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Dennis Dahlberg
University of Dayton

George M. De Marco
University of Dayton, gdemarco1@udayton.edu

Corinne M. Daprano
University of Dayton, cdaprano1@udayton.edu

Carolyn Ridenour
University of Dayton, cridenour1@udayton.edu

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The influence of Title IX on personal and professional biographies of early career female club volleyball coaches

Dennis Dahlberg, MS.Ed., George M. De Marco, Ed.D., Corinne Daprano, Ph.D., and Carolyn Ridenour, Ed.D.

Department of Health and Sport Science, University of Dayton, USA

Abstract:

Seeking to understand the relationship between Title IX and its impact on a select group of its contemporary beneficiaries, the purpose of this study was to determine the influence of Title IX on the personal and professional biographies of 8 early career female club volleyball coaches. This study utilized a modified case study design featuring constant comparison data analysis. Data were collected using a qualitative interview technique with each of the candidate's interviews subdivided into four distinct sections. Part I of the interview established a basic personal and professional biography of each individual coach. Part II provided data on the subject's athletic experiences. Part III addressed the life goals of the coaches. Part IV explored each individual participant's knowledge of Title IX. Findings revealed the existence of major themes common across all 8 coaches including (a) the shared belief that athletics provided opportunities for them to develop valuable life long personal and professional skills, (b) that opportunities for the acquisition of such skills were their implicit right (i.e., not directly attributable to Title IX, about which they knew little), and (c) the existence of an enduring commitment to the sport of volleyball as a source of personal identity and fulfillment. Once educated fully about Title IX, however, the coaches were unanimous in their belief that although progress in women's athletics -- related to the impact of Title IX -- had permitted them to succeed, inequity vis-à-vis opportunities accorded their male counterparts still existed. Correspondingly, the findings of this study suggest a post-gender society has not yet been attained and that efforts to ensure equal opportunity must continue.

為了要瞭解男女平權法(Title IX)及其對當代族群的貢獻之關係, 本研究的目的是探討男女平權法對女性排球俱樂部教練早期事業發展的個人與專業之影響。研究設計與工具使用改良式的案例設計, 其著重在持續性資料分析比較。在資料收集過程中, 八位研究對象均接受訪談, 訪談問題主要分做為四大部份: 第一部份為建立各研究對象的個人與專業基本資料, 第二部份為研究對象的運動背景, 第三部份為研究對象的生涯目標, 第四部份為探討其對男女平權法的瞭解。研究結果發現八位研究對象有主要數項特徵, 其包括: (a) 相信本身的運動經驗提供有價值的終生個人和專業技術, (b) 擁有這樣的排球技術是他們的隱性權利 (例如: 非直接歸究為她們甚少瞭解的男女平權法), 以及(c) 為個人身份和滿足感的來源而對排球運動有長久的承諾。一旦受訪對象更加完整瞭解男女平權法後, 所有受訪的教練們都一致認為雖然男女平權法在對女性運動的影響讓他們有機會成功, 但是在與她們和男性同事之間的機會相比較之下, 不均等的現象依舊存在。所以研究結果建議我們不應該只是生活在男女平權後期而已, 我們得對公平男女權利的目標繼續努力。

關鍵字: 男女平權法、女性排球俱樂部教練、早期事業生涯

Cherchant à comprendre la relation entre le Titre IX et son impact sur un groupe privilégié de ses bénéficiaires contemporains, le but de cette étude était de déterminer l'influence du Titre IX sur les biographies personnelles et professionnelles de 8 femmes entraîneurs de club de volley en début de carrière. L'étude actuelle a utilisé un plan d'étude de cas modifié représentant une comparaison constante d'analyse de données. Les données étaient rassemblées en utilisant une technique d'entrevue qualitative, avec chacune des entrevues des candidats subdivisées en quatre sections distinctes. La première partie de l'entrevue a établi une biographie personnelle et professionnelle de base de chaque entraîneur individuel. La deuxième partie a fourni des données sur les expériences athlétiques du sujet. La troisième partie a abordé les buts de la vie des entraîneurs. La quatrième partie a exploré la connaissance du Titre IX de chaque participant individuel. Des conclusions ont révélé l'existence de thèmes majeurs, communs à chacune des 8 entraîneurs, comprenant (a) la croyance partagée que le sport leur a fourni des occasions de développer des compétences personnelles et professionnelles de toute une vie, (b) que les occasions d'acquérir de telles compétences étaient leur droit implicite (c'est-à-dire pas directement attribuables au Titre IX qu'elles connaissaient peu), et (c) l'existence d'un attachement durable au sport du volley comme source d'identité personnelle et dépanouissement. Cependant, une fois renseignées complètement sur le Titre IX, les entraîneurs étaient unanimes dans leurs convictions que, bien que le progrès dans le sport féminin -- lié à l'impact du Titre IX -- leur ait permis de réussir, l'injustice vis à vis des avantages accordés à leurs homologues masculins existait toujours. En accord, les conclusions de cette étude suggèrent que nous ne vivons pas encore dans une société égale pour les sexes et que les efforts pour assurer l'égalité des chances doit continuer.

