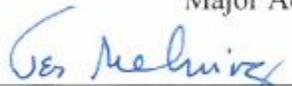


The Relationship Between Servant Leadership of Division I Athletic Directors, Basic Work-Related Psychological Need Satisfaction, and the Overall Job Satisfaction of Division I Athletic Department Employees

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Abstract

While recent high-profile cases of scandal in intercollegiate athletics have led administrators, the public, government officials, and scholars to call for reform, impropriety in intercollegiate athletics dates back to the earliest days of organized college sports. A scholarly voice for change has suggested an examination of leadership practices and styles, in particular, servant leadership in intercollegiate athletics administrators (Burton & Peachey, 2014). The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors, as reported by Division I athletic department employees, and the relationship with the self-reported work-related basic psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

Using an online survey ($n = 231$) of randomly selected athletic department employees at 35 Division I institutions, the results of this study revealed a statistically significant positive relationship exists ($p < .001$) with observed servant leadership characteristics in athletic directors and the employees' needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The results also showed a statistically significant positive relationship ($p < .001$) between observed servant leadership in athletic directors and employee's overall job satisfaction. The results of this study affirmed that servant leadership in athletic directors were associated with greater work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction and stronger overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees. This study supports the use of servant leadership to better support the work-related need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

Dedication

On the day this dedication was written, I saw a social media post by a popular Christian song artist that said “You have been assigned this mountain to show others it can be moved”. This dissertation is dedicated to my savior, Jesus Christ. May all who read this document come to know Him better.

Acknowledgements

To say it takes a village is an understatement. Countless people had a hand in this that I will probably leave out of this section accidentally, so I hope everyone who provided support over the years knows I am forever grateful.

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were always appreciated. I am a better employee because of your leadership, a better scholar because of your knowledge, and a better human because of your friendship. I am grateful I get to do this journey of work with you.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Formed originally as the Intercollegiate Athletic Association, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was born in 1910 as an answer to President Roosevelt's call for a review of the level of violence in intercollegiate football (Smith, 2000). The President's push for regulation and reform of intercollegiate athletics came at a time where little oversight existed at an institutional level. Over 100 years later, there are continued calls for reform of intercollegiate athletics due to unethical behavior of NCAA member institutions.

Organized sport is no stranger to unethical behavior, having seen scandal impact competition since the Olympic Games in 388 BC (Maennig, 2005). The rise of unethical conduct in intercollegiate athletics continues to be a concern, with a long list of highly-publicized scandals in recent years (Burton, Peachey, & Wells, 2017). Many scholars, organizations, governing bodies, and public officials have produced calls for reform in a variety of ways including stronger oversight and better enforcement. A recent plea by scholars to rehabilitate unethical conduct in intercollegiate athletics has come in the form of more meaningful evaluation of the leadership of intercollegiate athletics programs (Burton & Peachey, 2013; DeSensi, 2014; Robinson, Neubert, & Miller, 2018; Sagas & Wigley, 2014).

Background

A search of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Legislative Services Database (NCAA, n.d.) in January 2019 produced a report of 140 major infractions at the Division I level over the last 10 years alone. In the database were 30

records of Level II infractions which the NCAA Committee on Infractions deemed to be a “significant breach of conduct” (NCAA, 2013, para 4). Also found were 16 Level I infractions which the NCAA deemed to be the most severe breach of conduct and could “threaten the integrity of the NCAA collegiate model” (NCAA, 2013, para 3). Adding in Division II and III levels increased the number of major infractions over the last ten years to more than 200. An important fact to remember when classifying data on infractions from the database is that these numbers only reflected schools that were caught in egregious, unethical conduct, and may not reflect how widespread the problem could be. Unethical conduct in intercollegiate athletics has produced so much attention that publisher Human Kinetics produced a special issue of the *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport* in 2014 focusing solely on ethical leadership in intercollegiate athletics (Burton & Peachey, 2014). While the attention on these infraction cases is often focused on coaches, athletic department employees with administrative responsibilities are often involved as well, as shown in 2016 when the NCAA ruled that “two former Georgia Southern University staff members violated NCAA ethical conduct rules when they provided three football student-athletes with impermissible academic assistance” (NCAA, n.d.). The two staff members gave the student-athletes a flash drive that contained previous work for a course, and resulted in show-cause orders for the former assistant director of student-athlete services.

While the study of leadership in the field of sport management dates back to the 1970s, only recently has research related to leadership developed in the organizational context of intercollegiate athletics (Peachey, Zhou, Damon, & Burton, 2015). Many of these studies have examined the leadership behaviors of intercollegiate athletics

leadership including athletic directors (Branch, 1990; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). In this wave of recent literature, a line of inquiry has developed with a focus on servant leadership, an ethical and follower-focused leadership style, as an area of interest in promoting a more ethical climate in intercollegiate athletics (Burton, et al., 2017). Robinson, et al. (2018) described this emerging topic of research as still in its infancy, leading to continued calls for further inquiry (Burton, et al., 2017; Burton & Peachey, 2014; Burton & Peachey, 2013; DeSensi, 2014). Servant leadership continues to be a leadership style studied as a route to potential reform in an era of unethical conduct in intercollegiate athletics (Burton & Peachey, 2013).

The examination of servant leadership has produced a variety of meaningful contributions in organizational contexts where the leadership style has affected positive individual and organizational outcomes. Framing those outcomes in the lens of intercollegiate athletics it becomes easy to see why servant leadership has recently been lauded as a potential means of reforming unethical organizational climates in the industry (Burton & Peachey, 2013; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Peachey & Burton, 2017; Robinson, et al., 2018). Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, & Liden (2018) described servant leadership as a style that engages followers and aspires to empower them to reach their full capacity. This follower-first leadership approach has been found to have a conceptual and empirical tie to self-determination theory (SDT) and basic psychological needs satisfaction (Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). SDT is based on the idea that humans are naturally inclined to progress toward psychological growth and well-being, and the satisfaction or denial of these basic needs have measurable impacts (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Used in research focusing on the relationship

between work-related needs satisfaction and employee motivation, the founding authors of SDT suggested that humans in various organizational contexts have a basic psychological need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck, Ferris, Chang, & Rosen, 2016). Scholars have stated that having these needs met can produce positive outcomes in a variety of functioning contexts, including the workplace (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Deci & Ryan, 2002).

In their 2017 book on SDT and basic psychological needs, founding authors Ryan and Deci explained when autonomy is achieved, “one's behaviors are self-endorsed, or congruent with one's authentic interests and values” (p. 10). Competence was described by the authors as a need to feel effective and accomplished in essential life contexts. The last need of relatedness was explained as a desire to feel connection socially. Ryan and Deci (2017) explained that “people feel relatedness most typically when they feel cared for by others” (p. 11).

Peachey, Burton, Wells, and Chung (2018) were the first to examine the association between observed servant leadership behaviors and work-related needs satisfaction in the organizational context of sport, finding positive associations between servant leadership and needs satisfaction in development and peace (SDP) organizations. To date, no studies have been completed examining the relationship of basic work-related psychological needs and servant leadership in the context of intercollegiate athletics. The connection between observed leadership behaviors and overall job satisfaction has been explored in intercollegiate athletics at numerous levels, but mostly in the context of coaching. Kuchler (2008) found that observed leadership behaviors had a significant impact on coaches' overall job satisfaction and provided contributions to the examination

of servant leadership in the organizational context. Johnson and Remedios (2016) examined servant leadership and the relationship to organizational citizenship behavior and job satisfaction at the Division II level, but to date, the literature continues to lack empirical evidence of the connection between servant leadership, basic work-related needs satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction in the organizational context of intercollegiate athletics at the Division I level.

Statement of the Problem

While calls to answer the increased unethical conduct of intercollegiate programs have included reform in governance (Baxter, Margavio, & Lambert, 1996; Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009) and enforcement (Dennie, 2015), Burton and Peachey (2013) promoted a need to investigate leadership “as a necessary component to reform of intercollegiate athletics” (p. 355). Research on servant leadership continues to develop in organizational contexts, but empirical studies focusing on servant leadership in the context of intercollegiate athletics continue to lag in comparison to other organizational contexts. Robinson et al. (2018) stated: “it appears research on servant leadership in sport is in its infancy” (p. 44).

Extensive research exists on self-determination theory in the context of intercollegiate athletics. However, that research has focused mostly on the relationship between coach and athlete. Peachey, et al. (2018) explored the relationship between servant leadership and basic psychological needs satisfaction in the sport for development and peace context, but to date, no such research exists in the realm of intercollegiate athletics.

A review of servant leadership research (Eva et al., 2018) indicated that extensive research exists on various relationships involving servant leadership, follower and organizational outcomes, but no research has examined the relationship between servant leadership and employee psychological needs satisfaction in the organizational context of intercollegiate athletics. Also, no research has attempted to explain servant leadership's impact on overall job satisfaction through the lens of employees' psychological needs satisfaction. This study explored the relationship between servant leadership, work-related psychological basic needs satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction in the organizational context of Division I intercollegiate athletics.

Purpose of the Study

This cross-sectional, non-experimental, correlational quantitative study was guided by four purposes. The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the overall job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. The second purpose was to examine the associations between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for autonomy in Division I athletic department employees. The third purpose was to explore the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for competence in Division I athletic department employees. The fourth purpose was to examine the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for relatedness in Division I athletic department employees.

Significance of the Study

This study extended the knowledge of servant leadership and self-determination theory through basic work-related psychological needs satisfaction by being the first to examine the relationship between the theoretical concepts in the context of Division I intercollegiate athletics. While the examination of servant leadership in organizational contexts continues to develop, scholarship on servant leadership in sport and more specifically intercollegiate athletics remains limited (Robinson et al., 2018). Absent from that research in the organizational context of intercollegiate athletics is the use of the SL-7, one of three recommended measures of servant leadership behavior that has withstood significant construct validation (Eva et al., 2018). This study contributed significant reliability and validity to the pool of servant leadership data in intercollegiate athletics with research using the SL-7 to measure overall servant leadership of athletic directors at the Division I level.

This study also contributed valuable insight into the theoretical and practical relationship between servant leadership and self-determination theory in intercollegiate athletics, using the three components of basic work-related psychological needs satisfaction as an individual outcome connected to the servant leadership behaviors observed by athletic department employees. Peachey et al. (2018) examined the relationship of servant leadership and basic psychological needs satisfaction in employees of sport for development organizations, but to date, no research has explored that relationship in Division I intercollegiate athletics employees. While the sample may not be representative of the entire population of Division I athletic directors and athletic department employees, the methodology could be replicated by scholars to obtain better

representative findings. Athletic directors, university presidents, athletic department employees, coaches, and students who desire to potentially hold the role of athletic director in the future may be interested in the results of the study.

