Coach Gender and Coaching Style Preferences of NAIA Female Student-Athletes

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Abstract

There is little research on female-only college athlete preference of coaching gender and coaching style. This lack of research is especially true of female small college athletes. This study surveyed athletes from 12 NAIA colleges located in the Midwest. The *Revised Leadership Survey for Sports* was emailed to the female student athletes enrolled in participating colleges and universities. Survey responses were completed by 188 athletes. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA were used to analyze the results.

The results of the ANOVA revealed no significant differences in preference for coaching style when broken down by type of team or level of educational classification. There also was no statistical significant difference in coach gender preference when broken down by type of team, educational classification, or sport classification. Among the six coaching styles, teaching and instruction and situational consideration were most frequently preferred. Autocratic style was the least frequently preferred.

The major understanding gained from this study is that female college athletes are open to a variety of leadership styles. However, supportive coaching behaviors are the most desired styles. Female athletes do not want to be in charge nor do they want to be dictated to. Female athletes want a coach to teach them, to lead them, and to support them.

Dedication

There are several people and groups of people who have supplied a great deal of influence in my life that has led to the completion of this paper and journey on which I embarked five long years ago.

This paper is first dedicated to all of the female athletes and students with whom I have worked. My experiences with you were a continual learning experience and played a massive role in the selection of this topic. To the Mercy High School Softball team of 1981, the Benedictine College Softball teams of 1987-1991, the Atchison Middle School Track and Field female athletes of 1995-2000, the Atchison Catholic Elementary School Track and Field female athletes of 2003-2007, thank you for allowing me to be your coach and to learn from you. To the female athletes who attended my summer camps and personal training sessions, I thank you. You all had a great influence on me and shaped me as a coach and person.

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Jessica and Jordan, my beautiful and intelligent daughters, this is for you, too. Thank you for letting me be your father and to coach you as well. I was constantly vigilant to make sure the world gave you a fair shake, but you gave me a unique perspective with which to work. You helped me see experiences through a young woman's eyes! I hope to make you proud of me. I am proud and love you.

Jennifer, my rock and role model, this dissertation is a result of your example in life. This should have been said to you many years ago, but I constantly look to you as a

guide on how to live. I have learned more about words like, commitment, dedication, perseverance, and excellence from you than anyone else. You personify those values. When I considered quitting or giving up, I thought of you and your response to similar situations and realized that you would only work harder. Your support and your example were and continue to be invaluable. I love you.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter One

Introduction

Success in all athletics regardless of age, gender, or type of sport is often contingent upon the congruency of coaching style and preference of style of the team or individual. Jackson (2002) found that high school baseball players in small, central Missouri high schools expressed more satisfaction when the head coach utilized a coaching style compatible with the players' preferences. This phenomenon does not vary with venue or gender as Cheung and Halpern (2010) found in a study of successful leadership characteristics. Coaches who could work with the athletes within preferred coaching styles had a consistent link to winning records. This is true even at the highest level of competition in intercollegiate sport. When the preferred coaching behaviors are congruent with the athletes' preferences, win-loss success is positive (Jacob, 2006). This phenomenon is enhanced because athlete self-confidence and coach-athlete compatibility is increased thereby resulting in a reduction of negative perceptions (Kenow & Williams, 1999).

Henson (2010) surveyed National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I female student-athletes in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) regarding their coaching style preference and coach gender preference. This study is a replication of Henson's (2010) study. Henson (2010) investigated the coaching style preference of NCAA female athletes attending Southeast Conference (SEC) large universities. Henson's study had fewer respondents and fewer universities than the current study. The current study included National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) female student-athletes from twelve small colleges in the Midwest. These NAIA colleges are

from the Heart of America Athletic Conference (HAAC), the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), and the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC).

Background

Nationwide, the ratio of female coaches in charge of female athletic teams at the college level has been steadily dwindling (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Investigation of the lack of female coaches should be conducted. The coaching style of these female coaches should match the coaching style preferences of the female college athletes. The female college athletes' gender preference of coach should be evaluated. These preferences need to be attended to so that the collegiate athletic experience can be a satisfying one for the female athlete.

A struggle for athletic coaches through the years has been motivation of their athletes. The coach should know what style of leadership works best for a team. The coach should consider the type of sport and whether a different style of leadership is required. Individual and team sports may require different coaching styles. The coach should consider the gender of athletes on the team and whether gender difference requires a modification of coaching style (Martin, Dale, & Jackson, 2001; McClain, 2005).

The research on leadership style and gender preference is limited and is certainly not equal with the incredible growth of sport, especially at levels of play below NCAA I and with female athletes (Beam, 2001; Drago et al. 2005; Riemer & Chelladurai, 1995; Wilson, 2007). With the pressure to win becoming prevalent in all sports with both genders, it is critical to expand the research on female preference in coach gender and coaching style preference. Athletic stakeholders can better evaluate coaching issues such as hiring and firing or funding a program based on coach win-loss performance,

compatibility with the school's mission and vision, or relationship with the athletes. Some research has indicated that compatibility of coaching style and athlete preference is critical to success (Eguaoje, 2007; Lee, Magnusen, & Cho, 2013; Romayne, 2004; Wildman, 2006).

This study involved female college athletes attending member schools of three Midwestern NAIA conferences. These conferences were the Heart of America (HAAC), the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), and the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC). These conferences were selected because of the researcher's familiarity with the conferences and members and because very little study if any had been conducted with a female-only population attending NAIA member institutions.

Statement of the Problem

There is little research concerning coach gender and coaching style preference conducted with female-only populations attending colleges affiliated with the NAIA. The need exists to investigate female college athletes and their preferences of coach gender and coaching style preferences at the small collegiate level. Perhaps this might encourage more congruent matches of athlete to coach. Other studies conducted before and after Henson (2010) have focused on NCAA female athletes and primarily those attending NCAA I institutions (Chappell, 2012; Eguaoje, 2007; Ford, 2001; Giddings, 2009; Griffin, 2009; Haselwood et al., 2005; Johnson, 2010; Lough, 2001). NAIA, small college female athletes, particularly from the Midwest, represents an area that has not been studied. No research focusing on preferences for coach gender and style among NAIA female student athletes has been found.

The coach has an obligation to understand the preferred gender and coaching style behaviors of the female athlete and female athletic team in order to achieve high levels of cooperation and optimal performance from the college female athletes. These personality traits and reasons for motivation may vary at different levels of competition. An understanding of the college female athlete's preferences in coaching style can be crucial for a coach to effectively execute the roles of motivator and leader, especially with a group of individuals with many personalities (Griffin, 2009; Lough, 2001).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate small college NAIA female athletes' preference in gender of coach and preference in coaching style. The impact of female athlete participation in team (soccer, volleyball, softball, lacrosse, basketball, and cheer) or individual (tennis, cross country, track and field, golf, swimming, and bowling) athletics, as well as athletes' academic level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student), on coach gender and coaching style was investigated. There were a limited number of studies focusing on NAIA female college athletes.

Significance of the Study

Possession of information regarding the preferences of coaching style of a team comprised of female athletes or that of an individual female athlete can enable the coach to develop a team or individual culture of success. Beam (2001) and Henson (2010) suggested that an athletic director or administrator who has access to this information can more effectively screen coaching candidates. This study focused on athletic competition at the collegiate division or level. Existing studies have reported inconsistent findings or lack of statistical significance involving coach gender preference or coaching style

preference by female college athletes (Beam, 2001; Boyes, 2007; Chappell, 2012; Childs, 2010; Giddings, 2009; Greenawalt, 2012; Henson, 2010; Johnson, 2010; Lough, 2001; McGarity, 2009; Reimer & Toon, 2001; Turner, 2012; Windsor, 2005).

Delimitations

The scope of the study was narrowed by the use of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sports (RLSS) which is based on the Motivational Model of Leadership Sca;e (MMLS). In addition, the sample was drawn from three Midwestern NAIA level athletic conferences and involved only female student-athletes who were full-time students during 2015-2016. The eligible female student-athletes volunteered to participate in the study. The survey was open from July 14, 2015 to August 28, 2015. The participating schools were found in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. The female college athletes were members of varsity sports teams.

Assumptions

The researcher assumed that each question presented by the RLSS was understood by the athlete and that each athlete answered every question with accuracy. The researcher also assumed that each participating institution forwarded the survey to every female athlete.

The researcher assumed that the results of this study were generalizable only to NAIA female athletes due to external validity. External validity is the extent to which the study is generalizable to the population (Creswell, 2009). Validity was established because the researcher used a survey that has been utilized successfully in several previous studies (Burdette, 2008; Jacob, 2006; Henson, 2010). Validity was assumed by the design of the measurement scales.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1. What are the coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.a. What are the autocratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.b. What are the democratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.c. What are the social support coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.d. What are the positive feedback coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.e. What are the situational consideration coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.f. What are the teacher and instruction coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ2. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles among educational classifications (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student)?

RQ2.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of autocratic coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of democratic coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of social support coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of positive feedback coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of situational consideration coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of teaching and instruction coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of autocratic coaching styles between team and individual sports? RQ3.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of democratic coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of social support coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of positive feedback coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of situational consideration coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of teaching and instruction coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preference of gender of coach?

Definition of Terms

The following are terms that are common to athletics, athletic organizations, athletic administration, and Title IX. Also included are terms that are used to describe coaching behaviors and behaviors that affect hiring practices within the coaching field.

Autocratic behavior. "Autocratic behavior is defined as the coaching behaviors aimed at making decisions independently and stressing personal authority" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Democratic behavior. *"*Democratic behavior is defined as the coaching behaviors aimed at allowing the athlete to have input in practice and game strategies" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Division I. A Division I university must sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven sports for women, with two team sports for each gender (NCAA, 2014).

Homologous reproduction. *"*Homologous reproduction is the process by which the person in the dominating position hires others who had similar characteristics" (Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005).

NAIA. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, is the governing body of small athletic programs which offer scholarships that are dedicated to character-driven intercollegiate athletics (NAIA, 2014).

NCAA. The National Collegiate Athletic Association is a membership-driven organization dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of student-athletes and equipping them with the skills to succeed on the playing field, in the classroom, and throughout life (NCAA, 2014)

Positive feedback behavior. *"*Positive feedback behavior is defined as coaching behaviors aimed at reinforcing the athlete with reward and encouragement after an error" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Situational consideration. *"*Situational consideration is defined as coaching behaviors aimed at considering situational factors such as skill level and health conditions and adapting coaching methods for varying maturity levels" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Social support behavior. "Social support behavior is defined as coaching behaviors aimed at establishing a friendship with athletes as well as helping athletes with problems outside of sport" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Title IX. Title IX is the 1972 amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 that prohibited discrimination against women in sports. It stated, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (Rhoads, 2004; p 87).

Training and instruction behavior. "Training and instruction behavior is defined as coaching behavior aimed at improving the athlete's performance by training and instructing the athlete in skills and techniques" (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Overview of the Methodology

For the current study involving NAIA college female athletes, the RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann et al., 1997) (See Appendix A) was used to measure differences in athletes' preferences in gender and coaching style of the coach. College female athletes from three Midwestern small college (NAIA) conferences were invited to participate in the study. The conferences were the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), the Heart of America Athletic Conference (HAAC), and the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC). Within these conferences, the number of sports available for female athletes varies. Approximately 10 to 14 sports are available for female athletes depending on the conference and individual college as investigated by the researcher using conference websites and individual college websites. The Revised Leadership Scale for Sports (RLSS-Athlete Preference Version) (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) was used to collect

data. The athlete preference version was used for this study as athletes were the focus of the study. The survey was available to the participants online using a web-based survey provider.

Organization of the Study

Chapter one addressed the need for the current study. Research concerning coach gender preference and coaching style preference was detailed in chapter one as well. The different coaching styles as described by the MMLS (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) were listed and explained. The framework for this study utilized the MML which purports that if a coach's leadership style is congruent with an athlete's or a team's preferred style performance is enhanced and satisfaction is high (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980).

A review of the literature follows in Chapter two. Covered in chapter two are leadership theories utilized in sports, the MMLS, the RLSS, issues with Title IX, the decline in percentage of female coaches in sports, preferred coaching styles among athletes, preferred gender of coach by female athletes, and Henson's (2010) study of female athletes' coaching style preference and coach gender preference within the NCAA I Southeastern Athletic Conference.

Chapter three provides the methodology of the study including research design, population and sampling procedures, instrumentation utilized, data analysis, and ethical assurances. Chapter four summarizes the descriptive statistics of the study and results of data analyses. Chapter five presents the interpretation and recommendations of the study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

This quantitative study was designed to examine female college athletes' preferences of coach gender and coaching style. The differences in preferences were examined by type of sport (team or individual) and the academic classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student) of the female athlete. The literature review describes current leadership models in sport, athlete satisfaction, the state of women's athletics immediately prior to 1972 and the passage of Title IX and the explosive growth that followed, athlete's preferred leadership style and coach gender, and a review of Henson's (2010) study of NCAA I female athletes.

Theoretical Framework

Research in education and business has shown a strong correlation between leadership and success for academic and business performance (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Marzano & Waters, 2009). Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) theorized that athletic teams could be viewed as a formal organization similar to educational and business institutions. The Multidimensional Model of Leadership in Sports (MMLS) was developed as a possible vehicle for the examination of coaching behavior perceptions and preferences (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978).

