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Roles and Tasks of the Senior Woman Administrator in Role Congruity Theory Perspective: A Longitudinal Progress Report

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Over time, the roles, tasks, and even titles of the senior woman administrator (SWA) have evolved in a direction to suggest greater involvement with department decisions and governance. However, thirty years after the inception of the designation, a discrepancy persists between senior woman administrators and athletic directors (AD) regarding the extent to which SWAs are and should be involved in decision-making within athletic departments. Further discrepancies are noted towards training and mentoring support for SWAs. The purpose of this longitudinal study is to explore the current roles, tasks and support of the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) from the perspective of both the SWA and the AD in a follow-up to a study completed in 2005. Perceptions of SWAs involvement in roles and tasks deemed important to the operational and strategic management of collegiate athletic departments were reported by SWAs (n= 681) and ADs (n= 601). The results indicated ADs more often perceived the SWA has greater involvement in nearly all 17 categories of administrative roles than SWAs perceive for themselves. The greatest discrepancies existed in the areas of budgetary planning and management and oversight of all (especially men's) programs. Results also indicated that financial support for training and mentoring is not widely available or used by SWAs to enhance their career skills and advancement. Recommendations include continued efforts to involve the SWA in all areas of management, and to provide the necessary training and mentoring to enhance SWA effectiveness not only for their future, but also in their current position.

Introduction

Since 1981 when the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) began offering championships for women's sports, member institutions have been required to designate a 'Senior' Woman Administrator (SWA), formally known as a 'Primary' Woman Administrator (PWA). In 1996, a uniform definition of the senior woman administrator (bylaw 4.02.4.1) was published in all three divisional manuals. The definition remains virtually the same in that the SWA is designated as "the highest ranking female involved with the management of an institution's intercollegiate athletic program" (NCAA Division I Manual, 2011, p. 30).

The inclusion of females in meaningful decision-making positions within their respective athletic departments was the intended outcome of the SWA legislation established by the NCAA (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Sweet, Tiell, Goff, Kovalchik, & Stallman, 2006). Over time, the roles, tasks, and even the titles of the senior woman administrator have evolved with the anticipation that SWAs would have greater involvement in department decisions and governance. After thirty years, however, a discrepancy persists between senior woman administrators and athletic directors regarding the extent to which SWAs are involved in decision-making and additional roles typically defined as masculine (Tiell & Dixon, 2008).

Despite the stated intent of the NCAA to include women to a greater extent in the governance of intercollegiate athletics, rarely is the SWA the athletic director. In NCAA Division I institutions, the SWA is typically an assistant, associate, or senior associate athletic director. In Division II and III institutions, she is everything from an administrator to a coach to an office manager (Sweet et al., 2006; Tiell & Dixon, 2008). When the SWA's official athletic capacity is a head coach or as a support staff position (e.g., office manager or sports information director), an argument can be made that she does not have the competencies or authority of someone in the role as a true athletics administrator.

Role congruity theory provides context for explaining the status of the SWA in regards to her involvement as an administrator and decision maker in the department (see Tiell & Dixon, 2008 for a comprehensive review). This theory suggests that in general, females are expected to perform more stereotypically communal or feminine roles such as nurturing or mentoring, while males are expected to perform more masculine or agentic roles such as allocating resources or administering discipline (Atwater, Brett, Waldman, DiMare, & Hayden, 2004; Burton, Grappendorf, Field, & Lilienthal, 2006; Diekmann & Goodfriend, 2006; Eagley & Karau, 2002; Ritter & Yoder, 2004). Women in managerial roles are seen to behave inconsistently with these traditional roles and are not always accepted or promoted in managerial positions (Atwater et al., 2004; Eagley & Karau, 2002) including those in intercollegiate athletics (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 2000; Hatfield & Drummond, 2009; Hoffman, 2010a; Hoffman, 2010b; Lough & Grappendorf, 2007; O'Conner, Grappendorf, Burton, Harmon, Henderson, & Peel, 2010; Schneider, Stier, Henry, & Wilding, 2010; Sweet et al., 2006).

Feedback gathered from an NCAA-endorsed research study conducted in 2004-2005 (see Tiell & Dixon, 2008) generally supported the tenets of role congruity theory, suggesting that responsibilities for athletics administrators are typically divided along gender-ascribed lines whereby female administrators are seen to engage in more communal activities (e.g., serving as a role model) than the agentic activities (e.g., budget management) more frequently associated with male administrators. Further, in general, less than half of the SWAs in divisions II and III held accompanying administrative titles to correspond with their SWA appointment. Tiell and

Dixon (2008) concluded that role bias was very strong and impacted the meaningfulness and centrality of the SWA as a participant in the core governance of athletics departments.

Role congruity theorists, however, suggest that roles and can change over time, and that societal evaluations of counter-stereotypical behavior can be impacted by a) the presence and activities of more persons in counter-stereotypical roles (e.g., more female managers; Diekmann & Eagley, 2000; Eagley & Karau, 2002), b) more education regarding the abilities of both genders in multiple roles (Diekmann & Goodfriend, 2006), and c) specific mentoring and training of “opposite gender” roles particularly by persons of that gender (e.g., females being mentored by male administrators; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Ragins & Scandura, 1994). Thus, over time, there can be a greater acceptance of females in agentic and males in communal roles. In the college athletics context, this may carry over to increased centrality of the SWA position, increased agentic roles for female administrators, and increased accompanying titles for women in SWA designated positions.

