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COACHES AND OFFICIALS

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Introduction

Despite the notable strides that have been made in terms of participation in sport, women continue to be underrepresented in sport leadership roles such as coaching and officiating. The 2014 United Nations (UN) International Working Group on Women's Sport (IWG) noted that: 'Women are significantly under-represented in management, administration, coaching and officiating, particularly at the higher levels' (IWG, 2014 p. 6). This statement, part of the Helsinki Declaration, was made in the context of how sport can support the UN Millennium Development Goals. Across today's sporting landscape, women's sport experiences typically occur in male-dominated contexts, which favour men and masculinity (Norman, 2016).

Recent data indicates the men to women ratio in high-performance coaching over the last four consecutive Olympic cycles has been approximately 10:1. Among US high school sporting officials, only 11% are women, and even a greater disparity exists with officiating sports traditionally played by men (Nordstrom, Warner, & Barnes, 2016). This data highlights a systemic absence of women in coaching and officiating leadership roles across sport. In this chapter we will discuss the impact this has on developing sport for women and girls. Specifically, this chapter aims to:

Provide an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of coaches and officials in women and girls sport delivery

Explore career development pathways for improving opportunities for women in coaching and officiating

Present a critical reflection of the differences and similarities between athlete development and coach/official development (systems and structures) for women and girls.

We begin by discussing the gendered nature of coaching before turning our attention to women's experiences in sport officiating. We draw on relevant literature throughout the chapter and identify issues and opportunities for further research. We conclude by providing practical actions and recommendations to help facilitate coaching and officiating development for women and girls.

The gendered nature of coaching

Regardless of the level of participation or performance, coaches play an influential role in an individual's sport experience. Beyond developing technical skills, coaches also play the role of mentors (Banks, 2006), managers and leaders (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004) and moral educators (Bergmann Drewe, 2000). Indeed, Becker (2009) argued that it is the coach's responsibility to tactically, physically, technically and psychologically train athletes and to consider their social wellbeing. Thus, it is a varied, demanding and powerful role that requires coaches to understand their athletes. Considering the influential nature of their role, combined with their position of power, Norman (2016) suggests that coaches are important social change agents with the opportunity to implement visions and values of equity, equality and inclusion. Within sport for development (SFD), Philips and Schulenkorf (2016) also identify coaches as change agents who may use sport to establish or facilitate engagement between individuals and communities that are socially, culturally or ethically divided.

However, coaches often draw on their personal athletic experience as an important source of knowledge (Blackett, Evans & Piggott, 2018). Thus, coaches may be reproducing the gender and social power discourse they have experienced. Coaches may transmit their notions about gender and try to discipline their athletes into those ideas (Claringbould, Knoppers, & Jacobs, 2015). This knowledge becomes generative, rather

than transformative, by athletes who later coach. For coaches to act as social change agents therefore requires the disruption of dominant gendered discourses within coaching.

Coach education

Anderson (2007) explains that coaches play a significant role in reproducing sport social exclusions, which results from how they are educated and developed. Some emerging research explores the gendering of coaching education (e.g. Norman, 2016). This work highlights that coach education materials emphasise differences between men and women athletes, often positioning men athletes as 'ideal' and women athletes as 'other'. As LaVoi, Becker and Maxwell (2007) explain, socially constructed differences have established men as the universal ideological norm and women as 'other'. This has been one of the most powerful techniques employed to maintain male hegemony in sport.

In general, coaching education tends to emphasise physical differences between men and women, predominantly because it is based on a biomedical framework that views gender as a physical binary (Alsarve, 2018; LaVoi, et al., 2007). De Haan and Knoppers (2019) discussed their observations in relation to a rowing coaching handbook chapter (O'Brien, n.d.). In line with the biomedical framework, content in the chapter focused on physical differentiation between the sexes such as anatomical differences, menstrual 'problems', osteoporosis, muscular strength and endurance. Identified issues also extended beyond physical issues and considered 'societal problems' specifically relating to family commitments, and 'emotional problems'. In their analysis, de Haan and Knoppers (2019) noted that no comparative chapters outlining 'men's issues' were observed, implying that men athletes do not experience societal or emotional problems, thereby reinforcing men as dominant and women as 'other'.

