

Self-Categorization and Sport Management Students: Perceptions of Industry and Discipline by Self-Identified Gender

Mike Ross, Bobby Berry, and Mark Vermillion

Department of Sport Management, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS, USA

Previous research has identified the saliency of gendered experiences in sport industry and educational settings. Drawing from self-categorization theory to better understand the impact of in- and out-group membership on experiences and perceptions, the purpose of this study was to examine college students' perceptions of gender in both the sport industry and their sport management discipline. Data were collected from a sport management student population at a moderately sized, urban-serving university using an exploratory questionnaire. Descriptive and bivariate results indicate statistically significant differences in perceptions of equality, fairness, and experiences between male and female sport management students. Results, which are in alignment with previous research, are discussed along with study limitations.

Keywords: intragroup comparison, self-categorization theory, gender dynamics, gendered experiences

A large amount of research, scholarship, and reporting has identified the complex and interconnected relationship between sport—as both an institution and industry—and society, in general. As an industry, sport is a global structure, which is predominantly a male-occupied space. For example, a 2018 report by the England-based charity *Women in Sport* “stated that 40 percent of women that were surveyed in the sports industry felt that their gender could have a negative impact on the way they’re valued by others at work” (p. 8). Or, more particular to American intercollegiate athletics leadership and representation, Lapchick (2022a) highlighted the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions within intercollegiate athletics, especially at National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Football Bowl Subdivision environments. Recent research and popular press writings identified significant barriers facing women, which include corporate or organizational cultures (Hardin et al., 2021; Hindman & Walker, 2020; *Women in Sport*, 2018), social pressures or expectations (Boyle, 2006; Peachey & Burton, 2011; Swanson et al., 1996), and latent structural elements within educational processes (Harris et al., 2014; Hindman & Walker, 2020; Morris et al., 2019; Sauder et al., 2018; Taylor, Johnson, et al., 2018).

Relatedly, research has identified and discussed underrepresentation of women within the sport management academic discipline. Specifically, scholars (e.g., Ball, 2012; Barnhill et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2013; Levsen et al., 2001) have discussed low numbers of women sport management undergraduate majors, lower numbers of women in introduction to sport management classes, or even the number of women entering business-related academic majors or the professorate. Additionally, research noted the “gender gap” in sport management students, including in areas such as perceptions of nonsexist/sexist language (Hardin et al., 2021; Parks & Robertson, 2002), perceptions of perceived masculinity within certain managerial roles of athletic directors and in professional sport (Burton


et al., 2009; Hindman & Walker, 2020), male students preferring female sport management professors in the classroom (Sosa & Sagas, 2008), and how students’ gendered perceptions of sport are impacted by generation Z experiences (Schailee et al., 2021). While research continues to identify critical gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline, sport industry conversations have remained largely descriptive and cursory.

Recent high-profile industry hires have received national attention (Sveinson et al., 2022), but are often isolated in their impact. Examples of these often-covered stories include the hirings of both Jen Welter as an assistant coach for the Arizona Cardinals (National Football League) and Kim Ng as a general manager of the Miami Marlins (Major League Baseball). While widely consumed and touted for their impact, these examples do not help explain social dynamics within the various industries associated with sport, recreation, physical activity, tourism, entertainment, governance, or business academic majors and disciplines. These academic majors not only have a connection to the institution of sport, recreation, and physical activity, but also mirror similar gendered patterns, trends, and perceptions. Indeed, sport is the result of a gendered process that often inhibits or discourages women from advancing within the field (Burton & Leberman, 2017), and sport management education is similarly situated exhibiting many of the same dynamics of underrepresentation (Moore et al., 2004). As a result, one way of better understanding sport and sport management is through an examination of personal categorizations, perceptions, and responses to structural dynamics and barriers regarding gender (Burton et al., 2011; Morris et al., 2019; Whisenant et al., 2014).

Women are challenging traditional barriers in sport and continue to confront individual, structural, or societal norms (Franks & O’Neill, 2016). The current research will examine differing perceptions and categorizations of experiences between male and female students as they enter not only a male-dominated academic program, but also a male-dominated sport industry. The theoretical framework used to better understand these experiences is self-categorization theory (SCT), which examines individuals’ placements into various social categories and the resulting impact those categories have on student perceptions. As a result, the purpose

Ross  <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-5959-5550>

Berry  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2224-3567>

Vermillion (mark.vermillion@wichita.edu) is corresponding author,  <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2226-3379>

of this research is to examine college students' perceptions of gender within both the sport industry and their sport management discipline and/or program. To better contextualize these dynamics, a review of relevant literature provides an overview of gender dynamics within sport and the sport management higher education discipline.

