a proposal to exempt sports that produced gross revenue or donations from Title IX compliance determinations was rejected in Congress. In response, a separate amendment was passed by Congress to expand the protection to intercollegiate athletics (Edwards, 2010). However, in 1978, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare received roughly 100 discrimination complaints against athletic departments at more than 50 institutions of higher education, which prompted the Department to provide further guidance regarding compliance with Title IX in intercollegiate athletic programs and a framework for conflict resolution (Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979). The Title IX 1979 Policy Interpretation applies to three areas: financial assistance to athletes; program areas that provide treatment, benefits, and opportunities for the athletes; and providing equally effective accommodation of the interests and abilities of male and female athletes (Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979). The financial assistance requirement, or scholarships, means assistance should be available on a substantially commensurate basis to the number of male and female participants in the institution's athletic program. Pursuant to the regulation, compliance in other program areas refers to the governing principle that male and female athletes should receive equivalent treatment, benefits, and opportunities. Lastly, regarding compliance in meeting the interests and abilities of male and female students, the regulation states athletic interests and abilities of male and female students must be equally effectively accommodated (Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979).

Sport scholars have previously investigated managerial decisions regarding resource allocations as it pertains to Title IX (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994; Kim, Andrew, Mahony, & Hums, 2008; Mahony & Pastore, 1998; Mahony, Riemer, Breeding, & Hums, 2006; Rubin & Lough, 2015). Women often favor the equality principle for distribution of resources between programs, compared to men who favor the equity principle (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994; Patrick, Mahony, & Petrosko, 2008). The equity principle becomes problematic for women's sports because the popularity and growth of women's sport was achieved without an increase in coverage of women's sports on-campus or in the surrounding community (Cooky, Messner, & Hextrum, 2015). With women's sports not receiving the same marketing increase as men's sports, it creates a disadvantage within an equity approach of resource distribution. Need-based distribution can also create a disadvantage for women's sports because athletic departments will perceive need compared to what other universities provide

for each sport (Cunningham & Sagas, 2005; Mahony & Pastore, 1998). For example, if a university provides its football program with $10 million in yearly support, another university may believe its football program *needs* $10 million in order to compete. Similar support for women's sports is not reciprocated, as current female administrators spoke to ignorance of applying the need principle to women's sports when they were competing as student-athletes during Title IX's infancy (Rubin & Lough, 2015). Rubin and Lough (2015) provided examples of a lack of resources for women's sports, such as not providing basic playing equipment like leather basketballs for the basketball team or access to medical supplies. With concerns about the need and equity principles, current female athletes and, surprisingly, male athletes in revenue sports believed distributing resources based on the equality principle would be the fairest approach (Kim et al., 2008). On the contrary, other studies have found male athletes in non-revenue sport programs to support resource distribution to support revenue programs, even at the detriment of their own programs (Messner & Solomon, 2007). These findings highlight the possibility of differing opinions based on revenue sport designation. An important consideration for resource distribution is athletic department fundraising, which can fluctuate on a variety of factors but also provides the athletic departments funds that are unencumbered by university administration and provide athletic administrators greater flexibility on how they are used.

Athletic Fundraising

Coaching salaries continue to rise, and the costs of keeping up with the "arms race" regarding programs, facilities, and other expenses is likely unsustainable (Frank, 2004; Huml et al., 2019; Sparvero & Warner, 2013). Most intercollegiate athletic departments in the US report losses or are bound to operate within specific budget parameters (Sanderson & Siegfried, 2017). As a result, with athletic departments striving for self-sufficiency, donations have been identified as an opportunity for increasing revenue. Athletic fundraising is often viewed as one of the last mainstays of limitless financial support for intercollegiate athletic programs (Stinson & Howard, 2007), and many schools have become reliant on fundraising support to maintain operations (NCAA, 2018a). For college athletic programs to achieve long-term sustainability, financial support from donors is crucial (Park, Ko, Kim, Sagas, & Eddosary, 2016). Athletic fundraising has also steadily increased over the years, as donors are becoming more likely to be tapped to support capital campaigns and large facility projects (Huml et al., 2019).

Much of the literature on fundraising in intercollegiate athletics has focused on donor motivations and intentions (e.g., Brunette, Vo, & Watanabe, 2017; Gladden, Mahony, & Apostolopoulou, 2005; Ko, Rhee, Walker, & Lee, 2014; Park et al., 2016). There exists a range of motivations for donors to contribute to athletic programs: opportunities for priority seating, fan identification, athletic event attendance, complimentary programs, public recognition, hospitality suites, access to insider information, priority tickets for away games and bowl games, alumni status, tax deductions, special treatment, philanthropy, and successful football teams (Gladden et al., 2005; Mahoney, Gladden, & Funk, 2003; Stinson & Howard, 2004, 2010). Research

has shown football to be the primary influence on giving at institutions who have football teams (Martinez, Stinson, Kang, & Jubenville, 2010). While football may be a driving force for donations, gift officers for universities must work to comply with Title IX requirements while also managing donor motivations and intentions. Thus, it is imperative to understand how these athletic fundraisers guide donations within the university athletic departments, with respect to Title IX.

Fundraising provides a distinct context for examining Title IX, which has rules regarding access to educational opportunities. When creating new facilities, public institutions need to reflect on how those facilities will provide for both male and female athletes. For example, an eager donor may want to create a locker room for the men's golf team. Title IX considerations would require the athletic department to consider the women's golf team and its current options for a locker room. If the donation is not earmarked for new facilities, the athletic department may be able to avoid Title IX oversight, such as a donation that funds team travel for the men's golf team but not for the women's golf team.

Method

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the perception of Title IX by athletic department fundraisers. Specifically, we examine how athletic fundraisers work with prominent athletic donors in guiding or restricting their donation towards specific sport programs or prioritized projects. This study utilized a qualitative design to explore the interaction of gift officers with decision makers within the athletic department (i.e., athletic director) and donors to guide their decision-making through the lens of Title IX. Our two hypotheses were:

1. Athletic fundraisers believe there is a reluctance of donors to support varsity sport programs outside of football and men's basketball.
2. Athletic fundraisers create barriers for varsity sports programs outside of football and men's basketball to receive increased resources alongside placing priority on athletic facility projects.

To assess these guiding questions, we used the Gioia methodology to capture the unique context of the interaction of fundraisers with donors and university leadership, while also generating concepts to connect their responses to the theory of distributive justice. The Gioia methodology has been used to preserve informant perspectives while bridging to generalizable theoretical concepts (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012; Gioia & Thomas, 1996). This methodology requires the researcher to analyze the informant's statements by developing first-order concepts that accurately characterize the informant's context and vocabulary (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). These informant-centric terms are then analyzed through a second phase of the reviewers comparing each other's analysis and reconciling any differences, known as second-order concepts, which are categorized as researcher-centric terms and dimensions (Gioia et al., 2012). These second-order concepts provide a connec-

tion between informant responses and abstract theoretical principals. This qualitative approach provides strengths to the researcher for applying theoretical concepts to applications that can be generalizable to practitioners (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991).

The Gioia methodology is also suited for answering our hypotheses for further reasons. First, it is useful for developing theory, but it does not establish or create theory as with grounded method approaches (Gioia et al., 2012). In this article, we assume that distributive justice theory accurately portrays the varying ways of how managers distribute resources among groups. The questions we focused on were: (a) how employees charged with raising funds for the athletic department may influence their manager's or donor's decisions for resource distribution, (b) how established distributive justice approaches were thematically aligned with athletic fundraiser responses, and (c) how Title IX shaped the fundraiser's responsibilities and actions within the athletic department. Second, our methodological approach aligns well with our choice to study the distinctive case of college athletics fundraising (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Scholars use distinct cases to test and progress a theory by selecting a particularly trying, dramatic, or information-rich situation (such as athletic fundraising for college athletics, where donors and internal stakeholders are deciding which project to prioritize to help their various sport programs), so that new insights can be developed, which can then be tested in simpler situations. Examining Title IX within college athletics is not a unique contribution to the field, but the perspective of athletic fundraising and influencing projects from the perspective of Title IX and revenue/non-revenue sport is a distinct approach within scholarship. The Gioia method allows us to study a distinct case because it maintains the uniqueness while linking it to abstract generalizable concepts, such as distributive justice.

Participants

We targeted a sampling frame of athletic fundraisers at predominantly NCAA Power Five, Division I athletic departments. This targeted population was chosen for multiple reasons. First, Power Five, Division I athletics represents the highest level of intercollegiate sport competition and corresponds with significant fundraising commitments from fans and local constituents. Second, Power Five, Division I athletic departments also support the most amount of varsity sports, with the NCAA requiring a minimum of 16 varsity sport programs to maintain status as a Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) athletic program (NCAA, 2018b). While their profitability is often scrutinized by scholars (Cheslock & Knight, 2015), athletic departments are often dependent on donations to construct and maintain new athletic facilities (Huml et al., 2019). This fundraising is vital and differs across the NCAA divisions, as Power Five athletic departments are able to secure millions in yearly donations, and are therefore able to support multiple projects simultaneously. This differs from smaller athletic departments, which have fewer varsity sports and a smaller donor base, thus they may be only able to target one fundraising project every couple of years. Therefore, Power Five athletic departments have the affluence and capacity to support projects for both revenue (e.g., football) and nonrevenue (e.g., lacrosse) programs.

We interviewed 19 athletic administrators at 18 different NCAA Division I uni-

versities in the United States (one interview involved two athletic administrators working at the same institution). We used a snowball sampling method, first by purposely seeking out all fundraisers within a prominent Power Five conference, with additional institutions sought because of unique athletic department settings, such as a new athletic director or Division I program without football. Each administrator contacted was involved within development, the traditional office within an athletic department that is responsible for fundraising. Athletic fundraisers work as the go-between for internal stakeholders (interests from coaches, student-athletes, athletic directors, university leadership) and external stakeholders (donors and local community) by providing information and shaping interests that work for both parties. With their influence on decision making for both parties, they provide important context within the topic of Title IX project support. All of the participants responded and agreed to an interview, although one university later requested to be removed from the study, which reduced our sample to 18 usable interviews (two of the participants did a combined interview, leaving a total of 19 participants). The participants' characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before conducting interviews, we developed an interview guide with a committee of three scholars with expertise in intercollegiate athletics (both as former athletes and administrators) and two practitioners who work in athletic department fundraising. The interview guide was created to elicit perspectives from fundraisers on their job and interactions with donors, while also being tailored to the context of athletic departments and using the terms that administrators use (Gioia et al., 2012). A third athletic fundraising practitioner vetted the final interview guide. She agreed that all topics and questions were appropriate but recommended adding a topic about "quid pro quo" gifts (whereby donors request benefits from the athletic department in exchange for their donation) because these requests are an important part of donor management at major universities. We also added a question about the new federal tax plan that was introduced mid-way through the interview process, because this tax plan—which removed deductions for charitable giving—was expected to change how athletic departments worked with donors (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, 2017). Because this change occurred during data collection, only a portion of the participants were solicited on the topic.

Our analysis strategy began by reviewing literature on distributive justice theory and Title IX. This initial review focused on defining responses from fundraisers on their interactions with donors, internal decision-makers, and project prioritization within the concepts of need, equity, and equality. This analysis was completed using the open coding approach consistent with Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2012). This process is done in two-steps: (1) an establishment of first-order codes that are abbreviation content titles based on quotes from the participants, and (2) second-order codes that theoretically connect the first-order codes to provide abstract insights that connect the study's context and theoretical framework).

Table 1

Study participants

Name	Title	NCAA	Geographic Location
Phillip	Deputy Director of Athletics	Non-Power Five	South
Jacob	Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	South
Derek	Asst. Athletic Director of Development	Non-Power Five	West Coast
Lewis	Executive Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	Southeast
Melanie	Assoc. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	Midwest
Gregory	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	Midwest
George	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	Midwest
Kendall	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	Midwest
Nathan	Assoc. Vice President for Development	Power Five	Midwest
Emilio	Asst. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	Midwest
Scott	Asst. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	South
Aaron	Assoc. Director of Development	Non-Power Five	South
Brad	Assoc. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	South
Donovan	Director of Major Gifts	Power Five	South
Brandon	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	South
Shawn	President/CEO of Foundation	Power Five	South
Brittany	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director of Development	Power Five	South
Robert	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director of Development	Non-Power Five	West Coast
Luke	Senior Assoc. Athletic Director	Power Five	Northeast

The first author scheduled, conducted, and recorded 13 interviews in person at the participants' offices and five interviews over the phone. This author has six years' experience in college athletics and was able to adopt an insider perspective during the interviews, which enabled them to ask pertinent follow-up questions and elicit details from the informants. The second author adopted an outsider perspective, pro-

viding a legal acumen to Title IX considerations and balancing the insights from the first author. In total, 703 minutes of interviews were used in analysis, resulting in 237 single-spaced pages of transcripts. Interview times ranged from 35 minutes to one hour. Interviews were immediately transcribed and returned to the authors for edits and clarification. Following transcription, the completed transcripts were provided to the participants for review to ensure accuracy of transcription. Only one participant requested any edits, with those changes isolated to clarification of wording.

The first author and the second author conducted coding separately. The first author completed a thorough review of quotes from each participant interview, leading to the initial establishment of 450 concepts. Following this initial coding, the second author was provided these initial concepts, with both authors now required to review the quotes and concepts and create themes. This reduced total first-order concepts to 11 themes for the first author and nine themes for the second author. The first and second authors then compared their corresponding first-order concepts and themes: they agreed on 10 of 11of the themes, covering 91% of the data. They discussed the differences and came to mutual agreement on the underlying data structure, which is represented in Figure 1.

Results

Overview

Our results indicate that Title IX affected the perspective of fundraisers. These influences included finding ways to simply meet the minimum legal requirements of Title IX to turning down monies because it would put them in weak Title IX legal standing. Fundraisers also spoke to the hurdles and elevated standards they placed on non-football and men's basketball programs, including fending Olympic sports against each other, pushing Olympic sports to be "cheerleaders" for football and men's basketball, claiming a lack of support from donors, and claiming a need for a national championship before women's sports would be eligible for improved facilities.

Coaching Requests/Comparisons

An important component stemming from the interviews was the involvement of coaches in deciding what projects should be considered. Head coaches had the opportunity to meet with their athletic director and development office annually to discuss needs for their program. Many of these requests are made by coaches in order to improve their team success and all requests are considered. One athletic fundraiser provided an overview of request options:

> What your coach thinks is important for his program to win or her program to win, cause every coach has a different set, some coaches believe in, you know, I need the latest state-of-the-art locker room and weight room and training facility, and nutrition facility. And some other coaches say, I need a better competition facility, so it's kinda the eye of the beholder. (Gregory)

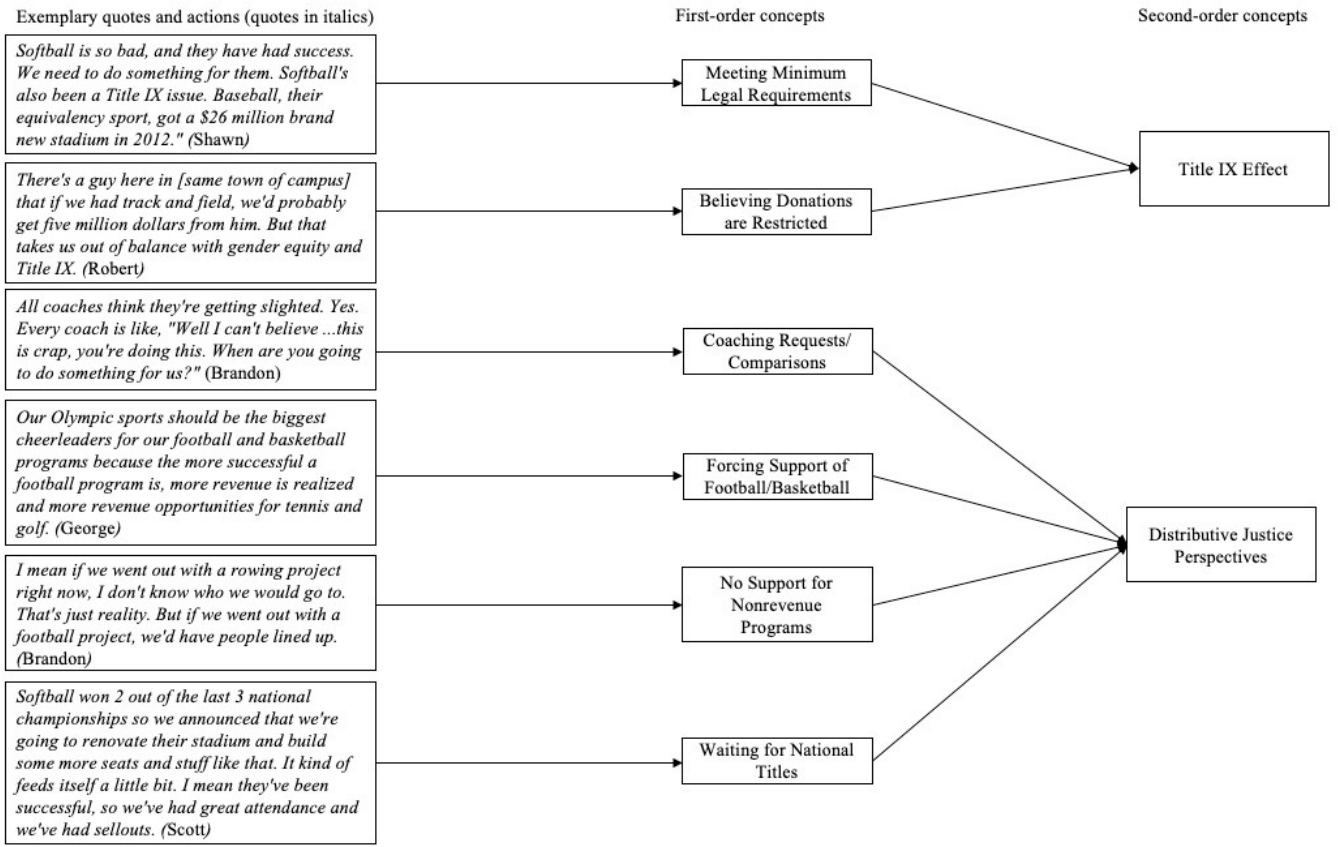

Figure 1. First- and second-order concepts

These requests are made by every coach in the athletic department: "Every sport has something they want to do to their facilities" (Scott). This requires the athletic director and development office to decide on which projects deserve to be prioritized to donors.

Coaches are aware of this competition for donor dollars and often go into the meeting with justification and data on why their requests should be supported. Many coaches keep close watch on the facility improvements being completed at their competitor schools, who then use these competitor upgrades as an explanation on why their project should be strongly considered: "For sure our coaches are doing that [keeping track of competitors]" (Scott). For example:

> They may not care if the project is fundraised or funded through the athletic department but there's no question when they look at what their peers have they say we need this if we're going to be able to compete for a championship. (Lewis)

This competition is not exclusively for external competitors. Many coaches outside of the football and basketball programs view it as a competition for a smaller amount of monies available to "non-revenue programs". This can create an environment where the athletic director and development office decide to promote a facility project for one non-revenue program, and the coaches in other non-revenue programs feel slighted. One athletic fundraiser (Shawn) provided an example of internal fighting between non-revenue programs:

> So, here's an example. Softball and track and field have gotten $70 million worth of construction going on out there. Soccer is right next door to them. The soccer coach tweeted out a picture of the facilities, and said, "There's $70 million worth of construction going on out here, people." That was all they said. Pretty passive-aggressive. And, I understand they said what they said. [The soccer program] worked pretty hard to raise money on their own. Those other two really haven't done any fundraising. They've done a lot of complaining. [Soccer has] been proactive [in self-fundraising], they [track and field] haven't. Now, they're [track and field] getting $70 million worth of construction, and [soccer is] still in their facility.

This internal "cannibalism" between Olympic sports provides an example of how athletic department decision-making creates pressure and an unhealthy competition between the department's Olympic sport programs. They know football and men's basketball are going to get many of their projects prioritized over their own, but they find it especially hurtful when other non-revenue programs are given preference over their own program.