Indeed, since the previous study on SWA roles and tasks (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), there have been concerted efforts to strengthen the role of the SWA. The NCAA and individual conferences have increased the availability of administrative training for women while various educational initiatives have targeted both Athletic Directors and University Presidents. This longitudinal update explores whether these types of initiatives in the past five years have changed the perceptions among ADs and SWAs regarding the extent to which specific roles and responsibilities are performed by the SWA. Role-congruity theory assists in interpreting changes (if any) among the populations regarding the extent SWAs engage in agentic (masculine) and communal (feminine) activities. In addition to this longitudinal comparison, this study also examines the support for SWA training and mentoring responding to literature that suggests employee development is critical for advancement in the organization and in one’s career (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Greenhaus & Callanan, 1994; McCauley & Heslett, 2001; Ragins & Scandura, 1994). This study contributes to the literature by examining changes over time in role expectations and performance, particularly in the presence of changing gender composition of the workforce and concerted educational efforts to strengthen women’s roles in college athletics management.

Method

Participants

The population for this study consisted of all NCAA ADs and SWAs from 1096 Division I, II, and III institutions. Consistent with protocol in the 2004-2005 study female-only or male-only institutions were not included because this study was concerned with athletics programs that served both men and women. Further, in universities where the director of athletics was a female who was also identified as the institution’s SWA, the individual only received the AD survey.

For the SWA survey, there was an overall 55.6% response rate. A total of 610 survey responses were received out of the 1,096 members identified by NCAA. The divisional breakdown revealed 232 respondents from Division III (38.0%), 214 respondents from Division I (35.1%) and 164 respondents from Division II (26.9%).

The AD version of the survey accrued an overall 54.8 percent response rate. A total of 601 survey responses were received out of the 1,096 members from the database. The divisional

breakdown revealed 250 respondents from Division III (41.5%), 191 respondents from Division I (31.6%) and 156 respondents from Division II (25.9%).

Instrument

The survey consisted of two questionnaires adapted from a previous instrument with parallel sections developed to obtain information regarding SWA roles and responsibilities from the perspectives of both the SWA and the AD (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). The survey constructs included the background information of the participants, and general perceptions of athletics experiences and involvement of the SWA within the athletics department. The integrity of the questionnaires from the previous study conducted on SWAs and ADs in 2004-2005 was kept intact for the purposes of longitudinal data comparisons.

The instrument used for the 2004-2005 study was based on the 2002 NCAA Guide to the SWA (NCAA, 2002) and a previous study on AD roles and tasks which identified financial operations, public relations, selection and supervision of staff, and increasing revenue as responsibilities for athletics administrators (Cundiff, 1985; Johnson, 1993). The survey contained 40 items: 16 demographic items and 24 questions designed to assess perceptions of the following: a) SWA job responsibilities, roles, and tasks at each institution, b) mentoring and training, and c) perceptions of the need for SWAs to hold administrative titles. This instrument showed strong face and content validity for its included items (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). Changes to the instrument for this updated study were the inclusion of three questions to assess perceptions towards support (especially financial) for training, mentoring opportunities, and whether the SWA should hold an administrative title within three years of her designation.

Procedure

The NCAA Membership Database was utilized to generate e-mail lists of SWAs and ADs from all active NCAA member institutions. Detailed instructions were provided in an initial e-mail message to all potential participants noting the purpose of the study, that participation was completely voluntary, and that human subjects protocol would be followed. The email provided a link to the online survey tool that allowed users to access the survey one time. Reminder emails were sent two weeks after the initial email. Then, within three weeks the survey links were disabled and data was downloaded.

Data Analysis

Frequencies and measures of central tendency were utilized to examine demographic and other descriptive variables. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to examine differences between AD and SWA perceptions of the roles and responsibilities items in the 2010 data, as well as differences between these responses from the 2005 and 2010 data sets.

Results

Demographics

Table 1 displays the demographic information reported by the SWA's in each of the three NCAA divisions. A majority of the respondents reported their ethnicity as white/Caucasian. Interestingly, compared to the 2004-2005 study, this sample of SWA's was slightly more diverse. For example, in 2004-2005, 82.5% of the Division I SWA's were white/Caucasian, with 12.5% Black, and 5% other. In this sample, the percentage of black was increased to 15% and other to 6.5%. Similar trends were noted in Divisions II and III.

Table 1 - *Demographic Information for SWAs at Divisions I, II, and III*

Item	Categories	NCAA I (n=214)	NCAA II (n=164)	NCAA III (n=232)
Ethnicity	White	78.50 %	84.80 %	93.10 %
	Black, non Hispanic	15.00 %	10.40 %	3.90 %
	Other	6.50 %	4.90 %	3.90 %
Average Age Range	22-34 Yrs	11.40 %	29.40 %	25.70 %
	35-44 Yrs	40.50 %	33.10 %	31.70 %
	45+ Yrs	48.10 %	37.40 %	42.60 %
Education	Doctoral	14.10 %	13.40 %	1.70 %
	Master	68.10 %	66.50 %	74.80 %
	Bachelor	15.50 %	19.50 %	22.60 %
	Other	2.30 %	0.60 %	0.90 %
Years in Athletic Administration	0-5 Yrs	13.60 %	32.50 %	33.90 %
	6-10 Yrs	20.70 %	29.40 %	26.50 %
	11-20 Yrs	44.60 %	31.90 %	24.30 %
	21+ Yrs	21.10 %	6.10 %	15.20 %
Years in current position as SWA	0-5 Yrs	50.50 %	64.00 %	51.90 %
	6-10 Yrs	25.50 %	17.70 %	26.80 %
	11-20 Yrs	16.00 %	17.70 %	15.60 %
	21+	8.00 %	0.60 %	5.60 %

