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I, Cynthia M Veraldo , hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Urban Educational Leadership.

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Career Experiences and Intentions of Women in Senior Level Intercollegiate

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Abstract

Women are underrepresented in the most senior level administrative positions in intercollegiate athletics. This qualitative study is an analysis of the professional lives of nine women who hold Senior Associate AD positions in Division I intercollegiate athletics. They were interviewed about their career experiences and their intentions to pursue the athletic director position. Their experiences were examined for the persistence of previously identified structural barriers to advancement and predictions were made about their intentions to pursue the athletic director position using the theory of planned behavior (TPB). The findings suggest structural barriers do persist which prevent them from obtaining the position of athletic director, however, they are very aware of the structural barriers and are actively breaking down those barriers to get the experiences they need to obtain an athletic director position. When applying TPB, predictions were made that five of the nine will likely not pursue the role of athletic director. These conclusions indicate women are partially contributing to their own underrepresentation. However, implementing strategies that cultivate and value women's experiences would go a long way to equalizing the hegemonic male environment of intercollegiate athletics and decrease underrepresentation of women in the most senior level position in athletic administration.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Intercollegiate athletics is a prominent feature of American higher education. Athletic leadership in higher education is critical not only to college sport, but to the university as a whole. Many universities are extremely dependent on the success of their athletic teams to attract prospective students and appeal to generous alumni and the local business sector for financial support. The leadership of the athletic director (AD) is essential in cultivating success and being an ambassador for the university. Over the course of the last 40 years, men have increasingly dominated senior level leadership in college athletics. Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in educational programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance (Title IX of the Educational Amendments, 1972). This important legislation has helped to increase girls' and women's participation opportunities in education and athletics; however, it has not prevented sex discrimination in leadership roles in intercollegiate sport.

Prior to 1972, the year Title IX was legislated, about 15% of intercollegiate athletes were women (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). In the 2010 – 2011 academic school year, that percentage significantly increased to women representing 42% of intercollegiate athletes at all three Divisions of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (NCAA, 2012b). Conversely, women led 90% of women's programs before Title IX was implemented (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). In the 2010-2011 academic year, women represented only 19.4% of ADs at all three Divisions of the NCAA, and at the Division I level specifically, women represented only 8.7% of the ADs (Irick, 2011). According to these statistics, as the participation rates of women athletes have increased, the percentage of women in leadership roles (particularly the AD position) within intercollegiate athletics has decreased. The overarching purpose of this research is to

investigate the underrepresentation of women in the most senior level leadership position (AD) in intercollegiate athletics.

Background of the Study

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the early development of intercollegiate athletics and the inception of the AD position to establish an understanding of how intercollegiate sport was organized by men and for the interests of men. The chapter goes on to provide an explanation of how women became involved in intercollegiate athletics, how Title IX of the Educational Amendments affected their participation and leadership, and some examples of efforts to improve women's opportunities and leadership development. To introduce the purposes and research questions, the chapter presents a discussion of previous research on women's intercollegiate athletic career experiences, findings on the persistence of structural barriers to women's career advancement, and related research on factors influence career choices and intentions. Furthermore, the chapter provides a brief overview of how the research questions will be answered through methods and data analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the significance of the study and a glossary of terms.

The foundation of intercollegiate athletics. The first intercollegiate competition was a rowing regatta between Harvard and Yale in 1852 (Smith, 2000). At first, sporting practices in higher education did not spread rapidly. The early university did not embrace athletics and actually restricted sport and recreation because it was seen as frivolous; it detracted from the intellectual and work oriented environment for higher learning (Chu, 1985). Eventually, gains in medical science began to link physical health with mental, moral, and spiritual improvement. In England in 1850, Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes, avid scholars and Christian Socialists, coined the term "Muscular Christianity" to connect the ideas of religion, morality, intellect, and

sport (Watson, Weir, & Friend, 2005). Their novels became popular in America, which further promoted the idea of the importance of physical fitness for spiritual and mental growth. Thomas Hughes' classic, *Tom Brown's School Days* published in 1857, was a popular book that promoted the ideals of Christian manliness (Rader, 1983). Kingsley and Hughes' ideas influenced the creation and growth of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in America as well as college and university acceptance of the idea of Muscular Christianity (Watson et al., 2005).

By the end of the nineteenth century, universities and colleges including Harvard, Brown, Dartmouth, Princeton, and Amherst formed a league to play baseball, which eventually led to the founding of one of the first sport governing associations – the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). At the same time baseball grew in popularity, the sport of football also increased in popularity. The first match between colleges was in 1869 - Princeton versus Rutgers (Flowers, 2009). College football became a consumable phenomenon; “it helped reorganize American colleges and universities into institutions controlled by alumni in the service of class socialization and character-building at the expense of academics” (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993, p. 169). Initially intercollegiate athletic teams were organized and supported by undergraduate students. However, because of the rapid growth and popularity of college sport, wealthy alumni and university administrators saw the earning power, as well as marketing potential to attract students. By 1890, administrators and alumni took over control of intercollegiate sport from students and more fully incorporated it into the university.

More detail on the growth of intercollegiate athletics is provided in the next section on the development of the position of AD and also in Chapter Two to support the theoretical framework of the study.

The inception of the position of athletic director. Early accounts of the position of AD are described by Carl Voltmer's (1935) text titled *A Brief History of the Intercollegiate Conference of Faculty Representatives: With Special Consideration of Athletic Problems*. Although dated, Voltmer provides exceptional evidence of increased university control of intercollegiate athletics through minutes of conference meetings, AD meetings, visits to universities, interviews with university presidents, athletic publications, sports yearbooks, student papers, newspapers, and magazines of the time.

In 1895, the Intercollegiate Conference of Faculty Representatives (ICFR) formed to discuss regulation and control of intercollegiate athletics. Amos Alonzo Stagg represented the University of Chicago as AD as well as a faculty member of the physical education department. It was not universal practice at the time to have a full-time AD with recognized faculty rank (Voltmer, 1935). In fact, it was not practice at the time to have a full time AD at all; students, and then eventually alumni, managed intercollegiate athletics. "Faculty indifference gave the athletic management to interested students. As time passed, the carry-over of this system and the interest of the general graduate body produced strong alumni influence" (Voltmer, 1935). Until about the late 1880s, undergraduates selected, coached, trained, organized and financed football squads through fund drives and donations to support the teams (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). During the 1890s and first part of the twentieth century, alumni associations became increasingly influential in fundraising, governance, management, and promotion of college athletics, particularly football.

From the 1890s to- 1905, football became increasingly more violent. There was little rule enforcement, and numerous other athletic problems arose such recruiting violations and the use of illegal players. The ICFR convened to generate rules and regulations that would provide

guidance on governing intercollegiate sport. One of the conference's first accomplishments was creating rules for individual university athletic committees and boards of control to govern their own athletic issues and problems. During this time, interest in intercollegiate sport continued to grow, especially in the sport of football. The early self-governing process seemed sufficient until 1905, when numerous deaths resulted in college football. President Theodore Roosevelt met with Ivy League institutions and mandated football reform. The mandate led to representatives from 62 institutions to form the Athletic Association of the United States (AAUS), which in 1910 became the NCAA (Mitten, Musselman, & Burton, 2009). Faculty and alumni continued to manage intercollegiate athletics at their own universities, but the NCAA became the national governing board to create and enforce rules across institutions.

College sport continued to grow between 1900 and 1914 with alumni and faculty continuing to administer intercollegiate athletics. However, with the escalation of global tension, university physical education programs and intercollegiate athletics teams became training grounds for preparing future soldiers. World War I eventually took a toll on intercollegiate athletics because many of the athletes left for military service.

In 1918, the Students Army Training Corps (SATC) were organized on the university campuses. . . . The SATC practically put the war department in control of intercollegiate (athletics). . . . By action of September 26, 1918, the Conference (NCAA) suspended control 'for the duration' to the war department. (Voltmer, 1935, p. 28)

After the war, the NCAA took on a significant effort in convincing its member institutions and public school systems that sport and physical education was necessary for students (Crowley, 2006). There was a link in the minds of many between physical education, sport, and military preparedness. Between 1919 and 1921, 17 states adopted a physical

education curriculum in secondary schools; by 1930 that number had grown to 36 states (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). At the same time, the NCAA took on an initiative requiring all of its member institutions to have programs in “Physical Training and Athletics” and to be recognized as departments of collegiate instruction (Crowley, 2006, p.24). Physical education and intercollegiate athletic departments evolved together on college campuses.

The rapid development of physical education programs as well as the growth of the athletic department led to an increased need for a chief administrator to lead and manage coaches, athletes, facilities, and finances. The chief administrator of the athletic department came to be known as the AD. The position was uncommon until the rapid growth of physical education and intercollegiate athletics in the very early 1920s. Many of the early ADs were either head coaches or instructors of physical education or both before the position became singular in nature.

In the 1920s, the responsibilities of the AD position rapidly expanded due to the construction of stadiums to attract and accommodate large crowds for football. At the same time, field houses were constructed to provide arenas for multiple sport competition such as track and field, gymnastics, swimming, basketball, and wrestling. Baseball fields, tennis courts, golf courses, and ice rinks were also being constructed for intercollegiate athletic competition. The NCAA began sanctioning championship events in 1921 with track and field and in 1924 with swimming. At the same time NCAA championships grew in prominence, so too did the media exposure of intercollegiate sport. The first radio broadcast of a college football game took place in October 1922 between Princeton and Chicago (Blackwell, 1922). From 1922 to 1929, radio sales in the U.S. grew from \$60 million to \$842.5 million, and much of the growth was due to coverage of college sports (Crowley, 2006). ADs quickly had to become budget experts, have

knowledge in facility construction and development, and understand various aspects of the media. Because men's sports were administered by men for men, women did not obtain experience in these realms of intercollegiate athletic leadership until much later.

The growth in competition, media coverage, and commercialization also led to an increase in ethical concerns about intercollegiate athletics. In 1929, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching delivered a report to the NCAA that criticized university and faculty control of intercollegiate athletics (Smith, 2000). The report criticized universities for questionable recruitment strategies that may not have had the athletes' best interest in mind. There were criticisms that alumni and private donors were illegally subsidizing teams. Sportsmanship was becoming less of a priority. There were questions about teams playing athletes who may not have been eligible. The principals of amateurism, which the NCAA was founded upon, seemed to be forgotten, and the health and safety of athletes was a real concern. Throughout the 1930s the NCAA, its member institutions, and ADs worked to address these criticisms.

After World War II and into the 1950s, higher education experienced extreme growth in student access due to increased government assistance and the GI Bill, which helped veterans pay for and earn a college education. At the same time student populations grew at colleges and universities, the invention of the television further promoted exposure and commercialization of men's intercollegiate sport. Stadiums were filling up with more spectators and television put the most competitive and powerful programs in the spotlight. Intercollegiate athletics became a significant source of revenue for colleges and universities. Money associated with winning programs and lucrative television contracts became a central focus for ADs and athletic departments. Along with increased exposure and the possibility of additional revenue came

escalating scandal associated with intercollegiate athletics. There were allegations at various institutions of illegal recruitment, gambling, and other rule violations. University presidents and ADs were confronted with the challenge of increasing institutional control, and the NCAA became more of an authority in the area of governance, rule enforcement, and compliance. By 1976, the NCAA had authority to penalize schools directly for rule violations (Smith, 2000). Management, public relations, and financial considerations grew as high priority leadership responsibilities for the AD.

Through the 1970s, most men and women's athletic departments were separate. After Title IX of the Education Amendments was passed in 1972, the role of both men and women ADs changed. When the NCAA took control of governing women's intercollegiate sport from the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) in the 1981-82 academic year, 74,239 women competed in intercollegiate athletics; that number grew to 193,232 in 2010-2011 (NCAA, 2012b). At the same time opportunities for women in athletics increased, men's participation in athletics also increased. In 1981-1982, 169,800 men participated in NCAA sports and that number grew to 256,344 in 2010-2011 (NCAA, 2012b). Therefore, not only were athletic departments becoming larger and providing more opportunity for women and men, the AD needed to make sure opportunities for men and women complied with Title IX legislation. ADs need to be sure there was no discrimination among the teams on the basis of sex. Participation opportunities for men and women either needed to be proportionate to their universities undergraduate enrollment, or they had to show a practice of continued expansion for the underrepresented sex, or they needed to prove they were fully accommodating the interests of the underrepresented sex.

When men and women's athletic programs merged on college campuses, most athletic departments retained the staff administered men's sports (almost entirely men) and laid off the women administrators (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). However, to aid with the merging of women's intercollegiate athletics into the athletic department, the NCAA designated a Primary Woman Administrator (PWA) at member institutions (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). In the 1991-1992 academic year, the NCAA changed the PWA designation to the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA). Due to the creation of the SWA position, women did have a voice in senior level leadership of the athletic department; however, they remain vastly underrepresented in the ultimate position of AD (Tiell & Dixon, 2008).

The following section provides information on the early experiences and growth of women's intercollegiate athletics followed by a section which discusses Title IX of the Educational Amendments and the consolidation of men's and women's sports on college campuses.

The rise of women in intercollegiate athletics. In 1885, the Association for the Advancement of Physical Education (AAPE), now called the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD) formed to promote physical education in colleges and universities. In 1891, James Naismith invented the game of basketball, and less than a year later, Senda Berenson introduced the game to the women of Smith College (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). In the late 1880s and early 1890s, women's participation in athletics continued to grow, particularly at the all-women's colleges like Smith College, Vassar College, and Wellesley College.

Early intercollegiate athletic competition for women was not face-to-face competition like it was for the men. In the 1920s, women's college sport took one of two approaches; the

telegraph approach, where women would simply perform the sport, usually archery or rifle, and telegraph their scores to the opponent and a neutral site (Crowley, 2006). The other, more popular approach was *play-days*. Women from several institutions would gather on one day to play basketball, volleyball, baseball, track and field, and other sports. Teams were comprised of a mix of individuals from the various universities so competition was friendly and the importance of winning was minimized. There was no emphasis on practice or preparation; the days were organized for physical fitness and socializing (Crowley, 2006). By 1951, 28% of schools reported intercollegiate athletic activities for women and 70% reported play-days were the main form of athletics for women (Crowley, 2006).

Although participation rates for women continued to grow, in 1923, 93% of physical educators still opposed intercollegiate sport for women (Messner, 1994). In fact, Mabel Lee, the first woman President of the American Physical Education Association, firmly opposed women's athletics following in the footsteps of men's programs (Crowley, 2006). Mabel Lee, the physical educators, and the Women's Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation took a firm stance against the highly competitive, commercial nature of sport for women and instead they promoted sportsmanship and enjoyment for women in sport.

Despite this opposition, women's intercollegiate sport gradually took on similar characteristics of men's sport. Eventually, *sport-days* became a popular means for women to express their athletic talents. Sport-days differed from play-days in two main ways: 1) women from the same school competed against women from other schools, and 2) women were often coached by women physical educators who volunteered their time to provide these opportunities for women (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). By this time, competition intensified and began to more closely resemble intercollegiate athletics for men.

In 1963, the Division for Girls and Women's Sports (DGWS) recognized and accepted intercollegiate varsity competition for highly skilled women (Crowley, 2006). In 1964 the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which had been the official governing body of men's intercollegiate sport since 1905, convened a special session to discuss its intentions in relation to women's sports. This is significant because, at this time, women's sports had become much more competitive and began to more closely resemble men's sports in form, rules, and regulations. In 1965, the DGWS created the Commission on Intercollegiate Sports for Women (CISW), which later became the Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (CIAW) to develop guidelines for intercollegiate athletics events and championships (Crowley, 2006). Two years later, intercollegiate championships were held for women in the sports of gymnastics, track and field, swimming, badminton, and volleyball. The expansion of championship competition for women led to increases in participation and the need for a national organization that embraced an intercollegiate model could expand participation opportunities and incorporate institutional memberships.

In 1971, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) was created to incorporate an intercollegiate model, expand participation opportunities, and incorporate institutional memberships for women's athletics (Ware, 2007). The creation of this organization was significant because it meant women could continue to grow and administer their own sporting experiences without the influence of a sport governing body dominated by men. Women had been successful in this endeavor for over 72 years and that momentum would continue. A few months after the formation of the AIAW, Congresswoman Edith Green of Tennessee and Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana proposed legislation focusing on gender discrimination and gender equity in education - Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act

1972. This historically significant piece of legislation provided countless opportunities for girls in education and athletics. Title IX and the consolidation of men's and women's programs are discussed in a forthcoming section of Chapter One.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the AIAW provided strong leadership and positively impacted opportunity for girls and women in sports. In the 1980-81 academic year, the NCAA took over control of women's intercollegiate athletics, and men's and women's athletic programs merged on most college campuses. Women's sports, formerly and almost entirely administered and coached by women, were consolidated with men's programs. In the merge, men assumed the position of head AD, and women were relegated to associate or assistant roles in administration and assigned as assistants in coaching (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005).

Title IX and the consolidation of men's and women's athletics. "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 an education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (Title IX of the Educational Amendments, 1972). This legislation mandates equitable opportunities for both men and women in educational institutions that receive public funding from the federal government. Interscholastic and intercollegiate athletic opportunities are provided in publicly funded educational institutions and thus are covered under this legislation. Opportunities for women in education undoubtedly grew because of Title IX; however, girl's and women's athletics became the most prominent beneficiary (Ware, 2007). Now, about 42% of the athletes competing in all three Divisions of the NCAA are women (NCAA, 2012b) as compared to 15% when Title IX was first implemented (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005).

After Title IX passed on June 23, 1972, women's sports flourished under the leadership of the AIAW. Nonetheless, there was tension about whether or not women should have the benefit of financial aid for athletic participation like men. The DGWS had a long-standing belief that athletic scholarships were a source of abuse and exploitation (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). Many members of the AIAW initially agreed with this position; however, when polled by the organization, 80 percent supported a change in the DGWS's policy on financial aid for women athletes and wanted the authority to award athletic scholarships (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005).

In March, 1973, the DGWS revised its philosophical statement on granting athletic scholarships and recommended the following summarized guidelines: a) athletic programs should be offered to enrich the lives of the participants, b) adequate funding for the entire program (e.g. offering a variety of sports, adequate travel needs, appropriate food and lodging, competent officials and coaches, and safe equipment and facilities) should receive priority over granting athletic scholarships, c) schools should focus on educating the participants rather than exploiting for athletic talent, d) coaches should devote time to developing the entire program rather than recruitment of athletes, e) students should be encouraged to choose a university based on the education it provides rather than the athletic scholarship, f) particular sports should not be favored in granting athletic awards, and g) participants should be encouraged to participate in sports for reasons other than financial assistance (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). These guidelines were very ambitious, but were pointedly antagonistic to the men's model of athletic financial assistance, and they demonstrate differences in the way women led in intercollegiate athletics.

Title IX caused the NCAA to become uncertain about whether or not they could continue to restrict opportunities for men student-athlete participation only. Would women demand to participate on men's teams? Numerous questions and concerns triggered the NCAA to respond

to Title IX. In 1974, one of the first attempts was the association's effort to convince the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), the appointed body to oversee compliance to Title IX, to exclude athletics entirely from Title IX. That effort failed. Later the same year, the NCAA took action to try to protect the revenue generating sports from mandatory compliance to Title IX. Together the NCAA and Senator John Tower of Texas drafted the Tower Amendment, which called for provisions to Title IX that would have revenue producing sports like football, men's basketball, and baseball be excluded from compliance to Title IX. The amendment failed. In continuing the effort to protect the revenue producing sports, the NCAA and Senator Jacob Javits of New York drafted the Javits Amendment which essentially added provisions to Title IX that recognized higher equipment and uniform costs, more officials, etc., and those differences should not signify inconsistency of support that would trigger a Title IX compliance problem (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). This amendment passed.

In 1975, the NCAA fought further to protect revenue producing sports and pushed a bill proposed "any revenue generated by a sport could be used first to offset any expenses of the generating sport before being shared with any other part of the athletic program's budget or other sport" (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005, p. 194). This bill did not pass. All of these efforts were conducted to preserve and protect men's intercollegiate athletics.

At this point and continuing until 1978, HEW grappled with how institutional compliance would be assessed and enforced. Finally, in 1978, all colleges and universities were required to be in compliance with Title IX and then in 1979, the three-prong test for determining compliance was introduced (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). A school must meet one of the following three prongs to achieve compliance:

1. Participation opportunities for male and female students at the institution are "substantially proportionate" to their respective full- time undergraduate enrollments
2. The institution has a "history and continuing practice of program expansion" for the underrepresented sex
3. The institution is "fully and effectively" accommodating the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex. (Reynolds, 2003, p.1)

If an educational institution is not in compliance with Title IX, the penalty is withdrawal of federal funds. It should be noted, however, federal funds have never been withdrawn regardless of estimates that 80 to 90 percent of all educational institutions are still not in compliance with Title IX (Women's Sports Foundation, 2011). When schools are not in compliance, the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR), who took over enforcement of Title IX from HEW in 1990, typically finds the institution in conditional compliance with plans to address the identified problems (Women's Sports Foundation, 2011). Lack of true enforcement for non-compliance to Title IX is likely one reason why gender equity has not been fully realized.

When mandatory compliance to Title IX was implemented, individual institutions became more uncertain of whether or not they could provide equitable opportunities for men and women under two separate associations (AIAW and NCAA). At the same time, the NCAA determined it would be in their best interest to control women's athletics. In the 1980-81 academic year, the NCAA took over control of women's intercollegiate athletics and was able to block the AIAW's access to national championship financial resources contributing to the demise of the AIAW (Crowley, 2006). At the time, "the AIAW offered 41 national championships in 19 sports to over 6,000 teams in 960 member colleges and universities"

(Carpenter & Acosta, 2005, p. 107). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the NAGWS and the AIAW provided strong leadership and positively influenced opportunity for girls and women in sports.

As the NCAA took control of the AIAW, men and women's athletic programs merged on most college campuses. Women's sports, formerly and almost entirely administered and coached by women, were taken over by men. The merge facilitated men assuming the position of head AD, and women were relegated to associate or assistant roles in administration and assigned as assistants in coaching (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005). Men began to realize coaching and administering women's sports was a viable career opportunity and they were given those opportunities by men ADs. Women were gradually pushed out of the head coaching and administrative positions and continue to be underrepresented in those roles.

In 1972, a year after the AIAW was created and the year Title IX was passed, 90 percent of head ADs and coaches of women's programs were women; since 1980, the percentage of women head ADs in all three Divisions of the NCAA has lingered between 15% and 21% (Claussen & Lehr, 2002). This percentage of women head ADs seems disproportionate to the 42% of athletes participating in all three Divisions of the NCAA today (NCAA, 2011). In 2013, only one Division I university maintains separate programs for men and women, The University of Texas at Austin.

In 1981, at the time of the merger, the NCAA created the position of PWA to be implemented at membership institutions to assist in the merging of men's and women's athletics as well as to ensure continued representation of women in athletic department activities and administration (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Throughout the 1980s, both men's and women's participation rates in intercollegiate athletics continued to expand. Athletic

departments grew, and there was a need to examine the role and tasks of the PWA. In 1990, the PWA designation was changed to SWA recommended by a Gender Equity Task Force under the supervision of the Committee on Women's Athletics in the NCAA (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). A formal definition of the SWA states:

An institutional senior woman administrator is the highest-ranking female involved with the management of the institution's intercollegiate athletics program. An institution with a female director of athletics may designate a different female involved with the management of the intercollegiate program as a fifth representative to the NCAA governance system. (NCAA, 1991, brochure)

In addition to the SWA appointments on college campuses, the NCAA appointed its first President of women memberships, Judith Sweet, in 1991. Sweet had been the head AD at the University of San Diego since 1972, when she became the first woman to oversee a combined athletics program (Crowley, 2006). Sweet played a major role in overseeing the implementation of the SWA at membership institutions. Additionally, there have been numerous efforts to enhance women's leadership development and professional opportunities. The next section discusses some of those efforts.

Efforts to enhance women's leadership and opportunities. The percentage of women administrators remains low despite numerous efforts to enhance leadership opportunities for women, thus creating a gender gap in senior levels of leadership in intercollegiate athletics. In 1981, when women's and men's programs merged in most athletic departments across the country, the NCAA created the position of Primary Woman Administrator (PWA) to be implemented at membership institutions to assist with the merge as well as to ensure continued representation of women in athletic department activities and administration (Claussen & Lehr,

2002; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). In 1990, the NCAA changed the PWA designation to Senior Woman Administrator (SWA).

According to the NCAA, the purpose in creating the position of SWA was to ensure females were involved in meaningful ways in athletics department decision-making, and to ensure women's interests were represented at all levels of intercollegiate athletics – campus, conference, and national. (Claussen & Lehr, 2002, p. 215)

The NCAA also displayed a genuine interest in women's leadership when, in 1997, the Committee on Women's Athletics and the NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee proposed and implemented the Fellows Leadership Development Program. The objective of this program was to expand the employment and leadership opportunities for ethnic minorities and women at the senior administration level of intercollegiate athletics (NCAA, 2011). In 2002, the NCAA collaborated with the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletics Administrators (NACWAA) to prepare senior ranking women in Division I for positions as ADs or conference commissioners. Initially, the focus was on Division I because it contained the smallest number of women senior level administrators and ADs; however, from the beginning, the program has been open to women of all three Divisions of the NCAA (NACWAA, 2010).

The NCAA co-sponsors a level one *Administrative Advancement* and level two *Leadership Enhancement* program with the NACWAA to advance the professional development opportunities for women in athletic administration. Furthermore, in 2010 under the direction of NCAA President Mark Emmert, the Association restructured its gender and minority issues under a new effort titled the *Inclusion Initiative* (Brown, 2010). The new initiative focuses less on leadership development of women and minorities and more on creating policies and practices

for improved climates for diversity and inclusion within the national office and more specifically at member institutions. This new initiative is still in the early stages; however, regardless of previous efforts to increase opportunities and enhance leadership development for women in intercollegiate athletics, numbers remain abysmal, particularly at the Division I level.

To introduce the purposes and research questions in the study, the following sections provide a discussion of previous research on women's intercollegiate athletic career experiences, findings on the persistence of structural barriers to women's career advancement, and related research on factors influence career choices and intentions.

General Findings from Previous Research

Previous research indicates multiple reasons explaining the lack of women in senior levels of administration in intercollegiate athletics. In 1988, Acosta and Carpenter (1994) surveyed over 240 men and women intercollegiate athletic administrators about the perceived causes for the lack of women in athletic administration.