Title IX

Trickle-down economics. When discussing the impact of Title IX on athletic fundraising, participants surprisingly viewed the legislation through the lens of football and men's basketball. Many of them took an approach akin to an ill-fated economic theory from the 1980's known as "trickle-down economics". The athletic fundraisers believed that the best way to solve Title IX was having a successful football and men's basketball program. This perspective stemmed from the belief these programs would increase revenue coming into the athletic department, corresponding with greater funding available for all varsity sports: "they understand that if football is doing well, then everybody will be doing well" (Luke). The fundraisers' view was that football and men's basketball provide funding across all programs, thereby requiring prioritization. Such a prioritization would help alleviate any Title IX concerns because the athletic department would have more funding: "Everywhere you go, football pays most of the bills, then basketball revenue pretty much picks up the rest. And you're lucky if you break even or make a little money on any other sport" (Brandon). Going further, one fundraiser claimed that Olympic sports should be the "biggest cheerleaders" of the football program:

> At the same time, our Olympic sports should be the biggest cheerleaders for our football and basketball programs because the more successful a football program is, more revenue is realized and more revenue opportunities for tennis and golf and baseball and those type of sports. And I think for the most part, everybody gets that. In our athletic department these are our priorities and this is because we need football to benefit all of our sports. (George)

These findings report that athletic fundraisers not only believe having a successful football and men's basketball program helps Title IX concerns and fundraising for other varsity sport programs, but those programs should also buy into this model and be supportive of football and men's basketball, as these programs allow other sports to exist and potentially flourish.

"Title IX is a problem". Title IX was also perceived as a troublesome component of the athletic fundraiser's profession. The athletic fundraiser, and other internal stakeholders, have long-term plans on how to improve the athletic department, but expressed that Title IX can become a constraint on these plans, legally requiring them to prioritize underserved programs even if they prefer other projects. One athletic fundraiser gave an example of how their newly hired athletic director had to address Title IX concerns first, even though they wanted to kickstart facility improvements for football:

> Some of those things could be driven based on Title IX issues. For example we had, when [athletic director] started here, priority number one was football. When he was hired it was to fix football. But when he got here he discovered that our facilities were some of the worst facilities in the country. And we had Title IX issues. So we had to direct our attention to building a new soccer facil-

> ity for our women's soccer. A new softball facility, a new tennis facility. All for women's sports, non-revenue sports. And so to make sure that we are compliant with Title IX, so at that point we were really focusing and really putting our attention to only those projects and really we're not actively fundraising for football or basketball at that point because we had to get those things addressed before we could turn our attention to our revenue sports. (George)

Another theme was that consideration for non-revenue programs only occurred once the situation became a legal issue under Title IX. Athletic fundraisers continued to prioritize certain sports, especially male sports, until they were notified that support was needed for their corresponding sports, often female sports, in order to avoid Title IX legal issues. Only when there were legal considerations did the athletic fundraisers, and subsequently the athletic department, start considering projects for these other programs: "Softball [facility] is so bad, and they have had success. We need to do something for them. Softball has also been a Title IX issue. Baseball, their equivalency sport, got a [over $20 million] brand new stadium in 2012" (Shawn).

Others went further, mentioning how Title IX was stopping them from securing monies from top-level donors. For example: "There's a guy here in [redacted] that if we had track and field, we'd probably get five million dollars from him. But that takes us out of balance with gender equity and Title IX" (Robert). These responses showcase how athletic fundraisers often perceive Title IX as a hindrance to their profession and to the athletic department. Instead of viewing Title IX as a way to increase facilities available to many female sports and male, non-revenue programs, they are viewed as a deterrent for continuing the facility projects designed to improve the university's football and men's basketball programs.

Different standards for new facilities. Unlike football and men's basketball, other sports were required to share any facility improvements with other programs. Athletic fundraisers spoke of seeking facility improvements with multi-use facilities. These multi-use facilities were often targeted to sports besides football and men's basketball, who were able to get state-of-the-art facilities that would not be accessible to other varsity sport programs. Multi-use facilities do provide future cost reductions for the athletic department, as a multi-use facility provides benefits for multiple sports without having to create a facility for each sport, but athletic fundraisers often viewed it as a way for non-football programs to not distract the football student-athletes and maximize the availability of the premier facility to the football program. An example from one of the participants:

> And realistically, our coaches are very smart about how they do things. One thing that part of our master plan is to build an Olympic sport weight room for all of our Olympic sports. Well, that will be priority number one because that's going to affect 12 sports compared to just affecting one sport with something else. So they understand that. They're all going to reap benefits from that. And while the Olympic sport weight room may not directly affect football, indirectly it'll affect football because it'll mean that less people are using their weight

> room because they have their own weight room so the golf team may not be over there using their weight room from 6 to 7:00 in the morning and it'll free up more time over there for them. So it has a direct effect on everybody (Luke).

In other instances, it was Olympic sports getting a facility handed down to them from the football program, who were being prioritized for a newer facility. This would mean football would maintain exclusive access to the new facility, but many of the other sports would "upgrade" to the facility that was being replaced: "When football vacates, call it 15 offices, the use of the weight room, use of the training room, use of academic tutoring services over there and the academic center over there. Now you repurpose that space for other programs" (Robert).

In addition to often having to share new or re-purposed facilities, athletic fundraisers often talked about the willingness to split donations from prominent donors that wanted to support projects outside of football and basketball. This was not perceived as a conscious decision by the athletic fundraiser, but any time they mentioned a specific sport program regarding joint asks, an athletic and academic donation, they always invoked an Olympic sport: "A lot of them will say, 'It wouldn't have been possible without the hockey program. It wouldn't have been possible without the business school.' I think that's certainly the case" (Derek). Another fundraiser spoke of a collaboration between women's soccer, baseball, and the university's business school for an endowed scholarship. Athletic fundraisers did provide one avenue for non-football and men's basketball programs to become prioritized for facility improvements – program success. This was an extremely high bar for programs to reach, as participants often described program success as being one of the recent best programs in your sport in order to demand new or improved facilities. For one women's program, this required winning two of the previous three national championships:

> I mean it gets (sic) you want to help out the programs that are being successful and you want to build on that momentum. I mean [women's spring sport] has won two out of the last three national championships so this spring we just announced that we're going to renovate their stadium and build some more seats and stuff like that. It kind of feeds itself a little bit. I mean they've been successful, so we've had great attendance and we've had sellouts so that's forcing to look at our stadium and see how we can build more seats (Scott).

Another example:

> Baseball's been in the College World Series [frequently recently]. There's a better than not chance that they're gonna get there and win it at some point. If we win with the national championship in baseball, guarantee you baseball coaches are gonna be knocking on the AD's door going, 'How about we redo this baseball stadium in a large way?' Then for two reasons, the appetite to do it will be there. Number one because we're winning and we want to keep the guy. Number

> two is because the way our stadium's configured, we can very easily wipe everything from the concourse level up out and start over with some suites. We have suites at the baseball stadium now, but we need more. We got demand for it, but we just don't have them available, and some other improvements (Donavan).

This level of success limits facility improvements to only teams who win national championships, an almost impossible bar for many programs, especially those lacking in program history. These challenges, requiring to be a "cheerleader" for football, only getting new facilities when you are legally required, having to share hand-me-down facilities with other sports, having to split donations with academic programs, and needing to win a national championship in order to prioritize facility improvements, showcase the incredibly high standards and diluted benefits that are provided to non-revenue sport programs when compared to football and men's basketball.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper is to explore the perception of Title IX by athletic department fundraisers. Specifically, we examine how athletic fundraisers work with prominent athletic donors in guiding or restricting their donation towards specific sport programs or prioritized projects. Previous studies have investigated the challenges faced by Olympic sports, particularly women sports, in trying to achieve equal footing with football and men's basketball within college sports (Francis, 2016; Rubin & Lough, 2015). Within that literature, there is a need to examine areas of resource distribution that are often overlooked in the implementation of Title IX, such as fundraising. In the previous section, responses from athletic fundraisers were categorized by themes stemming from the Gioia methodology. These themes sought to identify the effect of Title IX on their roles and potential barriers placed on Olympic sports, especially women's sports related to fundraising.

First, fundraisers described their discussions with coaches and how those interactions were framed within a distributive justice approach as a means for defending their requests. Athletic fundraisers discussed how every coach has "big picture" items they want the athletic department to prioritize to improve their program, such as improved practice facilities. Very few of these projects are chosen as priorities, therefore coaches would frame the importance of their requests through a couple different approaches. First, coaches would keep close tabs on the facility upgrades secured by their competitors, such as a Big Ten women's soccer program seeing another Big Ten women's soccer program securing renovations for its locker room. Once another program announced these improvements, the coach would frame their request of improvements as a need, believing they *needed* their requests approved in order to maintain the probability of success against a competitor that had already started its renovations and would soon reap benefits in the form of improved player performance, recruiting, analytics, etc. These findings extend Mahony et al.'s (2005) findings about need being defined as competing successfully. They reported how budget allocations were consistently monitored and argued as a need.

Fundraisers also mentioned how coaches paid attention to initiatives that were approved for other Olympic sport programs instead of their own. With coaches sensing a limited amount of funding initiatives available to non-football/men's basketball programs, it created a hostile environment where one program was able to secure a funding campaign to improve their program but ended up generating disdain from other Olympic sport programs whose requests were not chosen. This finding helps extend the concept of equity by illuminating possible negative consequences. Coaches within Olympic sports feel increased pressure within an equity approach due to the decreased funding available. This pressure manifests itself with passive aggressive behavior or comparison between programs that may erode organizational culture (Jayakumar & Comeaux, 2016). These negative consequences are unfortunate managerial implications for using an equitable approach. Implementing an equality approach or finding a way to alleviate this passive aggressive behavior between programs, such as increasing fundraising initiatives for non-football/men's basketball programs, would be recommended alternatives for managers. This lack of funding for sports outside of football and men's basketball, and the in-fighting to secure these limited funds, also creates an unfair environment for women's sports. The majority of fundraising and projects are predisposed to two men's sports, therefore creating a lack of resources for women's sports due to persistent beliefs across the athletic development offices and athletic departments interviewed for this study that football and men's basketball need to be prioritized. With athletic fundraising falling within a "gray area" of Title IX, athletic departments seem to seize this opportunity to prioritize football and men's basketball by constructing new facilities or renovating older ones. This would allow the athletic department to use the old facility, previously used by football, to now be used by Olympic sports to share a common facility, complying with Title IX by the law, but not the spirit.

Title IX Implications

Results on fundraisers directly responding to the influence of Title IX on their role helps scholars better understand the influence of Title IX on fundraising initiatives but also provides theoretical contributions for distributive justice. The overwhelming view of Title IX was from the perspective of equity; that football and men's basketball should be given a priority for incoming fundraising dollars and prioritized facility projects since they bring in the great majority of revenue. This perception was justified because fundraisers believed having a successful football and men's basketball program would increase the revenue for the athletic department, which would then provide a bigger pool of money that could be split up among the other programs. One fundraiser summarized this cycle by saying Olympic sport programs "should be the biggest cheerleaders for our football and basketball programs" (George). These findings further extend our understanding of equity and the justification of its use, with managers or decision-makers justifying this approach as a round-about way of providing the majority of available monies to football and men's basketball with the incentive that if they are successful it will lead to more monies for other sport programs further down the road.

This belief may also be rooted within fundraisers' belief of need, that most college athletic departments invest additional millions of dollars in their football program rather than in other sports because other athletic departments do the same and believe that a reduction in financial support will lead to a decrease in on-field success (Mahony et al., 2005). This argument becomes untenable within an equity approach, especially using the fundraisers' argument here that non-football/men's basketball programs should be supportive of football and men's basketball receiving the majority of funding requests. This argument is dependent on either achieving or maintaining success in football and men's basketball, which is bound by binary results that will leave the same amount of losing programs and winning programs, yet there are ever-increasing costs for new facilities, coaching salaries, and auxiliary spending that eliminates the benefit of supporting these programs. It also requires a coach to take an unnatural perspective of putting the resources needs of other programs over their own. With coaches in a working environment that have extreme pressure, endless hours, and risk of being fired if their team performs poorly (Bruening & Dixon, 2007; Hancock et al., 2019; Taylor, Huml, & Dixon, 2019), this perspective becomes an impossible request.

Title IX also functioned as motivation, albeit a legal motivation, for athletic departments to utilize an equality approach. Highlighting this issue was the specific quote from one fundraiser regarding the newly-hired athletic director having to deny his desire to focus on football to begin improving facilities in other sports due to Title IX compliance. These findings progress our theoretical understanding of the equality approach within distributive justice. Administrators may choose an equality approach based on fear of legal ramifications, not based on their beliefs of what would serve the best interests of their department. There are both positives and negatives for this finding. A positive is that Title IX is providing for women as intended. Athletic directors and university decision-makers may want to continue increasing their investment into football and men's basketball programs. Title IX requires these important stakeholders to reconsider certain facility projects to ensure similar facilities and funding is provided to female sports. One negative is that schools are likely to pursue an equality approach that only achieves a bare minimum by legal standards. Coaches outside of football and men's basketball are recommended to understand Title IX and use their knowledge of the statute to their maximum benefit when making requests to their athletic director and fundraising office.

Lastly, fundraisers spoke about how once a non-football/men's basketball program achieved an elite level of success, such as winning a national championship, their facility requests were taken more seriously and provided a level of priority similar to "revenue-generating sports." Surprisingly, the fundraisers did not consider this change of resource distribution from the perspective of equality, but from need. They viewed the facility improvements for the program as a necessity to (1) keep the coach, who has now become a valued asset, and (2) necessary to maintain the program's contention for national championships. This was disappointing for a few reasons. First, unlike the low bar for football/men's basketball programs to achieve in order to be prioritized for big-ticket fundraising initiatives, other sports were ex-

pected to win national championships to become prioritized, creating an extremely unfair incentive structure for other sport programs. Second, the fundraiser projected the athletic department's view as a need approach, believing that it was the coach whom was the department's asset. Therefore, resources needed to be provided in order for the coach to stay and maintain success at their current school, in fear of being lured to another school with improved resources, therefore projecting the perspective of the coach being the important asset, not the program.

Limitations & Future Recommendations

While this study provides unique contributions to the distributive justice and Title IX literature, there are limitations of the study and application. Data collected for this study were collected during a period of six months and comes from a cross-sectional approach, limiting its application to other areas within fundraising, distributive justice, and Title IX governance. Data were collected from athletic fundraisers within college sport, a context and relationship that may not be replicated within professional and amateur sports, therefore not generalizable within those levels. Lastly, data were collected from predominantly Power Five athletic departments, limiting their generalizability to lower-level athletic departments.

Findings from this study provide avenues for future scholarship. Responses from fundraisers within this study helped us better understand the parameters and application of the equity application of resource distribution. Coupled with previous findings on the need approach (Mahony et al., 2005), future research would be best used to examine greater details on how decision-makers define and apply an equality approach for resource distribution. Also, the influence of fundraisers on donors, and the affluence possessed by donors, provides an opportunity to explore the dynamic between fundraiser and donor to extend theoretical underpinnings within certain business models, such as stakeholder or stewardship theory. The authors were only able to complete interviews with two women working within athletic development. While this study was not particularly looking for participants based on gender, the lack of female participants may speak to the lack of female representation within athletic development. A future study examining this phenomenon is needed. Certain athletic departments, such as the University of Oregon, have implemented permanent athletic fundraising initiatives for their women sports programs. A future study examining the impact of these programs would be a unique contribution to the field and help provide insight into effective development initiatives for women's sport. We believe this study provides a unique contribution to the field by providing insight into the application of distributive justice within fundraising outlets. With fundraisers influencing donors to support prominent sports such as football and men's basketball, they create a system that is restricted to an equity approach unless certain thresholds are reached, such as a nonrevenue program winning national championships or the need to comply with Title IX.

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A Systematic Literature Review on the Academic and Athletic Identities of Student-Athletes

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Academic and athletic identities are related to performance and wellbeing indicators in both the educational and sport domains, respectively. This paper presents a systematic literature review examining empirical research into the academic and athletic identities of student-athletes in dual (education and sport) careers. The 42 records identified in this review suggest that research on the academic and athletic identities of student-athletes has focused on the themes of: identity development, role conflict, career development and motivation, and student-athlete stereotypes. Future research directions are considered, including the need for mixed-methods and longitudinal assessments of academic and athletic identities to assess the dynamic nature of identity development, and to ascertain how these relate to future performance and wellbeing outcomes.

Keywords: identity, education, sport, talent development, dual careers

Identity is defined as one aspect of an individual's wider self-concept, encapsulating an individual's subjective assessment of who they are, and how they fit with their social world in relation to others (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Caza, Vough, & Puranik, 2018). Identity is tied to appraisals of self-definition, self-worth, and self-esteem, and informs values and goal-related behaviors (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993; Gecas, 1982). Identity salience refers to the commitment to, and subjective importance of an identity, relative to other self-identities, with highly salient identities more likely to be activated across contexts and to motivate behaviors aligned to that identity (Stets & Burke, 2000; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Salient self-identities are usually developed around key life roles, reflecting levels of commitment to, and investment in, those roles (Stryker & Burke, 2000; Thoits, 1983). Performance of behaviors aligned with specific roles will serve to further strengthen related role identities (Terry, Hogg, & White, 1999).

Globally, many elite and semi-elite athletes simultaneously participate in competitive sport and higher education (see Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). These athletes thus participate in dual careers in sport and education and are commonly referred to as 'student-athletes' in scientific literature (Ivarsson et al., 2015; Stambulova,

Engström, Franck, Linnér, & Lindahl, 2015; Stambulova & Wylleman, 2015). Congruent with theories of relational identity-development (e.g., Stryker 1987), these student-athletes are thus predicted to develop domain-specific identities aligned with their roles as students and athletes.

Athletic identity specifically refers to the self-definition and meaning that is developed in relation to a role as an athlete and has been asserted to be central to the self-concept of athletes (Brewer et al., 1993). Athletic identity has been most commonly researched in the context of transitions that occur at times of athletic retirement (e.g., Grove, Lavallee, & Gordon, 1997; Reifsteck, Gill, & Labban, 2016; Ronkainen, Kavoura, & Ryba, 2016; Smith & Hardin, 2018), injury (e.g., Brewer, Cornelius, Stephan, & Van Raalte, 2009; Green & Weinberg. 2001), or performance set-backs (e.g., Brewer, Selby, Linder, & Petitpas, 1999; Brown & Potrac, 2009). Amongst (semi-)elite athletes, athletic identities have been found to increase in importance from childhood through to adolescence, as the demands of sport intensify (Houle, Brewer, & Kluck, 2010). Further, athletic identity is positively associated with athletic role commitment and sporting success (Horton & Mack, 2000). Therefore, a strong athletic identity is often considered desirable for aspiring and elite athletes (Williams & Krane, 1993). However, individuals with a sole commitment to their sporting identity have an increased risk of experiencing burnout and psychological distress when retiring from their sports (Anderson, 2012; Horton & Mack, 2000; Wylleman, Rosier, & De Knop, 2015). Researchers suggest that the risk of identity foreclosure, referring to an over-commitment to a specific role and avoidance of behaviors to explore other role identities, is higher in sport compared to other domains because athletic identity is generally developed at a young age before other possible role identities are explored (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017; Houle et al., 2010). From a life-span perspective, there is a high level of risk in exclusively investing in a highly specialized domain, such as sport, given that an unsuccessful or ending sporting career may leave the individual without more generalized skills to pursue alternative vocational domains (Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996). For student-athletes, the pursuit of a university degree thus represents an opportunity to establish or strengthen a self-identity that is distinct from their athletic identity and to diversify their skill base (Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996).

Academic identity refers to the self-meaning derived from one's role as a student and subsequent expectations on oneself derived from this role (Ewing & Allen, 2017; Mortimer, Lam, & Lee, 2015). The classroom environment provides a dynamic context in which the strength of an academic identity is continuously negotiated to meet role demands and the expectations of peers and teachers (DeCandia, 2014; Kaplan & Flum, 2010; Hawkins, 2005; Swanson, Spencer, Dell-Angelo, Harpalani, & Spencer, 2002). An academic identity positively predicts student motivation, goal-orientation, academic commitment, persistence, and successful performance in academic domains (Lairio, Puukari, & Kouvo, 2013; Hejazi, Lavasani, Amani, & Was, 2012; Osborne & Jones, 2011), as well as guides decisions relating to the pursuit of future career paths (Swanson et al., 2002).

A plethora of research has suggested that holistic athlete development, in which athletes are encouraged to participate in non-sporting life-domains, facilitates their wellbeing, provides them with long-term psychological and psychosocial advantages, as well as sets them up for viable alternative careers if their sporting endeavors are unsuccessful (see Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010; Schinke, Stambulova, Si, & Moore, 2018; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004; Wylleman & Rosier, 2016). Yet, although there is reasonable understanding of athletic identity of athletes, and academic identity of students, how these identities co-exist and co-contribute to an overall sense of self in student-athletes is not as well understood (van Rens, Ashley, & Steele, 2019; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014). Understanding the development of salient self-identities in student-athletes will better equip practitioners in supporting holistic athletic development. Although commitment across multiple key roles may result in negative consequences, such as role and identity conflict (Stryker & Burke, 2000), researchers have demonstrated that development of a multidimensional identity is positively associated with self-esteem, healthy psychological functioning, and wellbeing (Linville, 1985, Thoits, 1983). Concurrently engaging in both education and sport may enable student-athletes to remain invested in sport whilst engaging in wider self-development, including developing both specific and general knowledge and skills, exploring career options, and exploring their self-identities beyond sport (Cummins & O'Boyle, 2015). It follows that holistic talent development and seeking opportunities for multifaceted identity growth is likely beneficial to athletes' wellbeing (Ivarsson et al., 2015). Subsequently, an effective assessment of the scholarship relating to identity development in student-athletes, should consider studies that examine both academic and athletic self-identities to understand how these self-identities co-exist, as well as to explore their correlates.