SWA holds title as an Assistant AD, Associate AD, Senior Associate AD (or similar)	Yes	95.30 %	79.88 %	70.69 %
Currently a Head Coach	Yes	3.80 %	21.50 %	59.30 %
Currently a Teacher/Professor	Yes	8.90 %	26.20 %	35.50 %
Has more than two Primary Titles (not counting SWA designation)	Yes	3.00 %	7.60 %	8.50 %
Next Stage in Anticipated Career Path for the SWA	Remain in Athletics	68.80 %	71.40 %	70.40 %
	Retire	24.00 %	18.00 %	21.20 %
	Higher Ed/Not Athletics	2.90 %	3.7 %	2.2 %
	Out of Higher Education	4.30 %	6.80 %	6.2 %
SWA was Internally Promoted	Yes	66.40 %	65.20 %	73.70 %
Years in Department Prior to Internal Promotion to SWA	0-3 Yrs	28.20 %	45.80 %	43.50 %
	4-6 Yrs	26.10 %	19.60 %	20.00 %
The SWA Duties are Primarily Gender Neutral	7-10 Yrs	16.90 %	17.80 %	15.30 %
	11+ Yrs	28.90 %	16.80 %	21.20 %
	SWAs - Yes	91.10 %	90.24 %	84.91 %
	ADs - Yes	90.20 %	88.00 %	82.70 %

The large majority of SWA's in all divisions report holding at least a Master's degree, with 14.1% of Division I and 13.4% of Division II SWAs holding a Doctoral degree. Division III SWAs have the least experience in athletic administration with the largest percentage (33.9%) having less than six years of experience. In Division I, by contrast, the bulk of SWAs have at least 11 years of experience. The education and experience profiles are very similar to the 2004-2005 study.

Titles

This profile for SWAs showed the most visible change from the 2004-2005 study. In Division I, 95.3% of the SWA's report holding an administrative title (e.g., Assistant AD, Associate AD, Senior Associate AD), this is up from 93% in the 2004-2005 study. In Division II, 79.88% of the SWAs report holding such a title, which is up from 44% in the previous study. The trend is similar in Division III with 70.69% of SWAs report holding an administrative title—up from 53% in 2004-2005. The increase in administrative titles is accompanied by a decrease of SWA's reporting they are head coaches or teachers/professors, although there is still a large percentage of Division III SWAs who are both head coaches (59.3%) and professors (35.5%).

This is reflective of the nature of Division III athletic departments where most of the coaches and administrators have multiple responsibilities and positions within the department (Dixon, Noe & Pastore, 2008).

Career Paths

The career paths for SWAs remain largely the same from the 2004-2005 data, where over 2/3 of all SWAs (across divisions) are promoted internally, and nearly the same percentages (68.8%, 71.4%, and 70.4%) intend to remain in college athletics. This appears to be a committed workforce, both to the profession, and (as indicated by longevity in current positions and internal promotion rates) to their institutions.

SWA Roles and Tasks

As seen in Table 2, there was general agreement across positions (ADs and SWAs) and divisions that SWAs continue to perform a wide variety of roles and responsibilities in athletic departments. Similar to the 2004-2005 study, ADs tend to report stronger agreement that SWAs perform roles and tasks than do SWAs. For one example, across divisions, ADs report a strong level of agreement that SWAs act as a key decision maker ($M= 1.40, 1.53, 1.57$ for the respective three divisions), whereas SWAs report slightly lower agreement ($M= 1.66, 2.19, 2.24$). In addition, there was a small but statistically significant increase in AD's perception of this role for SWA's (e.g. Acts as a key decision-maker in department, $F[1,274]=4.66, p<.01$; Serves as a role model and resource, $F[1,274]=7.42, p<.01$; Involved in sport program supervision, $F[1,274]=15.77, p<.01$; Involved in governance of athletics, $F[1,274]=5.97, p<.05$), but only at the Division II level.

Table 2 - Mean Scores for SWAs and ADs on 17 Statements Describing SWA Roles & Tasks.

Statement	DI SWA <i>M (SD)</i>	DI AD <i>M (SD)</i>	DII SWA <i>M (SD)</i>	DII AD <i>M (SD)</i>	DIII SWA <i>M (SD)</i>	DIII AD <i>M (SD)</i>
1) Acts as a key decision-maker in department	1.66 (.80)	1.40 (.80)	2.19 (1.14)	1.53 (.78)	2.24 (1.16)	1.57 (.72)
2005 Results	<i>1.57 (.77)</i>	<i>1.41(.70)</i>	<i>2.34 (1.26)</i>	<i>1.74 (.83)</i>	<i>2.27 (1.14)</i>	<i>1.61 (.73)</i>
2) Participates on Sr. Management Team	1.29 (.70)	1.19 (.64)	1.88 (1.12)	1.40 (.77)	2.29 (1.39)	1.50 (.83)
2005 Results	<i>1.29 (.47)</i>	<i>1.14 (.46)</i>	<i>2.12 (1.20)</i>	<i>1.58 (.85)</i>	<i>2.28 (1.26)</i>	<i>1.59 (.88)</i>
3) Works within the group structure	1.44 (.68)	1.30 (.72)	1.78 (.91)	1.37 (.68)	1.87 (.95)	1.41 (.61)

