

The assessment of athletic equity by head men's and women's coaches in the
National Junior College Athletic Association

by

Riann Mullis

B.S., Pittsburg State University, 2011
M.S., Pittsburg State University, 2013

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Abstract

Throughout history, the foundation of athletics has remained consistent to provide the opportunity to compete and gain skills that will remain valuable throughout life. A significant change for athletics was over 50 years since President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendment (Title IX) into law in 1972 (Valentin, 1997). The purpose of this study was to aim to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) DI and DII institutions. This study was composed of a mix-methods design that included a survey and interviews with head coaches of the following sports: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's outdoor track and field, baseball, and softball to learn how head coaches assess athletic equity and identify best practices of athletic equity implementation. The findings of this study offer a unique perspective on how head coaches identify and assess athletic equity and best practice concepts that can be used for community college administrations nationwide to assist in the advancement of athletic equity.

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Abstract

A significant change for athletics occurred over 50 years when President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendment (Title IX) into law in 1972 (Valentin, 1997). The purpose of this study was to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division (DI) and Division II (DII institutions). This study was composed of a mixed-methods design that included a survey and interviews with head coaches of the following sports: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's outdoor track and field, baseball, and softball to learn how head coaches assess athletic equity and identify best practices of athletic equity implementation in facilities, scholarships, and travel. The findings of this study offer a unique perspective on role theory and coaches' identity while using the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Review Framework. The conclusions and recommendations can be used by community college athletic directors and administrations nationwide to assist in the advancement of athletic equity.

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Lastly, I would like to send a final expression of my gratitude to all of you with my favorite closing that I inherited from the strongest person I have ever known, my Aunt Stephanie: *“Peace and Love Always.”*

Dedication

For Scot and Ruby, the loves of my life.

Scot, thank you for loving and supporting me for exactly who I am and never asking me to be less, but pushing me to be more. Most importantly, thank you for raising our daughter so that she knows no barriers, so she is heard and seen, and teaching her how to fight for her beliefs without hesitating or apologizing.

Ruby, this study and everything I do is for you. My goal in life is to create more space for young girls like yourself to take up all the space in the room without pause. Always remember it is, “Not fragile like a flower, but fragile like a bomb,” Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Collegiate athletics have been a part of the American culture since the 1800s (Lewis, 2013). In addition to providing opportunities for individuals, college sports continue to serve as a primary form of entertainment in the nation, generating millions of dollars through advertisements, broadcasts, and merchandise. Culturally speaking, athletics are prevalent in educational systems, entertainment, careers, business and advertising, marketing, and lifestyles (Hutchins & Rowe, 2014; Knowles et al., 2018). Sports significantly influence colleges and universities nationwide, acting as a driving force for institutional culture. It is not uncommon for a National College Athletic Association (NCAA) college campus to consist of exceptional stadiums, fieldhouses, and arenas that can seat up to 80,000 fans, nor is it surprising for these stadiums to be sold out for entire seasons. College sports' popularity and influence are customarily incomparable to other college activities and programs.

Throughout history, the foundation of athletics has remained consistent to provide the opportunity to compete and gain skills that will remain valuable throughout life. Athletic scholarships allow individuals to earn a college degree while pursuing their sports passion. It is an essential responsibility of college administrators to provide a positive and equitable campus atmosphere. Colleges and universities are driven by rules and regulations set forth internally and externally. State and federal laws are mandated to ensure compliance and accreditation; college administrators are expected to comply to receive funding and accreditation from the governing bodies that apply rules and regulations.

Athletic compliance is a significant component of college sports. In addition to federal and state laws, every athletic affiliation has its own constitution and set of bylaws that are revised and published annually to ensure compliance. These bylaws must be adhered to by the

affiliated institutions, or they are subject to sanctions based on the severity of the violation. For many college administrators and coaches, being current with the ever-evolving requirements of athletic rules and regulations is challenging.

Statement of the Problem

It has been over 50 years since President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendment (Title IX) into law in 1972 (Valentin, 1997). The law states: “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” (Title IX Education Amendments Act of 1972, para. 2). Though major progress has been made since the enactment of this law, questions remain as to what equity looks like in athletics (Jensen, 2022).

Background of the Problem

Although rules and regulations are established to guide administrators toward equity in athletics, it remains challenging to define equity clearly. It is essential to have the ability to conceptualize the similarities and differences of sports to recognize what is deemed Title IX equitable. As an example, two college sports, baseball and softball, compete in the same season and have many similarities; however, there are also many differences. Baseball tends to have a larger team roster due to the number of pitchers necessary for student-athlete safety; whereas softball does not require as many pitchers because they throw underhand, which is less harmful on the shoulder than the overhand pitching technique used in baseball. For that reason, at the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) level, softball is allotted 60 competition dates per year, compared to baseball, which is permitted only 56 competition dates (National Junior College Athletic Association [NJCAA], 2023c). Baseball and softball are allocated the

same number of scholarship contracts, also known as Letters of Intent (LOIs,) at 24 per sport (NJCAA, 2023c). Nevertheless, some may argue that the NJCAA should provide more scholarship opportunities to baseball because baseball requires more pitchers. Baseball and softball teams cannot share the same competition facilities due to each sport's different field dimensions, equipment, and rules. In both sports, the teams are often responsible for field maintenance (NCAA, 2023a). A recent facility trend in baseball and softball is artificial turf. Some coaches still prefer to compete on dirt and grass fields. However, due to weather and minimal maintenance, artificial turf is the new and upcoming fad for college baseball and softball. If one team has artificial turf and the other does not, this could put athletic equity into question.

Two sports with vast differences are volleyball and football. Aside from competing during the same season, they share few similarities. NJCAA volleyball allocates 14 LOIs due to the average roster size of 19, whereas a football team roster averages close to 100, and the sport can award up to 85 LOIs (NJCAA, 2023c). Regarding athletic facilities, football tends to have a practice field and a game day field. For volleyball, it is common to have smaller arenas and to practice and compete in the same facility. It is challenging to clearly define equity for these two sports because of the vast differences, but equity is expected. Relating to equipment distribution, the Title IX Resource Guide (2015) has clarified:

A male football player needs protective equipment such as pads and a helmet, and a female soccer player needs shin guards. Title IX does allow for a discrepancy in the cost of the equipment as long as both the football and soccer player received the same quality of equipment. However, a female ice hockey player must receive the same protective

equipment that a male ice hockey player would receive, in as much as the protective equipment is the same. (para. 10)

Regarding likeness of sports in the NJCAA, men's and women's basketball are distinctly similar. The published NJCAA Sports Procedures chart (2023c) for men's and women's basketball are the same; they have an identical number of competition dates, and the LOI distribution is equivalent at a maximum of 15 (NJCAA, 2023c). The basketball court and goal dimensions are the same, and though women play quarters and men play halves, the games are all 40 minutes.

Even with multiple individuals and regulations dedicated to athletics, there remains difficulty in defining athletic equity. Jensen (2022) stated, "Different institutions interpreted the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) regulations in different ways in efforts to be compliant" (p. 10). Some coaches may choose to spend fundraised money on facilities, and other coaches may spend fundraised money on a team trip. Some administrators may consider this action inequitable because different teams were not entirely equal in their experiences. Situations such as these create major complications and confusion, leaving a great deal open for debate.

Mainstream media has also highlighted a narrative of inequities that leads to confusion. A modern example that raised national attention was during the 2021 NCAA National Basketball Tournaments when the NCAA endured major scrutiny regarding the deficiency of the weight room equipment provided at the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament compared to the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. The female participants immediately recognized the circumstances, resulting in a social media post that quickly went viral. The photo displayed a single dumbbell rack and a stack of yoga mats provided to the women in San Antonio next to the

state-of-the-art weight facility in Indiana for the men (Steele, 2022). As this caused significant concern, it also indicated reasonable doubt regarding athletic equity.

The conundrum of athletic equity remains, and although many measures are established to help simplify the process, there continues to be misunderstanding. Athletic administrators, coaches, and student-athletes must collaborate to build a compliant and comprehensible environment for all participants. It is essential to understand the entirety of each sport and the different situations that athletic administrators, coaches, and student-athletes face.

Causby (2010) stated, “While research examining the relationship between Title IX and intercollegiate athletics exists, it has largely focused on 4-year institutions with limited emphasis placed on athletic programs at 2-year colleges” (p. 11). Thirteen years after Causby’s study, there remain gaps in the literature, specifically focusing on NJCAA institutions and head coaches’ assessment regarding athletic equity, specifically regarding athletic facilities, scholarships, and team travel amenities. Studies using opinions of senior administrators were conducted, but studies focused on assessing coaches’ experiences are limited, particularly in NJCAA athletics (Causby, 2010). These identified literature gaps lead to this study’s concentration.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) DI and DII institutions.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do the head coaches of men’s and women’s NJCAA DI and DII teams assess athletic equity implementation, specifically regarding team facilities, scholarships, and travel?

Research Question 2: What do NJCAA DI and DII team head coaches identify as best practices to implement athletic equity?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Lochmiller and Lester (2017) noted the integral parts of the dissertation research are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as they explain how the researcher made sense of the relationships and interactions in the study. Mead (1934) and Cooley's (1902) role identity theory "considers the self to be a product of social interaction, in that people come to know who they are through their interactions with others; in this perspective, a core mechanism is that of 'taking the role of the other'" (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 256) and will serve as one of the theoretical frameworks. Agaiby (2021) further explained that "Identity is the pivotal concept linking social structure with individual action; thus, the prediction of behavior requires an analysis of the relationship between self and social structure" (p. 227).

In addition to role identity theory, the second theoretical framework was Pim's (Balance is Better, n.d.) coaching theory, which focused on "Coach's inner thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in their role as a coach drive behaviors to produce results" (Balance is Better, n.d., para. 3). Pim stated, "Coaches serve as role models for their student-athletes who observe behaviors, set examples and standards that will, in turn, over time, shape the individual character strengths that they develop" (as cited in Balance is Better, n.d., para. 3).

The conceptual framework used was the NCAA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Review Framework (NCAA, 2023a). The NCAA designed this framework to enhance and promote DEI on college campuses. These frameworks were applied throughout this study to generate the research, survey, interview questions and interpret the data and how, in the role as head coach athletic equity was assessed.

Methodology

This mixed-methods study was intended to assess the experiences of the head coaches of men's and women's NJCAA DI and DII teams regarding athletic equity related explicitly to facilities, scholarships, and team travel. The quantitative phase of this study consisted of a survey focusing on the head coaches' assessment of their roles and experience in athletic equity. Participants had an opportunity post survey, to partake in a follow-up interview with the researcher via phone or Zoom that created the qualitative phase of this study.

Alignment Table

An alignment table displays the organizational structure used throughout the development of the study to outline the literature review, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and the methodology, survey, and interview questions. The alignment table can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Delimitations and Assumptions

This study was delimited to NJCAA levels DI and DII men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's outdoor track and field, baseball and softball. The research was restricted to head coaches to gain perspective from the highest leadership role in each athletic program. The NCAA was referenced throughout the study to understand the highest caliber of college athletics; however, data was not collected from the NCAA. It will be assumed the respondents answered honestly and accurately to the questions. Another assumption was that the head coaches were knowledgeable and possessed a basic understanding of athletic equity. The intent was to receive total input and the participant's perspectives about their programs and experiences related to athletic equity. The final assumption was that the participating institutions

had the expectation to comply with state and federal regulations, including Title IX and the completion of the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) survey.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was to provide a description of athletic equity in NJCAA DI and DII men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's outdoor track and field, baseball and softball by focusing on head coaches' assessments and experiences as college coaches.

Definitions of Terms

Athletic Expenses: Athletic expenses are expenses attributable to intercollegiate athletic activities. Expenses include appearance guarantees and options, athletically related student aid, contract services, equipment, fundraising activities, operating expenses, promotional activities, recruiting expenses, salaries and benefits, supplies, team travel, and other expenses attributable to intercollegiate athletics (U.S. Department of Education [USDE], 2023).

Athletic Scholarship: An athletic scholarship is any institutional athletic aid given to any student based on his/her athletic capabilities or athletic association (NJCAA, 2023a).

Compliance: Compliance is fulfilling official requirements (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023), specifically within this study compliance relates to athletic rules and regulations.

Equity: Equity is the quality of being fair or impartial (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023). Specifically focusing on athletic equity within this study.

Facility: A facility is something (e.g., a hospital) built, installed, or established to serve a particular purpose (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023). In this study, facilities refer to venues specifically used by student-athletes (e.g., a gymnasium).

Gymnasium: A gymnasium is an athletic facility equipped for sports or physical training (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023)

Head Coach: The head coach is the lead coach and main decision maker for the designated team and serves as the specific team’s chief executive officer (CEO; Kollasch, 2017).

Letter of Intent (LOI): The letter of intent serves to document the commitment between a member college and a student-athlete (NJCAA, 2023a).

Locker Room: The locker room is a room for changing clothes and storing clothing and equipment in lockers, especially one for use by sports players (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023).

National College Athletic Association: “The National College Athletic Association is a member-led organization dedicated to the well-being and lifelong success of college student-athletes at 4-year institutions” (NCAA, 2023b).

National Junior College Athletic Association: The National Junior College Athletic Association is an association that represents 2-year colleges in the United States and provides student-athletes with opportunities to prepare, compete, succeed, and achieve in their academic and athletic disciplines (NJCAA, 2023b).

Student-Athlete: A student-athlete is an individual enrolled in college courses concurrently competing in college athletics (NJCAA, 2023b.).

Title IX of the Educations Amendment (Title IX): Title IX is a federal law originating in 1972 and states, “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” (USDE, 2023, para. 2).

Weight Room: A weight room is a room containing equipment for weight training (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023). Institutions often have weight rooms specifically designated for student-athletes.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 consisted of the study's synopsis, including the problem's background, purpose statement, research question, and methodology. The alignment table was referenced to provide a visualization of what guided the study (see Appendix A). The significance of the study was defined to provide the reader with an understanding of the importance of the study. The definition of terms are found at the end of the chapter to provide concrete definitions of key terms.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provided an introduction and overview of the study by defining the statement of the problem, the background of the problem, and the purpose of the study. The first chapter explained the research question's theoretical and conceptual frameworks and described the methodologies selected for the study. The alignment table was referenced in Chapter 1, along with the delimitations and assumptions of this dissertation. The significance of the study, the definition of terms, and the organization of the chapter were covered throughout Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review relevant to the study and defines the gaps that will lead to the purpose of this study. The literature covers topics such as role identity, coach identity, Title IX, The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), athletic equity, Title IX, and coaches' and athletic directors' assessment of athletic equity. The study gap is also discussed at the conclusion of Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 covers the methodology portion of this study. The purpose of the study, research questions, and theoretical and conceptual frameworks are reviewed. The research design, study settings, and study participants are defined and described in this chapter. The instrumentation, data collection, sources, and analysis are also described throughout Chapter 3. Finally, the alignment table is referenced, and the limitations, ethical considerations, and study quality are described in this section of the study. Chapter 4 provides the data analysis of the study followed by Chapter 5 which provides the recommendations and conclusions

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter details the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the study. The researcher reviews the two main collegiate athletic affiliations, National College Athletic Association (NCAA); National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), and each association provides student-athletes opportunities. The historical context and the significance of Title IX and athletic equity are emphasized in this chapter to educate the reader on the relevance of the law in relation to the study. An overview of athletic facilities, scholarships, team travel, and various studies focuses on the perspectives of college athletic directors and coaches to clarify the study's purpose. The gaps in literature are presented at the end of the chapter to provide evidence for this study.

The literature throughout this chapter was acquired through a variety of databases such as ERIC, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. Terms such as “athletics,” “equity,” “Title IX,” “college athletics,” and “athletic equity,” were used to find the literature that best aligned with this study. The database searches resulted in a variety of scholarly articles, dissertations and previous studies that created an enriched literature review relevant to the purpose of this study. All this literature was carefully collected, examined, and revised to provide meaning and currency to the study.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Three lenses framed this study. Role identity (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) and coaching identity (Balance is Better, n.d.) served as theoretical frameworks focusing on how participants define their roles as individuals and coaches. The NCAA diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) framework served as the conceptual framework for this study. These selected frameworks provided the foundation of the study as the NJCAA head coaches' experiences are connected to

their roles and coaching identities and how those roles influence their viewpoints concerning athletic equity pertaining to team facilities, scholarships, and travel.

Theoretical Frameworks

Lochmiller and Lester (2017) stated, “The theoretical framework serves as the foundation of the research study” (p. 31). Coaches integrating DEI in direct correlation with their role identity is central to understanding head coaches’ overall perspectives.

Role Identity

Role identity theory came to fruition through the works of Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) and was introduced as “The product of social interaction and the theory that people come to know who they are through their interactions with others; in this perspective, a core mechanism is that of ‘taking the role of the other’” (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 263). According to Lindesmith and Straus (1956), role identities cause meaning to oneself. In addition to individual roles, others respond to a person regarding role identity (Hogg et al., 1995). Role identities, by definition, imply action (Callero, 1985). Individuals have distinct components of self, called role identities, for each role position in society that people occupy, such as mothers, fathers, soldiers, teachers, and coaches (Stryker, 1968). Burke and Stets (2009) continued to specify:

Identity has been defined as a set of meanings that classifies who an individual is when they are occupying a given role in society or being a member of a group or specifies a set of characteristics that identify him or her as an individual. (p. 224)

Dilts and Bacon (n.d.) further expanded on the identity concept as it relates to the ego and soul, saying:

Identity can be viewed as being composed of two complementary aspects: the ego and the soul. The ego is oriented toward survival, recognition, and ambition. The soul is oriented

toward purpose, contribution, and mission. Charisma, passion, and presence emerge naturally when these two forces are aligned. (para. 6)

According to Stryker (1968), the perception that one is performing an adequate role would contribute to creating confidence. In contrast, self-perception of poor role performance may prompt doubts about one's self-worth and even produce psychological distress symptoms.

Coach Role Identity

Pim's coaching identity theory extends role identity (Balance is Better, n.d.). His coaching identity theory focuses on the role of an athletic coach. It is defined as "A coach's inner thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in their role as a coach that drive behaviors to produce results" (Balance is Better, n.d., para. 16). Balance is Better (n.d.) further explained:

A global expert in character and leader development through sport, asks coaches to consider the qualities they notice when observing peers in training sessions or games and reframe those qualities as character strengths. Then, once coaches understand the different types of character strengths and recognize what they look like in practical terms, coaches can establish the ones we wish to exhibit ourselves and form their own coaching identity. Ultimately, identity and coaching culture will be recognized by the players, influence the development of their own character strengths, impact both their individual and collective senses of identity, and help to drive the culture in the team. As such, developing a positive coaching identity is key to creating effective learning environments in which young student-athletes can enjoy their sport, develop, and thrive. (para. 3)

Coaching college student-athletes is a complex task combining multiple roles influenced by social and cultural situations (Potrac et al., 2000). Undeniably, much of a coach's role

responsibility coincides with many individuals, from student-athletes to administrators and coaches from other teams. These connections lead to the concept that coaching is a social activity interrelated to human interaction (Cushion et al., 2003).

According to Kollach's (2017) research, although some coaches' view performing multiple roles for their student-athletes as a positive aspect, they may view the other professional roles they play on their campuses as a hindrance that takes away time from their coaching focus. These include booster communication and assisting with other campus duties outside of coaching. In addition to these roles, many coaches consider upholding a respectable reputation and presence an added expectation (Potrac et al., 2000). Kollasch (2017) also found a driving factor for head coaches is the passion for molding young people, and he acknowledged, "Coaches play a much larger role for their student-athletes in addition to their sport-specific training such as a mentor, advisor and parent-figure" (p. 46).

McMullen (2016) conducted a qualitative study on how NCAA baseball coaches understood their leadership roles and responsibilities in higher education. His findings strongly suggested head coaches believe a sizable portion of their coaching role is to create a team vision executed by all program participants. The head coaches in McMullen's study also specified that their job entails the role of marketers and fundraisers and must spend time with boosters and community members. Like Kollach (2017), McMullen's study presented a central theme confirming how the coaches focused on the accountability of executing the various responsibilities to generate and sustain a winning culture. McMullen's findings also suggested that administrators in charge of hiring candidates for leadership positions should look well beyond a candidate's technical expertise and thoroughly evaluate a candidate's leadership knowledge and skills.

A similar study by Pope et al. (2014) focused on competitive-level coaches to obtain an in-depth and detailed description of the coaches' perspectives. The research separated the construct of coach identity into two higher-order themes: coach meanings and coach identity prominence. Coach meanings were further divided into coaching behavioral expectations, coaching characteristics, and ultimate coaching purpose. Coaching identity prominence was distributed into coaching centrality equals importance and coaching emotions. This study was consistent with role identity theorists' claims that meanings are learned through responses from others in the environment and through imitation. Pope et al.'s findings further described the coach's role of being a facilitator and providing student-athletes with the necessary tools and the environment to produce the greatest potential for development in their sport. One of the coaching characteristics reported was the need to be fair, objective, and ethical to provide the optimal athletic environment.

Burke and Stets (2009) further explained coaches may learn how to act based on the actions of other coaches they have observed or worked with throughout their careers; these values may also take the form of mindful behaviors or cognitions. Based on Burke and Stets's findings, coaches serve a variety of roles and responsibilities both inside their program and the institution. A major component of the coaches' roles is identifying and owning their personal and professional expectations for themselves and their respective programs (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Teacher Identity

Teacher identity is comparable to coaching identity as both theories consist of the roles in an educational setting. Although the teacher identity theory is not being used as a framework for this study, its similarities add relevance to this study because teachers and coaches strongly influence student-athletes. At the collegiate level, athletes are referred to as student-athletes, an

interrelation term for their roles as students and athletes. Agaiby (2021) observed, “Because intercollegiate student-athletes find themselves straddled between two realms, academics and athletics, their identity is consequently reflecting that dichotomy” (p. 11).

Ehmer (2018) conducted a qualitative study on how teachers identify and connect their belief systems to coincide with teacher perception and reality. His findings indicated teachers may not perceive their actions or interactions with students negatively because their identity and belief systems do not allow them to do so. Hence, when teachers truly embody their work’s vision and mission, they can change their beliefs and values about the significance of relationship building and develop the skills and capabilities to become relational. In the study, one of the participants, a current principal, related her personal experience as a soccer coach to her role as a principal and how the roles intertwine (Ehmer, 2018).

Multiple studies have identified role identity; however, there has been limited research focused on coaching identity of NJCAA DI and DII head coaches. This specific study focused on identifying the gap in the literature regarding coaching identity.

Conceptual Framework

Lochmiller and Lester (2017) stated, “A conceptual framework builds from a theoretical framework, but explains narratively or graphically ‘the key factors, variables or constructs and their presumed interrelationships that are central to your study’” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 31). It was further found that, “Over the past few years, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have been a prime focus in higher education” (Barnett, 2020, p. 28).

National Collegiate Athletic Association Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework

The NCAA DEI review framework (NCAA, 2023a) was created at the request of the NCAA membership for optional use to support thorough and meaningful DEI reviews in athletics (NCAA, 2023a). This framework aims to provide institutions with an additional tool to implement pathways for student-athletes and staff to reach their full potential. The NCAA DEI review framework provides guidelines for college leaders to foster an equitable campus environment by collaborating, focusing on key questions and areas of exploration, and prompting institutions to address self-identified DEI shortfalls. Each framework section suggests action items to put the review findings into practice. The entirety of the NCAA DEI review framework can be found in Appendix B.

According to the NCAA (2023), this framework aims to provide the opportunity for growth and connection for coaches, administrators and athletic departments that take the time to learn about, connect with, and build on cross-campus initiatives to amplify the impact of their departmental efforts. It is understood that this framework is not required and may vary by school, conference, public/private and other affiliations, region, and state (NCAA, 2023b). The framework provides a four-step process displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. NCAA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework Steps and Processes

Step	Process
1. Identify collaborators and create context	Proactive collaboration demonstrates that athletics seeks to cooperate with the school's overall DEI efforts.
2. Review demographics, outcomes, and climate/experiences data	Use data to set specific goals to increase representation in particular areas or to help educate others about the diverse makeup of your population.
3. Review athletics policies and practices for impact on DEI	Examine all institutional policies and procedures. Department operations should be intentional about advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
4. Review legal, institutional compliance, and legal obligations	The NCAA has a baseline expectation that its members comply with all federal, state, and local laws and NCAA legislation and policy.

Two steps are provided in this framework that were essential for this study: Steps 2 and 3. Step 2 examines the efforts to monitor the climate and experiences of student-athletes and staff. This framework section is especially relevant to the study because it focuses explicitly on access to athletic facilities. In addition, Step 3 provides an overview of all athletics policies and practices that may be examined for impact on climate, outcomes, and experiences relevant to scholarships and team travel. This step also highlights equitable recruiting resources for both men's and women's teams. This framework, specifically Steps 2 and 3, is particularly relevant to the study. The full description of the NCAA diversity, equity, and DEI review framework is also found in Appendix B.

Collegiate Athletic Associations

Two main athletic associations in the United States represent thousands of student-athletes and allow high school graduates to compete as college athletes at the national level. The largest 4-year college association is the NCAA, and the largest 2-year college athletic affiliation

is the NJCAA. In addition to institutional policies and procedures, all NCAA and NJCAA-affiliated colleges are required to follow state and federal legislation to secure funding.

National Collegiate Athletic Association

The NCAA (2023c) was established in 1906 and was initially known as the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States, then renamed in 1910. The organization's mission states, "The NCAA is a member-led organization focused on cultivating an environment that emphasizes academics, fairness and well-being across college sports" (NCAA, 2023c, para. 1). In 1973, the NCAA divided into three different divisions with the philosophy to align like-minded campuses in the areas of philosophy, competition, and opportunity. Each division develops its own legislation through committees overseen by college presidents and chancellors. Among all three divisions, there are a total of 1,098 schools affiliated with the NCAA (2023c). An overview of the NCAA divisional structure and resources available are defined and located in Appendix C.

The National Junior College Athletic Association

The NJCAA (2023b) mission states, "It is the mission of the NJCAA to foster a national program of athletic participation in an environment that supports equitable opportunities consistent with the educational objectives of member colleges" (p. 2). Since its establishment in 1938, the association has taken pride in providing student-athletes with opportunities to prepare, compete, succeed, and achieve in their academic and athletic disciplines. According to the NJCAA (2023), "The NJCAA represents 518 two-year colleges. Between three different divisions, more than 65,000 NJCAA student-athletes are pursuing academic and athletic opportunities" (p. 3).

NJCAA-affiliated institutions have the right to declare the division of their institution, and there is also the option for schools to be multidivisional. For example, a school can be Division I (DI) in men's and women's basketball and Division II (DII) in women's softball. In many cases, funding drives the divisional choice of a 2-year college. Institutions without residence halls often declare DII because no direct housing expenses are associated with attending the college. In contrast, a college with residence halls and the appropriate funding may opt to have all DI programs because there is enough money to designate full rides, including tuition and room and board (NJCAA, 2023c). An overview of the NJCAA divisional structure and resources available are defined and located in Appendix D.

Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972

A core component of college athletics is equity, determined by Title IX of the Education Amendment Act (Title IX Resource Guide, 2015). Before 1972, athletic opportunities were made more readily available to men than women. Title IX was signed into law in 1972 and states, "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" (USDE, 2023, para. 2). In this law, "programs" refers to all the activities of any educational institution receiving federal funding. Key areas include access to higher education, career education, education for pregnant and parenting students, math and science, sexual harassment, standardized testing, technology, and athletics (Winslow, 2013). Institutions that receive federal funding enforce Title IX by designating an employee as the Title IX coordinator to administer compliance. "Implementing Title IX requires institutions to provide equal athletic opportunities for members of both sexes and to accommodate students' athletic interests and abilities effectively" (U.S. Department of Education [USDE], 2020b). In cases of

noncompliance, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), which oversees the distribution of federal funding, may terminate aid (Gladstone, 1998).

There are three basic parts of Title IX as it applies to athletics defined by the U.S.

Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2020b):

1. Participation: Title IX requires that women and men be provided equitable opportunities to participate in sports. Title IX does not require institutions to offer identical sports but an equal opportunity to play.
2. Scholarships: Title IX requires that female and male student-athletes receive athletics scholarship dollars proportional to their participation.
3. Other benefits: Title IX requires the equal treatment of female and male student-athletes in the provisions of (a) equipment and supplies; (b) scheduling of games and practice times; (c) team travel and daily allowance/per diem; (d) access to tutoring; (e) coaching, (f) locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities; (g) medical and training facilities and services; (h) housing and dining facilities and services; (i) publicity and promotions; (j) support services and (k) recruitment of student-athletes.
(USDE, 2020b)

To maintain compliance in these areas, the OCR uses a three-part test to determine whether an institution meets its Title IX obligations. The OCR deems an institution in compliance with a three-part test if it meets any one of the following parts of the test:

1. The number of male and female athletes is substantially proportionate to their respective enrollments; or

2. The institution has a history and continuing practice of expanding participation opportunities responsive to the developing interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex; or
3. The institution is fully and effectively accommodating the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex (USDE, 2020b)

These regulations provide the framework for Title IX coordinators and auditors to adhere to and review when creating policies, conducting audits, and determining strategies moving forward in strategic plans. Regarding the second area of compliance, financial aid, Title IX requires female and male student-athletes receive athletics scholarship dollars proportional to their participation (Stafford, 2004). Therefore, if 60% of student-athletes are female and 40% are male, then 60% of athletic scholarship funding should go to female student-athletes and 40% to male student-athletes (Kenney, 2013).

The complications of athletic equity have resulted in provisions to help assist in the requirements of athletic equity. Title IX policy (NCAA, n.d.) indicates the following:

Student-athletes who have questions about Title IX specific to their institution may find the following individuals on their campus a good resource: (1) senior woman administrator (SWA); (2) director of athletics; (3) faculty athletics representative; (4) compliance coordinator; (5) the legal counsel; or (6) Equal Employment Opportunities office (Title IX Frequently Asked Questions, Question 14).

Missing from this list of resources are head coaches, thus the need for their assessment of athletic equity.

Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act

In 1994, the United States Congress passed the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA), which required all institutions receiving federal funding and sponsoring intercollegiate athletics to provide specific information annually (USDE, 2020a). Since 1996, the survey has been edited and reviewed to ensure that the most appropriate data are collected. The authors consist of members from the NCAA Research Committee, the NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA), and the federal government (DeHass, 2008). Since its establishment in 1996, the EADA has covered the following areas in athletics: total expenses, scholarships, recruiting expenses, head and assistant coaches' salaries, and coaches budgeted per team. This survey supports Title IX by providing college administrators with a measuring tool to determine if their institutions uphold athletic equity (USDE, 2020a). Kenney (2013) explained the EADA data are reported by the institution's designated employee responsible for reporting. Furthermore, the data do not result in automatic sanctions for institutions failing to achieve equity in the specified areas. Instead, a compliance investigation at an institution might take place only if an individual files a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

The History of Title IX

The enactment of Title IX was a breakthrough for women nationwide, comparable to other monumental legislation such as the 19th Amendment of 1920, which provided women the right to vote, and the Civil Rights Movement of 1964, which prohibited discrimination (McClure, 2020). Over the past 50 years, Title IX has enriched the lives of thousands of women by providing opportunities for women to compete and participate in collegiate sports. Before Title IX, there were less than 32,000 female athlete participants compared to 172,000 male student-athletes (Kennedy, 2010; U.S. Department of Education [USDE], 2010). Many

educational entities did not let women or girls participate in athletics, and if by a slight chance they were allowed, there was a minimum opportunity for scholarships because they were reserved for male student-athletes (Winslow, 2013). Ferris' (2000) study interviewed Stanford's head tennis coach, Dick Gould, at the time, highlighting:

[Dick Gould stated] "My wife played here in the early 70s, and they had practiced only 2 days a week for an hour-and-a-half, only in the spring, and they had to use the men's old tennis balls, buy their own equipment, and pay for their own team travel—which included using their own cars." Anne, an instructor in Stanford's Physical Education program, was quoted as saying that, prior to Title IX, "women's sports were treated like P.E. classes." (p. 69)

Rhode and Walker (2008) identified, "The statute and increase in female athletic participation are both a cause and an effect of more progressive understandings of women's rights and capabilities" (p. 8). Since the introduction of Title IX, the rate of women in college sports has increased by 456% (Kennedy, 2010). Athletic directors at all levels rely on Title IX coordinators and committees to assist with compliance, funding, staffing, and budget discussions focusing on equity (Jensen, 2022).

Title IX in Collegiate Athletics

Rodkey (2018) conducted a quantitative study to examine the levels of knowledge and perceptions among NCAA DII athletic administrators, staff, and coaches regarding Title IX standards at their institution. Rodkey's (2018) research resulted in the following findings:

On a five-point scale, participants' average overall knowledge score was 3.04 ($SD = 1.64$). The easiest questions to answer correctly focused on the three-part test of Title IX compliance (Q1, 73%) and the substantial proportionality calculation (Q2, 77%). The

most difficult items to answer correctly centered on scholarship requirements related to Title IX (Q6, 50%), Title IX as a quota system (Q3, 32%), female athletes trying out for male teams (Q4, 32%), and money raised through booster organizations (Q5, 39%). (pp. 97–98)

The study indicated that though athletic directors possessed the most athletic equity knowledge, there were no differences in coaches and staff (Rodkey, 2018).

Specifically relating to athletic facilities, Rodkey (2018) found, “Levels of disagreement were highlighted in the areas of locker room facilities at a total of 35% disagreeing that locker rooms were equitable” (p. 99). Perceptions connected to the awareness and understanding of Title IX issues identified that more than 70% of individuals were aware of their Title IX coordinator and believed their institutions were committed to achieving gender equity in the athletic programs. In contrast to other studies, Rodkey did conclude there was a difference in perceptions regarding athletic equity in facilities in the athletic department overall, but sport-specific data were not provided. Furthermore, Rodkey found scholarship opportunities were distributed proportionally, based on dollar amounts, to the gender breakdown of athletes. In addition, approximately 60% of the participants felt their institutions provided the appropriate Title IX and athletic equity information and training. Overall, the participants agreed at a 78.9% rate that team travel per diems was equitable among all teams (Rodkey, 2018).

More recently, Tegetmeyer (2021) conducted a qualitative multicase study at two NCAA DI universities, The University of Illinois and The University of Minnesota. The study examined EADA results, meeting minutes, and overall campus communication data to determine the institution’s commitment to Title IX equity. Tegetmeyer (2021) concluded, “One thing is for certain: gender equity in the context of college sports shows a complexity that deserves a lot

more attention and study” (p. 116). Another key finding from this study was that football and men’s basketball still dictated decision making in most college campuses’ athletics departments. Tegetmeyer (2021) analyzed the structure of the college athletics industry to see if the men-dominated structuralism of conferences and the NCAA impeded an institution’s ability to comply with the gender equity expectations of Title IX. When examining the gender breakdowns of the NCAA, Gabel and Coy (2020) found:

The Big Ten seems to be well balanced in regard to gender with 55% of its “leadership team” being women (Big Ten, 2006). The Big Ten’s leadership team was defined as a role with the title commissioner, deputy, associate, or chief of staff. That is remarkably balanced compared to the institutions themselves, with Illinois doing the better of the two, with 40% of campus leadership being women and 33% of its Board of Trustees being women (LeRoy, 2021). At Minnesota, women represent 29% of its campus leadership and only 25% of its Board of Regents. (p. 113)

Specifically related to athletic facilities and equity, Tegetmeyer (2021) found:

The women athletes of the two institutions in this study, though they have access to some of the best facilities and coaches in the country, still have a much different experience than some of the men on the revenue-generating teams at these same institutions.

Football-only facilities at both schools dwarf anything any of the other sports teams have access to, indicating the different experiences of the two genders. (p. 119)

The study reviewed Minnesota’s historical data for the athletics aid/scholarships and concluded that Minnesota has a compliance issue. Tegetmeyer (2021) reviewed the past 16 years of EADA data, finding Minnesota averaged 4% out of compliance in favor of the men. The study

concluded similar findings for Illinois as well. In Illinois' past 16 years of EADA data, the college averaged 2% out of compliance in favor of the men (Tegetmeyer, 2021).

Athletic Facilities

Recruiting through monetary incentives violates the bylaws for college athletic associations, which results in athletic departments investing in athletic facilities to become more enticing than their counterparts (Hoffer et al., 2015). Since the passage of Title IX, access to facilities and equipment has increased for women (Brake, 2010). Athletic facilities are taken into thoughtful consideration during the recruiting process. When colleges and universities invest in facilities, there is no universal layout; instead, the way the space is designed will reflect the individual culture of the school to meet the needs of the individual needs and to stay within budget (Dahnert & Pack, 2007).

Ferris (2000) conducted a study focusing on attributes of three successful DI institutions. Ferris found that winning was a core component of success across all three institutions, as it is for all major college athletic programs. Furthermore, at all three institutions where the study took place, the results found that every sport sponsored by the athletic departments was expected to be competitive in terms of wins and losses, and those programs that were "fully funded," with topflight facilities and a full complement of scholarships, were expected to attain the highest level of success, competing for conference and national championships. Ferris' research concluded it was no coincidence that most low-performing sports programs had the worst facilities compared to their counterparts at each school.

Title IX coordinators and athletic administrators oversee the implementation of athletic projects, including facilities. Based on the facility assessment of the Title IX coordinator's expertise, the facility upgrade could cause a potential inequity issue if one facility provides more.

Additionally, in baseball and softball, if one team has a turf field and the other has a dirt field, there will need to be major reasoning behind that decision, or it could be deemed inequitable because turf provides more access due to the weather resistance than dirt does. Dahnert and Peck (2007) stated:

High-quality sports facilities are essential in recruiting top collegiate student-athletes and coaches. They enhance the school's competitiveness and enable expansion of the school's sports programs. In choosing schools, top student-athletes and coaches assess the quality of the stadium, playing fields, track and courts. (para. 1)

The authors explained the locker room is the heart of the behind-the-scenes action for each team and a space where they can meet, prepare, and use as a changing area. Coaches can also determine other needs for the space, such as study hall, team meetings, and film review. Locker rooms are an extremely popular area for student-athletes; this space is considered exclusive for team comradery.

Dahnert and Peck (2007) clarified the expectation of the quality and availability of college athletic facilities, and, in numerous cases, many colleges have administrators specifically designated to campus facilities. At large NCAA schools, an athletic administrator is often responsible for overseeing athletic facilities. Higher education athletics projects have become increasingly complex as the demand for excellence continues. They require a vision incorporating design, construction, renovation, management, and planning. A process that involves all constituencies—administration, coaching staff, contributors, student-athletes, and housekeeping staff, and open communication with the project team helps address the details that can lead a plan to a successful implementation (Dahnert & Peck, 2007).

At the NCAA DI level, the institutional investment in facilities is extensive. Hobson and Rich (2015) concluded that in 2014, 48 4-year colleges spent \$772 million combined on athletic facilities, an 89% increase from \$408 million spent in 2004, adjusted for inflation. In 2013, Nike cofounder Phil Knight spent approximately \$138 million for the University of Oregon's Hatfield-Dowlin football complex. The authors noted that in the same year, \$45 million was invested at The University of Tennessee's Anderson Training Center, a football training facility. In 2015, the athletic department completed a \$156 million football facility project at the University of Colorado Boulder, including new locker rooms, coach's offices, and a team weight room (Hobson & Rich, 2015).

Notably, a study conducted by Huml et al. (2019) focused on the significance of athletic facilities for men's basketball and football concerning the recruiting success at institutions in the NCAA Power-5 (Atlantic Coast Conference, Southeastern Conference, Big 12, Big Ten, and Pacific-12). Thel et al.'s (2019) study aimed to investigate new facilities' impact on recruiting for Power-5 football and men's basketball programs. The facilities data for this study were collected from press releases posted on the schools' official athletic webpages following the announcement or completion of a project. According to Huml et al. (2019):

The data were initially recorded as the year in which a project was completed and classified into two categories. The first category was termed 'direct' facilities improvements and included projects closely related to student-athletes' athletic performances (e.g., weight rooms and practice facilities, playing field and stadium improvements). The second set included the 'indirect' facility investments that were classified as projects not directly related to athletic performance (e.g., academic centers and dormitories). In total, there were 57 (33 direct, 24 indirect) facility improvements

recorded for men's basketball and 107 (72 direct, 35 indirect) for football between the years of 2005 and 2015. These decisions were further confirmed by an active, athletic administrator working in major gifts at a Power Five program. (p. 6)

In contrast to Ferris's (2000) study, Huml et al.'s (2019) research found, while many athletic programs have invested in the addition and, or renovations of athletic facilities, there was little to no impact on the recruiting success for men's basketball or football. An alternative explanation of the findings discovered the following:

The addition of completed football and basketball facilities could have little to no effect on recruiting rankings because a large number of schools made upgrades around the same time. Prospective student-athletes would have many upgraded or new facilities to select from, meaning these elaborate projects would no longer become a deciding factor in their decision to attend. This situation personifies the saying, 'the rising tide lifts all boats,' as many universities upgrade their facilities and negate the expected benefit. In essence, the results of this study support the conjecture that the numerous football-related projects begin to cancel each other out. With so many schools building football facilities, the only way to garner increased recruiting success may be to pursue uncommon facility upgrades. For example, a university may want to pursue creating/renovating more unique projects, such as athlete-only dorms or food halls, if they identify that their competitors are not addressing those facilities on their campuses. (Huml et al., 2019, p. 14)

Athletic Directors' Perspectives

According to Ward (2011), college leaders must prioritize, balance, and reconcile an increasingly complex set of decision factors related to their intercollegiate athletic programs while maintaining the integrity of the institution's academic mission. Due to the limited research

conducted in community colleges on athletic compliance, Causby's (2010) primary purpose was to "Compare and analyze the perceptions of 2-year college athletic administrators regarding efforts surrounding Title IX compliance" (p. 157). According to the findings, "Athletic directors ranked unequal facilities as the 1³th barrier out of a total of 19 listed barriers, one being the highest concern)" (Causby, 2010, p. 116). Although preceding research had found differences in perceptions of compliance by gender at 4-year schools, Causby indicated that, based on his findings, there was less of an issue at 2-year institutions. Causby's exploration successfully determined Title IX compliance barriers and successes at 2-year colleges. The study was conducted over a decade ago, which suggested the need for more current research on the topic (Causby, 2010).

Through Ferris's (2000) findings, related explicitly to athletic directors' opinions, the University of Florida's athletic director, Jeremy Foley, stated, "Keeping facilities updated is a huge factor in showing the institutional commitment to men's basketball" (p. 182). The study also concluded, "State-of-the-art facilities and a full complement of scholarships are paramount in attracting the nation's most elite athletes" (Ferris, 2000, p. 355).

Foley further described the rationale behind Florida's athletic department's massive support structure of 22 departments and 275 full-time employees for 18 sports, saying:

We have a broad-based commitment to every sport, broad-based meaning equal support for each sport. I have a philosophy that every athlete who comes through here is going to have the same experience athletically and academically. (Ferris, 2000, p. 202)

Ferris (2000) indicated the University of Florida's boosters focused entirely on voluntary giving and philanthropy and had only two goals: "funding scholarships and building facilities" (p. 199).

Coaches' Perspectives

A quantitative study by Kenney (2013) interviewed male and female head and assistant coaches of women's teams from NJCAA Region 23. This study focused on NJCAA coaches' perceptions of gender equity and Title IX compliance among community colleges in Mississippi. Kenney (2013) stated, "Equity data reported by institutions through the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act may not accurately reflect information or perceptions of the coaches" (p. 14). Kenney (2013) found, "Only 23.5% of coaches reported reviewing annual data reported to the EADA" (p. 88). Consistent with these findings, Staurowsky and Weight (2011) believed coaches and staff members might not feel their obligation or responsibility to know the law or bring issues forward regarding Title IX infractions. Kenney (2013) further revealed, "The importance of surveying women's programs' coaches was to ascertain perceptions from a source more directly connected to and affected by inequities" (p. 14). In addition, the findings suggested the greatest number of respondents disagreed or disagreed strongly that benefits and services were provided equitably for men's and women's teams, specifically the locker room facilities, publicity, and equipment and supplies. Among the 19 items ranked, "The number one ranked least equitable by the coaches' perceptions were locker room facilities, number five was competitive facilities and practice facilities were ranked seventh overall" (Kenney, 2013, p. 87). The response comparison concluded, "The male coaches were more in agreement than female coaches that benefits and services were provided for equitably" (Kenney, 2013, p. 91).

In a comparison of responses by gender, Kenney (2013) revealed:

Males had higher mean scores on all items related to awareness, with the exception of the item related to reviewing annual data submitted to the U.S. Department of Education as required by the EADA (on a 5-point scale). The mean score on this item for males was

2.71 ($SD = 1.25$), and for women, $M = 2.78$ ($SD = 1.19$). Women reported being less comfortable ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.14$) than males ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.04$) discussing gender equity or Title IX noncompliance with their supervisor. (p. 105)

This study directly provided the perspective of female sports coaches and how they navigated through athletic equity. Among Kenney's (2013) findings, "descriptive statistics discovered 19.2% of coaches strongly disagreed that scholarships were distributed equitably, and 34.6% of coaches did not know if scholarships were distributed equitably among male and female student-athletes at their respective institutions" (p. 6). Additional findings indicated "team travel per Diem ranked 7 out of 12 from the perceptions of the head coaches of least equitable to most equitable" (Kenney, 2013, p. 87).

Kollasch's (2017) mixed-methods study analyzed Iowa community college coaches' levels of job satisfaction and their perspectives on their potential impacts on their student-athletes' educational experiences and outcomes. Kollasch (2017) concluded, "According to the seven interview participants, the aspect that would improve their level of job satisfaction most would be if they could concentrate on just being a coach without having to do the noncoaching duties on campus." (p. 181). Kollasch (2017) stated the following findings in his study:

Fellow researchers have examined the reasons for women leaving the coaching profession and have pointed to factors such as lack of opportunity (Knoppers et al., 1991), discrimination (Stangl & Kane, 1991), better opportunities outside of coaching (Lowry & Lovett, 1997), and time demands associated with coaching (Weiss & Stevens, 1993). (p. 53).

Ferris (2000) interviewed NCAA Ohio State head swim coach Bill Wadley, who did not minimize the importance of the relationship between new facilities and success. Wadley stated:

We have a great tradition, and it is going to take better recruiting and talent. But recruiting goes hand in hand with facilities, and that goes hand in hand with hosting junior national, regional, and high school state meets to bring student-athletes to your campus. (Ferris, 2000, p. 285)

Overall, Ferris concluded head coaches, for the most part, are highly competitive people who want the opportunity to build programs that can be among the very best in the nation, and athletic facilities are a benefactor to athletic success.

The Women's Sports Foundation

The Women's Sports Foundation (WSF, 2020) exists to enable girls and women to reach their potential in sports and life. According to the WSF (2000), "Founded by Billie Jean King in 1974, the foundation strengthens and expands participation and leadership opportunities through research, advocacy, community programming, and a wide variety of collaborative partnerships" (p. 2).

The WSF surveyed United States female sports leaders ($N = 2,356$) from all sectors of girls' and women's sports (i.e., youth, high school, college, elite/Olympic, and professional) to measure their thoughts. The study focused on the progress and challenges for female student-athletes and what the individuals personally recommend to provide athletic empowerment for girls and women. The following results were concluded from the survey:

- The participation and opportunity in sports for urban and rural girls drop out of sports at twice the rate of boys.
- 70% of female sports leaders say the lack of women's sports media coverage limits girls' sports participation.

- 87% of all three NCAA divisions offered a disproportionately higher number of athletic opportunities to male student-athletes than their enrollment.
- 83% of college coaches say they have never received formal Title IX training.
- 31% of female coaches believe they risk losing their jobs if they speak up about Title IX and gender equity.
- In sports, 60% of female sports leaders report they have experienced sex discrimination in the workplace.
- 60% of female sports leaders report being paid less for the same job as men (WSF, 2020, p. 3).

Summary

Cooley (1902), Mead (1934), and Balance is Better (n.d.) introduced the two theoretical frameworks of this study: role identity and coach identity. The literature from Kollasch (2017), McMullen (2016), and Pope et al. (2014) all found that college coaches agreed that their role responsibility exceeds far beyond the coaching of their respective sport. In addition, in all three studies, the head coaches sensed a responsibility for their teams' overall culture and reputation.

The literature of Rodkey (2018) and Tegetmeyer (2021) found gender inequities in facilities and the overall experience for female student-athletes compared to male student-athletes. Ferris (2000), Dahnert and Peck (2007), and Huml et al. (2019) all studied the impact of college athletic facilities at NCAA institutions. Ferris (2000) concluded college facilities directly impact team success. In contrast, Huml et al. concluded that college facilities do not impact recruiting. Causby (2010) found athletic facilities as a barrier for female teams, consistent with Kenney's (2013) findings that services were not provided equitably to the men's and women's teams. The Women's Sports Foundation (2020) provided statistics which signified athletic

inequities in college athletics, such as the lack of Title IX training for college coaches and more opportunities for male student-athletes than female athletes.

The theoretical frameworks, role identity (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) and coaching identity (Balance is Better, n.d.), are discussed in detail throughout this literature review. Teacher identity was also described through Ehmer's (2018) study. Studies conducted by Kollasch, (2017), McMullen (2016), and Pope et al. (2014) accentuate head coaches' perceived role identity and responsibilities. Rodkey's (2018) and Tegetmeyer's (2021) work provided context toward Title IX and gender equity in collegiate athletics. Ferris (2000), Dahnert and Peck (2007), and Huml et al. (2019) delivered content concerning the relationship between facilities and recruiting success in college athletics. Causby's (2010) study focused on Title IX barriers at community colleges. The analysis provided by Kenney (2013) conveyed insight focused on female coaches' opinions and how they navigated through athletic equity. The Women's Sports Foundation (WSF; 2020) offered an overall statistical analysis of female opinions regarding gender equity. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) assisted in defining terms for the reader to understand the research methodologies best.

The variety of literature sources covered throughout this chapter created a foundation to assist in the creation of this study. As reviewed in this chapter, many studies have been conducted at the NCAA level, but minimal literature has been published focusing on the NJCAA level. Although the literature reviewed is rich in detail, there remains a gap pertaining to the NJCAA coach's assessments on athletic equity. These gaps led to the purpose of this study, which identified the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at NJCAA DI and DII institutions from the head coaches' perspective.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

This chapter reviews the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The research design, study setting, and study participants are also described in this chapter to provide a comprehensive understanding of the overarching structure of the study. Finally, the instrumentation is discussed along with the ethical considerations and explanations of how data and personal information were protected, stored, and destroyed.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at NJCAA DI and DII institutions.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do the head coaches of men's and women's NJCAA DI and DII teams assess Title IX equity implementation, specifically regarding team facilities, scholarships, and team travel?

Research Question 2: What do NJCAA DI and DII team head coaches identify as best practices to implement athletic equity?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Consequently, two theoretical frameworks and one conceptual framework guided this study. First, Mead's (1934) and Cooley's (1902) role identity theory was used. This study "considers the self to be a product of social interaction, in that people come to know who they are through their interactions with others; in this perspective, a core mechanism is that of 'taking the role of the other'" (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 256). The second theoretical framework was

Pim's coaching theory, which focused on "The coach's inner thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in their role as a coach that drive behaviors to produce results" (Balance is Better, n.d.). These two theoretical frameworks guided the research regarding how the participants' responses were influenced by their perceived role identity as a NJCAA DI or DII head coach and how it correlated to the assessment of athletic equity in their individual teams.

These frameworks were appropriate for this study predominantly due to Hogg et al.'s (1995) statement that "Identity is the pivotal concept linking social structure with individual action; thus, the prediction of behavior requires an analysis of the relationship between self and social structure" (p. 227). The research questions focused on the roles of head coaches and their experiences as advisor, advocate, fundraiser, leader, mentor, and role model and rank of these roles in order of personal importance. The survey questions focused on the specific sports: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, baseball and softball, and men's and women's outdoor track and field and their assessment of athletic equity focused on scholarship, facilities and travel.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) review framework guided the study of how head coaches assessed athletic equity. This specific framework was designed to provide clarity to the study on how the head coaches defined their role in the implementation of athletic equity. In addition, the survey questions gathered coaches' perspectives on best practices of athletic equity implementation.

All three frameworks assisted in answering the two research questions regarding the implementation of athletic equity, best practice of athletic equity assessment and how head NJCAA DI and DII coaches identified their perceived roles and their relation to athletic equity.

Research Design

Lochmiller and Lester (2017) suggested, “The research design is a decision based on the research paradigm and its underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions, and the researcher’s assumptions about the world” (p. 23). A multiphase design (multistudy) was used for this specific study. Lochmiller and Lester defined a multistudy as “When a researcher carries out separate qualitative and quantitative studies and then relates the results/findings from these individual studies” (p. 221). The researcher conducted a quantitative leading, mixed-methods design in this study. The quantitative phase surveyed NJCAA DI and DII head coaches of the men’s and women’s teams and compared their assessments of their programs’ team facilities, scholarships and travel regarding Title IX equity. The quantitative phase was followed by the qualitative phase that included interviews with head coaches who participated in the survey. The results obtained from the survey raised additional questions about the head coaches’ perspectives, allowing the researcher to expand and enhance the survey findings.

Study Setting

The study was conducted virtually with head coaches from participating NJCAA DI and DII institutions across the United States. The NJCAA DI and DII head coaches invited to participate in this study had the opportunity to provide athletically related scholarships for their student-athletes. In addition, each head coach invited to participate were from the following teams: men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s basketball, baseball and softball and men’s and women’s outdoor track and field.

Study Participants

The participants selected for this research were the head coaches of the selected National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) athletic teams: Men’s and Women’s Soccer,

Men's and Women's Basketball, Baseball and Softball, and Men's and Women's Outdoor Track and Field. The researcher received 192 survey respondents and interviewed 15 willing participants out of the 1,621 total distributed emails. The researcher measured the head coaches' assessments about their teams' facilities, scholarships and travel in relation to athletic equity. These participants were recruited via email using the NJCAA website and Google to locate email addresses. NJCAA DI and DII institutions where the head coaches were employed and had the opportunity to scholarship their student-athletes, which is why they were selected for this study. Table 2 displays the number of teams in this study represented at the NJCAA Division I (DI) and Division II (DII) levels.

Table 2. National Junior College Athletic Association Men's and Women's Teams at the DI and DII Levels

Team	NJCAA DI	NJCAA DII	Total
Men's soccer	73	104	177
Women's soccer	86	98	184
Men's Basketball	197	137	334
Women's Basketball	169	138	307
Men's Baseball	159	159	318
Women's Softball	138	169	307
Men's Track	70	0	70
Women's Track	70	0	70
Totals	962	805	1,767

Instrumentation

For this mixed-methods study, the researcher distributed a survey to all participants for the quantitative phase and conducted one-on-one interviews with the willing head coaches to complete for the qualitative phase. First, the researcher developed a survey for the quantitative phase. A blend of Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions were conducted as the quantitative

survey instrumentation. The survey consisted of 10 questions that included multiple-choice, demographic questions, and Likert-Scale questions. The Likert scale questions were on an agreement scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The survey can be found in Appendix G. Allen and Seaman (2007) stated:

Likert scales were developed in 1932 as the familiar five-point bipolar response that most people are familiar with today. These scales range from group categories – least to most – asking people to indicate how much they agree or disagree, approve or disapprove, or believe to be true or false. Likert surveys are a standard rating format for surveys. (p. 64)

The survey questions aligned with the study's purpose, all questions measured variables and conducted a rational sequence. At the end of the survey, the questions asked the respondents if they were interested in participating in a follow-up interview.

In the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher served as the main instrument. The qualitative portion of the study included follow-up interviews with a selection of participants conducted via Zoom. The theoretical frameworks guided the researcher in the development of interview questions. The interviews served as an opportunity for participants to elaborate on their responses for the researcher to better understand athletic equity. These interviews were recorded on Zoom and transcribed using Word.

Data Collection and Data Sources

Prior to conducting research, the researcher obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix I). An introduction letter (see Appendix E) was sent by the researcher to the President and CEO of the NJCAA via email, informing him of the purpose and intent of the study and seeking his support of the research. Following the NJCAA notification, a formal introduction and consent email (see Appendix G) was sent to all NJCAA DI and DII head

coaches of the sports specific to this study. Upon completing the quantitative phase, contact to conduct the qualitative interviews took place based on the survey results of interested head coaches who chose to participate in the qualitative interview. The researcher provided a total of seven weeks for the survey data collection, and a total of eight weeks for the interviews. This approach provided an appropriate timeline for participants to complete the process effectively.

Data Analysis

The data were collected via Google Survey and were analyzed using Excel. The researcher then conducted a descriptive analysis of the survey questions. The descriptive analysis showed the frequency of responses to the survey questions and their relevance to the NCAA DEI review framework. The researcher also conducted a comparative analysis by using *t*-test calculations that determined how the head coaches of the following categories: DII and DII, Female and Male, Men's and Women's Teams, and Years of Head Coaching Experience (1–10 years and 11+ years) assessed athletic equity. For the follow-up interviews, the researcher identified themes through the head coaches' responses and aligned those topics with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Alignment Table

The alignment table displays the organizational structure that was used throughout this study that assisted with the organization of the literature review, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, the methodology, survey, and interview questions. The alignment table can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Limitations

The lack of head coaches willing to participate in this study were a limitation. An additional limitation was the lack of availability of head coaches to be interviewed, though some

individuals said they would participate in an interview, they did not respond when the researcher reached out. The qualitative interviews did not represent all the head coaches who completed the survey due to the limited time and resources.

Ethical Considerations

Nevarez and Wood (2014) stated, “It is commonly perceived that power exposes the true ethical standards and moral actions of individuals by intensifying their core propensities” (p. 38). The researcher remained professional and ethical throughout the process and received Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the collection of data. The researcher maintained transparent, explained the entire process, and answered all questions regarding the study. The survey respondents remained anonymous and nameless as did any institutions that were mentioned during the process. To protect their individual identity, the head coaches who participated in the qualitative interview portion of the study were identified by an assigned code based on their sport, division and number of interviewees for that particular sport. The researcher stored and secured the collected data on an external computer hard drive and the information is safeguarded. This confidential data will be stored for the minimum requirement of 5 years and then will be appropriately destroyed.

Study Quality

Each phase of this mixed-methodology approach entailed trustworthiness. The researcher focused on validity and reliability that ensured trustworthiness during the quantitative phase by the distribution of the same survey question to all head coaches. For the qualitative study, the researcher practiced credibility and transferability by asking all of the same questions and recording and transcribing the interviews.

Validity is “the extent to which a measure or concept is accurately measured in the study” (Trochim, 1999, p. 1). The interview questions were consistent, clear, and relative to the purpose of the study to ensure validity. During the quantitative phase, validity was enforced by distributing the same survey and questions to all participants. According to Trochim (1999), “Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurements to which an instrument measures the same with every use under the exact same conditions” (p. 1). This study remained consistent with questions, instrumentation, and data analysis throughout the entire process which ensured reliability.

During the qualitative phase, the researcher applied credibility and transferability. Credibility is the first aspect that must be established because it connects the study findings with reality to demonstrate the truth (Trochim, 1999). The study’s findings aligned with the frameworks and purpose which instituted trustworthiness of the study. Transferability in qualitative research provided readers with evidence that the research study’s findings can be applied to other contexts, situations, times, and populations (Trochim, 1999). In this study, the researcher conducted a clear and concise study centered on the overall purpose that could be applicable for future studies.

Summary

The researcher used a mixed-methods approach to collect the best data pertaining to NJCAA DI and DII men’s and women’s coaches’ athletic equity assessments regarding their teams’ facilities, scholarships, and travel. This chapter reviewed the purpose of the study the research questions and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The research design, the study setting, and study participants were also described. The instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis process were discussed throughout this section of the study. The limitations, ethical

considerations, and study quality concluded this chapter. The research results are depicted in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

Research Questions

This study aimed to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I (DI) and Division II (DII) institutions. This researcher investigated these best practices via a comprehensive quantitative survey followed by in-depth qualitative interviews with NJCAA DI and DII head coaches. The results of this rigorous mixed-method analysis are defined throughout this chapter, and the analysis includes a sample description, respondent demographics, and information regarding the findings that were aimed at answering this study's two research questions:

Research Question 1: How do the head coaches of men's and women's NJCAA DI and DII teams assess athletic equity implementation, specifically regarding team facilities, scholarships, and team travel?