The MMLS initiates the theoretical framework for the current study (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978). Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) proposed that if congruency existed between the leadership style of the coach and the preferred leadership style of the athlete that individual and group performance would be enhanced in a positive fashion. Satisfaction in the group or individual would be positive as well.

Chelladurai and Saleh's (1978) MMSL has been used in many studies to categorize coaching styles and athlete's preferences. Most of the studies involving this model were of both genders or with male-only sports teams. Studies of female-only groups were conducted but at higher levels of play (Hightower, 2000; Boyes, 2007; Giddings, 2009; Henson, 2010). The MMLS was enhanced by adding an additional leadership style to develop the Revised Leadership Scale for Sports (RLSS) which has often been used as a method to assess the athletes' preferences for coaching styles (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). One level of collegiate athletic competition that has not been assessed is the area of female collegiate athletes' coach gender preference and coaching style preference at the NAIA level of athletics. An addition to the available research including information on small college female athletes using the MML for reference and the RLSS for preference could be valuable.

This RLSS has been used in several studies most recently in a study of NCAA Division I female athletes (Henson, 2010). Chelladurai and Saleh (1980), with the development of the LSS, determined that coaches predominantly utilized one of the leadership styles while leading their team. Chelladurai and Saleh (1980) lacked one of those leadership styles listed; they did not list positive feedback behavior. Positive feedback behavior was added to the RLSS by Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997). Chelladurai and Saleh (1980) believed that a coach must utilize the team or individual's preferred coaching style to be most effective and successful.

Autocratic behavior is utilized by the coach who wants near total control of all decision-making for his team or sport. The coach expects obedience from the athletes so that the coach can manipulate and control all aspects of the program. A common term

used to describe a coach who utilizes autocratic behavior as the primary leadership style is power-hungry.

A near opposite style to autocratic behavior is democratic behavior. A coach who favors the democratic style would involve the team or individual in decisions concerning the program or sport. The athletes in such a situation would have more control over the direction of the program.

Positive feedback behavior is another leadership style a coach may utilize. This behavior is characterized by an evaluation of the athlete's performance and contributions to the team's performance by the coach. The coach focuses on those aspects of the performance that contribute to success of the individual or team.

Situational consideration requires the coach to be sensitive to the total environment surrounding the athlete or the team. The coach will attempt to remove obstacles from the positive performance of the athlete or team. If the coach cannot totally remove the obstacle, the hindrance caused will be considered by the coach and its potential impact on performance.

The stress that is placed on an athlete can be managed by the coach. This is called social support behavior. The coach expresses understanding and may attempt to help the individual or team deal with outside pressures. This could be academic in nature or involve social or family problems. The coach expresses understanding how these outside forces can impact on the athlete or team and offers support to rectify the situation.

Lastly, the sixth behavior is teaching and instruction. This is a behavior that deals totally with athlete or team performance. The coach evaluates and critiques the

performance. Correct technique is recognized. Incorrect technique is identified and attempts are made to improve the performance.

The RLSS was developed from a significant sampling of athletes and coaches by Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997). The sample was created by 18 head coaches from all three levels of the NCAA and 696 intercollegiate athletes from those teams. The athletes included 439 males and 257 females of different sports, individual and team. Three linguistic experts and seventeen theorists in sports leadership were consulted in the development of the RLSS.

Henson (2010) used the RLSS in a study of female college athletes in the NCAA Division I Southeast Conference. Aumand (2005) utilized the RLSS in a study of comparison of team sport athlete preferences in contrast to individual sport athlete preferences. Tucker (2008) used the RLSS in studies of burnout in athletes.

Other leadership theories, such as the Path-Goal theory of Robert House (House, 1971), have been discussed as possible solutions to effective leadership both in sport and other arenas. Most, however, have not addressed approaching a leadership position as congruent with the preferred style of the athletes or employees.

Not all models of leadership address what would often be called ‘fair’ by all employees or athletes. Some models or theories address what many would call ‘playing favorites’. These theories state that the coach or leader works more with certain groups. This would present the image of favoritism. The coach would see this as allowing the ‘favorites’ to become leaders themselves and to take roles in educating others (Case, 1998). Case (1998) developed such a theory.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory and Sport

Robert Case (1998) theorized that the Leader-Member Exchange Theory of the business world had value and could be implemented in sport. This theory suggested that the leader of an institution deals with two groups of members. One group is designated as the ‘in’ group. This is the group with which the leader works the most. The other group is designated as the “out” group. The leader spends much less time working with the ‘out’ group. In a sport setting, the ‘in’ group often are the starters of teams who participate in games at a significant level. The ‘out’ group would be those athletes who participate on a less frequent level (Case, 1998).

A concept presented by this theory is that team cohesiveness and individual investment in the group is enhanced when the coach or leader entrusts the ‘in’ group with educating or instructing the ‘out’ group with team or individual information. The ‘out’ group then also develops a deeper level of involvement because the ‘in’ group has a greater interest in their performance (Case, 1998).

Similar models exist that are like the leader-member exchange theory. These types of leadership theories state that rather than depending on the athletes’ or employees’ skills, the leader or coach develops leadership style based on the coach’s skill set.

The Motivational Model of the Coach-Athlete Relationship. The Motivational Model of the Coach-Athlete Relationship (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003) is an athletic-based leadership theory. Three factors influence how a coach might utilize autonomy-supportive behaviors with his team. Some of the factors might include (a) the coach’s attitude toward the profession, (b) the environment in which the coaching takes place,

which can include the amount of pressure there is present to win and the various levels of competition, and (c) the coach's understanding of the team's behaviors and motivation, including the athletes' abilities, the athletes' personalities, and the overall climate of the team (Horn, Bloom, Packard, & Berglund, 2011: Smoll & Smith, 1989).

Mageau and Vallerand (2003) maintained that athletes hold three perceptions that will determine their level of motivation to succeed in a sport. The three perceptions held by the athletes are competence of participation, autonomy to practice their sport, and relatedness. Mageau and Vallerand (2003) further maintained that the coach must use supportive leadership behaviors to foster this perception of autonomy in the athletes so that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is cultivated. The primary methods to develop this support of autonomy might include providing a structured setting of standards and protocols and showing care for athletes not only in the sporting setting but in academics and social settings as well (Horn, Bloom, Packard, & Berglund, 2011).

Leadership in Athletics

Northouse (2003) considered leadership as a situation in which one person can influence others to pursue and achieve a common goal. He further explained that leadership cannot exist without this influence. Others have supported this concept. Chelladurai and Saleh (1980) described leadership as being an interpersonal dynamic. Leadership was not to be undertaken as a solo endeavor. Leadership relied upon an interaction between a coach or supervisor and the team.

A coach whose leadership style or behavior is not congruent with the athlete or team's preferred style can be disruptive and have a negative impact on performance or climate of the team (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2011). Leadership matters and has a

direct influence on performance. Congruency of coaching style and coaching style preference results in improved performance (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2011).

A coach must take into account his or her own personality. The challenge is to blend that personality with the variety of types that make up the personality of the team. The coach must be comfortable with the leadership style that is employed and still be an effective motivator (Amorose & Horn, 2000; Kipp & Amorose, 2008; McGarrity, 2009; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002). Coaches may mistakenly perceive their leadership style as congruent with the preferences of the athletes (Lee, Magnusen, & Cho, 2013). The better practice for the coach is to become aware of the most preferred leadership style and attempt to adopt many of the behaviors needed (Lee, Magnusen, & Cho, 2013).

A successful coach must have sound communication skills (Boyes, 2007; Hoffman, 2008; Parker et al, 2012; Rhind & Jowett, 2009). Gearity (2012) stated that it is good to know and avoid poor coaching and communication skills such as not individualizing the message, not individualizing instruction, and not passing on useful knowledge of the sport. Manley et al. (2008) reported that non-verbal communication is important as well. Dynamic cues (what a skill looks like) and facial expressions are important for a successful coach and team unity as well (Gearity, 2012).

Coaches have additional roles to fill beside the ability to communicate athletic techniques and information to the athletes. An effective coach must also fulfill roles within the interscholastic and intercollegiate environment that are not traditionally considered coaching roles. The head coach may also serve as an academic advisor, an academic instructor, a surrogate parent, or social counselor (Johnson, 2010; Martin, Dale, & Jackson, 2001). The coach needs to be a strong role model for male and female athletes

and must be willing to discuss problems, share experiences, advise, and offer requested support to athletes when needed (Jambor & Zhang, 1997; Johnson, 2010; Moody, 2001).

It is within these requirements of a coach that some differences appear between male coaches and female coaches and the style of leadership utilized. Female coaches have been found to be more open than male coaches. The female coaches have been found to be more likely to share personal experiences and information than their male counterparts (Barnes, 2003; Eguaoje, 2007; Ford, 2001; Haselwood et al., 2005; Moody, 2001). Male coaches have been found to have a much more direct form of communication with their athletes than female coaches and have been found to be more reluctant to communicate personal information (Knoppers, 1989; Parker et al., 2012).

When leadership behaviors or styles are congruent with the athlete's preference, performance and satisfaction are enhanced (Andrew, 2004; Reike, Hammermeister, & Chase, 2008; Stein, Bloom, & Sabiston, 2012). This congruence results in positive behaviors exhibited by the athletes which in turn create increased satisfaction and cohesion. Gearity (2012) identified behaviors that would break down this cohesion. Gearity (2012) determined that coaches who did not recognize the individual, did not display knowledge of the sport, or was not able to or chose not to instruct the team would create an atmosphere which was destructive. The least desired leadership behavior was determined to be an autocratic style combined with verbal aggression (Turner, 2015).

Athlete Satisfaction

Coaches use several varied coaching behaviors or leadership techniques. Some of these behaviors or styles may not be preferred by an individual or athlete or by a group of athletes on a team. This may adversely affect motivation and team unity may become low

(Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, & Weber, 2009). Perception of the coach's ability can be affected (Kenow & Williams, 1999; Gearity, 2012), or athletes can suffer from burnout and decreased performance (Altahayneh, 2003). These adverse effects may cause athletes to quit the team (McClain, 2005; Wilson, 2008).

Most collegiate level athletes participated in interscholastic and youth athletics before engaging in collegiate pursuits. McGee, Strasser, Mckenzie, and Stoll (2013) found that experiences with head coaches of sports at the high school level can have an effect on perceived experiences at the college level. Parker (2012), in a study of youth soccer coaching behavior preferences found similar results. High school- and middle school-aged female athletes originally engage in interscholastic athletics for social engagement, excitement, and health enhancement. When a coach engages in incongruent behaviors, the female athlete may quit (McGee, Strasser, Mckenzie, & Stoll, 2013). A particularly damaging behavior that decreases satisfaction among interscholastic-aged female athletes is verbal aggression (Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, & Weber, 2009). The most damaging incongruent behaviors exhibited by coaches are inappropriate sexual behaviors (Martin, 2003).

A coach must also consider how athletes of different academic levels may respond to certain behaviors (Henson, 2010). Adolescent athletes could require a different leadership style than older athletes (Johnson, 2010). The preference may change for those athletes when advancing from middle school. Henson (2010) questioned what style of leadership best fits those who continue to participate at the collegiate level and advance from freshman to senior.

In addition to academic levels or age levels of athletes, additional considerations for the coach can be the level of ability of the athletes or even the position of the athlete within the chosen sport. Beam (2001) questioned if elite athletes preferred a specific style of leadership. Another study researched the position an athlete played and preference of coaching style (Horn, Bloom, Packard, & Berglund, 2011).

Many studies have been performed with groups of male and female team sport and individual sport athletes. There have also been many studies of male-only athletes in team and individual sports. Studies of female athletes regarding preferences in gender of coach and coaching style have been lacking (Beam, 2001; Giddings, 2009; Henson, 2010; Greenawalt, 2012). This investigation of preference in coach gender and coaching style is appropriate because male coaches may not be familiar with the conscious and subconscious motivations of the female athlete (Barnes, 2003; Boyes, 2007). Little research has been conducted for differences in coach gender and coaching style preference between female athletes at different levels of competition as well. The studies that have been completed indicated that differences exist but not at a significant level (Andrew, 2004; Beam, 2001; Henson, 2010). Very little research on coach gender preference and coaching style preference conducted with female athletes at smaller colleges has been conducted (Boyes, 2007; Johnson, 2010). A coach must have the ability to understand these potential differences in order to achieve success for the team or individual athlete.

It has been reported that differences in coaching style preference may differ with gender. Female athletes have a tendency to be less confident in athletic ability than male athletes (Childs, 2010). Male athletes have been found to perceive themselves as more

competent at their sport than female athletes (Childs, 2010). Hellrung (2009) found that females participated in sports more for the positive interactions with teammates and coaches as well as the simple pleasure of the activity itself. Male athletes were more likely to participate for the ego-boosting element of the sport. The extrinsic motives of celebration and admiration of others were strong reasons for males to participate in sport (Hellrung, 2009). This difference in motivation for participation may lead to a difference in leadership style preference (Childs, 2010). This difference may also manifest itself in a preference for gender of a coach (Turner, 2015)**.** These differences in preferences between male and female athletes should be taken into account (Case, 1998).