This review seeks to build upon recent dual career reviews (e.g., Guidotti, Cortis, & Capranica, 2015; Stambulova & Wylleman, 2019) by expanding the scope of research beyond a European context and to focus exclusively on the academic and athletic identity development of student-athletes. Specifically, this systematic literature review aims to: (a) identify the available empirical literature simultaneously investigating both academic and athletic identities of student-athletes; (b) identify and interpret relevant themes within this literature; and (c) determine potential directions for future research.

Method

Search Strategy

Three databases (PsycINFO, SCOPUS, and SPORTDiscus) that span the disciplines of sports science and psychology, were used to identify published research articles examining both academic and athletic identities of student-athletes. Pre-defined eligibility criteria were applied to the search, namely: peer-reviewed journal articles, English language; full-text availability; and must empirically investigate both academic and athletic identity of tertiary-level, adult student-athletes. Scholarship into dual careers is a relatively recent research trend, therefore all sources were searched

from January 2000 to May 2019. Records with both quantitative and qualitative (or mixed methods) approaches were included in the search protocol, given that a wide scope of methods were deemed important to explore the nuances of identity development (Brown & Hartley, 1998). Consistent keyword and title searches were employed using search string synonyms for the three primary study concepts: 'sport', 'student', and 'identity'. Truncation and Booleans were applied to broaden and refine the search. The specific terms that were used were: (sport OR athlet*OR student-athlete) AND (student OR scholar OR education OR school OR university OR academ* OR student-athlete OR dual career), AND (identity). Additionally, the reference lists of recent reviews (Fuller, 2014; Guidotti et al., 2015; Li & Sum, 2017; Stambulova & Wylleman, 2019) were assessed, identifying an additional 25 potentially relevant records. The flowchart of the record screening process is outlined in Figure 1 and is consistent with the PRISMA statement for the reporting of information in systematic reviews (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009). After the removal of 33 duplicates, a total of 148 unique records were identified. An initial title and abstract screening was conducted on all 148 records with 39 removed for not fitting the aforementioned inclusion criteria. A full-text review was then conducted on the remaining 109 records, identifying 42 records that were deemed relevant for inclusion in this review.

Of these 42 records, 15 measured both academic and athletic identities directly. The remaining records measured one or both of these identities indirectly, such as

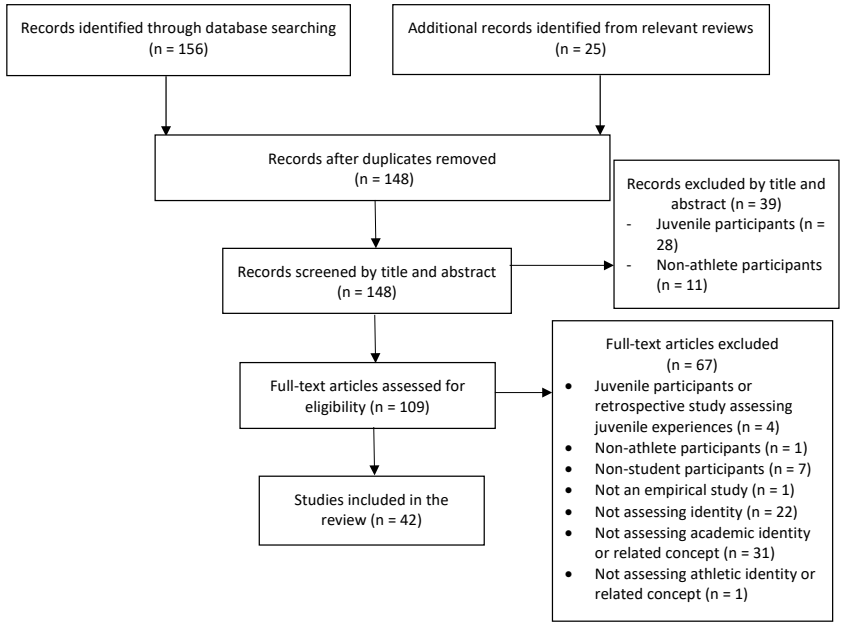

Figure 1. Flowchart of literature screening process (process adapted from Moher et al., 2009).

measuring indicators of academic experience (Huang, Chou, & Hung, 2016), academic involvement (Mignano, Brewer, Winter, & Van Raalte, 2006), or self-perceptions of academic importance (Settles, Sellers, & Damas, 2002). Given that academic and athletic self-identities are proposed to develop in reference to both intrinsic and extrinsic information, such as comparison of performance relative to others, and to be expressed through educational/performance outcomes and commitment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2002), records assessing these related concepts were included in this review to holistically capture all relevant research on identity development.

Results and Discussion

Research Characteristics

In total, 15 (36%) studies employed qualitative research methods, 24 (57%) studies used a quantitative approach, and three (7%) studies employed a mixed-methods approach. Of the studies with quantitative or mixed methods approaches, nine (33%) employed the *Athletic Identity Measurement Scale* (AIMS; Brewer et al., 1993) to assess athletic identity. There was no consistency in how academic identity was measured; two studies (Antshel, VanderDrift, & Pauline, 2016; Beron & Piquero, 2016) measured the strength of the academic identity relative to the strength of the athletic identity, such that if one was reported as higher, the other would subsequently be reported as lower. Conversely, although the *Academic and Athletic Scale* (AAIS; Yukhymenko- Lescroart, 2014; 2018) measured both athletic and academic identities within the one scale, these were treated as discrete subscales, such that a high score on one identity would not necessarily preclude a high score on the other.

Of the 42 records, five (12%) were published in the years 2000 to 2004, eight (19%) from 2005 to 2009, 11 (26%) from 2010 to 2014, and 18 (43%) since 2015. Thirty-five (83%) records sampled across a variety of sports, three (7%) sampled only (or primarily) from American football, two (5%) from hockey, and the remainder from either football, swimming, or basketball. Two (5%) studies were conducted in Asia, 13 (31%) in Europe, one each in Africa (2.5%) and Australasia (2.5%), with the remaining 25 (59%) studies conducted in North America. Most of these North American studies (68%) sampled student-athletes from National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions. Another five of the North American studies (20%) sampled from student-athletes competing at non-NCAA intercollegiate levels, with the final three (12%) studies assessing student-athletes competing across sporting levels. Of the studies conducted outside of North America, most (70%) sampled across sporting levels (from amateur to international levels), one (6%) sampled only from semi-professional levels, and four (24%) sampled only from professional or Olympic levels.

An inductive approach was employed to identify and analyze themes. Key findings were extracted from all studies, after which an iterative process identified higher-order themes for each record (methods adapted from Hatch, 2002). Similar themes were collapsed until the researchers were satisfied that the final themes encapsulated all records. Four over-arching themes were identified: the first theme consists of

17 studies examining the 'identity development' of student-athletes (see Table 1). The second theme consists of 10 studies examining 'role conflict and wellbeing' of student-athletes (see Table 2). The third theme consists of 16 studies examining 'career maturity and motivation' (see Table 3). The final theme consists of nine studies examining 'student-athlete stereotypes' (see Table 4). Ten studies were identified as examining multiple themes, and therefore were presented across multiple tables.

Table 1

Key Characteristics of Studies Examining Academic and Athletic Identity in Student-Athletes: Theme – Identity Development (n = 17)

Reference	Location	Sample size	Sport and level	Methods	Examines academic identity	Examines athletic identity	Main finding(s)
Antshel et al. (2016)*	North America	19738 (11875 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1, DII and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	On average, student-athletes identified slightly more with their athletic role than with their student role.
Beron and Piquero (2016)	North America	21000 (gender not specified)	Various sports, NCCA D1, DII and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	No significant differences in athletic identity across NCAA divisions. No significant gender differences in athletic identity.
Falls and Wilson (2013)	North America	12 (all female)	Soccer, professional, semi-professional, and club levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Team sports provided a 'temporary community', which fostered a collective identity. Decisions to pursue tertiary studies signified an autonomous desire to develop a future non-sporting identity. Significant adjustment difficulties and athletic identity loss following tertiary education competition.
Fuches et al. (2016)*	Europe	221 (117 male)	Various sports, national or international levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Female student-athletes reported putting more effort into their academic studies, and reported greater efficacy in meeting academic goals, than male student-athletes.
Kimball (2007)*	North America	12 (7 male)	Various sports, NCAA DI	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Student-athletes arrived at university with strong athletic identities, and only developed academic identities later in their degrees. Developing a non-sporting identity was important for experiences of personal autonomy.
Lally (2007)	North America	6 (3 male)	Various sports, intercollegiate level	Qualitative, longitudinal	Yes	Yes	Strong athletic identities were fostered by student-athletes, especially early in sporting careers. Many student-athletes developed strategies for managing impending sporting retirement, including increasing identification with their academic identities.
Lally and Kerr (2005)*	North America	8 (4 male)	Various sports, intercollegiate level	Qualitative, longitudinal	Yes	Yes	Student-athletes reported greater investment in academic identities in later university years, and subsequent divestment in their athletic identities.
Lopez de Subijana, Barriopedro, and Sanz (2015)	Europe	63 (27 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Male student-athletes reported stronger athletic identities than females. The strength of an individual's athletic identity was unrelated to sport type.
Lupo et al. (2017a)	Europe	760 (375 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Sub-elite athletes reported lower identity as a student-athlete than elite athletes. Younger participants (≤ 24

							years) reported higher identification with being a student-athlete than older participants.
Lupo et al. (2017b)*	Europe	616 (306 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Validation of the Sports and Academics Questionnaire (SAMSAQ) showed female student-athletes to report greater academic motivation compared to males. Sub-elite athletes reported lower sports motivation compared to elite athletes.
Lupo et al. (2012)	Europe	314 (118 males)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	No difference in academic or sporting motivation between genders or between types of sport (team or individual).
Miller and Kerr (2003)*	North America	8 (4 male)	Various sports, intercollegiate level	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Student-athletes showed early over-identification as athletes. The development of academic identities was deferred to later years of university study.
Sturm et al. (2011)	North America	188 (121 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1 and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Academic identity was stable throughout university. Females reported stronger student identity. No significant differences between academic or athletic identities between NCAA DI and DII student-athletes
Tekavc, et al. (2015)*	Europe	12 (6 male); all retired from sports, 6 completed university	Swimming and basketball, professional level	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Female athletes showed more motivation than males to pursue academics and to achieve higher academic grades. Engagement in academics was related to personal satisfaction and self-confidence, particularly for females.
van Rens et al. (2019)	Australasia	Study 1: 8 (3 male) Study 2: 94 (46 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Mixed methods, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Student-athletes developed both athletic and academic identities, although no relationship was found between the strength of these two identities.
Woodruff and Schallert (2008)*	North America	9 (5 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Change in domain-specific motivation was reported to precede changes to academic or athletic identity salience.
Yukhymenko-Lescroart (2014)	North America	596 (307 male)	Various sports, NCAA DI	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Student-athletes in club level sport reported higher academic identity and lower athletic identity than those in elite level sport. Student-athletes reported stronger athletic identity than academic identity across sporting levels. No gender differences found in the strength or academic or athletic identities.

Note * identifies studies that are presented in more than one table

Identity Development

A common finding amongst the 17 reviewed papers looking at identity development was that student-athletes simultaneously invested in both their academic and athletic identities (e.g., Kimball, 2007; van Rens et al., 2019; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014). However, student-athletes primarily identified themselves as athletes, with their athletic identity being more central to their self-definition than their academic identity (Antshel et al., 2016; Lally & Kerr, 2005; Miller & Kerr, 2003). Students engaging in elite level sport reported stronger identification with the athletic role, compared to those competing at sub-elite levels (Lupo et al., 2017a; 2017b; Yukhymenko-Le-

scroart, 2014; van Rens et al., 2019). Student-athletes often reported showing an early over-identification with the athletic role (Kimball, 2007; Miller & Kerr, 2003), which aligns with existing research identifying the high risk of athletic identity foreclosure for elite athletes, particularly in late adolescence (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017). However, findings suggest that the importance of the athletic identity in student-athletes may weaken over time as alternative roles (e.g., student) are explored (Lally & Kerr, 2005; Miller & Kerr, 2002). The weakening of the athletic identity may also be a protective self-regulatory process to minimize the impact of impending loss of an athletic role for those approaching sporting retirement (Lally, 2007). Some student-athletes attempted to proactively manage this impending 'identity crisis' at sporting retirement by further investing in their academic (and other non-sporting) identities (Lally, 2007). Together these results affirm established theory (e.g., Stryker & Burke, 2000) that identity is both dynamic and multidimensional in structure, and that student-athletes may simultaneously develop and invest in academic and athletic identities based upon their roles in these domains. Results also suggest that for student-athletes, their athletic identity is deeply embedded, and remains central to self-definition until athletic retirement.

Eight of the 17 studies in this theme investigated the role of demographic factors, such as gender, in the identity development process, providing inconsistent results. Female student-athletes reported stronger academic identities (Sturm, Feltz, & Gilson, 2011), greater motivation towards academics (Lupo et al., 2017b; Tekavc, Wylleman, & Erpič, 2015), and greater prioritization of academic pursuits (Fuches et al., 2016) compared to their male counterparts. This gender difference was proposed to reflect greater opportunities for an ongoing professional career in sports for men compared with women, hence women may be more motivated to explore non-sporting identities (Fuches et al., 2016; Sturm et al., 2011). However, this finding was not unanimously replicated, with other research failing to show these gender differences (Lupo et al., 2017b; Lupo Tessitore, Capranica, Rauter, & Doupona-Topic, 2012; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014).

Gender differences have also been observed in relation to the development of athletic identities, with male student-athletes reporting stronger athletic identities compared to females (López de Subijana, Barriopedro, & Sanz, 2015; Melendez, 2009). Mignano et al. (2006) provided context to these findings, with their work revealing that female student-athletes reported higher levels of athletic identity in same-sex campuses, compared to co-educational campuses. This finding was proposed to reflect an increased salience of the stereotypical 'feminine' role when studying with male students, which may be inconsistent with the athletic stereotype, and may subsequently influence female divestment from their athletic identities. Additionally, direct or indirect feedback from other students (see Ewing & Allen, 2017; Mortimer et al., 2015), based upon gender stereotypes, may work to legitimate the athlete role identity in males, and weaken the identity in females. Indeed, research beyond the scope of this review has identified a negative relationship between athletic identity and 'femininity' (Lantz & Schroeder, 1999). Conversely, other research found no gender differences in athletic identity in student-athletes (Beron & Pique-

ro, 2016; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014). Inconsistency across these results suggests that gender may influence identity development and related behaviors (Mignano et al., 2006), but that identity development is complex, and that context may play a role in facilitating the influence of gender on identity.

Table 2

Key Characteristics of Studies Examining Academic and Athletic Identity in Student-Athletes: Theme – Role conflict and Wellbeing (n = 10)

Reference	Location	Sample size	Sport and level	Methods	Examines academic identity	Examines athletic identity	Main finding(s)
Aquilina (2013)	Europe	18 (8 male)	Various sports, Olympic or professional levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Balance between dual roles is required to successfully meet the demands of education and sport. Older student-athletes were more successful in achieving balance.
Brown et al. (2015)	Europe	9 (5 male); 6 current student-athletes, 3 recently graduated	Various sports, various sporting levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Students reported struggling to meet the demands of sport and academics. Academic flexibility assisted students in meeting academic goals, such as allowing students to change between lab groups to attend competition.
Fuches et al. (2016)*	Europe	221 (117 male)	Various sports, national or international levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Perceived role conflict was greater for student-athletes competing at an international level compared to national level. Social support was helpful in supporting student-athletes to balance dual careers.
Geraniosova and Ronkainen (2014)*	Europe	5 (2 male)	Various sports, amateur and professional levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Family was identified as a key emotional and financial support. Student-athletes perceived limited structured support was available to help them balance multiple role demands.
Healy et al. (2016)	Europe	204 (103 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Student-athletes reported moderate levels of interference between sport and academic goals. Some student-athletes reported motivational facilitation between sport and academic goals.
Killeya-Jones (2005)	North America	40 (all male)	NFL, NCCA D1	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Life satisfaction, academic satisfaction, and wellbeing of student-athletes was lower when there was a greater discrepancy in attributes between the academic identity and athletic identity.
Lupo et al. (2015)*	Europe	524 (287 male)	Various sports, international and national levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	National Federations were effective in negotiating for academic flexibility with education institutions, including altered exam schedules and tutoring.
Miller and Kerr (2003)*	North America	8 (4 male)	Various sports, intercollegiate level	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Academic and athletic roles compete. Student-athletes reduced social interaction as a method to reduce work-life conflict and to rectify poor performance in academics.
Settles et al. (2002)	North America	200 (87 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	A negative association was found between role conflict and wellbeing in student-athletes. Compartmentalization of study and sport roles had wellbeing benefits in student-athletes.
Woodruff and Schallert (2008)*	North America	9 (5 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Sporting and academic roles may represent conflicting motivations.

Identity, Role Conflict, and Wellbeing

Ten studies in this review investigated role conflict between academic and athletic identities. Role conflict may occur when the demands of one role or identity, such as sport, interfere with meeting demands of another role or identity, such as academics (van Rens, Borkoles, Farrow, Curran, & Polman, 2016). Qualitative work (e.g., Healy, Ntoumanis, & Duda, 2016; Miller & Kerr, 2003) suggests that academic roles and student roles necessarily exist in competition, and that simultaneous commitment to both roles and subsequent identities may be difficult to maintain. Role conflict has been cited as a source of psychological stress in student-athletes and is related to poorer wellbeing and life satisfaction (Killeya-Jones, 2005; Settles et al., 2002).

Findings indicate that many student-athletes have developed strategies to mitigate conflict between their academic and athletic roles, such as enhancing role convergence, role compartmentalization, time prioritization and management, expectation reassessment, and leveraging personal resources, such as social and family support (Brown et al., 2015; Geraniosova & Ronkainen, 2014; Killeya-Jones 2005; Settles et al., 2002). Successful implementation of these strategies was deemed beneficial to one's wellbeing, with achieving a balance between academics and athletics becoming easier to obtain with greater life experience and age (Aquilina, 2013). However, conflicting results suggest that student-athletes were not always successful in balancing multiple role demands, with time management cited as a major barrier to successfully engaging in dual careers, often resulting in avoidance-related coping strategies, such as disengagement from study or failure to attend mandatory classes (Brown et al., 2015).

Conscious shifting of the centrality of domain-specific identities, across time, may also be an important strategy in reducing role conflict, supporting wellbeing, and to achieve goals in both sporting and academic domains (Settles et al., 2002). For instance, during athletic competition, the athletic identity is likely to be highly central to the individual's sense of self; whereas during university exams the academic identity becomes more central. Indeed, one study reported that student-athletes can rapidly shift the salience of their academic and athletic identities within the span of one experimental session, as they complete different types of tasks (Yopyk & Prentice, 2005). This self-regulatory process may facilitate responsiveness to changing role and performance demands and performance optimization (Yopyk & Prentice, 2005). These findings align with existing relational identity theories (e.g., Burke & Stets, 2009) conceptualizing role identities as fluid in structure, wherein the salience of domain-specific identities may shift over time in response to role and task demands (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008).