Research Question 2: What do NJCAA DI and DII team head coaches identify as best practices to implement athletic equity?

Method of Data Collection and Demographics

The researcher selected eight sports to research for this study: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, baseball, softball, and men's and women's outdoor track and field. Note that The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) does not have a DII level of competition for men's and women's outdoor track and field, only DI.

The researcher gathered email addresses for all NJCAA DI and DII head coaches by visiting the NJCAA website and acquiring the institutions, sport (see Table 3), and divisional information. Then, the researcher Google searched the institutions for specific head coaches of

the eight sports specific to this study and documented the email addresses of those coaches in an Excel document. This manual obtainment process took about 3 weeks. Once the email addresses were gathered, the quantitative Google Survey and consent email were delivered.

As summarized in Table 3, of the 1,622 emails sent, 46 emails were undeliverable, with 1,576 emails delivered successfully, resulting in 2.8% invalid emails and a 97.1% delivery success rate. DII softball had the highest response rate at 17.4% with 27 respondents and had the most emails distributed at 159. DI men's outdoor track and field had the lowest response rating of 6.0%, with 4 respondents with only 67 emails being distributed. A full summary of survey distribution per team can be found in Table 3. The total number of surveys received (*N*) was 192, reflecting a comprehensive and representative sample and an overall response rate of 12.2%.

Table 3. National Junior College Athletic Association Men's and Women's Teams Survey Distribution

Team	Emails distributed	Invalid emails	Valid emails	Number of responses	%
Men's DI soccer	70	2	68	7	10.3
Men's DII soccer	94	6	88	11	12.5
Women's DI soccer	82	3	79	11	13.9
Women's DII soccer	82	2	80	12	15.0
Men's DI basketball	136	2	134	10	7.7
Men's DII basketball	153	2	151	21	13.9
Women's DI basketball	130	3	127	15	11.8
Women's DII basketball	141	3	138	19	13.8
Men's baseball DI	153	5	148	14	9.5
Men's baseball DII	147	0	147	16	10.9
Women's softball DI	132	6	126	17	13.5
Women's softball DII	159	4	155	27	17.4
Men's track DI	71	4	67	4	6.0
Women's track DI	71	4	68	8	11.8
Totals	1622	46	1576	192	12.2

The researcher disaggregated the response rate using the NJCAA DI and DII men's teams found in Table 4. Though more emails were delivered to the men's DI head coaches, men's DII head coaches had the higher response rate, with 12.4%, compared to DI head coaches, with an 8.4% response rate.

Table 4. NJCAA Men's DI and DII Survey Distribution

Men NJCAA Division	Delivered	Completed	%
Division I	417	35	8.4
Division II	386	48	12.4
Totals	803	83	10.3

Like the men's teams, the women's DII head coaches had the higher response rate, 15.5%, compared to DI head coaches, 12.8% as summarized in Table 5. Overall, the women's teams had a greater response rate, 28.3%, compared to the men's teams' at 20.8%.

Table 5. NJCAA Women's DI and DII Survey Distribution

Women NJCAA division	Delivered	Completed	%
DI	400	51	12.8
DII	373	58	15.5
Totals	773	109	14.1

The survey was designed to capture key demographic information about head coaches. It comprised of four specific questions: years of head coaching experience, gender, NJCAA Division, and specific sport coached. To ensure accuracy, if a respondent coached more than one sport, the researcher required the respondent to define which sport they used to answer the survey.

As indicated in Table 6, head coaches with less than 11 years of experience had a higher portion of the sample at 60.5% than those with 11+ years of head coaching experience at 39.1%.

One hundred forty-three male head coaches responded to the survey, more than double the number of female head coaches, with 49 respondents. The NJCAA divisional response was higher in Division II (DII), with 107 respondents, compared to Division I (DI), with 85 respondents. Softball had the most respondents, with 44 responses, making those coaches a quarter of the sample (22.9% portion of the sample); traditionally, male head coaches are standard in softball and women's basketball. Refer to Table 6 for a complete summary of the descriptive demographics of the study.

Table 6. Descriptive Demographics of the Study Sample

Characteristics	<i>n</i>	%
Years of head coaching experience		
1–10	117	61.0
11 +	75	39.1
Gender		
Male	143	74.5
Female	49	25.5
NJCAA division		
NJCAA DI	85	44.3
NJCAA DII	107	55.7
Sport selected by head coach		
Men's soccer	16	8.3
Women's soccer	20	10.4
Men's and women's soccer	2	1.0
Men's basketball	30	15.6
Women's basketball	33	17.2
Men's and women's basketball	2	1.0
Men's baseball	30	15.6
Women's softball	44	23.0
Men's track	1	0.52
Women's track	2	1.04
Men's and women's track	9	4.7

Note. *N* = 192.

Table 7 offers a detailed breakdown of male and female respondents per sport, revealing some intriguing gender differences. Softball stood out with the most respondents, with a total of 15 male respondents and a significantly higher total of 29 female respondents. In stark contrast,

men's track records the lowest number of respondents, a mere four in total, with three male respondents and one female respondent. Baseball, however, showed a surge in male respondents, with a substantial 30 in total. While there were no female coaches in men's soccer, men's basketball and baseball, male respondents are present in every woman's sports category. For a comprehensive summary, see Table 7.

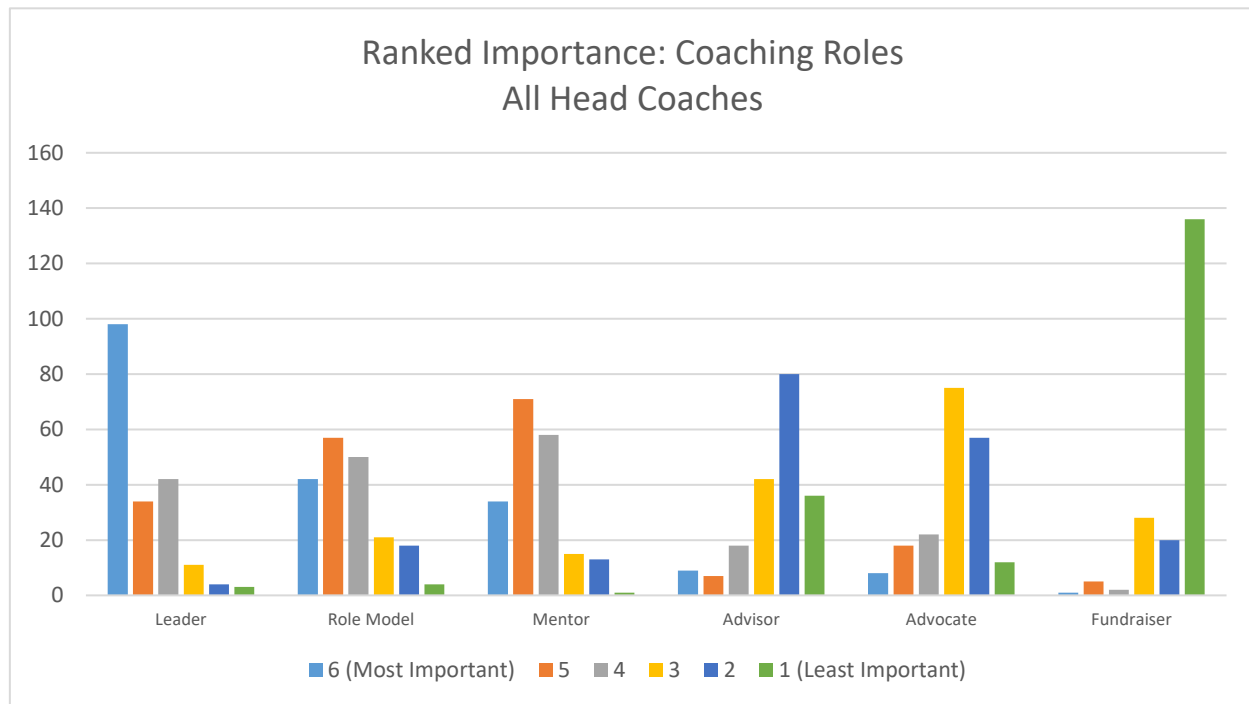
Table 7. Head Coach Gender by Team

Sport	Male	Female	Total
Men's soccer	18	0	18
Women's soccer	20	3	23
Men's basketball	31	0	31
Women's basketball	19	15	34
Men's baseball	30	0	30
Women's softball	15	29	44
Men's track	3	1	4
Women's track	7	1	8
Totals	143	49	192

Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles

Question 3 of the survey asked respondents to rank the importance of six distinct coaching roles, with 6 ranking the highest and 1 ranking the lowest. All the head coaches ranked the following roles: advisor, advocate, fundraiser, leader, mentor, role model. The rankings were consistent in ranking leader as the most important role and fundraiser as the least important. Overall, the rankings were very similar in all subgroups. Figure 1 displays the ranked importance for all head coaches, the results for each subgroup can be found in the Appendices: DI and DII Head Coaches (see Appendix J), Female and Male Head Coaches (see Appendix K), Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaches (see Appendix L) and Head Coaching Years of Experience (1–10 years and 11+ years; see Appendix M).

Figure 1. Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles, All Head Coaches



Descriptive Analysis of Survey Questions

The researcher disaggregated the survey data per team to find the mean for each question. Each sub-question asked the respondents to assess the level of agreement on a 4-point Likert Scale, which is a commonly used rating scale in surveys. The scale ranges from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

The research, as summarized in Table 8, focused on the institutional perspective of equity in sports teams, considering facilities (Q4) scholarships (Q5), and travel (Q6). Before asking question specific to each sport, the researcher asked the coaches to assess athletic equity in general at their institutions.

Question 4A – Facility Equity for All Teams

Table 8 provides a summary of question 4A, which delved into the respondents' perceptions of their institution providing equitable facilities for all teams, provided an interesting

individual team perspective. Notably, men's soccer and men's basketball, with a high agreement ($M = 3.3$), expressed the most positive feelings about their institutions' commitment to equitable facilities. In contrast, men's outdoor track and field, with a score of 1.8, indicated a lower level of agreement. This individual team perspective should help the audience to connect more deeply with the research. When reviewing the like sports scores for question 4A regarding facility equity, the men's teams had higher agreement than the women's teams, excluding men's track with a lower agreement ($M = 1.8$) than women's track ($M = 2.6$).

Question 5A focused on scholarship equity, all of which had comparable results by team, with the agreement being consistent ($M = 2.8$) among six of the eight teams, and baseball felt the strongest ($M = 3.1$) about scholarship equity. The consistency of these results indicated the respondents had a similar assessment toward scholarship equity for all teams at their institution.

Question 6A focused on travel equity for all teams, which referred to the perceived fairness in the opportunities for teams to travel for competitions and other sports-related activities. It had nearly identical mean scores across all teams. In contrast to most of the survey results, the track coaches felt the strongest ($M = 3.3$), indicating they agreed most regarding their institutions providing equitable travel for all teams.

Across the board, all scores were relatively high, excluding men's track in question 4A ($M = 1.8$), revealing the men's track coaches, compared to the other head coaches, felt the least strongly about their institutions providing equitable facilities for all teams. Overall, the high scores, particularly in travel (6A) with the highest overall average ($M = 3.2$) is showing a general perception of equity in facilities, scholarships, and travel.

Table 8. Equity Focused for all Teams

Team	<i>n</i>	4A. My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams	5A. My institution provides equitable scholarships for all teams	6A. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams
Men's soccer	18	3.3	2.8	3.2
Women's soccer	23	2.9	2.9	3.2
Men's basketball	31	3.3	2.8	3.2
Women's basketball	34	3.0	2.8	3.0
Men's baseball	30	2.9	3.1	3.1
Woman's softball	44	2.7	2.8	3.1
Men's track	4	1.8	2.8	3.3
Women's track	8	2.6	2.8	3.1
Averages		2.8	2.8	3.2

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Question 4 – Facilities

The researcher further disaggregated the survey data per team and NJCAA DI and DII to calculate the mean for each sub-question related to facilities as summarized in Table 9. Men's and women's track was excluded from this table because there is no NJCAA DII track competition level, only DI.

Question 4B asked the respondents if their institutions provided equitable facilities for their specific team; men's basketball had the highest agreement ($M = 3.7$), while the lowest was from DI softball ($M = 2.5$). Men's DI soccer had a higher agreement ($M = 3.3$) than DII men's soccer ($M = 3.2$) regarding equitable facilities. On the women's soccer side, the DI coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.6$) compared to the DII women's soccer coaches, who were in more robust agreement ($M = 3.3$) about their team's facilities being equitable. The same goes for DI women's basketball, which also had a slightly lower agreement ($M = 3.3$) than women's DII basketball ($M = 3.4$). DI baseball coaches disagreed less regarding equitable facilities for their

team ($M = 2.8$) than the DII head baseball coaches ($M = 3.1$). Similarly for head softball coaches, the DI coaches agreed less ($M = 2.5$) than DII head softball coaches ($M = 2.9$). Overall, in question 4B, the DII head coaches strongly agreed that their teams were provided equitable facilities more than the DI head coaches.

In question 4C concerning institutions providing equitable access to their team's facilities, DII women's soccer had the highest agreement ($M = 3.5$) indicating their institutions provided equitable access, while the minor agreement was from their like sport, women's DI soccer ($M = 2.6$). Men's DI soccer was in more agreement ($M = 3.3$) compared to men's DII soccer ($M = 3.2$). Men's DI basketball agreed less ($M = 3.2$) than men's DII basketball ($M = 3.3$) about their institution providing equitable facility access for their team. On the women's basketball side, the DI and DII head coaches were in the same level of agreement ($M = 3.4$) about equitable access to their team's facilities. DI baseball head coaches had a lower agreement level ($M = 3.2$) than DII coaches ($M = 3.4$). Though close, the head coaches for DI softball had a slightly lower level of agreement ($M = 2.9$) than the DII softball head coaches ($M = 3.0$). Overall, the DII head coaches agreed most strongly in terms of equitable access being provided to their teams.

Question 4D asked the respondents if they had quality athletic facilities; men's DI basketball head coaches indicated they had quality athletic facilities with the highest agreement level ($M = 3.5$) compared to DI baseball head coaches ($M = 2.6$) at the lowest. Men's DI soccer coaches disagreed slightly less ($M = 3.3$) about quality athletic facilities than the DII men's soccer coaches ($M = 3.4$). The results were similar to women's soccer, whereas the DI head coaches were also in less agreement ($M = 2.6$) than the DII head coaches ($M = 3.2$) but with a greater discrepancy. Men's DI basketball felt stronger ($M = 3.5$) regarding the quality of their

athletic facilities compared to the DII men's basketball coaches ($M = 3.1$). On the women's basketball side, DI head coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.9$) compared to DII head coaches ($M = 3.1$) that their teams had quality athletic facilities. DI head baseball coaches agreed less ($M = 2.6$) than DII head baseball coaches ($M = 3.1$). It was similar for the head softball coaches, with DI coaches in less agreement ($M = 2.9$) than DII head coaches ($M = 3.1$). Overall, the DII head coaches agreed most strongly about their teams being provided quality athletic facilities.

Question 4E asked head coaches if their teams' facilities have a positive impact on their recruit success; Men's DI soccer had the highest mean ($M = 3.4$) compared to women's DII basketball with the lowest mean ($M = 2.5$). DI men's soccer coaches were in more robust agreement ($M = 3.4$) that their facilities positively impacted their facilities compared to the DII head coaches ($M = 3.2$). Meanwhile, for women's soccer, the DI head coaches disagreed less ($M = 2.7$) than the DII head coaches ($M = 3.2$). DI men's basketball head coaches were in stronger agreement that their facilities positively impacted their recruiting ($M = 3.3$) compared to the DII head coaches ($M = 2.9$). The same was true for the women's basketball head coaches, where the DI coaches had stronger agreement ($M = 2.6$) than the DII coaches ($M = 2.5$) though both are relatively low. As for baseball, the DI head coaches agreed less ($M = 2.6$) than the DII baseball coaches ($M = 3.1$). The DI head softball coaches were also in less agreement ($M = 2.7$) than the DII head coaches ($M = 3.0$).

When it comes to facility equity, the differences in perceptions between DI and DII college sports teams vary. For instance, women's DII soccer consistently scored higher in every question than DI women's soccer. The survey results also revealed that DII baseball was more assertive about facility equity, scoring higher in every question than DI baseball. The responses from DI and DII men's basketball teams were also interestingly varied, with DI teams showing

more robust agreement on equitable facilities (4B), quality facilities (4D), and facilities' positive impact on recruiting success (4E). In contrast, the DII head men's basketball coaches felt

Table 9. Facilities Equity DI and DII Head Coaches Means

Team	<i>n</i>	4B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	4C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	4D. My team has quality athletic facilities	4E. My teams' facilities have a positive impact on my recruiting success
Men's DI soccer	7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4
Men's DII soccer	11	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.2
Women's DII soccer	12	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.2
Men's DII basketball	21	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.9
Women's DII basketball	19	3.4	3.4	3.1	2.5
Men's DII baseball	16	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.1
Women's DII softball	27	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Men's and women's track only compete in DI.

Table 10 reveals the overall mean scores between male and female respondents on the topic of facility equity. Male respondents consistently scored higher in every sub-question, indicating a stronger agreement regarding facility equity than their female counterparts. Interestingly, both groups shared the same level of satisfaction when it came to their institutions providing equitable facilities for their specific team (4B; $M = 2.9$) and their teams having quality facilities (4D; $M = 2.9$). However, both groups showed a lower level of agreement in question 4E, suggesting that they did not feel as strongly about facilities positively impacting their recruiting success.

Table 10. Facilities Equity Female and Male Head Coaches Means

Respondents	4B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	4C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	4D. My team has quality athletic facilities	4E. My teams' facilities have a positive impact on my recruiting success
Female respondents	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7
Male respondents	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.9

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Table 11 combines DI and DII and describes the men's and women's teams head coaches' overall mean score by sport for each sub-question related to facility equity. Question 4B asked if their institutions provided equitable facilities for their specific team. Men's basketball had the highest mean ($M = 3.5$) compared to men's track and field with the lowest mean ($M = 1.0$), indicating the head men's basketball coaches most strongly agreed their institutions provided equitable facilities, whereas the head men's track coaches did not agree that their teams were provided equitable facilities. All the men's teams had a higher mean score than the women's teams excluding men's track ($M = 1.0$), where women's track ($M = 2.4$) had the higher mean; note that men's track had a small number of respondents with only a total of 4 head coaches answering the survey. The second highest discrepancy within the like sports was baseball ($M = 3.0$) and softball ($M = 2.7$) where the baseball coaches felt more strongly that equitable facilities were provided for their teams in comparison to the softball coaches.

Question 4C asked the respondents if their institutions provided equitable access to their teams' facilities. Women's basketball had the highest mean ($M = 3.4$) compared to men's outdoor track and field with the lowest mean ($M = 2.0$). Similarly to question 4B regarding equitable facilities, the same teams felt alike in terms of equitable access, with the most significant difference between like sports being that women's track was in more agreement ($M =$

2.9) compared to men's track ($M = 2.0$) and the second most considerable discrepancy being baseball coaches ($M = 3.3$) compared to softball coaches ($M = 2.9$).

Question 4D asked the respondents if their team had quality facilities. Men's soccer and men's basketball had the highest mean ($M = 3.3$) compared to the lowest mean from men's outdoor track and field ($M = 1.0$). Though men and women's soccer and men and women's basketball teams often share the same facilities, men's soccer and men's basketball had a higher mean ($M = 3.3$) compared to women's soccer and women's basketball ($M = 3.0$). Softball coaches more so agreed to having quality facilities ($M = 3.0$) compared to the baseball coaches ($M = 2.8$).

Question 4E asked the respondents if their facilities positively impacted their recruiting success. The highest mean for question 4E was from men's soccer ($M = 3.3$) compared to the lowest from men's track ($M = 1.8$). Men's soccer felt more substantial that facilities positively impacted their recruiting success ($M = 3.3$) compared to women's soccer ($M = 3.0$). It was a similar case for men's basketball coaches who felt their facilities had a positive impact on their recruiting success ($M = 3.0$) in comparison to women's basketball who did not feel as strongly ($M = 2.6$).

The highest mean score from all of question 4 was found in question 4B ($M = 3.5$) from men's basketball indicating the head coaches felt most strongly about their institutions providing equitable facilities for their team. The lowest mean scores overall for question 4 were found in question 4B ($M = 1.0$) and 4D ($M = 1.0$), both from men's track, indicating that the head men's track coaches did not feel as strongly as the other teams regarding their institutions providing equitable facilities for track or that they were provided quality facilities.

The highest overall average ($M = 3.0$) for each sub-question indicated that the head coaches answered the highest on the question focused on providing equitable access to their teams' facilities (4C). Whereas, the other three sub-question (4B), (4D), (4E) averages were the same ($M = 2.8$) indicating consistency among the male and female team head coaches pertaining to facilities equity.

Table 11. Facilities Equity Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaches Means

Team	<i>n</i>	4B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	4C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	4D. My team has quality athletic facilities	4E. My teams' facilities have a positive impact on my recruiting success
Men's soccer	18	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3
Women's soccer	23	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Men's basketball	31	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.0
Women's basketball	34	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.6
Men's baseball	30	3.0	3.3	2.8	2.8
Women's softball	44	2.7	2.9	3.0	2.8
Men's track	4	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.8
Women's track	8	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.8
Averages		2.8	3.0	2.8	2.8

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

The respondents' facility equity assessment, based on their years of head coaching experience, as can be found in Table 12. Overall, the coaches with 11+ years of experience had higher averages in every sub-question, indicating they felt more strongly toward facility equity than the less experienced 1–10-year head coaches. The 1–10-year coaches were in most agreement ($M = 3.1$) regarding their institutions providing equitable facilities for their specific teams (4B). In contrast, they felt the least ($M = 2.8$) about their facilities positively impacting their recruiting success (4D). The 11+ years head coaches felt most strongly ($M = 3.2$) regarding

their institutions providing equitable facilities for their teams (4C) and felt the least strongly ($M = 3.0$) regarding their facilities having a positive impact on their recruiting success (4D).

Table 12. Facilities Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience Means

Years' experience	4B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	4C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	4D. My team has quality athletic facilities	4E. My teams' facilities have a positive impact on my recruiting success
1–10	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.8
11+	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.0

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Question 5 – Scholarship Equity

The researcher disaggregated the survey data per team on Question 5 explicitly focused on scholarship equity. The researcher further disaggregated the survey data per team and NJCAA DI and DII summarized in Table 13. Men and women's track was excluded from this table because there is no NJCAA DII track competition level, only DI.

The highest overall mean ($M = 3.4$) for question 5 was in question 5C from women's DI soccer, DI and DII baseball, indicating the head coaches of those sports felt most vital about their institution allowing them to raise additional funds to contribute to their scholarship budget. The lowest mean overall ($M = 2.4$) was in question 5B from the women's DI soccer head coaches, indicating coaches did not feel as strongly about their institutions provided equitable scholarship dollars to their team.

In question 5B, DI men's basketball had the highest mean ($M = 3.3$), compared to the men and women's DI head soccer coaches with the least agreement ($M = 2.4$), which signified they did not strongly agree their team had equitable scholarship dollars. Men's DI head soccer

coaches had a lower agreement rate ($M = 2.4$) in comparison to DII men's soccer head coaches ($M = 3.11$). Similarly, on the women's side, women's DI soccer head coaches were less in agreement ($M = 2.4$) compared to the DII women's soccer head coaches ($M = 3.2$). However, on the men's basketball side, DI men's basketball head coaches had a higher agreement ($M = 3.3$) than men's DII basketball head coaches ($M = 3.0$). That was the same case for women's DI basketball head coaches which had a slightly stronger agreement ($M = 3.1$) than women's DII basketball head coaches ($M = 3.0$). DII baseball ($M = 2.9$) agreed more on equitable scholarship dollars for their teams than DI baseball ($M = 2.7$). That was the same case for DII softball head coaches which had a higher agreement ($M = 3.0$) in equitable scholarship dollars for their teams compared to the DI softball head coaches ($M = 2.8$).

Question 5C focused on the institution allowing the head coaches to fundraise for scholarships. The highest overall mean ($M = 3.4$) was from both DI and DII baseball, indicating the head baseball coaches were in strong agreement toward fundraising. The lowest overall mean ($M = 2.2$) was from, DII men's soccer. Men's DI soccer ($M = 2.6$) felt stronger in regard to their institution allowing them to fundraise for scholarships in comparison to men's DII soccer ($M = 2.2$). Same goes for women's DI soccer ($M = 3.4$) in comparison to women's DII soccer ($M = 3.3$). Men's DI basketball ($M = 2.7$) did feel a little stronger compared to men's DII basketball ($M = 2.5$) when it came to contributing to scholarship money through fundraising. Similarly on the women's side women's DI basketball ($M = 3.0$) was in stronger compared to women's DII basketball ($M = 2.6$). When comparing DI baseball ($M = 3.4$) and DII baseball ($M = 3.4$) the head coaches were in complete agreement. As for the head softball coaches, DI softball ($M = 3.1$) head coaches more so agreed their institution allowed them to raise additional funds for scholarships in comparison to DII softball coaches ($M = 2.6$). Overall, the DI head coaches were

in higher agreement than the DII head coaches relating to the ability to fundraise for scholarships.

Question 5D focused on scholarship budgets having a positive impact on recruiting success. Both DI and DII men's soccer had the highest mean for this question ($M = 3.1$) and were in the most agreement which signified their budget had more of a positive impact on recruiting in comparison to other teams. Women's DI soccer head coaches were less agreement ($M = 2.7$) compared to the DII women's head soccer coaches ($M = 2.9$). On the men's basketball side, the DI head coaches were in slightly strong agreement ($M = 2.9$) compared to the head DII coaches ($M = 2.8$). The same was true for women's basketball with the DI head coaches agreeing slightly stronger ($M = 2.9$) in comparison to DII head coaches ($M = 2.8$). As for baseball, the DI head coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.7$) compared to DII head coaches ($M = 2.9$). It was the same case for softball with the DI head coaches being in less agreement ($M = 2.6$) compared to the DII head coaches ($M = 2.9$).

Overall, compared to the previous tables, the divisions seemed to have the largest difference in mean scores compared to the other subgroups. These results indicate that the two groups, DI and DII head coaches feel differently about different issues related to scholarship equity.

Table 13. Scholarship Equity DI and DII Head Coaches Means

Team	<i>n</i>	5B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	5C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	5D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success
Men's DI soccer	7	2.4	2.6	3.1
Men's DII soccer	11	3.1	2.2	3.1
Women's DI soccer	11	2.4	3.4	2.7
Women's DII soccer	12	3.2	3.3	2.9
Men's DI basketball	10	3.3	2.7	2.9
Men's DII basketball	21	3.0	2.5	2.8
Women's DI basketball	15	3.1	3.0	2.9
Women's DII basketball	19	3.0	2.6	2.5
Men's DI baseball	14	2.7	3.4	2.7
Men's DII baseball	16	2.9	3.4	2.9
Women's DI softball	17	2.8	3.1	2.6
Women's DII softball	27	3.0	2.6	2.9

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Men's and women's track only compete in DI.

Table 14 reveals the overall mean scores of male and female respondents on scholarship equity. The means were remarkably similar for both groups. The female head coaches felt stronger ($M = 3.0$) about their institutions providing equitable scholarship dollars (5B) than the male head coaches ($M = 2.9$). Both groups had the same agreement level ($M = 2.9$) regarding allowing their institutions to fundraise for additional scholarships (5B) and the female head coaches were slightly more agreement ($M = 2.9$) compared to the male head coaches ($M = 2.8$) regarding their scholarship budget positively impacting their overall recruiting success.

Table 14. Scholarship Equity Female and Male Head Coaches Means

Respondents	5B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	5C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	5D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success
Female	3.0	2.9	2.9
Male	2.9	2.9	2.8

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Table 15 combines DI and DII and presents the survey findings detailing each sub-question overall mean score by sport. Notably, women's outdoor track and field responded to 5C with the highest agreement ($M = 3.9$), a significant indication that their institutions allowed the head coaches to fundraise for additional scholarship dollars. Conversely, the lowest mean was found in question 5D, men's outdoor track and field, with the lowest agreement ($M = 1.5$), a finding that the head coaches strongly disagreed that their scholarship budget positively impacted their recruiting success.

Table 15. Scholarship Equity Men's and Women's Teams Means

Team	<i>n</i>	5B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	5C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	5D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success
Men's soccer	18	2.8	2.3	3.1
Women's soccer	23	2.8	3.3	2.8
Men's basketball	31	3.1	2.6	2.8
Women's basketball	34	3.0	2.8	2.7
Men's baseball	30	2.8	3.4	2.8
Women's softball	44	2.9	2.8	2.8
Men's track	4	2.3	2.8	1.5
Women's track	8	2.9	3.9	3.5
Averages		2.8	3.0	2.8

Note. A Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

The results for Question 5B specified that women's basketball respondents felt their institutions provided equitable scholarship dollars for their team, with the highest agreement ($M = 3.0$) compared to the least agreement ($M = 2.3$) for men's track. Men's and women's soccer head coaches agreed ($M = 2.8$) regarding equitable scholarship distribution. Though close, men's basketball had a higher agreement ($M = 3.1$) regarding equitable scholarship dollars being provided than women's basketball ($M = 3.0$). Similarly, there was a minor difference, with softball ($M = 2.9$) having a slightly higher agreement than baseball ($M = 2.8$). Though there were variances between teams, for the most part, the means were very similar across the board for scholarship equity.

Question 5C focuses on fundraising for scholarships. Men's soccer head coaches had a much lower agreement ($M = 2.3$) than women's ($M = 3.3$), indicating that women's soccer had more vital agreement about fundraising for scholarships. Another significant difference was that the baseball coaches were in stronger agreement ($M = 3.4$) compared to the softball coaches ($M = 2.8$), indicating that the baseball coaches felt more support in fundraising for scholarships. The trend of women's track having a stronger agreement ($M = 3.9$) than men's track ($M = 2.8$) continued in this question.