The type of sport (individual or team) or position played on a team may also impact the preference of coaching style or motivation to play by an athlete (Griffin, 2009; Riemer & Chelladurai, 1995). Regardless of gender, athletes who participate in individual sports such as tennis and golf were found to be more self-sufficient and less likely to need much support from the coaches. Neil and Kirby (2008) found that individual athletes were more autonomous, and as they became more self-sufficient with time, the need for supportive behaviors decreased. Riemer and Toon (2001) found that as the ability of the individual sport athlete increased, the need for support from the coach was reduced as well. Yet, although the need for supportive behaviors were reduced in the individual sport athlete, the supportive behaviors were still the preferred style among the athletes (Burdette, 2008). This was true with both males and female athletes (Burdette, 2008).

The autocratic style of leadership behavior used by some coaches also increases negative reactions in athlete behavior such as quitting the team or experiencing burnout (Tucker, 2008; Parker, 2012). The autocratic style of coaching is the least desired

behavior among all teams, genders, type of sport, levels of play, and age groups (Childs, 2010; Turman, 2008; Rudermann & Ohlott, 2005). Autocratic behavior as the predominant style can be corrosive to team unity.

In contrast to autocratic behavior, a more desired coaching behavior is the democratic style. Teams or individual athletes who competed for a coach who used a more democratic style of leadership often reported higher levels of satisfaction (Jacob, 2006; Wang, 2006). A democratic style of leadership teamed with coaching styles of teaching and instruction, and social support often supported higher levels of satisfaction and an increased desire to win (Aumand, 2005; Barnes, 2003; Bartholomaus, 2012).

Female Athletics Prior to Title IX

Prior to the enactment of Title IX in 1972, men had many more opportunities in athletics than women. Men were thought to be more physically capable of handling the stresses of physical activity and sport (Hargreave, 1994). Due to the physiologically incorrect myth that women lacked the necessary strength or stamina, women were steered away from high stress physical activities (Hargreave, 1994). Physicians supported this thinking. Physicians advised females that athletics might harm them psychologically as well as physically and enhance masculine traits (Hargreave, 1994; Aicher & Sagas, 2009). Conflicts with gender roles also inhibited participation in athletics. The gender roles involving cooking, cleaning, raising the children, and domestic duties were the focus for women (Hargreave, 1994). Health officials believed the best activities for women involved walking and simple exercises such as jumping jacks and other calisthenics (Hargreave, 1994). The common belief of the time prior to Title IX was that strenuous exercise would harm women’s ability to bear children and that the masculine

"nature" of athletics would turn them into lesbians (Hargreave, 1994; Aicher & Sagas, 2009). These biases hampered women's opportunities and motivation to participate in athletics.

Because women were not well-represented in the athletic work force, the workplace was dominated by men. Therefore, women had little political or financial influence within the sporting world (Kamphoff, 2010). The ability to legislate or initiate change was limited. Women, however, still found opportunities to participate in sports despite these biases and misinformation (Kamphoff, 2010). The sheer desire to participate allowed the number of women in sports to gradually increase (Kamphoff, 2010).

During the Progressive Era, 1890-1915, in the United States women were involved in sports that were deemed appropriate for women. These sports were primarily individual. They included golf, tennis, cycling, and swimming (Kamphoff, 2010). More women were moving into the workforce and political movements were encouraging them to evaluate their place and role in society (Kamphoff, 2010). These political movements such as the Temperance and Suffragist movements showed women the strength and power they possessed.

The participation of the United States in World War II provided an opportunity for women to begin a change in the perception of roles in society. As men began to serve in the armed forces, their jobs were filled by women. Women were employed in occupations which had largely been considered "male only" in previous years. Heavy industry jobs operating large equipment and hazardous jobs such as welding were filled by women. The defense industries were forced to employ women in armament factories

and flying planes around the nation. Women performed admirably in these roles and this performance led to more opportunity in sports.

World War II provided an opportunity for women in sports on a larger stage. The large number of male professional athletes drafted into the armed services created a gap in entertainment that women could fill. This led to the formation of a professional baseball league featuring female athletes. Called the All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League, it started play in 1943 and ceased play in 1954. The league provided alternate spectator entertainment during the time when men's major league baseball suffered from a depleted talent pool. At its peak, the professional baseball league drew nearly one million spectators in a season (Fazioli, 2004).

During this time in history, research and reports began to support female participation in sport as findings indicated that women could engage in activities such as tennis, track and field, and basketball. Due to this published research, women expressed a desire to compete in these sports and others. Females were often turned away from leagues. The lack of power and presence in the administration of sports and athletics did not give them enough of a voice (Fazioli, 2004; Gilbert, Gilbert, & Morawski, 2007).

Before 1972 only 7% of girls enrolled in high schools participated in interscholastic athletics even once during their high school experience (Compton & Compton, 2010). At that same time, intercollegiate athletics did not offer much opportunity to participate in sports either (Rhode, 2007). Fewer than 30,000 women might be participating in intercollegiate sports at any particular year. However, by 2006 that number rose to approximately 180,000 in all levels of post-secondary athletics

(Rhode, 2007). This increase in participation did not happen without the effect of advocates.

Prior to the enactment of Title IX, Congress had heard testimony regarding discrimination against women in athletics and in education in general. Birch Bayh, a United States Senator from Indiana, championed the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1970, Senator Bayh gave testimony on the floor of the United States Senate requesting the passage of Title IX. He pointed out that soon after the end of World War II this amendment and been brought forward in both 1950 and 1953 (Bayh, 1970). He indicated that it was now time to quit pretending that the law supported women and to do something about it (Bayh, 1970). Programs that did exist were run in a substandard method in comparison to men's programs. Besides being financially underfunded, women's programs often played significantly fewer games, had fewer practices, played a shorter season, and were not publicized or covered as well as the men's programs (Kamphoff, 2010).

Women also had to deal with a negative image that was given credence at the time. Female athletes suffered from stereotypes of masculinity and lesbianism for those who participated in athletics. In addition, with the lack of role models both participating and coaching in athletics, women did not get much encouragement to engage in athletics (Fasting & Pfister, 2000).

One way to have created more role models and to encourage female participation both as athletes and as coaches would have been through the collegiate governing bodies of the time. The NCAA, which was established for men's athletics in 1910 (NCAA, 2014), and the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW), established

in 1971, both had an opportunity to do so. However, with a staff of three including the director, one full-time assistant, and one part-time employee the AIAW opened for business. These three employees and programming were conducted on $24,000 per year initially. The NCAA had little interest in helping what was considered rival competition (Gilbert, Gilbert, & Morawski, 2007).

The Enactment of Title IX and the Gradual Move toward Equality

Title IX was passed to guarantee equal opportunity for all people of the United States in every aspect of education, including athletics. Paraphrased, the law ensures that nobody in the United States will be denied the benefits of any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (Porto, 2012). Title IX had an almost immediate and significant impact for female athletes in the United States.

Women's participation in sports greatly increased after Title IX was passed. The law stated that men's and women's programs must be treated equally, both in funding and opportunities created (Compton & Compton, 2010). In 1971, before the passage of Title IX, roughly 300,000 or 7% of high school females participated in sports on the interscholastic level. In 2006, the figure rose to almost 3,000,000 which is approximately 53% of high school females (Rhode, 2007). Women's participation in intercollegiate sports increased as well. Approximately 30,000 females participated in intercollegiate sports in 1971. The number rose to nearly 200,000 by 2010 in NCAA affiliated colleges alone (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014).

Title IX mandated that colleges were allowed to create this equality by incorporating one of three methods. The first method was to create proportionality. This method stated that the proportion of females on athletic teams as compared to the number

of females in the school was similar to the proportion of males on athletic teams as compared to the number of males enrolled in the school (Compton and Compton, 2010). A second method was to demonstrate an effort to create more opportunities for women to participate. This must be documented is ways such as expanding rosters, creating more teams, extending seasons, or adding games to the schedule (Compton and Compton, 2010). The third method was to make sure that each female student was not denied the opportunity to play a sport simply because the school did not sponsor a female team in that sport (Compton & Compton, 2010). Most schools chose proportionality as the avenue to comply with the legislation. One way to easily side step the proportionality compliance was to not add women's teams but simply cut men's teams, especially those that did not generate revenue for the college such as swimming, tennis, bowling, wrestling, and golf (Fazioli, 2004). According to Fazioli (2004) the fact that this was done at all was not in the spirit of the amendment.

The equal opportunity sought by Title IX does not end with the athletes. Employees of athletic departments are to be treated equally as well. One of those areas is salaries. Coaches of the same sport were to be paid equally. This caused a strain at every level of competition on budgets. At the time Title IX became the law, male coaches of male teams were paid significantly more than female coaches of similar female teams (Drago, et al. 2005; Faziloli, 2004; Rhoads, 2004).

By 1983 the AIAW collapsed and the NCAA and the NAIA took over the governance of both men's and women's intercollegiate athletics. Women's sports teams and participation of women continued to grow at a steady rate. In this respect it would appear that Title IX was working well. However, for women coaches and administrators

the reverse was true. Opportunities for male coaches and administrators actually saw an increase. Men were most often hired to fill these positions instead of women (Drago et al., 2005). The struggle still existed for women in administrative and coaching positions within athletic departments (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Porto, 2005; Sagas, Cunningham & Teed, 2006; Wills, 2005).

The Absence of Female Role Models

The year prior to the passage of Title IX saw nearly 90% of female athletic teams at NCAA sponsored colleges being led by a female coach (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The ten-fold increase in the number of females participating within 30 years created a like number of opportunities to hire female coaches. Yet, by 2010, barely 40% of female athletic teams had a female head coach (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The breadth and depth of demographic information on NAIA athletics does not match the NCAA. The NAIA began keeping demographic data in 2005. The coaching positions being created were also offering more prestige and compensation than female team positions prior to Title IX. Males were interested in these positions now as opposed to the time when the salary was not as attractive (Drago et al., 2005; Fazioli, 2004). With the increase of popularity and money spent, more pressure to win was evident (Wilson, 2008). Hiring practices were affected because the years of male domination had created a "think coach-think male" mindset (Greenawalt, 2012; Hasbrook, Hart, & Mathes, 1990). This mindset is referred to as male hegemony (Sandler, 1999).

Since the passage of Title IX, participation of females in interscholastic and intercollegiate sport has multiplied at a tremendous rate (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Welch & Sigelmann, 2007). Despite this dramatic increase in participation by female

athletes, the number of women in leadership roles, both in coaching and athletic administration, has not kept pace (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Moody, 2001). The low number of female role models in interscholastic and intercollegiate sports may have a detrimental effect on female athletes, both in satisfaction with the experience of playing sports and the desire to become a future role model for others who follow (Drago et al. 2005; Eguaoje, 2007). This effect can also manifest itself in a lack of information for young females entering the coaching or administration fields concerning how to function effectively in a male-dominated profession (Drago et al. 2005).

Acosta & Carpenter (2014) found that only about 40% of the available head coaching positions of female sports teams in all levels of NCAA-affiliated institutions were filled by female coaches. This is in stark contrast to 1972 when nearly 90% of the available positions were filled by female coaches. The majority of the female athletes may never receive the female mentorship that may be desired. The female athletes may also not develop the ability to communicate with a female coach and the opportunity to connect closely with a female coach (Eguaoje, 2007; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2005; Wilson, 2007). This, in turn, resulted in a continuing downward spiral in the percentage of female head coaches in sports (Krane & Barber, 2005; Lough, 2001; Owiesny, 1999; Sandler, 1999).

Demographic information on all NCAA athletics has been available since 1972. This has influenced the number of studies conducted on NCAA member institutions. The NAIA has only recently begun such data collection. The lack of demographic data corresponds with the lack of research available on NAIA collegiate athletics.

Male hegemony. For many years, sports have been a male-dominated enterprise. Males in sports have been praised for their accomplishments. Masculine efforts have

been the desired behavior in athletic endeavors. Femininity and females in general have been considered undesirable and inferior. This hegemonic masculinity results in an outcome in which men or males are given access to power and control because of homologous reproduction (Drago et al. 2005). Those in control, in this case men, are more likely to employ or appoint those who characterize desired traits. This has overwhelmingly been men. This has led to the state of male hegemony in which males hire male employees (Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006; Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005).

Acosta and Carpenter (2014) found that as of 2010 only 18% of NCAA administrative positions in university and college athletic departments were staffed by women. The process of homologous reproduction has led to the small number of women coaches of female athletic squads which is likely to continue unless specifically addressed (Drago, Hennighausen, Rogers, Vescio, & Stauffer, 2005; Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005). As Kauer (2005) believed, male hegemony has allowed males to gain and keep the power positions in collegiate athletics and to suppress women to the minority.

Despite the significant increase in the number of teams available to female athletes in collegiate sport, males have filled most of the new and growing number of coaching positions (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012; Wilson, 2007). Wilson (2007) indicated that most of the female athletes in collegiate sport are influenced in an atmosphere run by men. The possibility exists that females may not choose a career in athletics due to a lack of role models. Without a significant number of role models, some women may not perceive themselves as having sufficient abilities to succeed in these roles (Hellrung, 2009; Lough, 2001; Moody, 2001).

This phenomenon of homologous reproduction creating a hegemonic workplace will not improve without females choosing careers in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics. The gender gap may continue to grow (Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005). Adding to this situation are antiquated societal norms that have been clung to in the world of sports. Female coaches have long had to deal with the stress of family and parenting roles conflicting with the role of coach (Drago, Hennighausen, Rogers, Vescio, & Stauffer, 2005; Sandler, 1999). The athletic workplace has done little to accommodate these needs of female coaches.