Delimitations

According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), "delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study" (p. 134). One delimitation of this study was that data came from a random sample of Division I athletic department employees. Therefore, the results of this study should not be seen as a representative sample of the entire population.

In Eva et al. (2018), authors recommended the use of the Servant Leadership Scale 7 (SL-7) as a reliable and valid scale to measure a global score of servant leadership, but analysis on each of the seven dimensions should not be performed. As the SL-7 was selected for this study, the lack of servant leadership dimensional analysis with other variables serves as a second delimitation to the study. A third delimitation includes the measurement of the work-related basic psychological needs of Division I athletic department employees with the Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale - Adapted, developed by Chiniara and Bentein (2016) as a shortened adaptation of the work completed by Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens, and Lens (2010). The use of this scale provided data on measuring the autonomy, competence, and relatedness psychological work-related needs satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees, but not a global need satisfaction score.

Assumptions

Simon and Goes (n.d.) described the need for statement and justification of research assumptions which are "things that are somewhat out of your control, but if they disappear your study would become irrelevant" (para. 2). The following assumptions were present in this study:

- 1) Athletic department employees understood each question on the instrument and understood they were evaluating the leadership characteristics of the athletic director at their respective institution.
- 2) Athletic department employees who participated in the study answered honestly and accurately.

Research Questions

This non-experimental, correlational, quantitative study addressed the relationship between servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors, self-reported autonomy, competency, and relatedness work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction of athletic department employees in a Division I athletic conference. Four research questions guided the current study:

RQ1. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees?

RQ2. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

RQ3. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

RQ4. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

Definition of Terms

This section provides terms and definitions used throughout the study to enable the reader clarity and understanding. Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (2014) believed that researchers should define terms to aid individuals outside the field of study in understanding words that go beyond regularly used language. The following list of terms is used throughout the study.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Founded in 1910, the NCAA is a “member-led organization dedicated to providing a pathway for opportunity for college athletes” (NCAA, 2018b, para. 1).

Division I (DI). Comprised of 351 institutions competing at the highest NCAA competition level, Division I schools are generally known for large athletic budgets, have larger student bodies on their campuses, and provide significant amounts of athletic scholarships (NCAA, 2018a).

Athletic Director (AD). The NCAA website defined an athletic director as one who oversees athletic department staff and guides athletic department decisions and policy (NCAA, 2018c).

Athletic department employee (ADE). An athletic department employee is defined as a working member of an athletic department who reports directly or indirectly to the athletic director and listed as an administrative staff member of the athletic department in Collegiate Directories' *The National Directory of College Athletics* (2019), verifying an employment relationship exists.

Self-determination theory (SDT). Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan (2017) defined self-determination theory as "an empirically-based theory on human motivation, development and wellness" (p. 182).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was defined originally by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) as "the feelings a worker has about his job" (p. 100).

Servant leadership. Greenleaf (1977) was the first to define servant leadership in his essay *The Servant as Leader*: "The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 7).

Show-cause orders. A show-cause order is a penalty issued by the NCAA to a coach or administrative staff member of an athletic department who has been named as involved in a major infractions case. The order comes with an established timeline where "an NCAA school wishing to employ a show-case individual must appear with the individual before a Committee on Infractions panel to plead their case for doing so" (NCAA, n.d.).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provided an introduction, background, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitations, assumptions, research questions, and definition of

terms. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature related to servant leadership, work-related basic needs satisfaction and overall job satisfaction in the context of intercollegiate athletics. Chapter 3 includes the research design, selection of participants, measurement, data collection procedures, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and limitations. Results of the hypothesis testing are provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study, findings related to the literature, and conclusions.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the overall job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. The second purpose was to examine the connections between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for autonomy in Division I athletic department employees. The third purpose was to explore the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for competence in Division I athletic department employees. The fourth purpose was to examine the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for relatedness in Division I athletic department employees. The review of literature for the current study includes a summary of research on the history of intercollegiate athletics and calls for reform, development and application of servant leadership theory, measuring servant leadership, the Servant Leadership Scale – 7, servant leadership scholarship in intercollegiate athletics, self-determination theory, measuring self-determination theory, work-related need satisfaction in intercollegiate athletics, development of job satisfaction theory, measuring job satisfaction theory, and job satisfaction in intercollegiate athletics.

The History of Intercollegiate Athletics and Calls for Reform

While the first organized intercollegiate contest occurred in the mid 1800s, sport on college campuses dates back to the 1700s (Smith, 1988). Intercollegiate athletics

reportedly began in the United States in 1852 when Harvard University and Yale University engaged in a rowing contest (Dennie, 2015; Smith, 1988). This first contest was not without ethical issues. Harvard recruited a young man who was not a student to represent the school and participate in the regatta, and the event itself was sponsored by a major railroad line (Smith, 2000). The presence of these factors points to an unethical influence in intercollegiate athletics in the very beginning, a problem still troubling intercollegiate athletic leaders today.

As news spread about the rowing contest, members of intercollegiate teams began to challenge each other in a multitude of other sports and the rise of intercollegiate athletics was underway. The state of intercollegiate athletics in the late 1800's was very similar to current conditions. Mirroring the industrial growth occurring in the United States, intercollegiate athletics "took on many of the features of the larger America and its capitalistic rush for wealth, power, recognition, and influence" (Smith, 1988, p. 4). In this period of unprecedented growth, however, the question of governance became a serious problem for institutions sponsoring intercollegiate athletic programs to consider.

Members of academia were among the first to try to regulate intercollegiate sport. Those efforts met predictable resistance from institutional administrators who saw intercollegiate athletics as a means to economic benefit through publicity, admissions, and increased institutional support (Smith, 1987). Regardless, by the turn of the century, the crusade to establish intercollegiate sport governance in some form or fashion was well underway. The first highly public push for a significant overhaul of the intercollegiate sport governance structure came from an unlikely source: the White House (Dennie, 2015).

In 1905, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt responded to more than a dozen deaths and over 100 injuries in intercollegiate football by hosting a national meeting of intercollegiate athletics leaders at the White House to discuss reformation efforts, including playing rules (Dennie, 2015; Sailes, 2013; Smith, 1987). While the President's efforts at the time were ineffective in reforming the sport of college football, these efforts did produce the first version of what we now know as modern intercollegiate athletics governance. In 1905, a second meeting to discuss intercollegiate football reform by New York University Chancellor Henry McCracken brought together leaders from the country's top 13 programs, forming the first rules committee (Smith, 2000; Smith 1987). The combined effort to reform intercollegiate athletics from both the White House and the newly-formed rules committee led to the creation of a 62-member Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS), which would be renamed the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) in 1910 (Dennie, 2015; Sailes, 2013).

The early existence of the NCAA was mostly uneventful until 1919 when the member-led organization developed a policy where “member institutions were encouraged not to compete against violating members” (Dennie, 2015, p. 138). Even that policy could not prevent the commercialized growth and unethical behavior of intercollegiate athletics coaches and leaders. In 1929, the first outside effort to influence governance came in the Carnegie Report, produced by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Education (Sailes, 2013; Smith 2000; Smith 1987). The Carnegie Report concluded that reform was possible if institutional presidents desired it, and that intercollegiate athletics desperately needed to minimize commercialization and embrace stronger morality in its contributions to developing youth (Smith, 1987). The report

produced what was believed to be the first call for stronger moral leadership in intercollegiate athletics, a call that still exists in the modern world of college sport (Burton, et al., 2017; Burton & Peachey, 2014; Burton & Peachey, 2013; Sagas & Wigley, 2014).

The NCAA leaders' first significant effort into enforcement of intercollegiate athletics came in 1948 with the creation of the Sanity Code, an effort to end the practice of the exploitation of student-athletes in the recruiting process (Smith, 1987). To enforce the code, the NCAA's organizational leaders established a Constitutional Compliance Committee to investigate potential rules violations and provide a judicial-like interpretation of the NCAA's rules, which was replaced three years later with the Committee on Infractions that was provided the power to punish rule violations (Smith, 1987). While the attempt to eradicate unethical behavior appeared genuine, by the 1970s the NCAA faced even more scrutiny, focused on unfair rules and enforcement (Smith, 1987).

In the early 1970s, NCAA administrators created subunits, called divisions, that grouped similar institutions "in divisions that would better reflect their competitive capacity" (Smith, 2000, p. 15). The NCAA's three divisions were created in 1973, a structure that still stands today. Division I currently boasts 37% of the overall population of student-athletes and averages 19 athletic programs per school. The division is also distinct in providing multiyear, cost-of-attendance scholarships (NCAA, 2018a). The current study focused on Division I as the schools within it are the most recognizable in college athletics. The NCAA continues to be caught in a difficult battle of criticisms between unfair rules and regulations, and also unfair enforcement practices, especially as

it relates to the highly-publicized unethical behavior of its members at the Division I level.

Development and Application of Servant Leadership Theory

The conceptual theory and application of servant leadership is one that spans nearly four decades and a variety of academic disciplines including business, leadership, education, and psychology, among others. While the development of servant leadership as a theory that began with Robert Greenleaf's (1904-1990) original concepts, researchers continue to study the concept to gain additional understanding of how servant leadership can apply to a variety of leader, organizational, and individual outcomes across a variety of academic disciplines. A list of servant leadership scholarship with significant citations is found in Table 1.

Table 1

Servant Leadership Articles with at Least 250 Citations

Authors	Title	Source	Citations
Liden, R.C., Wayne, S.J., Zhao, H., Henderson, D. (2008)	Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment	<i>Leadership Quarterly</i> 19(2), pp. 161-177	393
van Dierendonck, D. (2011)	Servant leadership: A review and synthesis	<i>Journal of Management</i> 37(4), pp. 1228-1261	373
Russell, R.F., Gregory Stone, A. (2002)	A review of servant leadership attributes: developing a practical model	<i>Leadership & Organization Development Journal</i> 23(3), pp. 145-157	268
Walumbwa, F.O., Hartnell, C.A., Oke, A. (2010)	Servant leadership, procedural justice climate, service climate, employee attitudes, and organizational citizenship behavior: A cross-level investigation	<i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> 95(3), pp. 517-529	266
Nuebert, M.J., Kacmar, K.M., Carlson, D.S., Chonko, L.B., Roberts, J.A. (2010)	Regulatory focus as a mediator of the influence of initiating structure and servant leadership on employee behavior	<i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> 93(6), pp. 1220-1233	255
Barbuto Jr., J.E., Wheeler, D.W. (2006)	Scale development and construct clarification of servant leadership	<i>Group and Organization Management</i> 31(3), pp. 300-326	252

Note: From Scopus database search accessed on March 26, 2019.