Literature Review

The Gender Gap in Sport Management Education

While the overall population of women as students in higher education continues to grow, a gender gap in the sport management discipline remains (Chen et al., 2013). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the percentage of women students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions in Fall 2019 was 57.4%, which was tied with the year 2005 as the highest percentage of women students on campuses since 1947 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). The Pew Research Center reported that young women are now more likely to have a college degree than young men, and that "gap in college completion is even wider among younger adults ages 25–34" (Parker, 2021, para 1). Those trends in higher education do not appear to translate to sport management education where underrepresentation of women continues to be a critical concern (Moore & Huberty, 2014; Morris et al., 2019). Hums (1994) initially reported the significance of underrepresentation in the discipline, citing men outnumbered women 3-to-1 in sport management. In a survey of 172 North American Society for Sport Management member institutions, Moore (2008) found that nearly half of responding institutions reported female representation below 40%. Jones et al. (2008) also found that most sport management programs had a female population of less than 40%. Chen et al. (2013) later found an even more significant gender gap in a study that reported female enrollment in the major was less than 25%.

Female Student Perceptions of Sport Management Education and the Industry

Several scholars have contributed research to better understand why this gap exists, especially through the lens of female student perceptions of their education and experiences within the industry. Harris et al. (2014) found female students were often unaware of the sport management major prior to attending school and will often choose the major due to prior interest or participation in sport (Chen et al., 2013). Morris et al. (2019) added that women clearly understood that a gender gap existed within the major and the industry. Hardin et al. (2021) contributed to a better understanding of women's experiences in sport management, and found that nearly two-thirds experienced some variation of sexual harassment in internship settings.

Using Hall and Sandler's (1982) initial concept of a chilly climate, Harris et al. (2014) reported that female sport management students acknowledged inequitable treatment in the classroom, a condition that continues to persist (Morris et al., 2019; Park & Williams, 2022). Inequitable treatment of women in sport management classrooms unfortunately extends to faculty as well. Taylor et al. (2017) found more than half of female sport management faculty reported disparate treatment in the classroom based on their sex.

Hancock and Greenwell (2013) found that men and women choose sport management for similar reasons with one notable exception: women in the major perceived future salaries to be less

satisfying than men's perceptions. That work was supported by a 2020 College Sports Information Directors of America survey that included data on compensation and career satisfaction for college sports information directors. When asked "How well compensated are you?" more than 46% of female sports information directors gave a rating of "not well at all" or "moderately well." When male sports information directors answered the same question, only 38% responded in the same manner (College Sports Information Directors of America, 2020).

Female sport management students have also reported a chilly reception from external sources of support on their choice of a major (Harris et al., 2014). Female sport management students also reported feeling a sense of "otherness" or separation from peers and the feeling of being unwelcome in class discussions (Sauder et al., 2018). The chilly climate is confounded by widespread recognition of hostile sexism within the major, and women citing a need to develop specific coping mechanisms (Hindman & Walker, 2020; Morris et al., 2019; Park & Williams, 2022; Taylor, Johnson, et al., 2018) and skill sets including the ability to learn independently, time management, and communication skills (Leberman & Shaw, 2015). Taylor et al. (2017) found a similar environment exists for female sport management faculty indicating "women working within sport management programs in higher education settings experience high levels of sexism as well as moderate levels of sexual harassment from colleagues and superiors" (p. 50).

Harris et al. (2015) found that female students believed they will engage with negative gender stereotypes and discrimination in their future sport careers. Morris et al. (2019) provided additional strategies to overcome the barriers female students face in the study of sport management, and their future careers, including the importance of networking. Ezarik (2021) added that 40% of female students preferred a same gender mentor, which can impact the successfulness of networking efforts.

Jones et al. (2008) cited a concern in the lack of female representation in sport management faculty and the potential contribution to lower numbers of female students in the major. Moore and Huberty (2014) added to that finding with a continued call to expand the female professoriate and the need for recognition of diversity courses by the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation. Moore et al. (2004) also linked the development of student diversity programs to higher percentages of female sport management students.

Gender in the Sport Industry

Sauder et al. (2018) discussed the imbalance of male and female students in sport management education noting it is "... somewhat perplexing, given that females' participation in high school sports has been at an all-time high in recent years" (p. 69). Nonetheless, patterns persist, and once female students advance beyond the academe, they are met with many of the same concerns of underrepresentation upon entry into the sport industry (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Lapchick et al., 2018; Yiamouyiannis & Osborne, 2012). The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport publishes a yearly racial and gender hiring practices report card, and a recent report on Division I Football Bowl Subdivision leadership gender hiring practices gave a grade of "F" citing "women athletic directors at Football Bowl Subdivision schools make up for only 10 percent of the total" (Lapchick, 2022a, p. 3). Professional sport only fared marginally better in recent The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport report cards despite the hiring of more women to positions in Major League Baseball, the National Football

League, Major League Soccer, and the National Basketball Association in recent years (Lapchick, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2022c). Acosta and Carpenter (2014) reported that in 1972, 90% of the coaches for women's teams were female, and that number had dropped to 40% by 2014.