The top five factors perceived by women were:

1. The success of the "old-boys-club" network.
2. The failure of the "old-girls-club" network.
3. The lack of support systems for females.
4. (tie) Unconscious discrimination in selection and hiring process.
4. (tie) Females burn out and retire from coaching and administration earlier than males. (p. 117)

The top five perceived factors by men were:

1. The lack of qualified female coaches.
2. The failure of females to apply for job openings.

3. The lack of qualified female administrators.
4. (tie) Time constraints placed on females due to family duties.
4. (tie) Females' earlier burnout and retirement from coaching and administration.

(p. 117)

It is interesting to note, women perceived the actions and behaviors of others to have kept them out of athletic administration, and men perceived the actions and behaviors of the women themselves are the reason they are underrepresented in administrative roles.

Later, Coakley (2001) compiled a list of reasons for underrepresentation of women in athletics administration based on the research of others conducted between 1996 and 1999. The research is summarized in the following list:

- Men are well connected to other men in sport organizations, which help in the job search and hiring process.
- Women do not have the strategic professional connections to compete with male candidates.
- Search committees use subjective evaluation methods, which may stereotype women as being less qualified than men.
- There is a need for more support systems and professional development opportunities for women.
- Women perceive athletic departments have corporate cultures that are closed to different ways of thinking and leading in sport.
- Sport organizations are not organized to be sensitive to family responsibilities.
- Women feel they are judged to more rigid standards and are likely to experience sexual harassment more than men. (p. 219)

The lists compiled by Acosta and Carpenter (1994) and Coakley (2001) are strikingly similar. Both studies found women seem to lack the connections and networks that men have in intercollegiate athletics. Women are likely to face conscious and/or unconscious discrimination in the hiring process particularly related to their perceived qualifications and ways of leading. The intercollegiate athletic environment is not conducive to family commitments, and women lack enough support systems and professional development opportunities.

Pastore, Inglis, and Danylchuk (1996) surveyed both men and women athletic administrators in the United States and Canada to investigate factors that are important in retaining men and women in administration. They found both men and women rate *Work Balance and Conditions* as either high or moderately high in importance; however, this was an area that was not fulfilled in their current jobs. Both men and women value an environment that is *Inclusive*. In fact women rated this factor to have the greatest importance; however, men indicated they were more fulfilled in this construct than women. The results of the Pastore, et al. (1996) study indicate that in order to retain administrators, particularly women administrators, universities need to work on creating athletic department environments that are inclusive and free of stereotyping and discrimination. Additionally, work balance and conditions are important for the retention of women in athletic administration.

Some of the more recent research has focused specifically on the experiences of the SWA because the position is designated as the highest-ranking woman administrator in an intercollegiate athletic department. Claussen and Lehr (2002) found SWAs perform essentially the same roles and functions as men athletic administrators; however, they mostly perform those roles and functions on an advisory level, rather than a true decision-making level. Division I SWAs seem to have more decision-making authority than their Division II or III colleagues.

Both Claussen and Lehr (2002) and Tiell and Dixon (2008) found the roles and tasks performed least by SWAs were in the business aspects of the department including fundraising, marketing, and budget management, particularly at the Division II and III level. Tiell and Dixon (2008) also found women tend to perform communal roles, which are thought to conform to more feminine norms (e.g. nurturing, mentoring, and role modeling), than agentic roles, which are thought to be more masculine (e.g. allocating resources, strategic decision-making, and disciplining).

Hoffman (2010) discovered the role of SWA actually presents dilemmas for women in athletic administration. She found that because the SWA is a designated role for a woman, other women might be overlooked for additional positions in senior management in athletics. The SWA would be the only woman administrator, thus exacerbating underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration. The SWA often oversees academics or compliance and women's teams, but rarely oversees men's high profile teams or the financial arms of the department (e.g. marketing, business office, fundraising, etc.) (Hoffman, 2010). She also confirmed the SWA performs roles associated with more feminine roles such as mentoring and advocacy, those not seen as valuable as the more decision-making roles. Lack of decision-making authority in the financial arm and high profile team sports may prohibit SWAs from advancing into the position of head AD (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2010; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Rather than increasing opportunities for women and ensuring their representation in meaningful ways in the athletic department, the position of SWA may serve as an advisory role and may squeeze out opportunities for other women in senior level athletic administration.

Introduction of the Research Questions

The following section reviews previous research, which informs the construction of the research questions in this study. The specific research question is introduced at the conclusion of each section.

Career advancement experiences of athletic administrators. Underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration is a concern for women who aspire to the position of AD; however, there are numerous gaps in the research on exactly how women advance to senior level administrative positions. To introduce the purpose and the research questions for this study, a central focus is given to previous research that explores women's advancement into leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics. In the first study, Fitzgerald, Sagaria, and Nelson (1994) conducted a quantitative investigation of the career patterns of men and women ADs at the Division I, II, and III level using a sociological career trajectory model. The primary purpose of the study was to determine whether ADs' career experiences correspond to the tentative normative career pattern suggested by Fitzgerald et al. (1994). Based on previous research of AD career patterns, the tentative normative career pattern of advancement to the AD position is comprised of the following five steps: 1) college athlete, 2) high school coach, 3) college coach, 4) assistant or associate AD, and 5) college AD. Additionally, the study looked at variations or identifiable career patterns among ADs in Division I, II, and III, as well as variations based on the sex of the AD.

A total of 200 (143 men and 57 women) ADs from Divisions I, II, and III responded to a modified version of the *Leaders in Transition* (1981) questionnaire which gathers information on education, athletic participation, work history, professional development, job change, and other biographical information. Results show only 5.5% of ADs follow the normative pattern of career

advancement listed above. About 6% of ADs obtained their position without any of the experiences in the normative career trajectory and listed instead as having experience as a high school teacher or college professor, dean, or vice president. Cumulative statistics indicate 80% of ADs were former collegiate student-athletes, 65% had coached college sport, 39.5% held positions as assistant or associate AD, and 30% were high school coaches. The results indicate being a college athlete is at least a port of entry for the career of AD, and collegiate coaching appears to be a more common career experience than assistant or associate AD positions (Fitzgerald et al., 1994).

Grappendorf, Lough, and Griffin (2004) conducted a similar study comparing the career experiences of female, NCAA Division I ADs to the normative career pattern hypothesized by Fitzgerald et al. (1994). Similarly, Grappendorf et al. (2004) found participants' (N=19) career patterns did not correspond to the normative career pattern hypothesized by Fitzgerald et al. (1994), however, some crucial career experiences did emerge. A vast majority of ADs in the study were former college athletes (89.5%), and 100% were either teachers and/or coaches mostly at the collegiate level (73.7%) for their first professional position. When breaking out the numbers, 89.5% had coached college at some point in their career and 57.9% listed high school or college teaching as a career experience. All (100%) of the women earned their first professional position in intercollegiate athletics at the Division I level and none of them had experiences working at the Division II or III level. Grappendorf et al. (2004) also found the addition of two positions that appear to be important in the career path of women ADs: the SWA and the Senior Associate AD. More often than not the SWA position is incorporated into the assistant/associate AD position, the Senior Associate AD was not mentioned in the Fitzgerald et al. (1994) study. Finally, 84.2% of the participants in the Grappendorf et al. (2004), study were

an assistant/associate AD, SWA, or Senior Associate AD at some point in their career and 81.3% of them were in one of those three positions immediately before obtaining the position of AD.

The results of these studies indicate in order to become a college AD, it is important to have been a collegiate athlete and a collegiate coach. For women, it is also important to have experience in education and experience as an assistant/associate AD, SWA, or Senior Associate AD. Intercollegiate athletics can manage and control its professional workforce because 94% - 100% of college ADs held at least one position in collegiate athletics before obtaining the terminal role. Additionally, if women want to obtain the position of AD at the Division I level, it would be advantageous to begin their intercollegiate career at that level.

Both studies offer important quantitative data about career patterns and trajectory to the position of AD and although the Grappendorf et al. (2004), study did incorporate five open-ended survey questions, their studies do not provide deep, individual, personal knowledge and understanding of career advancement. Furthermore, both studies examined what positions were precursors for the AD position; however, these studies did not examine specific duties and responsibilities held by the participants in those positions. To fill in the gaps of the Fitzgerald et al. (1994) and Grappendorf et al. (2004) study, this research study gathers in-depth, qualitative data from women in senior level athletic administrator positions to gain a more thorough understanding of their career advancement experiences. The first research question is - what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics?

Structural barriers to career advancement. As previously noted, Claussen and Lehr (2002) and Tiell and Dixon (2008) found the roles and tasks performed least by women administrators were in the area of decision-making in the business aspects of the department

including fundraising, marketing, and budget management. Tiell and Dixon (2008) also found women tend to perform roles that are thought to conform to norms that are more feminine. Hoffman (2011) conducted a qualitative study to further investigate “how the convergence of specific duties and gender together create the tracking and trapping of women in roles that divert them from becoming ADs” (p. 261). To conduct the investigation, Hoffman (2011) interviewed six Division I SWAs who held decision-making and leadership roles while contributing to the senior management team in athletics. The analysis of the interviews suggests day-to-day operations for senior level athletic administrators are divided into two categories. The first category is internal operations, which consist of academics and advising, athletic training, compliance and conduct, event management and facilities, equipment and locker rooms, and strength and conditioning. The second category is external operations, which consist of marketing and promotions, alumni relations, development and fundraising, budget and contract negotiations, ticketing, and media relations. Hoffman (2011) found these roles and responsibilities tend to be divided along gender lines with men administrators performing more of the external operations and women performing more of the internal operations. The participants noted their belief that performing external operations is more important for career advancement to the role of AD than internal operations.

In addition to having experience in external operations, for a woman to be qualified for an AD position, she must also have experience with managing coaches, oversight of football or men’s basketball, participation in senior management team, direct contact with university presidents, and a strong network of colleagues inside and outside of the institution; these experiences would qualify a woman to be a *True Insider* (Hoffman, 2011, p. 268). Hoffman (2011) contends few women gain the experiences of a True Insider due to gender stereotyping of

work roles in athletics and thus are less likely to meet the criteria for consideration for the position of AD. Hoffman's (2011) study provides an understanding of the day-to-day work experiences of women in senior level athletic administration and why women may not advance to AD positions.

The studies by Claussen and Lehr (2002), Tiell and Dixon (2008), and Hoffman (2011) confirm either gender biases or hegemonic masculinity, in the form of structural barriers, which contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior levels of intercollegiate athletic administration. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the social condition in which male superiority, authority, imposition, manipulation, and dominance is accepted, naturalized, and normative in societal institutions (Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002). Hegemonic masculinity can take the form of organizational or structural barriers within institutions. For example, a structural barrier in intercollegiate athletics may include homologous reproduction. Homologous reproduction is the "theory that both male and female managers strive to create predictable environments in which they rely on socially similar others and reproduce themselves" (Sagas, Cunningham, & Teed, 2006. p. 504). Simply put, homologous reproduction is the idea that men tend to hire men and women tend to hire women.

Stangl and Kane (1991) surveyed 937 public high schools to examine the employment relationship between the sex of the AD and the sex of the head coach. They found women ADs hired significantly more women than did men ADs and the sex of the AD was directly related to sex of the head coach. Over the course of their investigation, from 1974 - 1989, 92% - 94% of the ADs were men. The mean percentages of women head coaches under men ADs was 56.22%, and the mean percentage of women head coaches employed under women ADs was 63.38%.

The results indicate homologous reproduction occurs because women tend to hire women; however, homologous reproduction is not present when men also tend to hire women.

More recently, Sagas, Cunningham, and Teed (2006) conducted a study looked at the gender of head and assistant coaches of women's team sports from Division I, II, and III compiled from the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act 2002-2003. They found similar results to Stangl and Kane (1991) where female head coaches were more likely to hire female assistant coaches than male head coaches were to hire male assistant coaches. Additionally, they found male head coaches were also likely to hire female assistant coaches, which does not support homologous reproduction. On the surface, the results of both of these studies seem positive for women; however, the number of women in the more powerful role of head coach of women's sports prior to Title IX was around 90% (Carpenter & Acosta, 2005), the percentage of women coaches is still lagging behind what it was four decades ago. Homologous reproduction is still perceived to be a structural barrier to women's advancement in intercollegiate athletics because men continue to obtain positions in women's athletics that were once held by women.

The research presented above indicates structural barriers exist for women in their career advancement experiences in intercollegiate athletics. It is important to understand whether or not these previously identified structural barriers persist to keep women out of the position of AD. Thus, the second purpose of this study is to compare the career advancement experiences of the participants in this study to previous research to determine the persistence of some of the same structural barriers prohibit women's advancement to the position of AD. The specific structural barriers were examined are: homologous reproduction (Sagas et. al, 2006; Stangl & Kane, 1991), conformity to feminine or masculine norms (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), experience with internal operations versus external operations (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell &

Dixon, 2008), and decision-making authority in men's high profile sports (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). The second research question is – do structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of athletic director?

Personal choice in career experiences and intent to pursue the AD position. Personal choice in career experiences and intent to pursue the position of AD is under-researched when it comes to explaining underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration. Much of the relevant research and literature on occupational choice has been done in the disciplines of business, psychology, and sociology. Astin (1984) proposed a socio-psychological model of career choice and work behavior which incorporates psychological variables such as personal characteristics as well as sociological variables such as context and social forces which contribute to career choice. Her first claim is that career choice is influenced by motivation to work which is impacted by the drive to satisfy the needs of survival (e.g. food, clothing, shelter), pleasure (the degree to which work is enjoyable), and contribution (the idea work benefits others).

Astin's (1984) second claim is that sex-role socialization (e.g. play, family, school, work) and the structure of opportunity (e.g. distribution of jobs, sex typing of jobs, discrimination, job requirements, economy, family structure, etc.) influence each other and both categories then influence the individuals expectations of the kinds of work they will be doing, as well as their strengths and ability to do the work. Ultimately then, according to Astin (1984), career choice is impacted by work motivation, sex-role socialization, structure of opportunity, and work expectations.

Within the field of sport management, Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, Kent, and Turner (2005) conducted a study that examined the impact of internships on students' career intentions

to enter the sport management profession. Their study focused on three constructs: anticipated career satisfaction, occupational commitment, and intention to enter the sport management profession. The first construct, anticipated career satisfaction, was measured by five items adapted from a questionnaire originally developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990). The items measured include: “a) the success they will achieve, (b) the progress they will make toward achieving career goals, (c) the income they will earn, (d) the advancement opportunities they will have, and (e) the opportunities they will have to develop new skills” (Cunningham et al., 2005, p.45). The second construct, occupational commitment, can be described as positive emotions and strong identification to an occupation. Job stress, engagement in work, autonomy, support from supervisors and co-workers, and skill development can also influence an individual’s commitment to their occupation (Cunningham et al., 2005). The third construct was simply defined as stated – the intention to enter the sport management profession. The results of their study indicate anticipated satisfaction is related to occupational commitment and occupational commitment is significantly associated with an individual’s intention to enter the sport management profession.

Sartore (2006) wrote an article that examined the effects of treatment discrimination evidenced through performance evaluation bias. She found denial of work-related opportunities could lead to self-limiting behavior, which can negatively affect future performance. She examined two main categories of work-related opportunities: role model presence (professional and psychological benefits gained from an organizational mentor and sponsorship opportunities) and workgroup composition which can be defined as the additional opportunities presented to in-group (demographically similar) members versus out-group members (Sartore, 2006). Sartore (2006) claims when performance feedback results in negative information about one’s ability and

motivation and there is a loss of work-related opportunity, self-limiting behavior will emerge. The implications of this article suggest “people who are demographically different from majority members of sport organizations may not seek advancement into upper-level positions as a result of self-limiting behavior” (Sartore, 2006, p. 546).

The research presented above indicates there are multiple factors that may influence career choice and intention; however, this topic is under-researched when it comes to examining women’s intent to pursue leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics. Ajzen (1985) suggests TPB can be used to predict human behavior. To further understand what influences career choice, this study considers the factors suggested by Astin (1984) (i.e. work motivation, sex-role socialization, structure of opportunity, and work expectations) and Sartore’s (2006) (i.e. self-limiting behavior in the analysis of the participants experiences). Ajzen’s (1985) TPB is used to predict whether or not the participants will pursue the position of athletic director. Their choices may contribute to the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration. Thus the third purpose of this study is to consider the role choice and intent plays in career experiences and advancement to the position of AD. The third and final research question is - how does personal choice and intent influence career experiences and advancement to the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration?

Statement of the Problem, Research Purposes, and Research Questions

“The interests of men predominate in most sports, and hegemonic masculinity has been more resistant to change in sport than in other areas of culture” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 23). Women represent nearly half of the participants in intercollegiate sport at 42% (NCAA, 2012b), however they only represent 19.4% of ADs at all three Divisions of the NCAA, and at the Division I level specifically, women represent only 8.7% of the ADs (Irick, 2011). “The high

incidence of men in leadership roles results in normative customs and practices that favor power among men rather than women” (Hoffman, 2011, p. 261). The problem is women are not experiencing equal opportunity in senior level leadership roles similar to what they are at the participant level in intercollegiate athletics. Consequently, collegiate sport continues to accommodate the customs, practices, and interests of men and remains a hegemonic male institution.

There are three general purposes to this research study. The first purpose is to gather in-depth, qualitative data from women in senior level athletic administrator positions to gain a more thorough understanding of their career advancement experiences. The second purpose is to compare the career advancement experiences of the participants to previous research to determine the persistence of four specific structural barriers that prohibit advancement to the position of AD. These four structural barriers include: a) homologous reproduction, b) conformity to feminine or masculine norms, C) experience with internal operations versus external operations, and d) decision-making authority in men’s high profile sports. The third purpose of this study is to understand the role choice plays in career experiences and intent to advance to the position of AD.

The research questions are as follows: 1) what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic administration positions in intercollegiate athletics, 2) do structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of athletic director, and 3) how does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to advance to the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration? This study contributes further understanding of the underrepresentation of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration.

Brief Overview of Methods and Analysis

The first research question focuses on the career experiences of women in senior level athletic administration positions in intercollegiate athletics. To assist with the examination, educational and career information was gathered from the resumes, curriculum vitas, or web-based biographical information of nine women who occupy the position of Senior Associate AD at Division I, urban universities. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with these individuals to gather more in-depth information about their career experiences. As recommended by Seidman (2006), the interviews focused on past experiences, current experiences, and the meaning the participants give to their experiences.

The second research question focuses on examining the persistence of structural barriers that prohibit women from advancing to the role of AD. To address this second research question, the interviews and career documents were analyzed using Creswell's (2007) *textural description and structural description* analysis for phenomenological studies. Textural descriptions explain what the participants experienced in their career advancement, while structural descriptions explain how the participants experienced their career advancement. Textural descriptions and structural descriptions were extracted from the transcribed interviews and compared to previous research that found specific structural barriers that prevent women from obtaining the AD position. In particular, the data were analyzed for evidence of the structural barriers of homologous reproduction, conformity to feminine or masculine norms, experience with internal operations versus external operations, and decision-making authority in men's high profile sports. The analysis process is described in full detail in Chapter Three.

The third research question focuses on examining how personal choice influences career experiences and intent to pursue the AD position. To address this final research question,

participants were asked about the choices or lack thereof in their current and previous career experiences. They were asked if they plan to pursue the position of AD and why or why not. These data were also analyzed using Creswell's (2007) textural descriptions and structural descriptions to determine how choice contributes to their career experiences. Additionally, Ajzen's (1985) theory of planned behavior (TPB) was used to determine whether or not the participants will pursue the position of AD and ultimately contribute further understanding of how choice influences the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it takes a comprehensive look at the career experiences of women to better understand their underrepresentation in senior level administration in intercollegiate athletics. The study contributes to the field methodologically, theoretically, and empirically.

Many of the previous studies on career trajectories of athletic administrators use quantitative survey data to gather information on education, position, role, duties, and responsibilities. This study uses an approach that draws upon qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather detailed information about the meaning of the participants' career experiences. The participants' resumes, vitae, and biographical information from their athletic departments' websites were also used as support documents. Creswell's (2007) textural descriptions and structural descriptions analysis is used to understand the data. Previous studies on the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletics have not used this method of data analysis. Lastly, the universities from which the participants are recruited are all located in urban settings. The urban context provides multiple competing interests for

intercollegiate athletics that a rural setting would not and thus complicates the leadership role. An explanation of the choice of urban context is explained in detail in Chapter Three.

Theoretically, this study takes a comprehensive look at the persistence of multiple structural barriers using multiple theoretical frameworks to inform the data analysis. Much of the previous research investigating underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics is generally informed by critical feminist theory (Hoffman, 2010, 2011; Messner, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991; and Whisenant et al., 2002). Using a critical feminist perspective helps to identify specific ways gender ideology and hegemonic masculinity is both reproduced and challenged in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. Critical feminist theory is used in this study to provide a broad framework for a general understanding of underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration.

In addition to critical feminist theory, this study builds on previous research findings that identified individual structural barriers as explanations for underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration. The multiple structural barriers examined in this study are: a) homologous reproduction, b) conformity to feminine or masculine norms, c) experience with internal operations versus external operations, and d) decision-making authority in men's high profile sports. Homologous reproduction and role congruity theory are two theoretical frameworks used in previous research as well as in this study to examine these four structural barriers.

To contribute both theoretically as well as empirically, this study examines the role personal choice plays in career experiences and intention to pursue the position of AD. Personal choice in career experiences and intent to pursue the position of AD is under-researched when it comes to explaining the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration.

Furthermore, this study uses Ajzen's (1985) theory of planned behavior (TBP) to examine intent to pursue the AD position. The theoretical frameworks will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two and Chapter Three.

Summary of Chapter One

This chapter introduced information on the problem of underrepresentation of women in senior level administration of intercollegiate athletics and presented general details of the research study. This chapter began with a brief overview on the early development of intercollegiate athletics and the inception of the position of AD to establish an understanding of how intercollegiate sport was organized by men and for the interests of men. The chapter went on to provide an explanation of how women became involved in intercollegiate athletics, how Title IX of the Educational Amendments affected their participation and leadership, and gave some examples of efforts to improve women's opportunities and leadership development. To introduce the purposes and research questions in the study, the chapter presented a discussion of previous research on women's intercollegiate athletic career experiences, findings on the persistence of structural barriers to career advancement, and related research on factors influence career choices and intentions. Furthermore, the chapter provided a brief overview of how the research questions are answered through methods and data analysis. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the significance of the study as well as a glossary of terms.

Preview of Chapters Two through Five

Chapter Two begins with an ideological explanation of the rise of intercollegiate athletics with an emphasis on capitalism and hegemonic masculinity. Critical feminist theory is presented as a general framework for understanding how hegemonic masculinity is both reproduced and challenged in intercollegiate athletics. Homologous reproduction and role congruity theory is

used to frame an understanding of the existence of structural barriers which prevent women from advancing to the AD position, and TPB is used as a framework to discuss the choices and intentions of the participants to pursue the AD position.

Chapter Three describes the purpose, methods, and data analysis used in this study to examine the underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration. The chapter begins by restating the purpose and research questions for the inquiry. The chapter provides justification for the qualitative research design and information on the urban context of the study. The chapter continues with a detailed description on the methods for recruiting participants, information on how the data were collected, and an explanation of how the data were analyzed to answer the research questions. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of ethical considerations and information on the validity of the study.

Chapter Four discusses the findings of this research study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the participant demographics and then each of the research questions is answered with the data. The first research question is answered with a discussion of the participants' past and current career experiences. The second question is answered with the participants' experiences of the four previously identified structural barriers to advancement. The last research question is answered with an analysis of each of the participants' intentions to pursue the AD position. Their intentions are analyzed using TPB to predict whether or not they will pursue the AD position.

The final chapter reviews the research problem, purpose, and methods of analysis and then summarizes the findings and implications of this research. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, recommendations for future research as well as recommendations for athletic administrative practice.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

To more fully understand intercollegiate athletic administration and the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership, it is important to provide a theoretical framework and a thorough review of previous research. This chapter begins with a general overview of how the dominant ideologies of capitalism and hegemonic masculinity led to the rise of intercollegiate athletics. The chapter then moves to a discussion of the appropriateness of critical feminist theory as a framework for understanding hegemonic masculinity. Previous research has discovered the existence of structural barriers, which prevent women from obtaining the position of AD. Homologous reproduction and role congruity theory have been used to provide an understanding of these structural barriers. This study also uses homologous reproduction and role congruity theory to discuss the persistence of these structural barriers. Finally, related research has used the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to explain choices and intentions in career advancement. This study applies TPB to understand the participants' choices and intentions to pursue the position of AD.

Dominant Ideologies and the Growth of Intercollegiate Athletics

Intercollegiate athletics can be examined by understanding some of the dominant cultural ideologies of the last 150 years. Coakley (2001) defines dominant ideology as “perspectives and ideas favored and promoted by dominant and powerful groups in a society and it serves the interests of those groups” (p.10). Two dominant ideologies contribute significantly to the rise of intercollegiate athletics: capitalism and hegemonic masculinity.

Coakley (2001) claims, “sports, especially spectator sports, are organized and sponsored by those with money and economic power in an effort to affirm the capitalistic values of competition, production, and consumption” (p. 36). Intercollegiate sport became the perfect means to promote the dominant cultural ideology of capitalism.

Gruneau (1988) summarized three capitalist functions modern sport serves. The first is the idea the dominant class created and controlled commercialized team sports and marketed them as spectacle to the working class. Upper-class university leaders promoted collegiate sport teams, which, through wins and championships, could prove prestigious in the public eye. In order to be more competitive and increase chances of producing a winning team, universities began to recruit promising athletes from among the urban, immigrant working class. Social class distinctions became very clear through sport; the elite played sport in private clubs for leisure, they controlled intercollegiate sport, and they paid to watch working class immigrants play sports at colleges and universities. The consumption of intercollegiate sport is evidenced by the fact in 1894, Harvard's football team earned \$42,000 and wealthy patrons paid \$5.00 for a ticket in a box seat (Flowers, 2009). This idea of sport as a production of competition for consumption further proves sport is an arena that promotes capitalistic ideology.

Gruneau's (1988) second capitalist function of sport is that it operates as a vehicle for political socialization, which reinforces the values and beliefs of the dominant class. The vehicle of collegiate sport (particularly football) advances the dominant ideals of competition, masculinity, and the importance of being strong both of body and mind. In addition, Gruneau (1988) points out modern sport embodies the values of hard work, discipline, and achievement required in a system of production geared to profit making through exploitation of mass markets. Sport mirrors and exemplifies the qualities needed for a capitalistic system to thrive. In theory, the stronger, more masculine or powerful teams who work harder will earn wins and achieve championships. This ideology encourages people to work hard, earn money, and buy more things to prove success. This meritocratic cycle maintains capitalistic ideals and in theory keeps the economy going.