Heterosexism. Along with the hurdles of male hegemony and the homologous reproduction that follows, women seeking leadership positions, or even those looking to participate in athletics, must also deal with the phenomenon of heterosexism. Drago, Hennighausen, Rogers, Vescio, & Stauffer (2005) suggested that many women must face the label of "lesbian" merely by being a part of or being associated with athletics. Because sports have not been identified as an area for women to participate, the alternative suggested by society is that the female coach or athlete must be a lesbian (Sandler, 1999).

Heterosexism, which is fundamentally illegal, is the act of discrimination against homosexual and transgender people (Chappell, 2012; Krane & Barber, 2005). This discrimination can have a detrimental effect on those seeking employment or already employed in athletics. Sandler (1999) interviewed eight NCAA female coaches who identified themselves as lesbian. These female coaches indicated that the unfavorable and unfounded labeling as lesbians steers female athletes away from a career in sports (Chappell, 2012). Those female coaches who were already working in collegiate athletics

often decided to take a job that had less pay or to seek employment in a "less visible" program to avoid the stigma of being identified as a lesbian (Kauer, 2005).

An unfortunate twist to this situation has been that many lesbian coaches have felt the pressure and have married men in order to present a heterosexual image so that a more successful career might be available (Mawson, 2006). A more common occurrence has been athletic departments overlooking unmarried female candidates for coaching positions because leaders in the department feared that the candidate was lesbian and to avoid homosexual issues altogether (Sandler, 1999).

Preferred Gender

Research on athletes' coaching gender preference is lacking. The research that has been conducted may be influenced by male hegemony. There are far more males in coaching positions and athletic administrative positions than females (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005; Wilson, 2007). Most females have likely been coached by only male coaches or have been influenced by males in their sports experiences. Therefore, the female athlete may indicate a preference for male coaches because that is the only gender of coach she has experienced (Whisenant & Pedersen, 2005; Wilson, 2007). Greenawalt (2012) conducted a study of select NCAA I female athletes. Greenawalt (2012) found that 81% of the respondents indicated a preference for a male coach. Another study found that the majority of 141 female athletes at a single university indicated a preference for a male coach (Wilson, 2007).

Lough (2001) suggested that a lack of female role models prevented female athletes from pursuing careers in coaching. She stated the lack of females as head coaches may affect female athlete's preference of coaching gender. This has led to a

mind-set in athletes and administrators of ‘think coach-think male’ (Greenawalt, 2012; Hasbrook, Hart, & Mathes, 1990). Athletes who have never been or seldom been exposed to female coaches immediately assume that the male coach is the more skilled coach. The female coach, then, is viewed as not possessing the skills necessary to be a ‘winner’ (Fazioli, 2004).

When female athletes show a preference for female head coaches, it is often due to the delivery of the coaching style rather than the actual coaching style itself (Fasting & Pfister, 2000). The perceived coaching style of male head coaches may conflict with the coaching preference of the female athlete. Tucker (2008) found that female athletes required more support and counseling than male athletes. He found that head coaches who utilized more social supportive techniques might be a more desired coach by a female athlete (Tucker, 2008). A calm, yet firm tone when dealing with female athletes is a preferred coaching behavior (McClain, 2005). Male coaches who had previously coached male athletes found that they changed their coaching style even when not intentional in order to have success when coaching female athletes (Ford, 2001; McClain, 2005). Common changes were to lower the tone or volume of the coach’s voice and to consider how the coach conveyed a correction or comment before speaking (Ford, 2001; McClain, 2005).

Role modeling and gender of coach effect on female athletes has been the subject of few studies. However, the findings are revealing. Feltz and Lirgg (2001) discovered that female head coaches can serve a significant positive effect on female athletes desiring and pursuing a career in athletics. Female athletes mentored by a female head coach were more apt to become a head coach than those mentored by a male head coach.

Lough (2001) went a step further and concluded that the declining percentage of female head coaches indicated that male head coaches do not inspire female athletes to pursue a career in coaching.

Boyes (2007) found no significant difference in preferred gender of head coaches in her study of NCAA III female softball players. Frankl and Babbitt (1998) conducted a study on gender preference of a hypothetical track and field coach with high school athletes. The high school athletes indicated no preference on gender but placed higher expectations of success with the hypothetical male coach (Frankl & Babbitt, 1998). Lee, Magnusen, and Cho (2013) in a study of both male and female athletes found that males were uncomfortable with female coaches and preferred males. The study found that female athletes did not show a preference for male or female coaches. Windsor (2005) stated that further research on female athlete coach gender preference should be conducted.

Boyes (2007) conducted a survey of female NCAA III collegiate softball players. The author surveyed 140 athletes of which 106 had played for only male coaches prior to attending college. Preference for a male head coach was indicated by 60 of the female athletes while 61 indicated a preference for a female head coach. Nineteen of the respondents chose not to answer the question of coach gender preference (Boyes, 2007).

The question of differences in preference of gender of a coach may not be easy to answer. There has, however, been research focusing on communication and coaching style as related to the gender of the coach.

Preferred Coaching Styles

Haselwood et al. (2005) found that communication styles differed between male and female coaches. Female coaches were more open and likely to share personal experiences with their athletes. Female coaches were considered more effective listeners as well. Male coaches were found to be more direct in their delivery of messages to the athletes and only offered encouragement to the athletes when the coach felt it was needed (Haselwood et al., 2005). Fasting and Pfister (2000) surveyed elite level female soccer athletes. They found that the elite level athletes preferred female coaches as they progressed through the levels of competition. The female athletes felt that at times the male coaches did not take their needs seriously. Communication of desired athlete responses is a preferred element of coaching by female athletes (Ford, 2001). Ford (2001) found that most male head coaches understood this concept but did not always know the most effective way to communicate.

Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, and Weber (2009) found that male coaches may adapt their approach to coaching depending on the gender of the team. The study discovered that male coaches used more verbal aggression techniques and a more autocratic approach to a team comprised of male athletes than female teams. Parker et al. (2012) found that athletes from Generation Z, those born since 1995, were more receptive to coaches who utilized more democratic methods. These athletes, especially female athletes, did not respond well to tactics that involved yelling and other aggressive verbal techniques. Often, coaches who use an autocratic and aggressive verbal coaching style suffer from burnout (Altahayneh, 2003). This negatively affects teams and creates a lack of satisfaction in the athletes (Altahayneh, 2003). Fasting and Pfister (2000) found that female athletes tended to be more satisfied when coached by individuals who utilized

more communicative techniques such as conflict management, positivity, openness, and social networking. Negative behaviors were found to have an adverse effect on performance. The coaches using a more communicative style tended to be females. In studies conducted by Beam (2001), Giddings (2009), and Windsor (2001) both female and male coaches used an autocratic style of coaching. Male coaches engaged in use of this style more than female coaches.

A coach should avoid putting added stress on athletes using harsh criticism or the use of negative reinforcement. The athletes already put significant pressure on themselves to perform well. Yelling at or berating young athletes only intensifies the stress level (Barnes, 2003; Hemphill, 2012; Parker et al., 2012; Rieke, Hammermeister, Stein, Bloom, & Sabiston, 2012). Athletes expect the coach to have a positive effect on the athlete's performance. Therefore, to be successful, male coaches must develop a more complete understanding of the female athlete than they may have in the past (Barnes, 2003; Hellrung, 2009; Hemphill, 2012).

Conflicting findings in the results of studies on coaching styles of collegiate male coaches and collegiate female coaches have been reported. Female coaches in one study were found to have higher expectations for female athletes than male coaches of female athletes (Newell, 2009). An earlier study by Burke and Collins (2001) found no difference in how male coaches and female coaches lead their teams. This conflict in results indicates that more research must be conducted to determine if female athletes have a preference for one gender of coach or the other and to determine the preferred style of coaching. It is important that a coach utilizes a style that is congruent with the preference of the athlete.

Females who participated in sports have been found to have better self-perception as they mature, and those who did not participate in sports tended to have lower levels of self-esteem (Johnson, 2010; McGee, Strasser, Mckenzie, & Stoll, 2013; Shaffer & Wittes, 2006). Johnson (2010) and McGee, Strasser, Mckenzie, and Stoll (2013) emphasized that it is important for adolescent females to enjoy their athletic experiences to encourage further participation as they mature. Regardless of gender, it is important for a coach to utilize a coaching style preferred by the athletes.

Altahayneh (2003), Aumand (2005), Johnson (2010), and McGee, Strasser, Mckenzie, and Stoll (2013) each found that incongruent coaching styles and a negative experience may have contributed to an early termination of a sporting career for many youth. A marred self-perception and poor self-worth may be the result of such an experience due to the negative experience (Manley, et al., 2008). A coach should have the ability to work with both genders of athlete and adapt to their specific needs. However, the importance of coaching style on the experience of athletes goes beyond the adolescent level of participation.

Bartholomaus (2012) and Turman (2003) studied high school athletes' perceptions of coaching behaviors and their preferences over the span of an entire athletic season. Bartholomaus (2012) measured the coaching behavior preference of high school football coaches at several points throughout a season. Results showed that high school football coaches displayed higher democratic behaviors at the beginning of the season and became more autocratic as the season progressed and that the high school football players preferred the more autocratic style. Turman (2003) studied the preferences of high school wrestlers and coaching behaviors. The wrestling coaches also showed an

increased autocratic style as the season continued and that the wrestlers were satisfied with this increase. These studies on high school athletes' preferences were valuable but limited. As a result of these limitations, additional research has been conducted in a wider variety of situations on the collegiate athlete.

Although there are some conflicting results concerning preferred coaching styles between male and female college athletes, most of the research has pointed to a difference in preference. Childs (2010) conducted a study involving collegiate cross country runners. She found that female runners preferred a coach who would be open and offer social supportive behaviors. The male runners preferred a more direct coaching style and a coach who would stick to more "sport-related" issues. Windsor (2005) reported similar findings in a study of over 100 NCAA I soccer players. A study by Jackson (2002) also supported this result. Jacob (2006), Wang (2006), and Hahm (2008) found that a democratic style was the most preferred style for female college athletes as well. Many female athletes also have a preference for coaching styles that are different from male athletes at the collegiate level (Miller, Ogilvie, & Branch, 2008). Satisfaction for male and female athletes may be achieved by different styles of coaching. A coach may have to adopt the preferred coaching style to meet the needs of the team or individual athlete.

Autocratic coaching styles have been identified as a reason that athletes may choose to quit participation in athletics. The environment may be considered too harsh when aggressive techniques are utilized by the coach. Preferences for a coaching style may be developed by the athlete early in a career. Rieke, Hammermeister, and Chase (2008) found that junior high female athletes preferred a democratic style from coaches.

Differences in coaching style exist not only between genders and age. Studies have found that differences in coaching style preference may exist between types of sport as well. Aumand (2005) and Burdette (2008) both found that team sport athletes tolerated an autocratic style better than individual sport athletes. Level of competition may also come into play when determining a preferred style of coaching (Posner, 1999). Beam (2001) studied Division I athletes and Division II athletes. Her findings indicated that NCAA Division I athletes were more satisfied with autocratic coaching than NCAA Division II athletes.

The exceptions to these studies indicated slight differences in findings. Aumand (2005) studied 140 athletes at a Division I university and determined that all athletes preferred a democratic style of coaching. Athletes in team sports, however, preferred higher levels of democratic coaching. Moreover, studies conducted by Johnson (2010) and Kravig (2003) indicated no consensus on coaching style preference by gender. Neil and Kirby (2008) studied collegiate rowers and found, as the rowers aged, less supportive behaviors were needed. Yet, Riemer and Toon (2001) studied collegiate tennis players and found that level of ability, which is often tied to age, had no effect on coaching style preference.

Regardless of the gender of the coach or gender of the team, the coach must utilize the coaching style that best fits the team or individual athlete. Team cohesion and individual satisfaction may be an important facet of utilizing the correct coaching style. The head coach is viewed as the leader of the team and is considered the central figure in the success or lack of success of any team (Hightower, 2000; Huang, 2003; Jacob, 2006; McClain, 2005; Rhind & Jowett, 2009; Smith, 2001).

In studies comparing female athletes to male athletes, differences in preferences in coaching style were found. Childs (2010) found that female cross country athletes preferred a coach who engaged in open discussion and incorporated situational consideration. The athletes wanted the coach to share personal experiences with them and to be aware of how factors such as time, weather, health, and skill level might affect the individual athlete's performance. Turner (2015) found that female athletes preferred training and instruction behavior and also found that the athletes preferred situational consideration as well. Romayne (2004) found that democratic styles including training and instruction, social support, and situation consideration were most desired. Beam (2001) proposed that female athletes desired these behaviors because these behaviors allowed the athlete to be part of the decision-making process, individually and as a team.

A study of the preferred and perceived leadership styles of coaches showed that female basketball players preferred greater emphasis on a democratic coaching style as did their male counterparts (Lam, 2007). As in the studies by Beam (2001), Romayne (2004) and Turner (2015), Lam (2007) found that female basketball players desired higher levels of teaching and instruction, social support, and positive feedback than did the males. The results of this study caused Lam (2007) to recommend that coaches consider that males and females be coached with a different approach. The finding was supported by Miller, Ogilvie, and Branch (2008) who concluded that female athletes have different coaching style preferences than male athletes.