Mots clés: Titre IX, les entraîneurs de joueuses de volley, analyse qualitative des expériences.

Tentando entender a relação entre o Título IX e seu impacto num grupo selecionado de beneficiários contemporâneos, o objectivo deste estudo foi determinar a influência do título IX nas biografias pessoais e profissionais de treinadoras de voleibol com menos de 8 anos de carreira. O presente estudo utilizou um caso de estudo introduzindo uma comparação de análise de dados constante. Os dados foram recolhidos por meio de uma técnica de entrevista qualitativa com cada uma das entrevistas do candidato subdividida em quatro secções distintas. Parte I da entrevista estabelece uma biografia básica, pessoal e profissional, de cada treinador. Parte II forneceu dados sobre as experiências atléticas do sujeito. Parte III abordou os objectivos de vida dos treinadores. Parte IV explorou individualmente o conhecimento de cada participante acerca do Título IX. Os resultados revelaram a existência de grandes temas comuns entre os 8 treinadores, incluindo (a) a crença comum de que atletas forneciam oportunidades para eles desenvolverem uma experiência pessoal e competências profissionais de valor, (b) as oportunidades para a aquisição de tais competências eram os seus direitos implícitos (ou seja, não directamente atribuíveis ao Título IX, sobre o qual pouco sabiam), e (c) a existência de um compromisso permanente para o desporto de voleibol, como fonte de identidade pessoal e realização. Contudo, uma vez educados plenamente sobre o Título IX, os treinadores foram unânimes na sua convicção de que embora o progresso das mulheres atletas - relacionados com o impacto do Título IX - permitiu que fossem sucedidas, a desigualdade e oportunidades concedidas aos seus homólogos masculinos ainda existia. Correspondentemente, os resultados deste estudo sugerem que ainda não vivemos numa sociedade onde existe igualdade entre os sexos e que os esforços para assegurar a igualdade de oportunidades têm de continuar.

Palavras-chave: Título IX, treinadoras de voleibol, análise qualitativa de experiências

INTRODUCTION

Historical Background of Title IX

Beginning in 1963, with the Equal Pay Act (EPA), Congress attempted to level the playing field in the area of gender equity. A year later, Congress passed Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting a broader range of discrimination than did the Equal Pay Act. The EPA only prohibited sex discrimination, whereas Title VII prohibited sex discrimination as well as discrimination based on race, color, religion, and national origin. Moreover, Congress then took another step toward guaranteed equality by enacting Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to bar sex discrimination in schools. This bill stated that “no person, on the basis of sex, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Title IX’s use has cleared the way for female athletes and coaches to experience a myriad of benefits from athletic participation, as gender equity continues to progress toward advanced levels of available, and equal, gender neutral opportunities. Title IX has had a significant impact on young female coaches and athletes in contemporary society.

The body of literature describing the historical significance of Title IX is extensive. Cohen (1997), while recognizing the growth of women’s sports, particularly volleyball, contended that despite a surge in interest among males, gender balancing, funding shortfalls, and institutional conservatism have all kept volleyball largely a women’s game. She (1997) foretold that Title IX issues would be the premise for many legal battles over the following decade. From a legal perspective citing landmark cases in collegiate and high school athletics, Tatum (2002) delineated the genesis of Title IX and concluded that roadblocks still exist and that vigilance by parents, lawyers and administrators is important for continued progress toward full gender equity. Dougherty, Goldberger, and Carpenter (2002) interpreted landmark federal legislation intended to prevent discrimination, highlighting the different program areas that guide Title IX evaluations, its impacts on male athletes, four important cases, the involvement of athletic associations, and the concept of sexual harassment. Heckman (2003) evaluated the impact of Title IX from a 30-year retrospective. Heckman cited landmark court cases including *Harper v. Board of Regents, Illinois State University*, and *Weaver v. The Ohio State University* and also discussed successes and failures associated with the Title IX movement. Smith (2006) described recent lawsuits, trends and ideas regarding contemporary Title IX issues and applications of the law and identified the three prongs for Title IX testing compliance: (a) Substantial Proportionality, (b) History and Continuing Practice, and (c) Effectively Accommodating Interests and Abilities.