There continues to be a need to conduct research to contextualize and better understand the experiences of women in sport. Claringbould and Knoppers (2012) found that both men and women have normalized the gender gap in sport, and women in leadership positions feel the need to identify more with the normal male image in organizations where women are underrepresented. Harris et al. (2015) found that female sport management students were well aware of the perceived challenges of navigating the job market in the sport industry but were still excited about that process. Darvin (2020) found that women left sport coaching because of toxic organizational cultures, destructive leadership practices, and factors leading to burnout. Sveinson et al. (2022) issued a call to further explore integrating personal experiences within organizational settings to address women's underrepresentation in the sport industry. Indeed, sport organizational workplaces are contested terrains where work and work expectations are related to both context and definitions of gender (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

While sport/sport management industry and educational conversations are varied, much of the discourse involves the structural category of gender, which relates to the social structures and organization of individual experiences. Sociologically, social structure is often conceptualized at its most basic of levels as the regular and repeatable patterns of social interactions (or social life) involving various ways of organizing social groups including statuses, roles, organizations, and institutions (Hughes & Kroehler, 2005). Gender, as a result, can be understood as not only a personal experience, but also as a categorical membership replete with social ideologies and industry or educational expectations.

Social structure is foundational to understanding how humans organize their social networks and relationships that includes personal and social values, beliefs, and ideologies (Schaefer, 2011). Reimer et al. (2020) observed that the complexity of social life involves both group membership and not belonging to a specific group, simultaneously. Group membership, then, is one way of understanding and categorizing the human experience that can influence how we begin addressing systemic, organizational dynamics within the sport industry. The *social identity approach* is an umbrella term often used to describe two separate theories—social identity theory (SIT) and SCT (Beauchamp & Dunlop, 2014). Both SIT and SCT (i.e., the *social identity approach*) attempt to build on our understanding of groups and identity development and are useful theoretical tools for examining issues of underrepresentation within the sport industry and sport management discipline respectively.

Categorizing people into social groups to better understand group membership and identity development lays the foundation for the development of in- and out-groups (Tajfel, 1974), which is crucial for the further bifurcation of the social identity approach. Specifically, SIT notes individuals develop not only personal identities, but also additional identities based upon membership into various social groups. SIT tends to focus its approach on *intergroup* or between-group processes, such as comparison between groups of sports fans or the gender of sport management educators (Sosa & Sagas, 2008).

To examine processes within a particular group, which is the primary focus of this research, Turner and colleagues created SCT, which seeks to better understand how people think about themselves and others, based upon membership within a social group (Turner, 1987). That is, SCT examines *intragroup* processes noting humans tend to self-select both themselves and others into social and predetermined categories. The self-selection influences our emotions, behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions of various phenomena. Indeed, SCT recognizes that the categorizing of individuals is hierarchical and based upon context and situation (Reimer et al., 2020).

Categorization involves two processes of cognitively assigning or placing objects into a nonsocial grouping for inanimate objects or a social grouping for people (Brewer, 2001; Simon, 1993). This latter categorization is what forms the in- and out-groups so important to SIT, SCT, and other work on small-group processes. Essentially, a person identifies as either part of an in- or out-group based upon prevailing social ideologies and/or personal experiences, such as those preconceived ideas associated with gender and race. Indeed, Sosa and Sagas (2008) noted, "Social categorization theory can illustrate instances of bias and negative preconceptions leading to discrimination within intergroup behavior" (p. 268). With in-groups often defining normative rules or prevailing ideologies, the identification of in- versus out-group membership lays the foundation for not only discrimination against out-group members, but also helps preserve the structure moving forward. What results, then, is a homogenous system that maintains the status quo and varies little, whether you are examining management and leadership positions within the sport industry or issues of underrepresentation within the sport management discipline.

Within the sport management student population, there are several self-identified categories. For example, students may self-categorize by their sport management (or related) academic major. Depending on context unique to each college, university, or environment, there may be additional categorizations involving graduate/undergraduate students or upper/lower division undergraduate students. In addition to major, students frequently self-categorize by gender which is often reflective of dominant ideologies and normative expectations, especially within the educational environment. Indeed, education is a bureaucratically structured system of organizations replete with specific rules, procedures, status, and roles (Hughes & Kroehler, 2005), all of which impact social structure, social interaction, and self-categorizations of students.

Within sport there is ample research identifying women being grossly underrepresented within sport industry power positions. For example, to receive an "A" on the The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport Racial and Gender Report Cards, organizations would only need to report that at least 42.5% of its employees are women. Only the Women's National Basketball Association managed to achieve this score in the 2022 Racial and Gender Report Card that included college sport, Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, Major League Soccer, and the National Football League (Lapchick, 2022c). Similarly, and within the sport management discipline, there are numerous scholarly works noting the underrepresentation of not only female sport management students, but also the underrepresentation at all levels of female professors (e.g., Chen et al., 2013; Hums, 1994; Moore, 2008; Moore & Huberty, 2014; Taylor, Smith, et al., 2018). The structural and demographic contexts of the sport industry and the sport management discipline present systemic homogeneity where men greatly outnumber women, both in the aggregate and within

power or decision-making positions, resulting in dominant or prevailing ideologies that support the historical underrepresentation of women.