Question 5D had another highest mean ($M = 3.5$) from women's outdoor track compared to men's track with the lowest mean ($M = 1.5$), representing the women's outdoor track and field respondents felt more substantial that their scholarship budget had a positive impact on their recruiting in comparison to the men's outdoor track and field coaches. Different from question 5C regarding fundraising for scholarship budgets, the men's soccer ($M = 3.1$) coaches were more robust in agreement regarding their budgets having a positive impact on recruiting compared to the women's soccer coaches ($M = 2.8$). Men's basketball head coaches were in slightly more

agreement ($M = 2.8$) compared to women's basketball head coaches ($M = 2.7$) regarding scholarship budgets impacting their team's recruiting success. At the same time, baseball ($M = 2.8$) and softball ($M = 2.8$) felt the same regarding the impact of their scholarship budget and recruiting success.

The overall averages for questions 5B and 5D were the same ($M = 2.8$), indicating a balanced perception among the head coaches. However, the highest average was found in 5C ($M = 3.0$), signifying a general sentiment that all the head coaches felt their institutions allowed them to raise money for scholarships.

Scholarship equity, based on the head coaches' experience years is shown in Table 16. The scores for both groups of head coaches were remarkably similar. The 1–10-year coaches were in stronger agreement ($M = 3.0$) about their institutions providing equitable scholarship dollars (5B) for their team in comparison to the 11+ year head coaches ($M = 2.8$). On the other hand, the 11+ year head coaches felt stronger ($M = 3.0$) about their institutions allowing them to fundraise for scholarships (5C) than the 1–10-year head coaches ($M = 2.9$). The 1–10-year head coaches were in slightly more agreement ($M = 2.9$) regarding their scholarship budgets having a positive impact on their recruiting (5D) compared to the 11+ head coaches ($M = 2.7$). Overall, the groups with vastly different experience levels had similar agreement about scholarship equity.

Table 16. Scholarship Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience Means

Years' experience	5B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	5C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	5D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success
1–10	3.0	2.9	2.9
11+	2.8	3.0	2.7

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Question 6 – Travel

The researcher next disaggregated the survey data per team and the specific NJCAA division to find the means for each sub-question. Question 6 focuses specifically on travel equity; Table 17 provides the results. Men's and women's track was excluded from this table because no NJCAA DII track competition level exists, only DI.

Overall, the highest agreement level ($M = 3.8$) for question 6 was in question 6C from men's DII soccer, which indicated that the men's head soccer coaches felt their institution was committed to providing safe travel accommodations for their team. Women's DI basketball had the lowest agreement level ($M = 1.5$) in question 6D, indicating that the head coaches felt less responsible for fundraising for their team's travel than other sports.

In question 6B, DI men's basketball had the highest agreement ($M = 3.5$). While DI baseball and DI women's soccer had the lowest agreement ($M = 2.9$) about their institutions providing equitable travel accommodations for their teams. Men's DI soccer head coaches were more agreeable ($M = 3.3$) than the DII head soccer coaches ($M = 3.1$). Meanwhile, in women's soccer, the DI head coaches disagreed less ($M = 2.9$) than the DII head women's soccer coaches. The DI men's basketball coaches had a higher agreement ($M = 3.5$) than the DII head men's basketball coaches ($M = 3.1$). Meanwhile, on the women's basketball side the DI head coaches

felt less strongly ($M = 3.0$) than women's basketball coaches ($M = 3.2$). The results were similar in baseball, with the DI head baseball coaches agreeing less about their equitable travel accommodations ($M = 2.9$) than the DII head baseball coaches ($M = 3.1$). The results were similar for softball as well, with the DI head softball coaches feeling less ($M = 3.0$) regarding their institutions providing equitable travel accommodations compared to the DII head softball coaches ($M = 3.2$). Overall, regarding institutions providing equitable travel accommodations for their teams, the DII head coaches agreed with more than the DI head coaches.

The highest agreement ($M = 3.8$) for question 6C was from men's DII soccer compared to women's DI basketball with the lowest agreement ($M = 2.7$), which signified that the DII soccer men's coaches felt their institutions provided safer travel accommodations in comparison to the DI women's basketball coaches. Men's DI soccer had less agreement ($M = 3.4$) with safe travel accommodations than the Men's DII soccer head coaches ($M = 3.8$). Similarly, the DI women's soccer coaches disagreed less than the DII head women's soccer coaches ($M = 3.5$). The same is true for men's basketball, where the DI head men's basketball coaches were in slightly lower agreement ($M = 3.2$) than the DII head men's basketball coaches ($M = 3.3$). The head baseball coaches for both DI and DII agreed ($M = 3.1$) about their institutions providing equitable travel accommodations for their teams. The softball coaches differed, with the DI head softball coaches in less agreement ($M = 3.1$) than the DII head softball coaches ($M = 3.4$). The trend of the DII head coaches in more robust agreement continues about institutions providing equitable travel accommodations.

In question 6D, DI baseball felt the strongest ($M = 3.1$) compared to women's DI basketball ($M = 1.5$) who had the least agreement regarding being responsible for fundraising for team travel accommodations. The DI men's soccer coaches were in slightly less agreement ($M =$

2.0) compared to the DII head men's soccer coaches ($M = 2.1$); whereas the DI and DII head women's soccer coaches were in exact agreement ($M = 2.3$) pertaining to the responsibility of fundraising for travel. The DI head men's basketball coaches were in stronger agreement ($M = 2.3$) compared to the DII head men's basketball coaches ($M = 2.1$). Whereas on the DI head women's basketball coaches were in less agreement ($M = 1.5$) compared to the DII head women's basketball coaches ($M = 1.9$), regarding the responsibility to fundraise money for travel. The head baseball coaches felt differently, with the DI head coaches feeling more responsible ($M = 3.1$) to fundraise for travel compared to the DII baseball coaches ($M = 2.6$). As for the head softball coaches, the DI head softball coaches felt less responsible ($M = 2.2$) whereas the head DII softball coaches felt more responsible ($M = 2.7$). The agreement levels varied per division and sport when focused on the responsibility of fundraising for team travel.

Question 6E had the strongest agreement from men's DI soccer head coaches ($M = 3.0$) compared to DI women's soccer with the lowest level of agreement ($M = 2.6$), regarding travel accommodations having an impact on their recruiting success. DI head men's soccer coaches had a stronger agreement ($M = 3.0$) toward their travel accommodations impacting their recruiting compared to the DII head men's soccer coaches ($M = 2.6$). Meanwhile, for women's soccer, the DI head women's soccer coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.6$) compared to the DI head women's soccer coaches ($M = 2.8$). The DI head men's basketball coaches felt slightly stronger ($M = 2.7$) than the DII head men's basketball coaches ($M = 2.6$). The same was true for the head women's basketball coaches, where the DI head coaches had stronger agreement ($M = 2.7$) than the DII head coaches ($M = 2.5$). The DI head baseball coaches ($M = 2.9$) felt travel accommodations positively impacted their recruiting success, while the DII head baseball coaches felt less so ($M = 2.6$). As for the head softball coaches, the DI head softball coaches

were in lower agreement ($M = 2.4$), whereas the DII head softball coaches felt stronger ($M = 2.9$).

Question 6F delved into the issue of institutions providing equitable funding for overnight travel. It is noteworthy that the highest overall agreement level was from men's and women's DII soccer head coaches ($M = 3.2$). On the other hand, the lowest overall agreement level was from the DI head women's soccer coaches ($M = 2.6$) suggesting a need for further discussion on equity funding for overnight travel. DI men's soccer head coaches had a slightly lower agreement ($M = 3.1$) than the DII men's soccer head coaches ($M = 3.2$). The same trend was observed for women's soccer head coaches with the DI women's soccer head coaches feeling less strongly ($M = 2.6$) than the DII women's soccer ($M = 3.2$).

DI men's basketball head coaches agreed more ($M = 3.1$) than the DII men's basketball coaches ($M = 2.9$). This was like women's basketball, with the DI women's head coaches feeling stronger ($M = 3.3$) than the DII women's coaches ($M = 2.9$). The same for DI baseball, with the DI baseball head coaches having a higher agreement ($M = 2.9$) than the DII baseball coaches ($M = 2.8$). On the opposite side for softball, the DI softball head coaches disagreed ($M = 2.8$) more than the DII softball head coaches ($M = 3.0$).

While comparing each sport and the two divisions, many differences between the divisions were identified. Indicating that the DI and DII head coaches of each sport felt differently about travel equity.

Table 17. Travel Equity DI and DII Head Coaches Means

Team	<i>n</i>	6B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	6C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	6D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	6E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	6F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary
Men's DI soccer	7	3.3	3.4	2.0	3.0	3.1
Men's DII soccer	11	3.1	3.8	2.1	2.6	3.2
Women's DI soccer	11	2.9	3.2	2.3	2.6	2.6
Women's DII soccer	12	3.4	3.5	2.3	2.8	3.2
Men's DI basketball	10	3.5	3.2	2.3	2.7	3.1
Men's DII basketball	21	3.1	3.3	2.1	2.6	2.9
Women's DI basketball	15	3.0	2.7	1.5	2.7	3.3
Women's DII basketball	19	3.2	3.3	1.9	2.5	2.9
Men's DI baseball	14	2.9	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.9
Men's DII baseball	16	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.6	2.8
Women's DI softball	17	3.0	3.1	2.2	2.4	2.8
Women's DII softball	27	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.9	3.0

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Men's and Women's track only compete in DI.

Table 18 provides travel equity means disaggregated by female and male respondents. Both groups of head coaches had the same agreement results ($M = 3.1$) about their institutions providing equitable (6B) and safe travel accommodations (6C) for their teams. The male head coaches ($M = 2.3$) agreed slightly stronger regarding the ability to fundraise for additional travel than the female head coaches ($M = 2.2$). However, the female head coaches felt stronger ($M = 2.7$) when it came to their travel accommodations, which positively impacted their recruiting, compared to the male head coaches, who were in slightly less agreement ($M = 2.6$). The women also agreed at a higher level ($M = 3.1$) in question 4F, focusing on their institutions providing equitable funding for overnight travel, as compared to the male head coaches ($M = 2.9$).

Table 18. Travel Equity Female and Male Head Coaches Means

Respondents	6B. My institution provides equitable travel accommoda- tions for my team	6C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommoda- tions for my team	6D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommoda- tions	6E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	6F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary
Female	3.1	3.2	2.2	2.7	3.1
Male	3.1	3.2	2.3	2.6	2.9

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

The researcher aggregated the DI and DII survey data for the men's and women's team for question 6 on travel equity. Table 19 provides the overall mean score for each sub-question. Men's and women's track was excluded from this table because no NJCAA DII track competition level exists, only DI.

The highest overall agreement ($M = 3.7$) for question 6 was in question 6C from men's soccer who felt the strongest regarding their institution providing equitable travel for their team. The lowest agreement ($M = 1.6$) was found in question 6D, indicating the women's track head coaches did not feel responsible for fundraising for teams' travel accommodations; however, in regard to scholarships, women's track did agree highly ($M = 3.9$) when asked about their ability to fundraise for scholarships.

Question 6B focusing on institutions providing equitable travel accommodations, men's and women's soccer head coaches answered with the same level of agreement ($M = 3.2$). Men's basketball head coaches answered more strongly ($M = 3.3$) compared to women's basketball head coaches ($M = 3.1$). Baseball had less of an agreement ($M = 3.0$) compared to the head softball coaches ($M = 3.1$). Though men's track has tended to have lower results throughout the data, the head coaches for men's and women's track were in the same agreement ($M = 3.0$) as it focused on institutions providing equitable travel for their teams.

In question 6C, overall, the highest agreement ($M = 3.7$) was from men's soccer, which signified the head coaches felt their institution was committed to providing safe travel accommodations for their team compared to a lesser agreement ($M = 2.8$) from men's track head coaches. Men's soccer had a stronger agreement ($M = 3.7$) compared to women's soccer head coaches ($M = 3.4$). Men's basketball head coaches had a higher agreement ($M = 3.3$) compared to the women's basketball head coaches ($M = 3.0$). Baseball head coaches had a lower agreement ($M = 3.1$) compared to softball head coaches ($M = 3.3$), indicating the softball coaches were in higher agreement toward their institutions providing safe travel accommodations for their teams. Men's track head coaches had a much lower sentiment ($M = 2.8$) about safe travel

accommodations provided by their institutions compared to women's track ($M = 3.5$). The teams varied in responses throughout the results, focusing on safe travel accommodations.

Question 6D had the highest agreement overall ($M = 2.9$) from the head baseball coaches ($M = 2.9$) compared to the lowest level of agreement from the women's track ($M = 1.6$), indicating the women's track coaches did not feel responsible for fundraising for travel. Men's soccer head coaches were in a lower level of agreement ($M = 2.1$) compared to women's head soccer coaches ($M = 2.3$). Men's basketball coaches felt more responsible for fundraising for team travel ($M = 2.2$) than women's basketball head coaches ($M = 1.7$). Baseball had a stronger sentiment toward fundraising ($M = 2.9$) than the head softball coaches ($M = 2.5$). In track, the men's team head coaches felt much stronger ($M = 2.5$) than the women's team head coaches ($M = 1.6$). In every like-sport, excluding men's and women's soccer, the head coaches of the men's teams felt more responsible for fundraising for their team's travel accommodations than the head coaches of the women's teams.

Question 6E had the highest agreement ($M = 2.8$) from baseball and women's track compared to the lowest agreement ($M = 2.0$) from men's outdoor track and field, signifying the baseball and women's track head coaches felt travel had more of a positive impact on their recruiting success than the other teams. The men's and women's soccer head coaches had the same sentiment ($M = 2.7$) about travel positively impacting their recruiting success. The same was true for men's and women's basketball head coaches ($M = 2.6$). The head coaches for baseball ($M = 2.8$) and softball ($M = 2.7$) were also remarkably close in agreement on the relationship between travel accommodations and recruiting success. Whereas men's track head coaches were in much less agreement ($M = 2.0$) compared to women's track head coaches ($M = 2.8$), signifying the women's track head coaches thought travel accommodations had more of a

positive impact on their recruiting success. The results for the teams were all similar, indicating that the teams were mostly in agreement that travel accommodations have a positive impact on their recruiting success.

Question 6F had the highest overall agreement from men's soccer ($M = 3.2$) compared to men's track with the lowest ($M = 2.3$), relative to their institution providing equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary. Men's soccer head coaches had stronger agreement ($M = 3.2$) than women's head soccer coaches ($M = 2.9$). The men's basketball head coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.9$) than the women's basketball head coaches ($M = 3.1$), signifying that the women's basketball coaches felt stronger that their institutions provided equitable funding for overnight travel. The results were similar for baseball and softball, where the softball head coaches were in stronger agreement ($M = 2.9$) than the baseball head coaches ($M = 2.8$). Men's track head coaches were in far less agreement ($M = 2.3$) than women's track head coaches ($M = 3.1$). These results indicated that collectively, the women's team head coaches felt stronger about their institution providing equitable funding when overnight travel was necessary.

Table 19. Travel Equity Men's and Women's Teams Means

Team	<i>n</i>	6B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	6C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	6D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	6E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	6F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary
Men's soccer	18	3.2	3.7	2.1	2.7	3.2
Women's soccer	23	3.2	3.4	2.3	2.7	2.9
Men's basketball	31	3.3	3.3	2.2	2.6	2.9
Women's basketball	34	3.1	3.0	1.7	2.6	3.1
Men's baseball	30	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.8
Women's softball	44	3.1	3.3	2.5	2.7	2.9
Men's track	4	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.0	2.3
Women's track	8	3.0	3.5	1.6	2.8	3.1
Averages		3.1	3.2	2.2	2.6	2.9

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

The travel equity means based on the head coaches' experience years are shown in Table 20. Though the means were remarkably similar for both groups, there were no matching agreement scores for any sub-question. 11+ years head coaches were in higher agreement ($M = 3.2$), whereas the men were in less agreement ($M = 3.0$) pertaining to institutions providing equitable travel for their teams (4B). The means in question 6C related to the institution's commitment to providing safe travel accommodations show the 11+ year head coaches were in more agreement ($M = 3.3$) compared to the 1–10-year head coaches ($M = 3.2$). However, the 1–10-year head coaches felt more strongly ($M = 2.4$) regarding the responsibility to fundraise for team travel (6F) compared to the 11+ head coaches ($M = 2.1$). Though similar, the 1–10-year head coaches felt slightly more agreement ($M = 2.7$) toward travel accommodations, which positively impacted recruiting success compared to the 11+ years ($M = 2.6$). On the other hand, the 11+ year head coaches felt stronger ($M = 3.0$) as it pertained to institutions providing equitable funding for overnight travel (6F) compared to the 1–10-year head coaches ($M = 2.9$).

Table 20. Travel Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience Means

Years' experience	6B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	6C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	6D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	6E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	6F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary
1–10	3.0	3.2	2.4	2.7	2.9
11+	3.2	3.3	2.1	2.6	3.0

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used.

Comparative Analysis

To implement a comparative analysis of the Likert Scale survey questions and conduct a comparative study, the researcher calculated the means and standard deviations and defined the significance of the results using a *t* test. The subgroups for all Likert Scale questions were defined as DI and DII, Female and Male Respondents, Men's and Women's Teams, and Years of Head Coaching Experience (1–10 years and 11+ years).

Facilities

Table 21 is the first of the series of the comparative results by division focused on facilities equity. Comparing the DI and DII head coaches' survey responses regarding facilities and athletic equity implementation, DI had 85 respondents ($N = 85$), and DII had 107 ($N = 107$). With the number of respondents being similar in each group, the standard deviation calculations are also similar as denoted in Table 21. The highest mean ($M = 3.2$) for DI was found in question 4C. Even with a similar number of respondents, while comparing the two divisions, the researcher found only one significant difference (*t* -test result of 0.05) in question 4B regarding providing equitable facilities for my team, the DII head coaches had a higher mean ($M = 3.2$) with a standard deviation of 1.0 compared to the DI teams ($M = 2.8$) and a standard deviation of 1.2. This indicates that DI and DII respondents felt significantly different regarding their institution providing equitable facilities for their teams with the DII head coaches in stronger agreement to equitable facilities than the DI head coaches. Question 4D was close to significance, with a *t* -test result of 0.09, as it pertained to their institutions providing equitable access to their team's facilities (4C). Table 21 summarizes the responses of the head DI and DII head coaches regarding facility equity.

Table 21. Facilities Equity DI and DII Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 4	DI		DII		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams	2.8	1.1	3.0	1.1	0.22
B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	2.8	1.2	3.2	1.0	0.05*
C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	3.0	1.0	3.2	0.9	0.14
D. My team has quality athletic facilities	2.9	1.1	3.1	1.0	0.09
E. My teams' facilities have a quality impact on my recruiting success	2.7	1.1	2.9	1.2	0.22

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. DI ($n = 85$) and DII ($n = 107$). The * denotes statistical significance.

When comparing the female and male respondents regarding facilities, there was a significantly higher number of male respondents than female respondents, which often results in the less respondent group having a higher standard deviation. Full results are presented in Table 22. The researcher found that there was no significance in the t-test results for any of the facility equity questions. Male and female head coaches had the highest mean ($M = 3.0$) for female respondents was in question 4C with a standard deviation of 1.0. Similarly, the highest mean for the male respondents was also question 4C ($M = 3.2$) with a standard deviation of 1.0. These results indicated that the female and male headed coaches felt strongest that their institutions provided equitable access to their team's facilities. The area with the lowest results for both the male and female head coaches was question 4E where the female respondents had a lower mean

($M = 2.7$) with a standard deviation of 1.2 compared to the male respondents, who had a higher mean of 3.0 with a standard deviation of 1.1. Overall, the results confirmed both groups felt facilities did not positively impact their recruiting success. Although there was no significance found, the male respondents all had higher scores in comparison to the female respondents in every sub-question, indicating the male coaches felt stronger about facility equity.

Table 22. Facilities Equity Female and Male Head Coaches t -test Results

Question 4	Female respondents		Male respondents		t test
	M	SD	M	SD	
A. My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams	2.8	1.1	3.0	1.1	0.34
B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	2.9	1.2	3.1	1.1	0.40
C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	3.0	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.32
D. My team has quality athletic facilities	2.9	1.1	3.0	1.0	0.43
E. My teams' facilities have a quality impact on my recruiting success	2.7	1.2	3.0	1.1	0.29

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Female respondent sample size was ($n = 49$) and male respondent sample size was ($n = 143$).

Table 23 provides the data results of the men's and women's teams' head coaches regarding facilities; the researcher found no significance in the t -test results. While there were similar numbers of men's teams and women's teams head coaches, the women's team respondents had slightly higher standard deviations; these results indicates that the women teams' respondents vary more regarding facility equity than men's team respondents. The t -test result for question 4A was closest to significance, with a score of 0.11. Overall, the female and

male head coaches assessed their institutions provided equitable access to their team's facilities. The highest scores for both groups were in 4C indicating that both the men's and women's teams head coaches were in most agreement about their institutions providing equitable access to their team's facilities.

Table 23. Facilities Equity Men's and Women's Team Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 4	Men's teams		Women's teams		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams	3.1	1.0	2.8	1.1	0.11
B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	3.1	1.0	2.9	1.2	0.28
C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	3.2	1.0	3.1	1.0	0.43
D. My team has quality athletic facilities	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	0.89
E. My teams' facilities have a quality impact on my recruiting success	3.0	1.1	2.8	1.2	0.32

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Men's team sample size was ($n = 83$) and the female's team sample size was ($n = 109$).

The head coaching experience is divided into 1–10 years and 11+ years. The results of these two categories, presented in Table 24, show a lack of variance and no significance; the two groups had similar response results. The highest mean for both groups was in question 4C indicating both groups agreed most strongly about their institutions providing equitable access to their team's facilities. Overall, the 11+ year head coaches were in slightly stronger agreement with all questions pertaining to facility equity.

Table 24. Facilities Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience t-test Results

Question 4	1–10		11 +		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams	2.9	1.1	3.0	1.1	0.36
B. My institution provides equitable facilities for my team	3.0	1.1	3.1	1.1	0.48
C. My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities	3.1	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.50
D. My team has quality athletic facilities	2.9	1.2	3.1	1.0	0.16
E. My teams' facilities have a quality impact on my recruiting success	2.8	1.2	3.0	1.1	0.32

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Participants with 1–10 years of experience had a sample size of ($n = 117$) and the participants with 11+ years of experience sample size was ($n = 75$).

Scholarships

Table 25 is the first of the series of comparative results focused on scholarship equity by division. Two questions resulted in significant differences. Question 5A *t*-test result of 0.02. The significance concludes the two groups had diverse levels of agreements when it pertained to their institutions providing equitable scholarship for all teams. The DI head coaches were in less agreement ($M = 2.7$) with a standard deviation of 1.2 about their institutions providing equitable scholarships than the DII head coaches who were in less agreement ($M = 3.0$) with a standard deviation of 1.0. The second question resulting in significance, with a *t*-test result of 0.04, is 4C about fundraising for scholarships. The DI head coaches were in stronger agreement ($M = 3.1$) with a standard deviation 1.1 compared to the DII head coaches who were in less agreement (M

= 2.8) with a standard deviation of 1.7. The DI coaches indicated their institutions are more likely to allow them to fundraise for scholarships than the DII coaches. Overall, the two groups varied in their responses toward scholarship equity.

Table 25. Scholarship Equity DI and DII Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 5	DI		DII		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable scholarships for all teams	2.7	1.2	3.0	1.0	0.02*
B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	2.8	1.1	3.0	1.0	0.16
C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	3.1	1.1	2.8	1.7	0.04*
D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.8	1.2	2.8	1.2	0.95

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. DI sample size was ($n = 85$) and DII sample size was ($n = 107$). The * denotes statistical significance.

The results comparing female and male head coaches, as presented in Table 26, focus on scholarship equity. There was a significantly higher number of male respondents than female respondents, which can result in the lesser respondent group having a higher standard deviation. Unlike the DI and DII results, the responses from female and male head coaches were not significant. One group did not have more high scores than the other, rather the overall agreement levels slightly varied with only a .1 different in all the mean scores pertaining to scholarship equity. In question 5C which focused on institutions allowing to fundraise for additional scholarships, both groups had the same agreement level ($M = 2.9$), the female head coaches had a

standard deviation of 1.3 and the male head coaches had a standard deviation of 1.2. Overall, the female and male head coaches felt very similarly about scholarship equity.

Table 26. Scholarship Equity Female and Male Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 5	Female respondents		Male respondents		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable scholarships for all teams	2.8	1.1	2.9	1.1	0.67
B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	3.0	1.0	2.9	1.1	0.46
C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	2.9	1.3	2.9	1.2	0.85
D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.9	1.2	2.8	1.2	0.68

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. The total female respondent sample size was ($n = 49$) and the male respondent total was ($n = 143$).

The comparison of men's and women's teams head coaches regarding scholarship equity can be found in Table 27. The *t*-test results did not conclude significance, with a *t*-test result of 0.05. The two groups had very similar results. Question 5C results displayed the largest discrepancy pertaining to scholarship equity; the men's teams head coaches agreed less ($M = 2.8$) with a standard deviation of 1.02 compared to the women's teams head coaches with a stronger agreement ($M = 3.2$) and the same standard deviation ($SD = 1.02$). These results indicate that the women's teams head coaches' felt their institutions allowed them to fundraise for scholarships more than the male team's head coaches. Overall, both the men's and women's teams head coaches had similar responses related to scholarship equity.

Table 27. Scholarship Equity Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 5	Men's teams		Women's teams		t test
	M	SD	M	SD	
A. My institution provides equitable scholarships for all teams	2.9	1.0	2.8	1.1	0.58
B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	2.9	1.1	2.9	1.1	0.92
C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	2.8	1.2	3.0	1.2	0.46
D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.8	1.2	2.8	1.2	0.99

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Sample size for men's teams ($n = 83$) and women's teams ($n = 109$) and the results of the t test between the two teams.

The head coaching experience was divided into 1–10 years and 11+ years, and the results of these two categories are presented in Table 28 with the t test not concluding significance. The responses from both groups of coaches were remarkably similar. The closest question to significance was question 5B, with a t -test result of 0.15, which focused on institutions providing equitable scholarship dollars. Overall, the results did not denote a difference in the two groups' responses.

Table 28. Scholarship Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience t-test Results

Question 5	1–10 years' experience		11 + years' experience		t test
	M	SD	M	SD	
A. My institution provides equitable scholarships for all teams	2.9	1.1	2.7	1.1	0.22
B. My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for my team	3.0	1.1	2.8	1.1	0.15

C. My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget	2.9	1.2	3.0	1.2	0.54
D. My team's scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.9	1.1	2.7	1.2	0.43

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. The sample size for 1–10 years' experience was ($n = 117$) and the 11+ year experience same size was ($n = 75$).

Travel

Table 29 is the first of the series of comparative results by division focused on team travel equity. When comparing the DI and DII coaches, question 6C displayed significance, with a t -test result of 0.04, regarding the institutions providing safe travel accommodations for the respondents' teams. The DI team had a lower mean ($M = 3.1$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.1$) compared to the DII respondents, with a higher mean ($M = 3.36$) and a lower standard deviation ($SD = 0.87$). These results indicate that DI respondents felt they had less safe travel accommodations than DII. The lowest mean for both groups was in question 6D ($M = 2.1$). The results concluded both groups did not feel strongly about their responsibility to raise money for their teams' travel accommodations.

Table 29. Travel Equity DI and DII Head Coaches t -test Results

Question 6	DI		DII		t -test
	M	SD	M	SD	
A. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams	3.0	1.1	3.2	1.0	0.19
B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	3.1	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.36
C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	3.1	1.1	3.7	0.9	0.04*

D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	2.2	1.2	2.3	1.2	0.49
E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.6	1.1	2.7	1.0	0.75
F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary	2.9	1.1	3.0	1.1	0.77

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. The DI sample size was ($n = 85$) and the DII sample size was ($n = 107$).

The results comparing female and male respondents, as presented in Table 30 focus on travel equity. There was a significantly higher number of male respondents than female respondents, which often results in the less respondent group having a higher standard deviation. Question 6C had the highest agreement level ($M = 3.2$) for the female and male head coaches was with a standard deviation of 1.0, indicating both groups felt their institutions were committed to providing safe travel accommodations for their teams. The lowest mean for the female head coaches was in question 6D and 6E ($M = 2.7$), with a standard deviation of 1.2 indicating the female head coaches did not feel as strongly in regard to the need to fundraise for team travel or that their travel accommodations had a positive impact on their recruiting success. The lowest agreement for the male head coaches was also in question 6D ($M = 2.3$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.2$) indicating that they also did not feel as strongly about the responsibility to fundraise for their team's travel accommodations. Overall, the female and male head coaches indicated their agreement toward travel equity.

Table 30. Travel Equity Female and Male Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 6	Female respondents		Male respondents		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams	3.0	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.53
B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	3.1	1.1	3.1	1.0	0.88
C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	3.2	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.90
D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	2.7	1.2	2.3	1.2	0.48
E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.7	1.0	2.6	1.0	0.56
F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary	3.1	1.1	2.9	1.1	0.30

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. The female respondent sample size was ($n = 49$) and the male respondent sample size was ($n = 143$).

The comparison of men's and women's teams regarding travel for both groups can be found in Table 31. The *t*-test results did not conclude significance; however, 6D was close to significance, with a *t*-test result of 0.11, about head coaches feeling responsible to fundraise for their teams' travel accommodation. The highest mean for both groups resulted in men's teams ($M = 3.3$) with a standard deviation of 1.16 and women's teams ($M = 3.2$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.0$). The consistency across all items regarding to travel, safety is the highest. These high results indicate both groups have a high rating toward their institutions providing safe travel accommodations for their teams. The lowest means for both groups were in 6D with the men's teams ($M = 2.4$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.2$) and the women's teams ($M = 2.2$)

with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.2$) proving the teams do not feel responsible for fundraising money for teams' travel.

Table 31. Travel Equity Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaches t-test Results

Question 6	Men's teams		Women's teams		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams	3.2	1.0	3.1	1.0	0.58
B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	3.1	1.0	3.1	1.0	0.88
C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	3.3	1.0	3.2	1.0	0.75
D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	2.4	1.2	2.2	1.2	0.11
E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.7	1.0	2.7	1.0	0.99
F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary	2.9	1.1	3.0	1.1	0.66

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Men's teams sample size was ($n = 83$) and the women's team sample size was ($n = 109$).