Identity, Career Maturity, and Motivation

The development of a strong athletic identity and an over-commitment to the athletic role may reduce a student's propensity to explore non-sporting vocations, which may have implications for their post-sporting career development (Huang et al., 2016). Indeed, athletic identity was found to negatively relate to academic adjustment (Me-

Table 3

Key Characteristics of Studies Examining Both Academic and Athletic Identity in Student-Athletes: Theme – Identity, Career Maturity and Motivation (n = 16)

Reference	Location	Sample size	Sport and level	Methods	Examines academic identity	Examines athletic identity	Main finding(s)
Antshel et al. (2016)*	North America	19738 (60% male)	Various sports, NCCA D1, DII and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	In academically struggling student-athletes, GPA predicted use of academic support services only when academic identity was prominent
Erpič et al. (2004)	Europe	85 (54 male); all retired from sports, 67.1% completed university	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Most participants reported successfully adapting to their post-sporting lives after athletic retirement. A stronger athletic identity was related to more psychological difficulties after sports. Higher educated participants reported fewer occupation difficulties (finding work, financial difficulties)
Foster and Huml (2017)	North America	546 (385 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1, DII and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Student-athletes with stronger athletic identities were more likely to choose a degree with less academic rigor
Harrison and Lawrence (2004)	North America	143 (79 male)	Various sports, NCCA DII	Mixed methods, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	A future career focus was reported to facilitate successful transitions out of sport for student-athletes. Student-athletes perceived that they were active agents in shaping their future career paths.
Huang et al. (2016)	Asia	345 (224 male)	Various sports, semi-professional levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	The negative relationship between enriched university experiences and career barriers was mediated by career self-efficacy. Student-athletes with higher levels of athletic identity were less likely to use university learning resources.
Kimball (2007)*	North America	12 (7 male)	Various sports, NCAA DI	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	NCAA students-athletes were required to nominate their major early in their degrees, which meant that many did not have time to organically develop their interests. This resulted in many participants enrolled in courses that did not intrinsically interest them. Participants reported that developing non-sporting identities was important preparation for life after sport.
Lally and Kerr (2005)*	North America	8 (4 male)	Various sports, intercollegiate level	Qualitative, longitudinal	Yes	Yes	Non-sporting career plans were ill-defined when entering university but developed over time. By the final year of university, many student-athletes no longer viewed sport as a viable future career option.
Lupo et al. (2015)*	Europe	524 (287 male)	Various sports, International and national	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Student-athletes expected a smoother transition out of sports when their State offered dual-

			levels				career policies. Athletic achievement may facilitate post-university work in sport-related careers (e.g., as coaches, trainers).
Lupo et al. (2017b)*	Europe	616 (306 male)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Validation of the Sports and Academics Questionnaire (SAMSAQ) showed sub-elite athletes reported lower career motivation than elite athletes.
Melendez (2009)	North America	101 (63 male)	Various sports, NCCA D1	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	A strong athletic identity was associated with lower academic adjustment and personal-emotional adjustment in student-athletes
Stoltenburg et al. (2011)	North America	7 (5 males); former athletes who had experienced career ending injury	Various sports, NCCA D1 and DII	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Students were able to prioritize academics after career ending sport injuries. Holding a strong athletic identity made the transition out of sports more difficult.
Sum et al. (2017)	Asia	8 (4 males)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	The influence of parents and coaches on the career development of student-athletes reduced as they progressed through university.
Tekavc, et al. (2015)*	Europe	12 (6 male); all retired from sports, 6 completed university	Swimming and basketball, elite level	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Female athletes reported investing more time into considering their future career paths, than males. Females were also more likely than their male counterparts to choose a post-sporting career path outside of sports
Torregrosa et al. (2015)	Europe	15 (10 men); all retired from sports	Various sports, Olympic level	Qualitative, longitudinal	Yes	Yes	A unidimensional self-identity focused on sport was related to poorer career planning and transitions. Some student-athletes reported studying degrees related to sports (e.g., sports science) to facilitate future sport-related employment and career transition
Tshube and Feltz (2015)	Africa	17 (12 males); all retired from sports, 10 participated in university	Various sports, Olympic or international levels	Mixed methods, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Athletes use education to prepare for sporting retirement and a post-sporting career. An exclusive focus on sports was related to a more difficult transition out of sports.
Yukhymenko-Lescroart (2018)	North America	1151 (55.8% male)	Various sports, NCCA D1	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Yes	Yes	Athletic identity negatively predicted ethical sporting conduct, academic mastery and academic performance goals. Academic identity positively predicted ethical sporting conduct, academic mastery, and academic performance goals.

Note * identifies studies that are presented in more than one table

lendez, 2009), academic mastery goals, and academic performance goals (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2018), and the success of post-sporting career transitions (Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupančič, 2004; Stoltenburg, Kamphoff, & Bremer, 2011; Torregrosa, Ramis, Pallarés, Azócar, & Selva, 2015; Tshube & Feltz, 2015). Student-athletes reporting a strong athletic identity were also less likely to utilize academic learning resources and support services (Antshel et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2016), and were more likely to choose an 'easier' degree, thus may have prioritized short-term sporting goals over longer-term career goals (Foster & Huml, 2017).

Compared to athletic identity, the development of an academic identity was found to relate to positive career outcomes and career readiness (Lally & Kerr, 2005).

A longitudinal study reported that student-athletes often had ill-defined non-sporting career plans when starting university, but as they reached the later years of their education they began to invest more in non-sporting identities and in their academic roles and develop more tangible and autonomous career plans (Lally & Kerr, 2005; Sum et al., 2017). Indeed, approaching graduation, many student-athletes reported no longer perceiving athletics as a viable future career plan (Lally & Kerr, 2005). Alternatively, many student-athletes reported seeking future employment in sports-related industries and some subsequently sought out relevant degrees (e.g., sports science) to facilitate employment in these roles (Torregrosa et al., 2015). This divestment in sport and focus on developing a broader skill base aligns with Heckhausen's life span model of aging (Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996), highlighting that re-training and skill diversification may be required for athletes who have overinvested in highly specialized elite sports. In this vein, engaging in education acts as a compensatory behavior to foster the development of new broader academic and professional skills required to attain future non-sporting vocational goals. Given these findings, and that studies beyond the scope of this review (e.g., Anderson, 2012; Stambulova, Stephan, & Japhag, 2007) have identified career planning as related to emotional wellbeing and coping during sporting retirement, the development of a strong academic identity is proposed to be important in facilitating successful career transitions and the development of post-sporting careers across genders.

Identity and Student-Athlete Stereotypes

In total, nine studies examined stereotypes related to student-athletes, with eight of those studies conducted in North America. These stereotypes were primarily based in perceptions that student-athletes were attending university solely on sporting merit, citing the 'dumb jock' stereotype (e.g., Bimper, 2014; Stone, Harrison, & Mottley, 2012; Yopyk & Prentice, 2005). African-American student-athletes were found to be most vulnerable to negative stereotype threat (Bimper, 2014; Stone et al., 2012), and research beyond this review (e.g., Cooper, 2012) has suggested that this may be particularly pervasive in predominately white institutions. Researchers have conjectured that compared to African-American student-athletes, white student-athletes may explicitly and/or implicitly receive greater on-campus support, which fosters positive associations with the academic role and buffers them from stereotype threat (Stone et al., 2012). One further study, conducted in Europe, found that negative stereotypes of students-athletes pervaded beyond North America, with student-athletes perceiving that university staff had lower academic expectations of them, compared to non-athlete students (Geraniosova & Ronkainen, 2014). In investigating the pervasiveness of student-athlete stereotypes, three studies consistently reported that artificially priming the athletic identity, by presenting samples of student-athletes with a test paper titled 'student-athlete' or asking them to write about a recent athletic event, caused a decline in academic task performance (Riciputi & Erdal, 2017; Stone et al., 2012; Yopyk & Prentice, 2005), and in academic self-regard (Yopyk & Prentice, 2005). These findings affirm concerns that that student-athletes are vulnerable to negative stereotyping (Simon, Bosworth, Fujita, & Jensen, 2007). Student-athletes

Table 4

Key Characteristics of Studies Examining Academic identity and Athletic Identity in Student-Athletes: Theme - Student-athlete Stereotypes (n = 9)

Reference	Location	Sample size	Sport and level	Methods	Examines academic identity	Examines athletic identity	Main finding(s)
Bimper (2014)	North America	255 (all male)	NFL, NCCA DI	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Athletic identity negatively predicted academic outcomes in African American student-athletes. No link was found between racial identity and academic outcomes.
Blodgett and Schinke (2015)	North America	13 (8 male), 4 at university	Hockey, various sporting levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Native Canadian student-athletes experienced backlash from their own communities for pursuing Euro-Canadian career pathways. Pursuing a dual career may be a way for minority groups to reduce cultural stereotyping
Feltz et al. (2013)	North America	318 (111 male)	Various sports, NCCA DI, DII and DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Athletic identity positively predicted susceptibility to stereotype threat. Athletic identity tended to be higher in student-athletes when they perceived their coaches had lower belief in their academic ability
Geraniosova and Ronkainen (2014)*	Europe	5 (2 male)	Various sports, amateur and professional levels	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Student-athletes perceived that university staff perceived them as less academically able, compared with non-athlete students.
Hawley et al. (2014)	North America	245 (150 male); 71 student-athletes and 174 non student-athletes	Primarily NFL, intercollegiate level	Quantitative, experimental, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Student-athletes were judged more harshly by other students for deviant behaviors.
Mignano et al. (2006)	North America	145 (all female)	Various sports, NCAA DIII	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Yes	Athletic identity and student involvement were higher in females attending same-sex universities compared to those at coeducational universities
Riciputi and Erdal (2017)	North America	60 (33 male)	Various sports, NCAA DIII	Quantitative, experimental, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Priming with the athletic stereotype resulted in a decrease in effort and performance in a mathematics assessment. No effect of gender
Stone et al. (2012)	North America	151 (gender not listed)	Various sports, various sporting levels	Quantitative, experimental, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Priming with the 'scholar-athlete' identity related to poorer verbal reasoning test results. African American student-athletes were more susceptible to negative stereotyping
Yopyk and Prentice (2005)	North America	67 (all male) 37 athletes and 30 singing group members	Ice hockey, intercollegiate level	Quantitative, experimental, cross-sectional	Indirectly	Indirectly	Student-athletes had significantly lower GPA than non-athletes. Priming student-athletes with their athletic identity decreased academic self-regard, and academic task performance compared to non-athletes

Note * identifies studies that are presented in more than one table

may internalize these stereotypes, which may have subsequent negative implications for their academic performance (see Bimper, 2014).

Directions for Future Research

Methodological recommendations. Firstly, all but three of the studies in this review were conducted cross-sectionally; subsequently, there is not yet a clear picture of the causal relationship between the development of academic and athletic identities and their relationships with wellbeing and performance outcomes. Future investigations of academic and athletic identities are encouraged to use within-person longitudinal modelling to explore the dynamic nature of self-identities, and how the relative importance of key self-identities change over time in response to changing task and role demands.

Secondly, there appears to be no gold standard for measuring academic and athletic identities (see Guidotti et al., 2015). Despite recent concern as to psychometric validity of the AIMS, relating to discrepancies in item factor loadings (Burns, Jasinski, Dunn, & Fletcher, 2012), one third of the quantitative studies in this review used this measure of athletic identity. Findings of this review suggesting that student-athletes may simultaneously develop salient academic and athletic identities, indicates that the measurement of these identities on a sliding scale (per Antshel et al., 2016), may not have an empirical basis as they fail to align with our theoretical understanding of relational identities as linked to key (often multiple) life roles (Stets & Burke, 2000). Additionally, a single item is unlikely to be sufficient when measuring the complexities of self-definition (Rafaeli-Mor, Gotlib, & Revelle, 1998). Yukhymenko-Lescroart (2014) has addressed these concerns by developing the AAIS, which has promising psychometric properties. We encourage future research to examine the cross-cultural psychometric validity of the AAIS as it could become a gold standard in dual career research.

This review narrowly focused on the academic and athletic identities of student-athletes. Although these identities are proposed to represent salient identities for this sample, future researchers are encouraged to consider the wider context and intersectionality of other important identities, such as identities as a female, atheist, and heterosexual, and roles beyond the university context such as employee, spouse, and parent (Caza et al., 2018).

Finally, research investigating academic and athletic identities has, perhaps logically, used samples of student-athletes who are currently engaged in dual careers. However, this methodology may inherently cause a survivor bias (Smith, 2014), where characteristics of those remaining in dual careers are interpreted as their reasons for pursuing dual careers. We would recommend researchers investigate the academic and athletic identities of not only those retained in dual careers, but also those who decide to drop out of education to focus on sport or vice versa, investigating reasons leading to departure decisions.

Context recommendations. This review has revealed that 52% of the contemporary literature on the identities of student-athletes has been conducted in the North American collegiate context, primarily in NCAA colleges. We may expect that the

structural differences between the NCAA and systems existing beyond North America, may have a significant influence on student-athletes' identity development, role conflict and wellbeing, and career development (Ryba, Stambulova, Ronkainen, Bundgaard, & Selänne, 2015). For instance, in contexts where elite sports are not integrated within the formal university systems, decisions to pursue an education are likely to be made autonomously, based on a genuine interest in furthering one's education. Hence student-athletes operating outside of the NCAA may be more intrinsically motivated to pursue education and in exploring self-identities beyond sport. Subsequently, it is proposed that academic and athletic identities may be more intertwined among NCAA student-athletes, while greater separation of the athletic and academic identities may be prevalent among student-athletes in non-NCAA systems. Subsequently, we recommend future research targets student-athletes outside of the NCAA system, so that these contextual differences can be explored.

We also encourage future research to explore how context may influence negative stereotyping of student-athletes. The degree to which negative athlete stereotyping occurs in academic settings outside of North America is largely unknown and is a matter for further investigation. Further, researchers are encouraged to expand upon the work of Chen and colleagues (2010) and explore positive self-perceptions and positive stereotypes associated with student-athletic roles, and whether cross-cultural differences exist in these perceptions.

Implications

Understanding identity development in student-athletes will better equip universities and sports practitioners in supporting athletic development initiatives. NCAA institutions have greater authority than other universities to make sporting participation contingent upon student-athlete class attendance and achievement of minimum GPAs, as well as increased ability to reduce scheduling conflicts between sporting and academic events (Ridpath, 2008). However, there are several ways that all universities may assist student-athletes in reducing role demands. Because attending mandatory classes was identified as an obstacle for student-athletes especially during times of sporting competition, providing flexibility to change between allocated class times or offering external or online courses may increase academic engagement (see Brown et al., 2015). Student-athletes may also benefit from flexibility regarding minimum course duration (Brown et al., 2015; Fuches et al., 2016). University athlete assistance programs may be useful in helping student-athletes develop strategies for better managing their time, and for liaising between the university and the student for seeking academic flexibility. Given that this review has also identified career planning as important for facilitating successful career transitions out of sport, access to career planning resources is likely to be important in fostering student-athletes to develop professional self-identities beyond sport.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in surveying available literature relating to the academic and athletic identities of student-athletes, this review identified and interpreted 42 studies simultaneously exploring these identities. Results revealed that contemporary research on the self-identities of student-athletes has focused on: the development of academic and athletic identities through university, role conflict between dual careers and the influence on wellbeing, career motivation and maturity, and stereotype threats to student-athletes. The findings suggest that student-athletes develop academic identities, albeit these are likely to be less important to their self-definition compared to their athletic identities, particularly in earlier university years. Many student-athletes report awareness of the limited timeframe of participation in elite sports and pursue academics to foster their post-sporting careers and to facilitate a successful transition out of sports.

Considerations for future research were examined, and importantly it was proposed that future research consider the influence of differences in national talent development systems on the development of academic and athletic identities. It is important that dual career research is better able to delineate how academic and athletic identities develop in student-athletes, and how these processes affect psychological wellbeing and performance outcomes. A better understanding of these processes will inform policy and practice among sporting organizations, universities, and sports psychologists to facilitate the performance and wellbeing of student-athletes in education and sport.

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"She is the Best *Female* Coach": NCAA Division I Swimming Coaches' Experiences of Sexism

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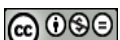
Sport participation for women and girls is at an all-time high in the United States, but women are still widely underrepresented in leadership positions and coaching (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Women hold approximately 50% of head coaching positions of women's teams in the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and only 18% of the head coaching positions of women's swimming and diving teams (LaVoi & Silva-Breen, 2018). Numerous barriers have been identified on the factors that inhibit upward career mobility for female coaches including sexism. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to examine the career experiences of 21 current or former female swimming coaches at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I level. The theme of sexism in coaching was pervasive and identified in five different categories: (a) misidentification, (b) differential treatment, (c) isolation, (d) tokenism, and (e) motherhood. The sexism that female coaches experience hinders upward career mobility which can lead to career dissatisfaction and early exits from the field, contributing to the underrepresentation of women in the profession.

Keywords: sexism, female coaches, NCAA, swimming, college sports

"She is the best *female* coach": Female Swimming Coaches Experiences of Sexism

The number of women participating in collegiate sport has dramatically increased since the passage of Title IX in 1972 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; "Sport Sponsorship, Participation, and Demographics," 2017). However, the percentage of women in leadership and coaching positions has decreased or stagnated (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The sport of swimming has one of the lowest percentages of female coaches coaching women's teams of all NCAA sports (LaVoi & Silva-Breen 2018). The purpose of this study was to examine the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches in order to better understand the lack of female representation in the college coaching profession.



USA Swimming, the national governing body for swimming in the United States, reports that nearly half (9,430) of the 19,000 registered coaches are women (USA Swimming, 2016). This percentage is relatively high compared to other youth sports where women only coach 27% of youth teams (Farrey & Solomon, 2017; LaVoi, 2009). The percentages drop significantly in collegiate swimming as only 18% of NCAA Division I head women's swimming coaches are women ("Sport Sponsorship, Participation, and Demographics," 2017). Women in collegiate swimming have far better representation as assistant coaches as nearly 41% of assistant coaches for women's teams are women ("Sport Sponsorship, Participation, and Demographics," 2017). This phenomenon of women attaining assistant coaching positions but not moving into head coaching positions is part of the rationale for the present study.

These statistics are sobering for women pursuing a career in college swimming coaching or considering this career. Retiring athletes looking for a healthy transition out of competing and into coaching may be discouraged to pursue it as a career. Additionally, gender stereotypes of what a leader looks and acts like are only further engrained in sport culture, which perpetuates the inequity (see Burton, 2015). Creating a more equitable environment and culture is necessary to begin to dismantle the entrenched gender hierarchy in sport.

Barriers to Women in Coaching

Women have struggled to reach the same levels of success as men in the coaching profession due in part to the barriers they encounter. The Ecological-Intersectional Model, created by LaVoi (2016), provides a framework into which career barriers and facilitators can be organized. Based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model (1977), the Ecological-Intersectional Model contains four levels, in which the individual level is at the center, followed by interpersonal, organizational, and societal levels (LaVoi, 2016; LaVoi, 2018). This model assists in understanding the relationships between person and environment, and how that affects human behavior. Integral to the Ecological-Intersectional Model is the acknowledgment of intersecting identities at the individual level, such as gender, age, race, and sexual orientation. The inclusion of intersectionality allows the model to illuminate the variations within the broad category of "women" (LaVoi, 2016). Barriers for women in coaching include but are not limited to gender normalcy, homologous reproduction, tokenism, an unequal assumption of competence, work-life conflict, and lack of mentors and professional networks. (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011; Kamphoff, 2010; Kilty, 2006; Messner, 2009). These barriers are examined next within the framework of the Ecological-Intersectional Model.

Societal Level

Stereotypes of gender roles can be included at the societal level of the Ecological-Intersectional Model. Gender stereotypes permeate sports culture and the professional duties therein, in the form of gender normalcy. Gender normalcy occurs in two facets: normalizing the skewed ratio of women to men and normalizing the assigned

duties based on gender (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012; Laabs, 1993). An example of the former facet would be a woman who is the assistant swim coach, but her duties primarily lie with coordinating team travel and meals, ordering equipment, and managing the facility. She is spending limited time coaching even though she is an assistant coach. The types of administrative and organizational tasks she has been given are considered "woman's work," and this becomes a regular part of assigned duties rather than coaching. In this example of gender normalcy, the coach is exhibiting or portraying behavior that is considered "natural" for her gender, and thus it is accepted by the community of athletes and coaches, and perhaps by the coach herself (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012).

Society may also perceive women's accomplishments as lesser than their male peers. Historically women have largely been perceived as "invaders" in the male-dominated sport spaces (Coakley, 2017), and therefore female coaches face an unequal assumption of competence as compared to their male counterparts (Kilty, 2006). Research consistently illustrates the presence of unequal assumption of competence between male and female coaches. Studies have found that female coaches who coach male athletes had to be highly decorated athletes or coaches to establish credibility from the athletes and administrators (Kamphoff, Armentrout & Driska, 2010; Siegele, Smith, & Hardin, 2019). Women are unable to achieve high-ranking positions without having the highest levels of credentials, while men can attain these levels with much greater diversity in their previous accomplishments (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002; Kilty, 2006). These results indicate that for women, personal athletic achievement may be more valued than diversified coaching experience, while the opposite may be true for men.