The disproportionate overrepresentation of men in sport has created a system of inequality whereby maleness is the default assumption and issues of representation are couched in terms of “fairness” or “progress” and based upon an individual’s sport, industry, or classroom experience. Importantly, Beauchamp and Dunlop (2014) note “categorization is sensitive to both the immediate context (e.g., comparative fit) and personal history (e.g., perceived readiness)” (p. 621). As a result, sport management students’ perceptions reflect both their current position within dominant social structures (i.e., in- or out-group status) and personal experiences. For example, the underrepresentation of women in the sport industry and sport management discipline might be perceived differently for male students as compared with female students. SCT provides the sport management scholar or educator with the theoretical tools to examine meaningful differences between male and female students’ perceptions regarding issues of fairness, representation, or comfort within both the sport industry and sport management educational settings.

Research Questions

Gender is more than a sociocultural construct that attempts to explain patterns of behavior. When combined with the understanding of SCT, discussions of gender help to better situate individual understandings of sport and the sport management discipline with lived experiences, which are often connected to dominant cultural ideologies embedded in organizational or group settings. These lived experiences and perceptions can be influential for evolving organizational or educational dynamics, processes, and approaches. Based upon the previous research and the identified theoretical framework, the purpose of this research is to examine sport management students’ perceptions of gender within both the sport industry and within the sport management discipline. Specifically, the research questions guiding this research are as follows:

- a. What are sport management students’ perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry?
- b. What are sport management students’ perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program?
- c. Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students’ perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry?
- d. Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students’ perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program?

Methodology

Participants

Study respondents were selected from the student population of a large, state university located in the southern high plains of the United States. Institutional review board-approved surveys were administered electronically using a Qualtrics link and sent to students’ official university email accounts. Survey links were sent to all undergraduate and graduate students in the sport management degree programs and to students within upper division sport

management courses (which sometimes include nonmajors or minors in sport management) and were initiated by both the undergraduate academic advisor and the graduate coordinator for the respective programs. Once surveys were completed, responses were automatically entered into a downloadable spreadsheet to develop an electronic database. Surveys with missing (skipped) questions were discarded and not included in the database.

After data collection, a total of 136 usable surveys were included in the analysis (*n* = 136). The sample consisted of mostly men (63.2%) as compared with women (36.8%) and 0% of participants self-reported gender diversity (e.g., trans, nonbinary, etc.) resulting in a dichotomous variable. The sample was predominantly White (76.5%). While multiple racial, ethnic, and/or international origin categories were provided for respondents to select from, a non-White minority group member category was created for reporting purposes; the remaining non-White categories summed to account for almost 25% of the sample. Almost 70% of the sample self-reported as having advanced student standing (e.g., junior, senior, or graduate student status) with over 80% of the sample reporting they were majoring in sport management. Similarly, over 75% of the sample reported not being a participant in varsity sports (i.e., student-athlete; see Table 1).

Measure

The survey instrument consisted of five demographic questions measuring gender identity, racial/ethnic/origin identity, academic standing (e.g., freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student), engagement with the sport management programs (e.g., majoring in sport management, minoring in sport management,

Table 1 Percentage of Respondents by Demographic Categories (N = 136)

Variables	Percentage (%)	<i>n</i>
Gender ^a		
Man	63.2	86
Woman	36.8	50
Race, ethnicity		
White	76.5	104
Non-White ^b	23.5	32
Student standing		
Freshman	11.8	16
Sophomore	18.4	25
Junior	34.6	47
Senior	29.4	40
Graduate student	5.9	8
Engagement		
Majoring	82.4	112
Minoring	13.2	18
Taking class	4.4	6
Student-athlete		
Yes	23.5	32
No	76.5	94

^aResponse options beyond dichotomous man/women (male/female) included trans-gender, nonbinary, prefer to respond, and other. ^bIncludes self-reports of Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx/Chicano/a, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Asian/Asian American, Multiracial, and International.

or simply taking a sport management class), and whether the respondent was a student-athlete. To better understand individual perceptions and experiences, researchers created a questionnaire influenced by SCT. The questionnaire consisted of Likert-type statements measured as ordinal categories and attempted to identify a basic quantitative tool for understanding how individual perceptions of the sport industry and their sport management program are connected to categorizations of self (and others). The questionnaire consisted of eight (8) Likert-type statements regarding perceptions of gender-based dynamics within the sport industry. The questionnaire also included seven (7) Likert-type statements regarding perceptions of gender-based dynamics within sport management degree programs; thus, attempting to measure students' perceptions for two major institutions associated with the sport management profession—the sport management educational environment and the professional sport (business) industry. For both sets of statements, respondents selected from the following options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. After class discussions with undergraduate students, questionnaire items were developed through conversations with academic colleagues from multiple disciplines to ensure face validity of the instrument.