In sport for development (SFD) in general, a similar binary gender divide reinforces traditional masculinities and marginalises girls and women (Forde & Frisby, 2015). Research on SFD gender issues and coaching is lacking, but recently, researchers have begun examining women coaches' experiences. In low-income countries (LIC) (i.e.

countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America), collectively known as the Global South, women coaches were expected to adapt to masculine sport culture while retaining a traditional 'feminine' approach (Meier, 2015). An SFD study in the Caribbean found that a government coach training programme and sport governing body encouraged women coaches to change their clothing style and avoid 'manly' dressing (Schmidt Zipp, 2017). The concern was that these women coaches would be perceived as lesbians and be rejected in their communities. Research found that coaching education leaders directed coaches and trainees to conform to traditional gender norms (Schmidt Zipp, 2017).

As Philips and Schulenkorf (2016) discussed, coaching is diverse and multifaceted. Coaches may be full- or part-time, work in a specific sport or across multiple sports, and work with beginners or elite athletes. Thus, coach education is diverse. Norman (2016) investigated coaches' ideas about gender after their completion of a formal gender equity course. She found that although these coaches understood the influence of structural inequities, they continued to hold stereotypical hierarchical views of gender. LaVoi, et al. (2007) conducted a content analysis of best-selling books on coaching girls, and concluded that these texts were written from a perspective of inflated gender differences, and represented a simplified, stereotyped account of coaching girls.

Coach-athlete relationship

There is emerging evidence showing how different athletes respond to or receive coaching, and research that suggests gender can create power imbalances between (men) coaches and their (women) athletes, which in turn may impact on the coaching quality and style. To not consider gender within the coach-athlete relationship as involving more than just biological sex, to ignore the potential power imbalances between coach and athlete according to gender, or to ignore what it means to be a man or woman, removes the social actors within the relationship from the social context, thereby excluding the 'bigger picture' in which these individuals compete or coach (de Haan & Norman, 2018).

Norman and French (2013) found that gendered ideologies regarding women athletes' abilities and the views men coaches' subsequently held, negatively impacted the coach-athlete relationship. Women athletes want their relationship with their coach to be more power-equal, in which coaches communicate positively and understand who the athlete is – beyond the training or competition arena. This is salient to how they train and perform (Norman & French, 2013). Longshore and Sachs (2015) contend that women athletes will often request the rationale behind coaching decisions and will often want to be more involved with the decision making process than men athletes. Indeed, de Haan and Norman (2018) noted that women athletes believed their men coaches often felt threatened by their questions, a situation which could change the power dynamics within the relationship. A breakdown in communication has been identified as a contributing coach-athlete relationship failure for women (Kristiansen, et al., 2012).

In the SFD context, coaches who can act as mentors are vital for fostering positive development outcomes. Meier (2015) identified SFD coaches as 'in between' mentors. Unlike elite athletes who might inspire young SFD participants via media outlets, coaches who also act as mentors have regular interaction with their athlete mentees. This unique positioning can help them build close relationships with mentees while also demonstrating attainable skills and behaviours (Meier, 2015).

Developing women coaches

Despite research that has attempted to understand and explain why women coaches remain underrepresented – especially at elite levels – there are still no definite answers. The majority of advancements in women's access to sport over the last 40 years can be characterised as liberal feminism. Fundamentally, liberal feminism advocates women's greater sport involvement by opportunities to join existing institutions and structures (de Haan & Dumbell, 2019). For example, the passage of Title IX in 1972 offered women, among many other rights and protections, equal opportunity to participate in school-sponsored athletics (Yiamouyiannis & Osborne, 2012). Equality in sport has been focused on participation, with an anecdotal belief that with more women playing, there will be enough women willing and able for leadership roles (de Haan & Dumbell, 2019).

However, a causal link between participation and representation does not exist. Since Title IX passed, US women's high school sport participation has increased by more than 900%, yet the number of women in head coaching positions has decreased by 50% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2010).