The Title IX debate has had a polarizing effect relative to equity in school-based sports. Covell (2003) described how progress in women’s sports has -- due to misapplication of

Title IX--unfortunately resulted in the loss of opportunities for men, an outcome, which was never intended by the authors of the act. Anderson (2006) described the significant gains women have realized since the passage of Title IX in 1972 and how new technologies and evaluation strategies allow the NCAA to gather more data to assist institutions with compliance issues. Anderson also found and that female athletes are still an underrepresented subset of the sport population.

Carpenter and Acosta (2006), whose national longitudinal study tracking women’s participation in intercollegiate sport spans 29 years, reported in 2006 data showing the highest ever participation by women in the United States’ intercollegiate athletic programs. However, the data revealed that a significantly smaller number of women are serving as head coaches and as lead administrators within their programs. In addition, the 2006 data show the lowest ever ratio of female coaches for women’s teams. Kiick (2007) described the growth of athletic opportunities for young females and women since the passage of Title IX in 1972, but also argued that complete gender equity has not yet been attained. Although almost four decades have passed since its passage, Kiick contended that contemporary society should not be satisfied with current levels of progress. Falduto (2006) described the process by which qualified coaches must be hired to pass the three-prong test, emphasizing that Title IX requires coaches for female athletes who are equally qualified to those of their male counterparts, whether those qualified coaches are men or women. He also asserted that Title IX can help assure that female athletes will receive the numerous life lessons as well as physical, psychological, and intellectual benefits by preventing unequal coaching.

Women’s personal perceptions of Title IX have also been examined. Based on her journal and correspondence, Walton (2003) provided an account of her experience as an athletic administrator and her fight for Title IX compliance.

Deboer’s (2004) case study is based on personal anecdotes which demonstrate how men and women approach the various aspects of their personal, professional, and competitive lives. Deboer, who is a former standout volleyball and basketball player, went on to coach volleyball at the University of Kentucky. She then moved into a position as an athletic director for the university, and is now currently serving as the executive director of the American Volleyball Coaches Association. The text highlights gender differences within the realm of sport, introduces the reader to the gender related reasoning behind various occurrences, then illustrates solutions on how one gender can intelligently interact with the other. Petit (2006), the former Head Women’s Volleyball Coach of the University of Nebraska, discussed his personal journey into the realm of coaching female athletes, the transformation of women in sports over the years, and how a coach can learn from the people one meets along his or her coaching journeys.

Hein and Hagger (2007) examined a theoretical model of global self-esteem that incorporated constructs from

achievement goal and self-determination theories. They hypothesized that self-determined motives mediate the influence of achievement goal orientation on global self-esteem. Findings suggest that participation in physical activity and athletics are likely to enhance young people's general self-esteem.

Heim (2008) described the experiences of executive females, working in Fortune 500 companies, relative to their needs to reshape the lessons they learn during childhood to produce a framework for success in the adult business world. Heim contended that boys learn how negative feedback is meant to improve performance at an early age and has no real significance of what other people may think of them. Because females are not involved in as many sports as males are in their traditional forms of play, they miss important experience to associate criticism with skill building. Furthermore, Heim also states that women, in an ironic sense, need to learn to deal better with accepting praise in order to cope in a business environment.

The Rimm Report of 1999 studied how 1,000 girls became successful women. Rimm found that (a) girls should be expected to learn that achieving the highest level of education possible is the greatest priority, (b) that high expectations and pressure are important learning devices for females, (c) that motivation is as critical as ability, (d) that girls need to learn to value and develop a work ethic (which is a component to motivation), (e) that assertiveness can be learned (assist girls to see themselves as smart and independent), and (f) that successful women all had quality educations and that parents need to strive to find the best educational opportunities available for their daughters.