Procedure

Respondents were sent an email from the co-principal investigators soliciting students' voluntary participation in completing the online survey. Informed consent was done electronically with the disclaimer being an embedded part of the electronic survey. Student participation was not mandatory, but was encouraged. Results are not simply confidential, but also anonymous because a detailed respondent record cannot be tracked or charted in the current electronic database. Surveys were taken by respondents at their convenience and the link collecting surveys was active for a period of 2 weeks. The gathered statistical information was downloaded from the survey collection tool to an electronic spreadsheet and any individual identifying information (such as IP address or date/time survey was started/completed) was removed leaving only a numerical statistical record. The remaining numerical database used SPSS (version 25.0) for data analysis.

Data were analyzed to answer the research questions guiding this study. To answer the first two research questions (What are sport management students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry? What are sport management students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program?), univariate descriptors were presented describing sport management students' perceptions of gender-based dynamics within both the sport industry and sport management degree programs. Since the questionnaire's items were ordinal in nature, both the median and modal responses are presented as measures of central tendency. Additionally, a summed percentage of those respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with individual questionnaire items is presented.

Regarding the third and fourth research questions (Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry? Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program?), researchers examined basic differences between male and female students. Cross-tabulation tables were used to identify differences in percentages of those students that *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the questionnaire item. Since the questionnaire items were ordinal

in nature and not normally distributed, a chi-square test of independence is the appropriate nonparametric test for examining the independence and interaction of two variables (Cronk, 2014, p. 98). A chi-square test was calculated comparing the percentages of those agreeing and strongly agreeing to questionnaire items between male and female students and measuring the resulting interaction.

Results

Regarding students' perception of the sport industry (Research questions [RQs] 1 and 2), the modal response for most industry-related items was "2," which corresponds to *disagree*; thus, there appears to be support for noting women are not treated fairly within the sport industry. Items related to fairness included items, such as the following:

- *Women are treated fairly within the sport business industry.*
- *Sport organizations hire, train, and develop equal numbers of male and female professionals.*
- *I believe female professionals in the sport industry feel acknowledged and understood by their coworkers and supervisors.*

The only modal response that was positive ("4") involved the statement *There needs to be more female professionals in the sport industry*, which corresponds with *agree*. Almost 60% of the sample *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement (see Table 2).

In reference to perceptions of the sport management programs, the (overall) sample reported women students are treated fairly in the programs (69.8%), they felt acknowledged or understood in their classes (69.1%), most classes address or connect with issues of gender within their curricula (55.5%), and there needs to be more women professors in the program(s) (54%). Less desirably, less than 50% of respondents reported there is fair and equal representation of women students in the programs (48.6%), they expected there to be equal numbers of men and women students in the program (33.2%), and over 19% of respondents reported they considered leaving or transferring out of the program due to the lack of women students represented in their program or classes (see Table 3).

The next research questions examined differences in perceptions of the sport industry and the sport management programs based upon respondents' self-reported gender identity. Regarding the sport industry (RQ3), there were statistically significant differences between respondents. Women students reported lower rates of agreement as compared with men students measured by the percentages of those that *agree* and *strongly agree* to the questionnaire items, including the perceived fair and equal treatment of female athletes, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 19.979, p < .001$, women being treated fairly in the sport industry, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 18.018, p < .001$, and expectations of equal number of men or women in a sport organization, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 16.657, p < .01$. Additionally, women had lower percentages regarding, belief that women in the sport industry feel acknowledged and understood, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 15.514, p < .01$, and sport organizations hire, train, and develop equal numbers of men and women, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 10.607, p < .05$. Women reported higher rates of agreement as compared with men measured by the percentages of those that *agree* and *strongly agree* to the questionnaire items, including the need for more women professionals in the industry, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 19.392, p < .001$, and having considered not taking a position with an organization due to issues of underrepresentation, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 19.310, p < .001$ (see Table 4).

Table 2 Students' Perceptions (N = 136) of Gender-Based Dynamics in the Sport Industry: Median, Mode, and Percentage Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Questionnaire Item

Questionnaire item: sport industry dynamic	Median	Mode	% agree or strongly agree
There is fair and equal treatment of female athletes in the sport industry.	3	2	35.1
Women are treated fairly within the sport business industry.	3	2	31.6
If/when I work within the sport industry, I expect there to be an equal number of males and females in my sport organization.	2.5	2	29.8
There needs to be more female professionals in the sport industry.	4	4	59.5
I believe female professionals in the sport industry feel acknowledged and understood by their coworkers and supervisors.	3	2	33.1
Most female professionals in the sport industry have never considered leaving their industry or organization due to a lack of representation or support.	3	2	24.2
Sport organizations hire, train, and develop equal numbers of male and female professionals.	2	2	29.4
I have considered not taking a position with a sport organization due to the lack of female representation within that organization.	2	2	18.4

Table 3 Students' Perceptions (N = 136) of Gender-Based Dynamics in the SMGT Discipline/Program(s): Median, Mode, and Percentage Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing With Questionnaire Item