Critics argue that adding women to existing masculine structures does little to challenge the gendered culture of sport. In the last decade, there has been an emerging body of research focusing on pathways, systems and structures to support and develop women coaches. Norman (2008) highlighted various UK sporting governing bodies' failures to provide adequate coach development and education for women due to the gendered culture. The result of the lack of support and infrastructure prevented women progressing their coaching career. Norman (2008) described this as a 'bottleneck' effect, whereby as women advance, they were excluded from positions of power. Greenhill, Auld, Cuskelly and Hooper (2009) noted similar cultural barriers in Australian sport organisations. Specifically, they noted that organisational strategies, prevailing hegemonic masculinity and systematic barriers sustained male coaching dominance and marginalisation of women coaches.

Focussing specifically on coaches' working conditions, Allen and Shaw (2013) concluded that organisational structures and values that facilitated quality interpersonal relationships, offered flexible working conditions, promoted continuous professional development and offered clear development pathways, contributed to women coaches feeling supported and valued and having enthusiasm for working for the organisation. Unfortunately, however, coaching pathways are not designed to facilitate progression to the highest echelons, creating a narrow bottleneck whereby the higher women coaches climb, the more constricted the pathways and opportunities become.

The SFD community has been calling for more opportunities for women in coaching since the Brighton Declaration in 1994 (IWG, 2014). Yet, the scarcity of women coaches remains (Zipp & Nauright, 2018; Meier, 2015). Even when women coaches are included in SFD programmes, they often face enormous pressure to balance their 'deviant' gender roles as coaches with traditional heterosexual feminine norms (Meier, 2015). The

presence of women coaches and coaches who promote positive gender attitudes can profoundly influence how participants engage with SFD programming.

Sport officiating

Similar to women coaches, women who attempt sport officiating also face many of these same pressures and career bottlenecks. Unlike coaches, though, there is a shortage of qualified referees, which could have a detrimental impact on the number and quality of sporting competitions. As a result, researchers have sought to identify the barriers to officiating and to address how to better recruit and retain officials (e.g. Ridinger, et al., 2017; Warner, Tingle, & Kellett, 2013). Furthermore, researchers have recognised that women may face additional barriers and understanding women's sport officiating experience is important (e.g. Nordstrom, Warner & Barnes, 2016; Schaeperkoetter, 2016; Tingle, Warner, & Sartore-Baldwin, 2014).

Much of the early work on sport officiating was focused on the psychological barriers and perceptions that keep individuals from entering and staying in the profession. Such psychological barriers were thought to keep individuals from positively viewing sport officiating as a way to extend one's athletic career. Specifically, the perceived stress and abuse from officiating has been assumed to deter individuals from seeking and continuing in a sport officiating career. While this is not surprising – given the amount of media attention that often follows a professional referee missing a call or the harsh remarks parents and fans direct at amateur youth sport referees – recent research has demonstrated these concerns only explain a small portion of why more individuals are not officiating.

Sport officials often reframe the fan abuse and do not consider it a factor that might lead them to consider leaving the role (Kellett & Shilbury, 2007). While abuse may inhibit some from initially entering into the sport officiating role, it has not been found to be a key factor in why officials choose to leave. Rather, researchers have suggested that umpires view it as serious leisure pursuit and recognise the stress and fan abuse as a part of the game (Phillips & Fairley, 2014). Consequently, researchers and sport managers have begun to

place a greater emphasis on both the on-the-field and off-the-field factors that are impacting officials. Because many sport officials view themselves as athletes, it is common for current officials to discover officiating as an avenue to remain involved in sport (Phillips & Fairley, 2014; Warner, et al., 2013). This has resulted in not just the psychological factors being identified and emphasised, but also the sociological and organisational factors (Ridinger, et al., 2017; Warner, et al., 2013). Viewing sport officiating as a leisure pursuit (not as an occupation or career) is important and has increased knowledge on how to better retain and recruit referees.