Gruneau's (1988) third point about how sport serves capitalist functions is that sports increasingly promote the characteristics of capitalist market operations: specialization, standardization, bureaucratic decision-making, dependence on technology and the constant drive for efficiency and maximum production. Only an elite few have the talent and ability to play collegiate sport and those who do are extremely specialized by sport and position on the team. Rules, standards, referees, and umpires are evidence of regulation and bureaucratization. Furthermore, in 1905, the Athletic Association of the United States (AAUS), now the NCAA was created to reform, organize, and govern intercollegiate sport. Initially the AAUS was created by President Theodore Roosevelt to reform the increasingly dangerous sport of football, but eventually the NCAA became an organization that promoted the bureaucratization of intercollegiate sport. Throughout the twentieth century and even today, the NCAA has become a hierarchical, profit making membership organization also serves as a national regulatory agency makes rules, polices the regulation of those rules, and enforces punishments for rule violations (Mitten et al., 2009).

Colleges and universities have become increasingly focused on Gruneau's functions of production, consumption, and bureaucratization in their athletic departments. Sports have become a product that universities sell for mass consumption. Contemporary bureaucratization of intercollegiate sport can be seen in the over-reliance on technology, especially as sport has become commercialized. Rules have been altered for time efficiency, increased scoring, and through maximum capacity seating, television, radio, internet, mobile devices, etc., sport can be massively produced and consumed. Athletic departments are organized in hierarchical structures. The ADs and head coaches possess the most power and authority followed by

associate and assistant ADs and coaches. Athletes fall at the bottom of the hierarchy with the least amount of power.

In addition to capitalism, hegemonic masculinity also contributed to the rise of intercollegiate athletics. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the social condition in which male superiority, authority, imposition, manipulation, and dominance is accepted, naturalized, and normative in societal institutions (Whisenant et al., 2002). Critical feminist theories contend “the meaning, organization, and purpose of sports are grounded in the values and experiences of men and are defined to celebrate the attributes and skills associated with masculinity” (Coakley, 2001, p. 45). As the popularity of men’s sport grew in institutions of higher education, the academy took on new roles. A newspaper publication in 1857 called *The Spirit of the Times* proclaimed “the object of education is to make men out of boys, real live men, not bookworms, not smart fellows, but manly fellows” (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993, p. 94). During this time, there was much anxiety with the over-feminization of men because of a strong influence from their mothers. In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* in March of 1858, Thomas Wentworth Higginson connected the ideas of physical fitness and intercollegiate sport to help further promote the ideas of Muscular Christianity, but also for men to overcome the domestic influence of women on men (Higginson, 1858). Oliver Wendell Holmes, an American jurist, championed manly sports which could provide men with heroic strength and a renewed sense of power; not only would men be physically stronger as a result of playing sport, but they could publicly display their physical prowess and masculinity (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). Popular belief in the ideas of prominent men like Higginson and Holmes contributed to hegemonic masculinity and the rise of intercollegiate sport.

The assumptions that sports were for men and defined masculine identity and sport was too strenuous for women, which might negatively affect their ability to have children flourished in the mid-1800s (Remley, 1983). Women were allowed to be in attendance at games and expected to be in the presence of men athletes and spectators; however, women's participation in sport was less accepted. Working class women turned away from sport because of public criticism and ridicule (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). Messner (1994) sums it up perfectly in the following statement: "sport was a male-created homosocial cultural sphere provided men with the psychological separation from the perceived feminization of society while also providing dramatic symbolic proof of the 'natural superiority' of men over women" (p. 68). Intercollegiate sport had a tendency to reinforce masculinity for men, but for women, athletic participation conflicted with the feminine ideal promoted during the Victorian era and the onset of urbanization due to the industrial revolution. Women were supposed to be the weaker sex who worked inside the home and raised the children. This ideal was the antithesis to women's participation in intercollegiate sport. Sport was an institution created by men to serve the interests of men and to keep women out. Hegemonic masculinity clearly contributed to the rise of intercollegiate athletics and the underrepresentation of women.

The development of ideological views that support hegemonic masculinity reproduce and contribute to consequences of social inequality which can manifest in various forms of discrimination (Donnelly, 1996). "The interests of men predominate in most sports, and hegemonic masculinity has been more resistant to change in sport than in other areas of culture" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 23). "The high incidence of men in leadership roles results in normative customs and practices that favor power among men rather than women" (Hoffman, 2011, p.

261). Thus, men are often overrepresented in leadership roles in sport and women are nearly absent.

Critical Feminist Theory

Critical feminist theorists and researchers believe gender is an organizing principle that shapes structures and conditions of women's lives (Creswell, 2007). Critical feminist theorists also contend that sport is a gendered institution and "the meaning, organization, and purpose of sports are grounded in the values and experiences of men and are defined to celebrate the attributes and skills associated with masculinity" (Coakley, 2001, p. 45). The overrepresentation of men in leadership positions facilitates the hegemonic organization of intercollegiate athletics. Critical feminist theory is helpful for examining the experiences of women administrators in the male dominated environment of intercollegiate athletics.

Critical feminist theorists believe women challenge the issues of power in society as it relates to gender relations and masculine privilege (Coakley, 2001). Critical feminists seek to understand "how gender ideology is formed, reproduced, resisted, and transformed in and through the everyday experiences of men and women" (Coakley, 2001, p. 45). The use of a critical feminist lens in this study brings into consciousness the reality of women's administrative experiences in the hegemonic organization of intercollegiate athletics. Critical feminist theory is the broad lens through which underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration is understood in this study.

Structural Barriers to Career Advancement – Homologous Reproduction

Several researchers have used critical feminist theory as a framework to claim there are structural barriers, which prohibit the advancement of women to senior levels of intercollegiate athletic administration (Hoffman, 2010, 2011; Messner, 1994; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Stangl &

Kane, 1991; Whisenant et al., 2002). One structural barrier examined in previous research is homologous reproduction (Sagas et al.; 2006; Stangl & Kane, 1991). Homologous reproduction is the “theory that both male and female managers strive to create predictable environments in which they rely on socially similar others and reproduce themselves” (Sagas et al., 2006, p. 504). The theory purports because men are overrepresented in senior level leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics, the practice of homologous reproduction becomes a structural barrier prevents the advancement of women to these same roles, and hegemonic masculinity gets reproduced (Sagas et al., 2006). Although Stangl and Kane (1991) and Sagas, et al. (2006) both found women and men were more likely to hire women to coach women’s sports at the high school and collegiate level, homologous reproduction is still perceived to be a structural barrier to women’s advancement in intercollegiate athletics because men continue to obtain positions in women’s athletics that were once held by women. Moreover, this study looks more specifically for the existence of homologous reproduction at the intercollegiate administrative level rather than at the high school or intercollegiate coaching level.

Structural Barriers to Career Advancement – Role Congruity Theory

Previous research specifically looking at the position of SWA, has identified the existence of additional structural barriers which prohibit women from advancing into the position of AD in intercollegiate athletics which include: a) conformity to feminine or masculine norms (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), b) experience with internal operations versus external operations (Hoffman, 2011), and c) decision-making authority in men’s high profile sports (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). These structural barriers are created by socially constructed dichotomies and gender stereotypes. Throughout history, men have defined what it means to be a woman in society. In fact, “all that women hear about womanhood and

female sexuality has come from the male point of view” (Crotty, 1998, p.169). Much of the time, men’s point of view produces dichotomies such as strong/weak, aggressive/passive, intelligent/emotional, where men decide and self-present the more desirable characteristic. Men and women are not dichotomous; in fact, they are similar but differ along a continuum. Women have been subjected to the definitions, discourse, and dominance of men; however, due to gender stereotypes men and women are expected to adhere to certain social roles.

Eagly, Wood, and Diekmann (2000), define social role theory as “the beliefs people hold about the sexes are derived from observations of the role performances of men and women and thus reflect the sexual division of labor and gender hierarchy of the society” (p. 124). They define communal roles as the stereotypical roles for women and they include characteristics such as nurturing, helpful, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, and kind. They define agentic roles as the stereotypical roles for men and include characteristics such as aggressiveness, dominance, self-sufficient, self-confident, and independent (Eagly et al., 2000). Specifically linking these roles to the intercollegiate athletic environment, Tiell and Dixon (2008) define the tasks, roles, and responsibilities related to communal roles and feminine norms as nurturing, mentoring, and role modeling and those related to agentic roles and masculine norms as allocating resources, strategic decision-making, and disciplining. More specifically, communal roles are linked to internal operations in the athletic department such as academics and advising, athletic training, compliance and conduct, event management and facilities, equipment and locker rooms, and strength and conditioning (Hoffman, 2011). Agentic roles are linked to external operations in the athletic department such as marketing and promotions, alumni relations, development and fundraising, budget and contract negotiations, ticketing, and media relations (Hoffman, 2011).

Role congruity theory takes social role theory one step further and links the compatibility of gender roles with leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). When used in intercollegiate athletics, role congruence can be seen as the adherence of women leaders to more feminine norms; role adherence can be self-imposed or imposed by others. In their review of previously researched gender role and leadership paradigms, Eagly and Karau (2002) claim there are two types of prejudice against women leaders: 1) they are perceived to have less ability in leadership roles than men, and 2) there is a preference for women to engage in and display more supportive, communal roles and behavior rather than agentic roles and behavior. Eagly and Karau (2002) also contend this prejudice results in: “a) less favorable attitudes toward female leaders than male leaders, b) greater difficulty for women in attaining leadership roles, and c) greater difficulty for women in being recognized as effective in these roles” (p. 589). To go further, in the male-dominated environment of intercollegiate athletics, women leaders may be more likely to face the prejudice and discrimination described above (Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009). Role congruity theory is used in this study as a framework for understanding three specific structural barriers which prohibit women from advancing into the position of AD in intercollegiate athletics which include: a) conformity to feminine or masculine norms, b) experience with internal operations versus external operations, and c) decision-making authority in men’s high profile sports.

Structural Barriers Explained Through the Position of SWA

The position of the SWA in intercollegiate athletics is significant in the history of the athletic department and has impacted the underrepresentation of women in senior levels of athletic administration.

According to the NCAA, the purpose in creating the position of SWA was to ensure

females were involved in meaningful ways in athletics department decision-making, and to ensure women's interests were represented at all levels of intercollegiate athletics – campus, conference, and national. (Claussen & Lehr, 2002, p. 215)

To better understand prohibitive structural barriers, the following pages contain a literature review on the experiences of the SWA. These articles also provide significant information on the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. The first article is a study conducted by Claussen and Lehr (2002), which focuses specifically on decision-making authority of the SWA. The second article is a study conducted by Tiell and Dixon (2008), which also focuses on decision-making authority in the roles and tasks of the SWA; but this article focuses more on gender norms and role congruity. The third article is a study conducted by Hoffman (2010), which focuses on the dilemmas of the SWA. All three of these articles provide important insight into the experiences of women in the position of the SWA and structural barriers to the advancement to the position of AD.

The research purpose of Claussen and Lehr (2002) was to investigate the types of decision-making authority held by SWAs in relationship to important athletic department functions. Questionnaires were sent to 784 SWAs of all three Divisions in the NCAA. The response rate was 61% (66% - Division I, 56% - Division II, and 57% - Division III), with 479 questionnaires returned. About 62% held the title of Assistant AD, Associate AD, or Senior Associate AD in addition to the SWA title. The instrument they used analyzed eleven typical functions of the SWA ascertained from previous research and literature on the SWA. The eleven functions included: “a) student-athlete concerns, b) gender equity, c) business affairs, d) personnel affairs, e) external communication, f) marketing/development, g) athletic advisory

committee, h) legislative process, i) disciplinary/grievance procedures, j) strategic planning, and k) mission/philosophy formulation” (Claussen & Lehr, 2002, p. 219).

Claussen and Lehr (2002) used modified RACI charting to understand the level of decision-making the participants had in each of the functions listed above. The RACI charting technique asks respondents to categorize their level of authority and decision-making in the functions listed above with the following words: a) Responsibility, b) Approval, c) Consulted, or Informed; they could also respond none. Responsibility and Approval were considered to be decision-making authority and Consulted and Informed were considered advisory. Results of all three Divisions combined show SWAs more often possess advisory rather than decision-making authority. The top three areas of decision-making authority were gender equity issues (45%), student-athlete concerns (41%), and discipline/grievance procedures (38%). When breaking the numbers down by Division, it appears SWAs in Division I schools have a little more decision-making authority. The top three areas for these SWAs were gender equity issues (56%), personnel affairs (54%), and disciplinary/grievance procedures (50%). Across all Divisions, SWAs have the least decision-making authority in the area of marketing/development – Division I (12%), Division II (11%), and Division III (14%).

These results indicate if the position of SWA was created to ensure women are involved in meaningful ways in athletics department decision-making authority, the NCAA and member institutions are not living up to their claims. Claussen and Lehr (2002) reveal most SWAs at all three Divisional levels possess only advisory authority for most athletic department functions. If women lack true decision-making authority, their interests may be considered lower in priority than men’s interests and significant differences could result in resource allocation, profitability, and visibility of women’s athletics (Claussen & Lehr, 2002). The areas where SWAs do tend to

have more decision-making authority tend to be in the relational aspects rather than the business aspects of the department. This trend may negatively influence an SWA's potential for promotion to the position of head AD (Claussen & Lehr, 2002).

Tiell and Dixon (2008) also conducted research on the role of the SWA in the contemporary athletic department. The purpose of this study was to find out if: a) SWAs execute decision-making functions in the athletic department, b) SWA's tasks are encouraged and hired to oversee programs are primarily gender-focused or gender-neutral, and c) SWA's roles and tasks are performed consistent with gendered norms. The participants for this study were Division I, II, and III ADs (men) and SWAs (women). A questionnaire containing 16 demographic questions and 24 questions pertaining to perceptions of job responsibilities, defined with previous literature, was specifically designed for this study. The response rates were as follows: Division I – ADs 53% (n=168) and SWAs 63% (n=200), Division II – ADs 55% (n=142) and SWAs 59% (n=161), Division III – ADs 66% (n=232) and SWAs 55% (n=213).

Results indicate the roles and tasks performed the least by SWAs were fundraising, budget management, educating others on masculine issues, participating on senior management team, and acting as a decision maker. There was a significant difference between all three Division ADs and SWAs in perceptions of involvement in key decision-making, participation on senior management team, working to accomplish goals within the group structure, and monitoring the implementation of the gender equity plan. SWAs perceptions means were higher than those of ADs. Generally, in all three Divisions, both ADs and SWAs agreed SWAs performed roles on behalf of both men's and women's programs with regard to public relations, staff selection and supervision, and program supervision; however, in Division II and III, SWAs

do not perform roles on behalf of either men's or women's programs when it comes to financial operations or increasing revenue.

In addressing the final question regarding performing roles and tasks according to gendered norms, Tiell and Dixon (2008) discuss the literature on role congruity theory and make connections between communal roles and feminine norms (e.g. nurturing, mentoring, and role modeling) and agentic roles and masculine norms (e.g. allocating resources, strategic decision-making, and disciplining). Their findings indicate SWAs do perform roles consistent with communal norms such as advocating for women's issues and monitoring compliance with Title IX, serving as role model, and working within the group. Division I athletic departments generally seem to be doing a better job of including women in meaningful decision-making and Division I SWAs perform roles and tasks are role congruent as well as role incongruent. Tiell and Dixon (2008) confirm Claussen and Lehr's (2002) study which found the SWA lacks decision-making authority in the contemporary athletic department. They found SWA's lack decision-making authority in high profile men's team sports and the financial aspects of the department, which may inhibit advancement into head AD positions (Tiell & Dixon, 2008: Claussen & Lehr, 2002). Additionally, even though it appears progress has been made in Division I, Tiell and Dixon (2008) contend the roles and responsibilities of SWAs continue to conform to feminine norms of behavior.

Hoffman's (2010) research also examined the role of the SWA in the contemporary athletic department. The purpose of this study was to better understand the influence of the SWA role in the advancement of women into top leadership positions in the contemporary athletic department. She interviewed six women who held the role of SWA at their Far West Region - Division I institution. Hoffman (2010) evaluated the data using post-structuralist

feminist theory to highlight the multiple power relations between men and women in the social construction of practices disadvantage women in organizations, language, policy, customs, social relationships, and other everyday practices (Hoffman, 2010). This theoretical framework uncovered one theme and four dilemmas that explain the influence of the SWA on women's leadership in athletics.

Hoffman (2010) names the theme *The Early "SWA" vs. Today's Senior Associate Athletic Administrator*, and found that initially the SWA was created to ensure women had a voice at the table as athletic departments merged into one. Early SWAs had access to university presidents at the NCAA convention and through the NCAA athletic certification process. Later, the governance structure changed in relationship to the convention and certification, so SWA access to the presidents was eliminated. Today the SWA is seen as a role for women leaders, often times, not as a Senior Associate AD.

The first dilemma Hoffman (2010) uncovered is *The SWA – The Sole Woman Administrator*. In Division I athletic programs there is an average of 5.78 administrators per institution, but only 1.71 are women (Hoffman, 2010). Once the SWA role is filled with a woman, additional women may be overlooked for other positions in senior management in athletics, meaning the SWA will be the only woman administrator. Hoffman's (2010) second dilemma is *The SWA and Title IX*. The SWA is often responsible for monitoring the NCAA's gender equity plan. This presents a dilemma because other administrators do not see gender equity as their responsibility even though the responsibility should be shared. Furthermore, if the SWA speaks up when there is an equity issue, she is seen as confrontational in the organization; on the other hand, if she does not speak up when an issue occurs, she is not doing her job.

The third dilemma is *The SWA as a Terminal Position*. The SWA often oversees academics or compliance (internal relations) and women's sports but rarely oversees men's high profile teams or the financial arms of the department (external operations). Hoffman (2010) confirmed the findings of Claussen and Lehr (2002) and Tiell and Dixon (2008) that lack of decision-making authority in the financial arm and high profile team sports may prohibit SWAs from advancing into the role of head AD. The last dilemma Hoffman (2010) discusses is "*My SWA*" – *The Senior Woman Advocate*. The SWA is often seen as the care-taking position in the department who advocates for student-athletes and women coaches; however, this role is not as valued as the more decision-making roles. This role conforms to feminine or communal norms as discussed in the Tiell and Dixon (2008) study. In conclusion, Hoffman (2010) notes super-performance, rather than subordination, innovation, or separatism is the only strategy available to women who want to be taken seriously and who seek upward career mobility. Hoffman (2010) also states the role of SWA "pinches the pipeline at the senior level of department leadership and allows only one woman to advance" (p. 71).

The areas of research presented above explain the role of the SWA in intercollegiate athletic departments and provide more understanding about underrepresentation of women in leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics. To summarize, the SWA performs similar tasks and functions to the AD; however, a majority of SWAs in all three Divisions perform these functions on an advisory level rather than with true decision-making authority. The roles and tasks performed least by SWAs were fundraising, budget management, educating others on masculine issues, and participating on senior management team (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). In Division II and III, SWAs do not perform roles on behalf of either men's or women's programs when it comes to financial operations or increasing revenue. In general, the roles and responsibilities of SWAs

continue to conform to feminine norms, behaviors, and expectations, thus confirming role congruity theory.

While the position of SWA was initially created to ensure women had a voice in the decision-making processes in the athletic department, the evolution of the roles of the position has created a quandary. SWA's access to presidents and others in more authoritative positions has diminished. Those in positions to hire may overlook women for senior level leadership roles because they might feel the quota of a woman administrator has been filled with the SWA. The SWA has become the only monitor for Title IX and gender equity and faces heavy scrutiny in that role. Due to the lack of decision-making authority in men's high profile sports and the financial arms of the department, as well as performing roles and tasks adhering to feminine norms, SWA's advancement to the head AD role is improbable. These three studies provide strong evidence of the existence of structural barriers that prevent women from obtaining senior level leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics. These three studies also provide strong evidence of the prejudices discussed in role congruity theory where women leaders: 1) are perceived to have less ability in leadership roles than men, and 2) there is a preference for women to engage in and display more supportive, communal roles and behavior rather than agentic roles and behavior.

In addition to structural barriers, the underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration can also be examined by looking at the choices women have had in their career advancement experiences in intercollegiate athletics as well as whether or not they want to pursue the position of AD. The following section provides a framework for understanding behavior choices and intentions.

Choices, Intentions, and the Theory of Planned Behavior

Personal choice in career experiences and intent to pursue the position of AD is under-researched when it comes to explaining underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletic administration. In Chapter One, previous research on career choices and intentions was presented. Astin (1984) claimed career choice is impacted by work motivation, sex-role socialization, structure of opportunity, and work expectations. Cunningham et al. (2005) indicated that anticipated career satisfaction is related to occupational commitment and occupational commitment is significantly associated with an individual's intention to pursue a particular profession. Sartore (2006) claimed when performance feedback results in negative information about one's ability and motivation and there is a loss of work-related opportunity, self-limiting behavior would emerge. Additionally, Sartore (2006) claimed when people are demographically different from majority members of sport organizations, they might not seek advancement into upper-level positions because of self-limiting behavior.

In addition to the factors offered by Astin (1984), Cunningham et al. (2005), and Sartore (2006), Fishbein (1979) proposed the theory of reasoned action (TRA) to predict and understand human behavior. Fishbein's (1979) TRA is "based on the assumption that humans are rational animals that systematically utilize or process the information available to them" and humans use the information (although it may be incomplete) reasonably to make behavioral decisions (p. 66). This theory assumes humans have full volitional control or free will in choosing behaviors and making decisions (Fishbein, 1979). The foundational principles of TRA and understanding a person's intentions are based on two factors: 1) personal attitude (either positive or negative) toward performing the behavior and 2) subjective norm – the person's perception of social pressures on whether or not to perform the behavior. Generally, people tend to perform a

behavior they evaluate as positive and if they believe it is important to others that they perform the behavior (Fishbein, 1979).

Later, Ajzen (1985) added a third factor that influences an individual's intentions in making behavioral decisions – perceived behavioral control. Perceived behavioral control is the perceived ease or difficulty in performing the behavior which reflects past experiences as well as anticipated challenges and obstacles to performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). When an individual believes he or she lacks the resources and has little control over performing the behavior, their intentions to perform the behavior may be low even if they have a positive attitude and/or favorable subjective norms concerning performing the behavior (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). Conversely, “the more resources and opportunities individuals think they possess, the greater should be their perceived behavioral control over the behavior” (Madden et al., 1992).

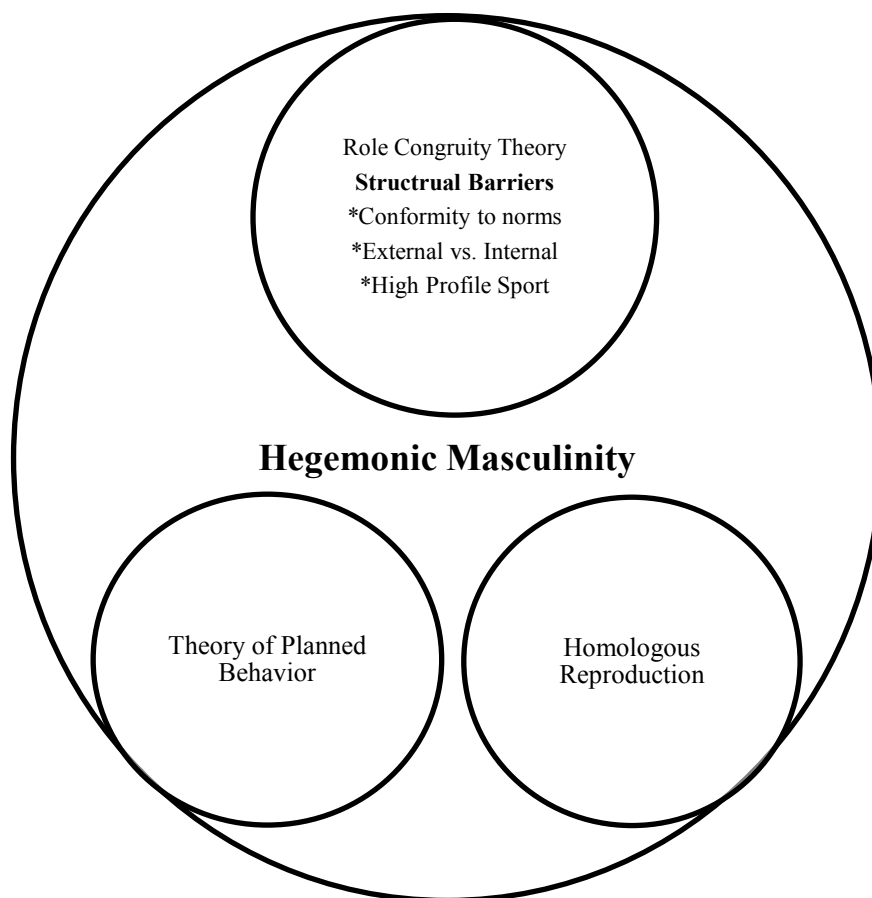
Khapova, Arthur, Wilderom, and Svensson, (2007) applied TPB to understand career change intention in the information technology industry. They used the following three factors modified from Ajzen (1991) to predict career change intention: 1) attitude toward career change, 2) perceived social pressure to change careers (more pressure = higher likelihood of changing careers), and 3) perceived behavioral control to change careers – “those with strong beliefs in their capability to find a new job or career opportunity will be more likely to exhibit stronger interest in or intentions toward a career change” (Khapova et al., 2007). They found all three of these factors are positively correlated with career change intention; however, the authors of the study suggest to more thoroughly distinguish between the three factors to further understand the level of importance of each factor in influencing career intentions (Khapova et al., 2007). The current study uses TPB as a framework to more thoroughly understand the career intentions of

the participants to pursue or not to pursue the position of AD and ultimately contribute to the discussion of underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration.

Synthesis of Theoretical Framework

Hegemonic masculinity, homologous reproduction, role congruity theory, and TPB help inform and explain the phenomenon of underrepresentation of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration. Figure 1 below provides a visual representation of the conceptual framework used in this study.

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework



Intercollegiate athletics is an institution created and sustained by the values and interests of men. The information previously presented in Chapters One and Two discussed how college sport became and continues to be a hegemonic male institution. In this study, critical feminism

is used as a lens to understand how hegemonic masculinity produces structural barriers in intercollegiate athletics like homologous reproduction and role congruity in experiences with external versus internal operations, conformity to feminine norms, and oversight of high profile men's sports. Additionally, critical feminism is used to more fully understand how hegemonic masculinity influences behavioral choice and intention of whether or not to pursue the AD position. Ultimately a better understanding of underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration is achieved.

