

**Understanding the Role of Human and Social Capital in the Perpetuation of Leader Development:  
A Study of College Basketball Coaching Networks**

*Jeff W. Mott, Washburn University*

*James Gladden, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

*Carol Barr, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

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Research in the domain of leadership is extremely broad and diverse. In his research, David Day (2001) draws a conceptual distinction between leader development and leadership development that is very powerful in its application to many professional contexts. In the case of leader development, the emphasis is on human capital, and developing individual-based knowledge, skills and abilities that are associated with leadership roles. Additionally, there are social resources associated with work environments that take the form of social capital. The focus here is on leadership development. Specifically, it relates to developing the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with building the network relationships that enhance the interactions and dynamics involved in creating organizational value (Day, 2001).

One form of both leader and leadership development is the practice of mentoring. Mentoring has frequently been segregated in research based on its function in both psychosocial development and career sponsorship (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2005; Kram, 1985). In either function, mentoring plays a role in the development of both human capital and social capital, and is certainly an influential element in teaching the importance of social networks for all facets of career growth and development (Day, 2001). Leaders often play important roles in contributing to employees' current and future career success, which underscores the importance of proactively assessing a leader's mentoring capabilities. Leaders that have engaged in mentoring behavior may have former protégés who have subsequently advanced progressively in their careers.

Social as well as developmental relationships exist quite commonly in the college basketball coaching fraternity. Career advancement within the profession requires personal and professional growth that is difficult to obtain through traditional educational and training vehicles. As such, the development of successive generations of coaches and leaders in the profession is critically dependent on those leaders currently active in these roles. This development requirement encompasses not only the knowledge and skills necessary to perform in the job, but also includes enrichment in learning to manage relationships and organizational dynamics that will enable the coach's athletic program to flourish.

This research used the collegiate men's basketball professional environment as the context to study the mentoring relationship and importance of both human capital and social networks in exploring which head coaching networks produced the greatest contribution to the career advancement of their assistant coaches (protégés).

The study employed a mixed methods approach. Biographical information was collected for each of the 1,679 coaches who coached in Division I men's college basketball between 1954 and 2007. Quantitative analyses were conducted to evaluate the statistical relationships between five measures of coaching networks and success outcomes. These results were used to identify the relevant coaching networks to be evaluated in the qualitative phase of the study. Qualitative data was then collected from coaches within the selected coaching networks using semi-structured interviews. A total of 27 interviews were conducted overall, inclusive of interviews with three of the five coaching network patriarchs.

Results of the study indicated that leader reproduction is related to a balanced developmental process focused on human capital, social capital, and situational context, all wrapped in an umbrella of self awareness. Future leaders must develop knowledge, relationships, and the necessary skills and abilities to effectively lead. This development occurs through mentoring relationships, networking acumen, role modeling behavior, and experiential learning opportunities. In all five coaching networks studied, each of these elements played a role in an overall development cycle, with mentoring relationships and processes displaying an interactive quality with social networking, subsequently contributing to a variety of career outcomes for both the mentor and the protégé alike. Thematic classifications both within and across the five coaching networks emerged from the data analyses, enabling the development of a conceptual model that will be a useful framework for future research.

There are no known empirical studies that have examined characteristics of successful coaching networks and development systems. This study contributes to the sport management field by introducing an integrated perspective of the mentoring and social networking literature. There have been scant publications in sport management literature in social network analysis, and very limited application of the mentoring literature in sport management publications (e.g. Young, 1990; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999, 2002; Pastore, 2003). This study builds on Pastore's (2003) call to action in her Ziegler lecture to study mentoring in sport

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management, though it also takes it in a new direction by integrating social networking theory. Finally, this study not only extends both of these theoretical bases through its study of collegiate basketball coaching, but also enhances Day's (2001) perspectives on the distinctions between leader and leadership development. The study provides a new context for the evaluation of his distinction, introducing a linkage between mentoring and social networking that interactively contributes to the development of human capital (leader development) and social capital (leadership development).

From a practical standpoint, this study sheds light on coaching leadership in a way that could be valuable to existing as well as aspiring head basketball coaches, seeking to obtain jobs, enhance careers, and improve performance outcomes. It could also be valuable for presidents and athletic directors at colleges and universities that are spending large sums of compensation and benefits to attract successful head coaches. Outside of the sport context, there are many organizations that invest in formal mentoring and leadership development programs to groom the next generation of leaders. This study may help those organizations identify those individuals that have truly produced the high performers in the next generation of management, enabling a more direct investment in targeted future leaders.