2005 Results	<i>1.42 (.68)</i>	<i>1.20 (.50)</i>	<i>1.76 (.97)</i>	<i>1.50 (.62)</i>	<i>1.78 (.87)</i>	<i>1.49 (.67)</i>
4) Manages gender equity and Title IX plans	1.49 (.75)	1.42 (.80)	2.05 (.99)	1.55 (.73)	2.13 (1.07)	1.65 (.72)
2005 Results	<i>1.43 (.68)</i>	<i>1.33 (.60)</i>	<i>2.17 (1.10)</i>	<i>1.70 (.78)</i>	<i>2.12 (.93)</i>	<i>1.70 (.76)</i>
5) Advocates issues important to females	1.37 (.67)	1.46 (.81)	1.76 (.77)	1.52 (.70)	1.70 (.82)	1.54 (.67)
2005 Results	<i>1.37 (.64)</i>	<i>1.30 (.51)</i>	<i>1.83 (.85)</i>	<i>1.61 (.73)</i>	<i>1.69 (.73)</i>	<i>1.48 (.57)</i>
6) Advocates issues important to males	1.50 (.75)	1.68 (.87)	1.84 (.80)	1.74 (.84)	2.00 (1.00)	1.93 (.89)
2005 Results	<i>1.50 (.69)</i>	<i>1.49 (.57)</i>	<i>2.01 (.96)</i>	<i>1.93 (.85)</i>	<i>2.00 (.87)</i>	<i>1.86 (.78)</i>
7) Educates others on feminine issues	1.79 (.83)	1.79 (.86)	2.08 (.82)	1.87 (.84)	2.10 (.92)	1.94 (.82)
2005 Results	<i>1.70 (.78)</i>	<i>1.67 (.69)</i>	<i>2.19 (1.04)</i>	<i>1.94 (.88)</i>	<i>2.11 (.86)</i>	<i>1.87 (.83)</i>
8) Educates others on masculine issues	1.95 (.87)	2.20 (.98)	2.22 (.87)	2.17 (.94)	2.49 (1.07)	2.37 (.97)
2005 Results	<i>2.06 (.92)</i>	<i>2.03 (.93)</i>	<i>2.40 (1.13)</i>	<i>2.37 (1.01)</i>	<i>2.48 (.94)</i>	<i>2.32 (.95)</i>
9) Serves as a role model and resource	1.33 (.57)	1.48 (.85)	1.51 (.59)	1.41 (.66)	1.50 (.64)	1.50 (.63)
2005 Results	<i>1.32 (.52)</i>	<i>1.42 (.64)</i>	<i>1.51 (.67)</i>	<i>1.65 (.79)</i>	<i>1.47 (.62)</i>	<i>1.49 (.66)</i>
10) Advises a balance of academics	1.90 (.82)	1.68 (.88)	1.78 (.84)	1.57 (.77)	1.71 (.85)	1.73 (.77)
2005 Results	<i>1.94 (.90)</i>	<i>1.57 (.52)</i>	<i>1.74 (.88)</i>	<i>1.66 (.74)</i>	<i>1.69 (.79)</i>	<i>1.72 (.77)</i>
11) Reviews EADA - Equity in Athletics	1.68 (.97)	1.53 (.92)	2.16 (1.25)	1.84 (.94)	2.27 (1.25)	1.90 (1.01)
2005 Results	<i>1.58 (.87)</i>	<i>1.52 (.82)</i>	<i>2.08 (1.25)</i>	<i>1.83 (.94)</i>	<i>2.22 (1.22)</i>	<i>1.79 (1.00)</i>
12) Monitors the gender equity plan.	1.63 (.86)	1.52 (.85)	2.40 (1.20)	1.82 (.81)	2.73 (1.26)	2.03 (.93)

2005 Results	<i>1.66 (.82)</i>	<i>1.45 (.70)</i>	<i>2.45 (1.19)</i>	<i>1.98 (.89)</i>	<i>2.61 (1.14)</i>	<i>1.96 (.88)</i>
13) Involved in sport program supervision	1.40 (.96)	1.48 (1.01)	2.22 (1.30)	1.87 (1.09)	2.42 (1.40)	1.89 (.98)
2005 Results	<i>1.46 (.94)</i>	<i>1.36 (.81)</i>	<i>2.21 (1.27)</i>	<i>2.46 (1.35)</i>	<i>2.12 (1.23)</i>	<i>1.86 (.88)</i>
14) Involved in budget management.	1.86 (1.10)	1.74 (.99)	2.41 (1.28)	2.06 (1.09)	2.59 (1.43)	2.18 (1.01)
2005 Results	<i>1.83 (1.08)</i>	<i>1.71 (.87)</i>	<i>2.46 (1.35)</i>	<i>2.19 (1.10)</i>	<i>2.53 (1.36)</i>	<i>2.14 (1.01)</i>
15) Involved in athletic fund-raising.	2.72 (1.12)	2.73 (1.08)	2.55 (1.14)	2.44 (1.06)	2.60 (1.30)	2.55 (1.16)
2005 Results	<i>2.71 (1.11)</i>	<i>2.67 (1.08)</i>	<i>2.38 (1.21)</i>	<i>2.46 (1.11)</i>	<i>2.14 (1.01)</i>	<i>2.53 (1.09)</i>
16) Involved in governance of athletics	1.52 (.75)	1.39 (.79)	1.93 (1.07)	1.52 (.72)	2.06 (1.13)	1.55 (.72)
2005 Results	<i>1.46 (.75)</i>	<i>1.37 (.60)</i>	<i>2.00 (1.09)</i>	<i>1.74 (.77)</i>	<i>1.97 (.97)</i>	<i>1.67 (.72)</i>
17) Involved in Personnel Hiring & Recruitment	1.56 (.84)	1.48 (.82)	1.90 (1.04)	1.66 (.88)	2.03 (1.14)	1.55 (.75)
2005 Results	<i>1.53 (.82)</i>	<i>1.39 (.64)</i>	<i>2.02 (1.08)</i>	<i>1.72 (.78)</i>	<i>1.98 (1.06)</i>	<i>1.60 (.73)</i>