Magnusen and Rhea (2009), in a study of gender preference of the head strength and conditioning coaches of NCAA Division I athletes, found that male athletes preferred a male head strength and conditioning coach while female athletes showed no preference

for gender of the coach. Magnusen and Rhea (2009) stated that earlier exposure to female coaching may alleviate this uncomfortable feeling by the male athletes. This preponderance of exposure to male coaching could be why male collegiate athletes have shown a high preference for autocratic coaching styles from head coaches (Magnusen & Rhea, 2009). However, female athletes have shown a preference for more democratic behaviors (Beam, 2001) despite also being exposed primarily to male coaches. Giddings (2009), in a study of NCAA Division I rowers, found that athlete management and engagement were preferred coaching styles coupled with a solid knowledge base of the sport. It was suggested that more research was needed for a better understanding of the coach-athlete relationship (Beam, 2001; Giddings, 2009).

Windsor (2005) found in her study of NCAA Division I soccer players that male athletes primarily preferred social support behavior. Female athletes preferred positive feedback behavior by the coach. A study by Jacob (2006) on the effect coaching style had on success of NCAA Division I basketball coaches reported similar results. Female collegiate basketball players preferred social support behaviors and male collegiate basketball players preferred teaching and instruction behaviors. Wang (2006) studied scholarship Tae Kwon Do athletes in Taiwan and found the same results for male and female athletes.

Other studies have reported different conclusions. Hahm (2008) conducted a study of athletes at a NCAA Division II university. The study reported that both the male and female athletes showed a preference for a democratic coaching style. This study involved only 32 athletes, however, and Hahm (2008) recommended that further study be conducted before his results could be considered conclusive. A study of high school

baseball players across north-central Missouri was conducted measuring high school athletes' coaching style preference (Jackson, 2002). Results indicated that high school baseball players of north-central Missouri had a change in preference based on the size of the high school and the family income of the athlete. As the school population increased, the preference for autocratic style decreased and the preference for democratic style increased. The greater the family income, the greater the preference for social support coaching behavior by the athlete. Jackson (2002) suggested that further study be conducted focusing on family income and coaching style preference.

Preference in leadership based on level of play has been investigated at the collegiate level as well. Griffin (2009) conducted a very comprehensive study of soccer players across every level of play in the NCAA including Divisions I, II, and III. The highest level of player, Division I, desired a style of coaching that focused more on developing the skill level of the player, teaching and instruction. The lowest level of player, Division III, desired a type of coaching style more supportive of the player's needs, which is the democratic or social support style. Griffin (2009) concluded that the level of play may have an impact on the type of coaching style which should be incorporated by the coach. Beam (2001) also came to this conclusion.

In the study of all levels of soccer players, Griffin (2009) studied the effect of player position on coaching style preference. Griffin (2009) found that as the position moves from a more defensive position to a more offensive position the preferred coaching style changed. The position that is the most defensive in soccer, goalie, showed a preference for an autocratic style by the coach. The position that is the most offensive-oriented, forward, showed a preference for positive feedback from the coach. A position

that is a mix of the two, midfield, showed a preference for a democratic approach. Griffin (2009) concluded that perhaps athletes playing different positions on a team may need to be coached differently.

In gender-based comparisons of coaching styles and behaviors, male and female coaches have been found to demonstrate similar styles with minor differences (Hahm, 2008; Jacob, 2006; Millard, 1996). Hahm (2008) found that a male college basketball coach and female college basketball coach at the same university both exhibited a democratic style of coaching. Jacob (2006) in a study of successful NCAA Division I basketball coaches found that both male and female coaches demonstrated a democratic style of coaching as well. The study by Jacob (2006) revealed a difference in the second-most preferred style for each gender. Male coaches supported the democratic style with a preference for teaching and instruction behavior, while female coaches supported the democratic style with a preference for social support behaviors (Jacob, 2006). In a study by Millard (1996), male soccer coaches exhibited more teaching and instruction behaviors compared to female soccer coaches. Female soccer coaches exhibited more social support behaviors compared to the male soccer coaches.

There are more male coaches represented in both collegiate and high school sports (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Both female sports and male sports are most likely to be coached by a male. Therefore, it is beneficial for the male coach to be aware of the preferences that might be desired by a female athlete. A coach who communicates by screaming or yelling will likely deter a female athlete because female athletes prefer to be approached in a less aggressive manner (Martin et al., 2009; McClain, 2005). Female athletes also do not respond well to negative criticism (McClain, 2005).

Summary

Women in sports have made much progress. Before Title IX was passed in 1972, opportunities for participation and employment within the sporting arena were limited for women. Since the passage of Title IX, the opportunities for participation in a growing variety of sports have expanded by the thousands (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Rhode, 2007). With this explosion in participation in sports by women, there is a need to understand what preferences female athletes may have in coach gender and coaching style. As presented in the review of literature, gaps exists in the research of female athletes and their preference of coach gender and coaching style preferences.

The jump in participation opportunities for women in sports has given rise to a need for the evaluation of leadership style in the process of coach selection. Several models of leadership and accompanying scales have been developed, including the RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). These scales have helped determine the preferred coaching style of groups of athletes. Therefore, the RLSS could improve selection of the best candidate for a women's athletic team.

This selection process may be important because before 1972 and the passage of Title IX most women's teams were coached by female coaches and that percentage has declined significantly over time (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The development of the RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) has created a tool to change the trend. The RLSS can be utilized to select a qualified candidate to coach a female athletic team. The candidate who best fits the preferences of the athletic team can be selected.

Many studies have been conducted at NCAA member institutions. The literature has been presented with the findings. All three levels of the NCAA have been represented in these studies. A gap in the research exists with NAIA member institutions. Little research has been conducted on NAIA level female athletes. Research in this area would add to the literature.

Chapter Three

Methods

The aim of this research was to determine coach gender and coaching style preferences of NAIA college female athletes. The female athletes participating in the study attended three Midwestern NAIA conferences. The research design, population, and sampling procedure are described in this chapter. The measurement, validity, and reliability of the RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) are described in the Instrumentation section of this chapter. A description of the collection, data analysis, and hypotheses testing, as well as limitations to the study are provided.

Research Design

A non-experimental survey research design was used in this study. The *Revised Leadership Scale for Sports* (*RLSS*) (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) was used to collect and analyze coaching style and coach gender preferences of female NAIA college athletes. The non-experimental survey design allowed the researcher to identify variables, measure them, and analyze the data. The researcher did not manipulate the variables. A cross-sectional, non-experimental online RLSS survey (surveymonkey.com) was used to collect the data. A Likert-type scale was used to rate the preferences (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). The preferences were (a) teaching and instruction behavior, (b) democratic behavior, (c) autocratic behavior, (d) social support behavior, (e) positive feedback behavior, and (f) situational consideration behavior (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). The dependent variables included preference of gender of coach (Male, Female, or No Preference) and preference in six RLSS coaching styles. Independent variables included academic classification (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, or Graduate Student) and

type of sport (individual or group). RLSS coaching style preferences were broken down by academic classification and coach gender preference. Differences between groups were investigated.

Population and Sample

Female college athletes were the focus of the study. Only female college athletes from three Midwest NAIA athletic conferences were surveyed. Thirty-two colleges and universities from the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), Heart of America Athletic Conference (HEART), and the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) were selected. These conferences were chosen because most NAIA institutions are located in the Midwest. The researcher believed these conferences would represent the NAIA student population. Each athletic director of the member institutions was invited by email to participate in the study.

Twelve of the 32 institutions granted permission for the female college athletes to participate in the study. Each participating institution's female sport rosters were evaluated by the researcher to estimate the potential sample-size. The sample included a total population of over 1,800 potential participants.

The number of returned and completed surveys totaled 188 female athletes 18 years of age or older who voluntarily participated from twelve colleges. The females were enrolled as full-time students in one of the Midwest colleges and were listed as an active participant in a team or individual sport.

Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Cresswell (2009) stated the goal of purposive sampling is to obtain potential subjects with specific traits to complete the

survey. The researcher chose these NAIA conferences because of the researcher's familiarity with the conferences. A limitation had to be made. The NAIA is comprised of over 300 member institutions. That number would be too large to manage. The Midwestern location of the conferences allowed for a large number of potential participants.

Athletic directors of the 32 colleges and universities were sent an email request for permission to survey the female student-athletes. A second letter was sent to athletic directors two weeks later. A consent letter and link to the RLSS was sent to athletic directors of participating colleges. The athletic directors were asked to forward the link to the female athletes. The link was operative for one month. By the end of the month, 188 completed surveys were returned to Survey Monkey.

Instrumentation

The *Revised Leadership Scale for Sport* (*RLSS*) was used to measure the preferences in coaching style of the female athletes (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). The RLSS evolved from the *Leadership Scale for Sport* (*LSS*) (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) which was developed to measure athlete coaching style preference in a manner similar to business leadership preferences measured by Chelladurai and Saleh (1980). The LSS concept was developed from various business leadership models. Three versions of the RLSS exist: the athlete preference version which was used in this study, the athlete perception version, and the coach self-evaluation version. The athlete preference section includes 60 items that use a Likert 5-point scale (see Appendix B). The RLSS measures athlete preferences of six coaching behaviors. These behaviors included (a) teaching and instruction behavior, (b) democratic behavior, (c) autocratic behavior, (d) social support

behavior, (e) positive feedback behavior, and (f) situational consideration behavior (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980; Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). Each of the 60 items in the scale uses a 5-point Likert scale. The responses available consisted of 5=always (100%), 4=often (75%), 3=occasionally (50%), 2=seldom (25%), and 1=never (0%). Results are expressed in percentages.

Measurement. The original LSS was designed as a scale to evaluate the *MML*. Designed to measure the same five dimensions of leadership style, the LSS is a 40 item questionnaire (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980). The RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) is a 60 item questionnaire which was developed to measure six dimensions of a coach's leadership style. A Likert scale of one to five indicating level of satisfaction by the athlete for each question was used. Total scores for each dimension were used to determine the level of satisfaction. These total scores were disaggregated into academic classification and type of sport played.

Table 1

Research Questions and Coaching Styles

Leadership Style	*RLSS* Questions	Sub-questions
Autocratic	6, 21, 28, 34, 38 40	RQ 1a. What are the autocratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2a. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of autocratic coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?
Democratic	4, 7, 9, 13, 14, 25, 30, 47, 50, 51, 55, 57	RQ 1b. What are the democratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2b. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of democratic coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?
Social Support	2, 16, 17, 26, 33, 48, 54, 58	RQ 1c. What are the social support coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2c. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of social support coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

(Continued)

Leadership Styles	RLSS Questions	Sub-questions
Positive Feedback	15, 18, 20, 29, 31, 41, 42, 45, 49, 52, 53, 56	RQ 1d. What are the positive feedback coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2d. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of positive feedback coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?
Situational Consideration	1, 5, 8, 10, 11, 24, 32, 43, 44, 60	RQ 1e. What are the situational consideration coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2e. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of situational consideration coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?
Teaching and Instruction	3, 12, 19, 22, 23, 27, 36, 37, 38, 39	RQ 1f. What are the teaching and instruction coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?
		RQ 2f. To what extent is there a difference in female college students' preferences of teaching instruction coaching styles among educational classifications?
		RQ 3f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

Validity and reliability. Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997) contracted three linguistic experts to conduct a linguistic check and to test the content and construct validity of the RLSS. Content and construct validity was established. Subsequent studies using the RLSS have supported validity (Horn, 2008, & Henson, 2010). Three versions of the RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) were tested for internal consistency and reliability by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients established that internal consistency of all three versions were acceptable (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). Cronbach values in the six coaching styles are as follows: Teaching and Instruction (.84), Positive Feedback (.78), Autocratic (.70), Situational Consideration (.69), Democratic (.66), and Social Support (.52) (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). The value of Social Support (.52) was the weakest of the six, but when considered with the total to not be significant (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the survey was obtained from the Baker University Institutional Review Board on July 21, 2015. In order to survey the participants, the researcher contacted the conference commissioner for each respective athletic director's email address. A link to the survey was distributed to those granting permission the next day. Then the researcher gained permission to have the electronic survey forwarded by athletic directors to the individual female athletes who fulfilled specific criteria. The selection criteria were (a) the athletes must be 18 years of age or older, (b) they must be enrolled as full time students in one of the Midwest colleges, and (c) they must be listed as an active participant in a team or individual sport. These criteria helped establish that participants met standards set forth by the NAIA for identification as eligible college

athletes. Directions for successful completion of the RLSS were part of the survey. Athletes were informed of options to not participate and to withdraw at any time within the survey. Data were collected using the Survey Monkey email collection system. The data were downloaded as a Microsoft Excel file to the researcher's computer. The data were password protected.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The following research questions and sub-questions with respective hypotheses were used to drive the study. The JASP program (Love et al., 2015) was used to analyze the data downloaded from Survey Monkey. Likert scale score interpretations follow in Table 2.

RQ1. What are the coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.a.What are the autocratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.a. Female college athletes will prefer the autocratic coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score to determine preference of the six survey items. Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ1.b. What are the democratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.b. Female college athletes will prefer the democratic coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score of the 12 survey items to determine preference of the democratic style.

Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ1.c. What are the social support coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.c. Female college athletes will prefer the social support coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score of the eight survey items to determine preference of the social support style. Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ1.d. What are the positive the feedback coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.d. Female college athletes will prefer the positive feedback coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score of 12 survey items to determine preference of positive feedback style. Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ1.e. What are the situational consideration coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.e. Female college athletes will prefer the situational coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score of the 10 survey items to determine preference of the situational consideration style. Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ1.f. What are the teaching and instruction coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.f. Female college athletes will prefer the teaching and instruction coaching style. Descriptive statistics were used to establish a mean Likert scale score of the 10 survey items to determine preference of the teaching and instruction style. Preference was determined by relationship of mean score to other coaching styles.

RQ2. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles among educational classifications?

RQ2.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the autocratic coaching style among educational classification?

H2.a. Autocratic style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the democratic coaching style among educational classification?

H2.b. Democratic style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the social support coaching style among educational classification?

H2.c. Social support style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the positive feedback coaching styles among educational classification?

H2.d. Positive feedback style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the situational consideration coaching style among educational classification?

H2.e. Situational consideration style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the teaching and instruction coaching styles among educational classification?

H2.f. Teaching and instruction style preference will differ among educational classifications. An ANOVA was used to test H2. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the autocratic coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.a. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the autocratic style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the democratic coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.b. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the democratic style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the social support coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.c. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the social support style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the positive feedback coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.d. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the positive feedback style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the situational consideration coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.e. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the situational consideration style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the teaching and instruction coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.f. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the teaching and instruction style more than those involved in individual sports. An ANOVA was used to test H3. The observed responses were tested against the other five styles. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preference of gender of coach?

H4. Female college athletes will prefer female coaches. An ANOVA was used to test H4. The observed responses for each of the 188 participants to no preference, male, and female were tested against team and individual sport participants. The level of significance was set at .05.

Table 2 represents the Likert Score interpretations which the participants of the survey were given as choices to the items in the RLSS. Each of the 60 responses to the six coaching style preferences utilized this Likert Score method.

Table 2

Likert Score Interpretation

Likert Score	Percentage Preference	Interpretation
1	0%	Never
2	25%	Seldom
3	50%	Occasionally
4	75%	Often
5	100%	Always

Table 3 represents the six coaching style preferences, the survey items which referred to that preference, the scoring method of the Likert Scale, and the respective number of items as compared to the total.

Table 3

Scoring Methodology-RLSS

Leadership Style	*RLSS* Questions	Scoring Method	Scoring
Autocratic	6, 21, 28, 34, 40, 46	0-100%	6/60 items
Democratic	4, 7, 9, 13, 14, 25, 30, 47, 50, 51, 55, 57	0-100%	12/60 items
Social Support	2, 16, 17, 26, 33, 48, 54, 58	0-100%	8/60 items
Positive Feedback	15, 18, 20, 29, 31, 41, 42, 45, 49, 52, 53, 56	0-100%	12/60 items
Situational Consideration	1, 5, 8, 10, 11, 24, 32, 43, 44, 60	0-100%	10/60 items
Teaching and Instruction	3, 12, 19, 22, 23, 27, 36, 37, 38, 39	0-100%	10/60 items

The student-athletes were also asked five questions concerning demographics to determine the group and to discern any influences upon the choice of leadership/coaching style. Table 4 summarizes questions and choices.

Table 4

Scoring Methodology – Demographic questions

Demographic Questions	Question Number	Coded
Male, Female, No Preference	65	1(male), 2(female), 3(no pref)
Educational Classification	62	1(freshman), 2(sophomore), 3(junior), 4(senior), 5(grad)
Age of Athlete	61	1(18 years), 2(19 years), 3(20 years), 4(21 years), 5(22 years), 6(23 years)
Type of Sport	64	1 (team sport), 2 (individual sport)
Individual Sport		Several sports listed

Limitations

Several limitations of the study were noted. The survey was available only to schools that chose to participate. No incentives were given to the eligible participants to encourage participation in the survey. Survey recipients could choose to participate or not participate. Results from the study may also not be generalizable to athletes who participate in sports outside of the college or university setting. Also, only Midwestern NAIA female college athletes were surveyed. It is possible that athletes from other parts of the country could answer differently.

The athletic directors may not have forwarded the survey to all student-athletes within the athletic department. It is possible that not all student-athletes answered the

survey honestly. They may have answered questions with concern that the head coach of their sport could get access to the answers.

The researcher had no face-to-face interaction with the participants. There was never an opportunity for participants to ask for clarification when completing the survey.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to discover if NAIA female student-athletes had a preference in coach gender and coaching style. The population was from participating colleges and universities found in the Midwest. The sample came from female student-athletes who chose to participate voluntarily in the survey. The survey used was the RLSS developed by Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997). The results were collected by a web-based provider and analyzed using ANOVA.

Presented in Chapter Four are the results which will include a report of the quantitative analyses of the data collection. Each research question and sub-questions and hypotheses are presented with the respective analyses.

Chapter Four

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The female college athletes who responded to the survey attended schools that were members of three National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) conferences in a four state area of the Midwest. Five of the schools were members of the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), five were members of the Heart of America Athletic Conference (HEART), and two were members of the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) (see Table 4).

The respondents were given six options to indicate their educational level. The responses were evenly spread in the traditional four classes. Forty-eight indicated they were freshman; forty-nine responded as sophomore; forty-two chose junior; and forty-two selected senior. Five responded as graduate students, and two selected other (see Table 5).

The female college athletes were given the opportunity to select the type of sport in which they competed. There was a spread between the two options, team or individual. One hundred fifty-four athletes selected team, and thirty-three chose individual. One survey respondent did not select an option (see Table 5).

Students were also given the opportunity to select a preference of gender of coach. The options were female, male, or no preference. Twenty-one selected a preference of female; sixty-seven chose a preference of male; one hundred respondents indicated no preference of gender of coach (see Table 5).

Table 5

Descriptors

Type of Descriptor	N	%
Educational Classification		
Freshman	48	25.5
Sophomore	49	26.1
Junior	42	22.3
Senior	42	22.3
Graduate	5	2.7
Other	2	1.1
Sport Type		
Individual	33	17.5
Team	154	82.4
Gender Preference		
Female	21	11.2
Male	67	35.6
No Preference	100	53.2
Conference Representation		
GPAC	5	41.7
HAAC	5	41.6
KCAC	2	16.6

Hypothesis Testing

The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The statistical data is included with narrative.

RQ1. What are the coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.a. What are the autocratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.a. Female college athletes will prefer autocratic coaching style.

RQ1.b. What are the democratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.b. Female college athletes will prefer democratic coaching style.

RQ1.c. What are the social support coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.c. Female college athletes will prefer social support coaching style.

RQ1.d. What are the positive feedback coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.d. Female college athletes will prefer positive feedback coaching style.

RQ1.e. What are the situational consideration coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.e. Female college athletes will prefer situational coaching style.

RQ1.f. What are the teaching and instruction coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

H1.f. Female college athletes will prefer teaching and instruction coaching style.

As seen in Table 6, the college female athletes preferred situational consideration (Mean=4.19) over the other five coaching styles. However, teaching and instruction was a preferred behavior as well (Mean=4.16). Positive feedback (Mean= 3.88), social support (Mean=3.70), and democratic (Mean=3.39) coaching styles were occasionally preferred. The only coaching style that was seldom preferred (Mean=below 3.0) was autocratic (Mean=2.76).

The mean scores for H1.e and H1.f show college female athletes often preferred a situational consideration coaching style and teaching and instruction coaching style. The mean Likert scores for H1.b, H1.c, and H1.d were less than four. Democratic coaching style, social support coaching style, and positive feedback coaching style showed an occasional preference.

Autocratic coaching style was a seldom preferred behavior. H1.a. was not supported. The mean Likert score of 2.76 indicated an overall non-preferred score.

Table 6

Summary of Descriptive Statistics and Coaching Style Preference

Coaching Style	n	Behaviors	Mean Likert Score	Percent of Time Preferred
Situational Consideration	188	10	4.19	~75%
Teaching and Instruction	188	10	4.16	~75%
Positive Feedback	188	12	3.88	~50%
Social Support	188	8	3.70	~50%
Democratic	188	12	3.39	~50%
Autocratic	188	8	2.76	~25%

RQ2. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles among educational classifications?

RQ2.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the autocratic coaching style among educational classification?

H2.a. Autocratic style preference will differ among educational classifications.

RQ2.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the democratic coaching style among educational classification?

H2.b. Democratic style preference will differ among educational classifications.

RQ2.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the social support coaching style among educational classification?

H2.c. Social support style preference will differ among educational classifications.

RQ2.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the positive feedback coaching style among educational classification?

H2.d. Positive feedback style preference will differ among educational classifications.

RQ2.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the situational consideration coaching style among educational classification?

H2.e. Situational consideration style preference will differ among educational classifications.

RQ2.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the teaching and instruction coaching style among educational classification?

H2.f. Teaching and instruction style preference will differ among educational classifications.

As shown in Table 7, none of the six coaching styles preferences by educational classification were supported by the data. An ANOVA was run to investigate any statistically significant differences between categories broken down by educational classifications and coaching style preference. A *p*-score of 0.05 or lower is required to indicate a significant difference among the educational classifications. A post hoc analysis was not run because of the lack of significance; the mean scores were not significantly different between classification categories regardless of educational classification. The data did not support the hypotheses.

Table 7

RQ2 – Summary Omnibus ANOVA Test of Significance for Coaching Style Preference when Broken Down by Grade Classification

Style	RQ	N	F score	P score
Autocratic	2A	188	0.797	0.553
Democratic	2B	188	0.675	0.643
Social Support	2C	188	0.244	0.943
Positive Feedback	2D	188	0.646	0.665
Situational Consideration	2E	188	0.303	0.911
Teaching and Instruction	2F	188	0.585	0.712

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the autocratic coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.a. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the autocratic style more than those involved in individual sports.

RQ3.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the democratic coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.b. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the democratic style more than those involved in individual sports.

RQ3.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the social support coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.c. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the social support style more than those involved in individual sports.

RQ3.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the positive feedback coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.d. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the positive feedback style more than those involved in individual sports.

RQ3.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the situational consideration coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.e.Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the situational consideration style more than those involved in individual sports.

RQ3.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of the teaching and instruction coaching style between team and individual sports?

H3.f. Those female college athletes involved in team sports will prefer the teaching and instruction style more than those involved in individual sports.

As shown in Table 8, there was no significant difference in type of sport played by the college female athletes and coaching style preference. Again, a *p*-score of 0.05 or lower is required to indicate a statistically significant difference. A post hoc analysis was not run because of the lack of significance; the mean scores were not significantly different between types of team categories. The hypotheses were not supported by the data.

Table 8

RQ3 – Summary Omnibus ANOVA Test of Significance for Coaching Style Preference when Broken Down by Individual or Team Sport

Style	RQ	Behaviors	n	F score	P score
Autocratic	3A	8	187	0.997	0.319
Democratic	3B	12	187	1.381	0.241
Social Support	3C	8	187	0.634	0.427
Positive Feedback	3D	12	187	0.176	0.675
Situational Consideration	3E	10	187	0.009	0.923
Teaching and Instruction	3F	10	187	0.390	0.533

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preference of gender of coach?

H4. Female college athletes will prefer female coaches.

As can be seen in Table 9, there are no statistically significant results for coach gender preference regardless of educational classification, type of sport, and sport classification. The hypotheses were not supported by the data.

Table 9

RQ4 – Summary Omnibus ANOVA Test of Significance for Coach Gender Preference when Broken Down by Educational Classification, Type of Sport and Classification of Sport

Cases	n	F score	P score
Educational Classification	188	1.650	0.149
Type of Sport	188	3.604	0.059
Classification of Sport	188	1.554	0.202

Additional Analyses

All 60 items of the RLSS received a mean score based on the responses of the sample. The researcher ordered the 60 behaviors regardless of style from most preferred to least preferred. The researcher wanted to discover what behaviors the female college athletes found to be the most preferred and least preferred. The issue of meeting athlete coaching needs might be more complex than selecting one style. For optimal results, the coach may need to adopt aspects of several styles.

Table 10 lists the ten most desired coaching behaviors and their respective coaching style. The most desired behavior was item 39 (Mean=4.75), "the coach possesses good knowledge of the sport and techniques". This behavior is a Teaching and Instruction item. Two other Teaching and Instruction behaviors made the list, "makes the complex easy to understand" (Mean=4.46) and "uses a variety of methods to instruct" (Mean=4.37). Three behaviors from Situational Consideration coaching style also made the top ten list. These included the second and third most desired behaviors, "uses

athletes appropriately" (Mean=4.55) and "clarifies goals and objectives" (Mean=4.48). The other two behaviors came from the Social Support coaching style.