Most leading scholars have recognized Greenleaf as the founder of servant leadership.

The concept of servant leadership began with a series of publications in the 1970s that provided the earliest definition of servant leadership:

The Servant Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed? (Greenleaf, 1977, para 7).

Greenleaf's definition of servant leadership aligns well with the NCAA's basic purpose outlined in the Division I Manual:

The competitive athletics programs of member institutions are designed to be a vital part of the educational system. A basic purpose of this Association is to maintain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the educational program and the athlete as an integral part of the student body and, by so doing, retain a clear line of demarcation between intercollegiate athletics and professional sports (NCAA, 2018a, p. 1).

The NCAA's 16 Principles for Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics (2016) also outlined aspirational conduct that promotes responsibility, student-athlete well-being, sportsmanship, and ethical conduct. These aspirational values for conduct also provide a connection to Greenleaf's earliest definition of servant leadership, prompting a call for the exploration of servant leadership's potential impact on the unethical behavior in intercollegiate athletics (Burton, et al., 2017; Burton & Peachey, 2014; Burton & Peachey, 2013; DeSensi, 2014). This call has established a desire for scholars to learn more about how the focus of servant leadership theory aligns with promoting more

successful organizational outcomes and producing a more ethical climate overall (Burton, et al., 2017; Lumpkin & Achen, 2018; Robinson et al., 2018).

Parris and Peachey (2013) conducted a review of servant leadership theory in organizational contexts and found that the majority of scholars use at least part of Greenleaf's original definition of servant leadership. The authors found in their review the second-most referenced servant leadership scholar to be Larry Spears, who served as the leader of the Greenleaf Center on Servant Leadership for nearly 20 years and wrote more than a dozen books on the subject. Spears (1995, 1998, 2004) proposed a model of servant leadership that included 11 characteristics including (a) listening, (b) empathy, (c) healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) philosophy, (g) conceptualization, (h) foresight, (i) stewardship, (j) commitment to the growth of people, and (k) building community.

In their review, Parris and Peachey found Laub (1999) to be third-highest cited scholar. Laub developed the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) as part of a dissertation. Laub delineated six critical areas of effective servant leadership practice in organizations including (a) valuing people, (b) building community, (c) providing leadership, (d) developing people, (e) displaying authenticity, and (e) sharing leadership. Laub's definition of strong servant leadership practice included servant leaders placing "the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader" (1999, p. 81).

Measuring Servant Leadership

Laub's (1999) work sparked a period of instrument development to assist in the measurement of servant leadership, thereby enhancing the empirical study of the concept. Eva et al. (2018) stated that a total of 16 instruments exist today to measure servant leadership, three of which are recommended for usage using Hinkin's (1995) guidelines

for scale development construction and validation rigor. A comparison of the three recommended scales is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparison of Recommended Measures of Servant Leadership

	SL-7	SLBS-6	SLS
Key scale development articles	Liden et al. (2015, 2008)	Sendjaya et al. (2018, 2008)	van Dierendonck et al. (2017); van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011)
Number of items	7/28	6/35	18/30
Number of servant leadership dimensions	7	6	8
Servant leadership dimensions	Emotional healing, creating value for the community, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, behaving ethically.	Voluntary subordination, authentic self, covenantal relationship, responsible morality, transcendental spirituality, transforming influence.	Empowerment, accountability, standing back, humility, authenticity, courage, interpersonal acceptance, stewardship.
Unique theorizing	Include concern towards community and followers' conceptual skills (not just character and behaviors).	Holistic aspect of servant followers' development, including spirituality (meaning, purpose).	The eight dimensions operationalize the 'leader'-side and the 'servant'-side of servant leadership.

Note: Adapted from “Servant Leadership: A systematic review and call for future research” by Eva, N. et al., 2018, *The Leadership Quarterly*, (30)1, p. 6.

The Servant Leadership Scale - 7

One of the three recommended measures of servant leadership includes the instrument used in this study, the Servant Leadership Scale - 7 (SLS-7) developed by Liden, Wayne, Meuser, Hu, Wu, and Liao (2015) as a short-form of the Servant Leadership Scale - 28 (2008). The authors used three samples of students and three organizational samples from the United States, China, and Singapore to provide evidence for the validity of the SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015). At the time of scale development, the SL-7 was the shortest servant leadership measure, one eclipsed only by Sendjaya, Eva, Butar-Butar, Robin, and Castles (2018) and the development of the Servant Leadership Behavior Scale (SLBS-6). Eva et al. (2018) recommended the SL-7 as a composite (or global) value of servant leadership that should be used in situations where individual measurement of the dimensions of servant leadership is not needed. Liden et al. (2015) concluded:

Across these samples, the correlation between the SL-7 and SL-28 averaged .90, reliabilities for the SL-7 remained above .80 in all samples, and criterion-related validities (tested only in the organizational samples) for the SL-7 were high and very similar to those produced by the SL-28 (p. 267).

Servant Leadership Scholarship in Intercollegiate Athletics

The discussion of servant leadership in sport continues to develop and grow. To date, no research on servant leadership in sport has used the SL-7, and few empirical studies exist about the nature of servant leadership, especially in the context of intercollegiate athletic organizations. Lumpkin and Achen (2018) examined the synergy

of self-determination theory (SDT), ethical leadership, servant leadership, and emotional intelligence and produced a call for more research into the connections.

Dodd, Achen, and Lumpkin (2018) conducted research in servant leadership and the connection to an ethical work climate in 8,000 Division III athletic department employees. Athletic directors were found to have several servant leadership characteristics including humility, empowerment, and accountability. Athletic department employees also reported the perception of working in an ethical climate, implementing the significant impact servant leadership can have on the organization's moral compass.

Burton et al. (2017) surveyed 285 athletic department employees from 151 Division I institutions to determine the relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors and followers' perceptions of an ethical climate, trust, and procedural justice inside of the athletic department. The authors found that servant leadership had a direct impact on the variables of perceived ethical climate, trust, and procedural justice in athletic department employees. In a dissertation on servant leadership in intercollegiate athletics, Johnson and Remedios (2016) used a purposive sample of Division II athletic department employees and found a significant relationship between observed servant leadership characteristics of athletic directors and self-reported levels of job satisfaction in their employees. While still in its infancy, servant leadership research in the context of intercollegiate athletics remains a desirable line of research for many scholars as a means to understand the potential of servant leaders to have an impact in correcting unethical behavior.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

The authors of self-determination theory, Deci and Ryan (2008) described SDT as "an empirically based theory of human motivation, development, and wellness" (p. 182). The theory centers on different types of motivation and their connections to outcomes in performance, relationships, and overall well-being. Deci and Ryan were among the first to consider a set of psychological needs that must be met in humans in order to achieve high levels of functioning. These basic psychological needs provided a basis for research in this study. Researchers have suggested that SDT requires the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) which are needed in order to achieve well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck et al., 2016).

Deci and Ryan (2000) defined autonomy as a need for individuals to have ownership over their own behavior. Deci et al. (2001) expressed competence as a sense of mastery in an environment and the ability to develop new skills. Relatedness represents the need to feel like a member of a group and grow close, personal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Van den Broeck et al., 2016).

The use of SDT to understand motivation in the workplace has been a popular area of empirical study in the last decade. Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, and Lens (2008) found that satisfaction of the three SDT needs were linked to less work-related exhaustion in a sample of workers from 17 organizations in Belgium. Lian, Ferris, and Brown (2012) using a random sample of 260 workers in three separate surveys, found that the fulfillment of the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness led to less organizational deviance in employees. Finally, De Cooman, Stynen, Van den Broeck, Sels, and De Witte (2013) discovered that employees who felt higher levels of

need satisfaction displayed higher levels of effort on the job. An element of emerging SDT research focused on gaining a better understanding about need satisfaction and need frustration in employees (Deci, et al., 2017). The first model of SDT in the workplace was produced by Deci et al. (2017) and is represented in Figure 1.

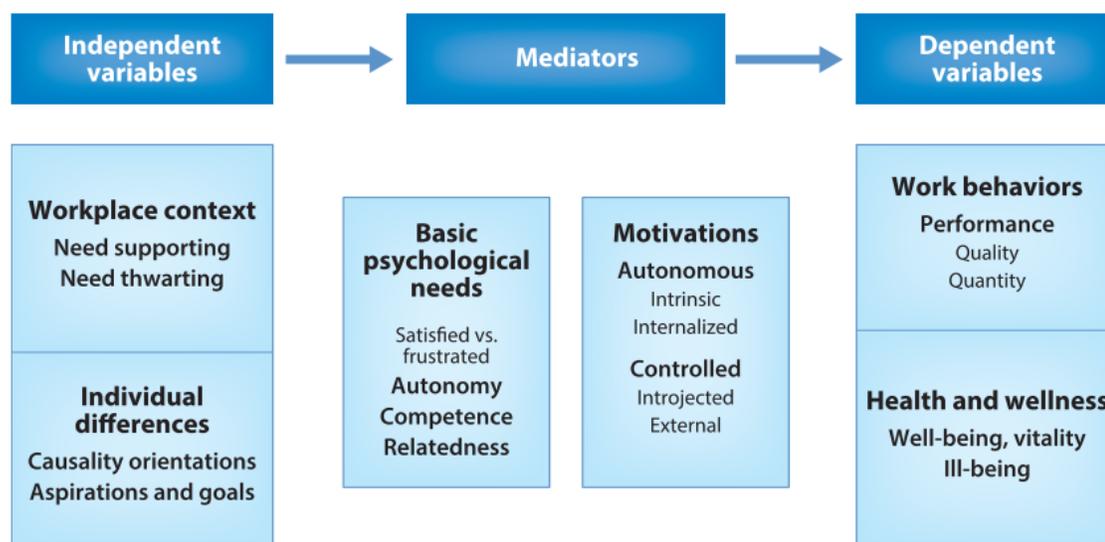


Figure 1: Reprinted from “Self-determination theory in work organizations” by Deci, et al., (2017), *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, (4), p. 23.