Note: Items anchored on a 5-point Likert-type scale: 1=Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3= Neutral; 4=Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree

It appears that the roles SWAs perform most are participating in senior management team, working within the group structure, participating in governance of athletics, acting as an advocate for female interests, and acting as a role model. The least performed roles by SWAs are education of others on masculine issues, fundraising, and budget management. Interestingly, at the Division II and III levels, there was also a perception by SWAs that they do not participate as strongly in the monitoring or management of the gender equity plans at their institutions.

All of these findings are largely congruent with the 2004-2005 results. There were minor changes in SWA's roles at the Division II level, and three of the four of these were related to decision-making and centrality in the department. However, there was actually a decrease among Division III SWA's regarding the extent to which they were involved in program supervision and athletic fundraising—both of which would be considered more agentic tasks/roles.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 display the levels of agreement between ADs and SWAs regarding the extent to which they perceive that SWAs perform the designated roles and tasks. For example,

participants were asked to assess their perception of whether the SWA at their institution participates on the Senior Management Team. As in the 2004-2005 study, there were fewer statistically significant ($p < .05$) differences in Division I than in the other two divisions. Division I had 5 significant differences (compared to 5 in 2004-5), Division II had 13 differences (compared to 9 in 2004-5), and Division III had 12 differences (compared to 13 in 2004-5). Thus, overall there appears to be more clarity in Division I (than the other two divisions) regarding the roles of SWAs.

Table 3 - Summary of ANOVA Analysis: Division I Perception Differences Between ADs and SWAs on SWA Roles and Tasks

Division I	Source	SS	df	MS	F	1- β
Decision Maker	Between Groups	9.911	1	9.911	9.908**	.881
	Within Groups	386.097	386	1.000		
	Total	396.008	387			
Advocates Issues Important to Males	Between Groups	4.394	1	4.394	4.298*	.543
	Within Groups	325.800	386	1.022		
	Total	326.907	387			
Educates Others on Masculine Issues	Between Groups	8.791	1	8.791	6.503*	.731
	Within Groups	508.639	386	1.318		
	Total	517.430	387			
Serves as a Role Model and Resource	Between Groups	3.546	1	3.546	4.200*	.566
	Within Groups	301.451	386	.781		
	Total	304.997	387			
Advises Students on Balancing Academics & Athletics	Between Groups	7.851	1	7.851	6.932**	.747
	Within Groups	437.147	386	1.133		
	Total					

Total	444.997	387	
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Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4 - Summary of ANOVA Analysis: Division II Perception Differences Between ADs and SWAs on SWA Roles and Tasks

Division II	Source	SS	df	MS	F	1- β
Decision Maker	Between Groups	49.388	1	49.388	34.277**	1.000
	Within Groups	458.720	295	1.555		
	Total	508.108	296			
Sr. Management Team Participant	Between Groups	25.895	1	25.895	18.551**	.985
	Within Groups	443.687	295	1.504		
	Total	469.582	296			
Group Structure	Between Groups	18.607	1	18.607	19.043**	.988
	Within Groups	305.945	295	1.037		
	Total	324.552	296			
Manages Title IX & Gender Equity	Between Groups	28.850	1	28.850	25.322**	.998
	Within Groups	357.877	295	1.213		
	Total	386.727	296			
Issues Important to Females	Between Groups	6.814	1	6.814	8.200**	.807
	Within Groups	250.001	295	0.847		
	Total	256.815	296			

Education on Issues Concerning Females	Between Groups	4.863	1	4.863	4.541*	.568
	Total	318.970	296			
Advises a Balance of Academics	Between Groups	5.308	1	5.308	5.278*	.622
	Within Groups	301.466	295	1.022		
	Total	306.774	296			
Reviews EADA Report	Between Groups	11.751	1	11.751	6.306*	.682
	Within Groups	582.235	295	1.974		
	Total	593.987	296			
Implements Gender Equity Plan	Between Groups	38.064	1	38.064	24.367**	.997
	Within Groups	498.630	295	1.690		
	Total	536.694	296			
Sport Program Supervision	Between Groups	14.726	1	14.726	6.679*	.715
	Within Groups	674.938	295	2.288		
	Total	689.663	296			
Budget Management	Between Groups	14.055	1	14.055	6.510*	.706
	Within Groups	658.639	295	2.233		
	Total	672.694	296			
Involved in Governance of Athletic Programs	Between Groups	19.246	1	19.246	15.435**	.964
	Within Groups	398.269	295	1.350		
	Total					