The head coaching experience was divided into 1–10 years and 11+ years, with the results presented in Table 32. The *t*-test results showed no significance. Both groups' highest mean was in question 6C with the 11+ year group having a higher mean ($M = 3.9$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.0$) compared to the 1–10-year group with a lower mean ($M = 3.2$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 1.0$) indicating both groups felt strongly about their institutions providing safe travel accommodations for their teams. Both groups had the lowest agreement

levels in two questions: question 6D regarding feeling responsible for fundraising for travel and 6E regarding a positive relationship between travel and recruiting success. Within the results of these two questions, the 1–10-year head coaches having a slightly strong agreement in both categories than the 11+ year group of head coaches. Though the scores were slightly different for each sub-question, the lack of significance in scores across both groups further supports the conclusion of travel equity.

Table 32. Travel Equity Years of Head Coaching Experience t-test Results

Question 6	1–10 years' experience		11+ years' experience		<i>t</i> test
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams	3.0	1.0	3.2	0.9	0.19
B. My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team	3.1	1.0	3.2	0.9	0.23
C. My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team	3.2	1.0	3.3	1.0	0.64
D. I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations	2.4	1.2	2.1	1.1	0.13
E. My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success	2.7	1.0	2.6	1.0	0.82
F. My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary	2.9	1.1	2.9	1.1	0.86

Note. A Likert Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. The sample size for 1–10 years of experience was ($n = 117$) and the sample size for 11+ years was ($n = 75$).

Qualitative Analysis

The researcher conducted a series of 15 individual interviews with willing survey respondents. At least one head coach represented every sport specific to this study throughout the

interviews. Throughout the interviews, the researcher identified significant themes associated with each question. The interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom and were transcribed using Word; the interview questions are in Appendix H. The researcher meticulously coded the interview participants by the sport they coach, their National Junior College Association (NJCAA) division affiliation, and the specific number of head coaches in one category, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the data. The completed list of interview participants can be found in Table 33.

Table 33. Interview Participants Demographic and Coding

Sport	Gender	NJCAA division	Code	Code description
Men's soccer	Male	DII	MSOCDII	Men's soccer DII respondent
Women's soccer	Male	DII	WSOCDI	Women's soccer DI respondent
Men's basketball	Male	DI	MBBDI	Men's basketball DI respondent
Men's basketball	Male	DII	MBBDII	Men's basketball DII respondent
Women's basketball	Female	DII	WBBDII1	Women's basketball DII respondent 1
Women's basketball	Female	DII	WBBDII2	Women's basketball DII respondent 2
Men's baseball	Male	DI	BSBDI1	Baseball DI respondent 1
Men's baseball	Male	DI	BSBDI2	Baseball DI respondent 2
Women's softball	Male	DII	SBDII1	Softball DII respondent 1
Women's softball	Female	DII	SBDII2	Softball DII respondent 2
Women's softball	Female	DII	SBDII3	Softball DII respondent 3
Women's softball	Female	DII	SBDII4	Softball DII respondent 4
Men's track	Male	DI	MTRCKDI	Men's track DI respondent
Women's track	Male	DI	WTRCKDI1	Women's track DI respondent 1
Women's track	Male	DI	WTRCKDI2	Women's track DI respondent 2

Why Did You Want to Be a Head Coach?

Follow-up: Is It What You Expected? Why or Why Not?

Through this interview question, the coaches expressed a profound sense of responsibility for their team's overall success, both on and off the playing field. Many coaches elaborated on why and how they became head coaches, and each interviewee had a different story; however, two consistent themes emerged throughout this question: *making an impact* and *influencing*.

Making an Impact

A central theme among the head coaches was making an impact. Many interviewees either had family members who were coaches or they were influenced by coaches they had while growing up. All participants interviewed had different personal or professional reasons for advancing into a head coaching role and were impacted by someone in their life through sports. Many of the head coaches aspired to have the same influence on others.

BSBDI2, a newly appointed head coach, explained why he wanted to become a college coach, "Baseball has been a big part of my life, and the head coaches that I have been around impacted me in a very positive way, and I wanted to give back that same way." SBDII4, a tenured head coach explained, "I just wanted to be in that role to impact our players' lives, whether on or off the playing field." SBDII3, a tenured head coach and an administrator explained why she originally wanted to be a head coach, "Being in charge and being that leader that makes a difference in people's lives." WBDII1, who was an assistant coach for over 15 years and is currently in her first year as a head coach, had parents who were head coaches, "For me, it was just the right time in my life to move on and be a head coach." SBDII4, a head coach

of over 5 years expressed the importance of being a head coach and making an impact on her players, saying:

I think that is huge just being a role model and being impactful to student-athletes and molding them for their futures. Seeing the growth from an individual from the first time they arrive to when they graduate. That is really impactful as a coach because that goes to show your hard work has paid off.

WSOCDII explained how initially he did not want to be a head coach but continued his story about how he is so happy to be in this role and further stated, “I get the opportunity to change the lives of young men and women at an age where they are trying to figure out who they are and where they want to go.”

Influencing

The coaches reported that one of the reasons they became head coaches was to influence those around them. Many coaches identified as teachers and strived to help develop their student-athletes as people. MBBDI, a head coach of almost 5 years confidently stated why he wanted to become a head coach, “Helping them (student-athletes) become better people, better community members, better brothers, better sons and hopefully one day, better fathers and a better husband.” Furthermore, BSBDI1 the most tenured head coach of all the candidates (38 years) made a similar statement regarding influencing student-athletes, “I wanted to be a head coach because you can influence kids. You can see the results. You can see growth and put your footprint on everything you do.” Similarly, WTRCKDI2, a newly appointed head coach stated, “We get to touch lives with a diverse group, and it is a dream job.”

In addition to making an impact and being an influencer, the coaches described their passion for their careers. SBDII1, a tenured head coach and athletic director, further explained

that his grandfather was a coach for over 30 years, and he had the opportunity to grow up and witness his grandfather influence young people through coaching. SBDII1 stated, "The impact he [his grandfather] had on young people and the community was why my goal was to be a coach."

Due to an opposite upbringing, MBBDII, with 2 years of head coaching experience, explained:

I did not have a father figure, so I knew I wanted to be a coach and be that point of contact that a lot of college basketball players do not have. Many players come from broken homes, and I feel like I can give back more this way due to my past and it has been extremely beneficial, and it is why I got into it (coaching).

SBDII2 also had personal reasons for wanting to become a head coach, sharing:

For me, it was a personal thing. I did not have the best home life and I felt like my coaches were really solid for me. Then I thought I wanted to teach and coach, then it progressed that I really wanted to just coach at the junior college level because that is where I found myself (at an early age). That is where I can help kids find themselves along the way. I would not be who I am today if I did not have the good coaches in my life.

MSOCDII, who has over 5 years of head coaching experience, first had the opportunity to work for the family business but chose coaching instead to be able to influence young people, "Just giving tools to be successful once they (student-athletes) leave, I think that is my favorite part and building the culture and that environment." WBBDI2 indicated she had a negative experience with head high school coaches that were male, which influenced her to go into coaching high school, which eventually led to her college coaching career, "I think representation matters and also having someone that looks like me and knows what it is like to be a woman is something that I wanted to be able to do for other student-athletes."

Tell Me Your Favorite Aspect of Being a Head Coach.

The head coaches were very enthusiastic about their careers and expressed their desires to develop their student-athletes as people. The coaches had a keen sense of pride in themselves and their relationships with their student-athletes on and off the competition field. The two themes discovered throughout the interviews were *teaching in sports and life* and *connection*.

Teaching in Sports and Life

The coaches expressed the reward of teaching student-athletes and how similar coaching and teaching are. SBDII1 expressed the importance of teaching, “You teach them [student-athletes] how to be disciplined in and focus on the process.” MTRCKDI, a tenured track coach of over 15 years, stated, “Teaching is coaching, so that was kind of my thought process: if you are teaching, you are coaching, and if you are coaching, you are teaching. I fell right into that, and that was my path to becoming a head coach.” In addition, SBDII4 expressed, “I think being a head coach is where I can really teach the game [softball] but also teach life.” BSBDI1 further expanded on his passion for teaching, saying:

I truly think I have embraced the fact that teaching is the number one thing, and I love teaching. It is kind of interesting when you are practicing, and a kid does not know something, and you teach it to them, and then suddenly it clicks, and they figure it out. Then you can see that light bulb go off in their head, and that is kind of cool.

Overall, your number one goal is teaching and by that, I mean about life, about the game and being a good person. I think you need to set an example and teach more than winning games or raising money.

SBDII2 explained the importance of teaching at the junior college level due to being able to impart young student-athletes, “I like this level where kids are at a point in their life where they

are starting their careers and education, and I just like to watch them develop at this age. I enjoy seeing the student-athletes succeed.” MBBDI had a similar outlook, sharing:

We want to get athletes graduated but I enjoy watching people develop and work toward their goals, whether that is athletically or academically. It is something that is very enjoyable to me, watching student-athletes walk the stage and leave better people, not just better athletes.

MTRCKDI was consistent with the others and expanded on his concept of teaching, sharing:

The process that goes behind the scenes is like a chess match. Seeing development over time and then the athletes getting a personal best. Being able to develop someone that was not good in high school and make them better.

Out of all 15 interviews, not one of the coaches commented on wins and losses when asked this question. Instead, the answers emphasized the importance of teaching and their overall impact on student-athletes. The head coaches emphasized the meaningfulness of wanting their teaching values to translate a lifetime.

Relationships

The coaches, deeply invested in their student-athletes, spoke of their pride in cultivating relationships WBBDI2, in her first year as a head coach, shared that her favorite part of coaching is the “Connection with my players.” This response was echoed by other coaches, who emphasized that the relationship component of coaching can last a lifetime. BSBDI2 explained how relationships were the favorite aspect of being a head coach, stating:

I think the relationship side of this is my favorite, especially at the junior college level where you get to recruit and promote and know the student-athletes for 2 years. The

relationships throughout the years continue to be a part of my life and I am a part of their life.

MSOCDII highlighted the importance of relationships, “Seeing some of my student-athletes grow up and get married are the best moments.” BSBDI discussed multiple relationship roles that he believed are linked to being a head coach, “When you get into coaching, you wear more hats than you thought. You realize you are a fundraiser, a coach, parent, and teacher.” SBDII2 highlighted the how much time coaches spend developing relationships with their athletes, including traveling as a team, and prepping the softball field. It all starts during the recruiting process, “You are going to spend a lot of hours recruiting student-athletes and a lot of hours helping student-athletes.” WTRCKDI2 expressed the impact relationships have for him and have kept him at the collegiate coaching level rather than going to a different level, “Building those connections within the campus and community and the local community, that is probably what keeps me in this position versus going back to a high school and making more money.”

When the coaches were asked an unofficial follow-up question regarding their least favorite part of the job, the responses varied; however, an overarching theme of *recruiting* became known. Two respondents indicated the COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the coaching world and created complications in terms of societal expectations, entitlement, and work ethic. MBBDI expressed, “COVID has changed society. I do not know that anybody could have predicted that that was going to play out and how young people were going to come out on the other side of the thing that went on.” Other coaches expressed their dislike of operational aspects such as credit card reconciling and budgets. WBBDII2 expressed that her least favorite aspect was administrative work due to distractions: “This whole week I have been doing emails and tomorrow I go recruiting and I do not feel prepared to successfully recruit.” A couple of the

coaches touched on the facilities and travel issues they are currently experiencing as their least favorite aspects of the job. SBDII2 said:

My least favorite is managing all the things. Then just driving the vehicles in late nights and things where you know it could be a better situation and I do feel like here [her current institution] we are in a bad situation the way we travel sometimes, and I do not enjoy that and I do not enjoy driving the vans after coaching all day. Also, not having some facilities up to par.

BSBDI2 stressed a similar sentiment toward facility issues, sharing:

The facilities are not where I want them to be, and the weather is not what I want it to be. I do not think that there is a negative of head coaching except for some of the headaches that happen with some things that you feel like you need that you do not get.”

Additionally, a few coaches mentioned how recruiting and retaining student-athletes is currently one of their least favorite aspects of their job. MBBDI2 explained his frustration with retainment, saying:

My least favorite is the turnover right now, you have got to recruit a whole new team in some sports, and we are dealing with this more. If you want to be competitive, you have got to get older players, but you have a very short time to get them to trust you and when you do build a relationship, they are gone.

WTRCKDI shared how he disliked a particular aspect of recruiting, stating:

You get your hopes up [while recruiting athletes] and then you get crushed. It is like, I thought I would have this person attend [my institution], and then they get a better offer. Then you are just left feeling crushed.

In addition to handling discipline issues, WBBDI1 explained why recruiting is one of her least favorite aspects of the job, saying:

I am not a huge fan of recruiting, and that is an essential component of what we do. We [her institution] have restrictions on how many in-state and out-of-state student-athletes we are required to have. And that is why I do not enjoy recruiting because we have to go watch all these in-state student-athletes who are mediocre at best and if they [institution] would just let us go to other states there is really good talent.

WSCODII indicated institutional restrictions have led to the frustration of recruiting, “The grind of recruiting and how recruiting has changed over the years. I have been at enrollment-driven schools, which is even more difficult because you are not even recruiting players. You are recruiting bodies.”

As a Head Coach, How Often Do You Experience Situations Focusing on Athletic Equity?

The coaches elaborated on their athletic equity experiences, which filtered into their everyday operations. Athletic equity did not seem to be a main form of focus but rather something current in the world of athletics. The responses and different experiences varied significantly as to how the theme of *constant comparison* came to fruition.

Constant Comparison

Taking a proactive stance, the coaches discussed their experiences daily, ensuring they had the appropriate resources compared to other teams. BSBDI1 indicated he deals with situations around athletic equity because he likes to complete projects at his facility, but due to comparison with softball he needs prior approval from the administration to ensure there is an issue with athletic equity. BSBDI1 shared:

I like to do projects, and every time I have a project, it has to be ran through [administration] and they are always looking at the other side of the fence. And there are times where maybe it is something I think is small and would not matter, but when administration looks at it, it is not quite so small, and it does matter.

WSOCDI expressed how often he is dealing with athletic equity lately because so many women's soccer programs are being cut nationwide due to the struggle of filling rosters compared to the thriving men's soccer teams. The head coaches are constantly navigating these situations as best as possible, and many continue to.

How Did You Learn About or Come to Understand Athletic Equity?

The head coaches were introduced to athletic equity by different methods throughout their careers; they were cognizant of it and the importance of creating an equitable environment. The coaches' experiences and outlook varied throughout the answers. The interviews consisted of emotion, caution, and even some resentment. The theme that came to fruition throughout this question was understanding athletic equity through *learning curves*.

Learning Curves

MBBDI shared how he has always worked for institutions that prioritized Title IX, saying:

Everywhere I have been has been very cognizant of making sure that Title IX is adhered to, and a lot of decisions, whether they were the right decisions or the wrong decisions, it led with Is it equitable for all sports across the board, men's, and women's? So, I have been fortunate to be around a lot of administrators that have followed the Title IX guidelines and have been intentional about making sure everything is equitable.

BSBDI1 expressed that athletic equity has evolved throughout his 30-plus year coaching career, especially in the past 5 years, "I have learned a lot about how equitable people actually want it

[athletics].” SBDII2 conveyed how her first institution of employment provided intentional and proactive Title IX, sharing:

I honestly received a lot of guidance at my previous institution, so I am glad I started there because I got a lot of clear-cut procedures; it was very cut and dry, “This is what we [previous institution] do, and this is what we [current institution] do not do.” So, for me, I was lucky to start at a place that already had some policies and procedures in place.

Similarly, SBDII3 expressed that earlier in her coaching career, she accepted the fact that women do not get respect. However, the leadership from a female athletic director made her recognize the importance of athletic equity, “She [athletic director] did a great job kind of explaining equity, explaining the reason why we [coaches] should fight for different things and hold our ground and stand firm.” SBDII1, a male coach, had a similar experience with having a female athletic director as his supervisor, stating, “I worked for a female athletic director who also coached. So in my time here [current institution], I have never known anything different than equity from a gender perspective.” WTRCKDI1 indicated that The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) report was a topic of conversation during a staff meeting at his previous institution of employment, indicating that the introduction to data helped him better understand athletic equity, “I am very analytical and I really want to see what everyone else is getting. I learned a lot about that side of things [athletic equity] just from that one experience [the meeting introducing the EADA].” BSBDI2 shared that during his time at his previous institution, “Athletic equity was it was introduced, and it was a huge theme.”

All head coaches had been familiarized with athletic equity at some point throughout their careers, but some were more knowledgeable on the subject than others. WTRCKDI admitted, “I would say it [athletic equity] has never been a major topic in 11 years of college

coaching and 2 years of high school coaching.” This coach continued to admit that he had to research the context of athletic equity when he received the survey to comprehend the study thoroughly. Whereas MBBDII learned about athletic equity at a younger age, “There was not really classes I took; it was more experience from when I played in college.” MTRCKDI had a more frustrating experience learning about athletic equity stating, “I hate that word [equity] because I have been having it thrown down my face so much during the last 2 or 3 years,” referring to situations where he was unable to do something for his team because he was told it would take away from other teams. SBDII4 shared how she became familiar with athletic equity by “Witnessing another sport on campus, which is just as successful as your program, getting a higher audience and maybe a higher privilege than what your athletes are getting.”

How Often Do You As a Head Coach See Your Role in Creating an Equitable Environment for Your Student-Athletes?

Follow Up: Have You Seen a “Best Practice” At Your College or Maybe Somewhere Else?

The respondents had decades of head coaching experience, and the coaches felt responsible for advocating for their student-athletes and teams’ needs. Whether advocating for the necessary athletic equipment, court time, or budget dollars, the head coaches suggested best practices for institutions to be most successful in implementing athletic equity. The best practice themes developed throughout the interviews were *institutional communication* and *equity rotation*.

Institutional Communication

The head coaches indicated that effective, institutional communication is a best practice they have witnessed being successful throughout their coaching careers. WBBDI1 and MBBDI,

both head coaches, one for women's basketball and one for men's basketball, expressed their success while working with their sport colleagues. Both coaches identified the best practice of effective communication, explicitly focusing on gym space and travel logistics. MBBDI stated:

We [the men's basketball coaching staff] work closely with our women's coaches here to make sure that practice time gym space we are flexible. I do not want to fight them [the women's basketball coaches] on it. It is the right thing to do, if I am thinking about athletic equity, I have been a role model as a head coach.

WBBDII1 expressed a similar sentiment toward communication, "Our men's coach asked me what time our team wanted to practice, and he would work around whatever we wanted."

WTRCKDI2 further suggested:

The best practice idea is communication, putting everybody in the same room, and reviewing athletic equity. Then, say, OK, this is why we do what we do, or this is why we think how we think because these are our experiences?

SBDDIID2 defined a best practice from her previous institution when athletic equity was communicated and introduced immediately; rather than at another institution, she was more reactive than proactive with athletic equity, which caused complications. MSOCDI explained that his previous athletic director would say, "You chose your sport," indicating that some sports were considered premiere and would receive more attention and resources than others. MSOCDI continued to express how he is experiencing the opposite mindset at his current institution, "They [current institution] do a really good job of trying to make sure everyone [student-athletes] are competitive on a national level." BSBDI1 shared athletic equity implementation best practices at his current institution, saying:

I think here [his current institution] we do a fantastic job, maybe too good of a job. I think sometimes people think it is dollar for dollar and it is not. I think our school maybe goes above and beyond what the scope of the actual rule is, but that is probably not bad either. I have seen other schools; I was just at a school yesterday that I will not name where the baseball program now has turf on the field, but softball does not, and there are no plans for the women because the head softball coach does not want it [turf]. And this is a very inequitable situation. But for the programs to be equal, that is going to require an athletic director and president to know the rules.

SBDII1 had a similar viewpoint toward the responsibility of administration, stating, “I think equity essentially starts with the presidents and their vision and mission. They are really the ones that are overseeing everything.” SBDII4 expressed comparable thoughts regarding necessary communication about athletic equity among administration and shared her experiences as a student-athlete, saying:

Our [softball] locker room was located in a closet, and the football locker room had lockers and everything. We [softball] were probably more dominant than they [football] had ever been over the years. We [softball] dominated every year, and we were still in a closet and still using the same jerseys. I do not think that not only the athletic department needs to look at that as a whole, but the administration among campus. Look at it from facilities all the way down to the last dollar.

MBBDI stressed the importance of communication with administration regarding how to implement athletic equity understanding best:

One thing I try to do, is layout to administrators that when it comes to equity, especially for us in men’s basketball, because we do deal with extremely large individuals, our

budget to feed student-athletes does not go as far as other sports. It is going to cost me a whole lot more to feed men's basketball players than it would to feed women's basketball players.

BSBDI2 discussed communication as an essential aspect, "Overall it [his experience] is positive, and everything is leaning toward an equitable environment, but just tightening some things up and maybe having more communication [would be helpful]." WBBDI1 specified how some head coaches may need more assistance learning about athletic equity, "Some coaches do not understand it [athletic equity], but I think at the end of the day not everything can be fair." WSOCDI specifically suggested, "I would like to see the continued involvement of the coaches in the decision making."

The head coaches felt that more transparent communication concerning athletic equity could prevent any uncertainty. Many head coaches felt they needed clarification about their institutions' decisions. It could be beneficial for regular campus meetings or open forums hosted to answer any questions related to athletic equity or explain why certain decisions are being made. For example, if softball received new uniforms but baseball did not, coaches would be able to ask why, and then the administration would be able to explain to them that baseball got new uniforms last year, which is now softball's turn. This concept leads to the next theme of *equity rotation*.

Equity Rotation

MBBDI identified an equity rotation concept as a best practice, "I definitely think there needs to be a broader plan. Baseball got something this year, so then it is softball's turn." He alluded that communicating this equity rotation concept could establish a better understanding as to why and when certain decisions are being made. This would allow all constituents to

understand what is taking place and why. Additionally, WBBDI1 shared a similar concept, saying:

We [the women's basketball team] would alternate travel accommodations between the charter bus and the minibus. Our athletic director was very much an advocate for equity, and he would say this team took a charter last time, so it is their [men's basketball] turn to take the charter this time, and now it is your turn to take the minibus. I did have help, and people advocated for our kids [women's basketball student-athletes] and tried to make it right.

SBDI2 shared a best practice of athletic equity that he practices at his current institution, commenting:

Anytime we [his institution] do anything to facilities, it is done to both sports. If we are in need of replacing the sound system at baseball, softball is going to get the same sound system at the same time. I think that is important and athletic directors view all of those things.

BSBDI1 indicated that he has purchased items for the softball team at his institution a couple of times throughout his career to ensure athletic equity. Had he used his fundraising just for his baseball facility, the institution would have been out of compliance; therefore, his solution was to buy the same item for the softball team. BSBDI1 indicated he did not mind doing so and considered it a "team-player" philosophy from which more than his team could benefit, saying:

We have even gone to the point of buying the women's team things so that we could have what we wanted. So, I think there is a way if you work together, but unfortunately you look at some other schools, and it is a fight between the men and the women.

MBBDI shared similar experiences indicating he had to find new solutions in his budget to accommodate his student-athletes for more comfortable travel because they needed more space but were not going to be provided more money in their budget, “I have never been necessarily told no, but I have been asked to find different solutions.”

Implementing the equity rotation concept at institutions could provide documentation and a solid reference of why certain decisions are being made. This practice could also result in better preparation for future planning as it would indicate what changes are upcoming for other sports; this practice is similar to an institutional strategic plan.

How Do You Advocate for Athletic Equity?

Follow-Up: Can You Provide an Example or Experience Regarding Advocacy in Athletics?

The head coaches elaborated on the athletic advocacy piece with different opinions and approaches. Overall, the head coaches did feel responsible for advocating for their student-athletes, teams, and, in some cases, themselves. The main theme that surfaced through this study was *personal responsibility*.

Personal Responsibility

BSBDI1 strongly stated, “We [the baseball coaching staff] definitely advocate for it [athletic equity].” BSBDI1 continued to discuss how his student-athletes do not complain about athletic equity, rather more so the coaches, sharing:

I do not think students look at athletic equity as much as the coaches do. However, at some larger levels, you hear about it. The news has stories about [athletic equity] lawsuits being filed but let us think about how many times nothing gets reported. So, it is always the squeaky wheel syndrome. The ones you hear about are the ones that do complain, but

I think for the most part, almost all schools across the board are doing a pretty good job of keeping it equitable and keeping people happy.

MBBDII shared an experience where he had to advocate for his student-athletes, saying:

Some teams may not need shoes, but when we [men's basketball] get into our 130th practice, those student-athletes need shoes, especially when they do not come from a lot of money. Situation two, when we are talking about travel budget, we had to spend more winning percentage is high at home.

A parallel experience was shared by MBBDI, who indicated he also felt responsible for advocating for the need for shoes for this basketball student-athletes, "Our [the men's basketball team] guys need a whole lot more, and our guys are big guys, they tear through shoes every three to five weeks and we got to go buy more compared to some other athletes."

As for the women's basketball coaches' when asked about advocacy, WBBDI1 expressed:

Yes. Absolutely. If I do not advocate for my kids [women's basketball student-athletes], who is going to do that? That is my job. My job is to advocate for them [women's basketball student-athletes] and help them get what is best for them. My goal is to make sure that our kids [women's basketball student-athletes] are getting the same treatment the same opportunities that every other sport, whether it be male or female, is getting on campus.

In addition, SBDII4 also took a strong stance toward advocacy, stating, "I will say that I have to tremendously advocate; my voice matters, and our program [softball] matters." She continued to share her experiences of speaking up at all-campus meetings in front of faculty and staff to ensure she and her team were heard regarding their needs, whether on the athletic or academic side. Lastly, SDII4 indicated she felt responsible for, "Fight for my kids [softball student-

athletes] to get more [resources].” MSOCDII expressed how he never wanted to be the coach who “Was going to ask for more.” However, throughout his time as a head coach he shared that when he was at his previous institution, “I felt like I had to push the envelope more just because our [the men’s soccer team] resources were minimal. “He also continued to share how he felt responsible for providing an equitable environment, “I am bringing guys [soccer athletes] in from across the world and I am selling them a professional experience.”

SBDII3 expressed how she has felt responsible throughout her career to advocate for her salary indicating that incoming coaches were being hired at a higher salary than her, “I needed to figure out a way to advocate for myself.” When asked if he felt responsible for advocating for his team, SBBDII1 simply stated, “No question.” Whereas BSBDI2 took a different approach, and though he felt responsible for athletic equity, he had a slightly different approach, “If we [the baseball team] need something, we will fundraise for it rather than going to ask for it.”

How Do You Assess Athletic Equity?

The head coaches deemed they did not have significant issues with athletic equity, but the group did have a couple of different approaches regarding how they assessed athletic equity. The two themes that came to fruition through this question were *optics and beyond* and *providing equity resources and scholarship budgets*.

Optics and Beyond

The eye test was mentioned when athletic equity was discussed in the NCAA DEI review framework. The eye test is meant to mean that the optics of bricks and mortar, in comparison, are equitable. When the coaches were asked this question, they specifically discussed the optics of athletic equity. In particular, the women’s basketball coach, WBBDI1, stated:

I have never really looked at dollar figures. I have never thought about money, but with the eye test and experience, I expect to be able to look at the men's locker room and my locker room and they be similar. I do not want to walk into their [men's basketball] locker room and have things that ours does not have; I want my student-athletes to be able to have the opportunities that the men's student-athletes have.

WSOCDII elaborated on how he assessed athletic equity, "Optics is one, and it is the easy one. It is what you can see, it is really important, but then you have to go beyond optics, and you have to ask yourself, why are optics that way?" MBBDI felt similarly and indicated that there must be more evaluation in addition to optics," I think combining the eye-test and data-driven decisions to really come up with a good feel of what is fair and equal is necessary." SBDII4 expressed that she assessed athletic equity with the eye test and the allocation of money, "I think a little bit is the eye test, but a majority of it [athletic equity] is money."

Optics were essential to all head coaches; the look and comparison were necessary for their overall opinion of the assessment of athletic equity. The head coaches also specified it was their responsibility to explain optics to their student-athletes if asked.

Providing Equitable Resources

The theme of providing equitable resources in funding, marketing, and advertising was a recurring focus in the discussion about athletic equity assessment. Many coaches indicated they could assess equity through the eye test and observed the resources provided throughout their athletic department. In this context, SBDII1 emphasized the topic of The NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament weight room situation that was mentioned earlier in this study's literature review, sharing:

After the weight room incident with the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament and knowing what transpired, there is a reason why you see women's sports: volleyball, softball and women's basketball growing so much in the last year. It is because The NCAA is finally putting resources behind the advertising of those programs and those sports. That [growth of women's sports] could have happened a long time ago had somebody called the question [of athletic equity], but for years, they were putting all the financial resources into the men's side from a marketing standpoint. Now look at what happens when you give equal marketing to the women's side. Right now, you see many people more interested in The NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament than the men's.

SBDII2 further elaborated on the need for institutions to provide the appropriate resources and recognize the needs of different team when it comes to providing equitable opportunities, stating:

Basketball teams are going to have different needs and opportunities than softball or baseball teams are going to have. Same for the academic advising standpoint, do all the athletes get the equal opportunity to advisement?"

WSOCDII implied that he could determine athletic equity as a head coach through resources provided and elaborated that it is common for NJCAA soccer programs to share a head coach for both men's and women's teams; however, that is rarely the case for men's and women's basketball.

In addition, the coaches suggested that the administration assess the allotted resources by calculating the dollar amount spent per student-athlete. SBDII3 suggested that the administration, as key stakeholders, take a comprehensive look at each sport's budget compared to fundraising. "I would look at what does the school give us [the softball team] compared to what is fundraised because there is a big difference."

The necessary resources could be defined during the institutional meetings or forums so that everyone can best understand what the different teams need and why. Conducting a dollar-spent mentality could also illuminate the teams receiving more per student-athlete compared to those receiving less, which would illuminate athletic equity discrepancies.