Several studies of SDT in the workplace have provided information on antecedents of need satisfaction and a better understanding of wellness and high performing organizations. Most of this research has included employees’ perceptions of supervisor’s support for the fulfillment of basic need satisfaction. A study of police officers (Otis & Pelletier, 2005) reported that when supervisors were perceived to be high in autonomy support, the officers responded by being more motivated for work. Moreau and Mageau (2012) found that health care workers reported higher levels of work satisfaction when receiving high levels of autonomy support from supervisors. Hon (2012) found that when hotel managers were supportive of autonomy needs and co-workers displayed high

levels of relatedness, employees displayed high levels of motivation and creativity in their work. Research has shown that high levels of managerial needs support can predict high levels of wellness, productivity, and satisfaction in employees (Deci, et al., 2017).

Measuring Self-Determination Theory

Deci et al. (2001) developed the most common instrument used to measure SDT in the 21-item Basic Need Satisfaction at Work Scale. While the scale has been widely used to measure levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction at work, it is not without critics. Authors have cited reliability and validity issues with the scale as measuring antecedents to need satisfaction rather than the fulfillment of the needs themselves (Van den Broeck et al., 2010).

Recently, another scale, the Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction (W-BNS) was developed in an attempt to provide a more robust understanding of SDT in the workplace. According to Van den Broeck et al. (2010) the W-BNS provides a more reliable and valid scale using Hinkin's (1995) standards. A meta-analysis of SDT using the W-BNS supported the argument that need satisfaction predicts psychological growth and well-being, and that the three needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness should be independent and not averaged.

Chiniara and Bentein (2016) adapted and shortened the W-BNS in a study that linked servant leadership to individual performance and SDT. The authors reduced the W-BNS from 18 items to 12 (W-BNSA) and explored connections of servant leadership to each of the three basic needs of SDT in 821 employees of a technology company in Canada. The adapted scale was pre-tested on a different sample of 209 employees working at the same company with Cronbach's alphas of .92 for autonomy, .87 for

competence, and .83 for relatedness. To date, the W-BNSA is the shortest scale in length measuring SDT and was chosen for this study due to the reliability, validity, and brevity of the scale. Chiniara and Bentein (2016) found that servant leadership strongly predicted the needs satisfaction for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the employees surveyed.

Work-Related Need Satisfaction in Intercollegiate Athletics

Much of the work in the realm of need satisfaction and intercollegiate athletics has involved athletes and intrinsic motivation. To date, there are no studies connecting need satisfaction and intercollegiate athletic department employees at any level. Peachey et al. (2018) examined need satisfaction with a study of 472 employees in the sport for development and peace (SDP) context. The mixed methods approach also included 14 purposively structured interviews with leaders and employees of SDP organizations. The authors found that servant leadership was significantly related to autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction.

Development of Job Satisfaction Theory

While the concepts and constructs of how employees view the degree of favor with their job are widely varied, Judge, Weiss, Kammeyer-Mueller, and Hulin (2017) described job satisfaction scholarship as including the elements of “satisfaction with work, tasks, supervision, promotions, pay, and job involvement” (p. 357). Weiss (2002) defined job satisfaction as “a positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one's job or job situation” (p. 175). Later in the same article, Weiss described the variable of job satisfaction as including not only evaluative judgment, but also an individual's affective experiences at work, and an individual's attitude about his or her

job. Breaking down these conclusions allows researchers a broad view of how complicated the study of job satisfaction can be. While employees may have a variety of attitudes toward their job, Figure 2 shows that the construct of job satisfaction is still the most studied variable over the last century of job-related attitude research.

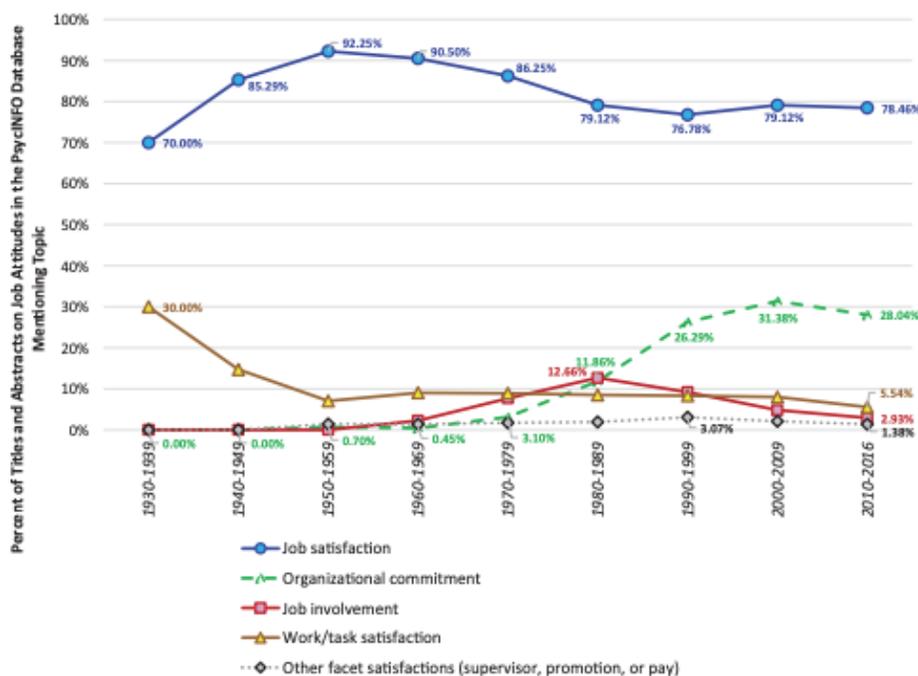


Figure 2: Proportion of all articles per decade in the PsychINFO database concerning different job attitudes over time. All percentages for job satisfaction and organizational commitment are shown. Reprinted from “Judge, T. A., Weiss, H. M., Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., & Hulin, C. L. (2017). Job attitudes, job satisfaction, and job affect: A century of continuity and of change. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), p. 358.”

Measuring Job Satisfaction

While the research trying to better define job satisfaction has been extensive and varied over the years, the same result can be viewed from the different measures of the variable. A search of the PsychTESTS database for the term job satisfaction produced a total of 693 different scales used for measurement in a variety of languages. Messersmith, Patel, Lepak, and Gould-Williams (2011) studied job satisfaction from the lens of human

resource management and as a mediating variable (along with organizational commitment and empowerment) between high-performance work systems and departmental performance. The authors hypothesized that the use of high-performance work systems would have a statistically significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior using job satisfaction as a mediator. The authors also found that increased high-performance work systems increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment increased overall organizational citizenship behavior. Newman, Nielsen, Smyth, and Hooke (2015) found that job satisfaction played a significant role in connecting workplace support and overall life satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has also been linked to servant leadership and SDT. Mayer et al. (2008) found a direct relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction using SDT and need satisfaction as a mediating variable. Schneider and George (2011) also found servant leadership had a direct relationship with job satisfaction using employee empowerment as a mediating variable. Chan and Mak (2014) used leader-member exchange theory (LMX) as a mediating variable to connect servant leadership and job satisfaction in 218 employees of a private service-oriented firm in China.

Job Satisfaction in Intercollegiate Athletics

Scholarship on job satisfaction in intercollegiate athletics is far more advanced than servant leadership and work-related need satisfaction. A significant number of articles have been written about job satisfaction in intercollegiate coaches. Job satisfaction research related to intercollegiate athletic department employees has also been conducted. Robinson, Peterson, Tedrick, and Carpenter (2003) found global job

satisfaction levels to be high in 42 Division III athletic directors, including the facets of coworkers and supervision. Parks, Russell, Wood, Robertson, and Shewokis (1995) found that while women reported lower salaries than men, they had comparable job satisfaction scores in a sample of 106 NCAA Division I institutions that included 514 athletic department employees.

Kim, Magnusen, Andrew, and Stoll (2012) found that transformational leadership did not have a direct impact on employee job satisfaction in 325 athletic department employees in an NCAA Division I conference. In a study of 494 mid-level athletic department administrators at Division I and III levels, Weaver and Chelladurai (2002) categorized three facets of job satisfaction including workgroup, extrinsic rewards, and intrinsic rewards when examining the relationship between mentoring and job satisfaction. Mentoring produced a weak positive relationship with each of the three facets of satisfaction. The *degree of self-fulfillment* was found to be a high-loading (>.85) item in the intrinsic rewards category, as was *the sense of accomplishment from work*, which is closely related to the definition of the work-related basic needs of autonomy and competence, respectively. A high-loading (>.61) item in the workgroup factor included a direct relationship between the item *the people you work within your organization* and job satisfaction, relating to the SDT variable of relatedness. Also, participants in the study who had mentoring relationships were found to have higher levels of job satisfaction as well.

Kuchler's (2008) study of Division III athletic directors and coaches found that the transformational leadership approaches of athletic directors were significantly related to coaches' job satisfaction. The study found that a “discrepancy between athletic

directors' perceptions of leadership and coaches' perceptions of leadership was associated with diminished job satisfaction” (para 1). In a study of 299 certified athletic trainers working for Division I, II, and III and NAIA athletic departments, Eason, Mazerolle, Denegar, Pitney, and McGarry (2018) found that a variety of individual, organizational and sociocultural-level factors influenced job satisfaction including organizational family support, work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, and career intentions.

Summary

Unethical behavior in intercollegiate athletic administrators can be traced back more than a century to the earliest contexts of college sports. Research has been conducted that explores the potential of leadership to address that behavior. Chapter 2 summarized servant leadership as an emerging leadership theory focusing on followers, and ethical behavior of leaders. Scholarship examining the work-related basic needs of employees has provided meaningful connections to better performing organizations. Job satisfaction research has provided insight into potential organizational outcomes to more satisfied employees. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used in the current study including the research design, selection of participants, measurement, data collection procedures, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 3

Methods

The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the overall job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. The second purpose was to examine the connections between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for autonomy in Division I athletic department employees. The third purpose was to explore the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for competence in Division I athletic department employees. The fourth purpose was to examine the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for relatedness in Division I athletic department employees. This chapter includes a description of the research design, selection of participants, measurements used, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and limitations of this study.

Research Design

This correlational quantitative study investigated the association of five variables including:

- 1) The servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees.
- 2) The work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction of autonomy, as self-reported by athletic department employees.

- 3) The work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction of competence, as self-reported by athletic department employees.
- 4) The work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction of relatedness, as self-reported by athletic department employees.
- 5) The self-reported overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

Servant leadership served as the independent variable in each of the four research questions used to guide the study. Work-related basic psychological needs (satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and self-reported job satisfaction were dependent variables.

Selection of Participants

The 2019 NCAA Online Directory listed 353 Division I athletic programs in March of 2019. The population for this study included all athletic department employees listed for each Division I institution, which can include employees that may number from as few as 12 to more than 100. Since the entire population is known and accessible but large, a random sampling technique was used to develop a list of participants for this study that could potentially serve as a representative sample of all Division I athletic department employees through inferential statistical analysis.