	Total	417.515	296			
Involved in Recruitment of Personnel	Between Groups	6.386	1	6.386	4.447*	.542
	Within Groups	438.584	295	1.487		
	Total	444.970	296			

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5 - Summary of ANOVA Analysis: Division III Perception Differences Between ADs and SWAs on SWA Roles and Tasks

Division III	Source	SS	df	MS	F	1- β
Decision Maker	Between Groups	79.682	1	79.682	54.886**	1.000
	Within Groups	671.175	455	1.475		
	Total	751.037	456			
Sr. Management Team Participant	Between Groups	110.913	1	110.913	54.729**	1.000
	Within Groups	935.726	455	2.057		
	Total	1046.639	456			
Group Structure	Between Groups	37.213	1	37.213	37.465**	1.000
	Within Groups	457.666	455	1.006		
	Total	494.880	456			
Manages Title IX & Gender Equity	Between Groups	41.777	1	41.777	32.445**	1.000
	Within Groups	592.604	455	1.302		
	Total	634.381	456			
Issues Important to Females	Between Groups	4.343	1	4.343	4.961*	.604
	Within Groups	398.335	455	0.875		

	Within Groups					
	Total	402.678	456			
Education on Issues Concerning Females	Between Groups	4.852	1	4.852	4.089*	.523
	Within Groups	539.957	455	1.187		
	Total	544.810	456			
Reviews EADA Report	Between Groups	23.889	1	23.889	11.848**	.928
	Within Groups	923.538	455	2.030		
	Total	947.427	456			
Implements Gender Equity Plan	Between Groups	87.460	1	87.460	45.791**	1.000
	Within Groups	876.895	455	1.927		
	Total	964.354	456			
Sport Program Supervision	Between Groups	7.238	1	51.152	22.617*	.997
	Within Groups	1039.785	455	2.285		
	Total	1090.937	456			
Budget Management	Between Groups	30.392	1	30.392	12.768**	.944
	Within Groups	1094.098	455	2.405		
	Total	1124.490	456			
Involved in Governance of Athletic Programs	Between Groups	45.969	1	45.969	32.952**	1.000
	Within Groups	642.977	455	1.413		
	Total	688.945	456			
Involved in Recruitment of Personnel	Between Groups	41.126	1	41.126	28.617**	1.000
	Total	702.945	456			

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

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In the previous study on the roles and tasks of the SWA (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), the following four statements were significantly different between SWAs and ADs: (1) The SWA acts as a key decision-maker instrumentally involved with the athletics department; (2) The SWA participates on the Senior Management Team; (3) The SWA works within the group structure to accomplish goals; and, (4) The SWA monitors the implementation of the gender equity plan. In the current study, the only statement that was still different across all three divisions was statement one about acting as a key decision-maker. ADs consistently perceive that SWAs perform this to a higher extent than do SWAs, indicating that SWAs across divisions continue to feel excluded from this important role. However, ANOVA of the 2004-5 and the current data reveals a significant improvement in agreement on this perception, $F(1,444)=5.27$, $p<.05$. That is, although there is still a disagreement between SWAs and ADs regarding the extent to which SWAs act as a key decision maker, there is more agreement between ADs and SWAs than there was five years ago. This demonstrates some progress in this role area at least at the division II level.

The other three main differences remained apparent at the Division II and III levels, where it appears the SWAs, in general, have less participation on senior management team, less work within the group structure, and less responsibility for monitoring the gender equity plan than do their Division I counterparts. They also perceive that they have less responsibility in these areas (as well as budget management and personnel decisions) than do their ADs. In all of these role areas, there were no significant changes from 2004-2005.

Interestingly, at the Division I level, there appears to be more agreement between SWAs and ADs that the SWA participates on senior management team, that she works within the group structure, and that she implements the gender equity plan. Conversely, the SWAs at this level have a stronger perception (than do ADs) that they act as role models and that they advise on matters related to masculinity. It appears SWAs at this level are feeling a stronger influence across a wider variety of roles and tasks.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 reveal that across all divisions there is little disagreement that SWAs do not participate heavily in fundraising. This finding is consistent with the 2004-5 findings, and ANOVA reveals no significant improvements in this area for any division.

Role Performance for Men's and Women's Programs

Table 6 displays the results regarding the extent to which SWAs perform their roles related to men's and women's programs. As seen in this table, SWAs are not perceived to perform revenue increasing roles for men's or women's programs at any level, and they are not involved in financial operations at the Division II and III levels. One interesting change in this trend is that the 2004-5 data revealed that SWAs were involved in roles increasing revenues for both men's and women's programs, whereas the participants in this study reported that they did not have those responsibilities for either program. Consistent with the 2004-5 data, outside of money management, it appears SWAs have responsibilities for programs of both genders.