Title IX has carved a new future for women' athlete in contemporary American society. Although significant progress has been made -- indeed, women have experienced extraordinary benefits from their participation in athletics since the passage of Title IX in 1972 -- efforts toward insuring gender equity in all areas of participation in sport must continue. Research on the success, or lack thereof, demonstrating institutional compliance and its related effects, must continue.

Seeking to understand the relationship between Title IX and its impact on a select group of its contemporary beneficiaries, the purpose of this study was to determine the influence Title IX on the personal and professional biographies of eight early career female club volleyball coaches.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Design

This investigation utilized a modified case study design featuring constant comparison data analysis. The data were collected using a qualitative interview technique. Each of the candidate's interviews were subdivided into four distinct sections (see Appendix for the actual questions). Part I of the interview established a basic personal and professional

biography of each individual coach. Part II provided data on the subject's athletic experiences. Part III addressed the life goals of the coaches. Part IV explored each individual participant's knowledge of Title IX.

Participants

The participants in the study were 8 early career female club volleyball coaches averaging 3.5 years experience. Recruited via personal invitation from the lead investigators regional volleyball community, all were former members of the club, scholastic, and/or collegiate teams he had coached since 1998. For purposes of maintaining subjects' confidentiality, pseudonyms were used.

Data Collection

Extended interviews -- which lasted approximately 90 minutes -- were conducted in person during the course of a 3- month period during the spring of 2007. Detailed notes of each interview were recorded manually and subsequently word -processed. Data were reviewed and constantly compared (Glaser & Straus, 1967) as gathered throughout the study. Similar to the data collection methods utilized by De Marco (1998), the process became "self-regenerating and ... assisted greatly in the identification and classification of recurring perspectives, themes, and categories" (p. 60). Constant comparison of the data from these interviews resulted in the identification of themes and categories describing the shared athletic coaching and playing experiences of the 8 coaches as related to the emerging case law surrounding Title IX.

RESULTS

Data Analysis - Major Findings

Explication of the data, in the form of 8 separate profiles of each participant, follows. Major findings were titled with each coach's pseudonym and divided into four separate sections: (a) Participants' Biographical Profiles, (b) Athletes' Experiences, (c) Athletes' Life Goals, and (d) Knowledge of Title IX.

Common Themes Based on the Analysis of the Subjects' Profiles

Content analysis of the data revealed the existence of common themes across the subjects. They were (a) similarities in the subjects' biographical profiles, (b) life long lessons learned from their athletic participation, (c) the belief that the opportunities available to women in sport and athletics were unrelated to the implementation of Title IX, and (d) the belief that there were both positive and negative aspects of Title IX. An in-depth explication of each of these theme follows.

Profile Similarities

Many similarities can be drawn from the biographical profiles

of these subjects relative to their involvement in sport as coaches. All of the coaches were introduced to the sport of volleyball sometime between the third and fifth grade, all had club volleyball playing experience, and all of the coaches, with only one exception, continued their playing careers while attending institutions of higher education.

Each coach also shared a very similar first coaching experience. All of the coaches, with only one exception, had their first introduction to coaching as a high school athlete who was working as an assistant camp coach for middle school athletes. Each took a great deal of enjoyment from this first experience. Jennifer, similar to the experiences of the coaches involved in the study, found her first experience to provide her with a new perspective of the game, as well as finding a sense of joy in helping to instruct and build confidence in younger players. All of these coaches would later become camp instructors during their collegiate careers at many volleyball camps and clinics. These coaches later went on to coach club volleyball teams, with some who were also coaching high school and / or collegiate teams as well.

Lessons Learned from a Lifetime of Athletic Participation

When evaluated, the skill sets learned from their participation in athletics, as it is applicable to their personal and professional lives, permitted these female coaches to unknowingly develop a solid consensus on the value of athletic participation to their lives. As Elizabeth noted, in a holistic sense, that "I would not be who I am today without sport in my life." Carly expounded on this notion when she clearly stated that "athletics has taught me more than any class or book ever possibly could." Athletics, she postulated, has permitted her to become a stronger person, and that concept is what should be most important in life.

Heather further believed that athletics involvement has pushed her to be efficient, quick and timely. Heather stated that, "I expect more out of myself today because of my involvement in athletics." And, athletics has also taught her how to work in a variety of social settings with people from many different walks of life. Becky echoed these remarks as she contended that athletics has taught her how to build and maintain relationships, and, moreover, how a person can then apply these skills in order to converse and relate to people on different levels. Becky stated, "The relationships that I have built today, in general, or with people of different ages, are because of the skills I learned in athletics."