First, an alphabetical list of the 353 NCAA Division I institutions from the NCAA Online Directory was created in an Excel spreadsheet. Next, a random number generator was used to assign each institution a number between 1 and 353. A randomly selected sample of 35 institutions was selected using a random integer set generator to request one set with 35 unique integers from 1 to 353. The number 35 was chosen as it represents 10% of the overall population of 353 schools. The set of 35 randomly selected numbers

was used to select institutions that had previously been assigned a random number between 1 and 353. Once the 35 institutions were selected for the study, the list of athletic department employees and their respective emails from *The National Directory of College Athletics* (Collegiate Directories, 2019) were placed into a separate sheet of the population's Excel document and titled 'Participants' to produce the randomly selected sample ($n = 1,139$). Athletic directors from each institution were excluded from the list of potential participants as they were deemed to be the leaders who would be evaluated by the participants. Faculty athletic representatives were also excluded from the list as their appointments are often under the supervision of academic affairs and not intercollegiate athletics.

Measurement

A quantitative survey combining demographic questions and the following existing open access instruments: The Servant Leadership Scale (SL-7) developed by Liden et al., (2015), the Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale - Adapted (W-BNSA) by Chiniara and Bentein (2016), and the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) developed by Messersmith et al. (2011) was administered. The demographic questions asked participants to describe their gender, age, and position within the athletic department. No other identifying characteristics were included. The study survey titled *Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics* can be found in Appendix A.

The SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015) was used in this study to measure observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors by athletic department employees. The SL-7 was developed as a short-form of the Servant Leadership Scale-28 (SL-28) created by Liden et al. (2008). The SL-28 captured seven dimensions of servant leadership in 28

items (four items for each dimension). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to create a conceptual model and determined seven distinguishable dimensions. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was then used to validate the scale of data obtained from followers who rated their supervisor ($n = 182$). The analysis confirmed that a seven-factor model was appropriate with the following scale reliabilities: conceptual skills ($\alpha = .86$), empowering ($\alpha = .90$), helping subordinates grow and succeed ($\alpha = .90$), putting subordinates first ($\alpha = .91$), behaving ethically ($\alpha = .90$), emotional healing ($\alpha = .89$), and creating value for the community ($\alpha = .89$). Each of the dimensions was represented by one question on the composite SL-7 ($\alpha = .86$). In the current study, the internal consistency level of the scale was high ($\alpha = .91$). Empirical evidence proved the SL-7 is strongly correlated (.90) with the SL-28 (Liden et al., 2015). The SL-7 was used in the current study to measure observed global servant leadership behaviors with an overall mean. The use of the SL-7 in this manner aligned with Eva et al. (2018), and the recommendation of this scale for global servant leadership measures when not investigating the seven individual dimensions of servant leadership suggested by Liden et al. (2008).

Sample questions on the SL-7 include *My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own* and *My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best*. Participants were asked to respond to questions by selecting a number on a scale that best represented their agreement with the seven questions. A scale was used ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* to score the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors by athletic department employees. Participants' answers to the seven questions were averaged to form a mean for the observed servant

leadership score for the athletic director. The maximum value for observed servant leadership ($M = 7.00$) was associated with high levels of servant leadership behaviors displayed by athletic directors as reported by athletic department employees. The minimum value ($M = 1.00$) was associated with low levels of servant leadership behaviors displayed by athletic directors as reported by athletic department employees. The entire SL-7 scale can be found in Appendix B. Currently, this is the first study to use the SL-7 to measure servant leadership in the context of a sport organization.

The Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale – Adapted (W-BNSA) (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) was used to measure the level of satisfaction of athletic department employees' work-related basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The 12-item instrument was adapted from the original 18-item Work-Related Basic Needs Satisfaction Scale developed by Van den Broeck et al. (2010). Participants in the current study were asked to mark the number that best represented their satisfaction level with the aspect of their work described in each statement, using the scale ranging from 1 = *very dissatisfied* and 7 = *very satisfied*. The W-BNSA includes four questions for each of the three dimensions of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008): autonomy (*The opportunity to exercise my own judgement and actions*; $\alpha = .84$), competence (*The level of confidence about my ability to execute my job properly*; $\alpha = .82$), and relatedness (*The feeling of being part of a group at work*; $\alpha = .80$). In the current study, the internal consistency level of each subscale was high; autonomy ($\alpha = .94$), competence ($\alpha = .90$), and relatedness ($\alpha = .91$). Van den Broeck et al. (2016) recommended that work-related basic psychological need should be examined in the context of the three dimensions, and not with an overall composite score. This study

followed that recommendation to calculate a mean score for each dimension. The maximum mean for each dimension ($M = 7.00$) indicated a high level of self-reported needs satisfaction in autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The minimum mean for each dimension ($M = 1.00$) indicated a low level of self-reported needs satisfaction in autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The W-BNSA can be found in Appendix C.

The Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) (Messersmith et al., 2011) was used to measure self-reported overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees ($\alpha = .83$). The scale contains three questions, and participants were asked to mark the number that best represented their agreement with each statement with responses ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*. The response to each question was used to compose an overall job satisfaction mean for each participant. Questions included *In general, I like working here*; *In general I do not like my job* (reverse-coded); and *All things considered, I feel pretty good about this job*. The maximum mean of all three questions ($M = 7.00$) represented a high level of overall self-reported job satisfaction by athletic department employees. The minimum mean of the three questions ($M = 1.00$) represented a low level of overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees. The JSS can be found in Appendix D.

The internal consistency level of the JSS in the current study was comparatively low for a three-item scale ($\alpha = .59$). After examining the wording of the scale closely, the comparatively low reliability level could be partially explained by the reverse-worded item 2 on the JSS scale. More specifically, in item 2, the rating was reversed on the survey (question 26 on the survey sent to participants), which means that for this item, 1 = *strongly agree* and 7 = *strongly disagree*, however, for the other two items,

1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*. The inconsistent rating could have been confusing to participants who might assume the rating 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree* was the same for all three questions.

Data Collection Procedures

After approval of the final survey by both the major advisor and research analyst an expedited Institutional Review Board (IRB) request was submitted to Baker University on March 15, 2019 (see Appendix E). The Baker University IRB approved the request to collect data on March 26, 2019 (see Appendix F). After approval of the IRB request a database of email addresses was created using the administrative staff directory available for each institution in Collegiate Directories' *The National Directory of College Athletics* (2019).

Before the collection of data, the survey was created using the online service SurveyMonkey on April 2, 2019, to gather responses from participants who had an email listed within the administrative directory of *The National Directory of College Athletics*. The first page of the survey included an informed consent agreement to ensure compliance with Baker University IRB guidelines (Appendix G). The consent agreement explained that participation in the research was voluntary, and that consent ending participation in the survey could occur at any time without penalty.

An email containing a link to participate in the survey was sent on May 8, 2019 (Appendix H). Reminder emails were sent to participants on May 14 and 21. The survey collection period was closed on May 30, 2019, and survey responses were recorded in a spreadsheet by SurveyMonkey.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) suggested that the researcher “should carefully consider each of [the] research questions or hypotheses” (p. 200). Before the examination of hypotheses, responses from participants were exported from the spreadsheet on SurveyMonkey into a Comma Separated Values (.csv) spreadsheet, and then imported into a Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) spreadsheet. The Excel spreadsheet was then uploaded into a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) database for testing and review. Creswell (2014) instructed researchers to “identify statistics and the statistical computer program for testing the major inferential research questions or hypotheses in the proposed study” (p. 163). Illowsky and Dean (2013) recommended regression analysis be used when the study seeks to examine the relationship between two, or multiple variables. The current study included the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H1. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and the self-reported overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees. Simple linear regression was chosen for the hypothesis testing since it examines an

association between two continuous variables. The level of significance was set at .05. When appropriate, an effect size, R^2 , is reported.

RQ2. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H2. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and the self-reported autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees. Simple linear regression was chosen for the hypothesis testing since it examines an association between two continuous variables. The level of significance was set at .05. When appropriate, an effect size, R^2 , is reported.

RQ3. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H3. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and the self-reported competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees. Simple linear regression was chosen for the hypothesis testing since it examines an association between two continuous variables. The level of significance was set at .05. When appropriate, an effect size, R^2 , is reported.

RQ4. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H4. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and the self-reported relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees. Simple linear regression was chosen for the hypothesis testing since it examines an association between two continuous variables. The level of significance was set at .05. When appropriate, an effect size, R^2 , is reported.

Limitations

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) defined limitations as “factors that may have an effect on the interpretation of the findings or on the generalizability of the results” (p. 133).

The current study was limited by the following:

- 1) Athletic department employee participation was voluntary and each selected participant did not have to answer all or any of the survey questions.
- 2) Some participants did not respond to every question. In addition, respondents may have had predisposed biases about the survey, leading to less objective answers.
- 3) Results of the study may not be used to generalize the entire population of Division I athletic department employees. While random sampling methods were used, participation was limited to individuals who were employed during the month data collection was open. The low response rate of the participants should also contribute to caution being used in generalizing results.
- 4) The use of the SL-7 provided a global measure of the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees. The use of this instrument limited the research to a global view of servant leadership and no examination of the relationships between the dimensions of servant leadership and the other variables of need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.
- 5) There was a comparatively low reliability of the JSS ($\alpha = .59$) for the current study.

Summary

The study was designed to explore the variables of servant leadership (as observed by athletic department employees), self-reported work-related need satisfaction, and self-reported overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees at the Division

I level. The selection of the 1,139 participants was completed using a random sampling technique. The survey used and instruments to measure variables were also described, and reliability and validity data was provided. The research questions and hypotheses tested were presented, with information on the regression tests run on each variable. Five limitations of the current study were identified and presented. Chapter 4 includes descriptive statistics and the results of the hypothesis testing.

Chapter 4

Results

The current study investigated the relationship between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors, the observed work-related basic psychological need satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees (ADE), and the overall job satisfaction of Division I ADE. The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the overall job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. The second purpose was to examine the association between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for autonomy in Division I athletic department employees. The third purpose was to explore the relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for competence in Division I athletic department employees. The fourth purpose was to examine the relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for relatedness in Division I athletic department employees.