Organizational Level

The organizational level of the multi-level model for the current study is the environment of the collegiate athletic department, which is largely male-dominated (Taylor & Hardin, 2016). Therefore, it is not uncommon for the behaviors of homologous representation and tokenism to present themselves within individual institutions (Taylor & Hardin, 2016). Homologous reproduction is the process by which dominant groups or individuals reproduce themselves through hiring similar individuals based on social and physical characteristics, (e.g., a white male would be more likely to hire another white male; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Homologous reproduction happens across gender and race as people are more likely to hire those that look like them. This practice is problematic for everyone in the organization, especially women as collegiate athletics preserves heteronormative gender roles and marginalizes, excludes, and devalues women (Hardin, Whiteside, & Ash, 2014; Whisenant & Mullane, 2007).

Tokenism also occurs at the organizational level. Men attribute the lack of women in sport organizations to a lack of aspiration, not opportunity (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012). This perception may be based on the token status that many women occupy in their organization, where they are viewed as symbols of their category, rather than individuals (Kanter, 1977). The token individual may have trouble be-

having naturally, fitting in, and gaining peer acceptance (Kanter, 1993). These effects may influence a woman's intention of staying within the organization and her overall satisfaction in the position.

Interpersonal Level

At the interpersonal level, relationships between female coaches and their colleagues, both male and female, predictably affect their experiences. Mentoring and networking may be less available to women as it is to men. Female coaches struggle to build networks and obtain mentors (Greenhill, Auld, Cuskelly, & Hooper, 2009; Walker & Bopp, 2010) due to the male-dominated nature of the environment. Strong evidence of an "good ole boys" club and the absence of a similar network for women has been identified as well (Katz, Walker, & Hindman, 2018; Taylor & Hardin, 2016). In non-sport environments, mentorship has shown to improve job satisfaction, career mobility, and career commitment (Chao, Walz, Gardner, 1992; Høigaard & Mathisen, 2009). Female coaches could struggle to find satisfaction within their career without the availability of networking and mentorship.

Female coaches also may experience sexism in interpersonal relationships among both male and female colleagues. Particularly in male-dominated contexts, male colleagues can be the offenders of sexist behaviors towards women (Clarkson, Cox, & Thelwell, 2019). However, research has also shown that women in male-dominated fields can play a negative role in the advancement of other women (Ellemers, Van den Heuvel, De Gilder, Maass, & Bonvini, 2004). This phenomenon, termed the Queen Bee Syndrome, may be present in the coaching profession, as female superiors legitimize the disadvantaged position of other women (Derks et al., 2011; Dobson & Iredale, 2006; Taylor, Hardin, Welch, & Smith, 2018). Academic research has indicated that Queen Bee Syndrome may be a product of the environment when working in a sexist organization (Derks et al., 2011; Dobson & Iredale, 2006).

Individual Level

At the individual level is where intersecting identities influence human experiences. Gender identity may intersect with age, class, race, sexual orientation, and other identities. Homophobia has been a barrier for women in the coaching field because of inaccurate and detrimental associations that come with being a lesbian and a coach. Often, rival coaches will use the accusation of the other coach being a lesbian as a negative recruiting tool (Krane & Barber, 2005). Coaches, therefore, have felt the need to hide their sexual orientation from the public to protect their coaching position. Lesbian coaches may "pass" as heterosexual by dressing more feminine or wearing make-up to hide their sexual orientation (Krane & Barber, 2005; Norman, 2016). Inevitably, this conflict between private and public identity will have a detrimental effect on these coaches and may lead to their exit from the coaching profession.

Racial identities are especially relevant in the context of the sport of swimming. Swimming has a long history of excluding African Americans (Wiltse, 2007), and that history leads to fewer African Americans choosing to participate in swimming

as a leisure activity (Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, & Noe, 1996). Undoubtedly, the eventual result is an underrepresentation of black women in the swimming coaching profession.

Parental status as it intersects with gender affects male and female coaches differently as well. NCAA Division I coaches who were also mothers reported a sense of fulfillment from their role as a coach, but they dealt with feelings of guilt and anxiety stemming from being away from their children (Dixon & Bruening, 2007). The accepted norms and policies of an organization may influence these feelings of guilt or anxiety based on constraints such as work schedule, job pressure, and stress (Burton, 2015; Dixon & Bruening, 2007). Women face the added barrier of work/life conflict, where involvement in one role makes it difficult to participate in the other (e.g., work responsibilities interfere with wife/mothering responsibilities and vice-versa; Linehan & Scullion, 2008). Traditionally, men and fathers are asked to provide financially for their family and to provide the discipline for children (Graham & Dixon, 2014), whereas women are expected to provide extensive childcare as well as completion of most household duties (e.g., cooking, cleaning; Goldberg, Tan, & Thorson, 2009).

Gender inequity among collegiate coaches is a result of the aforementioned barriers in addition to some others. These barriers, which are all related to the coach's gender result in limited upward career mobility. Career mobility is influenced by both personal characteristics and social structures (Allmendinger, 1989). The Ecological-Intersectional model is an appropriate model to evaluate career mobility because it addresses the personal characteristics and the social structures in which the individual works. In college coaching, interfirm career mobility is of specific importance because it refers to an individual's ability to advance their career through moving between organizations (Sicherman & Galor, 1990). Collegiate coaching is a unique field where positions for promotion rarely come available within the employee's current athletic department and to move up in the field coaches often must move to another institution. Thus, examining the personal characteristics of coaches and the social environment in which they work can provide insight into the underrepresentation issue.

Focusing on a single sport such as swimming may provide some nuance or differentiation into the phenomenon of underrepresentation of women in college coaching. With a relatively equal representation of male and female athletes in collegiate swimming, as well as the training environment often being a shared gender space, the environment is contextually different from other collegiate sports. Therefore, the sexism experienced by female coaches in swimming may be more or less pronounced or demonstrated differently than other sports.

Methodology

A qualitative research design was used as it is one of the best when attempting to gain understandings that are best communicated through examples and narratives (Yates, 2003). Moreover, the purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of

the participants; it is not an attempt to predict or find causation (Van Manen, 1990). Therefore, a phenomenological methodology guided this research to understand how female swim coaches make meaning around their career experiences. Methods were chosen that would allow the participants to describe their perceptions about their experiences (Patton, 2002).

Participants

Purposeful criterion sampling was used for participant selection (Patton, 2002; Seidman 2013). The inclusion criteria for the sample were swimming coaches who identify as female and have coached at the NCAA Division I level. Participants were limited to NCAA Division I because it is the division with the greatest disparity in the ratio between male and female coaches. Coaches at this level rarely have other responsibilities other than coaching as their primary focus. There are limited if any other administrative duties outside of their sport. The participants included both head coaches, associate head coaches, and assistant coaches. Potential participants were identified through their university's athletic department website, and 35 potential participants were contacted via email. These individuals were selected based on the diversity of conference (e.g., Autonomous, Non-Autonomous, other Division I) and position (e.g., head coach, associate head coach, or assistant coach) they represented, in order to have a diverse sample to represent swimming coaches across all of NCAA Division 1. Twenty-five female coaches responded to the inquiry and fit the inclusion criteria. Interviews were conducted with 21 participants.

Due to the small population of female swimming coaches, providing detailed individual demographic information (e.g., conference affiliation, age, etc.) in a traditional table format could compromise the confidentiality of the participants. Therefore, the participants were assigned pseudonyms based on years of experience in NCAA Division I coaching to provide context for the reader. Four coaches with less than five years of experience in Division I were assigned pseudonyms with surnames beginning A through D. There are seven coaches with five to 10 years of Division I experience and are represented with surnames E through K. The 11 coaches, with pseudonym surnames L through U, have more than 10 years of Division I experience. The mean age of the participants was 42.7 years old, ranging in age from 28 to 63 years. The participants all racially identified as Caucasian/white. Nineteen of the participants identified as heterosexual, with three identifying as not heterosexual. The average time spent in coaching, across all divisional levels, ranged from two to 41 years, with a mean of 18 years.

The participants were assigned pseudonyms with the title of Coach and a surname. The practice of using first names for pseudonyms did not lend the amount of respect the participants deserved. Additionally, using surnames may help the reader to bracket any bias they may have toward women. For example, reading quotations from "Coach Adams" versus "Amy" may invoke different responses from the reader (Enfield, 2007).

Data Collection

The primary researcher conducted semi-structured interviews for the targeted purposes of uncovering meaning in the experiences of the participants and to understand the topic from the participants' perspective (Perakyla & Ruusuvuori, 2013; Yates, 2003). Phone interviews were selected in order to reach individuals in varying geographic locations (Harvey, 2011). Although in-person interviews may be preferred, studies have found that comparable findings can be yielded from phone interviews (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). The questions in the interview guide related to (a) the participants' personal coaching history, (b) training and education as a coach, and (c) perceptions regarding the gender imbalance in the profession. The interview guide was constructed based on research conducted with women in sport leadership positions (e.g., Massengale, 2009; Norman, 2010; Taylor, Siegele, Smith, & Hardin, 2018). After conducting one pilot interview with a colleague who had retired from coaching, the interview guide was determined to reflect the intention of the study accurately. Interviews were conducted via telephone by the primary researcher with the average length of the interviews being slightly more than 44 minutes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Saturation was reached after 21 interviews at the point where similar data was being repeated through the interviews (Seidman, 2013).

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study was enhanced through member-checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the use of open-ended interview questions, and the primary researcher's ability to build rapport and understand the culture and the context of the participants' experiences due to her time spent in the profession (Morrow, 2005). The primary researcher also regularly journaled her own preconceptions and perceptions throughout the research process to understand her personal biases as it related to the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member-checking allowed the participants to review the transcription and change, delete, or amend any data they wished. Only one participant elected to change any of her data. She retracted two pages of her transcription in which she told a story that did not involve her personally.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data were analyzed using constant comparative analysis, beginning with in-vivo coding (Saldaña, 2015). The primary researcher chose to use in-vivo coding to keep the analysis in the words of the participants as much as possible. From the 215 pages of transcriptions, 819 initial codes were developed. Codes were compared to previous codes in the same transcription and then across transcriptions. These codes were then grouped into categories by "connecting threads and patterns" among the data (Seidman, 2013, p.127). A co-researcher reviewed the codes and categories for confirmation. Although some disagreement occurred between researchers, the researchers were able to agree on themes through discussion, debate and continual review and examination of the initial codes and categories. Nine categories were condensed into three mutually agreed-upon themes by the primary researcher and

one co-researcher. The themes were then presented to the other two co-researchers for verification. The theme of sexism is presented here independently due to the robust nature of the findings.

Findings and Discussion

The experiences of the participants in this study revealed a pervasiveness of gender bias in the swim coaching profession. These biases in several instances resulted in incidents of discrimination. The gender bias and discrimination experienced by the coaches in the present study could broadly be explained as subtle sexism or the "unequal and unfair treatment of women" that is "perceived to be normative, and therefore does not appear unusual" (Swim, Mallett, & Stangor, 2004, p. 117). The term sexism is used to generally identify both the prejudice and the discrimination the participants experienced (Cudd & Jones, 2005). Sexism was manifested in five general categories: (a) misidentification (b) differential treatment, (c) tokenism, (d) isolation, and (e) motherhood (see Table 1). Using the Ecological-Intersectional model, at the societal level, female coaches experience misidentification and differential treatment. At the organizational level, the female coaches experience tokenism. Isolation is representative of the coaches' experiences at the interpersonal level. Lastly, female coaches' intersectional identity regarding their parental status is represented by the motherhood category.

Table 1
Categories of Sexism within the Ecological-Intersectional Model

Ecological-Intersectional model level	Category of sexism	Example of category
Societal	Misidentification	Lack of external identification as coaches or leaders
	Differential treatment	Experience of treatment dissimilar from male colleagues
Organizational	Tokenism	Receiving additional attention for being a female coach
Interpersonal	Isolation	Separation from dominant group creating networking barriers
Individual/Intersectional	Motherhood	Experience of discrimination based on parental status

Misidentification

The female coaches in this study experienced sexism through a lack of external identification as coaches or the leaders of their teams. This sexism is not uncommon; research has found that many times women in coaching are questioned on their status or must hold high credentials (e..g., former All-American or Olympian) in order to be respected in their environment (Cunningham & Sagas, 2002; Kamphoff et al., 2010; Siegele et al., 2019). The participants commented on how they are sometimes mistaken for one of the student-athletes or an athletic trainer, and not as a part of the coaching staff. The less experienced, younger coaches often assume that it is because of their age and not because of their sex, although this misidentification happens to even the most experienced coaches. Coach Evans described a situation where she was not assumed to be a coach. She said,

> I was standing with another female coach at our conference meet and [a member of the meet staff] walks up and is like, "Where are your coaches at?" And it's two female coaches, one is the interim head coach and me. And I'm like, "We are the coaches. What are you thinking?" Sometimes as a female, you're either someone on the team or you're the trainer. Nobody knows you are the coach. If you are the head coach, they are still going to go to your male assistant, treating him like he's the head coach.

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

> I feel like sometimes I am not taken seriously. And there are times when officials are like, "What are you swimming?" I'm like, "No I'm the coach. Do you not see the stopwatch? I'm like one of the only people dressed in clothing." … But they never say that to my guy friends. They never say that to the other male coaches, they only ever say that to younger females.

The assumption of the female coach, being a student-athlete or staff member and not a coach extends beyond the younger coaches. This would suggest that the misidentification is more a product of sexism than ageism. Coach Ullman recalled a story of her male assistant and male director of operations being mistaken for the coaches. She said a younger male on the meet staff walked right past her and handed the meet line-up to her male assistant and male director of operations as he says, "Here you go, Coach." She reacted by informing this individual of his subconscious biases. She said to him, "Do you realize that you just assumed that the men were the head coaches and that I wasn't the coach? You just probably want to check in with that."

Coach Ullman also retold the story of her encounter with a female meet referee at a top-level national meet. Coach Ullman's institution has separate women's and men's swimming programs. There was an issue with one of the female swimmers, and the meet referee came to Coach Ullman and asked to speak with the head coach of the men's team. Coach Ullman said to the referee, "That's bullshit. This is a female, and this is a women's issue. Why are you going to him? You're a woman; you

should know how hard this has been." Coach Ullman said she "was dumbfounded" at the encounter. Lastly, in her many years of coaching, Coach Ullman said she has regularly been misidentified by swim meet security as a parent. She says she has been directed towards spectator seating by meet security. She says she does not see her male counterparts misidentified in this way.

This misidentification of female coaches as athletic trainers, athletes, or parents shows the deep-rooted bias individuals may hold, in which the assumption that a woman is not the leader is demonstrated. The pervasiveness of gender stereotypes, and who is perceived as leaders, is engrained throughout sport culture and therefore this category fell into the societal level of the Ecological-Intersectional model. The younger female coaches attributed this misidentification to their age; however, as this still happens to older women who are well established in their careers, it is likely to be more a product of sexism. In addition, younger men associated with the program, such as assistants or directors of operations, are assumed to be the coaches. It is naturally assumed a younger man with a team is a coach but that is not always the case for younger women or women of any age for that matter. It is also notable that it is not only men who misidentify the female coaches, as women do this as well. This finding aligns with research in collegiate athletics that found men are assumed to hold the leadership positions within college athletics (Burton, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2011; Taylor & Hardin, 2016).

The stereotypes surrounding gender and leadership create biases that lead to misidentifications. Gender stereotyping influences who is perceived as a competent leader. Women are stereotyped as kind, warm, and gentle. Although these are positive traits, when it comes to leadership this can have negative consequences because the stereotypical masculine characteristics of confidence, assertiveness, and independence are perceived as the preferred leadership qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Differential Treatment

Participants not only identified misidentification as a form of sexism used to discredit their role as head coaches but also discussed the differential treatment they experienced in comparison to their male peers. Sexism in the form of differential treatment occurred from a variety of sources within and tangential to the swimming program, be it other coaches, athletes, parents, and athletic administrators. This sexism is deeply embedded culturally in sport which limits or devalues women in leadership roles (Kamphoff et al., 2010; Kilty, 2006). These coaches regularly encounter stereotypes and discrimination as women in a male-dominated field.

Coach Davis witnessed varying levels of respect for the coaches on the pool deck based on their gender. There were both male and female head coaches in her conference. She said,

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

The swimmers on the team may also have a sexist view of who should be coaching them. Coach Evans tells a story of a female coach who had an athlete leave her program when she was promoted from the assistant coach to the head coach. The female swimmer said she did not want to swim for a female head coach and questioned what would happen to the team if that coach got pregnant. This female coach had been the group coach for this swimmer before her promotion and had been quite successful in developing this swimmer. It could, therefore, be inferred that the swimmer recognized the coach for her coaching acumen but could not accept her as the leader.

Coach Owens said she had personally faced sexist attitudes from female athletes. She said,

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

Coach Foster said that when she first started coaching, she perceived sexist attitudes from the men's team she coached. She again thought their disrespect might be attributed to her age rather than her gender. She "thought that the men's team didn't respect me as much as the women's team, or listened to me on coaching… I was a lot younger, too." However, her words suggest that the treatment she was receiving from her athletes was intersectional. She said,

> I don't think it was my gender, definitely my age, but it definitely was hard for me to garner respect of the athletes. I think I really had to work hard to get the men's respect. The other three swimming coaches were male, (and) it was sometimes difficult for them to take me seriously.

Gender may also be used as a negative recruiting tool against female coaches. A prospective student-athlete eventually told Coach Knight that she thought she needed a male coach after several months of Coach Knight recruiting her. The athlete told Coach Knight that a male coach who had been recruiting her to another institution suggested this. This particular student-athlete wanted to study engineering, and Coach Knight eventually won her over, by explaining that she had "some perspective on being a female in a male-dominated industry." She explained that this negative recruiting against female coaches "is out there, it gets used against you."

Female coaches also face gender biases when they act in stereotypically masculine ways. Coach Evans said that when a female coach enforces the rules, she is a "bitch." She said that the expectation is that the "female is supposed to be the complete nurturer." Female coaches are also disparaged by their male colleagues according to Coach Lewis when they do not act in stereotypically feminine ways. She said that she has heard, on several occasions, male coaches on the pool deck talking negatively about a highly successful female coach. She said, "People talk about how she's a bitch, and she's crazy. And it's like, what about these other guys? They're

crazy too!" She said this "is not very encouraging to women, especially if you are younger. You are hearing these people that you trust and see as a role model or idol, and they are talking that way."

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

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

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

This differential treatment is at the center of the sexism experienced by female coaches as it perpetuates hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is the system in which men's dominant role in society is legitimized, which in turns makes women the subordinate gender (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), and thus why this category falls at the societal level of the Ecological-Intersectional model. The participants' examples of differential treatment continually reinforce the notion that men are presumed to be the natural leaders. This is especially true in a male-dominated sporting context where stereotypical masculine behaviors are rewarded. When athletes say "they prefer a male coach" or administrators think they need to hire a male coach for male athletes, they are constructing or reconstructing the gender hierarchy and perpetuating hegemonic masculinity. Women continue to experience underrepresentation in leadership roles because of this view (Walker & Bopp, 2010).

Women are supposed to be sensitive, gentle, and nurturing, which are not considered leadership traits. Women are perceived to be a "bitch" when they exhibit stereotypical masculine traits of leadership. Women who express femininity have little chance to move into leadership roles within their sport organization because they are not taken seriously by their male colleagues. However, women who express masculinity are also excluded from leadership positions because they were perceived to be "bitchy" (Shaw & Hoebner, 2003). Of interest in the current study, was how Coach Ullman embraced her "bitch" status and has turned what is typically seen as a negative into a positive. She wears her "bitch" status proudly, recognizing what it really stands for and celebrating it almost as a status symbol.

Tokenism

Several of the coaches provided examples of times they have felt like a token in their careers. Tokenism is when an organization makes a symbolic effort to include minority groups in order to be perceived as more inclusive (Kanter, 1993). The effect of tokenism is that individuals may perceive that the only reason a woman has a specific position is because of her gender, not her expertise (Kanter, 1993). The women

in this study discussed feelings of tokenism in their interactions with other coaches. Coach Morris said she feels like "the reality is that you have to be better than the men coaches to be perceived as good." She said she still hears comments like, "She is the best *female* [emphasis added] coach I know," and that she is "still trying to get that clarification [female] out of the sentence." Being one of few female coaches inevitably brings more attention to her as a coach, but at the same time highlights her gender as different from the majority, just as Kanter (1977) asserted that token women feel highly visible, yet isolated from their peers.

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

Coach Smith discussed how entry-level positions might be easier to obtain as a woman, but it is necessary to overcome the token status which keeps female coaches in those positions. She said,

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

Coach Davis explained the attitude these male coaches may have in hiring a female assistant. She said male head coaches "feel like they need a female on a staff" and are "setting up her position to be at the bottom of the totem pole." She furthered her point saying, "they [male coaches] don't really care about who she is and aren't interested in her contribution" and "creating a space for her to actually want to be there." She says this is an "exceptionally huge hurdle in a coaching career." She continued addressing the impact that tokenism may have on female assistants. She said, "I guess I don't really think that head coaches these days have a ton of respect for young women coaches."