Summary of Chapter Two

To more fully understand intercollegiate athletic administration and the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership, it is important to provide a theoretical framework and a more thorough review of previous research. This chapter began with a general overview of how the dominant ideologies of capitalism and hegemonic masculinity led to the rise of intercollegiate athletics. The chapter then moved to a discussion of the appropriateness of critical feminist theory as a framework for understanding hegemonic masculinity. Previous research on the position of SWA discovered the existence of structural barriers which prevent women from obtaining the position of AD. This study uses homologous reproduction and role congruity theory to discuss the persistence of these structural barriers. Finally, related research used the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to explain choices and intentions in career advancement. TPB is used to analyze the participants' choices and intentions to pursue the position of AD.

Chapter Three describes the purpose, methods, and data analysis used in this study to examine the phenomenon of the underrepresentation of women in administration of intercollegiate athletics.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter One laid the foundation for a better understanding of the historical beginnings of intercollegiate athletics and the emergence of the AD. The description provided detailed information on how intercollegiate athletics was created by and for the interests of men. Clearly, as discussed, women had separate experiences with sport; however, after the passage of Title IX, women were forced to consolidate with men's programs on college campuses and conform to their model of competition. As a result of this consolidation, the number of women administrators gradually diminished, and the role of women's leadership in intercollegiate athletics changed. Women were given a voice at the table with the title of PWA, which later became the SWA, but as the literature reveals, their roles lacked the power and authority they had when men's and women's departments were separate. Chapter Two outlined multiple theoretical frameworks used to more fully understand the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics.

This chapter begins by reviewing the purpose and research questions for the inquiry. The chapter provides justification for the qualitative research design and information on the urban context of the study. The chapter continues with a detailed description on the methods for recruiting participants, information on how the data were collected, and an explanation of how the data is analyzed in order to answer the research questions. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of ethical considerations and information on the validity of the study.

Review of Purpose and Research Questions

The overarching purpose of the study is to learn more about the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. The three specific purposes of this research include: 1) gather in-depth, qualitative data from women in senior level athletic

administrator positions to gain a more thorough understanding of their career advancement experiences, 2) compare the career advancement experiences of the participants to previous literature to determine the persistence of structural barriers prohibit advancement to the position of AD, and 3) understand the role choice plays in career experiences and intention to pursue the position of AD. The specific research questions that accomplish the purposes outlined above are as follows:

Research Question 1: What are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics?

Research Question 2: Do structural barriers persist that prevent women from advancing to the position of AD?

Research Question 3: How does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration?

Research Design

Many researchers have conducted quantitative investigations to further understand women's underrepresentation in senior level leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics; career trajectory (Fitzgerald et al., 1994), retention (Pastore et al., 1996), success ratio and advancement (Whisenant et al., 2002), role congruity (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), and decision-making authority (Claussen & Lehr, 2002). Pastore et al. (1996) suggest "qualitative methods may be the appropriate methodology to fully probe gender differences" in athletic administration (p. 439). Qualitative approaches have their foundation in social constructivism, which focuses on understanding the processes of interaction among people in the specific contexts within which they live and work, also known as worldview (Creswell, 2007). A qualitative researcher strives to interpret the complex and varied meaning of their participants' experiences (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative approaches are advantageous for descriptions of situations, processes, and relationships (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The qualitative study design best suited for this investigation is a phenomenological study design because phenomenology attempts to describe and understand an individual's experiences and perspectives of a specific phenomenon or situation. Research question one requires describing and comparing the career pattern experiences of women in senior level athletic administration.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) also maintain qualitative approaches are effective for interpretation, "They enable a researcher to (a) gain new insights about a particular phenomenon, (b) develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon and/or (c) discover problems that exist within the phenomenon" (p. 140). Research questions two and three require analysis and interpretation of the career pattern experiences of women to understand whether structural barriers continue to prevent women from advancing to the position of AD and to more fully understand how personal choice influences career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position.

Study Context

Horvat and Shaw (1999) claim "the city is the lifeblood of the urban university" and "the urban university is deeply and meaningfully connected to the city in which it resides" (p. 103). Given this deep connection between the university and the city, athletic department leaders at urban universities are presented with particular challenges. Urban areas are large, densely populated cities that include the entire metropolitan area surrounding the urban center. According to 2010 census data, 83.7% of the U.S. population lives in urban metropolitan areas (Mackun & Wilson, 2011). Intercollegiate sport has the potential to appeal to large masses of people in urban areas. Urban centers, however, have multiple entertainment opportunities that

present competing interests for intercollegiate athletics. Large urban areas typically include at least one Division I university as well as a number of other post-secondary schooling options such as private colleges, small universities, and community colleges that also sponsor intercollegiate athletics. Urban communities are cultural centers with museums, music, theater, and art. Urban areas are hubs for ethnic and community festivals and events. Additionally, many urban areas have some type of minor league or professional sports team. All of these examples represent competing interests for urban intercollegiate athletic leadership and thus create added pressure for teams to be successful.

Urban areas are typically more diverse than non-urban areas. Differences in ethnic group, age, and social class lend to the difficult task of garnering support for local urban university sports teams. The sports the urban university sponsors may not appeal to multiple ethnic groups or various aged citizens. The ticket prices and opportunity to support athletic teams may be prohibitively expensive to middle class, working class, and especially impoverished people who live in the city. It is essential for contemporary athletic leadership to fully understand the challenges of the urban environment because these considerations directly influence community support and ultimately the success of the athletic program.

The urban context will be used in this study because of the competing interests and challenges to senior level athletic administration listed above. Eighteen urban areas with a combined city and metropolitan population of at least 500,000 people and include at least one Division I institution were identified for the context of the study. All institutions have football or men's basketball or both. This characteristic is important because these teams get the most media exposure and prior research suggests women do not gain experience in these two high

profile sports; this lack of experience may prohibit them from obtaining an AD position (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2010; Tiell & Dixon, 2008).

Participants

A purposeful sampling strategy was used in this investigation because particular individuals can inform an understanding of the research questions (Creswell, 2007). More specifically, a criterion purposeful sample was used because each of the participants met specific criteria (Creswell, 2007). The specific criteria for the participants in this study are outlined in the following paragraphs.

The NCAA is the largest intercollegiate athletic membership institution in the United States including over 1,000 colleges and universities. The association oversees more than 430,000 student-athletes who compete in 23 sports and 89 championships (NCAA, 2012a). Competition is offered in three Divisions; and each school can choose the Division that most appropriately matches its mission (NCAA, 2012a). Division I is comprised of the largest programs and can offer the most athletically related financial aid. Division II can offer limited financial aid, and Division III schools do not offer any athletically related financial aid.

Participants were chosen from Division I institutions because they comprise the largest athletic programs, Division I member schools get the most media exposure, and women are more highly underrepresented in senior level leadership roles in this Division as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage of Women in AD or Associate AD Positions by Division

Division	Women ADs (%)	Women Associate ADs (%)
I	8.7	29.7
II	17	43.1
III	29.2	49.1

A better understanding of the experiences of senior level administrators in Division I is needed to fully comprehend the vast underrepresentation of women.

Women who hold Senior Associate AD positions at Division I institutions were recruited to participate in the investigation. The position of Senior Associate AD was chosen for the following reasons: 1) there are more women Senior Associate ADs than ADs in Division I and thus creates a larger sample, 2) Senior Associate ADs are more easily accessible than ADs, 3) Senior Associate ADs are only one step lower than the AD and may have aspirations to obtain an AD position, and 4) Senior Associate ADs are typically not the focus of research on leadership in intercollegiate athletics, so it is a new position to be explored.

The number of participants in qualitative research varies; however, in phenomenological studies the goal is to collect extensive detail from the individuals studied, not to generalize the information (Creswell, 2007). In a qualitative study, the most important consideration is to select the individuals who can provide the principal investigator (PI) with information that will answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2005). Twenty-three participants were identified from eighteen, urban, Midwestern and Southern university athletic websites. The email addresses were collected for women who had the title of Senior Associate AD. An email with an attached recruitment document was sent to the women who fit the criteria requesting their participation in the study [See Appendix A for a copy of the email and Appendix B for a copy of the recruitment document that was used to recruit participants]. After three email requests were sent to all potential participants, nine women from seven institutions agreed to participate in the study.

Data Collection

According to Seidman (2006), interviewing can lead to “understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). Seidman

(2006) goes on to claim “interviewing provides access to the context of people’s behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior” (p. 10).

Seidman (2006) recommends a series of three interviews; however, due to time constraints and funding, each participant participated in a single interview. The shortest interview was 51 minutes and the longest interview lasted two hours and 16 minutes. Single interviews contained components of the three-interview process suggested by Seidman (2006).

The first part of the interview focused on the career history of the participant in order to establish the context of the participants’ experience. Questions in this section focused on educational experiences, previous positions, networks, professional development opportunities, and mentoring. The second part of the interview focused on the details of their present day lived experiences. Questions in this section focused on current position, responsibilities, committee work, required attendance at events, average hours worked per week, and personal commitments. The final section of questions focused on the participants understanding of their experiences and the meaning they give to these experiences [See Appendix C for the interview protocol]. The interviews were semi-structured, face-to-face, and took place in a private office on the individual’s campus. The participants were required to sign an informed consent document to be included in the study [See Appendix D for the informed consent document]. All nine participants agreed to be digitally recorded.

The participants were also asked for an updated copy of their resume or vitae. Four participants did not have an updated resume, so the biographical information listed on the athletic department website was used to gather previous career experience. This additional documentation provides supplemental detailed information on patterns, themes, similarities, and differences in career experiences of each of the participants involved.

The participants occupy senior level athletic administration positions at their university, and are therefore highly visible and readily identifiable. They are referred to in this study with numeric identifiers in order to maintain complete anonymity. They are also referred to as “administrators,” or “senior leaders” in the write-up of the study in order to further protect anonymity.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2007) recommends six levels of abstraction for analyzing and representing data in phenomenological, qualitative research. These six levels include: a) data management, b) reading and memoing, c) describing, d) classifying, e) interpreting, and f) representing, visualizing. These six levels of abstraction and representation were followed in the data analysis in this study.

To manage the data, all of the interviews were transcribed and saved as both electronic files and as hard copies. The audio files and transcriptions for each participant were saved in a file folder on a password-protected computer. The hard copy of each interview transcription was kept in a binder in a locked office drawer.

Each interview was read while simultaneously listened to and notes and memos were written in the margins. To describe and classify the data, three main categories were created according to Seidman’s (2006) three-part interview focus (e.g. past experiences, current responsibilities, and meanings given to those experiences). Under the first main category *past experiences*, were five subcategories including the following career experiences: a) educational experiences, b) previous positions, c) networks, d) professional development, and e) mentoring. Each of these subcategories represented a code and the interviews were analyzed for these specific codes. The same method was followed under the second main category *current*

responsibilities. The five subcategories under current responsibilities include: a) job duties, b) committee work, c) requested attendance at events, d) average hours worked per week, and e) personal commitments. Two concept maps of these categorizations and descriptions are presented below in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2. Past Experiences

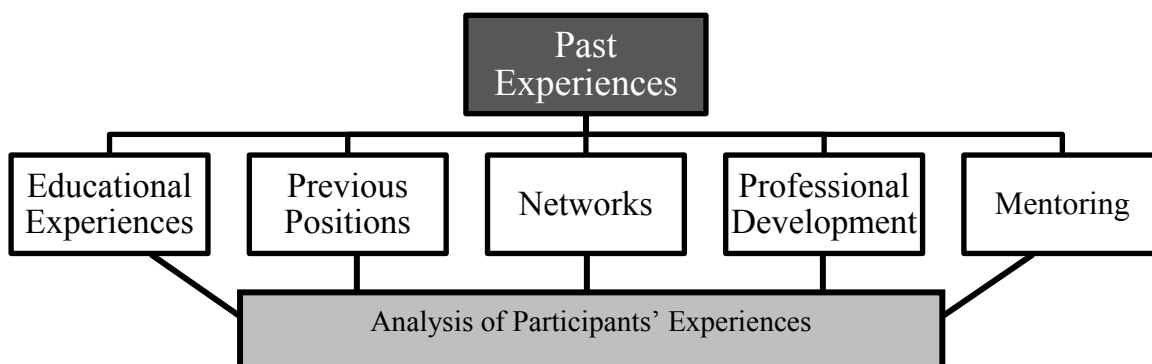
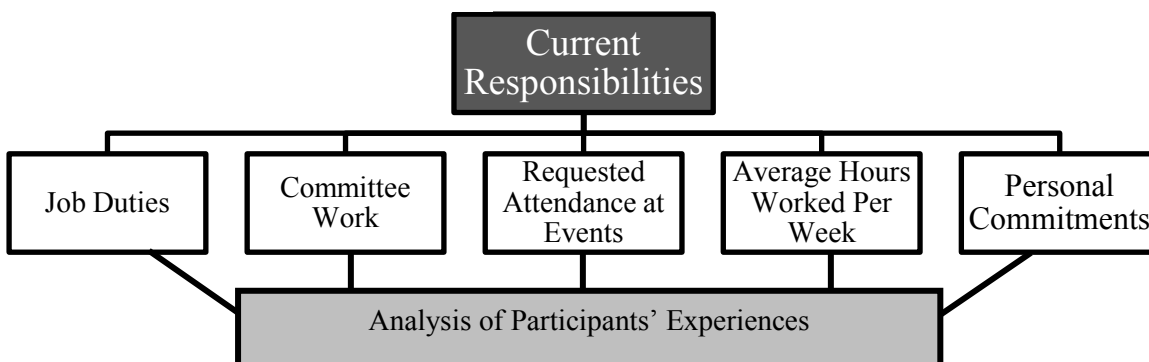


Figure 3. Current Responsibilities



Information from the participants' resumes, vitae, or website biographies were examined to provide more detailed information about their past career experiences and their current responsibilities. The information was included in the participant summaries under each of the subcategories listed in the concept maps in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Classifying the statements using the concept maps above helped to answer research question one - what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics? Additionally, Creswell (2007) recommends analyzing the data by classifying it into two categories. The first is *textural descriptions*, which explain “what” the participants experienced in their career advancement. The concept maps and summaries presented in Figures 2 and 3 provide most of the textural descriptions, and aid in answering the first research question. Creswell (2007) recommends a second category, which he calls *structural descriptions* that explain “how” the participants experienced their career advancement. The structural descriptions tap into understanding the meaning the participants give to their experiences. To help interpret the meaning of the participants’ experiences, the structural descriptions and comments referring to the interview questions regarding structural barriers and personal choices were coded, extracted, and recorded as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4. Structural Barriers

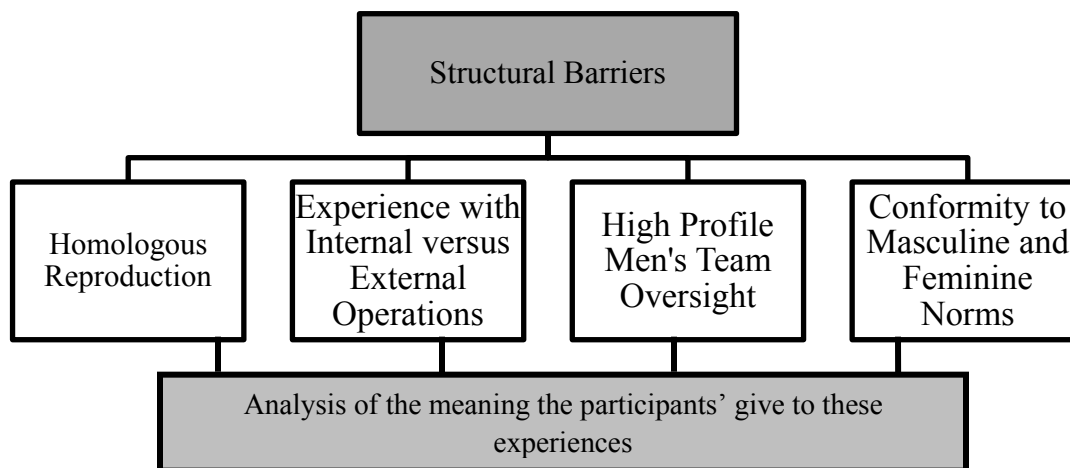
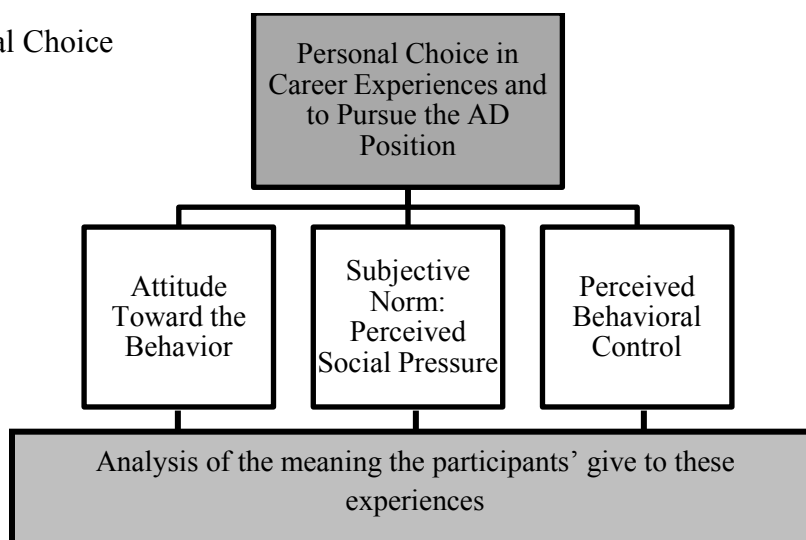


Figure 5. Personal Choice



The concept map in Figure 4 shows the data were coded and analyzed for specific evidence of homologous reproduction as well as the structural barriers: a) experience with internal operations versus external operations, b) decision-making authority in men's high profile sports, and c) conformity to feminine or masculine norms. It was pointed out in Chapter Two role congruity theory is useful in an investigation of senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics because many tasks and responsibilities have been categorized as tasks predominantly for men or tasks predominantly for women. The tasks that have been categorized as tasks for men are valued and preferred for advancement to the position of AD. Looking specifically to see whether roles, responsibilities, and tasks are mainly divided by masculine and feminine norms integrates role congruity theory. Additionally, examining whether high profile team oversight and experiences with external versus internal operations are primarily identified as experiences of men and advantage their advancement into the position of the AD also uses role congruity theory. A discussion of structural barriers and role congruity theory as it pertains to the participants' experiences in this study is provided in more detail in Chapter Four.

Structural barriers can influence personal choices especially within everyday duties and

responsibilities if women are denied specific career experiences that might better prepare them for the position of AD. Additionally, working within a system created by men for men might deter women from pursuing the AD position. Choices and intentions are possible reasons for underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. Figure 5 shows personal choice and intention were coded and analyzed using the three factors in TPB: a) attitudes toward the behavior, b) subjective norms/perceived social pressure, and c) perceived behavioral control. In addition to the participants' responses, TPB was used to predict whether or not the participants would pursue the AD position. A thorough discussion of this analysis is provided in Chapter Four.

The concept maps presented above help visualize and represent the data to help answer the research questions (Creswell, 2007). All of the questions are also discussed in narrative form. Quotes from the participants are used as evidence of how they experienced career advancement and what those experiences meant to them.

Ethical Considerations

The principal investigator (PI) in this investigation has experience as a former high school AD, a university adjunct instructor who has taught about gender issues in intercollegiate athletics, and an assistant director/academic advisor for intercollegiate student-athletes. Furthermore, she chose not to pursue senior levels of athletic administration. Currently, she is a doctoral student in Urban Educational Leadership and has previous research experience with athletic administrators and other senior level leaders in higher education. These experiences add to the knowledge base and qualifications for her to conduct the study; however, her background could lead to researcher bias and affect the trustworthiness and validity of the study. To improve trustworthiness of the study, she was trained in human subjects research through the

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. The PI submitted a protocol for working with human subjects to the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cincinnati. Finally, the PI had three doctoral committee members read the entire write up of the study to help detect any occurrence of researcher bias.

Validity

Maxwell (2005) defines validity as “the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account” (p. 106). The goal of the PI is to provide accurate, credible description and interpretation of the career experiences of women in senior levels of athletic administration. Maxwell (2005) discusses eight possible tests for validity; the PI uses four of these tests. The first test is gathering *rich data*. The PI used intensive interviews and verbatim transcriptions to gather the richest data from the participants. Furthermore, she provided detailed descriptions in the write up of the study. The second test of validity is called *respondent validation*, also known as *member checking*. The PI provided the participants with portions of the data analysis and discussion sections that are relevant to that particular participant so she can authenticate what the PI is representing as her experiences. The third test is *triangulation*, which requires the use of multiple methods to gather data in a study. The PI is using interviews as well as the participants’ resumes, vitae, and biographical information from their athletic departments’ websites to gather data in the study. Using these methods and documentation should provide an accurate description of the participants’ experiences. The fourth test is *comparison* and in this instance, the PI compares the findings to previous, similar research on the underrepresentation of women in senior levels of athletic administration in pages 77 through 118 of Chapter Four.

Summary of Methodology

Despite the gains in participation opportunities for women in intercollegiate athletics, women remain drastically underrepresented in senior levels of athletic administration. This study represents a qualitative, phenomenological study of women in Division I, Senior Associate AD positions in urban universities. The results of this examination: a) provides a comprehensive look at the career pattern experiences of women who are senior level athletic administrators, and b) provides a more complete understanding of how structural barriers and personal choice contribute to underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

This chapter addresses the overall purpose of understanding underrepresentation of women in senior levels of intercollegiate athletic administration. The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section describes the participant demographics. Sections two through five report, discuss, and summarize the findings, which correspond to each of the three research questions. There is a discussion of the career paths and experiences of the participants in the study, an examination of the structural barriers to career advancement, as well as an analysis of their career choices and intentions to pursue the position of AD. The final section contains concluding remarks and introduces the final chapter.

Participant Demographics

All nine of the participants are women who hold the title of Senior Associate AD at NCAA Division I universities in urban settings in the Midwest or Southeastern United States. Participants ranged in age from 34 to 59 years old with an average age of 47 years old. They have had anywhere from two to 23 years of experience in intercollegiate athletic administration with an average number of 13 years of experience. Three women are African American, one woman is Asian American, and five women are White. Five of the nine participants competed in intercollegiate athletics. Information is displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Participant Demographics

Characteristic	Data
Age	34 yrs. to 59 yrs.
Race	3 African American, 1 Asian American, 5 White
Intercollegiate Student-athlete	5 yes, 4 no
Undergraduate Degree	3 Psychology, 3 Physical Education, 1 Management Information Systems, 1 Business Administration (Management and Marketing), 1 English
Graduate Degree	7 Master's, 1 Juris Doctor, 1 Bachelors only
Years in Athletic Administration	2 years to 23 years

Past Experiences

The first research question asks, “What are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics?” Adhering to Seidman’s (2006) recommendation, the first research question is answered with a discussion of the participants past, as well as their current career experiences. The following section reports and analyzes data from the semi-structured interviews and review of the participants’ resumes, vitae, and biographical information from their athletic departments’ websites. Each subheading represents a subcategory described in Chapter Three and shown in Figure two of the same chapter.

Educational Experiences. The educational experiences of the participants are varied and are displayed in Table 2. Five of the nine women (55.5%) competed in intercollegiate athletics. This figure is lower than the 80% reported in the Fitzgerald et al. (1994) study and the 89.5% reported in the Grappendorf et al. (2004) study. The number of participants in the current study is small and may not be an accurate representation of the population.

Three of the participants earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in psychology, three received their Bachelor of Science degree in physical education, one earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in marketing and management, one a Bachelor of Arts degree in management information systems, one a Bachelor of Arts degree in accounting, and one a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. Seven participants have their master’s degree in sport administration or sport management and one participant has a Juris Doctor.

Participant one stated “When I went to college, at the time there weren’t many opportunities, if any I guess, to major in athletic administration or sports management on the undergraduate level” (February, 28, 2013). In 1985, there were only about 40 undergraduate programs in sport administration or sport management, but the number has grown to over 300 as

of 2010 (Crosset & Hums, 2012). Based on this information, it is very likely men in senior level administration also have varied educational backgrounds, which leads to a conclusion that educational experiences are not keeping women out of the AD position. Additionally, most of these women stated the coursework in marketing, business management, and legal aspects of sport management were most beneficial to their experience. So, even if they aren't gaining actual job experience in the business aspects of the department (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2010; Tiell & Dixon, 2008), they have educational training in those areas.

Previous Positions. The participants' previous career experiences are varied and represented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Previous Positions

Previous Position	n
Private sector	3
Professional Sports	2
Intercollegiate Coaching	2
NCAA	1
Intercollegiate athletic department	1

Only one participant started her career working in intercollegiate athletics at a university. One woman began her career working for the NCAA, two women began their careers coaching at the collegiate level, two participants began working in professional sports and three began working in the private sector (e.g. banking, recreational sports, and financial corporation). None of the participants specifically followed the tentative normative career pattern for advancement suggested by Fitzgerald et al. (1994) and discussed in Chapter One.

It is interesting to note the three participants who began their careers in the private sector were not student-athletes. At the time these three women finished their schooling, they did not see intercollegiate athletics as a career option. Participant one even stated,

I was talking with my Godmother about what I wanted to do, and then all of a sudden she said ‘well (name), you do realize that athletics is a business?’ I hadn’t really thought about it that way. I just always thought you either played or you coached and didn’t really think about what went on behind the scenes. It was my ‘ah ha’ moment, if you will. I then started looking into opportunities about what went into an athletic department. (February 28, 2013)

This finding suggests that even though most senior level intercollegiate athletic administrators were former student-athletes, it may be beneficial to educate or even recruit women who are not student-athletes to consider intercollegiate athletics as a possible career.

Women who are student-athletes have the opportunity to see the inter-workings of an athletic department and come to understand the organizational structure of intercollegiate athletics. Participant four, who was a former student-athlete and began her career in professional sports stated,

If you ask my mother, it’s kind of funny – when I got ready to take this job, she pulled out this article from when I was graduating from (name of institution) and being a women’s basketball player there and we had a pretty successful run, when my class graduated there were various articles that were done on where we were going next, and so in the article I talked about being an AD. (March 29, 2013)

Participant four’s comments convey the importance of encouraging female student-athletes to pursue a career in athletics because there may be quite a few women who aspire to be an AD.