Table 10

10 Most Desired Coaching Behaviors. Most Preferred Listed First

Item	Behavior Description	Mean, %	Coaching Style
39	Possesses good knowledge	4.75, >75%	Teaching/Instruction
32	Uses athletes appropriately	4.55, >75%	Situational Consideration
8	Clarifies goals	4.48, >75%	Situational Consideration
17	Stays interested in athletes	4.48, >75%	Social Support
26	Cares about personal welfare	4.47, >75%	Social Support
3	Makes the complex easier	4.46, >75%	Teaching/Instruction
22	Uses a variety of methods	4.37, >75%	Teaching/Instruction
29	Tells players good job	4.37, >75%	Positive Feedback
53	Gives credit when due	4.35, >75%	Positive Feedback
11	Uses alternative methods when needed	4.32, >75%	Situational Consideration

Table 11 lists the ten least desired coaching behaviors and respective coaching styles. Five of the ten came from the autocratic coaching style. These five included the first three with the lowest scores, "fails to explain actions and decisions" (Mean=1.64), "dislikes players' suggestions" (Mean=2.12), and "keeps aloof from players" (Mean=2.26). Three of the least desire coaching behaviors came from the democratic coaching style and the other two came from the social support coaching style. Social support coaching style was the only coaching style to have behavioral descriptions make both lists rated by the female college athlete.

Table 11

10 Least Desired Coaching Behaviors. Least Preferred Listed First

Item	Behavior Description	Mean, %	Coaching Style
40	Fails to explain actions	1.64, <25%	Autocratic
35	Dislikes suggestions	2.12, ~25%	Autocratic
59	Keeps aloof	2.26, >25%	Autocratic
48	Does personal favors for players	2.30, >25%	Social Support
21	Refuses to compromise	2.65, >25%	Autocratic
47	Let players decide which plays to use	2.73, >25%	Democratic
50	Let players decide which drills to use	2.79, >25%	Democratic
6	Disregards players' fears	2.86, ~50%	Autocratic
13	Let players try own way even when not working	2.96, ~50%	Democratic
58	Visits with players' parents/guardians	2.99, ~50%	Social Support

Summary

Findings for four research questions and four hypotheses were presented in chapter four. In all four cases, the hypotheses were not supported by the findings. Research question one utilized a descriptive analysis of mean scores to find results. Research questions one, two, and three used an ANOVA to analyze differences between categories for each research question.

The analysis results for research question one can be found in Table 5. The six coaching styles were ranked from most desirable to least desirable. Situational consideration and teaching and instruction were both rated as the most desirable of the six

coaching styles by the female college athletes. Autocratic style was ranked as the least desirable.

No significant results were found for research question two which addressed educational classification and coaching style preference (Table 6). ANOVA was used to determine differences between educational classification and coaching style preference. All *p*-scores were above the 0.05 used to determine significance. Educational classification had no relationship to coaching style preference.

No significant results were found for research question three. ANOVA was used to analyze the differences between athletes in team sports and athletes in individual sports. Preference for coaching style was measured. No significant difference was found (Table 7). All *p*-scores were above the 0.05 needed to establish significance. The survey participants, regardless whether a member of a team sport or individual sport, had no significant difference in coaching style preference.

ANOVA was used to determine whether significant differences existed for coach gender preference among educational classification, type of sport, or sport classification (Table 8). No significant difference was determined. All *p*-scores were above 0.05.

A fifth research purpose was added to further explore athlete preferences. Although not part of a research question, a descriptive analysis of each RLSS coaching behavior as defined by each individual survey item was conducted. The items were rank ordered by the mean percentage of preference by highest to lowest. The top ten most desired behaviors (Table 9) and the top ten least desired behaviors (Table 10) were presented. Only social support style was represented in both categories. Teaching and instruction and situational consideration styles were the other two coaching style

preferences making the top ten list. Autocratic and democratic coaching styles completed the bottom ten.

The findings presented in chapter four are discussed in chapter five. Chapter five includes the conclusions and implications of the research results. Chapter five will include recommendations for future research as well.

Chapter Five

Interpretation and Recommendations

Study Summary

College female student-athletes attending 12 colleges in three Midwest athletic conferences within the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) participated in this study. The *Revised Leadership Survey for Sport* (RLSS) (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) was used. The survey was emailed to prospective participants in June and July of 2015. Results were gathered from the respondents via Survey Monkey and recorded on the researcher's laptop computer. Data related to four research questions with respective sub-questions were analyzed for results and findings discussed in Chapter four.

Overview of the problem.

Little research had been conducted on coach gender preference and coaching style preference of small college female athletes. However, research has been conducted on male athletes and coaching style preference (Griffin, 2009; Lee, Magnusen, & Cho, 2013; Magnusen, & Rhea, 2009). In addition, research has been conducted on the coach gender and coaching style preferences of both sexes (Barnes, 2003; Beam, 2001; Chappell, 2012). Finally, research has been conducted on the coach gender and coaching style preferences of female athletes at elite level of play or at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) level (Fasting & Pfister, 2000; Giddings, 2009; Greenawalt, 2012; Henson, 2010; Turner, 2015). A gap in the literature was found which prompted this study.

Purpose statement and research questions.

This study was conducted in a quantitative manner with the purpose to discover small college NAIA female athletes' preference in gender of coach and preference in coaching style. The research questions follow:

RQ1. What are the coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.a. What are the autocratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.b. What are the democratic coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.c. What are the social support coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.d. What are the positive feedback coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.e. What are the situational consideration coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ1.f. What are the teacher and instruction coaching style preferences of female college student-athletes?

RQ2. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles among educational classifications?

RQ2.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of autocratic coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.b. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of democratic coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of social support coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of positive feedback coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of situational consideration coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ2.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of teaching and instruction coaching styles among educational classification?

RQ3. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.a. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of autocratic coaching styles between team and individual sports? **RQ3.b.** To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of democratic coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.c. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of social support coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.d. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of positive feedback coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.e. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of situational consideration coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ3.f. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preferences of teaching and instruction coaching styles between team and individual sports?

RQ4. To what extent is there a difference in female college student-athletes' preference of gender of coach?

Review of the methodology.

The RLSS (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997) (Appendix B) was used to measure differences in the NAIA female athletes' preferences in gender and coaching style of the coach. The survey measured the percent of time the athletes preferred each item (100%, 75%, 50%, 25%, and 0%). College female athletes from three Midwestern NAIA conferences were invited to participate in the study. The conferences were the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart), and the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC). The survey was available to the participating athletes by email using a link to a web-based survey provider.

Major findings.

In reference to RQ 1, the researcher found that the most preferred coaching behaviors were situational consideration (Mean=4.19) and teaching and instruction (Mean=4.16) followed by positive feedback (Mean=3.88) and social support (Mean=3.70). Democratic coaching style was next to last (Mean=3.39). Autocratic was the only coaching style to have a score in the non-preferred range (Mean=2.76).

Findings related to RQ 2 revealed that none of the coaching styles had a significantly different preference score by educational classification. The ANOVA results indicated no coaching style with a *p*-score of 0.05 (Table 6). The lowest *p*-score was 0.553 which is not close to establishing statistical significance.

The ANOVA results for RQ 3 also indicated no statistical significance in differences between type of sport (team or individual) the female athlete played and coaching style preference (Table 7). A *p*-score of 0.05 was needed to establish statistical significance. The lowest *p*-score was a 0.241 which is not close to significance.

The *p*-scores resulting from the ANOVA for RQ 4 were much closer to determining statistical significance than the results from RQ 2 and RQ 3 but still were greater than 0.05. When analyzing whether educational classification or type of sport had an impact on coach gender preference, a score of 0.059 was the result of type of sport and coach gender preference.

Additional analyses were conducted to identify the top and bottom ten behaviors defined by the 60 items from the RLSS. The top 10 consisted of items related to supportive behaviors. The bottom ten items were primarily autocratic in nature.

Findings Related to the Literature

The results found in the analysis of preference of coaching style reflect findings by other authors. Hemphill (2012) and Parker et al. (2012) found that young athletes do not respond well to autocratic behaviors by coaches. This study confirmed the least preferred coaching style was autocratic. Windsor (2005) and Jacob (2006) found that NCAA female athletes preferred social support behaviors which were preferred behaviors but not the highest in this study. Griffin (2009) found that NCAA soccer players preferred teaching and instruction behaviors which is a highly preferred coaching behavior in this study. The literature did not confirm situational consideration as a preferred behavior as was found in the current study.

One study investigated for this research analyzed educational classification and coaching style preference. Neil and Kirby (2008) found, that as collegiate rowers aged, less supportive behaviors were needed. The finding by Neil and Kirby was not supported by this study. The need for less supportive behaviors was not supported by the current study of educational classification.

The literature reviewed offered few research studies comparing type of sport (team or individual) and coaching style preference. Aumand (2005) conducted a study investigating team and individual sports at the NCAA Division I level. Athletes in team sports were found to desire more democratic behaviors than those in individual sports. Aumand's findings were not supported in this study. This study found that there is no significant difference of coaching style preference between team and individual sports.

Literature reporting coach gender preference based on type of sport or educational classification was sparse. Coach gender preference was not significantly different in the

current study. In fact, 53% of respondents indicated there was no gender preference. Additionally, when comparing just male or female preference, more respondents chose male coaches. Magnusen and Rhea (2009) found NCAA Division 1 female athletes had no preference in gender of the strength and conditioning coach. Respondents in the current study also indicated no preference in coaches as team or individual sports.

Conclusions

When looking at the results of the scores recorded for RQ1, an administrator or a coach should expect the NAIA female athletes to prefer certain coaching behaviors. A coach should focus on teaching skills and strategies to the athletes and keep in mind skill levels, class demands, and other situational considerations that might impact the female athlete. The female athlete will appreciate words of encouragement and recognition for a good performance. The NAIA female athlete will expect the coach to be in charge but also respect and seek the input of the athletes. No player wants to be ignored or left to fail.

The coach should understand that the NAIA college female athlete will not change coaching style preference as she progresses academically. The coach can instruct and lead the team and players in the same manner regardless of academic level. All players want to be taught skills to improve performance and to be supported in the journey to succeed.

It does not appear to matter whether the athlete is a member of a team or competes in an individual sport. NAIA female athletes will reject autocratic behaviors. NAIA female athletes desire supportive styles such as social support, teaching and instruction, positive feedback, and situational consideration. A coach should approach

both team and individual sport members with goals and objectives for achievement in mind and find the best way to motivate athletes to succeed.

The gender of the coach does not appear to be a factor. In this study, the majority of the female athletes did not prefer a gender. Administrators and coaches should expect that female college athletes want a positive coach/athlete relationship. The coach should know the sport, be able to teach it, and care about the players.

Implications for action.

When selecting a coach for a female collegiate sports team, the administrator should consider the preferred leadership style of the coach. The administrator should select a coach who prefers to emphasize skill improvement and game management skills. A coach should avoid emphasizing autocratic and democratic behaviors when leading female collegiate sports teams. Female college athletes want to be taught by the coach and given the opportunity to offer input about the program.

The academic classifications of a female college sports team does not need to be a concern for the coach. The coach can lead all athletes without regard to classification. Situational consideration and teaching and instruction are preferred styles and autocratic and democratic coaching styles should be avoided. Whether the coach is leading a team or individual sport, coaching style preferences remain stable.

Recommendations for future research.

Small college athletes have been ignored by researchers. A need exists for additional research into coach gender and coaching style preference of NAIA college female athletes. Studies of additional institutions and geographical areas are recommended.

Additional study investigating team and individual sport coaching style preferences is needed at the NAIA level. Minimal research has been conducted in this area regardless of level of play. Research should be directed toward determining if elementary and high school coach gender impacts college coach gender preference.

The final recommendation would be for a meta-study of the top 10 behavior preferences of each style using the *RLSS* to determine if the preferences of the groups are consistent or if they vary significantly. Coaching athletes is very complex. To suggest that one coaching style is a preferred style or a non-preferred style may be too simplistic. Perhaps it is more important to determine the combination of preferred and non-preferred coaching behaviors of athletes and recommend coaches act accordingly.

Concluding remarks.

With the continued expansion of collegiate women's athletics teams and participants (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014), it is logical for more study of issues that impact the female athletes' satisfaction in sports. Growth in sport for women is not limited to the NCAA or to the highest levels of competition. The number of female participants in interscholastic sport and all levels of recreational play has grown as well (Wills, 2005). Some studies have been conducted in these areas as previously mentioned, but the amount of research on women in athletics does not match the growth in participation. The number of female sports and participants in the NAIA is growing. No literature reviewed in this study focused on NAIA female athletes. This researcher hopes that this study is followed by increased investigations into NAIA female athletics across the nation.

Female college athletes are willing to be coached in a variety of styles. However, they most prefer supportive styles by the coach. Few female athletes desire a dictator for

a coach, and the athletes do not want to be in charge. The female small college athletes want a coach to teach them, lead them, and support them.

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Appendix A: The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport
(Athlete's Preference Version)

Directions: Each of the following statements describes a specific behavior that a coach may exhibit. For each statement there are five alternative answers, as follows: 5 = 'always' (100% of the time); 4 = 'often' (75% of the time); 3 = 'occasionally' (50% of the time); 2 = 'seldom' (25% of the time); and 1 = 'never' (0% of the time).

Please indicate your preference by circling the appropriate space. Answer all items even if you are unsure of a response. Please note that this is not an evaluation of your present coach or any other coach. **It is your own personal preference that is required.** There are no right or wrong answers. Your spontaneous and honest response is important for the success of this evaluation.

