

Overcoming barriers: The influence of gender and race on intentions to become a collegiate coach

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**Poster
Abstract 99**

Despite the many gains made by women and racial minorities in the sport context, they are still under-represented in leadership positions, specifically coaching. For instance, women constitute 42.4% of the coaches of women's teams and fewer than 3% of the coaches of men's teams (Acosta & Carpenter, 2006). Similarly, racial minorities constitute 12.1% of all head coaches even though they represent nearly 24% of all athletes (DeHass, 2007). These figures are discouraging on many levels. Not only do they indicate a lack of diversity within the athletics setting, but they also convey to others that leadership positions within college athletics are, in essence, reserved for those who have traditionally held power; that is, White men (see Knoppers, 1992). Given these trends, several researchers have sought to understand why the disparate numbers are present. Several consistent themes have emerged, including differences in the quality of work (Inglis et al., 1996; Pastore et al., 2000), the presence of access discrimination (Cunningham & Sagas, 2005; Lovett & Lowry, 1994), stereotypes concerning who should hold positions of power (Lapchick, 2002; Schein, 1973), and differences in occupational turnover (Cunningham et al., 2006; Hart et al., 1986).

A common theme among these studies is the emphasis on coaches and administrators. Such a focus is understandable, as it is these persons who are currently in the positions or who are charged with personnel decisions. An alternative approach is to study the aspirations of current athletes, or persons who constitute the most viable pool of future coaches (Everhart & Chelladurai, 1998). If differences are present at this level, such that women or racial minorities are less likely to become a coach than are their majority counterparts, then supply-side explanations can at least partially explain the under-representation. Few researchers have adopted this perspective. Everhart and Chelladurai (1998), in their study of Big Ten males and females, found no gender differences in the desire to become a coach. Cunningham (2004), in a football and men's basketball players, found that racial minorities perceived less opportunity to become a coach and expressed less interest in coaching, relative to their White counterparts.

The purpose of the current study was to extend on this research by considering the interactive effects of gender and race on the desire to become a collegiate coach. We did so by drawing from social cognitive career theory (Lent et al., 1994)-a framework that has been used extensively to explain the educational and vocational choices people make (see Lent et al., 2003). According to this perspective, self-efficacy (i.e., the confidence one has to execute a given course of action) and outcome expectations (i.e., the perceived outcomes associated with a given action) should give rise to intentions to engage in a particular behavior. Of course, these person-cognitive variables do not operate in a vacuum; rather, environmental factors serve to influence the self-efficacy people have, the outcomes they associate with activities, and the choices they make. These environmental factors can be in the form of barriers (i.e., factors that impede a given behavior) and supports (i.e., factors that promote a behavior). In drawing from this framework, we sought to investigate the following research question: what is the influence of gender and race on student-athletes' intentions to enter the coaching profession?

Data were gathered from 128 athletes at a large NCAA Division I university. The sample was diverse in nature: 35 racial minority men, 13 racial minority women, 39 White men, and 39 White women. After consenting to participate in the study, participants completed a questionnaire. Self-efficacy was measured with 9 items from Everhart and Chelladurai (1998), while outcome expectations (9 items), barriers (6 items), and supports (6 items) were measured with items adapted from social cognitive career theory literature (Bandura, 1986; Cunningham et al., 2007; Doherty & Johnson, 2001). Intention to become a collegiate coach was measured with three items from Hagger et al. (2001). All measures had acceptable reliability estimates (over .70).

We conducted a 2 (race: racial minority, White) x 2 (gender: men, women) multivariate analysis of variance, with the five social cognitive career theory variables serving as dependent variables. The multivariate effect for race was significant, $F(5, 109) = 4.75, p < .001$, while the effects of gender were not, $F(5, 109) = .56, p = .73$. The interactive effects were also not significant, $F(5, 109) = 1.16, p = .34$. Univariate analyses for race indicated that racial minorities, relative to their White counterparts, anticipated more positive outcomes associated with being a collegiate coach ($M = 5.03, SD = .76$, and $M = 4.48, SD = 1.02$, respectively), anticipated more barriers with being a coach ($M = 3.57, SD = 1.27$, and $M = 2.73, SD = 1.00$, respectively), and also had greater intentions to pursue a collegiate coaching position ($M = 4.26, SD = 1.37$, and $M = 3.11, SD = 1.60$, respectively). All differences were statistically significant, $F's(1, 113) > 7.00, p's < .01$.

Results indicate that supply-side explanations for the under-representation of women and racial minorities in collegiate coaching

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are likely not valid. On the contrary, men and women did not differ in their intentions to become a coach, while racial minorities actually expressed greater intentions to do so. The greater intentions on the part of racial minorities existed despite the perceived barriers, such as lack of opportunity and discrimination, they would encounter. The results of the study suggest that the under-representation of women and racial minorities in coaching positions is likely due to other factors, such as on-the-job treatment and biases by athletic administrators and alumni (see Acosta & Carpenter, 1985; Lapchick, 2002). Future researchers and activists should continue to explore these possibilities.