Coach Isaac summarized several of the themes in her discussion about assistant coach job openings in the Power Five Conferences (e.g., SEC, ACC, Pac-12, Big Ten, Big 12). She said when there is an assistant coach opening,

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

The token female role on a coaching staff does not work in favor of female coaches. Coach Smith explained how head coaches are resistant to hire more than

the one female coach they deem necessary to have on their staff. She said that she wanted to apply at a program that had multiple assistant openings when they hired a new head coach. Her mentor called the newly hired head coach to put in a good word for her and the "coach of the college told him, 'No, I'm going to retain the girl that was on staff, so we don't need any more women coaches.'"

This token status that female assistant coaches appear to occupy in the minds of their male head coaches or administrators may result in fewer opportunities for on-the-job training in the technical areas of coaching that will most likely lead to head coaching opportunities. The coaches in the current study used terms such as "secretary-coach," "admin-coach," and "operations-coach" to describe the token role that these female coaches occupy; demonstrating the gender norms of "men and women's work" (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012). Coaches receive most of their coaching education through their closest coaching contacts, for assistant coaches, this is their head coach. Therefore, the assistant coaches are highly dependent on the ability of their head coach to educate and train them to learn the necessary skills that will be required at the level of head coach. Unfortunately, in the current study, both head coaches and assistant coaches discuss the lack of training female assistant coaches receive from their head coach as a result of their token status. Coach Nelson explained the attitude that head coaches have in not training their assistant coaches to become head coaches. She said that they want someone who is "not going to overstep her boundaries," that the head coach will "still get to do all the coaching," and that the female assistant will "almost be like the secretary coach, do all the travel, do all the paperwork, do the expense reports, do all that stuff, instead of actual coaching."

Tokenism, while opening the door for some of the women in the current study, eventually has adverse outcomes. The token role assigned to many female coaches is a product of the culture of the organization, and thus has been situated within the organizational level of the Ecological-Intersectional model. An individual who is in a token role may have trouble behaving naturally, fitting in, and gaining peer acceptance (Kanter, 1993). The coaches in the current study reported some degree of all three of these negative outcomes. Kanter (1977) also suggests that tokenism can lead to role entrapment which is exactly what the women are experiencing as the "admin-coach." Evidence of women being stereotyped into certain career functions or "role entrapment" has been shown in college athletic departments (Taylor & Hardin, 2016). Women tend to be funneled into careers that do not lead to the highest leadership positions. Gender-role entrapment means the minority gender is pushed further into the stereotypical roles and behaviors of their gender (Johnson & Schulman, 1989). There is evidence of this in the current study as women are pushed into the "secretarial" or "administrative" duties that are stereotypically associated with women.

Women are not being prepared to move onto higher positions of leadership because of the token status of their position. They are experiencing "the sticky floor" phenomena where the entry-level position becomes a "trap" rather than a "stepping stone." A sticky floor does not allow a woman to advance high enough to even encounter the glass ceiling (Reskin & Pavadic, 2006). The other effect that tokenism

has on individuals in the minority group is diminished self-esteem (Kanter, 1977). This sentiment was echoed nearly verbatim by one of the participants when she questioned whether she was deserving of her position or whether she got her job "just because she was a female."

Isolation

Both more experienced and less experienced coaches discussed the isolation that occurs due to working in a male-dominated profession such as swimming. This lack of representation can lead to women lacking mentorship, role models, and allies within their industry causing feelings of isolation. Isolation can occur in two different ways: within a coaching staff and in the swimming community at large. In the current study, the assistant coaches discussed being the only woman on the coaching staff while the head coaches discussed isolation in the larger swimming community. The coaches were often one of the very few women on pool decks, at professional meetings, or in other potential networking situations. Isolation seemed to be present at every stage of these women's careers. The women were usually the only female coach on a five-person staff early in their careers. They were met with a "good 'ole boys" club that was unwelcoming, and they found it challenging to connect with other women when they pursued networking at professional development events. Once the women had a well-established career in their 30s and 40s, they found that many of the female coaches who were once their peers had left the profession. Lastly, if the female coach reached the highest coaching levels, they were now one of the very few head coaches.

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

The isolation that Coach Nelson was experiencing at a professional development convention may be considered sexism, as the male coaches, either intentionally or unintentionally, did not include women. Although this is a subtle form of sexism, it is still prevalent and impactful on a woman's career. This may suggest that male coaches do not see the female coaches as their peers, coworkers, or friends, and the female coaches are fundamentally different from them. Women are excluded from the normal dialogue and social interaction that develops between the male coaches. Ultimately, this exclusion from the networks and social interactions could negatively

affect the upward career mobility of women. Career mobility is enhanced by having a vast, sparse network of informal ties for acquiring information and resources (Podolny, & Baron, 1997). Female coaches struggle to advance their careers without the opportunity to build a network due to the isolation that occurs.

Other coaches discussed the isolation they experienced as a coach with a family. Coach Lewis explained how being a female coach with a family was isolating. She said, "I think I felt isolated for a long time as a mother trying to coach." In addition, she said that she lacked peers. She could name only two other female coaches in her age range with children. She said, "So there's not very many of us. I don't think I felt like I had any peers that I could talk to." She said there is a specific age group of unrepresented female coaches. She said there are some established older female coaches and quite a few young female assistants, but there are very few women in the mid-30s to mid-40s age range. She said, "Women look around, and sure it's great when you are young, but they look around and like, 'What do you do when you're in your mid-30s?' There's not very many women left, so they see it."

The observation of a missing demographic of female coaches may be evidence of limited upward career mobility. Individuals with fewer opportunities for career advancement will lower their career expectations, experience greater dissatisfaction, and eventually leave a given profession or organization (Kanter, 1977). This phenomenon may be precisely what women in coaching are experiencing, as women are represented in greater percentages at the assistant coach level than the head coach level. The missing demographic may be the result of women reaching a point in their coaching career where they are frustrated with limited opportunities for advancement and leave the profession altogether (Hardin, Taylor, Smith, & Siegele, 2017,, 2018; Taylor, Smith, & Hardin, 2017).

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

Coach Harris' perception that women are not helping other women because they are all just trying to "stay afloat" is the result of working in a male-dominated environment. "Queen Bee" behavior may emerge among some women in a male-dominated environment (Taylor et al., 2018). Some women will choose to distance themselves from other women because of the negative stereotypes associated with women and align themselves with their male colleagues (Derks et al., 2011). This may mean that female coaches will not build networks with other female coaches, and instead build a stronger network with male colleagues. As this experience limits relationship building, it has been categorized in the Ecological-Intersectional model as interpersonal.

The isolation these women are experiencing can have other effects, as well. The women expressed difficulty in identifying female role models and mentors. Research

has shown the importance of female role models for women. A female career-role model proves to be more inspiring for women than does a male role model for a man (Lockwood, 2006). Additionally, positive female role models influence women's perceptions of coaching as a potential career path. Current female coaches have limited numbers of high-achieving female coaches to emulate. Young coaches or prospective coaches may lose interest in the career field without this source of inspiration, and current female swimmers may not consider coaching as a possible career path.

Motherhood

Sexist attitudes towards female coaches can also come from pregnancy or parental status which can create further conflict for women regarding a work/life balance (Burton, 2015; Dixon & Bruening, 2007). Coach Evans described a conversation she overheard between two male head coaches as one was considering hiring a specific female coach for an open assistant position. The other male coach had previously worked with this female coach. The first male coach asked the other if he would ever hire the female assistant again. His response was, "I would if she didn't have kids."

Coach Adams expressed concern regarding getting pregnant as she thought her administrators might express some reservations. She did not have children, but she imagined telling her administrators she was pregnant and the reaction she might get. She said, "they would be like, 'Oh my gosh, now is she going out on maternity leave? Is she going to come back, or should we just try to replace her right now?'" Coach Isaac echoed a similar sentiment about the impact having children might have on her career. She wondered "if they [her administration] would be supportive? Or would they just push me out? I don't know." This concern over discrimination regarding having children or pregnancy extends to women who have no intention of having children. Coach Davis said,

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

Coach Nelson told a story of interviewing for a head coach position at another institution when she was visibly pregnant. She said she saw reactions from the hiring committee when she came to the interview "showing quite a bit." This job ended up going to a male coach. She did not say that her pregnancy was the reason she did not get the job, but she was aware of the hiring committee's reaction.

In other male-dominated professions, women who did not have children were perceived as competent as men in the field, but once women had children or became pregnant, they were now regarded as mothers rather than professionals (Ranson, 2005). Female coaches working in a male-dominated environment may be more accepted before they become mothers, but once pregnancy or motherhood occurs, the two identities of coach and mother may be incongruous. Arguably, the impact

of pregnancy or parental status discrimination may contribute to the struggle for women to advance in coaching. This is not uncommon for women to consider the repercussions of having a family. Taylor et al, (2017) found that early career women in collegiate administration had already decided to exit the profession or forego having children even when a partner and serious relationship was not present in their life.

Women who pursue coaching as a career may leave the profession when they have children or may decide that having children is not compatible with their career goals. Coach Smith, retired from coaching after having her second child. She said that she wants to "be all-in" in everything that she does. She did not feel like she could give coaching the proper attention necessary when distracted by the needs of motherhood. Coaching is a uniquely demanding profession, perhaps more so for women than men, add to that the expectations and responsibilities of motherhood, it may be an unmanageable lifestyle for some (Bruening & Dixon, 2008). Male coaches do face work-life challenges as well but are contextually different from women (Graham & Dixon, 2014). These intersecting identities of gender and parental status that uniquely effect women, situate this category of sexism at the individual/intersectional level of the Ecological-Intersectional model.

Conclusion

Examining the career experiences of NCAA Division I female swimming coaches in order to better understand the lack of female representation in the profession was the purpose of this research. Female leaders in sport experiencing sexism is not a new concept; however, understanding how and in what contexts that sexism occurs for swimming coaches is distinct. The women in the current study experienced sexism from a variety of sources and in a variety of contexts. The Ecological-Intersectional Model of barriers and supports for women coaches developed by Lavoi (2016) provides organization to the variety of barriers encountered by female coaches in this study. At the societal level, cultural norms and gender normalcy may limit women from obtaining leadership positions (e.g. head coach; Kamphoff, 2010; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Taylor et al., 2018) represented in this study in the Misidentification and Differential Treatment categories. At the organizational level, homologous reproduction and organizational culture within sport organizations limit women's ability to gain initial employment and subsequently climb the career ladder. The Tokenism category in this study is an example of such an organizational culture. At the interpersonal level, female coaches may struggle with sexism from colleagues and administrators, which results in a lack of mentorship and role models, represented by the Isolation category. At the individual level, female coaches intersecting identities create further challenges. As it relates to the current study, the intersection of gender and parental status, the Motherhood category, was identified as a barrier for female coaches.

The sexism female coaches experienced by those associated with their program can create a hostile working environment. As Coach Davis said, if "I felt like this

was going to be a very miserable existence, I would leave." She said that she thinks it is "a choice a lot of women, unfortunately, have been making across all types of sports, dealing with their various male-dominated cultures." When women regularly experience sexism, it may eventually lead to their decision to leave the career field. Moreover, a female athlete considering the coaching career path may choose not to enter the field initially if she is witness to the sexism experienced by female coaches. These sources of sexism encountered by female coaches, whether from athletes, other coaches, parents, or administrators, can create an environment that is less than hospitable for female coaches. Every coach may not have experienced sexism from every source, but most have experienced sexism to some degree from at least one of the sources. It could impact their career experiences to the point where they consider leaving the field when these coaches feel disrespected from a variety of sources.

Having opportunities for women in the coaching profession is important. Coaches are role models for children and adolescents. Athletes are overwhelmingly coached by men, which only serves to reinforce gender stereotypes which exist in sport and leadership (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Furthermore, women have largely been excluded from coaching men which limits career options for women, prevents boys/men from the benefits of female leadership, and further engrains the gender hierarchy. For example, in research conducted with men's college basketball coaches the environment is both gender exclusive and resistant to change which perpetuates the limited of opportunities for women to coach the sport (Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Additionally, coaching can be a viable career option for former athletes. Athletes often struggle with identity issues and lack of career opportunities after their competitive career ends and coaching is a potential outlet for them (Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Saxe, Hardin, Taylor, & Pate, 2017; Smith & Hardin, 2018; Smith, Taylor, & Hardin, 2018). Lastly, having female coaches as role models also affects perceptions of leadership characteristics. Girls and women may falsely come to believe that they must adopt a stereotypically masculine leadership style, whether in coaching or other leadership positions if they are only exposed to male leadership styles as coaches, and thus not pursue coaching as a career.

Women must be in an environment that facilitates upward career mobility to maintain a coaching career or climb the coaching career ladder. The current college swim coaching environment does the opposite. Many of these women are not able to ascend to higher ranks due to a variety of barriers perpetuated by sexism and hegemony. Additionally, the roles that they do occupy on their coaching staffs may be unfulfilling and not offer growth opportunities. Women who have achieved the highest levels of success and are widely considered experts in this field are still regularly confronting the hegemonic masculinity entrenched in sport and coaching.

From these findings, athletic administrators can recognize the challenges their female coaches face and consider strategies to support them better. Likewise, the perception of what a swimming coach looks, sounds, and acts like needs to evolve in order to challenge the belief that sport leadership positions are inherently masculine. It has long been recognized that there is a gender representation problem in collegiate swim coaching, but the narrative often shifted the blame to the coach herself,

with observations of women not wanting to coach. However, from these findings, it is undeniable that it is the environment that needs to change to make coaching more attractive for women in terms of career advancement and overall job satisfaction.

Limitations

This study is limited in a few ways. Foremost, the primary researcher is a former college swim coach herself. She spent six years coaching college swimming, and her positionality should be recognized. In addition, the instrument of interviews for data collection, although providing a narrative, does not provide scale. It cannot be determined if the experiences of the participants were isolated incidents or examples of regularly occurring events. Also, with self-reported data, the participants' memory may be selective or even exaggerated. The sample of participants was also a limitation to the study, as it did not represent women who left the career field early. Future research should examine women who have left the profession in order to understand their reasoning for opting out of this career path.

Implications for Practice

Due to the continued male-domination of leadership positions in sport, women cannot simply wait for a change in culture to advance their careers. Therefore, female swimming coaches must act to enhance their career mobility. Misidentification and differential treatment due to societal stereotypes will undoubtedly continue. However, the response of the coach can change perceptions. When asked how the coaches handled these situations, some coaches laughed off the misidentification or sexist behaviors while others corrected the behavior. Only through confronting the stereotypes will the offenders become aware of their biases (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). To combat the token role that assistant coaches often occupy, assistant coaches need to discuss their career goals with their head coach to avoid the "sticky floor" (Laabs, 1993). The head coach then needs to train and develop his/her assistant coaches in tangible skills that will be marketable for head coaching positions. This means assistant coaches need to assert themselves in asking for duties other than administration. Assistant coaches need to be given the autonomy to develop season plans, write workouts, recruit, and fundraise, among numerous other coaching skills. These are the skills that will help them climb the ladder to their next career move (Machida & Feltz, 2013; Smith, Taylor, Siegele, & Hardin, 2019; Taylor & Hardin, 2016). Although working in an inhospitable environment may make mentorship and networking more challenging, the most successful, longest tenured coaches in this study participated extensively in these activities. If a coach desires a long and more satisfying career experience networking and mentoring services are available through a variety of coaching organizations as well as through institutional athletic departments. Lastly, a coach's parental-status, whether a mom or dad, should not have a negative impact on the career of a coach. It should be under the purview of the athletic department to ensure that hiring practices are non-discriminatory based on parental status. The athletic department should also provide proper supports and

resources for coaches with children such as on-campus child-care options, flexible work schedules, and ability to travel with the team. Head coaches need to be aware of the demands of the job on parents and consider ways in which they can support assistant coaches with children. These recommendations for practice cannot summarily fix the problem of institutional and pervasive sexism in a male-dominated community, however they may provide some pathways towards equity between male and female coaches.

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At a Crossroads: The Senior Woman Administrator Designation

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The Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) designation was established by the NCAA to increase involvement of women in the management of collegiate athletics. However, research has found SWAs may not be afforded opportunities needed for further career advancement. This study explored the perceptions of NCAA Division I SWAs through role congruity theory. Interviews revealed two major themes: *Unintended Consequences* and *Future of the Designation.* Themes highlighted how the designation itself is problematic and accompanied with gender stereotypes. Furthermore, participants detailed the designation should be removed due to tokenism and marginalization. This call for removal of the designation demonstrates a new and unique finding to contribute to the literature as the participants found the designation and its practices archaic, outdated, and contrary to their overall career goals. The women in the study believed the designation of SWA limits ascension into leadership roles within collegiate athletics.

Keywords: collegiate athletics, senior woman administrator, role congruity theory

The position of Primary Woman Administrator (PWA) was created by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in 1981 for the individual, man or woman, overseeing women's athletics (Hult, 1994). It was renamed to its current title, Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) with modified responsibilities in 1989, in order to create a means for women to be more involved in the overall management of collegiate athletics (Hoffman, 2010; Hult, 1994). This has, however, created a situation where there is often only one woman in a senior-level administration position at NCAA member institutions (Hoffman, 2010). The SWA designation does create a leadership position for a woman, but it is just that, a designation or role, not an actual position (Hoffman, 2010).

There has been inconsistency in the responsibilities and duties of SWAs throughout the NCAA despite the intent of the designation. The involvement of SWAs in the actual decision-making process in athletic departments varies across institutions (Grappendorf, Pent, Burton, & Henderson, 2008; Hoffman, 2010; Tiell & Dixon, 2008; Tiell, Dixon, & Lin, 2012). Women are often tasked with overseeing wom-

en's programs and funneled into the "soft" areas of athletic department management such as marketing, academics, and student-life (Grappendorf et al., 2008; Taylor & Hardin, 2016). SWAs are many times not part of the decision-making process or involved in the financial management of the athletic department (Pent, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2007, Tiell et al., 2012). This has created a situation where the SWA designation may be perceived as the ceiling of career attainment for women in collegiate athletic administration. This is problematic as research has found female collegiate athletic administrators do have a desire to be a part of the decision-making process which would assist them in preparing for the role of athletic director (AD) or more senior-level positions (Lough & Grappendorf, 2007; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Tiell et al., 2012). Despite acknowledgement, resources and best practices provided by the NCAA (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a; 2018b), there is still confusion surrounding the designation and actual responsibilities of the SWA warranting a further investigation to better understand how this ambiguity affects women in this designation. Thus, the purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) designation by the women who hold this designation within NCAA Division I institutions.

Women in Collegiate Sport Administration

Women's collegiate athletics was first organized on a national level in 1941 with the establishment of the Division for Girl's and Women's in Sports (DGWS) within the organizational structure of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD). The governance structure of women's collegiate athletics fell under various governing bodies during the following three decades culminating with the establishment of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). The AIAW was established in late 1971 and began overseeing the governance of women's collegiate athletics in early 1972 with more than 280 member institutions (Crowley, 2006).

The AIAW continued to grow and develop and offered 41 championships in 19 sports by 1981 and had nearly 1,000 members in the late 1970s (Crowley, 2006). However, the passage of Title IX greatly changed the landscape of women's collegiate athletics and eventually lead to the downfall of the AIAW. The passage of Title IX in 1972 by Congress prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally-funded program (Crowley, 2006; Staurowsky, Zonder, & Riemer, 2017). Although there was no mention of collegiate athletics in the language of Title IX, college athletics fell under the guidelines set forth by Title IX. NCAA members had little interest in women's sports with the initial passage of Title IX, but colleges and universities soon began funding women's sports. As a result, the NCAA began offering championships for women, and eventually the AIAW was absorbed by the NCAA and its member institutions. NCAA members could offer more financial resources for female collegiate athletes, so AIAW members chose to participate in NCAA championships. The impact of these events was the eventual demise and ceased existence of the AIAW in mid-1983 (Crowley, 2006; Hoffman, 2011).

Another impact of the NCAA members absorbing women's collegiate athletics was the elimination of many administrative positions. More than 90% of women's teams were coached by women and women athletic departments were led by women prior to women's athletics being governed by the NCAA (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). However, there was no need for many of the administrators who oversaw women's athletics, as administrators who were overseeing men's athletics assumed those duties when the NCAA began to govern women's collegiate athletics. Many career opportunities and leadership positions for women were no longer available since the administrators who oversaw men's athletics were primarily men (Hoffman, 2011).

