

**Men are athletic directors, women are life skills coordinators: Examination of the gender typing of managerial roles within athletic administration positions**

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Abstract 345**

A persistent decline in the number of women represented in intercollegiate athletic administration positions has continued despite the significant increases in girls and women's participation in sports (Acosta & Carpenter, 2006). Scholars have examined the lack of women in senior level athletic administration positions from a variety of theoretical frameworks, including homologous reproduction, hegemonic masculinity, human capital theory, and symbolic interactionist theory, among others. However, there has been little research designed to use gender role theory as a framework to specifically explore if senior level athletic administration positions are constructed in a manner that may be biased toward women. Specifically, do the expectations and perceptions of the roles required of senior athletic administrators preclude certain individuals, in particular women, from holding or advancing to such positions?

Gender role theory has been used within management literature to examine the under representation of women in senior executive positions in business management, including examination of gender stereotypes of managerial roles as masculine roles, attitudes toward women as managers, and negative perceptions of women in managerial roles (Atwater, Brett, Waldman, DiMare, & Hayden, 2004; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Schein, 1975). Schein (2007) noted that gender stereotyping of managerial positions perpetuates a bias against women in selection to management roles, training, and advancement to upper level positions. Further, research has examined if managerial roles can be divided into subroles, and whether those subroles are gender-typed. Specifically, Atwater et al. (2004) examined if there were feminine and masculine subroles within the overarching management role. Findings indicated that managerial subroles were in fact gender typed. Subroles which were identified as masculine included allocating resources, delegating and punishing; feminine subroles included providing corrective feedback, planning and organizing, and supporting employees (Atwater et al., 2004). Thus, the purpose of this research was to extend Atwater et al.'s (2004) work in the context of intercollegiate athletic administration. In particular, researchers sought to examine the gender typing of managerial subroles for three specific positions in intercollegiate athletics, director of athletics, life skills coordinator, and compliance coordinator. Determination of the three different types of athletic administration positions was based on data obtained from the NCAA (2006) that recorded the number of men and women in specific administration positions at the Division I level. Based on analysis of that data, men were significantly overrepresented in the position of athletic director and women were significantly overrepresented in the position of life skills coordinator. Men and women were equally represented in the position of compliance coordinator.

Job descriptions were obtained from major Division I athletic departments for each of the three athletic administration positions included in this study. Six significant job responsibilities were included in the survey. To ensure that the selected job responsibilities accurately reflected the administration position listed, a Delphi method was employed using a panel of six experts. Based on results of the expert panel, the job descriptions for each position were provided on the survey. Participants included 215 undergraduates and 32 graduates, for a total of 248 participants ( $n = 248$ ). Fifty-nine women and 189 men completed the survey. The majority of the participants identified as White ( $n = 209$ ). The participants were provided a letter of introduction and information regarding the research project. After reading the job description for each position participants were asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale (5 = most important - 1 = least important) the level of importance of each managerial subrole as identified by Atwater et al. (2004) for athletic director, life skills coordinator, and compliance coordinator.

Prior to analysis of the data, exploratory factor analysis using principal components analysis with varimax rotation was used to collapse the 19 managerial subroles identified by Atwater et al. (2004) into four gender managerial subrole categories, masculine subrole 1 and masculine subrole 2, feminine subrole, and gender neutral subrole. The masculine management subrole 1 included the following items from the scale: allocating resources, delegating, managing conflict, strategic decision making, and problem solving. The two items that loaded on a separate factor were punishing and disciplining, which were labeled as masculine subrole 2. The items included in the feminine management subrole included providing corrective feedback, planning and organizing, developing and mentoring personnel, motivating and inspiring, communicating and informing, and supporting. For the gender neutral management subrole the following items were included: evaluating employees, recognizing and rewarding employees, clarifying roles and objectives, consulting others, networking, and monitoring work activities.

Paired sample t-tests were used to compare the importance of each gender managerial subrole for each athletic administration position. For the athletic director position, masculine management subrole 1 was significantly more important than all other

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managerial subroles ( $p < .01$ ). The feminine management subrole was significantly more important than masculine subrole 2 and the gender neutral subrole ( $p < .01$ ). For the life skills coordinator position, the feminine management subrole was significantly more important than all other managerial subroles ( $p < .01$ ). The feminine gender subrole was significantly more important than the gender neutral managerial subrole ( $p < .01$ ) for the compliance coordinator position. Comparisons found no other subroles were identified as significantly more important for that position. Analysis of variance was used to evaluate difference by sex of evaluator. The only difference based on sex of evaluator was found in importance of gender managerial subroles for athletic director. Female evaluators identified the feminine managerial roles as significantly more important for the position of athletic director when compared to male evaluators,  $F(1,246) = 7.02, p = .01$ .

Results of this research support previous work that has indicated that managerial positions are gender typed. The athletic director position was identified with masculine gender typed managerial roles, as the life skills position was identified as requiring more feminine gender typed managerial roles. The position of compliance director was identified as requiring masculine, feminine and gender neutral managerial roles. The gender typing of managerial roles within these positions is reflected in the composition of individuals holding such positions. Gender role stereotyping of managerial positions may be an additional component that impacts representation of men and women in positions within intercollegiate athletics, and may help to explain the under representation of women in positions of athletic director at the Division I level.