Questionnaire item: SMGT program dynamics	Median	Mode	% agree or strongly agree
There is fair and equal treatment of female students in the SMGT program(s).	4	4	69.8
There is fair and equal representation of female students in the SMGT program(s).	3	2	48.6
I expected there to be an equal number of males and females in my SMGT program(s).	3	2	33.2
There needs to be more female professors in the SMGT program(s).	3	3	45.6
I feel acknowledged and understood in my SMGT classes.	4	4	69.1
I have seriously considered leaving or transferring to a different program due to the lack of female representation in my SMGT program and/or classes.	1	1	19.8
Most of my SMGT classes address or discuss issues of gender within their curricula.	4	4	55.5

Note. SMGT = sport management.

Table 4 Students' Perceptions (N = 136) of Gender-Related Dynamics in the Sport Industry: Differences Between Males and Females

Questionnaire item: sport industry dynamic	Male, % ^a	Female, % ^a	χ^2 (df)	p
There is fair and equal treatment of female athletes in the sport industry.	43.5	19.5	19.979 (4)	***
Women are treated fairly within the sport business industry.	41.1	14.7	18.018 (4)	***
If/when I work within the sport industry, I expect there to be an equal number of males and females in my sport organization.	34.3	21.9	16.657 (4)	**
There needs to be more female professionals in the sport industry.	57.6	95.1	19.392 (4)	***
I believe female professionals in the sport industry feel acknowledged and understood by their coworkers and supervisors.	35.6	17.1	15.514 (4)	**
Most female professionals in the sport industry have never considered leaving their industry or organization due to a lack of representation or support.	20.5	21.9	6.822 (4)	NS
Sport organizations hire, train, and develop equal numbers of male and female professionals.	28.8	9.7	10.607 (4)	*
I have considered not taking a position with a sport organization due to the lack of female representation within that organization.	5.4	22	19.310 (4)	***

Note. NS = not significant.

^a% = percentage of males/females that agreed or strongly agreed with the questionnaire item.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Chi-square results measuring differences in perceptions of the sport management programs across gender identity categories (RQ4) are less homogenous as compared with the sport industry. Specifically, there are no statistically significant differences in the items examining fair and equal treatment of female students in the program, expectations of equal number of male and female students in the degree programs, and the addressing of gender within curricula. There were, however, statistically significant differences in the remaining items. Men reported higher percentages regarding perceptions of fair and equal representation of female students in the program, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 11.474, p < .05$, and feeling acknowledged and understood in classes, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 19.085, p < .001$. Female students indicated greater agreement to the need for more female sport management professors, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 18.615, p < .001$, and considerations of transferring or leaving due to lack of gender representation, $\chi^2(4, 136) = 9.403, p < .05$ (see Table 5).

Discussion

The purpose of the research was to examine sport management students' perceptions ($n = 136$) of gender within both the sport industry and within the sport management discipline. Specifically, research questions examined sport management students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics with the sport industry, their sport management discipline/program, and whether there were statistically significant differences between male and female sport management students' perceptions.

Sport Industry

The overall sample reported a broad understanding of the current state of sport industry, while simultaneously recognizing the need for increasing women's representation within sport. That is, only about one-third of respondents reported high levels of agreement regarding the equal treatment of women athletes in the sport industry; equal treatment of women sport business professionals; expectations of equal numbers of women and men employed within their sport organization; women employees feeling acknowledged and heard; and equal hiring, training, and development practices for both men and women employees. That is, the general sample acknowledged gender differences and lack of equality on sport industry-related items with modal responses being "disagree" except for the positive response (e.g., "4") to needing more women professionals in the sport industry. Results from this research align

with the recent recognition of barriers facing women within sport. Indeed, as Hancock et al. (2018) noted, "results suggested male and female students alike are, at the very least, aware of barriers to women's advancement in the sport industry" (p. 105).

On the surface, these univariate patterns might indicate paradigm-shifting awareness among undergraduate sport management students. However, upon looking at perceptions based upon self-categorized gender, the situation becomes more nuanced illustrating the importance of in- and out-group membership as identified by SCT. Specifically, self-categorized women students were more likely to report lower agreement levels regarding statements about fair and equal treatment of women athletes (19.5% vs. 43.5%), women being treated fairly in the industry (14.7% vs. 41.1%), expecting an equal number of professional women in the workplace (21.9% vs. 34.3%), and believing professional women feel acknowledged and understood by their supervisors or coworkers (17.1% vs. 35.6%). Additionally, women students more often reported a need for more women professionals in the industry (95.1% vs. 57.6%). When talking about professionals in the sport industry, women are often considered as the out-group with men dominating the in-group membership. Group membership, then, appears to relate to different individual perceptions of barriers and industry dynamics. These findings would also appear to support the work of DeLuca et al. (2022), where male sport management students were found more likely to support inequality and less likely to support diversity in intergroup relations. As Hancock et al. (2018) noted, perceptions of barriers for women in sport vary with men students having "a stronger belief than female students that barriers to female advancement no longer exist, or are altogether a myth" (p. 105). The women participating in this research also echoed previous scholars' concerns of industry underrepresentation (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Lapchick et al., 2018; Lapchick, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; Yiamouyiannis & Osborne, 2012). Similarly, as Harris et al. (2015) noted female sport management students were aware of perceived challenges of the sport industry's job market, self-categorized women students in this research reported statistically significant differences regarding sport industry dynamics centered on fair and equal treatment, the need for more women sport professionals, and professional women feeling acknowledged and understood.