Scholarship Budgets

The group collectively felt their scholarship budgets were equitable across the board. WTRCKDI1 expressed that his current institution provides equitable scholarships, especially compared to schools where he had been employed. “I think here [his current institution] our scholarships are all based the same amount per student-athlete, so that is equitable.” he implied that scholarship equity has significantly advanced throughout his coaching career. SBDII1 shared how his team’s scholarships are the same as baseball and are “equal across the board.” There was, however, a discussion regarding DI and DII scholarship requirements and limitations. SBDII2 expressed concern regarding the allotment of resources and the complications of schools having NCJAA DI and DII sports because DI can offer full-ride scholarships, whereas, in contrast, DII sports can only offer books, tuition, and fees. However, the head coaches did not indicate they felt their schools were equitable; it is just a point of contradiction having a blended divisional institution.

Which Areas in Athletics Have You Witnessed to Be Most Equitable

Follow Up: Can You Give Me an Example of an Experience of This?

Coaches generally favored equity and stressed the importance of athletic equity. Two main themes emerged from this question: *the advancement of equity* and *the allotment of resources*.

The Advancement of Equity

Two of the more tenured male head coaches, WSOCDII and BSBDIB, discussed how far athletic equity has advanced since the beginning of their careers. WSOCDII, who witnessed women's soccer beginning to benefit in 1996 from Title IX, shared his assessment:

Title IX was just starting to take its grip in college sports, and soccer was the first to benefit from Title IX of all sports because we just saw women's soccer programs being added yearly for a stretch of time, probably anywhere from 15-20 programs.

Coach BSBDIB, who has witnessed the evolution of Title IX, expressed that it is now taken more seriously, and people are paying more attention to athletic equity. The coaches have all indicated the importance of leadership and advocacy; their leadership roles correlate to the advancement of equity by setting positive examples, advocating, and leading their student-athletes toward a more equitable environment.

Allotment of Resources

SBDIIC raised a crucial concern about allocating resources, particularly in schools with NCJAA DI and DII sports. Other coaches indicated that resources should be reevaluated based on the athlete's size or sport. As mentioned earlier in this study, two coaches used shoes as an example; due to the dynamic of their sport, they have more wear and tear on shoes and should receive more funding to buy more shoes compared to other low-traffic sports.

Collectively, the head coaches suggested that equipment, training facilities, and travel should be tailored to the specific needs of each sport. It could benefit head coaches to create a list of needed equipment for their sport and why it is necessary. The shoes are a perfect example. Cross country and basketball could list why their sports need new shoes more often, whereas softball may need more bats because bats tend to break easily.

Is There Anything Else You Would Like to Elaborate on Regarding Athletic Equity and the Role of Being a College Head Coach?

An additional theme that arrived unexpectedly throughout the interviews was fundraising. During the quantitative portion of this study, fundraising was ranked the least important; however, during the interviews, most of the respondents mentioned fundraising as something they felt responsible for their teams to be successful. The coaches elaborated on the *importance of fundraising* in managing their programs.

The Importance of Fundraising

Overall, the participants emphasized the importance of fundraising to be competitive. SBDII3 stated, “Both baseball and softball, we do a ton of fundraising to travel down south twice, possibly three times [a year]. So, my goal is to raise \$25,000 a year.” Similarly, SBDII4 stated, “To play the best competition to be able to go on the road and eat nice, fundraising is not only a factor for our program but in other programs too.” In addition, she continued about extra amenities for her team:

I definitely think that we have to fundraise more to help our kids [student-athletes]. I think fundraising helps to make the student-athletes feel like they are somebody. Gear matters, extra cleats matter so we are having to fundraise a little bit more.

WBBDI1 explained how essential fundraising is for her program, sharing:

I feel like my budget is good enough to do the bare minimum. For us to travel down to Texas or go to Six Flags and do something fun, we would have to fundraise. I probably do not put it [fundraising] as high of a priority on it as I should because I worry more about coaching my team, and sometimes, I just write a check and move on. But I think fundraising is probably more important because it allows you to do those extra things and

stuff that helps you in recruiting. Especially if it is us being able to sit down at a Chili's or Applebee's or Olive Garden, which takes a little bit of extra money, and I cannot do that with the \$10 that they [her institution] give me.

MTRCKDI2's team had success and wanted to purchase championship rings. He stated: "We [the track program] paid half out of our athletic department budget and the kids [track student-athletes] fundraised [the other half]." WTRCKDI stated, "If we want to be more successful, we will probably have to fundraise more than what we're doing currently or have done." There was not one coach interviewed who was against the concept of fundraising. However, MBBDI1 expressed concerns regarding his team's lack of ability to fundraise, saying:

Fundraising a piece of what you have to do. I think there needs to be an understanding that men's basketball is a sport where particular demographics maybe do not have the economic backing like some other sports where they can quickly fundraise a lot more and they cannot necessarily go home and ask somebody to chip into the program. Some of our guys receive the Pell Grant, whereas with some other sports you go out and look in the parking lot, and they are driving nicer cars than the coaches.

BSBDI2 stated, "Fundraising is very important. In my 2 years, we have raised about \$120,000 which is kind of an operational budget for us [the baseball team]." BSBDI also explained how, throughout his 38 years of head coaching, his team has fundraised nearly \$100,000 annually to operate his program to his satisfaction level.

The head coaches stressed the importance of fundraising for the overall success of their programs, with substantial amounts of dollars being raised to operate at a competitive level. Institutions should foster transparency by clearly communicating the need for fundraising during the hiring process and by providing a comprehensive list of ideas and concepts that the head

coaches and teams can use to raise money. The involvement of booster clubs or foundations can help organize fundraising responsibilities, thereby relieving the coaches and student-athletes of additional pressure and allowing them to focus on their athletic and academic responsibilities.

Unexpected Theme

The Impact of Football

One of the most intriguing and unexpected themes that emerged from this study was *the impact of football*. Despite not being a direct focus of the study and none of the interview respondents being head football coaches, football was a recurring topic. Among the 15 head coaches interviewed, more than half brought up the topic of football, revealing its considerable influence. WSOCDII explained:

What we need to do from an equity standpoint is still very difficult to see sometimes when you're at programs that have football because when you're at schools that have football, it becomes really clear some of the equity questions at the junior college level. Schools that have football programs need to ask themselves who is going to suffer because of that [having football]?

WTRCKDI2 shared a similar sentiment, "We do not have football [at is current institution] so it is very nice to be able to see the teams on more of an equal basis." MTRCKDI, whose school does not have football still struggles with the concept of the sport, "Football receiving a lion's share [of resources] but junior college football does not make money. There is no way they do." MBBDI indicated he is fortunate to be a head basketball coach because at his school, men's basketball is "The center [of attention] for the athletic department, especially since we do not have football. The last three schools I have worked at did not have football, so that means men's basketball typically got taken care of very well."

SBDII2, who is currently employed at an institution with football, expressed how difficult it is to recruit female athletes at a football school, sharing that a lot of parents say, “I do not want my daughter going to a football school,” A couple of the coaches who have been employed at football schools indicated they have benefited from having football. MSCODII, who is currently employed at a school with football stated, “I know the only reason we [the men’s soccer team] are getting turf is because of football, we get football inside [the ideas], and it all connects.” Similarly, SBDII2 is employed at a football school and stated, “On days we cannot get on our field we can use the turfed football field, but we get limited amount of time because we cannot take away time from football practice.” WBBDI1 explained that during her coaching career, she faced challenges with football, sharing:

Everybody puts money into football because they want to be good in football. So, you’re catering to all male athletes and that is a much larger number. Football gets the most, but we (basketball) get the second most. They do put so much money into football, their locker rooms are nicer, their field is nicer, they charter every time [to travel], but they also have bigger [roster] numbers, so I understand that as well.”

Summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the data and results from the study’s quantitative and qualitative phases. The researcher focused on how head NJCAA DI and DII coaches assessed athletic equity in the three key areas of this study: facilities, scholarships, and travel. The quantitative segment involved a detailed analysis of the head coaches’ perceptions of their role and identity and their assessment of athletic equity in these areas. The qualitative research, on the other hand, provided unique insights through in-depth interviews with willing

head coaches, allowing the researcher to delve deeper into their experiences and assessment of best practices of athletic equity in these areas.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations

Statement of the Problem

It has been over 50 years since President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendment (Title IX) into law in 1972 (Valentin, 1997). The law states: “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” (Title IX Education Amendments Act of 1972, para. 2). Though major progress has been made since the enactment of this law, questions remain as to what equity looks like in athletics (Jensen, 2022).

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I (DI) and Division II (DII) institutions.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do the head coaches of men’s and women’s NJCAA DI and DII teams assess athletic equity implementation, specifically regarding team facilities, scholarships, and travel?

Research Question 2: What do NJCAA DI and DII team head coaches identify as best practices to implement athletic equity?

Methodology

This mixed-methods study assessed the experiences of the head coaches of men’s and women’s NJCAA DI and DII teams regarding athletic equity related explicitly to facilities,

scholarships, and team travel. A quantitative survey led the study to reveal the coaches' assessment of their roles and experiences in athletic equity, followed by the qualitative portion in which the researcher conducted follow-up interviews with 15 head coaches via Zoom to reveal best practices of athletic equity implementation.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB; see Appendix I). The researcher then emailed the president and CEO of the NJCAA via email, informing him of the study (see Appendix E) and requesting the email addresses of all NJCAA DI and DII head coaches of the sports specific to this study. Though the NJCAA supported this study, their organization could not provide the researcher with the email addresses because of legal matters. Due to this obstacle, the researcher had to manually obtain every email address by first visiting the NJCAA website, identifying the divisions and teams, and then conducting a Google search of the head coaches from each sport and their institution. Once all the emails were obtained, a formal introduction and consent email with the Google Survey link was sent to all NJCAA DI and DII head coaches regarding the study (see Appendix G). The Google Survey was available for two months, a period determined to allow sufficient time for the head coaches to review and respond to the survey, and two reminder emails were sent in addition to the initial email. The quantitative data were then downloaded from Google Surveys and disaggregated for analysis. Upon completing the quantitative phase, the researcher scheduled the qualitative interviews based on the survey results of interested head coaches. The researcher dedicated two months to conducting a total of 15 one-on-one interviews with the willing participants. The interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom, then transcribed using Word. The researcher

printed the transcriptions and highlighted the defined themes from the responses to each interview question.

Discussion of the Findings

Theoretical Frameworks

The data from the quantitative survey, in addition to the themes of the qualitative interviews, support the two conceptual frameworks of this study: Mead (1934) and Cooley's (1902) role identity theory, "Which considers the self to be a product of social interaction, in that people come to know who they are through their interactions with others; in this perspective, a core mechanism is that of 'taking the role of the other'" (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 256) and Pim's (Balance is Better, n.d.) coaching theory, which focuses on "Coach's inner thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in their role as a coach that drive behaviors to produce results" (Balance is Better, n.d., para. 3). Pim stated, "Coaches serve as role models for their student-athletes who observe behaviors, set examples and standards that will, in turn, over time, shape the individual character strengths that they develop" (as cited in Balance is Better, n.d., para. 3). This study's findings underscore the pivotal role of head coaches' self-identification as leaders in shaping their role and coaching identity. In a compelling validation, the quantitative data revealed that the coaches ranked "leader" as the most significant role, as ranked number one among 98 of the 192 head coaches. Overall, the ranking of the six roles was as follows: leader, role model, mentor, advisor, advocate, and fundraiser. This strong identification as leaders and their assessment of athletic equity, particularly about facilities, scholarships, and travel, further emphasized the coaches' commitment to their student-athletes. These findings echo Kollasch's (2017) study, which also highlighted the coaches' passion for nurturing young people, stating, "Coaches play a much

larger role for their student-athletes in addition to their sport-specific training such as mentor, advisor and parent-figure” (p. 46).

The qualitative interviews substantiated the quantitative data, with all 15 coaches who were interviewed expressing their eagerness to make a positive impact on the lives of others. SBDII2 strongly expressed her reasoning for becoming a head coach, stating she is, “in charge and being a leader that makes a difference in people’s lives.” The coaches felt a profound sense of duty to advocate and set positive examples for their student-athletes, particularly in the context of athletic equity implementation. This sense of duty resonates with Pope et al.’s (2014) findings, which revealed that one of the coaches’ reported characteristics was the need to be fair, objective, and ethical to provide an optimal athletic experience. Throughout the interviews, more than half of the head coaches indicated the personal responsibility they felt toward advocating for their student-athletes and their needs. WBDII1 strongly stated, “If I do not advocate for my kids [women’s basketball student-athletes], who is going to do that? That is my job.” In addition, the head coaches proudly shared their enthusiasm to influence and shape the lives of those around them, particularly their student-athletes. Another finding through the interviews was that many of the head coaches identified as teachers, which aligns with Emher’s (2018) findings, showing the close intertwining of coaching roles and teaching. SBSBDI1 confidently stated:

I truly think I have embraced the fact that teaching is the number one thing, and I love teaching. It is kind of interesting when you are practicing and a kid does not know something and you teach it to them, and then suddenly it clicks, and they figure it out. When you see that light bulb go off in their head, and that is kind of cool. Overall, your number one goal is teaching, and by that, I mean about life, about the game and being a

good person. I think you need to set an example and teach more than winning games and raising money.

Personal narratives were shared and elaborated upon to understand better why and how the head coaches evaluate specific situations and experiences. Many of the head coaches shared their motivations for becoming head coaches and the influences on their coaching philosophies, which aligns with Burke and Stet's (2009) study, indicating that coaches learn how to act based on the actions of other coaches they have observed or worked with throughout their careers. For example, SBDII1 explained how his grandfather was a coach for over 30 years, and he had the opportunity to grow up and witness his grandfather influence young people through coaching. SBDII1 stated, "The impact he [his grandfather] had on young people and the community was why my goal was to be a coach." These alignments not only underscore the credibility and relevance of the research but also instills confidence in the study's findings.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study, The NCAA's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) review framework, is a versatile tool that can be adapted to conduct a meaningful DEI review, adjusting it best to serve the individual campus (NCAA, 2023a). This adaptability empowers stakeholders to implement the framework in a way that best suits their unique circumstances. The NCAA designed this framework to enhance and promote DEI on college campuses. The quantitative findings are consistent with this framework as the coaches identified as leaders and advocates for athletic equity. All head coaches agreed that equity is present for all teams at their institutions. They assessed facility equity ($M = 2.8$), scholarship equity ($M = 2.8$) and travel equity ($M = 3.2$) at high levels; the quantitative findings align with the conceptual review framework concept to examine the efforts to monitor climate and experiences of student-

athletes and staff (NCAA, 2023a), which showed that coaches, as a whole, strongly agree that equity is present, particularly in the assessment of facilities, scholarship and travel.

The qualitative findings strongly align with the NCAA DEI review framework, formulated by the head coaches, emphasizing the importance of athletic equity assessment and their role in creating an equitable environment to build a sense of belonging. Coaches' responses spanned from providing the necessary equipment such as basketball shoes, to creating an equitable sense of environment and belonging. MBBDI indicated he felt responsible for advocating for the need for shoes for his basketball student-athletes, saying, "Our [the men's basketball team] guys need a whole lot more and our guys are big guys. they tear through shoes every three to five weeks, and we got to go buy more compared to some other athletes." Locker rooms were another example, with WBBDI1 stating, "I expect to be able to look at the men's locker room and my locker room, and they will be similar. I do not want to walk into their [men's basketball] locker room and have things that ours does not have. I want my student-athletes to be able to have the opportunities that the men's student-athletes have."

This alignment of the head coaches' responses with the NCAA DEI review framework (NCAA, 2023a) reassures its effectiveness. Collectively, the views and opinions of the head coaches aligned with the framework and the organizational structure in suggesting how they, as head coaches, administrators, and other college leaders, can continue to enhance athletic equity for all constituents. In addition, the coaches emphasized the importance of institutional collaboration to provide a better understanding of the individual teams' structures, needs and expectations. These thoughts align with The NCAA review framework (NCAA, 2023a) which states, "This is a great potential for growth and connection for those athletic departments to take the time to learn about, connect with, and build on cross-campus initiatives to amplify the impact

of their departmental efforts (p. 1). This statement instills a sense of optimism and inspiration about the future of athletic departments. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings strongly support this objective.

RQ 1

How do the head coaches of men's and women's NJCAA DI and DII teams assess athletic equity implementation, specifically regarding team facilities, scholarships, and travel?

The researcher used the quantitative survey and qualitative interview results to determine how the head coaches of NJCAA DI and DII teams assess athletic equity implementation in scholarships, facilities, and travel. Through the quantitative findings, the researcher discovered that the head coaches were in remarkably similar agreement toward athletic equity assessment, except for D1 and DII head coaches. Through the survey and later in the interviews, the researcher learned how the distinct groups in this study assessed athletic equity.

DI and DII Head Coaches' Assessment

DI and DII head coaches are the only groups that revealed significant differences in the data. Some clear disparities included that the DI head coaches were more likely to fundraise for scholarships than DII head coaches. While the DII head coaches felt their scholarships were more equitable DI head coaches felt the need to fundraise for more scholarships. These differences could be because DI institutions can provide full scholarships compared to the DII schools, which are limited to books, tuition, and fee scholarships only. Scholarship discrepancies could be playing a large part in the assessment of equity. Another difference between the two divisions was that DII coaches assessed that their institutions offered equitable travel and provided safer travel for their teams than the DI schools. The concern of DI and DII head coaches also came to light during the qualitative interviews when SBDII2 expressed concern

regarding the allotment of resources and the complications of schools having both NJCAA DI and DII sports teams since, as previously stated, DI can offer full-ride scholarships and DII sports can only provide books, tuition, and fees.

Female and Male Head Coaches' Assessment

The female and male head coaches demonstrated a remarkable unity in their assessments of athletic equity, even though many male coaches in the study coached women's sports teams. Despite some nonsignificant differences in the quantitative data, which differed from Rodkey (2018), who revealed a 35% level of disagreement about locker room equity between head coaches, the overall sentiment in this study was one of shared understanding toward athletic equity. Consistent with Kenney's (2013) findings, the male head coaches in this study had a higher overall assessment regarding facility equity for their teams than the female head coaches (see Table 22). Overall, for both male and female head coaches, the lowest level of agreement was facilities positively impacting on their recruiting success (4E). This differs from Ferris (2000) who concluded that college facilities directly impact team success. However, this study's findings were consistent with Huml et al. (2019) concluding that college facilities do not impact recruiting. It is a current trend in athletics for schools to update their facilities regularly. This trend is not just about keeping up with the Joneses-it's a reflection of the evolving expectations in athletic facilities. The bar has been raised significantly in the past 20 years, which Ferris (2000) might find surprising if he were to conduct his study today. This evolution in expectations has led to a less significant relationship between facilities and recruiting, as the majority of schools now meet these high standards with their quality facilities.

The quantitative data revealed that the female head coaches had a higher general evaluation of scholarship equity than the male head coaches, but no significance was found (see

Table 26). This study revealed a positive shift, as the head coaches in various sub-groups did not indicate any significant disparities in scholarship equity assessments. This is a notable improvement from Kenney's (2013) study, which reported that "19.2% of coaches strongly disagreed that scholarships were distributed equitably, and 34.6% of coaches were unsure about the equity of scholarship distribution" (p. 87).

As it pertained to travel, the female and male head coaches assessed travel equity at the same level, more so than in the other two equity-assessed categories, facilities and scholarships, signifying teams are experiencing the same travel amenities (see Table 31). During the qualitative interviews, the coaches stressed the significance of communication and sharing responsibilities, particularly in relation to travel arrangements. WBBDI1 discussed how her school supports the alternation concept of men's and women's basketball travel accommodations where one team takes a charter so the next time that team takes the smaller bus and vice-versa; this concept supports athletic equity among the groups. Travel has made substantial advances since the beginning of Title IX when women used to provide their own travel for events compared to the men's teams, who were provided accommodations by the institution. The popularity and safety aspects of charter buses have helped advance travel equity. Also, the expectations of higher roster numbers have forced institutions to provide charters for all teams.

These research findings not only highlighted the current state of athletic equity from both the female and male head coaches' perspectives but also point to a promising trend. In comparison to previous literature, this study's results indicate measurable improvement particularly when compared to Kenney (2013) and Ferris (2000), where both studies revealed lack of equity when comparing men to women. This progress was a clear testament to the

positive impact of this research on the field of athletic equity, instilling a sense of optimism and hope for the future.

Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaching Assessment

Men's and women's teams' head coaches also had similar assessments of athletic equity in most areas. During the qualitative phase, the men's and women's basketball coaches reported they consistently communicated to share facility space effectively to benefit both teams. Like the female and male head coaches, the men's teams coaches had a slightly stronger assessment of facility equity than the women's teams (see Table 83). This was a significant improvement since Rodkey (2018) found that locker room facilities were at a 35% level of disagreement among coaches. The qualitative phase indicated coaches feel a shared responsibility for advocating for facility equity, as noted by the men's and women's basketball coaches who discussed the importance of locker room amenities and practice times. The women's basketball coaches noted, at their respective institutions, the male coaches prioritized women's basketball in terms of practice and court time. MBDI indicated he gave first preference of practice and court time to the women's teams at his institution and indicated he needed to be a role model of athletic equity, which aligned with Pim's (Balance is Better, n.d.) coaching theory.

The male and female teams' head coaches did not have significantly different assessments of scholarship equity. The lowest level of agreement pertained to scholarship budgets positively impacting recruiting success (5D). This was completely opposite Kenney's (2013) study, in which respondents disagreed enormously that benefits were provided equitably for men and women. During the qualitative phase, a male coach, SBDII, shared his experiences with equal scholarships for his softball team and baseball, further confirming scholarship equity.

As it pertained to travel, the men's and women's teams head coaches assessed travel at the same levels, signifying teams are experiencing the same travel amenities (see Table 31). The two lowest assessment areas for both men's and women's teams head coaches were in the responsibility of fundraising for travel (6D) and the team's travel accommodations positively impacting recruiting (6E). The sentiment in the qualitative interviews differed, where the head coaches elaborated on having enough money in their budget to travel; however, if they wanted to find good competition or travel at a distance, they needed to fundraise. Travel amenities were equitably provided, yet the need to fundraise to be competitive was prevalent. This gave those teams advantages to choose to fundraise, compared to the teams that could not fundraise for travel as easily, which could hinder athletic equity perceptions in the future.

These findings related to facility, scholarship, and travel equity highlighted the prevalence of travel equity and the noteworthy progress compared to the men's and women's teams' head coaches. Though extensive travel needs attention, scholarships and facilities are progressing in the right direction, instilling a sense of optimism and hope for a more equitable future in college sports.

Years of Head Coaching Experience Assessment

Head coaches with less years of experience had a similar assessment of athletic equity, as the seasoned coaches, but there were no significant differences. Both groups had similar assessments of facility equity, with the 11+ years coaches having slightly higher agreement in every subquestion, indicating that experience could conclude a different facility equity perception (see Table 24).

The coaches with 1–10-years of experience had more of a responsibility to fundraise (4D) for travel compared to the 11+ years of head coaching (see Table 32). This shift in fundraising

responsibility could be attributed to the COVID-19 global pandemic and the subsequent inflation rates. The COVID-19 global pandemic has increased financial strain on sports programs, making fundraising more necessary for operations. Previously, fundraising was more optional and for extra amenities. However, the data findings in this study indicate for newer coaches, fundraising has become more essential for several reasons, including the desire to travel to open competitions not covered in the budget and better travel logistics, including charters, lodging, and nicer meals. This was confirmed and expanded on during the qualitative phase, where one of the newest head coaches interviewed, BSBDII2, stated, “Fundraising is very important. In my 2 years, we have raised about \$120,000, which is kind of an operational budget for us [the baseball team].” SBDII2, who had been coaching for over 15 years, indicated fundraising was more prevalent than it used to be at the beginning of her coaching career.

During the interviews, the 11+ years head coaches elaborated on how they witnessed the evolution of athletic equity. This is consistent with the findings from Kenney (2013), who revealed Title IX has enriched the lives of thousands of women by providing opportunities for women to compete and participate in collegiate sports. This study also revealed findings through the two most tenured head coaches interviewed, specifically BSBDI1 and WSOC DI, who witnessed the evolution of Title IX, which confirmed Brake’s (2010) finding that since the passage of Title IX, access to facilities and equipment has increased for women.

In conclusion, despite slight differences, the quantitative results did not denote significance. The comments from the two groups were also quite similar, suggesting the years of head coaching experience did not noticeably affect their views on athletic equity.

RQ 2

What do NJCAA DI and DII team head coaches identify as best practices to implement athletic equity?

Numerous best practices were identified through the qualitative phase of this study in the interviews with 15 head coaches representing different sports and both DI and DII teams. The head coaches highlighted the best practices they have experienced throughout their careers and mentioned concepts they would like to witness in the future. This study reveals that equity has improved compared to previous studies referenced in this research, and best practice models are being executed. However, there is still more to be done, consistent with Jensen (2022), who concluded that the question remains about what equity looks like in athletics. Equity rotation and institutional collaboration are two of the best practices discussed by the coaches that could assist in closing the gaps. The coaches' recommendations align with the role identity and coaching theories in which the coaches feel, as leaders, they are responsible for implementing best practices in equity. In addition to the theoretical frameworks, these best practices also relate to the conceptual theory as they assist in advancing athletic equity nationwide.

Equity Rotation

The concept of equity rotation is where athletic departments document upgrades, such as new apparel, facility upgrades, and travel amenities, and ensure that there is a fair sequence of distributed resources for all teams. This concept is like a strategic plan, which lays out the goals for intuitions and the plans' timeline and priorities to ensure an institution's overall advancement. This best practice was identified by MBBDII, who suggested communicating this concept could establish a better understanding of why and when certain decisions are being made. It would allow all constituents to understand why definitive choices such as facility

upgrades, equipment purchases, budget allocation, and travel logistics have been made. The equity rotation concept is consistent with other coaches' preference for better communication and more involvement from the administration. WBBDI1 indicated that her institution practices a similar rotation idea regarding travel: the men's and women's basketball teams alternate taking charter buses to ensure athletic equity.

Practices such as these underscore the substantial role of resources in promoting equity in sports; if head coaches and student-athletes know why the decisions are being implemented, it will provide a better understanding of athletic equity. This aligned with the conceptual theories of this study as the head coaches identified as leaders, advocates, and teachers. This best practice approach is rooted in respecting all voices and ensuring fairness. It would instill trust and confidence in the athletic and institutional administration, as it demonstrates the equitable distribution of resources. The documentation and execution of this best practice would align with the NCAA DEI review framework by providing a viable reference for future planning and helping athletic departments set and achieve goals to improve the overall atmosphere of the institution.

Institutional Collaboration

The findings of this study, which echo Ward's (2011) call for college administrators to prioritize athletic equity decisions, presented a promising outlook. The interviews conducted for this research revealed that athletic equity was present and expanded from what was previously mentioned in the literature review. However, there was a slight hesitation from most head coaches, who still hinted at the need for more explanations regarding institutional decisions that directly impact athletic equity. Many coaches indicated that campus athletic directors and presidents should be involved and aware of athletic needs, which is consistent with the list of

collaborators listed on the NCAA DEI review framework (NCAA, 2023a.) BSBDI1 shared best practices at his institution where the decisions are made, starting with the president, which is a respectable approach. SBDII2 elaborated on the importance of campus leaders having regular conversations with coaches to better understand the actual teams per team. This institutional collaboration would provide a comprehensive understanding of needs and current issues for specific teams, and the meeting minutes could be made public and posted on the website as a reference for athletic equity implementation. The researcher recommends a monthly, open-forum meeting conducted in person in addition to a virtual attendance option. These meetings could be a beacon of hope for a more equitable future in athletics and help close the slight discrepancies between DI and DII in this study.

The researcher did not focus on the administration's role in the study's quantitative or qualitative segments; however, themes revealed the importance of the administration's role and the connection to athletic equity. This is also consistent with the NCAA DEI review framework (NCAA, 2023a.), which lists the athletic director as the first person to collaborate and create content for DEI decisions. The concept of institutional collaboration and structured meetings is also consistent with the findings from Dahnert and Peck (2007), who expressed that while implementing a planning process that involves all constituents—administration, coaching staff, contributors, student-athletes, and housekeeping staff, and open communication with the project team helps address the details that can lead a plan to a successful implementation.

The institutional communication and equity rotation recommendations could lead to a more athletic, equitable environment. It is crucial for the administration to understand its pivotal role and responsibility in this process, as its decisions can significantly impact the advancement of athletic equity.

Fundraising Support

This research indicated fundraising is necessary and will be around in junior college athletics for quite some time. Best practice concepts include the pivotal role of booster clubs or foundations. These organizations could significantly assist head coaches with organizing events, developing new and innovative fundraising ideas, and managing the funds raised. It would also be beneficial for the institutions to be transparent toward the fundraising expectations during the hiring process; when new head coaches are being hired, they could be given an expected amount of how much to fundraise and a list of ideas and concepts to assist with raising additional funds. Both baseball coaches interviewed in this study indicated they fundraise over \$50,000 annually, and perhaps the involvement of a booster club or foundation could minimize the focus on fundraising for their programs.

Advocacy

This study uncovered the progress of Title IX and athletic equity, a journey that has been a team effort. A significant best practice identified has been the advocacy and leadership of head coaches. The coaches in this study, self-identified as leaders and advocates for athletic equity, have created a more equitable environment for all. They have set a positive example for their student-athletes and fostered a positive environment for everyone. The best practice of continuing athletic advocacy for their teams and student-athletes' direct needs could profoundly impact the promotion of athletic equity on campuses nationwide. However, it is crucial to emphasize the need for further research and action to maintain and accelerate this progress.

Teaching

In addition to leadership and coaching, the study, consistent with Ehmer's (2018), found head coaches also identify as teachers, which also aligned with this study's conceptual

framework, Mead's (1934) and Cooley's (1902) role identity theory. Throughout this study, the head coaches emphasized the meaningfulness of wanting their teaching values to translate for a lifetime.

Teaching is a best practice identified to continue the execution of athletic equity, the idea of coaches teaching their student-athletes what is equitable. In addition, the coaches continue to advocate and teach administrators and those around them, beyond their student-athletes, the importance of athletic equity. The head coaches can teach their constituents how and why each sport is different and what needs must be met to be successful. As SBDII4 expressed, "I think being a head coach is where I can teach the game [softball] but also teach life." The coaches identified teaching beyond the sport is their responsibility; this could continue to pertain to athletic equity. Coaches continued to take the opportunity to teach their student-athletes how to be equitable, how to react when challenged, and how to create more opportunities for everyone, thereby empowering and including all.