Table 6 - *SWA Role Performance for Both or Neither Men's & Women's Programs*

Role Performed by SWA	Division I	Division II	Division III
Public Relations	Both	Both	Both
Financial Operations	Both	Neither	Neither
Increasing Revenue	Neither	Neither	Neither
Selection & Supervision of Staff	Both	Both	Both
Program Supervision	Both	Both	Both

Training and Mentoring

Questions regarding training for SWAs revealed differences between ADs and SWAs in the current study. While 80% of ADs reported providing a training or a mentorship role in developing their SWA as an athletics administrator in their department, only 30% of SWAs reported that their AD provided such training or mentoring. When asked about approval of institutional funds to receive athletics administrative training, over 85% of ADs reported that they have approved this funding, while only 60% of SWAs reported that they have been approved for institutional funds to receive athletics administrative training. There is an obvious discrepancy between the two parties on this issue, with SWAs feeling less supported in training and mentoring than ADs report.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to utilize a role congruity perspective to examine the current status of the SWA designation and compare it to data collected five years ago. In the interim time period, the NCAA made a strong push to educate administrators on purpose and breadth of the SWA designation. Role congruity theory purports that such educational efforts may serve to change gender norms and stereotypes, opening the door for role performance in non-stereotypically agentic (masculine) or communal (feminine) roles (Diekmann & Eagley, 2000; Eagley & Karau, 2002). Thus, given the strong educational efforts over a five year period, it was expected there would be an increase in SWAs holding an actual administrative title to accompany their designation, and a less stereotypical profile of roles and responsibilities within athletic departments.

While the NCAA definition suggests the SWA is an athletic administrator, there is a perception that without an official "director" title, the authority and decision making role is not as readily understood or integrated into the leadership of athletic departments. In cases where an SWA does not have a true administrator title, it often limits the perception and reality of her role on the senior management team, thereby marginalizing her role as a senior management team

member. For instance, a comment from an SWA in a similar study questioned how many females would be an Associate or Senior Associate Athletic Director if it were not for the SWA designation (Hoffman, 2010a, p. 64). A majority of SWAs (over 81%) and ADs (over 72%) in the current study indicated high levels of agreement (strongly agree or agree) with the statement that the SWA should have an accompanying title as an athletics administrator (assistant, associate or senior associate athletic director) within three years of their SWA designation.

One of the most promising findings of the study was the pronounced increase in SWAs holding administrative titles, particularly at the Division II and III levels, which almost doubled from the 2004-5 study. This is accompanied by a general agreement that SWAs participate as a member of the senior management team, with the strongest perception at Division I schools. It appears that educational efforts may be having some positive effect in this area.

A second focal point of this study was to explore the perceptions of ADs and SWAs regarding the extent to which SWAs perform roles and responsibilities in the athletics department and whether SWAs seem to be confined to more “communal” or “feminine” roles or more “agentic” or “masculine” roles (Burton, Grappendorf, & Henderson, 2011; Deikman & Goodfried, 2006; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Tiell & Dixon, 2008;). Supporting earlier research on the extent of decision making by the SWA (Claussen & Lehr, 2002; NCAA Project Team, 2002; Raphaely, 2003; Tiell & Dixon, 2008) the current study noted a moderate percentage of SWAs acted as a key decision maker (agentic role) in the department and were involved in roles related to governance and supervision, beyond the more supportive roles of advisor and advocate. A closer look at the divisional differences in the current research suggests a potential correlation between the percentage of SWAs that hold an administrative title and extent to which they are involved in a decision making or supervisory role.

For instance, in the current research, Table 2 indicates a generally stronger agreement among both SWAs and ADs in Division I (than Divisions II and III) that SWAs act as a key decision maker, participate on the senior management team, and are involved in governance and program supervision. In terms of percentages, almost 97% of Division I SWAs hold an administrative title as an assistant or associate athletic director (or similar) and over 80% indicate a high level of agreement that they perform these roles. Conversely, only 72% of SWAs in Division III hold an administrative title and less than 64% have a high level of agreement that they act as a key decision maker, participate on the senior management team, and are involved in governance and program supervision. This makes sense given that Division I departments tend to be larger and have more administrative support than smaller schools—that is, there are simply more administrative titles available. However, it also makes sense in that the administrators in Division I typically only hold administrative duties—not also coaching and/or teaching duties. This not only leads to more role clarity, but may also help these SWAs improve their job skills such that they can expand their roles to other areas (e.g., finance) that were typically viewed as agentic. It is important that as Divisions II and III become more professionalized, they work proactively to move the SWA away from positions with multiple and sometimes conflicting “hats” and into a more clearly administrative/managerial role.

An important area of responsibility that correlates with administration is financial competency. In 1995, 96% of the SWA respondents in Judd’s study indicated an important competency for the SWA was preparing an annual budget yet, only 57% of the SWAs in the current study indicated they were involved in budget management. In fact, as indicated by Table 2, fundraising and budget management were consistently the least reported roles for SWAs across divisions. While there is a distinction between budget preparation and budget

management, the preponderance of earlier literature notes that neither is a common responsibility for the SWA (Grappendorf, Pent, Burton, & Henderson, 2008; Pent & Grappendorf, 2007; Pent et al., 2007). Similarly, the lack of fundraising is evidenced by the fewer than 40% of the SWAs and ADs which indicates a high level of agreement with the SWAs involvement in that role.

Clearly, while there has been some progress, particularly in terms of senior management participation, SWAs continue to lag behind their AD (and usually male) counterparts in holding more agentic roles, particularly those involving finances (Tiell & Dixon, 2008). It is not clear, however, if this is due to the functions within the positions themselves, a reticence to involve women in these roles, or a lack of competence on the part of the SWAs to perform these roles. Clearly more investigation of this particular role is warranted to understand how either competence, perception, or both might be advanced (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006).