Arguably the most significant factor that has emerged from this officiating as a leisure pursuit perspective has been the value and importance placed on the sense of community among officials. That is, scholars have concluded that the community that is often among officials is fundamental to both officials' recruitment and retention. Officiating provides an avenue for individuals to stay connected to sport and remain involved with a strong community of interest (Warner, 2016). A burgeoning line of research continues to demonstrate that sport is one of the few remaining avenues in today's society where individuals can find and belong to community, which is fundamental to one's health and well-being (Warner, 2016; 2018).

Recognising this innate desire to be involved and a part of a community is vital to promoting sport officiating as a leisure pursuit or career path for those with an interest in sport. For example, the opportunity to stay a part of the sport and a love of the game have been found to be fundamental in the recruitment of new officials (Ridinger, et al., 2017; Warner, et al., 2013). Further, Kellett and Shilbury (2007) noted how the social worlds – often formed around reframing abuse – was central to an individual's decision to continue officiating. Rather than viewing fan abuse as a negative aspect of the job, sport officials accepted it as part of the job and emphasized more the socialising with other umpires as being key to their continuation.

Later work from Kellett and Warner (2011) more explicitly identified how these social worlds or officiating communities form. The researchers noted factors that both foster and inhibit a community from forming. Those factors included lack of administration consideration, inequity (specifically related to remuneration and resources), competition

and common interest (specifically in the sport, interactions within football community, and/or within social spaces), they impacted this sense of community that was deemed essential for officials to continue in profession.

Interestingly, both Kellett and Shilbury (2007) and Kellett and Warner's (2011) studies only included male umpires as research participants. When considering the lack of women sport officials, however, the importance placed on the social worlds and community likely explains why more women are not entering and staying in officiating. Although the research on sport officiating communities demonstrates why officials likely stay involved, it may also highlight why new officials – and women specifically – may be hesitant to join. Without an insider within the sport community willing to help someone new navigate the social worlds and understand the social protocols, it may be especially difficult for an individual to enter into and become a part of an existing sport officiating community. The majority of the research into the topic of sport officiating has continually emphasised the importance of a mentor encouraging someone to try refereeing and provides them access to the community. This is important to the recruitment of new officials and likely highly crucial to seeing more women officials enter into the officiating role.

Women referee experiences and workplace incivility

Although little research exists on women sport officials, the research that does exist is quite consistent. For example, in an autoethnographic study of a woman basketball official, the author concluded her 'femaleness' was a salient part of her officiating experiences (Schaeperkoetter, 2016). The author described instances where she was treated differently than her male counterparts and learned to deal with demeaning actions from players and coaches. She also highlighted the difficulty of trying to enter into the strong, already-bonded community of older, more experienced officials.

To give another example: a study of eight women basketball officials revealed these officials experienced a lack of mutual respect from male counterparts, encountered a perceived inequity of policies, a lack of role modelling and mentoring for and from women

officials, and experienced more gendered abuse than did their male counterparts (Tingle, et al., 2014). This gendered experience especially held true in sport traditionally considered male dominated sports. In a study involving eight US football officials, researchers reported:

all the participants noted that their officiating experiences were different than their male counterparts. These collective experiences were defined as gendered experiences ... the participants and data highlighted that the challenges, resistance and stereotypes were more subtle but nonetheless impactful on their experience. (Nordstrom, et al., 2016, p. 267)

Subtle, less overt discrimination has been defined as workplace incivility, and sport researchers have highlighted that this workplace incivility is being perceived and experienced by women sport officials. Clearly, if more women are going to enter into officiating and be retained in the role, it is vital that they be encouraged to do so, that they have a mentor and a welcoming community, and that they enter into a more civil environment.

Sport development (SD), sport for development (SFD) and officials

Because officiating can be an extension of an athlete's career, research has helped to understand the officiating experience via an SD lens. Warner, et al.'s (2013) work used the SD framework (Green, 2005) to demonstrate referee recruitment, retention, and advancement. At the referee recruitment stage, staying part of the game, and the competition and challenge of refereeing were on-the-field attractors, while the remuneration and socialisation in the community were the off-the-field factors that attracted officials. Again, this last factor – socialisation in the community – likely explains why few women are involved in sport officiating.