The experiences of women who worked in professional sport are also interesting to note, especially because the reasons two of them chose to leave their jobs in professional sports had to do with reasons associated to being a woman. Participant one, who started her career in private sector, but had a short stint in professional sport stated,

There wasn't really opportunities to grow or advance in the areas in which I wanted to because I wasn't a man and I hadn't played. So I really wanted to do more with player relations and game ops, and be involved in that side of it whereas I was in the event, party planning aspect of it. I was buying napkins and throwing parties and stuff like that, which was a typical female role there. (February 28, 2013)

Participant three mentioned professional athletics was a very difficult industry for women to work because of stereotypes about women. She stated,

I didn't like professional athletics as a career path; I would not recommend it for my own daughter after experiencing it. Not a good industry for women. Still a lot of stereotypes about women who work in professional athletics. A lot of very old-school mentality from the men who work in athletics and I would not let my daughter do it. (March 29, 2013)

Later on in the interview, participant three described her experiences in professional sport in more detail:

With networks being so important, you know, we have to be aggressive and try to meet people, try to, you know, just build our relationships, but you get hit on. You turn people down because you know what happens if you don't in that industry. You lose that relationship and that was, I would say without question, 90% of people in professional athletics that I tried to build a relationship with. And there are just so few women

anyways and some of the women do meet the stereotype. I wasn't one of them. But then it's just hard to get a job after that. I'm talking like people in high up places that other people in the industry knew or a little bit how they were with women. Again, you know, you lose your...I left with no contacts, like literally. (March 29, 2013)

These two women left professional athletics and felt that college athletics would provide more opportunity as well as a more professional environment in which to work. For seven of the nine participants in the study, once they began their careers in intercollegiate athletics, they continued. One participant left for one year to be closer to family and take some time off, but later returned to intercollegiate athletics. Another participant left intercollegiate athletics for five years to run her own business unrelated to sport, but also returned.

Networks. According to Acosta and Carpenter (1994) and Coakley (2001), women seem to lack the connections and networks that men have in intercollegiate athletics. These nine women seem to fully understand the value of networking. All of the participants noted networking was important to their careers. The two most important ideas that surfaced from the interviews were 1) the specific affiliations included in their networks, and 2) how they used their networks. The participants mentioned multiple networks which are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Participant Networks

Network	n
ADs (their own and NACDA)	4
National associations related to their position (NAAC, NACMA)	4
NACWAA	4
Conference affiliations	3
SWA groups	3
NCAA committees	3
Former business clients and contacts	1

These nine women actively use their networks. When speaking about ADs, participant five said “I have a pretty good relationship with many of the ADs in the conference and feel free to call them whenever I want to bounce something off of them or ask how they do something” (April 10, 2013). She tends to use her network of ADs for advice or input. Participant one stated,

It’s really all about me still trying to continue to build my network, letting people know I’m still there, I still exist, and I’m still relevant. I think that’s the biggest piece. So just about every year I go to the NACDA convention because it’s a huge platform where everybody from all over the country comes, a large portion of them are men. (February 28, 2013)

These women are aware of the “good old boys’ network” and their networks must include men in order to advance their careers. Participant two even noted, “I say that being able to drink beer has done wonders for my networking with those guys” (March 7, 2013).

Another commonly mentioned network are the national associations that are affiliated specifically to their current roles and positions, participant two stated,

I have one that’s compliance based and we’re like a really tight knit group. I would go to a point where I probably would say we’re like really good friends, some of like my best friends and so we met through meetings and things like that and you form this trust. (March 7, 2013)

Four participants use networks affiliated specifically to their positions for advice or input because they may have run across similar situations at their own institutions in the past and may be able to share their expertise. These open lines of communication and attendance at

conference meetings with others in their same roles leads to formation of trust, friendships, and connections that may be useful to their future careers.

The National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA) was mentioned by nearly all of the participants, however only four mentioned the association as being part of their network. Participant nine described the first NACWAA conference she attended as “fantastic” (April 24, 2013). She went on to state,

I think it was interesting to just be in a group, of women who are also sort of aspiring to improve professionally, and it was fun, number one. I mean, it was a good time and everybody was really very enthusiastic and brought a lot of different experiences to the table. (Participant 9, April 24, 2013)

Participant two also considers NACWAA as one of her networks. She stated,

It’s amazing, that network of women, what it can do for you. But was one of the – I think was a huge thing in terms of confidence and learning, kind of the ins and outs, as being the only female in the room with probably nine males, which is kind of typical in terms of meetings in intercollegiate athletics. (March 7, 2013)

For the most part, the participants in this study found having a network of women like NACWAA is beneficial; however, one participant said the organization marginalizes some women, specifically when it comes to becoming involved with committees or boards. She stated,

Within NACWAA, which I’m really disappointed to say, if you’re not an AD, a commissioner, even they have a tendency not to give you the opportunities or let you serve on things and if I became the AD of (institution) tomorrow, and then expressed

interest to be on the board, I could probably be on the board this summer. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)

She goes on to say, “you want to show off the women that have ‘made it,’ but then there are a lot of good women, I think, that could make it if we could get this experience” (Participant One, February 28, 2013). As you can see from the comments, there is even competition within some of the associations that are set up specifically to support the interests of women in intercollegiate athletics.

Participant six mentions some of the other important networks,

I have great relationships with the SWAs in the (name) conference. I have fantastic relationships with people I have met over the years because of our success in women’s basketball. I have another group of people I’ve met because I was on the NCAA track and field committee. I can pick up the phone and call those people at any time, but I wouldn’t say it’s something I work at. (April 17, 2013)

Even though she mentioned the networks above, participant six does not think of herself as one who actively networks. She wants to get to know the people she comes in contact with on a daily basis at her institution (e.g. student-athletes, coaches, alumni, and donors). She sees herself staying at her institution until she retires, so her network is where she is.

Many of the participants discussed the importance of networks if you want to move on to another institution or pursue the position of AD. Participant one stated, “at this point, you’re not allowed, or it’s frowned upon if you actively at my level or as an AD, if you actively pursue a position” (February 28, 2013). She goes on to state it is important to use your network to get to the people in decision-making and hiring positions. She states she tries to “figure out who’s the decision-making person and try to work network so they can help me get to the (next) decision-

making person to help influence the direction I want to go” (Participant One, February 28, 2013). Many of the participants agreed that at their level, they really do not need to apply for another position in athletics. These women clearly understand the importance and role of networking in the intercollegiate athletic community. They are actively putting their networks to work in order to obtain the next position if that is their ultimate goal.

Professional Development. As previously stated in Chapter One, the NCAA and NACWAA have offered professional development opportunities to help prepare women for advancement into leadership roles within intercollegiate athletics. The effectiveness of these programs is undetermined and the participants in this study have varying views of their professional development opportunities and experiences.

Three of the nine participants found NACWAA helpful to their professional development. Two of them thought the Institute for Administrative Advancement, formerly the NACWAA/HERS (Higher Education Resource Services) Institute, was extremely important to their professional development. Participant two stated,

It is a week-long, intensive, 8:00am until probably 8:00pm, five days of leadership development, everything you can possibly think of and was probably career changing in terms of professional development. I think I was not coasting along, but probably didn't make the moves as quickly as I could have before that, and so they kind of gave you all the tools and confidence. (March 7, 2013)

Participant nine also thought the institute was “fantastic” (April 24, 2013).

Participant one had mixed emotions about the professional development opportunities offered by NACWAA and NACDA, but she stated, “NACWAA & NACDA don't offer enough

“new” content each year for folks to attend every year solely for reason alone; their primary reason for attending every year is for the networking piece” (February 28, 2013).

Participant three did not attend the NACWAA institute, but of the annual convention, she stated, “NACWAA was a waste of time, no question. I just went to their conference and there was just nothing there that would have helped me” (March 29, 2013).

Speaking more generally about professional development, participant six said, “I can’t tell you I’ve been to anything that has made a difference in my career” (April 17, 2013).

Participant eight felt like she did not have time to attend professional development workshops and seminars because she was so busy with her day to day activities on campus.

Other helpful professional development activities mentioned by a few of the participants were meetings with other SWAs, conference meetings, meetings or groups specifically associated with their positions (NACMA, NAAC, etc.), private industry workshops, and personally chosen books and readings.

Mentoring. Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) define mentoring as “a process in which a more experienced person serves as a role model, provides guidance and support to a developing novice, and sponsors individual’s career progress” (p. 25). Mentoring is important for enhancing career success and power within an organization as well as for attracting women to the field of sport (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999).

The participants mentioned a number of different mentors in their lives such as parents, coaches, supervisors, professors, other university administrators, and ADs. All of them mentioned both men and women who were mentors in their lives. Bower (2009) claims “Cross-gendered mentoring may be more beneficial to the female because male mentors hold a more crucial position within the organization” (p. 10).

Participant six's comments illustrate the importance of having mentors and role models early in life when she said,

I have had tremendous role models and mentors since I was in high school. I was very close to a lady that was the associate principal at the high school where I went. And one of the reasons I admired her so was because I think she was the first female I ever really knew that was in a position other than a teacher. (April 17, 2013)

Later she goes on to talk about this mentor and says, "I think probably from (name), my high school mentor, it's like this – you can be a leader and you can be a decision maker and you can also be a woman" (April 17, 2013). In high school, participant six recognized she could aspire to a leadership and decision-making role even if she is a woman.

Participant seven spoke about four different professors from her master's program that were important mentors. She stated "they really challenged me to think more deeply about issues and to look at different perspectives that might be equally valid" (April 18, 2013). When speaking about one of her professors specifically, participant seven stated,

She just exuded integrity and a passion for intercollegiate athletics, a passion for the experience of the student-athlete in your program, and for fairness, for Title IX and wanting to make sure young women have the same opportunity to participate in intercollegiate athletics as young men. (April 18, 2013)

Participant seven stated this mentor had a direct impact on her both personally and professionally.

Many of the women spoke of often consulting their mentors for advice on a particular issue and they would choose which mentor to speak with depending on the situation. Participant four spoke about her mentors as her "Board of Directors" (March 29, 2013). She said,

I believe in having different people you can go to at different times for different things and I also believe in going to people who have the opposite point of view of me so I can hear the other side. (Participant Four, March 29, 2013)

Being mentored and mentoring others was clearly important for all of the participants. Four of the participants mentioned they really enjoyed mentoring first time coaches or graduate assistants. Only participant two mentioned that mentors were there for her, but she felt like she has gotten where she is mostly on her own, however sees the importance of mentoring others. She stated, “I felt like I was on my own to learn and figure things out, which is probably why I take a more active role in the people who work for me, to kind of give them ” (March 7, 2013).

Summary of Past Experiences

Research question one asks, what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics? To summarize and answer this question, five of the nine participants were former student-athletes and they were educated in a number of different fields in undergraduate study. All but two have master’s degrees in sport administration or sport management. One has a Juris Doctor and the other does not have a degree higher than her bachelor’s degree.

Their experience in intercollegiate athletic administration ranges from two to 23 years with an average of 13 years of experience. Six out of nine of them had previous careers in sport, either intercollegiate athletics or professional sport. The other three worked in private sector business in finance, banking, or recreational sport. The women who left professional sport felt like there would be more opportunity for women in intercollegiate athletics and two of them felt college sport would provide an environment that was less gender stereotypical for women.

With regard to networking, all of the participants acknowledged the importance of it, and they mentioned multiple affiliations for networking including: ADs, national associations related to their position, NACWAA, conference affiliations, SWA groups, and NCAA committees. Most of the time they use their networks for advice in particular situations relating to professional decision-making and referrals or to help them obtain next career position.

The participants' thoughts on professional development were varied. Some of the professional development activities mentioned were NACWAA institutes and conventions, meetings with other SWAs, conference meetings, meetings or groups specifically associated with their positions (NACMA, NAAC, etc.), private industry workshops, and personally chosen books and readings. Some of them found professional development activities and workshops extremely helpful to their careers and others did not really find any professional development activities particularly meaningful to their careers.

All of the participants had mentors of which included parents, coaches, supervisors, professors, other university administrators, and ADs. They all had both male and female mentors and they mentioned mentors from the past as well as current mentors. Some of the participants consult their various mentors based on certain professional or personal situations and one participant felt her mentors had only a small impact on where she is today.

Some of these women were former student-athletes, but it is not necessary for their career. Their educational and professional backgrounds are varied. All of the participants have networks and understand the importance of using their networks for career success. Professional development has been influential for some in their career development and all but one of the participants have and recognize the importance of mentors in their career advancement. The

next section discusses their current job experiences and provides further understanding of their careers in senior level athletic administration.

Current Job Responsibilities and Experiences

To continue answering research question number one, what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics, Seidman (2006) recommends gaining an understanding of the participants' current job responsibilities and experiences. The following section reports and analyzes data from the semi-structured interviews and review of the participants' resumes, vitae, and biographical summaries from their athletic departments' websites. Each subheading represents a subcategory described in Chapter Three and shown in Figure 3 of the same chapter.

Job Duties and Responsibilities. Five of the nine participants serve as the SWA in addition to or as part of their Senior Associate AD position. These five participants oversee internal operations such as compliance, student-athlete services, human resources, strength and conditioning, athletic training, equipment, as well as sport supervision for anywhere between four and 35 varsity sports teams. Two of the participants mostly oversee the compliance office operations only, but also supervise from one to seven sports. One participant strictly oversees all aspects of the athletic department budget and has no team oversight. One participant is in charge of all aspects of external operations, which includes marketing, game operations, corporate sales, ticket sales, licensing and merchandising, radio and television, and has supervision of four teams. All of the participants serve as members of the executive committees in the athletic department that consist of the highest level of administrators and the AD.

All of the participants feel role congruency with their current job responsibilities whether their positions are more communally based or agentically based. Eight out of the nine feel if

they ask the AD for additional responsibilities, the AD would give them those opportunities.

Participant two stated,

I went to my AD and said ‘I’m feeling like I’m hitting another ceiling, so I want to continuously grow in this profession, so this is what I think I need.’ And he said ‘okay, write out a list and send it to me,’ and then he has basically given me what I want.

(March 7, 2013)

One participant had her requests for additional responsibilities denied. When asked if she had ever been denied specific responsibilities, participant five stated, “Yes, with (name), I told him I needed some development oversight and he agreed, but never gave it” (April 10, 2013). The experiences of participant five are interesting, because at the time she asked for that opportunity, she was also seeking a few AD positions. Participant five’s AD may have felt the additional responsibilities were not congruent with being a women and her role in the department.

According to Claussen & Lehr (2002), Hoffman (2011), and Tiell & Dixon (2008), women are not getting the experience in external operations including fundraising and development, which may limit their chances at obtaining an AD position. Most of the participants who want to pursue the position of AD know they need to get experience in external operations to do so. I will explore this idea more thoroughly in the section on structural barriers to career advancement.

Committee Work. All of the participants reported being involved with committees. The number of committees each of the participants are involved with ranges between four and eight and the type of committee ranges from athletic department committees, to university committees, to conference committees, to NCAA committees, to national association committees to community committees. See Table 5 for representation of committee participation.

Table 5. Committee Work

Participant	Athletics	University	Conference	NCAA	National Association	Community	Total
1	1	4	0	1	2	0	8
2	4	1	0	1	1	1	8
3	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
4	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
5	2	0	1	1	0	0	4
6	2	3	1	0	0	0	6
7	2	0	0	0	3	0	5
8	1	3	0	0	0	0	4
9	2	1	2	1	0	0	6

A couple of the participants report being regularly asked to represent the athletic department on committees. When referring to committee work, participant six stated, “The chancellor and I have a pretty good relationship, and I’ve been here a hell of a long time, so I get on a lot of his committees” (April 17, 2013). She went on to say “I’m asked. I don’t ever seek out that kind of (stuff), it’s not my style” (April 17, 2013). Similarly, participant nine stated, “I kind of tend to end up being, end up sounds so bad, I tend to be the liaison, so if there’s a campus initiative affects the department...I’m the person gets the call” (April 24, 2013). Most of the time the participants choose to be on the committees, but periodically, their presence on a committee is requested either by the AD or the president or chancellor of the university.

Two of the participants of color reported frustration with some committee participation opportunities because they either get pigeonholed for minority committees or they fill a quota for representation on certain committees. Participant one stated,

I went to my conference office this year and expressed that I want to get on an NCAA committee, because the conference office ultimately has to move your name forward to

the NCAA, and what committee did they move me forward for? – Minority. (February 28, 2013)

Similarly, participant five stated,

One of the challenges I have is there is always the desire to have diversity on these committees, and so part of it is I keep getting sucked in because I'm an African American female and so I can fill the box. Now having said that, I must be doing something right because they keep asking me. (April 10, 2013)

The participants seem generally satisfied with their representation on committees, particularly the committees outside of the athletic department but within their own institutions. Participant one displayed this satisfaction when she stated, "I want to learn more about the university and the inter-workings of the university, not only in conjunction or correlation with the athletic department, but just in general" (February 28, 2013). She talked about how the university committee work helped her build connections and relationships. Participant nine discussed in depth, her involvement and satisfaction with a university committee geared toward women faculty and staff in which she has been a member of since she arrived on campus and has chaired the committee for the past four years.

Although committee work was not discussed in the previously reviewed literature, it is an expected task and responsibility. It is a substantial commitment in the current career experiences of the women in these roles.

Requested Attendance at Events. The participants were asked about mandatory attendance at athletic and other functions in order to provide further understanding of their job requirements. The participants' responses to the question ranged from nothing to everything. The most common responses were: all home events of the sports they supervise, home football

games, some men's basketball games, some fundraising events, department meetings, hall of fame events, student-athlete welcome back events and awards recognitions, and some travel with teams.

Participants five, six, and seven felt very few if any events were actually required for them to be in attendance, however, they choose to be at quite a few events. Participant five stated,

There's nothing that says in my job description that I am expected to attend every home women's basketball game or any of that, but as the oversight person for that sport, I would feel weird not going to their events. There's nothing in my job description that says it's mandatory for me to attend anything. (April 10, 2013)

Participant six stated, "No one's ever told me my attendance was mandatory. I mean, there's certain things like that (awards banquet), about three or five things a year when we say, okay, you've got to be there" (April 17, 2013). She goes on to describe why she thinks it is important to attend as many events as she can.

I think if you want to really be in a position to make decisions, if you want to be a part of the leadership group, then people need to know who you are. You need to be around.

They need to see you. (Participant Six, April 17, 2013)

All of the participants would agree with this statement, however, some of the participants felt more pressure to be at nearly every event. Participant two felt like you lose credibility if you do not attend events. She stated, "If you're just sitting home on the couch, and it's my perspective, you're going to lose some of that credibility. So I almost feel like everything is mandatory. But that's more so my perception than the reality" (March 7, 2013). Her attendance at events was

more self-imposed whereas participants three and four felt their attendance was mandatory at nearly all events.

Participant three listed everything she was required to attend including: all of the home games of all the sports she supervises, all home football games, all home men's basketball games, all large student-athlete events, monthly department meetings, certain fundraising events, football luncheons, basketball luncheons, and alumni events with the sports she oversees. She stated, "I think probably a lot more than most institutions" and she felt like at other institutions "it was just choice, but here's it's a requirement" (Participant Three, March 29, 2013).

Participant four echoes participant three's statement when she stated, "I have a boss who believes I'm supposed to be at every event" (Participant Four, March 29, 2013).

Attendance at events was not discussed in the literature review, and although a few of the participants feel their attendance at athletic events is not mandatory, all of the participants spend a great deal of time at work. A more detailed discussion about how the participants feel about the time requirements of their positions will follow in the next two sections.

Average Hours Worked Per Week. The participants were asked to estimate the average number of hours worked per week to provide understanding of the time commitment to their job. Most of the participants gave a range of average hours worked per week between 50 and 80 hours. Based on these ranges, the average hours worked per week would be about 60 hours per week. See the participants' responses in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Estimated Average Hours Worked Per Week

Participant	Hours
1	50 - 80
2	60
3	50 plus
4	50 – 80
5	50 – 60
6	60 - 65
7	65 - 70
8	50 - 70
9	50 – 60

The variance and range in estimated average hours worked per week really depends on the sport season with the overlap of fall and winter seasons and the overlap of winter and spring seasons being the busiest, most time consuming parts of the job for most of the participants. Other busy times center on deadlines for their specific positions whether it be budget deadlines or student-athlete initial eligibility deadlines. A few of the participants feel like they always need to be available. Participant two asserts,

I need to be available 24/7. So whether my phone is ringing or I'm getting a text message, I still feel like I'm always on the clock because I feel like I have to be ready to deal with an issue or something that happens. (March 7, 2013)

When possible, participant four stated she tries to be really efficient with her time so she can have some personal time. She declared,

I'm one of those people in order to make sure I can get my work done and have some semblance of a home life, I come in here and I'm like the only person here at 7:30. At

5:00, 5:15, I am leaving. That is it. I'm done. If we don't have a game, I'm out of here. I'm not working late. (March 29, 2013)

Not all of the participants feel like the amount of time spent at their job is too much.

Participant one stated, "I really am still one of those crazy people where it doesn't feel like work, so it's not like I really get into dreading this stuff" (February 28, 2013). Participant six feels the time commitment to the position is to be expected. She claims,

You know, you work all day and then you work all night and you work all weekend and that's just what you do. It's not a job. Every time I speak to a class, I say to them this is not a job. This is a lifestyle and if you can't commit to the lifestyle, then you need to look somewhere else. (April 17, 2013)

Although average hours worked was not discussed in the literature review, overwhelmingly, all of the participants felt like they worked a very large number of hours. They also collectively agreed it was difficult to maintain work-life balance at least at some point in their career. A discussion of time devoted to personal commitments and work-life balance is included in the next section.

Personal Commitments. The participants were asked about how many hours they spent on personal commitments per week. Not all of the participants quantified the number of hours spent on personal commitments, but participant seven said "None, right now, none, it's stupid" (April 18, 2013). Participant one gave a range of "0 – 15 hours per week" (February 28, 2013), participant two said "20 hours per week" (March 7, 2013), and participant five said "35 hours per week" (April 10, 2013). The other participants did not give a specific number of hours, but they did discuss their work-life balance. Participant one describes her lack of work-life balance over the course of her career and says,

I didn't take any other aspect or part of my life into consideration, and it (work) never ended up fulfilling me the way I expected it to or thought it would be based on the amount of energy and focus I put into it and it's because it wasn't feeding the whole person. It was feeding the professional aspect, but it can't be my friend. It can't be my husband. It can't be the whole relationship piece, and that piece I totally and completely sacrificed for the career. (February 28, 2013)

She doesn't necessarily regret the choices she has made in her career and she is pleased with what she has accomplished, but she did say she is "to the point that I'm not willing to do that anymore" (February 28, 2013). She plans to work on balancing her personal and professional life.

It is clearly a difficult job in which to balance personal and professional life. Participant six has only had Thanksgiving with her family four times in the last 23 years. Participant five stated,

I got to get off the wheel. It's a grind, it's a grind. There are times I wish when I left the office, I could leave the office, but you really can't, and it's becoming more of a challenge for me, creating balance; 24/7 is wearing on me. (April 10, 2013)

Participant four also discusses the exhaustive nature of the job and the difficult professional and personal life balance. She said,

There are times that I wish and I would pray about my schedule becoming more flexible here, and I don't know, maybe one day that'll happen. Maybe not. Maybe I'll be someplace else and that'll have to happen and this is just kind of my journey. I don't complain about it. There are times that I do, I'm very, very, very, very tired. I'm exhausted. (March 29, 2013)

Participants two, three, and four discussed integrating their personal life with their professional life by inviting their kids, partners, spouses, or parents to athletic events. For example, participant two said,

If my parents are in town and there's events, you know, bringing them into those so I'm getting my personal time with them and spending time with them while I'm also at the event I probably should be at. Not really working, but I am working. So kind of like how I can interweave the two. (March 7, 2013)

Another commonly cited strategy for balancing personal life with professional life was setting policies and boundaries about answering emails or phone calls at night or on the weekends.

Participant three stated,

Before my (child), I would be responding to emails all day, all night, but I've made the choice not to and so I've kind of set the tone if you send me an email after this time, I'm not going to respond to it until the morning. I will always get back in 24 hours, but I will not respond after this time because it's for my child. (March 29, 2013)

Similarly, participant five said

I tell coaches, those direct reports to me, here's my home phone number. If you need to reach me after 9:00, call me on my home phone because when I go upstairs at night, I plug in the phone downstairs and 's just my way of creating balance and maintaining it. (April 10, 2013)

Participants one, five, and seven discussed the importance of making time for exercise because it is enjoyable to them and it helps them deal with stress from the job. In fact, participant one has a treadmill in her office so it reminds her on a daily basis of the importance of exercise. She makes time right before she goes home from work to either walk or run on it. Participant four

tries to make time for herself by getting her hair or nails done. Participants three, four, and eight mentioned supportive spouses help them manage professional and personal life.

Only participant nine mentioned her “balance is actually pretty good right now” (April 24, 2013). She mentioned the AD she works for does a good job of modeling work-life balance. She said,

I think it’s a really good model for people here who are trying to manage everything and especially the ones who do have kids. I think they see he takes time. He doesn’t come to stuff on weekends if his son has a game; he goes to his son’s game. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

Participant nine’s experiences seem to be the exception rather than the rule, at least in terms of this small sample of women.

In general, personal commitments received far less of the participants time and attention than their job responsibilities. Overall, the participants struggled with work-life balance. Pastore et al. (1996) found work balance and conditions are important for the retention of women in athletic administration. Committee work, mandatory attendance at events, large numbers of hours worked, and little time for personal commitments can influence whether or not women intend to pursue the AD position, especially if she perceives the role to require more time than she gives in her current position.

Summary of Current Job Responsibilities

To continue answering research question number one, what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics, this section summarizes the findings of the participants’ current job responsibilities and experiences.

When describing day to day area oversight and responsibility, most of the participants oversee internal operations such as compliance, student-athlete services, human resources, strength and conditioning, athletic training, equipment, and they may supervise anywhere from one to 35 varsity sports teams. Two of the participants oversee external operations which may include the budget, marketing, game operations, corporate sales, ticket sales, licensing and merchandising, radio and television, and has supervision of four teams.

Women in senior level administrative positions are busy. All of the participants reported being involved with between four and eight committees on a regular basis and the type of committee ranges from department to university to national and even community committees. When asked about mandatory attendance at events, the participants' mostly attend home events of the sports they supervise, home football games, some home men's basketball games, some fundraising events, department meetings, student-athlete welcome back events, awards recognitions, and some travel with teams. The participants average about 60 hours of work per week and they spend very little time on personal commitments. For the most part, all but one of them struggle with work-life balance. Work balance and conditions are important for the retention of women in athletic administration (Pastore et al., 1996).

The findings reported about past and current experiences provide a good understanding of the career experiences of women in senior level athletic administrator roles. The following section provides an understanding of whether or not structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD.

Structural Barriers to Advancement

The second research question in this study asks, do structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD? Previous research discovered the

existence of the specific structural barriers of homologous reproduction (Sagas et al., 2006; Stangl & Kane, 1991), experience with internal operations versus external operations (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008), decision-making authority in men's high profile sports (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008), and conformity to feminine and masculine norms (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Both Seidman (2006) and Creswell (2007) place an importance on understanding the meaning the participants give to their experiences. This section focuses on the meaning of the participants' experiences and on understanding whether or not structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD.