Example: I prefer my coach to like each athlete on the team. 1 2 3 4 5

I prefer my coach to:

1. Coach to the level of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

2. Encourage close and informal relationships with the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Make complex things easier to understand and learn. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Put the suggestions made by the team members into operation. 1 2 3 4 5

5. Set goals that are compatible with the athletes' ability. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Disregard athletes' fears and dissatisfactions. 1 2 3 4 5

7. Ask for the opinion of the athletes on strategies for specific competition. 1 2 3 4 5

8. Clarify goals and the paths to reach the goals for the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

9. Encourage the athletes to make suggestions for ways to conduct practices. 1 2 3 4 5

10. Adapt coaching style to suit the situation. 1 2 3 4 5

11. Use alternative methods when the efforts of the athletes are not working well in practice or in competition. 1 2 3 4 5

12. Pay special attention to correcting athletes' mistakes. 1 2 3 4 5

13. Let the athletes try their own way even if they make mistakes. 1 2 3 4 5

14. See the merits of athletes' ideas when differ from the coach's. 1 2 3 4 5

15. Show ‘O.K.’ or ‘Thumbs Up’ gesture to the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

16. Remain sensitive to the needs of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

I prefer my coach to:

17. Stay interested in the personal well-being of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

18. Pat an athlete after a good performance. 1 2 3 4 5

19. Explain to each athlete the techniques and tactics of the sport. 1 2 3 4 5

20. Congratulate an athlete after a good play. 1 2 3 4 5

21. Refuse to compromise on a point. 1 2 3 4 5

22. Use a variety of drills for a practice. 1 2 3 4 5

23. Stress the mastery of greater skills. 1 2 3 4 5

24. Alter plans due to unforeseen events. 1 2 3 4 5

25. Let the athletes set their own goals. 1 2 3 4 5

26. Look out for the personal welfare of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

27. Use objective measurements for evaluation. 1 2 3 4 5

28. Plan for the team relatively independent of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

29. Tell an athlete when the athlete does a particularly good job. 1 2 3 4 5

30. Get approval from the athletes on important matters before going ahead. 1 2 3 4 5

31. Express appreciation when an athlete performs well. 1 2 3 4 5

32. Put the appropriate athletes in the lineup. 1 2 3 4 5

33. Encourage the athletes to confide in the coach. 1 2 3 4 5

34. Prescribe the methods to be followed. 1 2 3 4 5

35. Dislike suggestions and opinions from the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

36. Conduct proper progressions in teaching fundamentals. 1 2 3 4 5

37. Supervise athletes' drills closely. 1 2 3 4 5

38. Clarify training priorities and work on them. 1 2 3 4 5

39. Possess good knowledge of the sport. 1 2 3 4 5

40. Fail to explain his/her actions. 1 2 3 4 5

I prefer my coach to:

41. Encourage an athlete when the athlete makes mistakes in performance. 1 2 3 4 5

42. Praise the athletes' good performance after losing a competition. 1 2 3 4 5

43. Put an athlete into different positions depending on the needs of the situation. 1 2 3 4 5

44. Assign tasks according to each individual's ability and needs. 1 2 3 4 5

45. Recognize individual contributions to the success of each competition. 1 2 3 4 5

46. Present ideas forcefully. 1 2 3 4 5

47. Let the athletes decide on plays to be used in a competition. 1 2 3 4 5

48. Perform personal favors for the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

49. Compliment an athlete for good performance in front of others. 1 2 3 4 5

50. Give the athletes freedom to determine the details of conducting a drill. 1 2 3 4 5

51. Get input from the athletes at daily team meetings. 1 2 3 4 5

52. Clap hands when an athlete does well. 1 2 3 4 5

53. Give credit when it is due. 1 2 3 4 5

54. Help the athletes with their personal problems. 1 2 3 4 5

55. Ask for the opinion of the athletes on important coaching matters. 1 2 3 4 5

56. Reward an athlete as long as the athlete tries hard. 1 2 3 4 5

57. Let the athletes share in decision-making and policy formulation. 1 2 3 4 5

58. Visit with the parents/guardians of the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

59. Keep aloof from the athletes. 1 2 3 4 5

60. Increase complexity and demands if the athletes find the demands are too easy. 1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B: Manual for the Application of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS)

The leadership scale for Sport was originally formulated by P. Chelladurai and S.D. Saleh in 1980, and was later revised by James J. Zhang, Barbara E. Jensen, and Betty L. Mann in 1997. Three versions of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) are listed in the following pages respectively, which are athletic preference version, athletic perception version, and coach self-evaluation version. The dimensions of coaching leadership behaviors are defined as follows:

Training & Instruction Behavior (TI). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Improving the athlete's performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training.
- Instructing the athletes in the skills, techniques, and tactics of the sport.
- Providing the athletes with facilities, equipment, and practice methods that allow for the safety of the athletes.
- Planning training practices and evaluating the performance of the athletes.
- Having knowledge and being responsible.

Democratic Behavior (DB). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Allowing participation by the athlete in decisions pertaining to group goals, practice methods, and game tactics and strategies.
- Respecting and accepting the rights of the athletes.
- Encouraging involvement of the athletes in personnel selection and performance evaluation.
- Admitting mistakes and confronting problems.

Autocratic Behavior (AB). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Making independent decisions.
- Making and stressing personal authority.
- Using commands and punishment.
- Acting without considering the feeling and thinking of the athletes.
- Prescribing the ways to get work done.

Social Support Behavior (SS). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Providing the athletes with psychological supports that are indirectly related to athletic training or competition.
- Helping the athletes with personal problems.
- Providing for the welfare of the athletes.
- Establishing friendship, positive group atmosphere, and warm interpersonal relations with the athletes.
- Making sport part of enjoyment of an athlete's life.
- Protecting the athletes from any outside harm.

Positive Feedback Behavior (PF). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Reinforcing the athletes by recognizing and rewarding good performance.
- Encouraging an athlete after making a mistake.

- Correcting the behavior rather than blaming the athletes.
- Complimenting the athletes properly.
- Using body language properly.

Situational Consideration Behaviors (SC). Coaching behaviors aimed at:

- Considering situational factors, such as time, game, environment, individual, gender, skill level, and health condition.
- Setting up individual goals and clarifying ways to reach the goals.
- Differentiating coaching methods at different maturity stages and skill levels.
- Selecting an athlete for the appropriate game position or line up.

Appendix C: ITEM NUMBER UNDER EACH OF THE RLSS FACTOR

Factor	Number of Items	Item Number
Democratic Behavior	12	4, 7,9, 13, 14, 25, 30, 47, 50, 51, 55, 57
Positive Feedback Behavior	12	15, 18, 20, 29, 31, 41, 42, 45, 49, 52, 53, 56
Teaching & Instruction	10	3, 12, 19, 22, 23, 27, 36, 37, 38, 39
Situational Consideration	10	1, 5, 8, 10, 11, 24, 32, 43, 44, 60
Social Support Behavior	8	2, 16, 17, 26, 33, 48, 54, 58
Autocratic Behavior	8	6, 21, 28, 34, 35, 40, 46, 59

Note: 1. The RLSS is a multidimensional scale.

2. A composite score for a factor is equal to the sum of its item scores.

3. Each factor needs to be interpreted independently.

Appendix D: Demographic Questions

1. What year were you born?
   A. 1997
   B. 1996
   C. 1995
   D. 1994
   E. Before 1993

2. What is your educational classification?

   A. Freshman
   B. Sophomore
   C. Junior
   D. Senior
   E. Graduate Student

3. What sport do you participate in at your university?

   A. Basketball
   B. Softball
   C. Soccer
   D. Volleyball
   E. Swimming
   F. Track and Field
   G. Tennis
   H. Golf
   I. Cross Country
   J. Cheer
   K. Bowling
   L. Dance
   M. Lacrosse
   N. Other

4. Is the sport you participate in at your university considered to be a team sport or individual sport?

   A. Team Sport B. Individual Sport

5. If you had the opportunity to choose the gender of your coach, which would you choose?

   A. Male
   B. Female
   C. No preference – doesn't matter to me

Appendix E: Consent Letter

Purpose: You are invited to participate in a study in which the purpose is to assess if NAIA college-level female athletes' preference in coaching style and gender of the coach.
Instrumentation: The Revised Leadership Scale for Sports (RLSS) consists of 60 items regarding preference in coaching style. In addition, five items related to preference in gender of coach are included in addition to several demographic items. The survey will be completed online through a web-based survey provider. The estimated time to complete the survey will be approximately 20 minutes.

Research Personnel: The study is being conducted by Jon Stammers, doctoral candidate at Baker University under the direction of Dr. Gary George.

Potential Risk/Discomfort: There are no known risks of participation.

Potential Benefit: There are no direct benefits to you for your participation in this study. No incentives are offered. The information collected through your participation will be used to fulfill the educational requirement needed for my completion of the EdD. However, the findings will be made available to your college if desired.

Anonymity/Confidentiality: The data collected in this study are confidential. Your name will never be asked nor will any identifying personal information be collected, so there is no way for the researcher to identify any individuals. Responses will be reported aggregately.

Right to Withdraw: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.
If you have any questions regarding the survey or study, please contact me.

Jon Stammers
jstammers@benedictine.edu
HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW. YOU MAY PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO KEEP.

Appendix F: First Letter to Athletic Directors

Dear Athletic Director:

My name is Jon Stammers. I am an assistant professor and assistant football coach at Benedictine College. Currently, I am working on my doctoral dissertation. My research is centered on coach-gender preference and coaching style preference of NAIA college female student-athletes. In short, there is very little to no data available in this area.

Later this spring semester of 2015 I would like your permission to survey all of your female student-athletes. The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport is a well-recognized online survey which will be emailed to your student athletes via Survey Monkey. The data is completely private and anonymous, individually and institutionally. I will be using a survey that was created in 1997 and has been used in several related studies, most recently in the SEC. I hope to work with the GPAC, HAAC, KCAC.

Any findings will be made available to you as will access to the paper if you choose to read it. I hope this data will be valuable to both administrators and coaches in the hiring process and coaching small college female athletes.

Please reply with your assent or denial at your convenience. When I get approval to move forward, I will email you an alert followed by the survey. Of course, it will not occur until we are all in school. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jon Stammers Asst. Professor HWES
913-360-7585
913-832-0089
jstammers@benedictine.edu

Appendix G: Second Letter to Athletic Directors

Jon Stammers

Asst. Professor HWES

Benedictine College Atchison, KS

jstammers@benedictine.edu

913-360-7585

Dear Athletic Director,

This is a follow-up email to a previous message requesting your permission to send an online survey to your female student-athletes later this semester. My request would be to send you the survey via email with a link to a web-based survey provider and to have you send it to your athletes via email.

The survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. It was designed in 1997 and is called the RLSS or Revised Leadership Scale for Sport. It is designed to measure preferences in coaching/leadership styles. I am tabulating the results as part of a doctoral dissertation I am writing.

Please let me know if you would and your school would be willing to participate in this survey. It is my hope that the results garnered from this survey and the ensuing statistical data derived will be useful in future decisions made for hiring coaches of female teams.

Thank you for your consideration in advance.

Jon Stammers

Appendix H: IRB Letter of Approval

Baker University Institutional Review Board

July 21, 2015

Dear Jon Stammers and Dr. George,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research 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 CTodden@BakerU.edu or 785.594.8440.

Sincerely,

Chris Todden EdD
Chair, Baker University IRB

Baker University IRB Committee
Verneda Edwards EdD
Sara Crump PhD
Erin Morris PhD
Scott Crenshaw

Appendix I: Mean Score and Standard Deviation of All Behavior Items

Survey Questions	Mean	SD
SQ 39	4.75	0.77
SQ 32	4.55	0.84
SQ 8	4.48	0.83
SQ 17	4.48	0.93
SQ 26	4.47	0.85
SQ 3	4.46	0.82
SQ 22	4.37	0.85
SQ 53	4.35	0.88
SQ 29	4.34	0.81
SQ 11	4.32	0.86
SQ 20	4.29	0.95
SQ 5	4.28	0.90
SQ 31	4.25	0.92
SQ 33	4.24	0.91
SQ 38	4.22	0.85
SQ 10	4.21	0.93
SQ 12	4.14	0.91
SQ 44	4.14	0.93
SQ 45	4.12	0.93
SQ 60	4.10	0.90
SQ 23	4.06	0.90
SQ 36	4.06	0.92
SQ 43	4.04	0.89
SQ 34	4.01	0.88
SQ 4	4.00	0.88
SQ 24	4.00	0.94
SQ 2	3.98	0.98
SQ 16	3.91	1.00
SQ 41	3.88	1.09
SQ 19	3.87	1.05
SQ 37	3.86	0.98
SQ 27	3.85	0.89
SQ 1	3.83	1.14
SQ 25	3.82	0.91
SQ 9	3.72	1.09
SQ 15	3.72	1.06
SQ 7	3.70	1.06
SQ 18	3.67	1.16
SQ 14	3.65	0.97

SQ 52	3.60	1.19
SQ 51	3.55	1.12
SQ 30	3.51	1.06
SQ 49	3.49	1.13
SQ 56	3.36	1.02
SQ 28	3.36	0.94
SQ 42	3.26	1.11
SQ 54	3.21	1.11
SQ 46	3.17	1.09
SQ 55	3.16	1.20
SQ 57	3.12	1.13
SQ 58	3.00	1.13
SQ 13	2.96	1.07
SQ 50	2.79	1.02
SQ 47	2.73	1.01
SQ 21	2.66	1.09
SQ 6	2.50	1.12
SQ 48	2.30	1.06
SQ 59	2.26	1.04
SQ 35	2.13	1.11
SQ 40	1.64	1.02