Content analysis of lists of positive traits generated through these interviews led to the identification of the theme Lessons Learned, which strongly supports the notion that participation in athletics provided opportunities for these young women to develop life long skills, which deeply valued and evidenced in their personal profiles, have been made manifest in their personal and professional lives.

Belief in the Opportunities Available Today to Women in Sport

Data also revealed that, of the eight participants who took part in this research project, five of the eight felt that there were only a few, to almost no further opportunities available to women in sport today than there have been over the last twenty years. Only three of the participants felt that there now existed many more opportunities for women's involvement in sport today. It also should be noted that the evidence provided by these participants is solely based on their life experiences and perception of today's society.

Amy, Becky and Carly observed that opportunities for growth for females, through athletics, had been made available to them throughout the course of their playing and coaching careers. Amy believed that she has seen a great deal of expansion of opportunities for female athletes today outside of the normal scholastic team availability – particularly in the sport of volleyball. She stated that "these opportunities, outside of normal school teams, has expanded a lot; especially in volleyball." She also felt that female athletics is both more "accepted and expected," and that there also existed a great "physical attraction within society" a whole relative to female athletes. Becky concurred with the statements by Amy and further noted the dramatic increase in club volleyball over the last ten years. Becky stated that "the idea of club volleyball has taken off and the number of available recruiting services is increasing." She also believed, beyond the opportunities for female athletes to attend camps and clinics, that there exists greater improvement in athletic budgets for female teams. Carly also made similar statements, relevant to Becky's claim, of more monetary support going into school budgets for female athletes, and she feels that there is an emerging trend to hire more female coaches at the collegiate level. Carly stated, "I have seen more women being hired by own father, and it appears that female teams today get more support and more money in their budgets."

The inverse of these observations are echoed by the other five participants in the study who have found little to no growth in greater opportunities for female athletes. Heather, on one end of the spectrum felt that there have been very few new sports, and little growth offered to female athletes over the last few years. Heather stated, "I have witnessed no significant change; nor have I seen anything new created." Jennifer took this argument a step further when she stated that "what is missing from female sports today is the opportunity for girls and women to participate in recreational leagues." Though Elizabeth, in her particular hometown, has seen an increased number of teams available to female athletes in the parks and recreations division, believed that the overall growth might be on a steady increase, but it has been particularly small.

Knowledge of Title IX and Related Areas

The intent of the United States Congress was to take a step forward, in regards to equality within the fabric of the American

society, by enacting Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to bar sex discrimination in schools. Title IX's use, over the previous thirty-seven years, has cleared the way for female athletes and coaches to experience vast benefits from athletic participation, as gender equity continues to progress toward advanced levels of available, and equal, gender neutral opportunities. Title IX has had a remarkable impact on young female coaches and athletes in today's society, through its opportunities it has afforded them, and it will continue to do so into the future. Title IX's original intent was not concerned with establishing equity in sport relative to gender, but its interpretations by the court system, particularly over the last twenty years, has acted as a catalyst toward this notion of gender equity in athletics.

When the participants were asked to discuss their knowledge of Title IX in Part IV of their interviews, not a single participant of the eight in the study could accurately provide a definition or an understanding of the original passage of Title IX. Although, further analysis of the data revealed that three participants (Carly, Elizabeth, Becky) had some working idea of the status / use of Title IX in American society today, three participants (Amy, Heather, Jennifer) possessed some idea of its use and implications, and two participants (Dawn and Gabriel) admittedly had no conceptual knowledge of Title IX. Heather, when asked to discuss her knowledge of Title IX, provided a typical answer which surmised that Title IX was an attempt to promote women in sports and to halt "discrimination against women's athletics." She further assumed, by "looking at the trophies [in the university's athletics cases] that Title IX came about in the 1970s or 1980s." She furthered her discussion under the premise that "Title IX, I assume, is to prevent inequity between genders in athletics because sport is an important part of society, and it goes along with the equal rights movement of the time period."

Furthermore, in an acknowledgement of historical context, each of the coaches struggled to name important or famous female athletes during, or prior to, the 1970s (this does not include the one reference by a subject to the film *A League of their Own*). When asked to name female athletes within the last five years, they could easily provide examples, though any reference to an athlete of 10 or more years ago was virtually not possible by each participant.