Homologous Reproduction. Homologous reproduction is the “theory that both male and female managers strive to create predictable environments in which they rely on socially similar others and reproduce themselves” (Sagas et al., 2006, p. 504). The theory contends that because men are overrepresented in senior level leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics, the practice of homologous reproduction becomes a structural barrier prevents the advancement of women to these same roles (Sagas et al., 2006). The PI in this study specifically asked the participants about the gender of the person who hired them for each of their intercollegiate athletic positions. Table 7 displays the information that was reported by the participants.

Table 7. Gender of Supervisor Who Hired or Promoted the Participants

Participant	1st Position	2nd Position	3rd Position	4th Position
1	Man	Woman	Woman	Man
2	Man	Stayed at the same university and was always promoted by a man		
3	Man	Woman		
4	Woman			
5	Woman	Man	Stayed at the same university and was always promoted by a man	
6	Woman	Woman	Stayed at the same university and was always promoted by a woman	
7	Man	Woman		
8	Man	Stayed at the same university and was always promoted by a woman		
9	Man	Man		

The data from Table 7 reveal that in the 17 position transitions within intercollegiate athletic administration that were made cumulatively by all of the participants, nine hires were made by men and eight hires were made by women. Four participants have stayed at their university and received promotions. Two of the four received all of their promotions from women and the other two received all of their promotions from men. The rest of the participants were hired into their current job title.

From the experience of these nine participants, on the surface, there seems to be no evidence of homologous reproduction as a structural barrier to being hired into senior level leadership positions because they were almost equally hired and promoted by both men and women. However, the data does not tell us anything about the proportion of men versus women

hired and promoted into other administrative roles by the individuals at those institutions who hired and promoted these women. In other words, we do not know if the AD's who hired and promoted them mostly hire and promote men or mostly hire and promote women or equally hire and promote both. When asked about other positions they applied for, none of the participants knew whether or not they were denied a position based on being a woman. Additionally, five of the nine women serve in the role of SWA which is most commonly filled by a woman, so regardless of sex, the position was likely going to be filled with a woman.

Rather than a person's sex playing a role in obtaining a senior level intercollegiate athletic administration position, the data revealed more about the importance of networking and getting to know the right people in hiring positions, more specifically, the ADs. For example, participant one stated, "People always used to say, 'it's not what you know, it's who you know,' and with athletics, we'd always take the next step and say 'it's not who you know, it's actually who knows you'" (February 28, 2013). The participants know it is extremely important for others in the field to know who they are and how they work in order to obtain an AD position.

A couple of the participants discussed gender differences in the expectations of working for a woman AD that they did not mention about the AD's whom they worked for who are men. Participant three stated,

Every report has to be perfect. I mean, with (female AD), once a week I make sure every piece of information I have is accurate. I make sure it's done professionally, no mistakes, and I'm accurately informing her of what's going on in all the areas because I'm sure it's the same for her when she's reporting to (name), our president. (March 29, 2013)

Similarly, participant one stated,

I think (female AD) really forced me to prove my competency a lot more during the interviewing process maybe than (male AD) necessarily made me do. And I think would be a dynamic of a woman to woman kind of a thing, because she was in the business, she knew how hard it was for her to get there and become an athletic director at a DI institution. She just wasn't going to let you do it just because you were a female and so I had to prove myself. (February 28, 2013)

Although homologous reproduction does not appear to be a structural barrier that prohibited these women from obtaining their senior level athletic administration positions, it is difficult to tell from this small sample and the data that was collected if homologous reproduction persists.

Structural Barriers and Role Congruity Theory. Previous research has identified the existence of additional structural barriers which prohibit women from advancing into the position of AD in intercollegiate athletics including: a) experience with internal operations versus external operations (Hoffman, 2011), b) decision-making authority in men's high profile sports (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008), and c) conformity to feminine or masculine norms (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Each of these previously identified structural barriers is linked to gender stereotypes of how men and women are expected to adhere to certain social roles within intercollegiate athletics. In this study, role congruity theory is used as a framework for understanding these three structural barriers.

Role congruity theory links the compatibility of gender roles with leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Eagly and Karau (2002) claim there are two types of prejudice against women leaders: 1) they are perceived to have less ability in leadership roles than men, and 2) there is a preference for women to engage in and display more supportive, communal roles and behavior rather than agentic roles and behavior. Experience with internal versus external operations and

high profile team oversight relates to ability and expectations in leadership roles and gender preferences for engagement in communal and agentic roles relates to conformity to masculine and feminine norms. The following is a discussion of these structural barriers.

Experience with internal versus external operations. Specific to the intercollegiate athletic environment, communal roles are linked to internal operations in the athletic department such as academics and advising, athletic training, compliance and conduct, event management and facilities, equipment and locker rooms, and strength and conditioning (Hoffman, 2011). Agentic roles are linked to external operations in the athletic department such as marketing and promotions, alumni relations, development and fundraising, budget and contract negotiations, ticketing, and media relations (Hoffman, 2011). These roles and responsibilities tend to be divided along gender lines with men administrators performing more of the external operations and women performing more of the internal operations; external operations is more important for career advancement to the role of AD than internal operations (Hoffman, 2011).

Table 8 summarizes the participants' internal and external experiences based on the categorizations defined by Hoffman (2011) listed above.

Table 8. Experience with Internal and External Operations

Participant	Internal	External	Additional Responsibilities
1	X		Some budget, and some contract negotiations (external)
2	X		
3	X		
4		X	Some event management(internal)
5	X		Some contract negotiations (external)
6	X		
7	X		
8		X	All budget operations (external)
9	X		Some budget oversight (external)

Four of the participants have oversight of internal operations exclusively. Two of the participants have almost exclusive oversight of external operations. Three participants (mostly because of their longevity in the position) have or have had some oversight of small areas of external operations. All of the participants feel role congruence with their job responsibilities and accepted their current positions knowing what responsibilities they would have. Those who aspire or previously aspired to obtain an AD position are very much aware of the experience they need in external operations in order to obtain the ultimate position. For example, participant five discussed the importance of fundraising and financial oversight as more important than sport oversight in obtaining an AD job. She stated,

When I was aspiring to be an athletic director, I wanted more responsibility with fundraising because I'm a firm believer that you can get an AD who has never had oversight. In fact our last fundraiser had never had any sport oversight. They can get an AD's position. (April 10, 2013)

Interestingly, participant five is the same participant who had asked for more experience with fundraising when she was looking into obtaining an AD position, however, she was never granted those responsibilities by her AD. There was no mention as to whether or not this was intentional or if her AD felt the additional responsibility was not congruent with her role in the athletic department. This could be the structural barrier that prohibited her from obtaining an AD position.

Participant three also discussed the necessity of gaining more experience with fundraising in order to obtain an AD position. She stated,

I think at some point, I would like to get a little bit more involved in fundraising, just because I know you need to have that on your plate if you want to move up. At the same

time, the fact we're required to go to all these alumni fundraising events, even if I'm not there to actually do 'an ask,' or build a relationship, you're still experiencing it and you kind of see what goes on. (March 29, 2013)

Participant three pointed out that she has fundraising experience without actually having it as a direct responsibility. In fact, all of these women attend at least a few fundraising events every year whether it is their direct responsibility or not and they are gaining some experience in that area. Participant two aspires to be an AD and asks her AD for specific external operations in order to get experience even though she has oversight in internal operations. She said,

I'm going to get things I wish I would have had a month ago are now going to be on my plate, the external things, like sport specific fundraising experience, facility enhancement projects, and I guess the licensing and merchandising would go along with . So those are things that I specifically said I need, experience on the external. (March 7, 2013)

The overrepresentation of the participants in internal operations would suggest women's ability to lead in external operations is questioned and doubted as Eagly and Karau (2002) claim.

However, the participants who aspire to obtain an AD position realize that not having experience with external operations could be a structural barrier that would prohibit them from obtaining the position. Thus, they are actively seeking out the experience they need to move forward and for the most part are being given experience with external operations when asked. If women are denied experience with external operations, the structural barrier will persist.

High profile men's sport oversight. Lack of decision-making authority in high profile men's sports may prohibit SWAs from advancing into the role of head AD (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). High profile teams include football, men's basketball, and depending on the success of the team, the institution, and the conference, this

could also include baseball, and men's ice hockey. Table 9 displays information on high profile team oversight for the participants in the study and takes into consideration what would be high profile at each of the institutions where the participants work.

Table 9. High Profile Men's Team Oversight

Participant	High Profile Men's Team Oversight
1	Assisted the AD with oversight of football and men's basketball at previous institution, but on paper, both sports reported to the AD. Currently assists the AD in the oversight of men's basketball, but on paper the sport reports to the AD. Had oversight of baseball at previous institution.
2	Baseball
3	No
4	No
5	Previously had men's basketball
6	No
7	No
8	No
9	No

According to the data, only participant two currently has oversight of high profile men's sports on paper. Moreover, the sport she has is likely the third or fourth highest profile team at her particular institution. Participant two feels the experience of baseball oversight is important to her future. She stated, "Baseball will be higher profile, higher fundraising, higher whatever aspect, and I kind of tried to lobby to work with the male sports as oversight to position myself for a future position" (March 7, 2013). Participant four also discussed team sport supervisory experience as necessary when she stated, "I'm glad I have it (sport) because I need sport supervisory experience if I intend to stay in college athletics. So it's a necessary thing for me" (March 29, 2013).

All of the participants acknowledge the importance of some experience with team oversight and realize that oversight of men's basketball and football are prioritized. In a conversation about schools with and without football, participant one stated,

It drives so much, that without it, it really does limit your professional opportunities. It limits where you can go and what you can do. You can go from a school with football to a school without football, but it becomes very difficult to spend a large portion of your career or time at a school without football and go to a school with football. (February 28, 2013)

At a former institution, participant one was exposed to football and men's basketball because her AD who was also a woman knew of the importance of that experience. Participant one stated,

I was really able to get the sport supervision because 's also one of the things I was taught early you have to get the sport or unit supervision, you can't progress and you can't move into a Senior Associate role I'm in now, or athletic director without piece. She (former AD) made sure I got that, and then exposed me to football and men's basketball. (February 28, 2013)

Although none of the participants in this study currently have supervision of football, participant one had some experience with football and men's basketball at a former institution and she currently assists her AD with men's basketball, but on paper the team reports to the AD.

Participant five was given oversight of men's basketball when she started at her institution and she claims oversight of men's basketball by women is more common now. She said,

When I first started at (institution) and was given responsibility of direct oversight for men's basketball, it was uncommon. I was the only woman in (conference) that had oversight for men's basketball. And so, that was one of the things that interested me

about the job and one of the things I enjoyed having, direct responsibility for men's basketball. So it was very unique. Not as unique anymore. There are probably a couple of women now in (conference) that oversee men's basketball. (April 10, 2013)

The participants are highly underrepresented in their oversight responsibility of high profile men's sports which would suggest doubt in a woman's ability to lead and supervise high profile men's sports, as Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest. However, the participants who aspire to obtain an AD position realize not having supervisory experience with high profile men's sports could be a structural barrier that would prohibit them from obtaining the position. Thus, those who aspire to obtain an AD position are actively seeking out the experience they need to move forward and for the most part are being given experience with some high profile team sports when asked. If women are denied this supervisory experience, the structural barrier will persist.

Conformity to masculine and feminine norms. Eagly and Karau's (2002) second type of prejudice against women leaders is there is a preference for women to engage in and display more supportive, communal roles and behavior rather than agentic roles and behavior. Specifically linking these roles to the intercollegiate athletic environment, Tiell and Dixon (2008) define the tasks, roles, and responsibilities related to communal roles and feminine norms as nurturing, mentoring, and role modeling and those related to agentic roles and masculine norms as allocating resources, strategic decision-making, and disciplining. Hoffman (2011) linked communal roles to internal operations and agentic roles to external operations.

As previously noted, seven of the nine participants in this study have responsibilities almost exclusively over internal operations that are linked to communal roles. Conversely, only two participants have responsibilities almost exclusively over external operations that are linked to agentic roles. The sample size is small, and generalizations about pigeonholing women into

communal roles cannot be made. Additionally, all of the participants are satisfied and comfortable with their current responsibilities. Furthermore, each of these women have experience in allocating resources and disciplining in their team oversight responsibilities and all of them sit on the executive leadership committee within the athletic department which does much of the strategic planning. All of these women have experience with agentic roles.

Gender and even age does come into play in these participants' everyday lives in the athletic department. Participant two is the youngest participant even though she has worked in intercollegiate athletics for twelve years. When discussing her ability and proving herself she stated, "At least I'm not called 'the young girl' anymore, so that's good" (March 7, 2013).

Participant one is very aware of the roles that are stereotypical for women in athletics. She stated,

I just tried to be smart coming up and listening to the women that have come along before me. I learned early on that your stereotypical roles for females are getting into academics and getting into compliance and understanding if you end up in those roles, it becomes very difficult for you to transition out of those roles. (February 28, 2013)

Some of the women discussed having to prove themselves differently than men. Participants two and three discussed different expectations or double standards for women in athletics.

Participant two stated,

I've managed to be able to say 'no' and everyone still likes me and comes back. I think 's one of the things about being female, it's perceived as if I have to be stern, than I am being a bitch versus if a male counterpart says 'no,' he's just doing his job. (March 7, 2013)

When discussing being a woman in senior level management and more specifically, discussing her AD who is a woman, participant three stated,

There are certain things I've learned from her - you need to be a perfectionist as a woman – and this, I feel is true of any career and she's reiterated it you cannot show, I mean she just doesn't show, she doesn't show weakness. (March 29, 2013)

Participant six expressed her annoyance with attention to gender, she said,

Every time somebody says to me, you know, 'what do you think about being the only female on the executive staff?' I look at them and I say 'You know, I don't think about it that way, I think about it as being a person who has earned the position and being female has nothing to do with it. It's being good at your job.' So that's the way I look at it; gender things are not really important to me. (April 17, 2013)

She really did not want gender to matter in the role and position she is in, but clearly it did matter to those around her who paid attention to her gender and position particularly in a male dominated field.

Gender also matters in the intersection of the personal and professional lives of these women. Participant three stated,

There's the concept of the super feminist where you have to be great at everything, but then there's the concept that choice is the actual true power and that actually influenced me, not necessarily working in athletics, but coming back after I had a child and still trying to be a mom and still trying to move up in the industry; just knowing that even if I did quit and decide not to pursue my career that I wasn't a failure. (March 29, 2013)

Participant four also discussed gender in the intersection of her professional and personal lives when she stated,

I think I have decided the positive of it (position) is that my children see the strong woman, the work that I do. They have an opportunity to be exposed to this environment. So, that was one of the reasons why I came here is for them to be exposed to women playing sports. (March 29, 2013)

This comment shows participant four knows gender matters in intercollegiate athletics she wants to expose her children to strong and successful women in the field.

As previously noted, most of the participants in this study have responsibilities almost exclusively over internal operations which are linked to feminine norms and communal roles. Conversely, only two participants have responsibilities almost exclusively over external operations that are linked to masculine norms and agentic roles; however all of these women have experience with agentic roles. If people in hiring positions in intercollegiate athletics, namely ADs believe women's roles are more congruent with communal roles, this will remain a structural barrier for women who pursue AD positions. However, the awareness of these stereotypes and the active pursuit to have experience with external operations and agentic roles, particularly among these women, should assist them in moving into the position of AD.

Summary of Structural Barriers to Advancement

Previous research has discovered the existence of structural barriers that prevent women from obtaining the position of AD. The second research question in this study asks, do structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD?

There seems to be no evidence of homologous reproduction as a structural barrier to being hired into senior level leadership positions for these women as a group, because they were almost equally hired and promoted by both men and women. This study did not examine individual gender preferences for the ADs that hired these nine participants.

This study also examined the persistence of additional structural barriers which prohibit women from advancing into the position of AD in intercollegiate athletics including: a) experience with internal operations versus external operations, b) decision-making authority in men's high profile sports and c) conformity to feminine or masculine norms. Each of these previously identified structural barriers is linked to gender stereotypes of how men and women are expected to display role congruence with certain social roles within intercollegiate athletics.

In this study, the participants are mostly represented in internal operations which exhibit role congruence with tasks and responsibilities that are identified as being more feminine. The data also suggest women's ability to lead in external operations is questioned and doubted as Eagly and Karau (2002) claim. However, the participants who aspire to obtain an AD position realize they may feel more role congruence with internal operations, but not having experience with external operations could be a structural barrier that would prohibit them from obtaining the position. Thus, they are actively seeking out the experience they need to move forward and gain experience with external operations. If women are denied experience with external operations, the structural barrier will continue to persist.

The participants are highly underrepresented in their oversight responsibility of high profile men's sports, which could suggest role congruence with lower profile teams or individual sports. These results could also indicate a doubt or prejudice in a woman's ability to lead and supervise high profile men's sports, as Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest. However, the participants who currently aspire to obtain an AD position realize not having supervisory experience with high profile men's sports could be a structural barrier that would prohibit them from obtaining the position. Thus, those who aspire to obtain an AD position are actively seeking out the experience they need to move forward and for the most part are being given

experience with some high profile team sports when asked. None of these women currently have oversight over the most high profile sport of football and one currently shares oversight of men's basketball with her AD, although on paper the sport reports to him. If women are denied this supervisory experience, the structural barrier will continue to persist.

Another structural barrier is that there is a preference for women to engage in and display more supportive, communal roles and behavior rather than aggressive, agentic roles and behavior. Most of the participants in this study have responsibilities almost exclusively linked to feminine norms and communal roles which exhibit role congruence with these tasks and responsibilities. Conversely, only two participants have responsibilities almost exclusively linked to masculine norms and agentic roles, however, they also expressed role congruence. All of these women have experience with agentic roles and did not express role incongruence with those experiences. If people in hiring positions in intercollegiate athletics, namely ADs believe women are more suited for communal roles; this will remain a structural barrier for women to obtain AD positions. However, the awareness of these stereotypes and the active pursuit to have experience with agentic roles, particularly among these women, should assist them in moving into the position of AD if that is what they choose.

To conclude this section, if experiences in internal operations, experience with lower profile team and individual sports, and experience in communal roles are not valued by university administration and if women are denied the experiences are valued, these structural barriers will persist and continue to keep women out of senior level athletic administration.

Personal Choice in Career Experiences and Intention to Pursue the AD Position

The third research question asks, how does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration? To answer this

question, the participants were asked about the choices they had in their career experiences and whether or not they plan to pursue the position of AD. To analyze the data, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) is applied to each of their experiences.

To review, TBP is used to predict human behavior (Ajzen, 1985). The foundational principles of TPB are based on three factors: 1) personal attitude (either positive or negative) toward performing the behavior, 2) subjective norm – the person’s perception of social pressures on whether or not to perform the behavior, and 3) perceived behavioral control – the perceived ease or difficulty in performing the behavior which reflects past experiences as well as anticipated challenges and obstacles to performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The theory supposes when an individual has positive attitudes toward a behavior, they receive encouragement or positive social pressure to perform the behavior, and they perceive to have a strong sense of control over the behavior, they will be more likely to perform the behavior. When an individual believes he or she lacks the resources and has little control over performing the behavior, their intentions to perform the behavior may be low even if they have a positive attitude and/or favorable subjective norms concerning performing the behavior (Madden et al., 1992).

Rather than analyzing the data from this research collectively according to the three factors of TPB, the data is presented separately for each participant to more fully understand their individual intentions to pursue the position of AD.

Participant one will not pursue an AD position. Predicting whether or not participant one will pursue the position of AD is the most difficult of all of the participants. One of the reasons it was so difficult to predict her behavior had to do with where she is in her personal life. She had very recently lost her mother and so she poured herself into her work. A consequence of

working a large numbers of hours was a feeling she needed more balance and more personal time which in turn really influenced her thoughts on the profession as a whole. At some points in the interview she has unfavorable attitudes about the position. This is apparent in comments like these:

- I don't know if I want to be an athletic director. That changes from day to day. I always joke I want to be an athletic director when he's (the AD) not doing what I want him to do. But most every day, I don't. I think at this point, career-wise, unless something changed, I don't think I want to be an athletic director. I'd prefer (but don't have to be) married/in a long term relationship before I pursue an AD position on the Division I level.
(Participant One, February 28, 2013)
- It would be very difficult to give a 'new' relationship the attention it would need to grow into marriage/long term relationship while at the same time entering the first couple of years of being a first time AD at the Division I level. I want to be extremely successful at both and therefore prefer not to try and do both at the same time. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)
- "At this point I'm perfectly fine with being the number two of the department and not the AD" (Participant One, February 28, 2013).

At the end of the interview, however, she had a more positive attitude of the AD position and discussed possibly pursuing it. She stated,

I think at this point, really talking about keeping me important and the focus. I think at this point more so than most anything else at any other time of my career, I think location has become very, very important to me. As I look to do whatever is next, whatever that is and whatever that looks like, location would drive my decision-making process more so

than the title or the position. So would I be willing to be an AD on a Division III level to get to a location I want to live, yes. Would I be willing to do it and stay at this level (Division I), yes. So that's where I say I feel like I'm open to any level. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)

Participant one seems open to the possibility of obtaining an AD position, but she is not currently actively pursuing a position.

When considering subjective norm – perceived social pressure, participant one did feel social pressure to become an AD, but she did not feel ready to do that. She said,

I had a lot of people looking at me to become an athletic director. But it was going to be on the Division III or II level. I wasn't ready to leave Division I because returning to it would be very difficult if not impossible to do. (February 28, 2013)

She also discussed social pressure as an African American woman and how she did not want the “weight on her shoulders if she did mess up” (Participant One, February 28, 2013). She discussed this social pressure,

We had a big influx a few years ago of women of color becoming athletic directors and good/bad, right or wrong, they all ended up losing their jobs and the opportunities haven't presented themselves again. I don't know if they will and I'm not sure the expectations are meant for you to be successful either. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)

She felt social pressure to obtain an AD position and felt confident she could do the job, but she acknowledged the challenges she might face. Her last sentence in the previous comment leads to her perceived behavioral control to pursue the AD position.

Participant one has experience in both internal and external operations and she has had some oversight of high profile men's sports, which could help her break structural barriers to

advancement. She also was given a large amount of choice in all of her previous positions to earn experience in areas she knew she needed in order to pursue an AD position. However, she realizes the decision-making is out of her control. She stated, “I think fit plays a huge role in this industry, maybe more so than others because we spend so much time together” (Participant One, February 28, 2013). Later she discussed how her experience at a previous institution as well as her gender and race might be prohibitive to her obtaining a position.

Because of my experience and the institution being in (city), I think that closed some doors for me. I’m sure in certain cases, probably being a female and my race might have played a role in some of those decisions. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)

Later she discussed race and gender in more detail in the experience of two former women ADs she worked for and how there seems to be a double standard in the field.

There was no room for a mistake, whereas if they were men, even men of color, they could have made a mistake and survived. We women can’t do that. If the man had made a mistake and was let go, they could be rehired so much faster and easier than a woman could. Because it’s one of those things you kind of get the stereotype. That was a woman thing and that’s why they can’t lead and they can’t deal with the whole piece. (Participant One, February 28, 2013)

Participant one’s comments reveal a lack of perceived behavioral control. Following the three tenets of TPB, participant one has more negative attitudes toward becoming an AD than positive, she does have social pressure to become an AD, but she does not view pressure favorably and she desires more focus on her personal life at this point. Additionally, she feels a lack of control because of her experience at smaller institutions as well as the influence of her gender and race.

Although she mentions being open to an AD position, when applying TPB, it is unlikely she will pursue the position.

Participant two will pursue an AD position. Participant two's actions and attitudes are positive toward pursuing an AD position. She knows exactly the experiences she needs in external operations and high profile team oversight and has been given those experiences when she has asked for them. Additionally, when asked about pursuing an AD position, she immediately said, "Yes, but I have not decided what type of institution yet" (Participant Two, March 7, 2013). She may not pursue Division I, but has a positive attitude about pursuing the position. She stated,

Sometimes I see all the things that go on with FBS (Football Bowl Subdivision) football and 'No thank you!' I think I'm more driven by the philosophy of what collegiate athletics probably was a long time ago versus the business it is now. Sometimes I talk to friends who, and it's still a business everywhere, but I talk to friends who are at the Division III or Division II or Division I level who don't have football and a lot of times it's a lot different than what I see day to day. And not to say I wouldn't do FBS level, but like if it was tomorrow, I don't think I would. If it's like five years, maybe I would.

It is apparent both from her actions and comments she has a positive attitude toward pursuing the AD position, but might not necessarily want to be at a school with high profile football. (Participant Two, March 7, 2013)

Participant two did not really discuss a lot of social pressure against or toward pursuing an AD position, however, whenever she asked for more responsibilities in her positions she was given them. She said, "It was almost as if as soon as I asked for it, I got it type deal" (March 7,

2013). Her ADs seemed to recognize and reward her talents and ambition in the field and feel confident in her ability to perform tasks and responsibilities at a high level.

Participant two also appears to have a high level of perceived behavior control because she has actively sought out the experiences she knows ADs need, particularly in the areas of external relations and high profile team oversight as previously noted. She has been given those experiences and thus feels encouragement. She did mention intercollegiate athletics is a highly competitive field for career upward mobility, particularly among women. She said,

I think one of the big things like with dealing within athletics, you have two types of women you work with: one who's trying to help you and then you have others are trying to sandbag you almost, because it's almost like you're a threat. ...So, I think that's an obstacle you don't even realize you could potentially face. (Participant Two, March 7, 2013)

Much of this competition she feels is likely due to the underrepresentation of women in senior level administration of intercollegiate athletics. Participant two knows the percentages of women at the top and she knows exactly the experiences she needs to get there, she understands how difficult it might be for her and other woman to obtain an AD position. When applying TPB, participant two has positive attitudes and appears to be deliberately gaining the experiences she needs to obtain an AD position. She has received positive encouragement from her ADs and she feels mostly in control of her pursuit of the position, but is not naive about hurdles or obstacles she might face as she pursues an AD job.

Participant three will pursue an AD position. Although she spoke about how she thinks women ADs might feel pressure to be “perfectionists,” participant three has a positive attitude about pursuing the position of AD. She stated,

If you had asked me probably when I had my (child), I would have said ‘no,’ but now I would. It has to be obviously the right fit and the right opportunity. But again, I think a lot of the issues with women not pursuing it is because of the family. Same with coaches, it’s the family thing. But I just think it’s possible....I know it can be done and the sacrifices I make now will benefit my children, my family in the long run, which is ultimately why I work, is for my family. Yeah, yes I would. (Participant Three, March 29, 2013)

She is very confident in her ability to manage both work and family and sees it as possible in the role of AD.