Descriptive Statistics

For the current study, an email was sent to 1,139 athletic department employees (ADE) at the Division I level. This represented the total number of ADE from the 35 randomly selected institutions that were listed in the administrative section of Collegiate Directories' *National Directory of College Athletics* (2019). A total of 231 ADE responded to the survey, representing a 20.3% response rate. One respondent answered

question five, *Since this study examines the leadership style of your current athletic director and your current job satisfaction, please tell us if your institution currently has an athletic director* with *No, my institution does not currently have an athletic director* and was directed to exit the survey without answering the rest of the questions on the survey. A total of 39 emails were returned as undeliverable in each round of invitations to participate, with three others responding to the first email that they no longer work in college athletics and were subsequently removed from follow-up lists. A total of 37 emails in the initial invitation were met with an automatic out-of-office reply, with 39 similar replies in the first follow-up reminder, and 42 in the final follow-up reminder. These automatic email replies can help to partially explain the smaller response rate in accordance with Baruch and Holtom (2008) who suggested response rates less than a benchmark of 35-40% be explained. Potential factors related to the lower response rate include the number of conference meetings and conference tournaments occurring during the response window, where it is common for ADE to travel and attend these respective events. Also potentially contributing to the lower response rate is the common practice of scheduling vacations for the end of the academic year, which may have aligned with the response window for participants at several of the institutions selected.

Survey questions two through four provided demographic information (*gender*, *age*, and *employment title*) to describe the study's sample ($n = 231$). Of the 228 participants who responded to *gender*, 144 (62.3%) were male and 84 were female (36.4%). Three respondents did not disclose gender. Of the 198 participants who responded to survey question three *What is your age?*, the youngest respondent was 23,

and oldest was 65. The mean age of respondents was 38.6 ($SD = 9.71$), with 33 choosing not to answer the question.

Question four asked *Which of the following best describes your position within the athletic department?* Participants selected from one of seven potential responses, with the most frequent response of *Other*, followed by *Department director*. Examples of *Other* titles included academic advisor, athletic trainer, and positions listed as manager and coordinator. One respondent declined to answer question four. Table 3 contains frequency and distribution data for question four.

Table 3

Athletic Department Employee Reported Position of Employment Frequency Table

Position Title	<i>n</i>	%
Senior associate athletic director	35	15.2
Associate athletic director	29	12.6
Assistant athletic director	26	11.3
Department director	42	18.3
Associate department director	21	9.1
Assistant department director	32	13.9
Other	45	19.6
Total	230	100

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis testing that addressed the four research questions are reported below. Survey data were analyzed to examine the relationship between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the autonomy, competence, and relatedness work-related psychological need satisfaction and overall job

satisfaction of Division I ADE. A simple linear regression was used to test each hypothesis.

RQ1. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees?

HI. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors (measured with survey questions six through 12) and the self-reported overall job satisfaction of Division I ADE (measured with survey questions 25-27). Outliers were detected, and one outlier was excluded from the following analysis. Linear regression can be significantly affected by outliers, which Rousseeuw and Hubert (2011) defined as observations that skew from the majority that could potentially be erroneous responses that “could have been recorded under exceptional circumstances, or belong to another population. Consequently, they do not fit the model well” (p. 73). These outliers can cause significant statistical problems that greatly influence the results. Using this guide, it was determined for the current study that outliers in each of the research questions should be detected and removed.

The results of the simple linear regression revealed that a statistically significant regression equation was found, $F(1, 195) = 113.54, p < .001, R^2 = .368$. Therefore, there was a significant association between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by ADE and the self-reported overall job satisfaction of ADE,

$B = .541$, $t(195) = 10.66$, $p < .001$. Observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors explained a significant portion of the variance (36.8%) in overall self-reported job satisfaction of ADE. For every 1.0 point increase in observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors on the servant leadership scale (1-7 point Likert-scale), the overall self-reported job satisfaction of ADE was predicted to increase .541 points, based on the scale (1-7 point Likert-scale) used to measure job satisfaction. This result indicated *H1* was supported by the analysis, as higher ratings of servant leadership in athletic directors as reported by ADE were found to be positively associated with higher levels of self-reported job satisfaction in ADE.

RQ2. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H2. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported autonomy work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the self-reported work-related basic psychological need of autonomy in Division I ADE (questions 13-16). Outliers were detected, and 10 responses that deviated greatly from the average were excluded from the following analysis. The results of the simple linear regression revealed that a statistically significant regression equation was found,

$F(1, 187) = 89.63, p < .001, R^2 = .324$. Therefore, there was a significant association between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by ADE and the self-reported need satisfaction of autonomy in ADE, $B = .362, t(187) = 9.47, p < .001$. Observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors explained a significant portion of the variance (32.4%) in self-reported autonomy need satisfaction in ADE. For every 1.0-point increase in observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors on the servant leadership scale (1-7 point Likert-scale), the self-reported autonomy need satisfaction of ADE was predicted to increase .362 points, based on the subscale (1-7 point Likert-scale) used to measure autonomy need satisfaction. This result indicated $H2$ was supported by the analysis, as higher ratings of servant leadership in athletic directors as reported by ADE were found to be positively associated with higher levels of self-reported autonomy need satisfaction in ADE.

RQ3. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H3. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported competence work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the self-reported work-related basic psychological need of competence in Division I ADE (questions 17-20). Outliers were detected, and 14 responses that deviated greatly from the

average were excluded from the following analysis. The results of the simple linear regression revealed that a statistically significant regression equation was found, $F(1, 184) = 34.63, p < .001, R^2 = .158$. Therefore, there was a significant association between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by ADE and the self-reported need satisfaction of competence in ADE, $B = .192, t(184) = 5.89, p < .001$. Observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors explained a significant portion of the variance (15.8%) in self-reported competence need satisfaction in ADE. For every 1.0-point increase in observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors on the servant leadership scale (1-7 point Likert-scale), the self-reported competence need satisfaction of ADE was predicted to increase .192 points, based on the subscale (1-7 point Likert-scale) used to measure competence need satisfaction. This result indicated *H3* was supported by the analysis, as higher ratings of servant leadership in athletic directors as reported by ADE were found to be positively associated with higher levels of self-reported competence need satisfaction in ADE.

RQ4. What is the association between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees?

H4. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by athletic department employees and self-reported relatedness work-related basic needs satisfaction of athletic department employees.

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the association between the observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the self-

reported work-related basic psychological need of relatedness in Division I ADE (questions 21-24). Outliers were detected, and 12 responses that deviated greatly from the average were excluded from the following analysis. The results of the simple linear regression revealed that a statistically significant regression equation was found, $F(1, 186) = 28.17, p < .001, R^2 = .132$. Therefore, there was a significant association between the servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors as observed by ADE and the self-reported need satisfaction of relatedness in ADE, $B = .259, t(186) = 5.31, p < .001$. Observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors explained a significant portion of the variance (13.2%) in self-reported relatedness need satisfaction in ADE. For every 1.0-point increase in observed servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors on the servant leadership scale (1-7 point Likert-scale), the self-reported relatedness need satisfaction of ADE was predicted to increase .259 points, based on the subscale (1-7 point Likert-scale) used to measure relatedness need satisfaction. This result indicated $H4$ was supported by the analysis, as higher ratings of servant leadership in athletic directors as reported by ADE were found to be positively associated with higher levels of self-reported relatedness need satisfaction in ADE.

Summary

Chapter 4 included descriptive statistics for the participants of the current study and described the results of the hypothesis testing connected to the four research questions. Servant leadership and job satisfaction were found to have a statistically significant positive relationship. Servant leadership was also found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with all three work-related basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness).

The current study concludes with Chapter 5, which includes an overview of the problem, a summary of the purpose statement and research questions, review of the methodology, and major findings. In addition to the study summary is information connecting this study to findings related to the literature. Chapter 5 and this study conclude with a discussion on implications for action, recommendations for future research and concluding remarks.

Chapter 5

Interpretation and Recommendations

Chapter 1 of this study focused on background information, a statement of the problem, purpose, and significance of the study, delimitations, assumptions, research questions, and a definition of terms along with a brief note on the organization of the study. Chapter 2 provided a summary of the literature relating to intercollegiate athletics, servant leadership, self-determination theory and work-related basic psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction. Chapter 3 introduced the methods used in the study and described the research design, selection of participants, measurement and data collection procedures, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and limitations of the study. Chapter 4 summarized the results of the hypothesis testing. Chapter 5 presents a review of the study, relates the findings to the literature, and offers concluding remarks.

Study Summary

Burton et al. (2017) stated the “evaluation of leadership as a necessary component to reform sport could be critical to fostering a more ethical climate and reducing the frequency and severity of ethical improprieties within this context” (p. 229). Leadership research in the administrative realm of intercollegiate athletics, especially concerning athletic department employees, remains limited. Servant leadership, which has an ethical component to its style, may improve the climate of intercollegiate athletics by building an organizational culture where athletic department employees’ work-related needs are being met at higher levels, leading to a higher level of overall job satisfaction.

Overview of the problem. In a study that examined the relationship between servant leadership and the perception of an ethical climate in intercollegiate athletic departments, Burton et al. (2017) wrote, “Organizational climates that foster unethical behavior among leaders, administrators, and coaches seem to be more the norm than the exception in sport organizations” (p. 229). While there have been numerous calls to not only examine unethical behavior in intercollegiate athletics, many efforts have been made to reform the industry through increased governance and enforcement with little success (Baxter et al., 1996; Dennie, 2015; Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009). As the industry continues to face increased scrutiny for ethical improprieties and scandal, Burton and Peachey (2013) recommended research on leadership in the organizational context of intercollegiate athletics, especially in the form of examining the existence and impact of servant leadership. Scholarship on servant leadership in intercollegiate athletics is scarce (Robinson et al., 2018) and much of the research that does exist that includes athletic directors is focused on the impact of the leadership style on coaches and student-athletes, and not on athletic department employees with an administrative role.

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a line of burgeoning research exploring basic human motivation (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017). One area of focus in SDT is the satisfaction of basic psychological needs in multiple contexts, including the workplace. There is extensive research exploring SDT and work-related basic psychological need satisfaction in the context of intercollegiate athletics, but much of that research focuses on the relationship between the coach and student-athlete. Peachey et al. (2018) produced the first research that examined the relationship between servant leadership and

need satisfaction in the context of sport development and peace organizations. No research has explored the relationship between servant leadership and need satisfaction in the context of intercollegiate athletics.

Job satisfaction research is extensive within the context of intercollegiate athletics but has mostly focused on coaches. No research in the context of intercollegiate athletics administration exists that has examined the relationship between servant leadership behaviors of athletic directors, basic work-related psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees. The current study contributed to better understanding the relationship between servant leadership behaviors in intercollegiate athletic directors, and work-related basic psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees within the Division I level of intercollegiate athletics.