Finally, Sveinson et al. (2022) advocated for further exploration of women's personal experiences in the sport industry in order to address structural inequalities within sport. Their research called for a better understanding of mesolevel organizational structures

Table 5 Students' Perceptions ($N = 136$) of Gender-Related Dynamics in SMGT Program(s): Differences Between Males and Females

Questionnaire item: SMGT program dynamics	Male, % ^a	Female, % ^a	χ^2 (df)	<i>p</i>
There is fair and equal treatment of female students in the SMGT program(s).	70.9	68	5.024 (4)	NS
There is fair and equal representation of female students in the SMGT program(s).	59.1	44	11.474 (4)	*
I expected there to be an equal number of males and females in my SMGT program(s).	30.2	36	5.287 (4)	NS
There needs to be more female professors in the SMGT program(s).	32.6	68	18.615 (4)	***
I feel acknowledged and understood in my SMGT classes.	75.6	58	19.085 (4)	***
I have seriously considered leaving or transferring to a different program due to the lack of female representation in my SMGT program and/or classes.	17.4	24	9.403 (4)	*
Most of my SMGT classes address or discuss issues of gender within their curricula.	68.3	46	8.421 (4)	NS

Note. NS = not significant.

^a% = percentage of males/females that agreed or strongly agreed with the questionnaire item.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

and experiences. The power of personal experiences, or lack thereof, is connected to the self-categorized experiences of sport industry professionals and is often reaffirmed by organizational culture and day-to-day interactions (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2008). Indeed, only about 17% of women respondents reported a belief that women professionals felt acknowledged or understood by organizational colleagues (e.g., supervisors and coworkers), and only 9.7% of women students reported that sport organizations hire, train, and develop equal numbers of men and women professionals.

SCT, as a theoretical framework for examining group membership, provides sport management scholars insight into better understanding differences in perceptions between men and women sport industry professionals. Indeed, as SCT notes, the in-groups and out-groups so prominent within an institution like the sport industry (i.e., men being defined as the dominant in-group based upon social and historical precedence) become identifiable structures influencing students' perceptions of sport organizations or the larger sport industry. One can examine these multifaceted structures, such as normative expectations regarding participation within the sport industry, through the intersection of group membership (or nonmembership) and personal experiences (Reimer et al., 2020). As Claringbould and Knoppers (2012) noted, both men and women have normalized the gender gap in sport with women in leadership positions feeling the need to identify more with an image of organizational maleness to be a part of dominant structures and processes. The result is that both the in- (men in the sport industry) and out-group (women in the sport industry) use the same rationalization explaining the underrepresentation of women in sport, which further supports current organizational structures and does not systemically challenge the industry status quo. Since the sport management discipline often serves as an entry point for many matriculating into the sport industry, examining the sport management discipline and the self-conceptualization group membership(s) of its students is important for better understanding the sport industry's current structures and potential avenues for challenging the perceptions that hinder the industry's advancement of fair and equitable treatment among men and women sport professionals.

Sport Management Discipline

Examining the sport management discipline is important for understanding the connection between self-categorizations, educational experiences, and perceptions of industry dynamics. In general, the sample reported positive perceptions of the sport management program with almost 70% of respondents noting fair and equal treatment of women students in the program and students feeling acknowledged and understood in the program. Over 55% of students reported gender being discussed or addressed in their classes. Continuing forward, though, univariate descriptors begin revealing important patterns, such as only a third of students expecting there to be equal numbers of men and women in their sport management program, and less than 50% of the students reporting fair and equal treatment in the program, or the need for more women professors in the program.

When examining differences based upon self-categorized gender, additional patterns emerge including women students' reporting lesser levels of agreement regarding fair and equal treatment of women students in the program (44% vs. 59.1%) and feeling acknowledged and understood in classes (58% vs. 75.6%). These findings support the work of Kluch et al. (2023), who found that sport management students from minoritized groups felt a