Participant three did not specifically speak to any social pressure to become an AD, however she said “I’m fortunate to have a really, really supportive husband who has a flexible career” (March 29, 2013). She felt like because he was supportive of her career, she could pursue an AD position. She also spoke about working for a woman AD and how that has positively influenced her to pursue the position. She stated,

Seeing her succeed and being successful and respected and well-known in this industry, I mean it is still old school in a lot of ways. It just kind of makes you say well, I can do it. I can do it. So it’s been positive. (Participant Three, March 29, 2013)

Overall, participant three feels supported to pursue her career goals; however, she did not mention any encouragement or discouragement to specifically become an AD.

Participant three also perceives a lot of control over her ability to grow in her profession and pursue an AD position. She mentioned the support of her AD when she said, “Our athletic director is open to professional growth, so if there’s something I would want to take on, she

would be open to it” (Participant Three, March 29, 2013). She made several comments about the control she had in her career trajectory, she stated,

- “I made my own succession plan...I had legitimate reasons to continue to move up. I had accomplished a lot while I was there, worked very, very, extremely hard. Like three times harder than anyone else” (Participant Three, March 29, 2013).
- At (former school) there weren’t any women, there weren’t any minorities and so, for me, there were several reasons why I felt like I had to create a path for myself. But the great thing is I had a supervisor who supported it, supported my path the entire way. But you know, I think a lot of times women just are afraid to ask. Whether it’s salary or promotions or anything. They’re just afraid to ask. (Participant Three, March 29, 2013)

She acknowledges the importance of support from supervisors, but she feels she can control her ability to obtain an AD position by working hard and creating her own path. When applying TPB, participant three will pursue an AD position based on her positive attitude, the social support of her career, and her perceived control of her ability to obtain the position.

Participant four will pursue an AD position. Although participant four denied interest in pursuing the position of AD when she said, “If you ask me right now, absolutely not” (Participant Four, March 29, 2013). Using TPB would lead to the opposite conclusion. Her attitude toward her current position is extremely positive based on these comments:

- I think the really cool thing about my day to day job is I’m doing all those things I love to do, but I’m doing it in this space and I’m really having an impact on students and student-athletes, and their experiences and making sure they are publicized and promoted as much as I was, the attention I was given when I was a student-athlete. (Participant Four, March 29, 2013)

- “I love the work I’m doing” (Participant Four, March 29, 2013).

This is her first experience working in intercollegiate athletics and she acknowledged the only reason she said “no” was because,

I can’t see beyond what is required of my athletic director. So I’ve not had enough experience in seeing how other folks do it and how other athletic departments run. That is the only reason as to why not. Now when you ask me three years from now after I’ve had an opportunity to be someplace else, that same question, it might change. (Participant Four, March 29, 2013)

In addition to her generally positive comments about her work, participant four has the experiences in external relations are valued for the AD position and she knows she needs to get high profile sport supervisory experience to obtain position.

Participant four also has social support to pursue an AD position. She recalled the conversation with her mother about what she had said in an article around the time she was graduating with her bachelor’s degree, “In the article I talked about being an AD” (Participant Four, March 29, 2013). She had forgotten about the article, but her mother reminded her of it when she accepted her current job. She also recognized she has a husband who is very supportive of her career.

Her perceived behavioral control in her career path varies. In her day-to-day tasks and responsibilities she doesn’t always feel like she has complete control. She really did not want to have ticket sales as one of her responsibilities, but she does. She did not want to have two more sports added to her supervisory plate, but later knew she needed more sport supervisory experience. She also does not feel comfortable with her work-life balance. However, she does

have an interesting perspective on the control of her professional growth and opportunity. She stated,

I find when I articulate a specific thing I want to do, I push hard and I work hard for it, but I don't feel the same way about it as when I started the task. When I have gone into situations where it's about an opportunity to learn and grow and to gain as much knowledge as I possibly can, I've positioned myself to be in a position to move on and move up and move forward. So that's how I look at it now. (Participant Four, March 29, 2013)

In this comment there is evidence of control of her career and how it goes and she is likely using her current position to set her up for another position, an even higher position. With her positive attitude toward working in intercollegiate athletics, her social support, particularly from her mother and husband, and her outlook on how she perceives her professional opportunities, it is likely she will pursue an AD position.

Participant five will not pursue an AD position. It was evident participant five will not pursue an AD position. About five years ago she had pursued a few positions and she discussed what changed. She stated,

- It's two-fold. One, I am looking to retire in three years, I can't wait....I also got to a point in my career last couple of years where I am looking to winding down. I just don't want the pressure athletic directors have because of the nature of what we do now. You know when I complain about work-life balance, they have none. (Participant Five, April 10, 2013)
- Some of it is low self-esteem if you can call it that. I'm just very good at being number two and I get a lot of satisfaction about the impact I can make at number two. I have the

autonomy to do what I want to do in my areas. I'm like a little mini AD with what I have. I don't need the notoriety of being the boss. (Participant Five, April 10, 2013)

- I'm not motivated by making more money. I just think I can make more of an impact in this position with the student-athletes I work with than I can as an athletic director and have more hands-on interaction than you do as an athletic director because they are doing all the external stuff, the branding, the donors, all of that and that's not the part I enjoy the most. (Participant Five, April 10, 2013)

She is clearly winding down her career in intercollegiate athletics and has no desire to pursue an AD position.

Participant five displays some role incongruence in her second comment above, however she chose to pursue and interview for a few AD positions. She did not obtain any of the positions and did not receive any feedback as to why she did not get those positions. She did not state this, but she may have felt social pressure to do so because that was the next logical step in her career and she spent so much of her career at a very well-known athletic institution. She also received mixed messages of social support when she was considering pursuing the AD position. She was given oversight of high profile team sports when she arrived on her current campus, but as previously noted, she was never given responsibilities she requested in the area of development. She did say her current AD was supportive:

(Name) did a great job when we were doing the reorganization and including me in the discussion about the reorganization and about giving me different responsibilities I would have were also areas would help me for any opportunities beyond (name of institution). (Participant Five, April 10, 2013)

She definitely felt supported by her current AD, but again, overall she did not mention a lot of social support to pursue the AD job.

When first applying for AD positions, participant five may have perceived more control than she now knows she lacks. She was very experienced in her career at the time, she came recommended by a prominent AD, and she was at a big time athletic institution. She likely thought she would be a good fit as an AD. Having the experience of interviewing for and not obtaining an AD position as well as experiencing role incongruence soured her on pursuing it further. Now when you add her desire to wind down her career and have more work-life balance than she feels AD's have, it is very unlikely she will pursue any other opportunities to become an AD.

Participant six will not pursue an AD position. It is clear participant six will not pursue an AD position and she shared similar views as participant five in terms of what she is comfortable with and what is important to her in the role. She stated, "For 19 of the 23 years I've been here, I feel like I've been the athletic director" (Participant Six, April 17, 2013). She went on to explain this comment and share other comments which describe her attitude toward pursuing an AD position.

- She (the former AD) was out there doing those things (getting to know people and promoting the program) and could be doing those things because I was here with the ability to make decisions. I understood what things I needed to talk to her about before I gave an answer or before I made a decision. That came from having worked together so long. So I always felt like I had the opportunity and the authority without the responsibilities associated with being the athletic director. (Participant Six, April 17, 2013)

- I don't want to raise money. I can and I will spend time with donors, but I don't want a full time job in development. I want to be at (name of the university) making a difference in the lives of the young men and women who wear our uniform. 's all I want to do and I have been incredibly blessed and incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity. I just want to be right here. For me, intercollegiate athletics is making a difference on this campus. (Participant Six, April 17, 2013)

She has a positive attitude toward her current position, but clearly had no desire to pursue an AD position and displays some incongruence with the role of AD.

She mentioned having a lot of support and opportunity in her position in the following comment:

I've never had a desire to (pursue an AD position) because I feel like I've had the opportunity. The university has been incredibly good to me, and I've had awesome opportunities and awesome advantages to a lot of other people who are in the kind of position I'm in they've never had and never will have and I will be eternally thankful for . (Participant Six, April 17, 2013)

She did not mention, however, any direct encouragement or social pressure to pursue an AD position. It is evident from the comments above she feels high role congruency in her current position and she feels she has had a great deal of control in creating her position. She stated, "I think I have created the position through the years as to what it is and how it's seen on this campus and what it means in making a difference for our kids" (Participant Six, April 17, 2013).

Participant six also revealed she would have little control over what she would be able to do in an AD position and thus it is not appealing to her. She stated,

I don't want to have the burden of \$100,000,000 budget. I'll be happy to do my part. I'll be happy to spend time with donors. I'll be happy to try to encourage people to sell tickets, but I don't want that responsibility. I want to spend time with 18 to 22 year olds. I want to make a difference in the lives of young people. 's why I do what I do. Not because I want a title. Not because I want all this authority or responsibility, because I believe I have authority. I believe I have responsibility. For me it's about the kids. I want to help them prepare for some day. I think that's my calling. (April 17, 2013)

Applying TPB to participant six's experience reveals she does not have a positive attitude toward pursuing the AD position, she has not mentioned any social pressure to pursue the position, and she feels she would have little control over her time if she were to pursue an AD position. Thus, participant six will not pursue an AD position.

Participant seven will pursue an AD position. Participant seven will pursue an AD position partially because she has a good role model in her current AD who is a woman and partially because of her generally positive attitude toward her ability to do it. Her positive attitude is revealed in the following comments:

- Especially seeing (AD name) do what she does. She's been doing this a long time and I'm learning a lot just watching her, and I think I can do it. I think I can do it. I think I'd be really good at it. (Participant Seven, April 18, 2013)
- I'd like to be an AD because there are decisions that are made by folks in other parts of the department I either agree with or don't agree with or I think I could do better. I think I could be the kind of athletic director that actually not only helps the coaches be successful, but helps manage a staff. . . I think you can empower the staff in such a way that they are fulfilling the kinds of mission and goals help their staffs be successful, then

I think you can help everyone do what it is they need to do to create a really functional athletic department. (Participant Seven, April 18, 2013)

She did not mention any social pressure to pursue or not pursue an AD position; however she mentioned learning a great deal from her current AD who is a woman and studying under a woman AD for her master's degree. The first comment above shows the impact of her current AD and a comment about her master's thesis advisor also conveys the impact of a role model.

Participant seven stated,

I thought to myself, you know, if she's a leader in women's athletics, I'd really like to study under her. So I ended up going to (university name). She was the athletic director for women there and so I studied there for five years. (April 18, 2013)

She understands that as an AD, your ability to do a good job is not always within your control. Lack of resources and lack of tools can impact your success. When answering the question about whether or not she would like to be an AD, she stated, "I like Division II. Division III, probably not enough resources to be able to do what I'd like to do, so maybe Division II or mid-major Division I has some resources" (Participant Seven, April 18, 2013). She also made a comment about the lack of tools available in the field which can affect job performance.

We need better tools in intercollegiate athletics. That is my primary frustration with this field. Most days I get up and I'm pretty enthusiastic about this job and helping our student-athletes and helping our coaches. Almost every single day I'm frustrated by the tools, the lack of tools we should have in this field and we don't. (Participant Seven, April 18, 2013)

Participant seven does acknowledge some things are within her control as she pursues an AD position; however, it may also be out of her control on whether or not she obtains an AD position. She stated,

It's so interesting to me how people's career paths go. Sometimes they are the result of our choice and sometimes they're the result of other people's choices and it sets you on a path and they're two totally different paths. (April 18, 2013)

Applying TPB to participant seven's comments, it is likely she will pursue an AD position. She has a positive attitude toward pursuing the position, she has two strong role models in the position of AD, and she is wise to know it is not entirely within her control as to whether she obtains an AD position. She does believe, however, she can obtain an AD position and even though there may be a lack of tools and resources to be successful, she believes she can do a good job.

Participant eight will not pursue an AD position. Participant eight does not feel she is the right fit for an AD position and she generally has a pretty negative attitude about pursuing the role. She stated,

- I do not believe I would be an effective athletic director. I think I would go crazy. Either I would want to try and satisfy everybody or I would just go on a 'no' binge that wouldn't stop. It would be one extreme or the other. (Participant Eight, April 19, 2013)
- I envy people who can think on their feet and who can respond to questions, media, and those kinds of things at the drop of a hat. I probably could, but I want to look at it first and I want to analyze it first. I like doing what I do. I like being the support person that can help everybody out. Some people are cut out for that. I don't think I'm cut from that cloth. (Participant Eight, April 19, 2013)

She also mentioned location and she really lives where she wants to live and is not interested in moving or going anywhere else to become an AD.

Participant eight did not mention any encouragement or discouragement from becoming an AD. She was not an intercollegiate student-athlete and she started her professional career in private sector finance. She experiences a high level of role congruence in her primarily external operations oriented position, but does not want team oversight and has no interest in picking up skills would increase her chance of becoming an AD. Her current position simply seems to match her skills and interests professionally and becoming an AD is not really on her radar. She demonstrates a high level of control of not wanting to pursue an AD position by stating, “It is just my choice in not wanting to do that” (Participant Eight, April 19, 2013).

When applying TPB, it is clear participant eight will not pursue an AD position. She generally has a negative attitude about pursuing the job, she never really received any encouragement to do so, she feels comfortable with her current role; she clearly chooses not to pursue an AD position.

Participant nine will not pursue an AD position. Participant nine generally has a negative attitude about pursuing the AD position and does not really feel her strengths and talents are congruent with the job. She generally feels like she could do the job, but is not interested in it. She stated, “I think they deal with just a lot that I’m not really sure I want to deal with” (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013). When asked about the possibility of becoming an AD, she said,

- I’m not sure I really want to be the person with a target on their back when things are really bad, and it is really a personal thing to me. I’m not the most thick-skinned person.

I'm not a wimp, but to me, there are things about that job where I think you have to be able to let things kind of go, and I don't. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

- I think there's a lot of good things that I could do if I wanted to be an AD. I have a philosophy and I think about how things should be done, the other side of it to me, it's just not particularly appealing to be the out front person and I'm okay with . (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

She did not mention any encouragement or discouragement to pursue the AD position; she simply does not seem interested. She did mention that if she wanted to get more experience in external operations or other areas that might help, her AD would be supportive and open to giving her those experiences. She said,

I think if I went in and said, 'hey, I think I'd like to get some more experience in fundraising or I'd like to get some more experience in such and such, I know he would have been willing to figure out how to make happen. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

She has never been denied any tasks, responsibilities, or other experiences; she generally is just not interested in pursuing the AD position.

She also understands women in general do not really have complete control in their pursuit of the AD position. She stated,

I think there's clearly a thought out there women are underrepresented because they're not being hired and they're not given opportunity and they're being closed out of those opportunities and I am sure is true at some level and I think a lot of has to do with the football piece. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

She agrees women may not be given the opportunity and she sees there may be structural barriers in place might prevent women from obtaining an AD position, but she goes on to claim she thinks some women are mindfully choosing not to pursue the position. She said,

I do think there are women who are legitimately in line who do not pursue it. I would put myself in that category. I would put some of my colleagues in that category. I mean we've had those conversations of who wants to be an AD and who doesn't want to be an AD. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

She said she thinks the decision to pursue may be generational too. She stated, "I think some of the younger women administrators coming into the pipeline might say –'that's exactly what I want to do'" (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013). She also says she notices a difference between men and women in pursuing the AD position. She said,

My perception is it's different for women who appear to be tracking towards and the male administrators who are tracking towards it at a much younger age, with the mindset, 'of course I want to be an AD,' which I don't think is the standard answer you get from women in administration. (Participant Nine, April 24, 2013)

Applying TPB to participant nine's experiences clearly reveals she will not pursue the AD position. She generally has a negative attitude toward pursuing it, she did not mention any encouragement or discouragement to pursue the position, and she understands obtaining an AD position would not be completely in her control. She is completely comfortable with her choice and knows of other women who feel the same way.

Summary of the Participants Intentions to Pursue the AD Position

The third research question asks, how does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration? To answer this

question, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) was utilized. TPB states human behavior can be predicted based on three factors; 1) either positive or negative attitude toward performing the behavior, 2) the person's perception of social pressures on whether or not to perform the behavior, and 3) the perceived ease or difficulty in performing the behavior which reflects past experiences as well as anticipated challenges and obstacles to performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Each participant's interview was analyzed individually using TPB.

The findings indicate that four of the nine participants will likely pursue the AD position. These results are not solely based on their answers to the question; do you plan to pursue the position of head AD? Participant one indicated she would pursue an AD position, but she has more negative attitudes toward becoming an AD than positive, she does have social pressure to become an AD, but she does not view that pressure favorably and she desires more focus on her personal life at this point. Additionally, she feels a lack of control because of her experience at smaller institutions as well as because of her gender and race.

Participant four stated she would not pursue the position of AD, however, with her positive attitude toward working in intercollegiate athletics, her social support, particularly from her mother and husband, and her outlook on how she perceives control of her professional opportunities, and it is likely she will pursue an AD position.

Participant nine suspects the choice to pursue the AD position varies by generation or age. There may be some significance in her theory. Out of the nine participants, the average age of the four that are predicted to pursue the AD position is approximately 42. The average age of the five participants not predicted to pursue the AD position is approximately 52. Additionally, those predicted to pursue the AD position have less experience in an intercollegiate athletic department with an average of eight years' experience and those predicted not to pursue the AD

position have an average of 17 years' experience. Based on these results, experience and age may influence a woman's choice and intention to pursue the AD position.

Summary of Chapter Four

This chapter addressed the overall purpose of this research, which is to more fully understand underrepresentation of women in senior levels of intercollegiate athletic administration. The chapter contains demographic information about the nine women participants who occupy Senior Associate AD positions at Division I universities in Midwestern and Southern urban areas of the United States. The findings presented in the chapter help resolve the three research questions: 1) what are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic administration positions in intercollegiate athletics, 2) do structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD, and 3) how does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to advance to the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration? The chapter contains a comprehensive examination of the career pattern experiences of these nine women. In addition to understanding their past and present jobs and responsibilities, the participants' experiences were compared to previous research to determine if structural barriers persist which prevent women from advancing to the position of AD. Finally, the participants' experiences were analyzed using TPB to predict whether or not they will pursue an AD position. A more detailed discussion of these findings is presented in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications

“It’s so interesting to me how people’s career paths go. Sometimes they are the result of our choice and sometimes they’re the result of other people’s choices and it sets you on a path and they’re two totally different paths.” (Participant Seven, April 18, 2013)

Participant seven’s comment succinctly summarizes the findings of this research study. The underrepresentation of women in senior level athletic administration is a result of choices. The choices of others can influence both the duties and responsibilities one has in their career as well as their career mobility. Others can choose to inhibit professional growth by creating structural barriers to advancement or they can provide opportunity that will increase the likelihood of career promotion. Individuals can also choose duties, responsibilities, and direction in their career. Individuals can choose whether or not they pursue the upper-most position in senior level administration. However, it is the combination of individual choice and the choice of others that ultimately determines career advancement.

This final chapter includes a restatement of the overarching purpose for this study and a review of the methodology used to examine the problem and resolve the research questions. The results are reviewed and summarized, limitations are presented, and the implications of the findings are discussed in detail. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and concluding remarks.

Review of the Problem and Purpose of the Research

Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the social condition in which male superiority, authority, imposition, manipulation, and dominance is accepted, naturalized, and normative in societal institutions (Whisenant et al., 2002). “The interests of men predominate in most sports, and hegemonic masculinity has been more resistant to change in sport than in other areas of

culture” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 23). Critical feminist theories contend “the meaning, organization, and purpose of sports are grounded in the values and experiences of men and are defined to celebrate the attributes and skills associated with masculinity” (Coakley, 2001, p. 45). Over the course of the last 40 years, senior level administration in athletics has become increasingly dominated by men. “The high incidence of men in leadership roles results in normative customs and practices that favor power among men rather than women” (Hoffman, 2011, p. 261). Some women are challenging these prohibitive structures; however, the problem is that some women are not experiencing equal opportunity or access to senior level leadership roles. Consequently, collegiate sport continues to accommodate the customs, practices, and interests of men and it remains a hegemonic male institution, underrepresented by women.

The overarching purpose of this research is to contribute further understanding of the underrepresentation of women in senior level administrative roles in intercollegiate athletics. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to gather in-depth, qualitative data from women in senior level athletic administrator positions to gain a more thorough understanding of their career advancement experiences. Another purpose was to compare the career advancement experiences of the participants to previous research to determine the persistence of four specific structural barriers that prohibit advancement to the position of AD. The four structural barriers include: a) homologous reproduction, b) experience with internal operations versus external operations, c) decision-making authority in men’s high profile sports, and d) conformity to feminine or masculine norms. The final purpose of this study was to more fully understand the role choice plays in career experiences and intent to advance to the position of AD.

The specific research questions utilized to accomplish the purposes of the study include:

Research Question 1: What are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics?

Research Question 2: Do structural barriers persist that prevent women from advancing to the position of AD?

Research Question 3: How does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration?

Review of the Methodology

The design for this study is a phenomenological qualitative approach, which is advantageous for descriptions of situations, processes, and relationships (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). This type of study design is better suited for understanding an individual's experiences and perspectives of their career experiences. Nine women who occupy Senior Associate AD positions at Division I universities in Midwestern and Southern urban areas of the United States agreed to participate in the study. All nine women participated in one face-to-face, semi-structured interview which lasted anywhere between 51 and 136 minutes. The participants were asked questions drawing on past and present career experiences as well as the meanings they give to those experiences (Seidman, 2006). They were also asked questions about choices they have had in their career and about their intention to pursue the AD position.

The participants past experiences were summarized with the following categories: educational experiences, previous positions, networks, professional development, and mentoring. Their current experiences were also summarized with categories including: job duties, committee work, requested attendance at events, average hours worked per week, and personal commitments. The participants' comments were analyzed for the persistence of the previously identified structural barriers of homologous reproduction, experience with external versus internal operations, high profile team sport oversight, and conformity to masculine or feminine norms. The latter three structural barriers were analyzed using role congruity theory which

explains a prejudice against women in leadership roles because they are perceived to have less ability than men in these roles and there is a preference for women to work in communal roles rather than agentic roles. Finally, TPB was applied to the participants' comments and experiences to predict whether or not they would pursue the AD position. More specifically, the combination of their positive or negative attitude toward pursuing the AD role, the perceived social pressure to advance to the position, and their perceived control in obtaining an AD position were analyzed to predict their intentions. The following section provides a summary of the results and a discussion of the implications of the findings.

Summary and Implications of the Findings

Research Question 1: What are the career experiences of women in senior level athletic leadership positions in intercollegiate athletics?

The past career experiences of these nine women are varied. Five of the nine of them were athletes at the intercollegiate level and they were educated in a number of different disciplines in undergraduate study. All but two of them have graduate degrees in sport management or administration. Their professional experience includes working in private sector business, professional sport, intercollegiate coaching, and working for the NCAA. None of their experiences followed the normative career pattern of college athlete to high school coach to college coach to assistant or associate AD to college AD (Fitzgerald et al., 1994). In fact, only participant five and nine had a similar pattern where they were college athletes, college coaches, and assistant/associate ADs. Neither of them, however, intends to pursue the position of AD.

These findings imply intercollegiate athletes and non-athletes as well as women from various undergraduate disciplines, should be encouraged or even recruited to pursue graduate degrees in sport management or administration. Additionally, women from other sectors of the

job market should be encouraged to consider a career in intercollegiate athletics. A more diverse pool of women can succeed in upper level administration as these women have demonstrated. Furthermore, a larger pool of women to choose from will likely decrease underrepresentation of women, especially if the numbers of women applying for these jobs more closely resemble the number of men pursuing these positions.

Acosta and Carpenter (1994) and Coakley (2001) found women seem to lack the connections and networks men have in intercollegiate athletics. It is difficult to discern the effectiveness of the professional networks these women described. However, all of the participants acknowledged having multiple affiliations to various networks in the field and completely understood the importance of networking for career advancement. In fact, they used their networks for advice relating to professional decision-making or to help them obtain the next career position. Lack of networks and connections no longer seems to be the problem, at least based on the experience of these women. The effectiveness of women's networks to help them pursue and obtain AD positions needs further investigation.

Since 1997, the NCAA has provided women with professional development programs and opportunities for leadership growth (NCAA, 2011). NACWAA joined the NCAA in these efforts in 2002 (NACWAA, 2010). Underrepresentation of women in the AD position persists to exist even with these efforts. Some of these participants have taken part in these professional development activities and found them worthwhile. Others have either not found these initiatives particularly helpful or they have chosen other professional development activities. Ultimately, the findings do not indicate professional development will decrease underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics.

All of the participants mentioned at least a few personal and/or professional mentors in their careers. Additionally, all of the participants had at least one mentor that is a man. Men tend to hold more powerful and connected positions in intercollegiate athletics. In fact, 80.6% of all ADs at the Division I, II, and III level of the NCAA are men (Irick, 2011). The participants in this study realize the importance of having men as mentors in order to learn the field, be connected, and referred for upper level positions. They also mentioned women mentors who provided them a great deal of insight on how to navigate the field of intercollegiate athletics as well as how to obtain the experiences necessary for upward career mobility. Furthermore, four of them mentioned they enjoy mentoring and corroborate Weaver and Challadurai's (1999) claim mentoring is important for attracting other women to the field of sport. They realize they are underrepresented and try to encourage other women to enter and stay in intercollegiate athletics.

The current job responsibilities and experiences of these nine women are also varied. These women really do it all. They oversee and are responsible for a number of different areas within their own athletic departments. Although most of them oversee areas that operate more internally to the department, they all have experiences with external areas such as budget, fundraising, alumni relations, promotions, and media relations. They are all members of their department's executive leadership committees, they are all involved with strategic planning, and they all have decision-making authority in their current positions. Although their resumes may not reflect knowledge of and experience with every aspect of intercollegiate athletics, these women do have those experiences and can lead an athletic department effectively. Their experiences should be universally valid and they should be given equal consideration for AD positions.

The current job experiences of these women reveal they are very busy. They are on numerous committees both within and outside of the university. They attend a considerable amount of department and other university events. They work on average 60 hours a week, give or take a few hours depending on the sport season and most of them struggle with work-life balance. These women experience nearly the same demands on their time that ADs do. The time demands placed on all athletic administrators seems unreasonable and overwhelming. Research says both men and women ranked work balance and conditions as high or moderately high in importance (Pastore et al., 1996). Unless the exceedingly busy culture was created to keep women out and rather than blaming women for not wanting to pursue a position that would create more work-life imbalance, a change in the work conditions and culture would make the job more manageable for both men and women. This change would likely contribute to higher retention of women as well as a greater likelihood they would pursue senior level athletic administration positions.