An initial first step to remedy the lack of women sport officials would be to place more emphasis on the recruitment of referees. Given the promising and steady growth of women's sport participation, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on targeting these women athletes as future potential referees. Because sport officiating is a great way to

extend one's athletic career and provides an avenue to fine-tune and master athletic skills, ideally more women athletes would be pursuing it. Considering sport officiating as a part of SD – i.e. a way to further progress and advance one's athletic career – should encourage more to enter the role.

Further, in terms of SD, youth-level referees and umpires are fundamental to sport systems and athlete development. At the youth level specifically, sport officiating can provide direct guidance and coaching that can help ensure an athlete understands and advances in the sport. For example, if a young basketball player dribbles, picks up the ball, then dribbles again, a referee will typically just deal with the infraction immediately. A high-level, well-trained basketball official, on the other hand, will recognise this as a teaching and coaching opportunity. Instead of simply dealing with the issue, they might blow the whistle, briefly stop the game to explain to the young player that when he or she stopped dribbling and picked up the ball they must pass or shoot. They would go on to explain that if they dribble again, it is called a 'double dribble' and the other team will get the ball. It may seem simple and straightforward, but a well-trained basketball official can have a huge impact on SD systems and, as a result, also on young players' retention in the sport.

Sport officials also can have an important impact in SFD. Because the goal of SFD is to use sport as a tool to bring about positive change, sport officials can play a role in supporting such outcomes. To give an example, an SFD programme may have a goal of promoting peace or positive social behaviour among its participants. In an intense contest, tempers can flare, and play can become more aggressive. A well-trained sport official would recognise this and do his or her best make calls that would steer players towards less aggressive play to aid in diffusing the situation. A high-level sport official has the ability to stay calm and redirect negative behaviour. For SFD programmes that place an emphasis on gender equity and improving diversity, sporting officials who are from minority groups can have an immediate positive impact; having an underrepresented individual – i.e. a woman in sport – in a power and authoritarian role, such as that of a sport official, can send an important message to participants. Furthermore, minority or underrepresented sport officials can – and should – be important role models to have

involved SFD programmes. If sport is for all, those in power should be reflective of all individuals, regardless of gender. Thus, the role that sport officials play in both SD and SFD should not be overlooked.

Summary

Sport has long been male dominated. Women athletes, coaches, officials and leaders have to navigate their careers within organisational structures that have been built by men for men. Coach education, practices and methods have primarily been developed by men coaches for men athletes. While women's sport access and participation are increasing, women remain underrepresented in leadership roles like coaching and officiating. For sport officials, we are only beginning to recognize that the global shortage of referees is likely due to the oversight of women and women's sport.

The current inequality in sport indicates there are improvement opportunities. Organisations can develop structures and values that can help improve the recruitment and retention of women coaches and officials. Coach educators can develop resources that better support the needs of individual athletes. Better marketing and an improved understanding of the potential barriers keeping women from entering and seeing officiating as a viable career path are fundamental. A better understanding of the importance placed on the social worlds and community in officiating is key as women are reporting that this lack of community is fundamental to their decision to leave the profession. While women may face additional barriers, sport managers must continue to recruit men and women officials and provide an environment that can better retain all officials. Everyone should look beyond the intended behaviours or outcomes of coaching and officiating and focus on critiquing the gendered context. Our sport systems depend on this, and SD and SFD programmes will benefit from a more diverse pool of qualified coaches and referees.

CASE STUDY

UEFA Women's EURO

Most advancements in women's sport over the last 40 years can be characterized as liberal feminism, but the 'just add women' approach does not challenge the male hegemonic structure. Women's football is an example. In 2017, the UEFA Women's EURO attracted a record audience (over 13 million) and became the host nation's most watched sports event that year. Of the 16 participating nations, six were led by women, including tournament champions The Netherlands, and all 33 officials involved were women. Within the global context of women's football, numerous nations have won the Olympics, World Cup and Euros since 2000 and all but one of these winning teams were coached by women. Numerically this reads like a success story.

However, the number of women coaches and officials in men's football is miniscule and despite successes in women's football, these women coaches and officials routinely report experiencing discrimination, marginalisation, and injustices. This limits not only their own career retention and progression, but the career trajectory of other women, and the game in general.

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