Unexpected Findings

Additional findings were discovered throughout this research beyond the literature depicted in Chapter 2. Though these two topics were briefly touched upon during the literature review, they were found to a much larger extent throughout the research. *The necessity to fundraise* and the *impact of football* are two unexpected findings that emerged throughout this study.

The Necessity to Fundraise

In the quantitative survey, the head coaches were asked to rank specific roles in order of importance, including fundraiser. Despite 136 respondents out of the 192 ranked it the least important role, the qualitative interviews revealed a surprising and reoccurring theme of the

necessity of fundraising. More than half of the head coaches expressed the need for fundraising to be successful, demonstrating their commitment to the task. None of the head coaches claimed fundraising as their favorite aspect of the job or identified as fundraisers, but rather the necessity. Many of the head coaches strongly emphasized the paramount competitive advantage that fundraising provides. They indicated fundraising enabled them to make their teams more competitive and, in turn, assisted in the recruitment and retention process of student-athletes, a crucial aspect of college athletics. Most of the head coaches interviewed have accepted that fundraising is part of the head coaching process; however, WBBDI1 coach indicated that fundraising is a distraction, and MBBDI suggested his team does not necessarily have the demographic backing among his athletes to go out and ask for money, alluding to the inequity of fundraising expectations.

This finding was significant because it exposes institutions to their commitments when allocating funds and sheds light on how much extra work the coaches and student-athletes must do to operate their teams. This was consistent with the qualitative findings of the DI head baseball coaches, expressly signifying that it was customary to fundraise over \$50,000 annually. These findings supported Rodkey (2018), where the funds raised through the boosters' organization was 39% of the fundraising amount. Lastly, as highlighted in the quantitative research, DI and DII head coaches also emphasized the necessity of fundraising to be competitive.

The Impact of Football

Though no questions were asked, and this study was not focused on the sport of football, more than half of the head coaches interviewed discussed football's impact on athletic equity and athletics in general. This finding was noteworthy because many NJCAA institutions have

football, which complicates athletic equity due to the high demands and resources required for football to operate successfully. If the head coaches indicate that their programs are being negatively impacted, then it is most likely that the student-athletes feel similarly. Throughout the qualitative interviews, two coaches shared their stories about when they were student-athletes at a football school and how they experienced inequities compared to the football program. MTRCKDI resented football, indicating that they receive more money than other programs. However, the most striking aspect was the negative impact of football on female teams, as detailed by three of the female head coaches. One coach elaborated on how she loses out on recruits because parents do not feel comfortable sending their daughters to a football school. The head coaches' comments were consistent with those of Tegetmeyer (2021), who concluded, "Football-only facilities at both schools dwarf anything any of the other sports teams have access to, indicating the different experiences of the two genders" (p. 119).

Implications and Recommendations

The implications of this research include that coaches collectively assess athletic equity, which refers to the fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities, and recognition in the athletic realm, as being present at their institutions. The findings indicated head coaches assert a keen responsibility toward leadership, which is more important than wins and losses, and their long-lasting impact on student-athletes is attached to their role and coaching identity. This sense of leadership derives from their upbringing and mentors' guidance. The head coaches state a responsibility to advocate and implement athletic equity but with the support and backing from their institutions, implying that collaboration is critical to progress. This collaboration leads to key concepts such as the equity rotation method, which provides an additional tool for the organizational structure to promote athletic equity. To effectively lead their student-athletes both

on and off the competition field, head coaches need effective collaboration and communication to continue to move the needle forward and advance athletic equity in collegiate athletics.

The main assessment differences are between the head coaches of DI and DII teams. These differences can be concluded from DI and DII having different scholarship allotment rules and regulations (see Appendix C). The trend in the necessity of fundraising could be attributed to the COVID-19 global pandemic and the subsequent inflation rates, which have significantly increased the cost of running athletic programs. With the less experienced head coaches (1–10 years) having a greater agreement of the need to fundraise, that implies that the more experienced head coaches (11+ years) did not start their careers with as much pressure regarding raising funds. Fundraising has evolved from raising money for wants to raising money for needs. Head coaches must learn how to fundraise to operate, and the new coaches know no different; however, the tenured head coaches must understand that fundraising money is needed to operate rather than just an extra cushion for additional wants for their student-athletes.

Equity Rotation Template

Through this study, the researcher has identified recommendations that could advance athletic equity at NJCAA DI and DII institutions. Rhode and Walker (2008) identified, “The statute and increase in female athletic participation are both a cause and an effect of more progressive understandings of women’s rights and capabilities” (p. 8). Based on this study, those findings are still valid; however, it also identified that some male head coaches of men’s programs believe that equity could still be understood better from their viewpoint. Therefore, a better understanding of athletic equity is still necessary. These recommendations, which are relevant to the expansion of athletic equity assessment and best practices, are based on the

insights shared by the head coaches, further highlighting their integral role in this study and the gap that this study filled by asking the opinions of the head coaches.

Additional Training

This study's findings indicated coaches identify as leaders and teachers, which implies a willingness to learn. Therefore, providing additional training relevant to The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) report and athletic equity in general could be a beneficial tool to help all constituents understand why decisions are being made. Head coaches could gain more insight into athletic equity and how to serve their teams and the institution best. This recommendation is consistent with the objective of the NCAA DEI review framework; however, it would differ in that the additional training would be specific to NJCAA institutions, particularly DI and DII institutions. This could be beneficial to schools with a blended divisional structure as it would allow a better understanding of the divisional differences in scholarship rules and regulations. This additional training, including coaches, administration, faculty, and staff, could be available campus wide.

Fundraising Expectations

This study revealed the crucial role of fundraising and its advancement. The researcher urgently recommends institutions initiate transparency about the annual fundraising targets for coaches as early as the interview process. This early implementation can provide potential candidates with a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities. By doing so, institutions can enable individuals to make informed decisions about incorporating fundraising into their job duties. Furthermore, this transparency can be extended to head coaches and athletes, particularly during recruitment, to set clear expectations and foster a culture of shared responsibility.

Annual Sport Audit

It is crucial to note the head coaches expressed a considerable need for the administration to be more aware of what student-athletes are experiencing. This includes aspects such as the meals they eat on the road or the quality of the locker room facilities. This feedback underscored the importance of an annual sports audit. In addition to the EADA report, it could be beneficial for institutional leadership to conduct an annual audit for each sport. This audit could focus on, but not be limited to, facilities, scholarships, and travel. The audit could serve as a campus walk-through for the administration and coaches, allowing them to communicate and visualize what teams have and need. This process could eliminate some of the minor inconsistencies (e.g., optic perceptions and assumptions). This recommendation does not incur any additional costs.

Monthly Institutional Forums

Considering the findings and the need for the administration to be involved and informed about athletic needs, introducing monthly meetings with the head coaches could be a reassuring step. These meetings, designed as forum-structured discussions, could provide a dedicated space for addressing questions and concerns related explicitly to athletic equity. This approach, emphasizing transparency and understanding individual coaches' and student-athletes' needs, could foster a sense of unity on campuses and work toward eliminating any discrepancies or doubts related to athletic equity. Monthly institutional meetings open to everyone could be beneficial. These meetings could provide a brief update on what athletic department decisions: facility upgrades, travel plans, upcoming events, and budgeting concerns. During this research, the head coaches mentioned how the presentation of data-driven decisions benefited in the overall understanding of athletic equity; data could be presented during these forums to promote comprehension. This practice of transparent communication could provide better insight into the

inner workings of the athletic department. These meetings would also allow constituents to ask questions about decisions and upcoming projects.

Recommendations for Further Research

As women's sports gain momentum and societal expectations for equality rise, the issue of athletic equity in college sports is becoming increasingly pertinent. While this study has provided a preliminary understanding of the equity of facilities, scholarships, and travel, further research is crucial as athletic equity continues to evolve, particularly at The NJCAA level. Replicating this study with the addition of all NJCAA DI and DII sports could significantly broaden our understanding of athletics in community colleges. Based on these findings a study specifically focused on the impact of fundraising could offer valuable insights for college leaders, emphasizing their integral role in reassessing funding formulas to serve student-athletes better.

With differences found in the NJCAA DI and DII head coaches due to most likely the allotment of scholarship differences, it could be beneficial for a researcher to delve into the athletic equity perceptions between NJCAA DI and DII head coaches as an entirety, expanding beyond facilities, scholarships, and travel. This study could provide a foundation of understanding for colleges to serve their student-athletes better. Another recommendation would be to compare athletic equity implementation at NJCAA and NCAA institutions. This study could be replicated with the same survey questions but focused on head coaches at NCAA levels, comparing the results to the NJCAA head coaches.

A final recommendation would be replicating this study with student-athletes or athletic directors rather than head coaches. These studies could highlight the assessment of athletic equity through the lens of student-athletes or athletic directors, specifically pertaining to

facilities, scholarships, and travel. Replacing the role of the respondents could provide a new and unique perspective toward athletic equity implementation. With constantly changing state and federal regulations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), Title IX implementation, and the Name Image Likeness (NIL) opportunities there may be a need for studies like this to be ongoing. These changes could potentially have a major impact on college processes and outcomes.

One of the first to focus on NJCAA head coaches' assessment of athletic equity in the specified sport, this study has created a solid foundation for NJCAA institutions to advance athletic equity. These additional recommendations could continue to draw attention to athletic equity and introduce college leaders to innovative ideas and concepts, piquing their interest in the potential of this research.

Conclusion

Significant advances have been made in Title IX since its enactment in 1972. The evolution of athletic equity is evident based on previous studies and continues in this study. Many studies have been conducted on the impact of athletic equity at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions, revealing data relative to athletic equity advancement and the current gaps. This study, however, is one of the first ever to emphasize assessments from NJCAA DI and DII head coaches to gain a never-before-seen insight into best practices of athletic equity implementation specific to facilities, scholarships, and travel. These best practices include an athletic equity rotation template, additional training, fundraising expectation transparency, an annual sports audit, and monthly institutional forums.

This study concluded that coaches' voices and roles in creating an equitable environment are essential to continue moving the athletic equity needle forward. The progressive ideals and

validity of the data showed that athletic equity is present and crucial, but it can continue to improve with better communication and information. This study provided insight into best practices regarding athletic equity implementation as a foundation for NJCAA leaders. Through the assessment of the head coaches, the unexpected finding of the football's impact on NJCAA institutions and the expectation of fundraising could be further explored in an additional study. The findings underscored the importance of athletic equity and how football significantly influences athletic departments and institutions, are significant. Fundraising has become necessary at NJCAA levels due to society's rising costs and demands. The head coaches identified fundraising as necessary but still need to identify themselves as a fundraiser.

In conclusion, though this study found advancement in athletic equity and provided a platform to voice NJCAA head coaches' assessment of athletic equity, it also highlighted the urgent need for more communication, training, collaboration, and data. These are necessary to comprehensively understanding why and how decisions affect individual teams, coaches, and institutions. Continuing to be inclusive toward head coaches' opinions and perspectives could be imperative to providing an equitable atmosphere for all at The NJCAA level.

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Appendix A - Alignment Table

Literature Findings	Statement of the Problem	Research Questions	Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks	Methodology	Survey/ Interview Questions
- Title IX Compliance Barriers at Two-Year Colleges Causby (2010) - The relation between athletic facilities and recruiting Huml, (2019) - NCAA Compliance Study Gimbert (2013) - Perceptions of Women's teams coaches regarding equity Kenney (2013) - Iowa CC coaches' profile characteristics Kollasch (2017). - NCAA Baseball Coaches' Roles McMullen (2016) - Rodkey (2018) - Tegetmeyer (2021) – College Athletics and Institutional Decision-Making Ward (2011) - Mead (1034) - Cooley (1902)	Over 50 years after the implementation of Title IX there still remains the question of what equity looks like in collegiate athletics (Jensen, 2022).	Research Question 1: How do the head coaches of men's and women's NJCAA DI and DII teams assess Title IX equity implementation; specifically, as it relates to team facilities, scholarships, and team travel? Research Question 2: What do the head coaches of NJCAA DI and DII teams' identity as best practices to athletic equity implementation?	Role Identity Mead (1934) and Cooley's (1902) /Coaching Identity(Balance is Better, n.d.) = Theoretical NCAA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Review Framework (NCAA, 2023) = Conceptual All three frameworks will ultimately assist in answering the two research questions regarding the implementation of athletic equity, best practice of athletic equity assessment and how head NJCAA DI and DII coaches identify their perceived roles and their relation to athletic equity.	Mixed-Methodology Quantitative Study Open-Ended Survey Likert Scale Survey Qualitative Study Follow-up Interview Questions The researcher will conduct a quantitative leading, mixed-methods design in this study.	Survey Questions: Multiple Choice Questions, demographic and Likert Scale Questions Likert Scale = 4 points Strongly Disagree 1 Disagree Agree Strongly Agree 4 9 interview questions for the qualitative interviews

Appendix B - National Collegiate Athletic Association Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework

A Sample Framework for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Reviews in Athletics Departments

BACKGROUND.

The NCAA is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture in college athletics and to supporting DEI efforts of member schools, conferences and the national office. Building on the intent of the NCAA's Presidential Pledge and Commitment to Promoting Diversity and Gender Equity in Intercollegiate Athletics,¹ Division I adopted legislation² that requires institutions to attest to completing a self-directed DEI review once every four years. In Divisions II and III, the philosophy statement includes a commitment to creating inclusive cultures in athletics. This sample framework was created at the request of the NCAA membership for optional use to support thorough and meaningful DEI reviews in athletics. The four NCAA membership diversity, equity and inclusion committees/task force, NCAA staff and outside counsel reviewed and provided feedback on the resource.³

OBJECTIVE.

Regular reviews provide unique opportunities for schools to examine their DEI efforts closely and to assess whether their existing programs contribute to a more equitable and inclusive athletics community in their organization and beyond. More specifically, athletics departments are urged to determine whether their individual DEI efforts create cultures of belonging where student-athletes and those who teach and lead them, coaches, administrators and staff, feel that they are seen, heard and matter beyond the playing field and for the greater good of the community. If completed in a meaningful way, these reviews help schools maintain an ongoing focus on effort (what the school is doing) and outcome (what student-athletes and staff are experiencing). The work schools invest in these reviews will facilitate the incorporation of DEI principles into the fabric of their day-to-day interactions, discussions, operations and long-term strategic planning. There is great potential for growth and connection for those athletics departments that take the time to learn about, connect with and build on cross-campus initiatives to amplify the impact of their departmental efforts.

PROCESS.

¹ "Presidential Pledge." NCAA, 15 Sept. 2020, www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/9/16/ncaa-presidential-pledge.aspx.

² "LSDBI." NCAA, Accessed 3 June 2022, <https://web3.ncaa.org/lstdbi/search/bylawView?id=114940>.

³ The four NCAA membership diversity, equity, and inclusion committees are the Board of Governors Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity, the Committee on Women's Athletics, the Gender Equity Task Force, and the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee. Janet Judge, Partner, Education and Sport Group, LLC reviewed and provided feedback on the resource.

The framework included in this resource reflects the priorities expressed in the NCAA Board of Governors inclusion statement⁴ (equitable participation, inclusive cultures, the learning environment, programming and education, and hiring practices), and the focus on a thorough, collaborative and proactive process reflects the intent and rationale of the Division I review requirement. While the NCAA recognizes that the substance of each review will vary by school, conference, public/ private and other affiliations, region and state, the goal is that schools will discover and put in place pathways for student-athletes and staff to reach their full potential. The Division I legislated review is not subject to formal NCAA assessment or approval, and it is not required that a member use any specific format to complete a review.

The sample DEI review framework emphasizes collaboration, focuses on key questions and areas of exploration, and prompts institutions to remedy self-identified shortfalls. Each section ends with suggested action items, and the framework concludes with final suggested actions to put the findings of the review into practice.

Framework Overview

STEP 1:

Identify collaborators and create context.

- a. Establish roles and responsibilities for the review process.
- b. Build foundational clarity.
- c. Examine alignment of athletics with the institution's DEI policies, statements, goals and plans.
- d. Examine the scope of DEI planning in athletics.
- e. Examine organizational structures.
- f. Examine foundational athletics department documents.

STEP 2:

Review demographics, outcomes and climate/experiences data.

- a. Review demographic data to examine the population of athletics and the broader campus.
- b. Examine trends in the educational and career outcomes of student-athletes and staff.
- c. Examine the efforts to monitor climate and experiences of student-athletes and staff.
- d. Examine collection and use of qualitative information on student-athlete and staff experiences.

STEP 3:

Review athletics policies and practices for impact on DEI. a.

Review hiring practices.

- b. Review student-athlete recruitment practices.
- c. Review professional development efforts for individuals from historically marginalized populations in athletics.
- d. Review student-athlete and staff support offerings/retention efforts.

⁴ "NCAA Inclusion Statement." NCAA, April 2017, www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/3/2/ncaa-inclusion-statement.aspx. This statement is regularly reviewed and updated by the NCAA's Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity, on approval by the NCAA Board of Governors.

- e. Review DEI educational efforts for student-athletes and staff.

STEP 4:

Review legal, institutional compliance and other responsibilities.

- a. Review general considerations with institutional counsel.
- b. Review processes to meet NCAA policies with the director of athletics, athletics compliance officer(s) and other necessary parties.
- c. Review processes for following applicable federal laws with institutional counsel.
- d. Review the process to meet additional responsibilities (e.g., state, local, accreditation, conference) with institutional counsel, athletics compliance and other responsible institutional staff.

PUTTING THE FRAMEWORK INTO PRACTICE

The purpose of a program review is to create understanding and context. Reviews set the stage for strategic planning, where specific goals and actions are established and prioritized. These final action items offer a path to launch a strategic or other action planning process and to generally pursue progress on diversity, equity and inclusion in athletics.

1. Compile a master list of strengths, opportunities and items needing further study identified during the review.
2. Determine the most significant strengths and opportunities from the review's findings.
3. Identify specific ways the results of this review help the athletics department set and achieve goals to improve diversity, equity and inclusion.
4. Establish a plan and timeline to follow up on items needing further study, and to address other items that need attention or monitoring before the next review cycle.
5. Communicate the findings of the review to a broad audience and include the related follow-up plan.
6. Celebrate progress to enhance visibility of DEI efforts on campus.

STEP 1: Identify collaborators and create context.

Effective reviews typically include people with a broad range of backgrounds, perspectives and identities, including individuals from a host of personal and professional populations. When identifying collaborators, it is helpful to consider if the reviewers reflect the community being assessed. Also, cross-campus collaboration helps build trust among vital campus partners while reducing inconsistencies in approach and policy development. Proactive collaboration demonstrates that athletics seeks to operate in concert with the school's overall DEI efforts.

- a. Establish roles and responsibilities for the review process. Some people or areas you may want to include in the review are:
 - (1) Athletics representation.
 - (a) Director of athletics.
 - (b) Senior woman administrator (SWA).
 - (c) Faculty athletics representative (FAR).
 - (d) Athletics diversity and inclusion designee (ADID).
 - (e) Administrator overseeing DEI.

- (f) Sports psychologist(s) and/or mental health providers.
 - (g) Student-Athlete Advisory Committee members.
 - (h) Student-athletes and/or staff committees with a DEI focus.
 - (i) Former student-athlete(s).
 - (j) Athletics staff that are members of or can access resources offered by outside organizations with a DEI focus (e.g., the Black AD Alliance; Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Council of Excellence; **The LEAD1 Association**;⁵ Minority Opportunities Athletic Association; National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics; Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality; Women Leaders in College Sports; WeCOACH; and the Women's Sports Foundation).
- (2) Cross-campus and community representation.**
- (a) Equal opportunity, inclusion, diversity, equity, belonging and related offices, including campus leaders responsible for these areas.
 - (b) Chief diversity officer with campus-wide oversight.
 - (c) Campus office of civil rights.
 - (d) Cultural center representatives.
 - (e) Title IX coordinator.
 - (f) Counseling services.
 - (g) Disability services.
 - (h) LGBTQ+ or Campus Pride offices.
 - (i) International Student Services.
 - (j) Student affairs.
 - (k) Admissions.
 - (l) Registrar.
 - (m) Faculty, staff and/or student committees with a DEI focus.
 - (n) General counsel and institutional compliance officers.
 - (o) Human resources.
 - (p) Institutional Research.
 - (q) Staff and faculty with related expertise, including academic (e.g., African American studies, gender studies, religious studies) or consulting work.
 - (r) Community representative(s), including but not limited to people who understand the social, cultural and political history of the land on which the college sits.
- b. Build foundational clarity.**
- (1) Establish the “why” to guide the review.** Consider why the athletics department is committed to an effective review process and reflect on the benefits of committing to diverse, equitable and inclusive cultures.
 - (2) Identify and acknowledge tribal communities that include the descendants of the original inhabitants of the land shared by the college.** Consider the colonial narrative that has resulted in the erasure of native people across this country.

⁵ In January 2021, LEAD1 published the white paper “Actionable Recommendations to Create More Diverse Senior Leadership in NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) College Sports.” Select recommendations from the white paper are included in this DEI review framework.

- (3) Review the institution and department mission statements and core values.
 - (4) Establish common terminology consistent with campus policy and subject to expansion and updating as appropriate, including “diversity, equity and inclusion.” Consider what key DEI-related terms and definitions are used by the institution.
 - (5) Review the demographic and other diversity data reflective of the school’s overall and athletics populations. Consider the many different identities to address in the review. Think about those generally recognized by the institution and other identities that might currently be overlooked such as disability, gender identity, national origin, religion and socioeconomic status.
 - (6) Review the methodology, findings and recommendations of previous DEI reviews. Review available reporting on follow-up actions from past reviews, if any exist.
- c. Examine alignment of athletics with the institution’s DEI policies, statements, goals and plans.
- (1) Review the school’s nondiscrimination policy and DEI statements, goals and plans, and examine the extent to which the athletics department is aligned, connected or integrated with each of these institutional commitments.
 - (2) Does the athletics department have a published statement of nondiscrimination commitment for student-athletes, coaches and staff in addition to school policy? If so, where is it located and how is it communicated?
 - (3) Review the athletics department’s DEI statement, if one exists. Consider the following:
 - When was the statement created and how often is it updated?
 - How was it developed? Who was involved?
 - How is the statement used to guide DEI efforts?
 - How does the athletics statement align with institutional statement(s)?
 - How is the statement shared and communicated in the athletics department? With teams?
 - (4) If athletics does not have a DEI statement, how does the department communicate its commitment to DEI?
 - (5) How do the athletics department’s goals and plans connect to the institutions?
- d. Examine the scope of DEI planning in athletics.
- (1) How clearly stated are the department’s DEI goals?
 - (2) Are there specific action plans identified to achieve the goals? Are the plans reviewed and approved by senior staff? Are there metrics to assess progress?
 - (3) Who developed the plan(s) and to what extent did this include broad-based campus participation?
 - (4) Are the plans regularly updated?
 - (5) To what extent is the department meeting stated goals?
 - (6) How and to whom are the goals and progress communicated?

- (7) What core identities are addressed in current DEI plans (e.g., international students, LGBTQ+ students, those from various racial/ethnic backgrounds, students with disabilities, women)?

e. Examine organizational structures.

- (1) Does the athletic department have a DEI Committee(s) or other formal structure overseeing DEI efforts?
- What are the goals or charge of the committee?
 - What is the makeup of the committee? Does it include a variety of roles and titles and diversity of identities?
Do student-athletes serve on the committee? To whom does the committee report?
 - How are committee goals and plans shared?
 - What is the connection between the DEI committee in athletics and broader institutional committee(s)?
- (2) Is there a Title IX designee in athletics? Is there a written description of the designation and specified reporting obligations? Is the Title IX designee known in the athletics community?
- (3) When/how often is there communication between the campus Title IX officer and the athletics department? Does the communication broadly address Title IX, including sexual violence prevention and education and athletics compliance?
- (4) How is the athletics department engaging student-athletes, including SAAC, affinity groups (a collection of individuals who share a common identity characteristic) and others on DEI issues that they care about and are impacted by?
- (5) What roles do the ADID,⁶ SWA⁷ and FAR⁸ have regarding DEI? How well known and how impactful are these roles?
- Does the ADID have a background in DEI work, or was the individual appointed to the position due to other factors? What training is this person provided?⁷
 - Is the ADID an athletics department employee, or does the individual work outside of athletics? Is the ADID positioned to effectively influence and shape DEI policy and initiatives in the athletics department and across campus? How does the ADID collaborate with other campus departments?⁸

⁶ "Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designees." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/7/26/athletics-diversity-and-inclusion-designees.aspx>.

⁷ "Senior Woman Administrators." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2013/11/21/senior-woman-administrators.aspx>. ⁸ "Faculty Athletics Representatives Association." NCAA, <https://www.ncaafara.org>.

⁷ This question was sourced from LEAD1's 2021 white paper, "Actionable Recommendations to Create More Diverse Senior Leadership in NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) College Sports." See the paper for additional recommendations: <http://lead1association.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LEAD1-DEI-Working-Group-Recommendations-FINAL-1.pdf>.

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- Is the SWA engaged in senior-level decision-making for the conduct and administration of the overall athletics program?
 - Are the ADID, SWA and FAR provided with resources and access to support their active engagement in DEI efforts?
 - How do the ADID, SWA and FAR keep abreast of issues and trends in intercollegiate athletics?
 - Are the ADID, SWA and FAR regularly consulted by athletics and campus decision-makers, student-athletes and other key partners on DEI topics?
 - To what extent do the ADID, SWA and FAR have the opportunity or responsibility to present information at department wide staff meetings?¹¹
 - Are the ADID, SWA and FAR provided with resources (e.g., time, authority, administrative support, professional development opportunities) to support their active engagement in carrying out their responsibilities?
- (6) What affinity groups at the college or university are working well? What can athletics learn from these affinity groups to better support student-athletes?
- f. Examine foundational athletics department documents (e.g., strategic plan, policy and procedure documents, handbooks, team rules and expectations, training aids, websites, regular meeting schedules and agendas and other relevant foundational documents). Consider the following:
- (1) How well do the foundational documents contribute to creating an environment where people of all identities feel respected and express feelings of belonging?
 - (2) Do the documents consistently use inclusive language?
 - (3) How are DEI terms communicated in athletics?
 - (4) Do students and staff appear to be familiar with the DEI terms and their proper use?
 - (5) Do department meeting agendas regularly and adequately include DEI topics?
 - (6) Do athletics senior staff members regularly discuss the department's DEI expectations in organized settings?
 - (7) Do the mission statement and/or values speak to the importance of supporting diverse student-athletes and a culture of inclusion? Do they address equitable opportunities for all student-athletes across their intersection of identities?
 - (8) Has the institution formulated written policies aimed at ensuring adequate institutional support and equity for men's and women's programs?
 - (9) How definitively and consistently are existing policies being used/enforced?
 - (10) Is there a documented process in place to evaluate and update athletics department policies? If so, where is the policy located and who has responsibility for

overseeing the process? How (and how often) does this occur, and is there an emphasis on DEI in this process?

ACTION ITEMS

1. Identify who will work on the review, and each person's role in the process.
2. Establish meeting and communication expectations for the review process. While timelines vary greatly, a thorough review can take a full academic year to complete.
3. Gather information and conduct meetings to address items b-f under step one.
4. Capture a list of strengths, opportunities to improve, and items needing further study related to step one. Specifically consider whether and how athletics can engage in cross-campus collaboration to support DEI efforts.

STEP 2: Review demographics, outcomes and climate/experiences data.

Data is an informative starting point and important ongoing reference to understand your student-athlete and staff population. It can be used to set specific goals to increase representation in particular areas, or to help educate others about the diverse makeup of your population.

- a. Review demographic data to examine the population of athletics and the broader college, including student - student-athletes, students and staff, across significant elements of identity (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity and national origin) over a period of at least the past five years. This data may be found in the institution's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data, or in self-reports to the NCAA.⁹
 - (1) To what extent are the demographics in athletics consistent with the rest of campus? Consider for student - student-athletes, coaches, staff and leadership.
 - (2) What are the demographic trends in athletics, and how do they compare with the trends for the broader college population?¹⁰
 - (3) To what extent do the leaders in athletics reflect the student-athlete population?
 - (4) To what extent is the composition of the population in athletics consistent with the diversity, equity and inclusion vision or goals for the athletics department and for the college or university?
- b. Examine trends in the educational and career outcomes of student-athletes and staff.
 - (1) Compare student-athlete graduation, retention, job placement and earning potential data across significant elements of identity (e.g., race/ethnicity and gender) over a period of at least the past five years. Are there gaps or significant outliers in outcomes data for any specific identities?
 - (2) Is the athletics department tracking staff attrition, promotion and pay by race/ethnicity and gender? If so, are there any discernable trends?
 - (3) Are people of color, women and employees from other historically marginalized groups fairly represented in different operational and leadership roles?

⁹ The NCAA Institutional Performance Program is available to NCAA members in MyApps. See <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2017/11/1/division-i-institutional-performance-program.aspx>.

¹⁰ The NCAA publishes a searchable demographic database with information about member schools' student-student-athletes, coaches and administrators. See <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2018/12/13/ncaa-demographics-database.aspx?id=1729>.

- c. Examine the efforts to monitor the climate and experiences of student-athletes and staff.
 - (1) Is your athletics department administering a climate survey directly to student-athletes or partnering with efforts to survey the broader campus?
 - What is being monitored (e.g., demographic information, programming, recruitment and retention policies, hiring, coaching, level of comfort and safety in the classroom, on campus and in teams, accessibility of facilities, use and awareness of campus resources such as cultural centers, access to staff/tutoring, student-athlete voice or expression, connection with faculty, internship/externship opportunities)?
 - How often is the climate survey administered?
 - How is the campus climate survey data analyzed, shared and used?
 - (2) Examine coach/season performance evaluations, exit interviews or other assessment instruments. Consider the following:
 - Do the assessment instruments address significant issues of DEI related to the student-athlete experience? Do they include consideration of the physical, emotional and social well-being of student-athletes across core dimensions of diversity such as ability, gender identity, natural origin, race/ethnicity and sexual orientation?
 - Is direct student-athlete feedback gathered regarding the topics covered in the Title IX treatment areas/"laundry list" (e.g., equipment and supplies, scheduling of contests and practice times, per diem and team travel)?
 - How are the evaluations and exit interviews used? Are they conducted regularly and in a meaningful way?
 - (3) Do head coach evaluations include consideration of the establishment of a safe environment for their student-athletes (e.g., education on and methods for discussing and resolving harassment or discrimination)?
- d. Examine collection and use of qualitative information on student-athlete and staff experiences.
 - (1) What mechanisms are used to gather qualitative information on student-athlete experiences (e.g., discussion forums or in-person interviews)?
 - (2) How is the qualitative information analyzed, shared or used?