The number of women competing at NCAA institutions has increased dramatically in the past 35 years. Women comprise 43.8% of collegiate athletes within the NCAA and compete for 73 national championships on more than 19,600 teams (Irick, 2017). The number of women competing within the NCAA in 1982 was approximately 74,000 and that number stood at more than 217,500 in 2017 (Irick, 2017). Despite this growth in the participation rates of female collegiate athletes, there has been a stagnation in the percentage of women coaching women's teams and in athletic administration positions during the past several years (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Women held 39.8% of Division I head coaching positions and 11.2% of Division I athletic director positions in 2017 (Lapchick et al., 2018). There has been an increase in the actual number of women employed by collegiate athletic departments, but this employment is often seen at the assistant coach level or in entry-level positions (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The concentration of women at these entry-level or "support" positions, may be due to gender biases that see women as inferior in leadership roles, homologous reproduction or the idea of hiring those who look similar to you, and lack of female mentors preventing them from ascending to leadership positions (Hoffman, 2011; Kamphoff, 2010; Stangl & Kane, 1991; Taylor & Hardin, 2016).

Senior Woman Administrator Designation

The SWA designation has created confusion since its inception as the description of the designation and duties involved are limited. The SWA is defined by the NCAA Division I Manual in Article 4.02.5.1 as "the highest-ranking female involved in the management of an institution's intercollegiate athletics program" (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2019, p. 18; NCAA Inclusion, 2018a), but exact responsibilities of the SWA are not specified by the NCAA and are left to the discretion of individual athletic departments. As such, although the purpose of this designation is to encourage meaningful involvement of women in the administrative structure of collegiate athletics, this meaningful involvement can differ greatly by institution and division. Stemming from the limited structure associated with the designation, common misconceptions surrounding the SWA designation include (1) confusing Senior Woman Administration with "Senior Women's Administrator," suggesting the purpose is to oversee women's sports, (2) confusing the SWA as the longest serving woman in the department instead of the most senior woman, and (3) believing the SWA designation is required by the NCAA (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

The NCAA reported only 59% of Division I SWAs and 50% of conference SWAs at the Division II and III level agreed with the statement, "SWAs are actively engaged in key decision-making at the institutional level" (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a) in comparison to 71% percent of ADs and 45% of conference commissioners, suggesting a perception gap among administrators. Although 75% of SWAs from all three divisions reported they were actively engaged in hiring decisions within their department, only 46% indicated they were involved in major financial decisions (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Grappendorf et al. (2008) also found SWAs lacked involvement in key financial decision-making and desired increased opportunity. Additionally, the NCAA reported minimal involvement for SWAs with regards to football or men's basketball oversight. Sixty-six percent of SWAs reported having sport oversight responsibilities, but only 13% oversaw football and 9% oversaw men's basketball at the Division I level (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

Limited involvement in financial decision-making as with football and men's basketball may inhibit the upward mobility of women working in collegiate athletics (Grappendorf et al., 2008). A typical progression to the AD position prior to the 1990s was to transition from (football) coach into administration. However, recently those in charge of hiring ADs, namely university presidents and donors, are interested in candidate's ability to make financial decisions and oversee successful football and men's basketball programs (Hardin, Cooper, & Huffman, 2013; Taylor & Hardin, 2016). SWAs' ability to ascend to the AD position may be limited if they are not involved in the financial decision-making process or able to oversee high-profile sports. Taylor and Hardin's (2016) study of female ADs had this theme emerge in their interviews with 10 female ADs. The participants acknowledged their perceived lack of knowledge in managing a Division I football program was a hindrance in their career advancement opportunities (Taylor & Hardin, 2016). This limited career mobility is problematic as 65% of SWAs indicated they desired a more senior position (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

Research has consistently shown that financial decision-making and managing high-profile sports are instrumental in advancing to senior-level positions in collegiate athletics. Hancock and Hums (2016) found women in assistant and associate athletic director roles noted that "effective problem solving, budgeting and finance, compliance and eligibility, and facility operations as critical for professional success" (p. 202). A combination of all of these skills is necessary for women to advance to more senior-level positions including that of athletic director (Hardin et al., 2013; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Taylor, Siegele, Smith, & Hardin, 2018). Women in senior leadership positions encounter gender stereotypes and organizational barriers that limit their input and effectiveness on the senior management team which will hinder their professional development (Hancock & Hums, 2016). So regardless of the direct responsibilities (i.e., compliance, academics) of the SWA, they should be involved in other aspects of the overall management of the athletic department to enhance their professional development. Women have traditionally been limited in the amount of influence they have in an organization, and this seems to be the case in regards to SWAs as well (Kanter, 1977; Smith, Taylor, Siegele, & Hardin, 2019). The SWA should not have a

"silent" seat at the table, but be involved in major decisions and the overall direction of the athletic department. The SWA should be engaged in the financial decision-making, long-term strategic planning, and hiring decisions of other senior-staff members (Grappendorf et al., 2008; Tiell & Dixon, 2008; Tiell et al., 2012).

Tokenism and Marginalization

The SWA designation was created by the NCAA in an attempt to increase the presence of women within senior leadership in collegiate athletics. However, women in this designation may experience "tokenism" as many senior leadership teams within collegiate athletics are male-dominated (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Kanter, 1977). A token employee is defined as a member of a small minority (15% of less) in an environment with a dominant homogenous group (Kanter, 1977). By having only a small number of women in senior leadership positions (e.g., sometimes the SWA is the only female on this leadership team), athletic departments are allowing men to maintain their dominance while simultaneously demonstrating the athletic department, and more specifically senior leadership team, is open, nondiscriminatory, and democratic (Hardin, Whiteside, & Ash, 2014; Kane & Stangl, 1991; Siegele, Hardin, Smith, & Taylor, 2020; Whisenant & Mullane, 2007). Tokenism may serve to open doors for some women (i.e., provide them with opportunities they may not otherwise be afforded because of their minority status), however, women who experience tokenism have been found to struggle to behave naturally, fit in, and gain acceptance of their peers due to heightened performance pressure, social isolation, and gender stereotyping (Kanter, 1977; Siegele et al., 2020).

Marginalization has also been a significant barrier that has contributed to the lack of women in leadership roles in collegiate athletics. Marginalization occurs when women are segmented to less desirable positions within the same profession in comparison to their male peers (Hardin et al., 2014; Kane & Stangl, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Siegele et al., 2020; Whisenant & Mullane, 2007). Women may face horizontal segregation that forces them to enter certain fields which are marginalized or less powerful (Hultin, 2003). These career fields women are channeled into are typically positions of lesser authority therefore are considered gender-appropriate (Smith, 2002). This horizontal segregation is illustrated in collegiate athletic departments through the funneling of women into the "soft" areas of athletic administration (e.g., academics, life-skills, marketing; Grappendorf et al., 2008). Women's career mobility may be limited by this marginalization into the "soft" areas of athletic administration as they then are not gaining experience in the financial aspects of collegiate sport or oversight of high-profile sports.

Theoretical Framework

Role congruity theory was used to understand the perceptions of the designation of Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) by the women who hold this designation within NCAA Division I institutions. Role congruity theory explains how the perception of individuals in social group membership does not align with the perceived need-

ed characteristics to obtain membership or status (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Reaching beyond social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), which focuses on how gender norms shape understanding of societal expectations and roles, role congruity theory focuses on how gender and societal norms influence leadership status (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Due to the gender roles and expectations of what behaviors women should exhibit (e.g., being nurturers and caretakers, working in the home), when women obtain leadership roles they may be met with prejudice. The qualities associated with being a successful leader (e.g., dominant, aggressive, objective, self-confident) are attributed by societal and gender norms to be masculine traits. When female leaders display the aforementioned traits, it is viewed as incongruent or in violation with their communal and societal norms causing disapproval and even poor evaluations from their employees and superiors (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Furthermore, demonstrating societal expectations of gender, NCAA Division I athletic departments are male-dominated, especially within leadership positions. A potential cause of this skewed gendered make-up is society's views of masculinity and femininity, particularly in the context of sport. As masculine characteristics are often associated with superior leadership (Anderson, 2008), women may be perceived as lacking the skills necessary to assume leadership positions in sport (Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009). Additionally, Walker and Satore-Baldwin (2013) found masculinity to be deeply embedded within the culture of collegiate sport and found men saw women as intruders in these spaces.

Thus, it is challenging for women to secure and maintain leadership roles within collegiate athletics (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Burton et al., 2009; Hardin, Taylor, Smith, & Siegele, 2017; Lapchick et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2018; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Taylor, Smith, & Hardin, 2017). Sport research grounded in role congruity theory has been used to explain this phenomenon and explore the designation of SWAs. Tiell and Dixon (2008) and Tiell et al. (2012) found a discrepancy between ADs and SWAs regarding the decision-making responsibilities of the SWA. Athletic directors consistently rated SWAs higher in regards to their actual involvement in job performance of masculine tasks such as fundraising, budgeting, or being involved in senior-level decision making, in comparison to SWAs themselves, who rated themselves much lower, especially in the Division II and III levels. This suggests a disconnect between perceived job duties and actual job duties. SWAs were rated the highest by ADs in the tasks of advocacy for female sports, Title IX, being a role model, and working within the group. Tiell et al. (2012) found SWAs low task involvement in fundraising and budgeting was especially prevalent in men's programs and these women lacked the training and mentorship necessary to enhance and advance their careers. These results highlight SWAs aligning congruently with their gender and communal expectations, however this alignment limits them from developing the skills (i.e., budgeting and fundraising) deemed necessary to ascend to leadership positions in collegiate athletics (Grappendorf et al., 2008). Pent and Grappendorf (2007) also found SWAs reported less financial decision-making responsibilities than their male peers and attributed this to a lack of experience and

knowledge. These studies reinforce previous work in this area (see Clausen & Lehr, 2002; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore 2000; Raphaely, 2003) that has examined how SWAs and other women in collegiate athletics are assigned tasks deemed nurturing or gender specific in nature, such as athlete welfare and overseeing women's sports.

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) designation by the women who hold this designation within NCAA Division I institutions. This research sought to understand how the participants constructed meaning and value around the SWA designation. Research has explored the designation of SWA, particularly in relation to whether the designation leads to leadership opportunities for women in collegiate athletics (Clausen & Lehr, 2002; Grappendorf et al., 2008; Inglis et al., 2000; Pent & Grappendorf, 2007; Raphaely, 2003; Tiell & Dixon, 2008; Tiell, et al., 2012). The designation was created as an avenue to empower and provide leadership opportunity for women, however, research has found women are still perceived to lack the skills and experience to move to more senior leadership roles (Burton, 2015; Burton et al., 2009; Burton, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2011; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Taylor et al., 2018; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Furthermore, the NCAA SWA report found confusion is present on the purpose and responsibilities of the SWA (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

Method

A qualitative, descriptive approach was implemented to best understand the experiences and perceptions of the NCAA Division I SWAs, as the researchers were "seeking to describe an experience" (Sandelowski, 2000, p.335). In a historically patriarchal industry such as sport, it is important to understand the perceptions and experiences of those within the minority, such as women in leadership positions, in order to grow, diversify, and change potentially discriminatory cultures (Cunningham, 2008; Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001).

Participants

Purposeful, criterion sampling was used to identify participants who fit the inclusion criteria of being a SWA in a NCAA Division I athletic department (Creswell, 2014). E-mails were sent to 121 NCAA Division I SWAs found through searching athletic directory websites inviting them to participate in interviews. Sixteen SWAs responded to the interview request. Interviews were conducted with 14 participants based on their availability to commit to an interview.

The participants for this study ranged in age from 32 to 66 with an average age of 51. The majority of participants were white (n = 11). This is representative of the overall SWA population within Division I as only 18% of SWAs are women of color (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). There was a wide variation in the length of time the participants had been in their current roles; experience ranged from less than 1 year to 19 years with an average of 10 years. Their length in the field of collegiate athletics ranged from 10 years to 45 years with an average of 27 years. The participants had an array of previous experiences in collegiate athletics such as: coaching, athletic training, mar-

keting, development, compliance, life skills, conference office, and two participants had previously been ADs. This information is reflective of the broader population of women in collegiate athletic administration, as research has found women in senior level positions typically have a long history of experience and in a variety of areas (Taylor et al., 2018; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Tiell & Dixon, 2008; Tiell et al., 2012). All but one of the participants held at least a master's degree, while three participants held or were in the process of completing a doctorate degree. Ten of the participants were former collegiate athletes and six were former collegiate coaches (See table one).

Table 1

Participant	Age	Length of Time in Field	Length of Time in Position	Previous Area of Collegiate Athletics
Afton	49	27 years	5.5 years	Athletic Training
Beth	62	35 years	13 years	Coach; WBB
Cathy	62	40 years	17 years	Development
Donna	56	30 years	19 years	Coaching
Edith	51	30 years	19 years	Athletic Training
Faith	44	21 years	17 years	Compliance
Gretchen	53	20 years	2.5 years	Athletic Director
Hallie	55	29 years	12 years	Athletic Training
Irene	43	21.5 years	1.5 years	Coaching
Jacky	66	45 years	6 years	Athletic Director
Kim	53	30 years	10.5 years	Coaching; WVB
Lauren	47	19 years	10 years	Life Skills
Monica	44	20 years	2 years	Athletic Relations
Nora	32	10 years	One month	Internal Operations

Data Collection

An interview guide was developed based upon research conducted with female athletic administrators including SWAs, ADs, and conference commissioners (e.g., Clausen & Lehr, 2002; Grappendorf et al., 2008; Pent & Grappendorf, 2007; Inglis et al., 2000; Raphaely 2003; Taylor et al., 2018; Tiell & Dixon, 2008; Tiell et al., 2012). The interview protocol consisted of three parts: (a) history of the career experience, (b) understanding and perception of the designation of SWA, and (c) navigation of career path (See table two). All participants were asked similar questions, however there was some variation due to the use of probes and follow-ups by the interviewer (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

The participants consented verbally during the audio recording of the interview prior to the start of the interview. All of the interviews were completed via phone. Participants were reminded their participation was voluntary and of their ability to withdraw from the study at any time. Interviews were transcribed via a third party and compared to the audio file to confirm accuracy. Identifying information such as names, employers, conferences, or colleagues were omitted from the transcriptions to protect anonymity and pseudonyms were assigned. The interviews ranged in length from 26 to 58 minutes and averaged 42 minutes.

Table 2

Interview Guide Questions
1. Tell me how you got where you are? Was working in collegiate athletics administration always your aspirations?
2. Did/Do you see the role of SWA as a stepping-stone to move up in collegiate athletics administration?
3. Was mentorship influential in your progression? Why or why not? If so, can you describe those relationships?
4. Describe the job/role of the SWA in your department.
5. Describe a typical workday as SWA.
6. What is the perception of the SWA position in your department? Conference? In athletics in general?
7. Do you think women are more inclined to enter into the soft areas (academic advising, life skills, etc.) of sport? Why or why not?
8. Describe the process or how you manage your personal, professional, and work life.
9. How do you think we can attract and keep more women in collegiate athletics administration?
10. What are the best parts of your job as SWA? What are the worst?
11. What are your future career goals? Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
12. Is there anything else you think I missed or want to tell me about being an SWA or woman in collegiate athletics administration?

Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed verbatim. Three researchers read each transcript multiple times to become immersed in the words of the participants, as this allows them to embed the narratives of the participants in the final research outcome (Charmaz, 2006).The data were coded by each member of the research team first separately using the initial coding methods of in-vivo coding and descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2013). In-vivo coding creates codes from direct words, phrases or quotations by the participants in relation to the creation of meaning (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). In-vivo coding was used to keep the analysis in the participants' voices as much as possible (Saldaña, 2013). Descriptive coding was also used when in-vivo codes were not sufficient as descriptive coding summarizes a passage in a short word or phrase (Saldaña, 2013). This method was chosen to match the descriptive nature of the study (Wolcott, 1994). The second round of coding was done collaboratively as the researchers discussed initial codes and a master code sheet was created which aggregated all the codes from all the researchers. The researchers jointly grouped the codes into categories using a code sheet. This approach is widely seen as beneficial in qualitative research as "a research team builds codes and coding builds a team through the creation of shared interpretation and understanding of the phenomenon being studied" (Weston et al., 2001, p. 382). The researchers jointly agreed and identified categories that were most applicable to the research questions in order to generate themes (See table three). Quotes were identified that best characterized the participants' views consistent with the researchers' analyses.

Table 3
Example of the Coding Process

Theme	Major Categories	Codes
Unintended Consequences	Misrepresented and misunderstood, Marginalization, Tokenism	*Male dominated space, Negative perception of SWA, Combating gender norms, Misperception of SWA responsibilities, Personnel issues/concerns, Gender differences, Tokenism, Gender bullying and intimidation*
Future of the Designation	Lack of role and responsibility, Hindering career mobility, SWA Progression for athletes, not administration	*Title can limit women, Role of designation, Desire to be AD, Not a role or responsibility-simply a title, Lack of improvement or growth as SWA, Remove title, SWA is not a stepping stone*

Findings and Discussion

The SWA designation was created by the NCAA to increase the number of women seated at the senior-level administration table within collegiate athletics (Hoffman, 2010; Weight, 2015). However, the lack of guidance provided by the NCAA to athletic departments surrounding the designation creates a situation where athletic departments are able to provide as much, or as little, power to the SWA as they see fit. This then influences the experiences and career development of SWAs. Within the sample of Division I SWAs interviewed for the current study two primary themes emerged: (a) Unintended Consequences and (b) Future of the Designation. The difference in afforded power can help explain why the opinions of the participants in this study may be different from the participants of the NCAA Inclusion report (2018) where 62% of SWAs felt that the SWA designation made them more marketable for senior positions, and 69% felt the designation had positively impacted their career advancement. In this study, four of the participants saw benefit in the designation, while three participants expressed opinions of the designation being outdated, but also feared the repercussion of its removal, and seven participants felt the designation was holding women back.

Unintended Consequences

Misunderstanding. All 14 of the participants discussed how the designation itself was accompanied with negative perceptions from their peers, collegiate athletes, superiors, and the general public causing unforeseen consequences for the women in the designation. More specifically, the women discussed how many times the designation of SWA is confused with being the only administrator overseeing women's sports, when in actuality these women are awarded the designation of SWA due to their status as the most senior female member of the athletic department. Role congruity theory may explain the root of this misrepresentation and misunderstanding could be in the name itself: Senior Woman Administrator. The use of the word "woman" in the title leads to the misunderstanding and assumption that this person oversees women's sports or their tasks and responsibilities should align with stereotypical gender norms. Role congruity theory explains this occurs because women are perceived to lack the masculine characteristics associated with leadership roles or the "hard areas" of athletics such as fundraising, budgeting, and oversight of revenue generating sports, thus, they are given responsibilities in areas such as women's sports, life skills, and academic advising (Burton et al., 2009; Cunningham, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Grappendorf et al., 2008; Kanter, 1977).

Jacky explains these underlying gender norms associated with role congruity theory through her frustration with this misrepresentation of the SWA designation by saying, "People still don't understand it [the SWA title]. People still call it the women's AD or administrator and think that we're only over women's sports." Gretchen reiterated this frustration with the SWA designation saying, "I'm still disappointed that people still refer to it as senior women's administrator. I had somebody speak

to me today that used that title, and I always correct them." Cathy also echoed the sentiments surrounding the misrepresentation of the SWA,

> When people hear that (SWA title), they assume that you have a responsibility for the women's programs, and that's not what I do here. And so I don't want to be locked into that stereotype, because I think it limits what people think of my sphere of influence or what I can do to help the entire athletics program.

Lauren explained the common misunderstanding and lack of education surrounding the designation and its existence is troubling especially when female collegiate athletes do not understand its history, purpose, and impact. She said,

> I get introduced as the senior AD, associate, or the women's AD. Nobody knows the title and can get it straight. Which is sad. What is even sadder, is our female student-athletes have no idea about Title IX. (They) have no idea about the designation or why I am in this role, why this role is a designation. And even when you try to educate, it doesn't even register.

Research has found this misnomer is common and problematic for women in collegiate athletics. Clauringbould and Knoppers (2012) detailed how gender normalcy or the acceptance of unequal presentation frequently occurs in sports organizations by both men and women. Furthermore, Ely and Padavic (2007) exemplified the underlying influences behind role congruity theory through power and gender social norms. Men are perceived as powerful and women as compliant, hence tasks and positions were constructed to favor men (Ely & Padavic, 2007). Research on role congruity theory has found a female administrator is less likely to be hired for an AD position in comparison to a male peer even though both deemed equal in regards to qualifications and possible success (Burton et al., 2011). This suggests the deeply embedded gender norms and perceptions of the roles of women are in conflict with positions of power (such as an AD) despite being qualified for the positions. Additionally, despite the creation of a designation that was intended to increase the voice of women within leadership circles, women are still perceived as less qualified to lead than men suggesting the designation is not fulfilling its intended goal.