This evidence might suggest that today's female coaches and athletes have very little information of the women's rights movement in sports over the last 100 years in the United States, and that important female athletes, to sport or women's rights in sport, have been greatly ignored by the public and within the sports community.

Positive Aspects of Title IX

Once each participant had received some information about Title IX by the investigator (via a brief explanation of its history and implications, lasting approximately 10 minutes), each of the participants were able to identify positive and negative aspects of the law and make connections as to how

it actually had impacted upon their lives. Examples of these perceptions follow.

Amy, in a protective stance, said that the interpretation of Title IX in favor of female athletes is necessary in order to protect other women's sports on campus that might not be doing as well as others. She also surmised that "since there are more opportunities to be involved in athletics there should also be an increased chance to coach; more opportunities for females to coach in female sports." Carly also observed that it was important to "offer more opportunities for women, but historically more males have been involved." Becky also saw a rise in the opportunities available for female coaches today, and it is her hope, that with increased grant money, more opportunities will be offered in the future. Gabriel further believed that there exists more opportunities for female athletes to play and coach sports today, though, like many of her fellow colleagues in the study, felt there exists few opportunities for women to coach male sports teams today.

Negative Aspects of Title IX

By referencing the remarks of the subjects, it can be determined there also exists some negative aspects of Title IX, but solutions exist on how to rectify gender inequity in sport. Amy stated, "The greatest amount of inequities today in female sports is due in part to societal perceptions." She felt that "from a business perspective if money is not put into a program then it cannot grow; though this is a systematic problem" at many levels. Heather also noted the compelling theme that in order to end any inequities that exist today "the money needs to be spent in promotion of female sports." She also believed that more high school teaching and coaching positions should be provided to women as well, in order to produce a greater equity at that particular level. Gabriel also contended that male teachers are more likely to receive teaching / coaching positions, and are more likely to receive promotions at the administrative level. Whereas Jennifer, extended Heather's thoughts by stating there "still exists a stigma with females coaching male athletes, but there exists no stigma to males coaching female athletes" (something also noted by Elizabeth as well).

Dawn echoed many of these similar comments, and Carly, took this a step further when she discussed how she personally finds the trend distasteful, in regards to many athletic departments today, that have cut opportunities for males, in order to produce an even ratio with female sports. Dawn contended that "there is far too much politics to work through today ... no matter what the [gender]." Elizabeth also noted the increase in number of male sports being cut by colleges today, in order to provide some equalization in numbers, as well as colleges attempting to provide athletic teams with similar scholarship availability. Becky also saw a growing sentiment, within the athletic realm, when she related how a close, and highly qualified, male friend, who is a collegiate coach for women's basketball, has found it increasingly more difficult to find a head coaching position due to his gender. She sadly stated, "I have witnessed

the pressure of watching a friend passed over for positions due to his male gender in coaching a female sport.” Carly felt that there exists “a lack of money in general for both genders in sports today – you cannot compensate for one by penalizing another.”

Three of the participants from the study observed that opportunities for growth for females through athletics had been made available to them throughout the course of playing and coaching careers. One participant believed that she has seen a great deal of expansion of opportunities for female athletes today outside of the normal scholastic team availability – particularly in the sport of volleyball. An unexpected finding was that the subjects did not know Title IX had produced more opportunities for them. Though, one must also view these same levels of participation through the perception of the other five participants in the study.

These five participants believed that there had been little to no change witnessed within the opportunities available to female athletes in today’s society. Lacking knowledge of the actual law itself, the participants in the study did not know Title IX had produced more opportunities for them over the years.

DISCUSSION

Reverberating in the responses of these eight participants regarding to gender based head coaching positions was their knowledge that there exists today very few females who regularly coach male teams and a perception that the majority of coaches for female teams are men. They were acutely aware that their positions as female coaches were the exceptions to this trend. Specifically, although compliance with Title IX has resulted in the opportunities for female

their participation in athletics.

athletes, the same cannot be said of female coaches. These beliefs are supported by Carpenter and Acosta (2006):

The representation of females among the ranks of head coaches for MEN’s [sic] teams remains at 2%; where it has been since before the passage of Title IX. Today, even though the number of women’s teams is at an all-time high, the representation of females among the coaching ranks of women’s intercollegiate athletics is at an all time low [42.4% for all divisions].

Upon learning of these discouraging data during their debriefing interviews, the participants made suggestions on how to further implement Title IX for greater effect. All believed that more human and financial resources should be directed to bring about true gender equity.