Purpose statement and research questions. The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the overall job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. The second purpose was to examine the connections between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for autonomy in Division I athletic department employees. The third purpose was to explore the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for competence in Division I athletic department employees. The fourth purpose was to examine the relationship between the servant leadership characteristics of Division I

athletic directors and the basic work-related psychological need for relatedness in Division I athletic department employees.

Review of the methodology. The current study was guided by a cross-sectional, non-experimental, correlational, quantitative design. Five variables were measured including the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors, the self-reported athletic department employee work-related basic need satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and the overall self-reported job satisfaction of athletic department employees. The NCAA Online Directory was used to create an alphabetical list of the 353 Division I athletic programs. A random number generation produced a random integer for each institution, and another random number generation produced a set of 35 integers that ranged from 1 to 353 to select the participating institutions in the current study.

A list of administrative employees for each of the 35 selected institutions was created from Collegiate Directories' *The National Directory of College Athletics* to produce the random sample of 1,139 Division I athletic department employees. Athletic directors and faculty athletic representatives were excluded from the participant list. A survey was created using demographic questions and the combination of three open-source instruments that measured servant leadership, work-related basic psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction. An initial email and two reminder emails were sent to each participant, who responded via SurveyMonkey.

Major findings. Of the 1,139 participant emails sent, 231 athletic department employees responded to the survey for a 20.3% response rate. Participants were well distributed within the seven possible position titles from which they could choose. The

mean age of respondents was 38.6 years ($SD = 9.71$), and of the 228 participants who responded to gender, 62.3% were male and 36.4% female. Hypothesis testing was completed using simple linear regression, which revealed a statistically significant relationship between each of the variables measured in the research questions, and all four hypotheses were supported by the data analysis.

The results of this study suggest a statistically significant positive relationship between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the overall self-reported job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the self-reported autonomy work-related basic need satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. A statistically significant positive relationship was also found between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the self-reported competence and relatedness work-related basic need satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. In the current study, higher levels of servant leadership in Division I athletic directors were found to be positively associated with higher levels of self-reported overall job satisfaction, and self-reported basic psychological need satisfaction in Division I athletic department employees.

Findings Related to the Literature

The current study provided a foundational exploration of servant leadership in Division I athletics. Servant leadership was positively related to the job satisfaction of Division I athletic department employees. In addition, servant leadership was found to be positively associated with the work-related basic psychological need satisfaction of

autonomy, competence, and relatedness. To date, no study has examined the relationship between servant leadership, work-related basic psychological needs, and overall job satisfaction in Division I athletic department employees.

The finding of a positive relationship between servant leadership in athletic directors and overall self-reported job satisfaction in athletic department employees was consistent with previous findings by Johnson and Remedios (2016) in a dissertation using athletic department employees at the Division II level. The results of the current study were also in line with the work of Dodd, Achen, and Lumpkin (2018) and Burton, et al. (2017) who reported servant leadership is a predictor of the positive organizational outcome of working in an ethical climate in Division III and Division I athletic departments respectively. The positive relationship between servant leadership and each of the three dimensions of SDT (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in this study was consistent with the findings of Peachey and Burton (2017) who produced the first exploration connecting the theories in the context of sport organizations. The study suggested that servant leadership was positively associated with each of the three dimensions of SDT.

Conclusions

This study explored how servant leadership behaviors in Division I athletic directors are related to the individual outcomes of work-related basic psychological need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction in Division I athletic department employees. The results of the study have implications on the leadership style choice of intercollegiate athletic directors across the country, and not just at the Division I level. The study's results also laid a foundation for future research of servant leadership in intercollegiate

athletic directors and supervisors. Additionally, this study provided groundwork for further research of the basic work-related psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction of intercollegiate athletic department employees.

Implications for action. This study found a positive association between the servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors and the need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees. Intercollegiate athletic directors at all levels should be informed about the positive association between servant leadership in athletic directors and the need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees. Presentations and trainings about servant leadership behaviors should be made available through national conferences and the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA). The results of the study should also be made available to the NCAA for further investigation on leadership style best practices of athletic directors, and their impact on athletic department employees. Finally, further research should be conducted to gain a better understanding of the relationships between servant leadership, basic work-related psychological need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction especially in the context of sport organizations.

Recommendations for future research. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, several opportunities for future research exist to further the knowledge base of servant leadership, self-determination theory and job satisfaction in Division I athletics, and in intercollegiate athletics in general:

1. Explore the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction in intercollegiate athletics, especially with larger and more representative sample sizes. Much of the research that exists focuses on coaching relationships, and

further research is needed to examine the impact of servant leadership of athletic directors on administrative employees. Future research should include one of the three recommended instruments by Eva et al. (2018) to provide reliable and valid results. Those instruments include the Servant Leadership Scale – 7 (Liden et al., 2015) used in the current study, the Servant Leadership Behavior Scale – 6 (Sendjaya et al., 2018), and the Servant Leadership Survey (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

2. Investigate the impact of working in an ethical climate on the basic work-related psychological need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees in intercollegiate athletics. Research exists on the relationship between servant leadership and employee perceptions of working in an ethical climate, but could be further explored through the lens of servant leadership with work-related basic need satisfaction, and job satisfaction acting as mediators.

3. Explore the desire of athletic department employees to have servant leadership qualities displayed in their athletic director. This research might determine the demand for leaders who produce a positive organizational culture and an ethical work climate. This research could also begin to explore other mediating factors significantly affecting job satisfaction that are not leadership related (salary, benefits, working remotely, etc.). This knowledge could also add important literature to the field of compassion fatigue, if servant leadership scores are higher and athletic department employees desire for servant leaders is low.

The impact of that relationship and how it affects leaders who display servant leadership behaviors should be explored.

4. Explore the impact servant leadership behaviors have on creating more servant leaders in intercollegiate athletics through the lens of work-related basic need satisfaction.

5. Conduct a longitudinal study on servant leadership to determine the sustainability of the leadership style in an industry facing immense pressures to win at all costs.

Concluding remarks. Servant leadership has been described as a leadership style that can produce a variety of positive individual employee and organizational outcomes (Robinson et al., 2018). The current study explored the relationship between servant leadership and the individual outcomes of work-related basic psychological need satisfaction and overall job satisfaction. The study was exploratory in nature, as no other research in intercollegiate athletics has used self-determination theory to explain the relationship between an athletic department leaders' servant leadership style on overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

As further research is conducted on servant leadership, basic work-related need satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction, connections may also be made to ethical work climate, organizational trust and commitment, organizational identification, and organizational citizenship behavior. Results from these studies on these variables may provide further information on how servant leadership in athletic directors can reduce the amount of scandal and impropriety found in intercollegiate athletics.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics Survey

Section I

The section asks basic demographic questions that help to describe the types of respondents taking this survey. Please check the appropriate box or type your answer in the space provided.

1. Which of the following best represents you?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your age?
 - a. Open numerical response

3. Which of the following best describes your position within the athletic department?
 - a. Associate athletic director
 - b. Assistant athletic director
 - c. Director
 - d. Associate director
 - e. Assistant director
 - f. Graduate assistant

4. Since this study examines the leadership style of your current athletic director and your current job satisfaction, please tell us if your institution current has an athletic director.
 - a. Yes, my institution currently has an athletic director
 - b. No, my institution does not currently have an athletic director (prompts exit of survey)

Section II

This section asks questions about certain leadership characteristics in your current athletic director (AD). Please select the number on the scale that best represents your agreement to each of the following statements about your current AD. 1 = Strongly disagree 7 = Strongly agree

5. My leader can tell if something work-relates is going wrong
6. My leader makes my career development a priority
7. I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem
8. My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community
9. My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own
10. My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way I feel is best
11. My leader would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success

Section III

This section asks questions about the satisfaction you have with various aspects of your work. Please mark the number that best represents your satisfaction level with the aspect of your work described in each question. 1 = Very dissatisfied 7 = Very satisfied

12. The degree of freedom I have to do my job the way I think it can be done best.
13. The opportunities to take personal initiatives in my work.
14. The level of autonomy I have in my job.
15. The opportunities to exercise my own judgment and my own actions.
16. The feeling of being competent at doing my job.
17. The level of mastery I can achieve at my task.

18. The level of confidence about my ability to execute my job properly.
19. The sense that I can accomplish the most difficult tasks.
20. The positive social interactions I have at work with other people.
21. The feeling of being part of a group at work.
22. The close friends I have at work.
23. The opportunities to talk with people about things that really matter to me.

Section IV

This section asks questions about your current overall job satisfaction. Please mark the number that best represents your agreement level with the following statements about your current overall job satisfaction. 1 = Very dissatisfied 7 = Very satisfied

24. In general, I like working here
25. In general, I don't like my job (reverse-coded)
26. All things considered, I feel pretty good about this job

Appendix B: Servant Leadership Scale – 7

**Servant Leadership Scale-7**

Version Attached: Full Test

PsycTESTS Citation:

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Meuser, J. D., Hu, J., Wu, J., & Liao, C. (2015). Servant Leadership Scale-7 [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t41818-000>

Instrument Type:
Rating Scale

Test Format:
Responses for the 7 items use a 7-point "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" response scale.

Source:

Liden, Robert C., Wayne, Sandy J., Meuser, Jeremy D., Hu, Jia, Wu, Junfeng, & Liao, Chenwei. (2015). Servant leadership: Validation of a short form of the SL-28. *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol 26(2), 254-269. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.12.002, © 2015 by Elsevier. Reproduced by Permission of Elsevier.

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doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t41818-000>

Servant Leadership Scale-7

SL-7

Item Number

SL-28 SL-7

9	1	My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.
17	2	My leader makes my career development a priority.
1	3	I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.
5	4	My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.
22	5	My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
15	6	My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
27	7	My leader would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

Appendix C: Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale – Adapted

**Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale--Adapted**

Version Attached: Full Test

PsycTESTS Citation:

Chiniara, M., & Bentein, K. (2016). Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale--Adapted [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t60296-000>

Instrument Type:

Inventory/Questionnaire

Test Format:

This instrument comprises 12 items organized among three subscales. The items utilize a five-point Likert-type response scale with the following options: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.

Source:

Chiniara, Myriam, & Bentein, Kathleen. (2016). Linking servant leadership to individual performance: Differentiating the mediating role of autonomy, competence and relatedness need satisfaction. *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol 27(1), 124-141. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.08.004, © 2016 by Elsevier. Reproduced by Permission of Elsevier.