ACTION ITEMS

1. Gather information and conduct meetings to address items a-d of step two.
2. Capture a list of strengths, opportunities to improve, and items needing further study related to step two. Does existing data and analysis provide enough information for the athletics department to understand the athletics and college population and set specific goals?

STEP 3: Review athletics policies and practices for impact on DEI.

Rather than focusing only on specific diversity, equity and inclusion policies, all athletics policies and practices should be examined for impact on climate, outcomes and experiences. Ultimately DEI is not a singular effort; all department operations should be intentional about advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

a. Review hiring practices.¹¹

- (1) Does the athletics department have strategies for recruiting applicants that identify as racial and ethnic minorities, women and other historically marginalized groups for athletics positions? What are the outcomes of these strategies?
- (2) What process is used to form search committees? What efforts are in place to ensure that racial and ethnic minorities, women and historically marginalized groups are included on the committees, including for high-profile searches?¹²
- (3) What bias training is provided to the search committees?
- (4) What efforts are in place to identify racial and ethnic minorities, women and other historically marginalized groups in candidate pools on an ongoing basis?
- (5) Do candidate pools reflect the desired composition of the department?
- (6) What role does networking and ongoing connection to individuals from different identity groups play in your institution's hiring practices?
- (7) What mechanisms are in place to ensure that job postings are communicated to potential candidates from different gender, racial/ethnic or other historically marginalized backgrounds?
- (8) Has your school communicated its participation in the NCAA presidential pledge?¹³
- (9) Has your school used the NCAA Leadership Collective¹⁴ to identify a diverse pool of candidates?
- (10) If your institution uses search firms, what consideration is given to the search firm's record of advancing candidates from diverse backgrounds?

b. Review student-athlete recruitment practices.

- (1) What initiatives is your campus undertaking to recruit a diverse population of student-athletes?
- (2) Are recruiting materials offered in different languages or accessibility options? Do materials include a wide variety of student-athlete identities?
- (3) To what extent are staff and coaches from historically marginalized populations engaged in recruiting visits?¹⁸
- (4) Are resources provided to coaches to help recruit student-athletes from diverse backgrounds and locations for all sports?
- (5) Are men's and women's sports programs provided equitable resources for recruiting?

¹¹ Additional considerations can be found in the NCAA Division III publication, "The Diverse Workforce." https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/inclusion/d3/D3_INC_HiringResource.pdf.

¹² See note 9.

¹³ "Presidential Pledge." NCAA, 15 Sept. 2020, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/9/16/ncaa-presidential-pledge.aspx>.

¹⁴ "NCAA Leadership Collective." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2020/12/10/ncaa-leadership-collective.aspx>. ¹⁸ See note 9.

- (6) What do you show recruits on visits to help them feel welcome on campus? Is DEI information about the local area and community provided to students to help them feel welcome?
- (7) Are other campus offices that serve various identities (e.g., international students, LGBTQ+ students, those from various racial/ethnic backgrounds, students with disabilities, women) engaged or highlighted in the recruiting process?
- c. Review professional development efforts for individuals from historically marginalized populations in athletics.
 - (1) How is athletics ensuring it prepares individuals from historically marginalized populations for advancement or other growth opportunities?
 - (2) How does the athletics department allocate financial and other resources to professional development for historically marginalized populations? How significant is the resource allocation?
 - (3) How does the department communicate with student-athletes and staff about campus, NCAA and other outside professional development opportunities (e.g., Career in Sports Forum, Emerging Leaders Seminar, Postgraduate Internship Program, NCAA Inclusion Forum, programming offered by professional and affinity groups)?
 - (4) To what extent does the athletics department work with or support participation in organizations dedicated to advancing athletics professionals with historically marginalized backgrounds (e.g., Minority Opportunities Athletic Association, Women Leaders in College Sports, etc.)?
 - (5) What regular mentoring opportunities exist for historically marginalized populations? Does the mentoring effort include clear expectations for the mentor and mentee? To what extent are mentees connected with influencers in college sports?¹⁵
 - (6) To what extent are individuals from historically marginalized populations given leadership opportunities to expand their growth?
- d. Review student-athlete and staff support offerings/retention efforts.
 - (1) What specific strategies does the athletics department have to build and enhance student-athlete and/or staff belonging?
 - (2) Is the athletics department implementing land acknowledgments to honor the unique sovereign status of Indigenous people and the sacred land on which the university was built?¹⁶
 - (3) How does the new employee onboarding/new student-athlete orientation process promote feelings of belonging and contribute to building an inclusive culture?
 - (4) To what extent are there safe places for people from historically marginalized populations to share their perspective and experiences about topical issues without fear of being terminated, reprimanded, ostracized, or having the perception of sounding “angry” or “intense”?¹⁷

¹⁵ See note 9.

¹⁶ “Celebrating Native American Heritage Month.” NCAA, https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/inclusion/ethnic/INC_CelebratingNativeAmericanHeritageMonth.pdf.

¹⁷ See note 9.

- (5) How do staff use campus disability support offices, including referring student-athletes and communicating with the athletics department and student-athletes about services offered?
- (6) Does the athletics department ask all employees what special equipment, technology, workspace and/or support they might need to maximize their success? To what extent are these items or support provided?¹⁸ (7) What efforts are in place to support student-athletes of all gender identities?¹⁹
- (8) What efforts are in place to ensure proper pronoun use throughout athletics?
- (9) What photos are being used to depict student-athletes? Do the images promote feelings of belonging?
- (10) What efforts are in place to ensure the proper pronunciation of student-athlete and staff names, from both home and visiting teams?
- (11) What efforts are in place to ensure that dress codes, including hairstyles, support diverse cultures?²⁰
- (12) What efforts are in place to serve the different and intersecting identities of student-athletes and staff related to mental health?²¹
- (13) Are student-athletes, coaches and staff informed of and given the opportunity to participate in DEI-related programs and services (support or otherwise) on campus?
- (14) To what extent are requests to celebrate religious, nation- and culture-specific holidays and to commemorate cultural heritage months/days supported?²²
- (15) What efforts does the school make to ensure that student-athletes, coaches and athletics department staff know whom to contact if they experience an issue of discrimination (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or national origin)?
- (16) How does the department support and encourage affinity groups, other student-athlete leadership groups, and student-athletes in general to learn and lead in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion?²³
- (17) Does athletic staff support or help raise awareness about different social causes? What conversations about activism are being had in teams? The athletics department at large?
- (18) Is there specific funding available to support social activism efforts by student-athletes and athletics department staff? Is this funding sufficient to achieve DEI goals in athletics?
- (19) To what extent does the school support and encourage a positive game environment during intercollegiate athletics events?
- (20) To what extent does the institution have specific policies or initiatives focused on the environment experienced by visiting teams?

¹⁸ See note 9.

¹⁹ "NCAA Gender Identity and Student-Athlete Participation Summit Meeting Summary." NCAA, 5-6 Oct. 2020, https://s3.amazonaws.com/ncaaorg/about/ncaa/Report_from_Transgender_Student-Athlete_Participation_Summit.pdf.

²⁰ See note 9.

²¹ See the NCAA Diverse Student-Athlete Mental Health and Well-Being Summit Final Report, https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/ssi/mental/samhwb/2020SSI_SAMHWSummit_Report.pdf.

²² See note 9.

²³ "The Power of the Student-Athlete Voice: Activism for Social Impact." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/7/23/student-athlete-activism.aspx#sapower>.

- (21) What procedures are in place to address fan behavior that violates the campus or athletics department's values? Review DEI educational efforts for student-athletes and staff.
- (1) What DEI education is in place for student-athletes, coaches and other athletics staff? Are the educational efforts ongoing?
- (2) Is educational content focused on the specific culture and needs of the athletics department (e.g., implicit bias training, foundational DEI topics, Diversity 101, inclusion mental health, anti-racism, LGBTQ+, allyship and social activism)?
- (3) Do educational efforts have stated goals? Are they assessed to gain feedback that can direct and shape future programming?
- (4) To what extent is the education format varied and tailored to the specific audience (e.g., cultural months, workshops, trainings and TED Talks)?
- (5) How does the athletics department allocate financial and other resources for DEI-related education? How significant is the resource allocation?
- (6) How are student-athletes involved in identifying topics or formats for education?
- (7) Does DEI education include partnering with campus departments and faculty whose work focuses on DEI?
- (8) During the past year, has a representative from the athletics department attended an NCAA Inclusion Forum or NCAA Convention session on DEI? How was information learned at those events used?

ACTION ITEMS

1. Gather information and conduct meetings to address items a-e for step 3.
2. Capture a list of strengths, opportunities to improve and items needing further study related to step three.
Specifically consider whether written policy is followed in practice and how well known and accessible department policies are.

STEP 4: Review legal, institutional compliance, and other responsibilities. While legal and institutional obligations will vary by campus, the NCAA has a baseline expectation that its members comply with all federal, state and local laws, in addition to NCAA legislation and policy. Other important expectations may be established by the accrediting body, conference, institution, athletics department or individual teams.

This review framework is not meant to be a substitute for schools' ongoing obligations to comply with all relevant federal and state laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX requires all federally funded schools to provide gender equitable participation, athletics-related financial aid, and support and benefits across a no exhaustive list of 11 treatment areas. For more information about a school's obligations under Title IX, see the Office for Civil Rights website²⁴ and the NCAA's gender equity planning resources.²⁵

²⁴ "Office for Civil Rights." U.S. Department of Education, 17 Nov. 2021, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>.

²⁵ "Gender Equity Planning." NCAA, https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/inclusion/bestprac/NCAAInc_BestPracticeGenderEquity.pdf.

Finally, the NCAA acknowledges that some state and local laws may create barriers for schools to engage in specific DEI work. Ultimately, the NCAA constitution²⁶ requires members to commit to promoting DEI in athletics activities and events, hiring practices, professional and coaching relationships, leadership and advancement opportunities.

- a. Review general considerations with institutional counsel.
 - (1) Does the school currently comply with all federal, state, and local laws; campus policies and procedures; and NCAA legislation and policy?
 - (2) How are these made available and accessible to student-athletes and staff?
 - (3) What steps are in place for tracking legal and compliance updates and communicating them to athletics leadership, coaches, other staff and student-athletes?
 - (4) What other important expectations are established by the school's accrediting body, conference, institution, athletics department or individual teams?
 - (5) Does the department work collaboratively with legal counsel and institutional compliance to identify all relevant sources of law and policy?
 - (6) How does the institution overall ensure that its athletics program complies with the law or has identified appropriate action steps designed to meet these responsibilities?
 - (7) What training is required of those in positions of oversight for athletics equity areas, including, as required by Title IX, the provision of gender equitable participation, athletics-related financial aid, and the 11 treatment areas?
 - (8) What process is in place to consider legal and compliance matters in the regular update of athletics policies?
 - (9) Does the school have a process in place for students and staff to report concerns related to legal, compliance or other responsibilities? Is this process widely known?
- b. Review processes to meet the following NCAA policies with the director of athletics, SWA, ADID, athletics compliance officer(s) and other necessary parties:
 - (1) NCAA Division I legislation²⁷ requiring a once-in-four year DEI review and attestation.
 - (2) NCAA championships and event hosting policy.²⁸
 - (3) NCAA Board of Governors policy on campus sexual violence.²⁹
 - (4) NCAA transgender student-athlete participation policy.³⁰
 - (5) NCAA Institutional Performance Program.³¹
- c. Review processes for following applicable federal laws with institutional counsel:
 - (1) Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution.
 - (2) Federal nondiscrimination laws in education that apply to recipients of federal financial aid and their implementing regulations protecting students, including the following:

²⁶ "NCAA Constitution." NCAA, 14 Dec. 2021, https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/governance/ncaa/constitution/NCAAGov_Constitution121421.pdf.

²⁷ "LSDBI." NCAA, <https://web3.ncaa.org/lldb/search/bylawView?id=114940>.

²⁸ "NCAA Selection Process and Information." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2019/5/1/bids.aspx>.

²⁹ "NCAA Board of Governors Policy on Campus Sexual Violence." NCAA, 27 April 2021, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2017/8/17/ncaa-board-of-governors-policy-on-campus-sexual-violence.aspx>.

³⁰ "Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2022/1/27/transgender-participation-policy.aspx>.

³¹ "Division I Institutional Performance Program." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2017/11/1/division-i-institutional-performance-program.aspx>.

"Division II Institutional Performance Program." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2015/9/11/ncaa-division-ii-institutional-performance-program-resources.aspx>. "Division III Institutional Performance Program." NCAA, <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/9/6/division-iii-institutional-performance-program-ipp.aspx>.

- (a) Those that prohibit discrimination based on race, color and national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).
- (b)
- (c) Those that prohibit discrimination based on sex and/or gender (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972).
- (d) Those that prohibit discrimination based on disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).
- (e) Those that prohibit discrimination based on age (Age Discrimination Act of 1973).
- (f) Those that require the posting of relevant athletics-based information such as the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994.
- (3) Laws that prohibit discrimination in employment, including the following:
 - (a) Those that prohibit employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin and sex (Title VII).
 - (b) Those that prohibit discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity (Title IX); wage discrimination based on sex (Equal Pay Act of 1963); and pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth (Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978).
 - (c) Those that prohibit employment discrimination against qualified people with a disability or perceived disability status (ADA).
 - (d) Those that prohibit employment discrimination against people age 40 or above based on age (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967).
 - (e) Those that make it illegal to discriminate against employees because of their genetic information (the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008).
 - (f) Those that prohibit covered employers from discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin (Executive Order 11246).
 - (g) Those that prohibit discrimination based on a person's status as a veteran (Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974).
- (4) Relevant federal agency guidance and other federal law requirements.
- d. Review the process to meet the following additional items with institutional counsel, athletics compliance and other responsible institutional staff:
 - (1) State and local laws.
 - (2) Accreditation standards.
 - (3) Conference expectations, review processes and/or attestation requirements.
 - (4) Other local and institution-specific requirements, as relevant.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Identify and describe the impact of local laws, educational efforts, advocacy groups, etc. that may:
 - a. Limit the advancement of DEI efforts.
 - b. Promote the advancement of DEI efforts.
2. Identify and describe any other communication or other initiatives that limit or support compliance and DEI efforts.
3. Capture a list of strengths, opportunities to improve, and items needing further study related to step four.

FINAL ACTION ITEMS: Putting the Framework Into Practice

The purpose of a program review is to create understanding and context. Reviews set the stage for strategic planning, where specific goals and actions are established and prioritized. These final action items offer a path to launch a strategic or other action planning process or to generally pursue progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion in athletics.

1. Compile a master list of strengths, opportunities and items needing further study identified during the review.
2. Determine the most significant strengths and opportunities from the review's findings.
3. Identify specific ways the results of this review help the athletics department set and achieve goals to improve diversity, equity and inclusion.
4. Establish a plan and timeline to follow up on items needing further study and to address other items that need attention or monitoring before the next review cycle.
5. Communicate the findings of the review to a broad audience and include the related follow-up plan.
6. Celebrate progress to enhance visibility of DEI efforts on campus.

This will be a living document updated on a regular basis. If you have feedback on ways to enhance this resource, please send those comments to: inclusion@ncaa.org

Appendix C - National Collegiate Athletic Association Divisional and Resource Information

Division	Resources	Data
Division I (DI)	• Full scholarships	• 350 Colleges • 6000 Athletic Teams • 170,000 Student-athletes
Division II (DII)	• Full Scholarships	• 1,100 colleges • 300 Athletic Teams
Division III (DIII)	• Does not provide athletic scholarships	• 440 member institutions • 195,000 Student-athletes

Appendix D - National Junior College Athletic Association Division and Resource Information

Division	Resources Offered
Division (DI)	• Full Scholarships
Division II (DII)	• Scholarships provided with a maximum of tuition/fees/books
Division III (DIII)	• No financial support or aid maybe given to student-athletes based on their athletic ability

Appendix E - President and CEO of the National Junior College Athletic Association Letter of Support Request

Email Subject Line

Doctoral Research Request

Email Content

Dr. Parker,

My name is Riann Mullis, I am the athletic director at Neosho County Community College and also currently serve multiple roles for The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) as The Region VI Assistant Women's Director, The NJCAA DII Volleyball Sports Chair and I am a member of the Division II Oversight Committee. All of these roles have led me to conduct research toward my dissertation to obtain my doctoral degree and I am a doctoral student in through the John E. Roueche Community College Leadership program through Kansas State University.

I am seeking your support to email a survey to all NJCAA DI and DII head coaches of the following teams: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's outdoor track, baseball and softball to gain knowledge based on their experiences pertaining to athletic equity specifically as it relates to team facilities, scholarships and team travel. There will also be an additional opportunity for interviews post-survey for any willing participant to elaborate on their survey results.

The purpose of this survey is to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at NJCAA DI and DII institutions. All of the identities will be kept anonymous and the participation is strictly voluntary. This research will not diminish The NJCAA or the participants in any way.

The results of this research project will be published in a dissertation through Kansas State University. If you have any questions regarding this research you may contact me directly at riann@ksu.edu or my supervising doctoral Chair, Dr. Jennifer Spielvogel at drjspielvogel@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Riann Mullis

Appendix F - Email Survey Consent

Email Subject Line

Attn: NJCAA DI and DII Head Coaches: Doctoral Research Request

Email Content

Coach,

My name is Riann Mullis. I am a doctoral student in Kansas State University's Community College Leadership Program. I am conducting research via a survey to obtain my doctoral degree. The purpose of this survey is to identify the current state and best practices of athletic equity implementation at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I (DI) and Division II (DII) institutions.

Your participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated. The survey is designed to take less than 10 minutes. At the end of the survey there is an option to participate in an additional individual interview via zoom or telephone, which is designed to take less than 30 minutes. These interviews will be audio recorded.

To participate in this survey, you must meet the following three conditions: (1) Be 18 years or older; (2) Be currently employed at a NJCAA Division I or II institution; (3) Be a current head coach of men's and/or women's soccer, men's and/or women's basketball, baseball, softball and/or men's and women's outdoor track and field.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. By completing the survey, you indicate your consent to participate in this research project. You also have the option to skip any questions desired or opt out of the survey entirely. Potential risks may include discomfort or fear of retaliation, and unpredicted data breaches. Benefits of participation can enhance the understanding and opportunity to provide information focusing on best practices regarding athletic equity implementation. Individual identity will remain confidential and coded throughout the entirety of this research. Interview participants will be coded A-Z and any institution mentioned will be coded 1-50.

The results of this research project will be published in a dissertation through Kansas State University. All data collected from this research may be used in future research without additional informed consent.

If you have any questions regarding this research you may contact me, Riann Mullis directly at riann@ksu.edu, my supervising doctoral Chair, Dr. Jennifer Spielvogel at drjspielvogel@gmail.com, or Kansas State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, Lisa Rubin at rubin@ksu.edu.

For access to the survey, please click the following link:

<https://forms.gle/3TurNjgw1gG69WXx6>

Appendix G - Head Coaches Athletic Equity Assessment Survey

1. How many years of college head coaching experience do you have? _____ years
2. What Team(s) are you currently head coach for? Please mark all that apply.
 - a. Baseball
 - b. Both Baseball and Softball
 - c. Both Men's and Women's Basketball
 - d. Both Men's and Women's Soccer
 - e. Both Women's and Men's Outdoor Track and Field
 - f. Men's Basketball
 - g. Men's Outdoor Track and Field
 - h. Men's Soccer
 - i. Softball
 - j. Women's Basketball
 - k. Women's Outdoor Track and Field
 - l. Women's Soccer
3. Of all of the coaching roles listed, please rank them in order of importance to you.
 - a. Advisor
 - b. Advocate
 - c. Fundraiser
 - d. Leader
 - e. Mentor
 - f. Role Model

Please answer the survey questions as they relate to the specific sport(s) that you are head coach of. If you selected more than one sport in question two, please select and identify one team to answer the survey questions. Identity the selected team here: _____

4. The following questions pertain to your assessment of your **team's athletic facilities**. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (Strongly agree).

	1	2	3	4
My institution provides equitable facilities for all teams.				
My institution provides equitable facilities for my team.				
My institution provides equitable access to my team's facilities.				

My team has quality athletic facilities.				
My team facilities have a positive impact on my recruiting success.				

5. The following questions pertain to your assessment of your **team's athletic scholarships**. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (Strongly agree).

	1	2	3	4
My institution provides equitable scholarship dollars for all teams.				
My institution provides equitable scholarship for my team.				
My institution allows me to raise additional funds to contribute to my scholarship budget.				
My teams' scholarship budget has a positive impact on my recruiting success.				

6. The following questions pertain to your assessment of your **team's travel**. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (Strongly agree).

	1	2	3	4
My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for all teams.				
My institution provides equitable travel accommodations for my team.				
My institution is committed to providing safe travel accommodations for my team.				
I feel responsible for fundraising money for my team's travel accommodations.				
My team's travel accommodations have a positive impact on my recruiting success.				

My institution provides equitable funding when overnight travel is necessary for my team.				
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7. What level of National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) does your team compete at?
- NJCAA Division I (DI)
 - NJCAA Division II (DII)

8. What is your gender?
- Male
 - Female
 - Non-Binary
 - Other

The researcher is looking to highlight best practices associated with the implementation of athletic equity.

9. Have you witnessed best practices of athletic equity implementation at a specific institution? If so, please identify the institution, the sport and other details relevant to this study.
10. Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview via telephone or Zoom with the researcher?
- Yes
 - No

If you answered Yes to the above question please provide the following contact information:

Full Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Appendix H - Interview Questions

1. Why did you want to be a head coach?
 - a. Follow-up: Is it what you expected? Why or why not?
2. Tell me your favorite aspect about being a head coach.
3. As a head coach, how often do you experience situations that focus on athletic equity?
4. How did you learn about or come to understand athletic equity?
5. How do you as a head coach see your role in creating an equitable environment for your student-athletes?
 - a. Have you seen a “best practice” at your college or maybe somewhere else?
6. How do you advocate for equity?
 - a. Follow up: can you provide an example or experience of regarding advocacy in athletics?
7. How do you assess athletic equity?
8. Which areas in athletics have you witnessed being most equitable?
 - a. Follow-up: Can you give me an example or an experience of this?
9. Is there anything else you would like to elaborate on regarding athletic equity and the role of a college head coach?

Appendix I - Institutional Review Board Approval



University Research
Compliance Office

TO: Jennifer A Spielvogel
Educational Leadership

Proposal Number IRB-11975

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 01/11/2024

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, “

The assessment of athletic equity by head men’s and women’s coaches in the National Junior College Athletic Association.”

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for three years from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 01/11/2024

EXPIRATION DATE: 01/10/2027

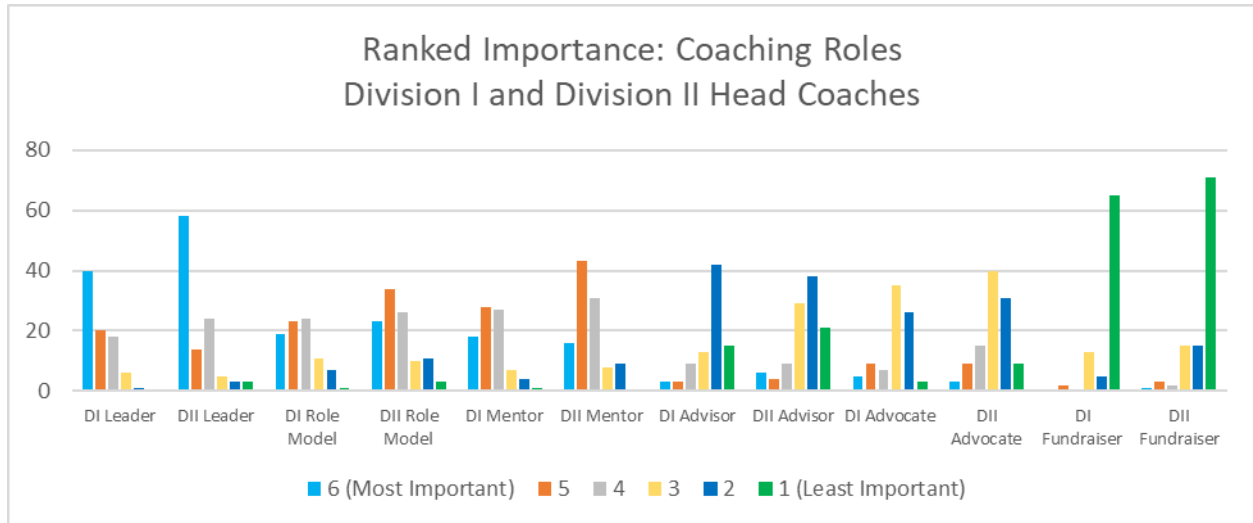
In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

No more than minimal risk to subjects

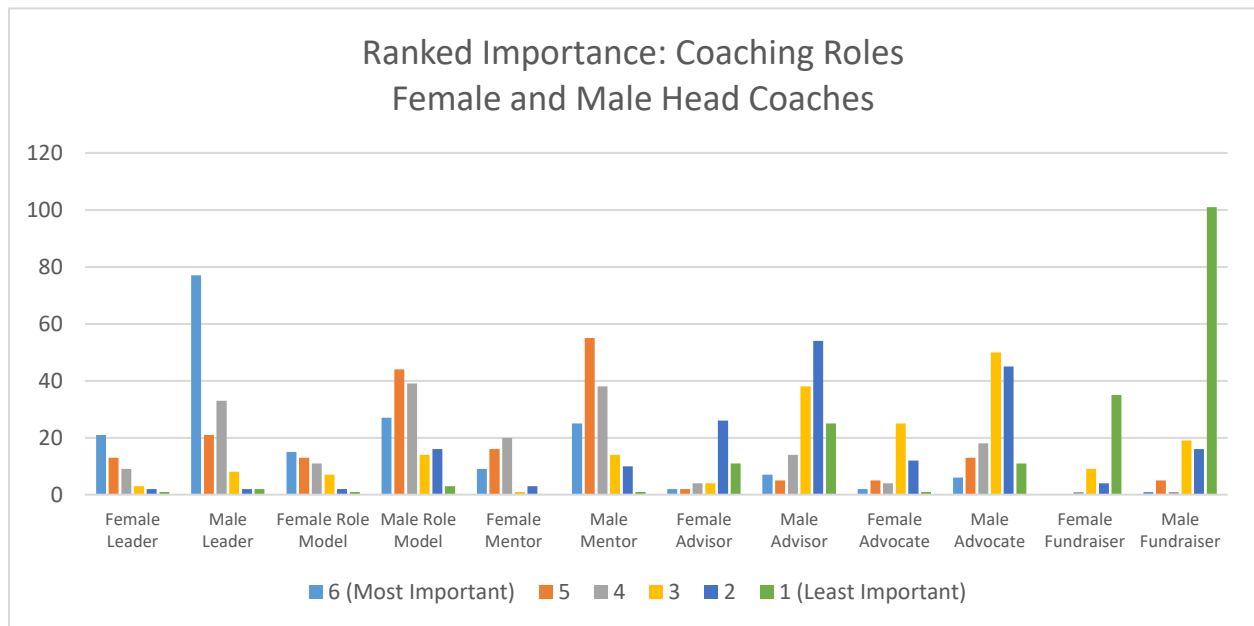
This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

Electronically signed by Lisa Rubin on 01/11/2024 2:50 PM ET

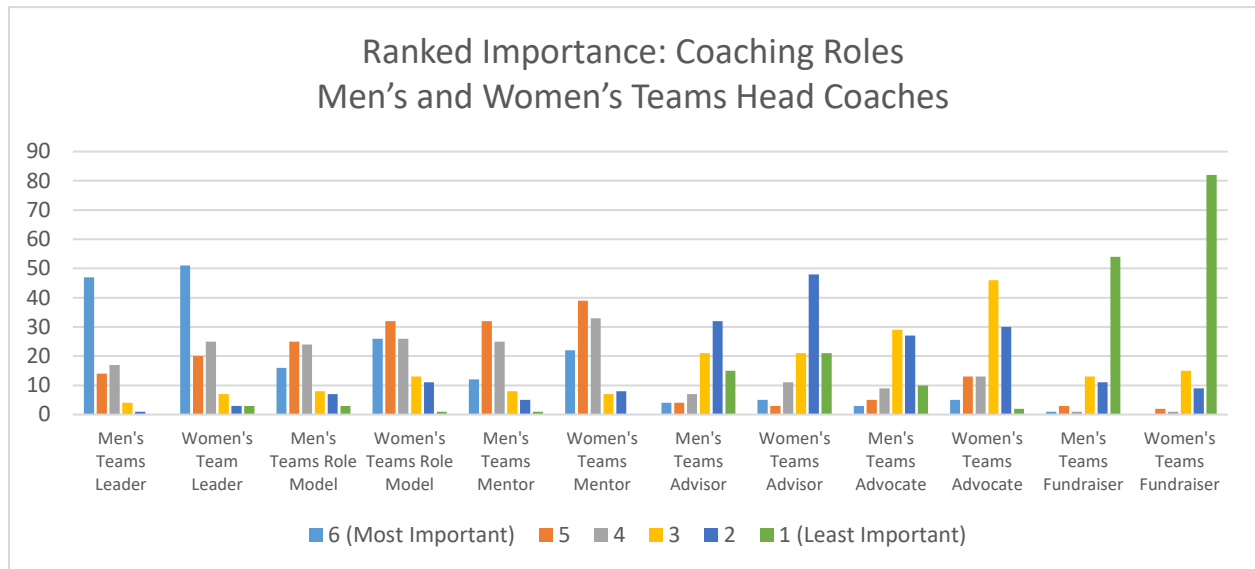
Appendix J - Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles, Division I and Division II Head Coaches



Appendix K - Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles, Female and Male Head Coaches



Appendix L - Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles, Men's and Women's Teams Head Coaches



Appendix M - Ranked Importance: Coaching Roles, Years of Head Coaching Experience