Training and Mentoring for SWAs

In addition to titles and roles, this study examined the perceptions of ADs and SWAs regarding support for mentoring and training opportunities. It has been widely suggested that mentoring and professional development is instrumental not only for changing role perceptions, but also for upward mobility and closing hiring gaps in the workplace (Pickle, 2010; Weaver & Chellandurai, 2002; Young, 1985). The wide gap between SWAs and ADs regarding participation by SWAs in mentoring and training suggests a degree of disconnect between the two groups. While 80% of ADs reported they provide training or a mentorship role, only 30% of SWAs reported participating in training or a mentoring relationship. A logical conclusion may be that the SWA does not equate an informal mentor as satisfying the definition of a mentorship role or that indeed SWAs are receiving little to no mentoring of any kind. Surely, it is difficult to attain the institutional and technical knowledge for the wide variety of roles and tasks of the AD role without such mentoring.

The gap between SWAs and ADs regarding the approval of institutional funds to receive athletics administrative training was not as extensive a divide as the perception that mentoring was provided. A plausible explanation may be that while funding is available, it may not always be utilized or the SWA is not typically in a position to have the extent of budgetary knowledge as the AD. It could also mean that SWAs have asked for more training that may have been initially approved, yet ultimately denied.

There are an increasing number of associations related to intercollegiate athletics that are sensitive to the issue of an under-representation of women operating as administrators. Associations such as the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA), the NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interest Committee (MOIC), and the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) are designing mentoring and training initiatives to address the issue of discrimination and a misappropriated perception that women and minority candidates have certain inadequacies related to required competencies in decision making and general administration. The data from this study indicates that these and other types of training programs may not be fully utilized by the constituents for which they are designed to serve.

Mentoring, training, and professional development are important initiatives to improve managerial competencies to a degree which may facilitate changes in a societal bias towards women in leadership and power positions (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Drehr & Ash, 1990; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Greenhaus & Callanan, 1994; McCauley & Heslett, 2001; Ragins & Scandura,

1994). Currently, only a small percentage of SWAs claim they participate in training or a mentoring relationship even though some institutional funding is available. Development programs at any level must remain affordable in the current economy. Perhaps more SWAs would take advantage of training opportunities if the use of technology such as Webinars made professional development more convenient or accessible. In addition, participation may increase with greater support of ADs who proactively encourage SWA to take the necessary time to engage in training.

Conclusions

The research on the roles and tasks of the senior woman administrator has indicated marked improvement in the percentage of SWAs who hold administrative titles at Division I and II institutions. The extent to which the SWA participates on the management team or in decision making functions has remained relatively unchanged over five years despite the increase in the number of SWAs with administrative titles, with meaningful advances limited to the Division I level. Further exploration into the connection between administrative title and scope of authority and responsibility is warranted.

The outcomes of training and mentoring opportunities for the SWA, while promising in theory, are another area for further review. Longitudinal research should continue to help decipher trends and opportunities for the highest ranking female in intercollegiate athletic departments over time and whether training and mentoring opportunities are available, utilized, and helpful for changing their experience, performance, and social roles.

There have been initiatives in the past decade demonstrating promise for restoring the SWA designation to its original intent of providing a female voice in the governance structure of the athletics department. The NCAA produced webcasts and published news articles to clarify the role of the SWA (Copeland, 2009; Sweet et al., 2006). The results of this research suggest that these kinds of initiatives have had some impact on the number of SWAs holding administrative titles, and perhaps even the types of roles that they hold. These results suggest that educational initiatives aimed at the entire athletic department's management structure should be continued.

In addition to these broad scale efforts, The NCAA also updated webpages to include helpful resources and the President's Council for the NCAA II Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) endorsed a position statement recommending that "the senior woman administrator should have an appropriate title designating her as a member of the athletics department senior management team within three years of initial appointment as the SWA" (Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletics Conference, 2010). The strength of the GLIAC position statement is that it supports training for those SWAs who are not yet ready to be identified as an authority figure, but it does not legislate that institutions must attach an administrative title to the SWA.

Those who assume leadership positions in intercollegiate sports are receiving much more specialized training and formal education in the business side of sport than in past decades. Partially as a result of technological advancements in society, progressive changes in the culture of intercollegiate sports are increasingly requiring the necessary leadership to operate athletic departments with managerial functions similar to Corporate Executive Officers. The data in this study suggest that SWAs need training in the areas of development, budgeting and financial management, and in managing male sports. Such training could be made available through

formal education in an MBA or graduate sport management curriculum, or could be garnered through classes or training modules. New technology may assist in increasing the percentage of SWAs and other administrators who take advantage of training and education to increase their competencies, which will continue to decrease gender-based stereotypes (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006).

In addition, Ragins (1997) suggested that multiple mentors could be utilized to reduce power differentials in organizations. That is, according to Ragins, often mentees seek mentors who are like them in race or gender because those people are comfortable. However, for women and minorities, this often means that mentees deny themselves access to power networks and to positions that could benefit them. For SWAs, this means that in addition to female mentors who may help provide support and political insight, they should build mentoring networks with individuals (probably male senior administrators) who can help them gain important knowledge, skills, and abilities to broaden their job skills and perhaps reduce role stereotypes. In addition, organizations should provide such mentoring networks for SWAs combining both formal and informal mentors, such that SWAs can continue to enhance their contribution to the athletic department as a whole.

Furthering the literature on the roles and tasks of the SWA, as well as exploring the availability and use of training and mentoring opportunities will continue to strengthen the clarification of the designation and provide baseline data for institutions to assist in implementing professional development.

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