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doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t60296-000>

**Work-Related Basic Need Satisfaction Scale--Adapted
W-BNS**

Items

In your current job, how satisfied are you with the following aspect of your work?

Autonomy Need Satisfaction

1. The degree of freedom I have to do my job the way I think it can be done best.
2. The opportunities to take personal initiatives in my work.
3. The level of autonomy I have in my job.
4. The opportunities to exercise my own judgment and my own actions.

Competence Need Satisfaction

5. The feeling of being competent at doing my job.
6. The level of mastery I can achieve at my task.
7. The level of confidence about my ability to execute my job properly.
8. The sense that I can accomplish the most difficult tasks.

Relatedness Need Satisfaction

9. The positive social interactions I have at work with other people.
10. The feeling of being part of a group at work.
11. The close friends I have at work.
12. The opportunities to talk with people about things that really matter to me.

Note. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale of satisfaction (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5=very satisfied)

Appendix D: Job Satisfaction Scale



Job Satisfaction Scale
Version Attached: Full Test

PsycTESTS Citation:

Messersmith, J. G., Patel, P. C., Lepak, D. P., & Gould-Williams, J. S. (2011). Job Satisfaction Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t08267-000>

Instrument Type:

Rating Scale

Test Format:

Items use a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

Source:

Messersmith, Jake G., Patel, Pankaj C., Lepak, David P., & Gould-Williams, Julian S. (2011). Unlocking the black box: Exploring the link between high-performance work systems and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol 96(6), 1105-1118. doi: 10.1037/a0024710

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doi: 10.1037/t08267-000

Job Satisfaction Scale

Items

- (a) In general, I like working here.
- (b) In general, I don't like my job. (reverse coded)
- (c) All things considered, I feel pretty good about this job.

Note. Items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

Appendix E: Baker University IRB Request Form



IRB Request

Date 3/13/19

IRB Protocol Number _____
(IRB use only)

I. Research Investigator(s) (students must list faculty sponsor)

Department(s) Higher Education (Ed.D.)

Name	Signature	
1. <u>Mike Ross</u>	<u>Mike Ross</u> <small>Digitally signed by Mike Ross Date: 2019.03.15 11:55:40 -0500</small>	Principal Investigator
2. <u>Dr. Sue Darby</u>	<u>Suzanna Darby</u> <small>Digitally signed by Suzanna Darby Date: 2019.03.15 10:28:52 -0500</small>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check if faculty sponsor
3. <u>Dr. Li Chen-Bouck</u>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if faculty sponsor
4. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if faculty sponsor

Principal investigator contact information

Phone

316-734-6309

Email

richardmross@stu.bakeru.edu

Address

P.O. Box 10

312 S. Oak St.

Whitewater, KS 67154

Note: When submitting your finalized, signed form to the IRB, please ensure that you cc all investigators and faculty sponsors using their official Baker University (or respective organization's) email addresses.

Faculty sponsor contact information

Phone

Email

suzanna.darby@bakeru.edu

Expected Category of Review: Exempt Expedited Full Renewal

II. Protocol Title

The Relationship Between Servant Leadership of Division I Athletic Directors, Basic Work-Related

Psychological Needs, and Overall Job Satisfaction of Division I Athletic Department Employees

III. Summary:

The following questions must be answered. Be specific about exactly what participants will experience and about the protections that have been included to safeguard participants from harm.

A. In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

The purpose of this study was to examine the association of observed servant leadership behaviors of Division I athletic directors, and the basic psychological needs and overall job satisfaction of athletic department employees.

B. Briefly describe each condition, manipulation, or archival data set to be included within the study.

An online survey will be emailed to approximately 1,150 randomly selected employees in Division I athletic departments across the United States. Subjects will be asked to answer questions about behaviors they observe in their institution's athletic director, and also their own observations on current overall job satisfaction and the satisfaction levels of their work-related basic psychological needs. Subjects will also answer three demographic questions and they will self-report their own gender, age, and position they hold within the athletic department.

IV. Protocol Details

A. What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.

Participants will evaluate the observed servant leadership behaviors of the athletic director at their institution. Participants will also self-report the level to which their basic psychological work-related needs are being satisfied, as well as a self-report to their overall job satisfaction in their current position. Participants will also answer three demographically-related questions, including gender, age, and type of position they hold in the organization. See Appendix A for the full survey.

B. Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical, or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

Subjects will not encounter psychological, social, physical or legal risk. Participants will not be identified by name or institution so only the researcher will know the actual names of people who are invited to participate in the research, but will have no way to identify respondents.

C. Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

Subjects will not be stressed in any way.

D. Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

The subjects will not be misled in any way.

E. Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

Evaluations of the servant leadership of their athletic director could be considered personal and/or sensitive. Some participants may consider the reporting of their psychological needs satisfaction and overall job satisfaction to be personal in nature. Research methods will ensure anonymity of subjects and any answers they may deem personal or sensitive.

F. Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

Subjects will not be exposed to any materials which might be considered offensive, threatening, or degrading.

G. Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

It is estimated that the survey can be completed in about 10 minutes.

H. Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

The subjects in this study will be a randomly selected group of approximately 1,150 athletic department employees at 35 randomly selected Division I institutions. They will be solicited to participate via email. The solicitation script can be found in Appendix B.

I. What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

Subjects may only respond if they have signed informed consent, which states that their participation is voluntary and they may withdraw their participation at any time without penalty. No inducements will be offered.

J. How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Upon clicking the link to participate in the survey, subjects will land on an informed consent page that requires them to accept the terms of participation in the study. The language for the consent form can be found in Appendix C.

K. Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

No identifying data will be collected, so no permanent record tied to the subject will exist. The list of solicited subjects will be deleted following the final reminder email to invite them to participate.

L. Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer? If so, explain.

Since no identifying data will be collected from subjects, it will be impossible to prove that any one subject participated in the study.

M. What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data? Where will it be stored? How long will it be stored? What will be done with the data after the study is completed?

Data will be stored in its original format on a password-protect survey collection vehicle (SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, etc.) and any downloaded spreadsheets of data from those sources will be stored in a password-protected Google Drive. Data will be stored up to five years after the completion of the dissertation process and then deleted.

N. If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

There are no expected risks involved with this study.

O. Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

No archival data will be used.

Appendix F: Baker University IRB Approval



Baker University Institutional Review Board

March 26th, 2019

Dear Richard Ross and Sue Darby,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your project application and approved this project under Expedited Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.
3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.
4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.
5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.

Please inform this Committee or myself when this project is terminated or completed. As noted above, you must also provide IRB with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If you have any questions, please contact me at npoell@bakeru.edu or 785.594.4582.

Sincerely,

Nathan Poell, MA
Chair, Baker University IRB

Baker University IRB Committee
Scott Crenshaw
Jamin Perry, PhD
Susan Rogers, PhD
Joe Watson, PhD

Appendix G: Informed Consent Agreement

Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics

Welcome!

Thank you for considering participation in our survey. Please read the following consent information below, and if you agree click yes to advance to the survey questions.

Purpose: You are invited to participate in a research study of leadership behaviors of athletic directors and the level of your job satisfaction and the satisfaction of your basic psychological needs in your workplace. This study will examine the relationships between the leadership behaviors you report of your athletic director and your overall job and psychological needs satisfaction.

Participant Selection: You and other members of your athletic department were selected as a potential participant in this study by a random draw of 353 Division I institutions. Approximately 1,150 participants were invited to join this study from 35 randomly selected Division I athletic programs.

Explanation of Procedures: If you decide to participate you will answer 25 questions divided into four sections. Section I includes questions about your gender, age, and position within the athletic department. Section II includes seven questions about the observed servant leadership behaviors of your current athletic director. Section III includes 12 questions about the satisfaction levels of certain aspects of your current position. Section IV includes three questions about your overall job satisfaction. It is expected that the survey will take you 5-10 minutes to complete.

Discomfort/Risks: There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable with a question, you may skip it, and you may exit the survey at any time.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you as a participant in the study. This study may help athletic department leaders understand employee perceptions of job satisfaction and work-related basic psychological needs satisfaction to gain better insight into how servant leadership might improve both.

Confidentiality: Any feedback you provide in the survey will be kept confidential. Your data will remain anonymous, which means neither your name nor the name of your institution will be linked to the data you provide. The information on the 35 institutions selected to participate will be kept confidential and will not appear in any publication. Following completion of the project, that list, and all other data related to the project will be deleted.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Right to Withdraw: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty or notice to the researcher(s). You can withdraw by closing the survey at any point prior to clicking the button 'Submit my Survey' at the end.

Compensation: You will receive no compensation for participating in this study.

For questions regarding this study, please contact:

Principal Investigator:

Mike Ross

Ed.D., candidate at Baker University

richardmross@stu.bakeru.edu

* I have read the above statement and consent to participating in this survey

Yes

No

Appendix H: Invitation Email Sent to Participants

From: "Ross, Mike" <Mike.Ross@wichita.edu>
Date: Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 1:34 PM
Subject: Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics Survey

Greetings,

My name is Mike Ross and I am former intercollegiate athletics professional and now an Assistant Professor of Sport Management at Wichita State and a doctoral student at Baker University located in Baldwin City, Kansas. I am currently working on my dissertation titled The Relationship Between Servant Leadership of Division I Athletic Directors, and Basic Work-Related Needs Satisfaction and Overall Job Satisfaction of Division I Athletic Department Employees. There is little research into the connections of leadership, job satisfaction and the satisfaction levels of employees' work-related psychological needs in the context of Division I athletic departments where administrative employees are surveyed.

The study can be completed online via SurveyMonkey, a password-protected data collection service that keeps your response completely anonymous to me and anyone else. No personal or institutional identifying data will be collected.

This study will include an analysis of the responses received by yourself, and approximately 1,150 other participants randomly selected from one of 35 Division I institutions using a random number generator to assign numbers to each of the 353 Division I institutions and another random generation to select participating institutions. You received this email because your name and this email were included on the selected institution's administrative staff listing in The National Directory of College Athletics, published in 2019 by Collegiate Directories.

Upon conclusion of the dissertation, data stored from participants will be deleted. Participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your participation at any time by closing or exiting the survey prior to the "Submit Your Response" at the end.

Should you choose to participate, the study should take you approximately 5 minutes to complete. The Baker University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this study. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at this email address or at richardmross@stu.bakeru.edu. Thank you for your consideration, and best wishes as you wrap up your spring 2019 seasons!

[Link to Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics Survey](#)

Sincerely,
Mike Ross
Baker University EdD candidate/
Assistant Professor – Wichita State University

Mike Ross

**Department of Sport Management
Wichita State University**

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