Research Question 2: Do structural barriers persist that prevent women from advancing to the position of AD?

In addition to working in an environment where it is difficult to create work-life balance, women have also faced structural barriers that prohibit their advancement to the position of AD. Homologous reproduction, experience with internal versus external operations, lack of experience with high profile men's sports, and conformity to feminine or masculine norms were the structural barriers explored in this study.

In the experience of these nine participants, the data produced no evidence of homologous reproduction as a structural barrier to advancement. Men are hiring women and women are hiring women. In this study, the women were only asked who hired them and that

was, in all cases, their AD. On the surface, there appears to be no bias in their hiring processes, but there is no way of knowing from the data that was collected if these AD tend to hire more men or tend to hire more women. Thus, the true existence of homologous reproduction is unknown. The ultimate decision of hiring an AD at a university generally falls with the president of the institution with recommendations from search committees and search firms. Women only make up about 26% of all university presidents on college campuses (Kim & Cook, 2012). If homologous reproduction does exist and all of the women presidents hire women ADs and all of the men presidents hire men ADs, women would continue to be underrepresented. In this study homologous reproduction did not appear to be a structural barrier for their advancement to their current positions, however, homologous reproduction might be a structural barrier that prohibits them from advancing to an AD position.

Another structural barrier which may prohibit women from advancing to an AD position is their experience with internal versus external operations in the athletic department. The participants in this study are mostly represented in internal operations, which suggests they may feel more role congruence with these tasks and responsibilities. It also suggests they may have been hired into those positions by ADs who believe internal operations are more role appropriate for women. Furthermore, internal operations are often linked to the SWA position, which is almost always filled by a woman (Hoffman, 2011). Five of the nine participants in this study are the SWA at their universities and all five of them oversee internal operations. A significant finding to note is the participants who aspire to obtain an AD position realize they may feel more role congruence with internal operations, but not having experience with external operations could be a structural barrier that would prohibit them from obtaining the position. Thus, they are actively seeking out the experience they need to progress in their career and gain experience with

external operations. If women are denied experience with external operations, the structural barrier will continue to persist.

This finding generates many unanswered questions. Are external operations valued for the AD position because not many women have those experiences and it is another way to keep women out of the position? As previously noted, these women are gaining experience with external operations even though these experiences are not formally listed in their job descriptions. Is this informal experience with external operations not recognized or counted in their qualifications for an AD position? Why is it that internal operations are not seen as important as external operations to running an effective athletic department? Are there other ways, rather than internal and external operations, duties and responsibilities can be divided in an athletic department so more of the experiences are valued for promotion to an AD are more equally shared? Until these questions and others are answered, experience with internal operations versus external operations will continue to be a structural barrier that prohibits women from obtaining an AD position.

Another structural barrier that may prohibit women from obtaining an AD position is lack of experience with supervising high profile men's sports. None of the participants in this study currently have oversight of football and only two have previous experience with oversight of men's basketball. One participant currently has shared oversight of men's basketball, and one participant has full oversight of a high profile men's sport, which is baseball. Baseball does not attract the same size fan base, have as large of a budget, or garner as high amounts of donor support like football or men's basketball. Thus overseeing the sport of baseball offers a slightly different experience. The women who are planning to pursue the AD position know they need high profile men's team oversight and they are asking for those responsibilities. For the most

part they are being given opportunities for sport oversight; however it has not been in the sports of men's basketball or football.

The women in this study may feel more role congruence with lower profile team sports or their supervisors might have the perception women's roles in the department should be with the lower profile teams. Once again, the experiences women do have with lower profile teams are less valued for the AD position. Supervisors may even doubt a woman's ability to lead and oversee high profile men's sports. Furthermore, preventing women from overseeing football and men's basketball may be another way to keep them out of the AD position and if women are denied this supervisory experience, the structural barrier will continue to persist

The last structural barrier examined in this study was the experience these women have with communal roles that are linked to feminine norms versus agentic roles that are linked more to masculine norms. Seven of the nine participants have roles in their athletic departments linked almost exclusively to communal roles that suggests role congruence with these tasks and responsibilities. Another perspective would be that the supervisors of these women might feel they should fill communal roles and placed them in these roles because they are women. Only two participants have responsibilities almost exclusively linked to masculine norms and agentic roles, however, they also expressed role congruence with their positions. Their supervisors are open to women filling more agentic roles.

All of these women have some experience with agentic roles such as budget oversight with the teams they supervise, fundraising experience, strategic planning, and decision-making. This experience is not formally acknowledged in their job descriptions and resumes and may not be recognized when pursuing an AD position. The experience in communal roles is not valued if an individual aspires to become an AD. Are women more often placed in communal roles to

intentionally keep them out of the AD role? Do men who are ADs give women the tasks and responsibilities they do not want to do and thus value less? If people in hiring positions in intercollegiate athletics, namely ADs believe women are more suited for communal roles, and those roles continue to be devalued, this will remain a structural barrier for women intending to pursue the AD position. However, women's awareness of these stereotypes and the active pursuit to have experience with agentic roles should facilitate their upward movement into AD positions.

Research Question 3: How does personal choice influence career experiences and intention to pursue the AD position in intercollegiate athletic administration?

Each of the participants' was asked about their intentions to pursue the AD position. Their interviews were analyzed individually and TPB was applied to predict whether or not these women would pursue the position of AD. For the most part if they had positive attitudes toward the AD position, they received positive encouragement and support, and if they perceived to have a great deal of control in their pursuit, they were predicted to pursue the AD position. The findings indicate only four of the nine women will likely pursue the AD position. There are multiple reasons for predicting these women will pursue the AD position, they include: a) active pursuit of the experiences valued for the role of AD (external operations, high profile men's sport oversight, and experience in agentic roles), b) confidence in their ability to do the job, c) supportive spouses or families, and c) learning from females currently occupying the AD position.

The other five women either displayed negative attitudes, did not feel social pressure or encouragement to pursue the position, or felt they had little control of the outcome of their pursuit of the AD position. The reasons for predicting these women will not pursue the AD

position include: a) the desire to have more work-life balance, b) race and/or gender discrimination, and c) role incongruence with the AD position. A significant item to note is the women who are predicted not to pursue the AD position are, on average, 10 years older and have about nine more years of experience in intercollegiate athletics. They would likely be better candidates than their younger, less experienced peers; however, they were very comfortable with their current positions and had absolutely no desire to pursue the AD job.

Women may be underrepresented in senior levels of athletic administration because they are choosing not to pursue the position of AD. Furthermore, if females represent only 29.7% of Division I associate ADs (Irick, 2011), and if only about 50% or fewer of them are choosing to pursue the AD position, women will continue to be underrepresented. The next section contains recommendations for future research on the underrepresentation of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration and recommendations for practice in intercollegiate athletic administration.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited because the number of participants is small and thus the findings are not generalizable. The focus of the study is Senior Associate ADs, so the career experiences of other athletic administrators are not recorded or understood. The participants in this study are women, so there is no comparison with men's career experiences. All of the participants represent Division I universities in urban settings, therefore the experiences of administrators at non-urban schools in other Divisions and membership organizations are not considered. Furthermore, there are likely many theoretical frameworks that would be useful for examining the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics.

More specifically, this study was limited in the amount of detail the PI was able to get about the experiences of women in senior level athletic administration. Distance, lack of resources, and time constraints prohibited the PI from doing multiple interviews to get more in-depth data on certain aspects of their experiences. More detail of their professional development experiences and opportunities, of their mentoring experiences, and of the effectiveness of their networks would contribute to a better understanding of their overall experiences in athletic administration. More information is needed to see how their current responsibilities and time commitments contribute to their intentions to pursue the AD position. A longitudinal study is needed to adequately know if these ultimately women choose to pursue the AD position. Additional, alternative qualitative methods like surveys and focus groups could provide a more thorough examination of their career experiences and intentions. Lastly, this study only examined four structural barriers that prevent women from advancing to the AD position. There are likely other structural barriers that need to be examined to determine explanations for underrepresentation.

Recommendations

The results of this study are important for understanding the underrepresentation of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration. The results are also important for understanding the culture, environment, and expectations of Division I intercollegiate athletics. These results can inform directions for future research and intercollegiate athletic administrative practice.

Recommendations for Future Research. This study completely focused on the career experiences of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration. In order to more fully understand underrepresentation of women in intercollegiate athletics, particularly at the

Division I level, it would be beneficial to understand and compare the experiences of men in the same positions. Are their past and current experiences vastly different or are there more similarities? Is the experience men are getting in external operations, oversight of high profile men's sport, and in agentic roles really advantaging them in obtaining AD positions or is it something else? How do men experience work-life balance in these roles and does that affect their choices to pursue the AD position?

In addition to exploring men's career experience in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration, it would also be important to explore the experiences of both men and women at earlier points in their athletic careers. Many women may drop out or choose not to pursue higher levels of intercollegiate athletic administration earlier on in their careers. Understanding the similarities and differences in the messages (e.g. encouragement, discouragement, etc.) men and women receive in their early careers in an athletic department may also inform underrepresentation of women in AD roles.

It would be beneficial to more fully explore the AD position, too. It would be helpful to know if presidents of universities are hiring AD's of their own gender, which might produce evidence of the structural barrier of homologous reproduction. It would be beneficial to know if experience in external relations, oversight of high profile sports, and having more agentic roles actually contribute to successful leadership of an athletic department. Are these experiences essential or are they barriers intentionally created to keep women out? It would also be helpful to understand why women's experiences in internal operations, oversight of lower profile sports, and communal role congruence is not valued or why these experiences are not valued running a successful athletic department.

As previously noted in Chapter Three, 8.7% of Division I ADs, 17% of Division II ADs, and 29.2% of Division III ADs are women (Irick, 2011). Women continue to be underrepresented in the AD role at all three Divisions of the NCAA; however, they are making strides and are increasingly filling positions at the Division III level. It would be helpful to examine why women are at least a little more equally represented in AD positions at lower competitive levels. Are they getting more opportunity? Are their experiences more valued or adequately matched to leading at this level? Are women more willing to pursue positions at this level, thus creating a larger candidate pool from which to hire? These are important questions to answer and can inform the bigger picture of underrepresentation.

This study also only examined the experiences of women in urban contexts in the Midwestern and Southern United States. The urban context was used because of the competing interests may make the AD position a bit more challenging, but the rural context likely presents its own challenges to running a successful athletic department. Similarly, there may be different advantages and disadvantages of working in athletic administration at institutions located in other parts of the country. Future research could include participants who represent rural institutions or participants from other parts of the country.

Women represent 23% of women in vice president or higher positions in Major League Baseball (MLB), 28% in the National Football League (NFL), and 42% in the National Basketball Association (NBA) (University of Central Florida, 2012). These organizations represent the highest level of professional sports. On the surface, this seems to be progress, however there are no women currently in general manager positions in MLB, NFL, or NBA. According to Howard (2012), only 4% of the chief executive officers of the fortune 500 companies are women. Representation of women in the most senior level administrative

positions in both professional sport and successful business companies are even lower than that of women in AD positions in Division I, NCAA. A comparison of the similarities and differences in the career experiences of women in these three different facets of the job market would be beneficial, as well as a comparison with men would inform our understanding of underrepresentation of women in the most senior level of administration.

Finally, to know whether or not TPB accurately predicted whether or not the women in this study pursued the position of AD, a follow up study would be needed. If the predictions are accurate, TPB may be a useful theory for predicting career advancement behavior. Additionally, knowledge is gained about the importance of facilitating positive experiences for women involved in intercollegiate athletics, encouraging them to pursue career advancement opportunities, and providing environments in which they perceive to have control over their career advancement.

Recommendations for athletic administrative practice. This research study also informs intercollegiate athletic administrative practice. Creating partnerships with sport management or sport administration academic programs on campus will create communication about the professional preparation, knowledge, and skills necessary for successful leadership of an athletic department. Intercollegiate athletic departments can begin or continue to provide internship and graduate assistant opportunities for students to begin their careers. Internships and assistantships can provide opportunities for students to network and gain mentors in the field of intercollegiate athletics. In addition to providing opportunities for sport management/administration undergraduates and graduates, it would be beneficial for athletic departments to recruit women from other disciplines (e.g. Marketing, Management, Finance,

Public Relations, Communications, etc.) who may have strengths and talents suited to the intercollegiate environment and who may not have considered collegiate sport as a career.

To encourage women who may already be in the intercollegiate athletic pipeline, creating formalized succession plans would provide women with relevant professional development opportunities and it would send a message of encouragement for their professional growth and promise of advancing in the field. Men in upper level administration need to continue mentoring women and providing them with the opportunities and responsibilities they ask for to advance their careers. Additionally, men need to open their networks to women so opportunities to move up are more plentiful. Furthermore, women's roles and experiences need to be valued for leadership positions and they need to be hired into and encouraged to pursue roles and responsibilities in the athletic department that are less gender stereotypical.

One of the most important suggestions is to modify the culture and environment of intercollegiate athletics. Really dissecting whether or not committee representation is shared equally among all administrators and determining whether or not it is necessary for their attendance at so many events can go a long way to creating more work-life balance. Additionally, setting guidelines for limiting after-hours communication and allowing for the integration of family and work can produce a more manageable personal and professional life for all athletic administrators. Creating an environment that is enjoyable and meaningful and not exhaustive can contribute to career satisfaction.

If implemented, these practical suggestions may influence the likelihood of women choosing to stay in intercollegiate athletics and seeking advancement in their careers. It may take a very long time for women to have equal representation in senior level leadership;

however, they may be more likely to choose to pursue the AD position if they perceive more control of their careers.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to contribute further understanding of the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership roles in intercollegiate athletics. Underrepresentation is a problem because women are not experiencing equal opportunity in senior level leadership roles and consequently, collegiate sport continues to accommodate the customs, practices, and interests of men and it remains a hegemonic male institution. An in-depth, qualitative, phenomenological study of nine women occupying Senior Associate AD positions at Division I urban universities in the Midwest and Southern United States was conducted. The women's career experiences were gathered using face-to-face semi-structured interviews and review of their resumes, vitae, or biographical information page on their university's athletic department websites.

The data were analyzed using Creswell's (2007) textural and structural descriptions and comparing their responses to previous evidence of the existence of four structural barriers to advancement including: a) homologous reproduction, b) experience with internal operations versus external operations, c) decision-making authority in men's high profile sports, and d) conformity to feminine or masculine norms. Additionally, the women's responses were analyzed using TPB to determine whether or not they would pursue the AD position.

The most significant findings reveal there is no direct evidence of homologous reproduction; however, there is evidence of the persistence of the other three structural barriers. The women who do plan to pursue the AD position are actively seeking out and being given

experience with external operations, high profile men's sports, and agentic roles to increase their chances of obtaining an AD position.

When applying TPB, five of these nine women were predicted not to pursue the AD position. These women generally feel more role congruency with their current positions and do not feel as congruent with the expectations of the AD position. Additionally, the women who are choosing not to pursue the AD position are doing so because they desire more work-life balance than they perceive they would have in an AD position. Although this study cannot be used to generalize given the small sample of participants, it appears from their experiences women are choosing not to pursue the AD position. Their behavior contributes to a smaller pool of candidates and thus may contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior levels of athletic administration.

Future research using both qualitative and quantitative methods as well as using men and women from various sectors of the job market would help resolve this problem more thoroughly. More immediately, current administrators can work to encourage women in the field, and provide a more positive work environment that includes more realistic time expectations and more opportunity for work-life balance. These suggestions would go a long way toward increasing the possibility and probability of women pursuing senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletic administration. If women are more equally represented, their customs, practices, and interests may become more accepted and begin breaking down intercollegiate sport as a hegemonic male institution.

Glossary of Terms

AAHPERD: American Alliance of Health and Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance.

AAPE: Association for the Advancement of Physical Education.

AAUS: Athletic Association of the United States.

AD: Athletic Director. The highest ranked administrator of an educational institution's athletic department.

AIAW: Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women.

CIAW: Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women.

CISW: Commission on Intercollegiate Sports for Women.

Division I: NCAA designation for the member institutions with the largest intercollegiate athletic programs which can offer the most athletically related financial aid.

Division II: NCAA designation for member institutions with mid-size intercollegiate athletic programs which can offer limited financial aid.

Division III: NCAA designation for member institutions with smaller intercollegiate athletic programs which do not offer any athletically related financial aid.

DGWS: Division on Girls and Women in Sport.

HEW: Health, Education, and Welfare.

ICFR: Intercollegiate Conference of Faculty Representatives.

NACWAA: National Association of Collegiate Women in Athletic Administration.

NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association.

OCR: Office of Civil Rights.

PWA: Primary Woman Administrator.

Senior Associate Athletic Director: An athletic administrator at the rank and level just under the athletic director.

SWA: Senior Woman Administrator.

TPB: Theory of Planned Behavior.

TRA: Theory of Reasoned Action.

Urban: Large, diverse, densely populated area that includes the city and entire metropolitan area surrounding the urban center.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

From: Veraldo, Cynthia (veraldcm)
To:
Subject: Your participation is requested in a research study on the career experiences of athletic administrators
Date:
Attachments: Recruitment_Document_Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics.docx

Dear *Senior Associate Athletic Director (Name)*:

My name is Cynthia Miller Veraldo and I am a doctoral student at the University of Cincinnati. I am looking for participants for a research study, which examines the career experiences of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. You are receiving this email because you are a Senior Associate Athletic Director at a Division I university. Your email address was obtained from your university website.

If you take part in this study, you would be required to participate in one in-person or phone interview with me regarding your past and current career experiences and the meanings you give to these experiences. Additionally, you would need to provide me with a copy of your resume or curriculum vitae.

I have included in this email a document explains more of the details of the study. If you are interested in participating or have any questions about the study, please email me at veraldcm@ucmail.uc.edu or call me at 513-520-4369.

Thank you for your consideration,
Cynthia Miller Veraldo

Appendix B

Recruitment Document**College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services**

Research Study

Title: Underrepresentation of Women in Senior Level Leadership in Intercollegiate Athletics

Principal Investigator:

Cynthia Miller Veraldo, ABD, Doctoral Candidate, Urban Educational Leadership

Project Description:

The principal investigator (PI) is interested in learning more about the underrepresentation of women in senior level leadership in intercollegiate athletics. The main purpose of this research is to gather in-depth information from men and women in senior level athletic administrative positions about their career advancement experiences and to see if there are specific experiences influence the likelihood of advancement to senior level leadership roles. Additionally, the PI is interested to see if structural barriers exist prevent career advancement for women in senior levels of intercollegiate athletics.

Who will participate:

Eight to 12 men and 8 to 12 women in Senior Associate athletic director positions at NCAA Division I universities located in cities larger than 500,000 in the metropolitan area will be recruited to participate in the study.

What will happen:

- You will be asked to participate in one 60 – 120 minute interview with the principal investigator.
- The interviews will take place in a location agreed upon by you and the principal investigator or the interview may take place by phone.
- The interview will include questions about your former and current career experiences. You will be asked to reflect on the meaning of some of those experiences and you will be asked about your intentions to aspire to the role of athletic director.
- You will also be asked to share a copy of your resume or curriculum vitae with the principal investigator.
- At your request, the PI will share the findings of the study.

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Department: Urban Educational Leadership
Principal Investigator: Cynthia Miller Veraldo

Past Experiences

1. Were you a student-athlete at a post-secondary institution? If yes, please provide information on what institution(s) and which sport(s).
2. Please discuss the details of your education (Bachelors, Master, Doctoral, majors, minors, and focus of those programs).
 - a. When you think about specific coursework, which classes were most relevant to your career in intercollegiate athletics?
3. Please describe the positions you held prior to your current position.
 - a. Who hired you for each position?
 - b. What specific tasks and responsibilities did you have in these positions?
 - c. Did you choose to do these tasks and responsibilities or where they assigned or in your job description?
4. Are there positions within intercollegiate athletics you applied for but did not obtain? If so, do you know why you did not get the position(s)?
5. Please describe any formal professional development workshops, seminars, conferences, programs, etc., you have participated in have positively influenced your career.
6. Do you have specific mentors have been an important influence in your career advancement? If yes,
 - a. Who were they?
 - b. What position(s) did they hold?
 - c. Describe the specific ways they mentored your or influenced your career.
7. Describe your networks in intercollegiate athletics?
 - a. Have you been directly referred for a position (by a colleague)?
 - b. Have you been indirectly referred for a position (by a colleague of a colleague or you heard about the position through a network)?
8. Were you a part of a formal or informal succession plan for any of your positions? If so, please explain.

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Current Experiences

1. Please describe the specific duties and responsibilities of your current position (e.g. team supervision, department oversight, financial responsibilities, gender equity, work with students, etc.).
 - a. Are these duties and responsibilities in your job description?
 - b. Are these duties and responsibilities choice or assigned?
2. On what committees do you serve within the athletic department and what role do you serve on those committees?
 - a. On what committees do you serve outside of the athletic department including internal and external to the university?
 - b. Do you serve on these committees by choice or assignment?
3. In what aspects of the athletic department do you have the most decision-making authority? Which aspects do you play more of an advisory role?
4. What events is your attendance mandatory? What events is your attendance optional?
5. On average, how many hours do you work on a weekly basis?
 - a. What is the most time consuming aspect of your job?
6. On average, how many hours do you spend on personal commitments?
 - a. Describe your personal/professional life balance.
7. Are there roles and responsibilities you wish you had but don't?
 - a. Have you asked for any of these responsibilities and been denied?
8. What is the most challenging aspect of your job?
9. What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?
10. Do you plan to pursue the position of head athletic director? Why or why not?
11. Is there anything else I need to know about your career experience as I go forth with my research study?

(Other related questions may be needed to gather further detail and clarification)

Appendix D

Adult Consent Form for Research
University of Cincinnati
Department: *Educational Leadership*
Principal Investigator: *Cynthia Veraldo*
Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brody Ruihley*

Title of Study: *Understanding Structural Barriers and Choice in the Career Experiences of Women in Senior Level Leadership of Intercollegiate Athletics*

Introduction:

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Please read this paper carefully and ask questions about anything you do not understand.

Who is doing this research study?

The person in charge of this research study is Cynthia Veraldo of the University of Cincinnati (UC) Department of Educational Leadership.

She is being guided in this research by Dr. Brody Ruihley.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The first purpose of this research study is to gather in-depth, qualitative data from women in senior level athletic administrator positions to gain a more thorough understanding of their career advancement experiences. The second purpose is to do a comprehensive analysis to understand if structural barriers exist prevent career advancement for women in senior levels of intercollegiate athletics. The final purpose of this study is to discover how personal choice influences career experiences and advancement of women into senior level leadership positions.

Who will be in this research study?

About six to twenty women will take part in this study. You may be in this study if you are over the age of 18, a Woman Senior Associate Athletic Director at a Division I University in an urban area in the Midwest or South in the United States.

What if you are an employee where the research study is done?

Taking part in this research study is not part of your job. Refusing to be in the study will not affect your job. You will not be offered any special work-related benefits if you take part in this study.

What will you be asked to do in this research study, and how long will it take?

You will be asked to answer questions in the form of one, in-person or phone interview with the principal investigator. It will take about 1 or 2 hours for the interview. The interviews will take place in your office or at another location agreed upon by you and the principal investigator.

- The interview will include questions about your former and current career experiences. You will be asked to reflect on the choices you had and have in those career experiences. You will also be asked about the meaning of some of those experiences and your intentions to aspire to the role of athletic director.
- You will also be asked to share a copy of your resume or curriculum vitae with the

principal investigator.

The interview will be digitally recorded. If you do not want to be digitally recorded, you will not be asked to participate in this study. If you choose to participate in the study, I will share the findings of the study with you at your request.

Are there any risks to being in this research study?

There is a possibility of embarrassment or rejection from colleagues or others, however I have no intention of asking or probing beyond what the participants would be comfortable saying as part of agreeing to participate in the study. Some questions may make you uncomfortable. You can choose not to answer any questions you don't want to answer.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?

You will probably not get any benefit because of being in this study. But, being in this study may contribute to a better understanding of the underrepresentation of women in senior level intercollegiate athletic administration.

Will you have to pay anything to be in this research study?

You will not have to pay anything to take part in this study.

What will you get because of being in this research study?

You will not be paid (*or given anything*) to take part in this study.

Do you have choices about taking part in this research study?

If you do not want to take part in this research study you may simply discontinue participation at any time.

How will your research information be kept confidential?

Information about you will be kept private by

- using a study ID number instead of the participant's name on the research forms
- limiting access to research data to the researcher and the faculty advisor
- not including the participant's name on the typed transcript
- not including the participant's name on the write up of the findings
- keeping research data on a password-protected computer

Your information will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's campus office which also can be locked. Signed consent documents and master lists of participant names and ID numbers will be kept in the principal investigator's office in a locked drawer.

- Identifiers such as name will be deleted as soon as the study is closed.
- Federal regulations require signed consent documents must be kept for a minimum of three years after the study is closed.
- UC recommends raw data should be kept for a minimum of two years after the study is closed.
- Records will be de-identified or destroyed in a confidential manner, such as:
 - a) removing participant's name from all research data
 - b) deleting computerized records
 - c) shredding paper research files when the study is complete
- The data from this research study may be published; but you will not be identified by name.

Agents of the University of Cincinnati may inspect study records for audit or quality assurance purposes.

The researcher will ask people in the interview group to keep interview information confidential, but they might talk about it anyway.

The researcher cannot promise information sent by the internet or email will be private.

What are your legal rights in this research study?

Nothing in this consent form waives any legal rights you may have. This consent form also does not release the investigator, the institution, or its agents from liability for negligence.

What if you have questions about this research study?

If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, you should contact Cynthia Veraldo at (513) 520-4369 or at veraldcm@mail.uc.edu.

Or, you may contact Dr. Brody Ruyhley at (513)556-1340 or brody.ruyhley@uc.edu

The UC Institutional Review Board reviews all research projects involve human participants to be sure the rights and welfare of participants are protected.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant or complaints about the study, you may contact the UC IRB at (513) 558-5259. Or, you may call the UC Research Compliance Hotline at (800) 889-1547, or write to the IRB, 300 University Hall, ML 0567, 51 Goodman Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0567, or email the IRB office at irb@ucmail.uc.edu.

Do you HAVE to take part in this research study?

No one has to be in this research study. Refusing to take part will NOT cause any penalty or loss of benefits you would otherwise have. You may skip any questions you don't want to answer.

You may start and then change your mind and stop at any time. To stop being in the study, you should tell Cynthia Veraldo at (513)520-4369 or Dr. Brody Ruyhley at (513)556-1340.

Agreement:

I have read this information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I give my consent to participate in this research study. I will receive a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep.

Participant Name (please print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent _____ Date _____