Role congruity theory can also assist in the understanding of why 76% of all SWAs in the NCAA divisions directly oversee gender equity and compliance in comparison to their male athletic administrator peers (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Due to the influence of gender norms, role congruity theory explains Title IX and gender equity issues are associated with women's work and should be handled by a woman. Although the NCAA Inclusion (2018b) report includes SWA best practices which state that part of the designation of SWA is to strategize ways to support and manage gender equity and Title IX plans and concerns, as well as complete reporting on these two issues, SWAs are continuously and almost synonymously associated with the oversight of gender equity and compliance and their additional responsibilities and titles (e.g., Assistant Director of Compliance or Marketing) are forgotten. Thus,

the perception of the SWA's oversight over women's sports is solidified and remains associated with stereotypical gender norms and job responsibilities.

The women in this study were not alone in their frustrations with the lack of understanding and clarity given to the designation of SWA. The NCAA found 92% of ADs felt they understood the designation of the SWA, in contrast to only 45% of the women in the designation of SWA felt their AD had role clarity surrounding their designation (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Furthermore, SWAs themselves reported a lack of role clarity in regards to being the SWA, 50% reported understanding their campus role, 41% their conference role, and 27% their national role (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). The women in this study asserted the misunderstanding and lack of role clarity had negative consequences for their careers. If SWAs are only associated as the "AD of women's sports" or dealing with "Title IX and gender equity" they are not being perceived with the skills to operate and manage an athletic department. The SWA designation is supposed to give women a seat at the table and a voice, but the women in this study are voicing it is failing in its efforts. SWAs and the ADs (or those in power) must work together to create a more concrete set of tasks and responsibilities for the designation to develop the women professionally and allow them the growth that could potentially secure more senior positions.

Authority limitations. The participants also detailed how the designation of SWA itself was used to marginalize and limit their power and influence demonstrating role congruity theory. Edith detailed how the designation of SWA limited her stating,

> I'm introduced 97% of the time as "this is *name,* our senior woman administrator." Does that tell you what I do? No, it just tells you that by "senior" I could be the highest ranking woman in the department, and by "woman" it just tells you that I'm a woman, but it does not tell you what I do. How many men are introduced, and I'm just going to say a black man, how many black men are introduced as this is our senior black administrator? Never. Or senior male administrator. Never. I'm an executive associate athletic director. Okay what does that entail? Well, if you say "executive," you immediately think well that's probably fairly-high ranking, because in our world assistant, associate, senior associate all matter, but I'm never introduced as that. Never. This is *name*. She's our SWA. I think that there's a lot of women out there that that's what they're introduced as, and I think immediately when you say that it is delimiting. I can't necessarily prove it yet. I feel it's delimiting in my role over the years, and you'll have men that tell you "oh it's not delimiting." Well, you're not being introduced that way, you're being introduced as the athletic director, or the senior associate athletic director, or the deputy athletic director. You're not being introduced as the senior male administrator.

Gretchen discussed how women were questioned more frequently than men in her space and this contributed to limited power. She said, "People don't question male senior associates, but they certainly do question senior associates that happen to be

female and why they're there. Definitely whether they're SWA or not, we still have that element of having to prove ourselves." Similarly, Kim felt being introduced only by the title of SWA marginalized her from her peers as less important. She said,

> On the one hand, I want to say we should be removing it, because it removes any of the confusion from the community and outside. For instance, if you have a female athletic director, she is the senior woman administrator, so nobody at the institution technically needs that title, because she is the senior woman administrator, but she isn't required to have a senior men's administrator or a senior man administrator, so why are we using this? We kind of have that double-edged sword. We're kicking the glass ceiling and we're putting women in that athletic director role, but we're not mandating a senior men's (administrator). I believe it's becoming an antiquated title. The other piece too is that perception is reality, so when I am introduced in a room and they introduce the athletic director, and they introduce the associate athletic director for facilities, who is a man, and they introduce me as the senior woman administrator. Automatically, I am a lesser title.

Being introduced as the SWA and not their primary job title in comparison to male peers being introduced by their job specific titles leads to perceptions of inferiority. In the cases described by participants in this study, the designation and introduction of SWA, whether intentional or unintentional places women at a disadvantage. This is especially problematic as these women have primary job titles that could be utilized in their introduction, however these titles are often ignored and the designation of SWA is inappropriately utilized. Referring to these women solely by their SWA designation may also suggest there is more confusion about the SWA designation within the AD population than individuals in that position are reporting, as 92% reported understanding the SWA designation (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Kim discussed consequence stemming from this phenomenon stating,

> I see my role as associate athletic director helping me move up, but because there's still confusion around the SWA. You've seen the studies, the athletic directors don't even know what the SWA does. No, I don't think the SWA is the stepping stone. I think the title of the associate or assistant athletic director is the role and the title that helps a woman to the next step of athletic director.

If the designation was fully understood one might assume these women would be first introduced by their primary title (e.g., senior associate AD of marketing) followed by the mention of the SWA designation to add further legitimacy to their expertise.

Eagly and Karau (2002) described how women are constrained in two distinct ways using role congruity theory. First, in conforming to their gender role (i.e., being introduced as the SWA or associated with the SWA designation) limits their capacity and ability to meet requirements for leadership roles or opportunities (e.g., by the

omitting of their assistant, associate, or executive titles, and areas they oversee such as marketing, fundraising, etc.). Second, if the women step out from beneath their gender roles, historically female leaders are viewed less favorably and more scrutinized than their male peers (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Thus, these two forms of prejudice produce less access for women to leadership roles and more obstacles for women to overcome to be seen as successful in these roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Unfortunately, as Edith and Kim explained being introduced as SWA delimits their status and importance on the senior leadership team and perpetuates the perception that they are less influential and important. This further solidifies gender norms and the problems highlighted with role congruity theory. The utilization of the SWA designation also suggests to those outside of the senior leadership circle that these women secured their spot on the leadership team because of their gender, which is false. These women first secured their primary role (e.g., director of compliance or marketing), then secured the SWA designation if their primary role made them the most senior-ranking woman. This again works to delegitimize women within the SWA designation, suggesting they are not capable of securing a position within senior leadership without utilizing their minority gender status.

Some of the women detailed how the designation helped provide them with a seat at the senior leadership table, but they still felt inability to voice their concerns or ideas due to the nature of the male-dominated space, as well as the acceptance and encouragement of masculine traits that are deemed compatible with male leadership. Monica explained her inability to voice concerns and ideas in athletic department meetings, "I don't occasionally get respect that I would if I were a male. I am treated a little differently at times." Cathy reiterated being segmented due to her gender, "I think sometimes women are segmented by others. Like you're not going to get the track of being an athletic director because you're not male."

Societal views of masculinity and femininity, especially in a context like sport, privilege masculinity and associate it with superior leadership skills (Anderson, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Role congruity theory then provides men with the platform to ascend to power and leadership positions more quickly and frequently, leaving women to be viewed as inferior and in industries such as athletics to be seen as intruders (Anderson 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Furthermore, homologous reproduction or the perpetuation of dominant groups hiring those who are physically, socially, and intellectually similar to them (i.e., male senior leaders) leads to a lack of women in collegiate athletic administration (Stangl & Kane, 1991). This is especially problematic in collegiate athletics as the dominant group is men. Socially constructed views of masculinity and femininity and homologous reproduction within sport organizations perpetuate the belief that women are not capable of obtaining, keeping, or succeeding in leadership positions (Burton, 2015; Mazerolle, Burton, & Cotrufo, 2015; Staurowsky & DiManno, 2002), thus, women continually get placed in positions with limited power such as the SWA designation.

Limited professional development. The participants discussed how the designation of SWA does not allow them opportunities to diversify their skill set in areas

needed to ascend into the AD role. The NCAA Inclusion report (2018a) found that 66% of SWAs have sport oversight, however, that statistics drops dramatically in revenue generating sports, with only 13% of SWAs having oversight over men's basketball and football. This creates a challenge when attempting to develop the skills necessary to obtain leadership positions (i.e., AD) as these women lack experience with financial and fundraising decision-making responsibilities (Grappendorf et al., 2008; Pent & Grappendorf, 2007). Although there are fundraising and decision-making responsibilities in non-revenue sports, research has found oversight in budgeting and leading men's sports teams are skills associated with being a successful AD (Grappendorf et al., 2008; Hardin et al., 2013; Hoffman, 2010; Pent et al., 2007; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Tiell et al., 2012). Specifically, Hardin et al. (2013) found in their survey of NCAA ADs the skills most valued by hiring committees were fundraising and managing a successful football program. Furthermore, Taylor and Hardin (2016) found female Division I ADs felt there is still a strong perception that women are incapable of running a successful athletic department, especially one with a football program. This manifestation about the ability of women to lead athletic departments with focuses on football and men's basketball can been seen in reports on Division I leadership. As recent as the fall of 2019, there are 130 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) ADs and women only make up 6.9% of that total (Lapchick et al., 2019).

Kim detailed how the designation does not demonstrate her diverse set of skills and her work with men's football, a revenue generating sport associated with AD experience,

> If anybody in the outside world, in the community, they see my title as senior woman administrator, and they assume it's a senior women's administrator. That all I do is deal with the women's sports teams. That can be deflating, defeating, demeaning, because in their own eyes many times they think of men's basketball and men's football as the important sports. They have no idea that 25% of what I do is dealing with the men's football team. They just have no idea, because they don't understand my role and my associate athletic director responsibilities.

Further discussing how only a small amount of SWAs are given the opportunity to diversify their needed skill sets Lauren said,

> There are several women that are out there in this role and are overseeing football and men's basketball. Now it is a shame when you can sit here and name the majority of them, but there are some women out there that are not just your typical SWA overseeing the women's sports programs.

These quotes from Kim and Lauren demonstrate the association with the "SWA position" is accompanied by the perception of lesser skill and power or that the SWAs should not have other duties, skills, or responsibilities in other areas. This lack of skill development associated with sport oversight of football and men's basketball

programs is problematic as these are skills deemed necessary to secure AD positions and 65% of SWAs indicated they were interested in ascending to more senior-level positions (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Nora was particularly candid on how the designation of SWA could limit her ability to diversify her skill set and hinder her career saying,

> I will be candid with you. I didn't want to build my career based on the SWA designation. Because it has been my experience, viewed experience, and just my personal thought, there are times when it is just a designation and doesn't really serve. That person doesn't really get a seat at the table, make decisions, make executive decisions, and sometimes you get pigeon-holed in that position or in that title.

It appears the NCAA created the SWA designation to provide women a seat at the table, but did not include any mechanisms to assist in their skill development while they were there. This is problematic as many women in the current study felt as though their seat at the table came with limited organizational power or the ability for professional development.

Future of the Designation

Eliminating the designation. Ten out of the 14 participants felt eliminating the designation was appropriate due to its contributions to tokenism, the marginalization they received in the designation, and its lack of outlined responsibilities. Edith stated she feels the designation should be removed as it is delimiting women's ascension. She said, "What I'm concerned about now is that it's a role that may be delimiting women if they want to become athletic directors." Lauren explained the designation should be removed since women are still undervalued, "I feel like women are moving the needle and making a difference, but we still have a long way to go because there are a lot of women out there that are not valued the way they should be."

Research has found the designation may be contributing to tokenism as the participants in this study expressed similar feelings of struggling to fit in and gain acceptance in the male dominated space of collegiate athletics and this caused social isolation and stereotyping (i.e., the way they are introduced to others; Hardin et al., 2014; Kane & Stangl, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Siegele et al., 2020; Whisenant & Mullane, 2007). Additionally, Hoffman (2010) found the SWA designation has resulted in a token or single woman on the senior management team. The women in this study were in the minority in their athletic department's executive team indicating their token status (15% or less in an environment with a dominant homogenous group; Kanter, 1977). Out of the 14 participant institutions, on average the executive team was made up of 20% women, with the lowest school having 15% women and the highest 42%. These low levels of women on the executive team is especially problematic as the NCAA originally created the SWA designation to increase diversity. However, the SWA designation may not be effective in creating this diversity as only 15% of SWAs are women of color, and 25% of Division I and more than 70% of Division II

and III institutions reported they have zero or one female administrator in 2015-2016 (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a). Furthermore, in relation to advancing into collegiate leadership roles, approximately 7% of those who hold the position of AD in the Division I FBS are women, and only 20% of those who hold the position overall across all three divisions are women (Lapchick et al., 2019; NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

Adding to the understanding of role congruity theory, many of the women in this study are calling for the removal of the designation. The participants felt the designation and its direct association with gender led to inequality and perceptions of inferiority in comparison to their male peers. The women in this study had an average of 27 years of experience in the field of collegiate athletics in areas such as marketing, development, athletic training, coaching, compliance, and internal operations, but these areas and their expertise were not emphasized as prevalently as their designation of SWA. The NCAA also found SWAs desire an additional title that more clearly defines their job and influence in the athletic department. Ninety-two percent of SWAs believed they should have an administrative title such as Assistant AD or Associate AD as it would provide clarity on the daily tasks and responsibilities of these women (NCAA Inclusion, 2018a).

Role congruity theory posits removing the designation and only addressing women with titles that outline their responsibilities (i.e., assistant AD for compliance, senior executive AD) could negate some of the gender norms. Sagas and Cunningham (2004) found in their study of male and female athletic administrators how men profited more from their social capital than women, resulting in women having to work harder to establish this capital and women were more limited in their influence then their male peers. Katz, Walker and Hindman (2018) found the SWA designation might not be beneficial for upward mobility as the SWA designation can limit informal networks needed to gain the knowledge and relationships necessary to become an AD. In the cases provided by the participants, social capital and informal networks could increase with the removal of the SWA designation as it is associated more with gender than job responsibilities. The removal and focus on the other duties associated with the women's titles could allow them to be perceived and associated with agentic attributes (e.g., assertive, self-sufficient, independent, and self-confident) that are believed crucial to success in leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). More specifically, focusing on titles that describe their duties highlights the capabilities of these women in a multitude of areas. This could aid in allowing decision-makers within collegiate athletics to view these women as potential leaders or executives.

Furthermore, previous studies on SWAs have proposed the designation isn't as beneficial as it could or should be, however this study is the first study where participants are actually calling for the *removal of the designation*. For example, in the Lough and Grappendorf (2007) and Grappendorf et al. (2008) studies the results suggest the SWA designation is limiting (e.g., limited financial oversight, lack of fundraising experience and development activities), but the participants and authors do not call for removal of the designation, instead call for "further discussion and more aggressive action needs to taken by the NCAA to better define the true roles and responsibilities of the SWA" (p. 41). Similarly, in the studies by Tiell and Dixon

(2008) and Tiell et al. (2012) results found a discrepancy in NCAA SWAs and ADs perceptions of SWAs involvement in the management and decision-making within the executive team. Both studies recommended that SWAs become more incorporated into the senior or core management team and be provided necessary training and mentoring to enhance the effectiveness in the designation. Thus, this study's call for the removal of the designation from both the participants and authors demonstrates not only a unique contribution to the existing literature on SWAs, but also further indicates that the designation is not providing these women the experiences and support needed to create upward mobility into the role of AD.

Career enhancement. The participants in this study also discussed women need to be provided decision-making abilities and opportunities to learn outside their domains through the support of their AD. Irene discussed gaining exposure meant opportunities to make decisions, "I think in general being able to be involved in high-level decision-making and engaged at the highest level is what is going to prepare you for the next step." Additionally, Gretchen discussed in order for women to gain the necessary exposure they need to be given resources to explore domains outside their current roles, specifically those needed for leadership positions. She said,

> It's just that we need to make sure that the women that are in the role feel empowered to take on or to tailor the role or tweak the role so that they get the exposure to things that they want to get exposure to. I still have to assert myself and make sure that people see me as a senior-level executive rather than just an administrative role. It's still, the role, the title itself, it's still not enough to get the professional development and exposure that was intended for the women in it.

Nora detailed this exposure was based on support and cooperation from the AD,

> Ultimately, the intent behind the designation was to sit at the table and contributing to making executive decisions. It is not about the role or unique responsibilities. It is about the institution's commitment to diversifying the leadership and the authority or the executive folks that have authority, the executive level titles. The designation, its worth, the responsibilities, it takes shape and forms in the organization based on the leader of the organization, what their priorities are, what their objectives are, and how they see that role, or how they see the person that will serve in that designation will serve in that role.

Kim reiterated this by stating how her AD had demonstrated support and encouragement by advocating she expand her network by joining *Women Leaders in College Sports*, an organization committed to advancing women in collegiate athletics,

> My AD at the time really pushed me to get involved with NACWAA, but now it's *Women Leaders in College Sports* and he really pushed me to get involved and advance my career that way. So that is really how I got involved and started

> making contacts, and again going to different NCAA conferences. I made contacts at the NCAA and through those conferences.

Furthermore, Edith detailed that support needed to be specific to allowing women the opportunities to make AD decisions,

> I'm blessed that the athletic directors I've worked with let me make independent decisions. If I chose to dismiss a head coach I would go in, and I would've been having conversations with our athletic director, but I would manage that, and then I would run the search to replace that person.

Beyond the call to action by the participants in this study, research has found although the SWAs were gaining momentum in terms of greater acceptance into the field of athletic administration, they still lacked the access and ability to be part of the core decision-making team (Pent & Grappendorf, 2007; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Research has noted that women are many times horizontally segmented into "soft" areas of athletic administration leaving them without the financial and oversight experience needed to move into a more prominent leadership role (Grappendorf et al., 2008). Specifically, Tiell and Dixon (2008) noted marginalization occurred within the SWA designation, as women in this position expressed they were not empowered to make decisions in the department, while their ADs felt they assumed roles as decision-makers leading again to conflict and role ambiguity. Recently, the NCAA (2018) advocated that athletic departments should capitalize on diverse leadership perspectives (including the SWA), share the commitment to equity and well-being, support training and mentoring opportunities, involve SWAs in conference governance, and engage SWAs in national issues (NCAA Inclusion, 2018ab). Thus, the support of the AD in women's pursuit of leadership skills and opportunities is crucial. Athletic departments centered on diversity and inclusion are more likely to encourage participation in mentoring activities by underrepresented individuals and take a proactive approach to the hiring process (Cunningham & Singer, 2009) and this approach begins with the AD's vision and emphasis on such initiatives. Support and opportunities for human capital (e.g., education, job experience, and training) and social capital (e.g., relationship building with peers and supervisors) can assist in career advancement for women and minorities (Sagas & Cunningham, 2004). This is an area where ADs can provide assistance to their female staff members, as the majority of male ADs have large and dense person-to-person and global networks (Katz et al., 2018). Furthermore, ADs can use their platform to publicly support the advancement of women in collegiate athletics (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010) through providing not only inclusive environments, but more specifically policy changes, mentorship, and sponsorship or working with a protégé directly for career advancement (Taylor & Wells, 2017; Wayne, Linden, Kraimer, & Graf, 1999). Providing these opportunities can allow for a more diverse and inclusive environment within the current male-dominated space of collegiate athletics, which could lead to more positive outcomes and effectiveness as organizations continue to change and grow.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the complexity and consequences experienced by women who hold the designation of SWA. As the women in this study demonstrated, the intent from the NCAA to include a woman to the senior level athletic staff was promising, but in reality, the designation has caused women to experience marginalization and hardships when attempting to ascend into further leadership opportunities. Specifically, the women in this study called for a removal of the designation as it contributed to the gender stereotypes and norms that have been well-cited by role congruity theory research to limit women's ability to move into leadership positions. This is possibly the first instance in the literature where women within the role are calling for the designation's removal as they noted the designation does not contribute to their career goals and in its overall current state the designation is archaic, outdated, and unbeneficial to the women who are in the designation. Adding to the understanding of role congruity theory, the women in this study felt removal of the SWA designation would assist with aligning their careers and positions around their abilities and skills and not gender norms. Furthermore, collegiate athletics is continuing to evolve and change, thus, the SWA designation needs to evolve or be eliminated.

Limitations of this study include the qualitative nature of the study as there is an inability to generalize this study and its findings. However, qualitative experts have noted that transferability may be possible in qualitative research indicating "the power to create in readers the idea that they have experienced the same thing in a different area" (Papathomas, 2016; Smith, 2018, p. 141). Another limitation is the study's sole focus on the perspective of women and women from the highest division. Future research should explore the perception of the SWA designation from SWAs from Division II and III, the few men that have acquired the SWA designation, and from male administrators, especially ADs who are in positions of power to make hiring decisions as well as assign job responsibilities. In addition, future research should explore if this proposed removal of the designation would be encouraged and accepted by other women within collegiate athletics, as well as NCAA administrators in general.

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