The current study revealed that participants exhibited a specific set of positive traits (see Table 1. Benefits of Athletic Participation) that common threads were woven from, through the constant comparative method. Content analysis of these lists of positive traits led to the identification of the theme Lessons Learned, which strongly supports the notion that participation in athletics provided opportunities for these young women to develop life long skills which deeply, valued and evidenced in their personal profiles, have been made manifest in their personal and professional lives.

This analysis additionally revealed three categories of skills sets that are highly prized in today’s workplace. Table 1 provides each skill set, a description of the skill that falls under that particular category, and how many of the participants stated that it was a skill directly derived from

Table 1. Employment Related Skills Developed through Athletic Participation

| Working Smart | Teamwork / Leadership | Understanding Roles |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Time management (5) | Teamwork (7) | Goal oriented (7) |
| Organization | Social skills (7) | Perseverance (6) |
| Responsibility | Networking skills (3) | Positive attitude (5) |
| Efficiency | Leadership skills (3) | Competitiveness (4) |
| Detail orientation | Leadership opportunities | Composure (3) |
| Consistency | Delegation of responsibility | Self-confidence (3) |
| Defining limits | Sportsmanship | Perspective |
| Verbal expression | Trust | Dedication |
| Critical thinking skills | Friendship | Maturity |
| | | Solid work ethic |
| | | Will to succeed |
| | | Life Experience (3) |
| | | Self-motivation |
| | | Self-reliance |

Note: Numbers note frequency of terms used by participants during interviews

The skills learned by the participants in this study, which they are now imparting to their own athletes, were thematic. Reported in the findings of the related literature reviewed herein, the acquisition of these skills are essential for success in the business world.

The category titles for Table 1: Employment Related Skills Developed through Athletic Participation represent the perceptions of the participants and are consistent with the findings of Heim (2008), DeBoer (2004), and Rimm (1999), endorsing the notion that sports provide women with essential life experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

Seen through the lens of progress made since Title IX's passage in 1972, women's participation in sports, particularly in volleyball, had come a long way. Female athletes and coaches who were once type cast as "tom-boys," are now coming closer to being seen as empowered equals. Women, in today's society, have also found that it is alright to be both feminine and athletic at the same time. By barring sexual discrimination in educational settings, Title IX has paved the way for female athletes and coaches to experience vast benefits from athletic participation. As was demonstrated in the present study, participation in athletics has allowed women to develop many positive traits that have prepared them to lead successful lives. However, in the present study, the participants -- themselves direct beneficiaries of opportunities generated by Title IX -- were not cognizant of the efforts that were made to pave the way for them to begin to experience gender equity. In addition, as can be seen in the literature reviewed for the present study, women today are still all too often not provided the same opportunities as those offered to men. This is perhaps due to the fact that economics drives sport (e.g. some men's sports generate greater revenue). Consequently, women still have miles to go before they may rest within the full fabric of gender equity in sport and society.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COACHING

The opportunities afforded to female athletes and coaches, through participation in athletics, has a profound impact on their lives. Results from this study suggest that the participants' early coaching experiences, even as volunteer assistants in a middle school camp, when they were high school students, made a major impact on their lives and fostered a sincere desire to continue their coaching careers. Participation opportunities for female athletes and coaches in sport, in childhood and later in life, are necessary to instill the positive traits needed to function properly in the adult world. Coaches, administrators, politicians, and others, need to make as many opportunities available to females, as they do for males, to participate in athletics. The positive traits developed, within athletic opportunities, provide young women the ability to develop life long skills, which they deeply value, and are made manifest in their personal and professional lives.

Women's athletics today, due to the enactment and further interpretations of Title IX, has witnessed many great leaps forward since 1972. It is important, though, that coaches and others note that women still have not received parity in athletics over 37 years later, and because of this discrepancy, many women are missing the opportunity to develop skill sets that they need in their professional lives. Subsequently, they are left at a serious disadvantage. A need, then, exists for coaches, and others to push for greater equity within athletics for women.

Finally, regardless of the competition level, as witnessed in this study, female athletes and coaches who are direct beneficiaries of the opportunities generated by Title IX, are still not cognizant of the efforts made by previous members of society. It should then be a portion of the task of today's coaches and athletic administrators to assist in instructing athletes concerning the people and efforts that were made to pave the road for opportunities they receive today.

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