sense of belonging "when they could see themselves in the people they were surrounded by in their respective academic context—including peers, faculty, and industry professionals" (p. 7). It should then come as little surprise that women students in our study reported higher agreement levels with statements about needing more women professors in the program (68% vs. 32.6%) and seriously considered leaving the program due to women students' underrepresentation in the classroom (24% vs. 17.4%). Leberman and Shaw (2015) highlighted the importance of sport management educational experiences in preparing women for sport industry employment. They discussed the critical role a sport management curriculum that includes regular discussions of gendered workplaces in sport can play in the success of women professionals. Relatedly, and as Hughes and Kroehler (2005) noted when discussing schools, educational environments are often standardized, bureaucratically structured spaces reaffirming social thoughts, values, and beliefs. Sport management educational spaces help to expose students to new opportunities, possibilities, and/or current modes of thought. As Harris et al. (2014) noted in their research with sport management undergraduate students, most women were unaware of sport management (or the related) as a major or career opportunity until they were already pursuing higher education and noticed severe underrepresentation of women in sport management classes. Harris et al. (2014) focus group results illustrate how sport management educational spaces are categorized as men-dominated arenas with women sport management students being categorized as out-group members in those spaces, which impacted their emotions, behaviors, and comfort levels.

Sport management classrooms or programs that continue incorporating gendered content within their curricula can begin addressing experiences and perceptions based upon self or social categorizations. SCT notes the importance of in- and out-group distinctions is related to both accessibility and fit of the categories (Oakes, 1987). Reimer et al. (2020) further elaborated on the connection between context, accessibility of a category, and the educational setting:

A category's accessibility depends on an individual's immediate social context (situational accessibility), as well as the extent to which an individual tends to make use of a self-categorization across a range of situations (chronic accessibility). For example, a female student's gender category may become psychologically activated if she finds herself in a room filled with male students (high situational accessibility) but not in a room filled with female students (low situational accessibility). An example of chronic accessibility would be if the same student is part of a feminist campaign group which makes her much more aware of, and think more frequently about, her gender. (p. 275)

The example of an individual activating or accessing predetermined categorizations and how it is impacted by the gender makeup of the classroom environment is extremely pertinent to the sport management discipline which suffers from issues of underrepresentation (e.g., Chen et al., 2013; Harris et al., 2015; Moore & Huberty, 2014). Within sport management classroom settings, the intragroup comparisons based upon dichotomous gender categories could be seen as influencing individual perceptions that reinforce traditional sport management and educational dynamics, categories, and stereotypes. That is, women in the sport management classroom see they are underrepresented, which could influence or reinforce out-group membership expectations and stereotypes that women are not heavily involved in sport management or the sport industry.

There were several statistically significant differences in perceptions of the sport industry between respondents, which closely mirrors the previous literature regarding gender, sport, and sport management education. Specifically, men respondents were overwhelmingly more likely to report perceived equal treatment of women athletes (43.5% vs. 19.5%), fair treatment of women within sport business (41.1% vs. 14.7%) that women professionals feel acknowledged and heard (35.6% vs. 17.1%), and the equal hiring, training, and development of professionals (28.8% vs. 9.7%) as compared with women respondents. These differences also correspond with a prevailing understanding of gendered experiences within sport, especially in regard to perceptions. For example, Morris et al. (2019) noted, women understand and acknowledge a gender gap within sport; and, women sport management students reported a strong belief that they will not only engage with gender stereotypes in their careers, but also face discriminatory behaviors and practices (Harris et al., 2015). Women as sport management students, then, are socially and self-categorized as out-group members within the sport management student category. As a result, female sport management students not only acknowledge issues of underrepresentation, but also are expected to negotiate these barriers as outlier or out-group members on their own.

Women and men students have different perceptions of the sport management discipline. Relatedly, SCT provides a useful framework for examining how group membership can influence how an individual's perception of larger structural dynamics. As Sosa and Sagas (2008) discussed, SCT provides scholars with a way to study potential biases based upon categorical membership, such as gender. Indeed, negative stereotypes associated with out-group membership results in not only bias or discrimination (Reynolds et al., 2000), but also the further institutionalization of men-dominated structures, environments, and systems of organizational power which continue marginalizing women.

SCT provides the sport management educator and researcher with a framework for understanding potential differences between women and men regarding perceptions of the sport management discipline and the sport industry. The social environments of sport-related settings are male-dominated spaces and are imbued with gender ideologies and stereotypes impacting individuals (Coakley, 2017). Indeed, women—in this research—understand the gendered nature of these spaces differently than men. For example, women reported lower percentages of feeling acknowledged and understood in the classroom (58% vs. 75.6%) and reported higher percentages of considered leaving the program due to representation issues (24% vs. 17.4%). SCT notes women sport management students being defined socially as out-group members seems to relate to reported perceptions of the sport management discipline.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Research

The purpose of this research was to examine sport management students' perceptions of gender within both the sport industry and within the sport management discipline. Using SCT to better understand gendered experiences within the sport industry and sport management educational settings, the research questions guiding this project included: What are sport management students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry? What are sport management students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program? Are there statistically significant differences between male and female

students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport industry? and Are there statistically significant differences between male and female students' perceptions of gender-related dynamics within the sport management discipline/program? This research identified significant differences in student perceptions of gender-related dynamics and self-categorizations useful to sport management scholars and educators, including issues of fairness, support, access, and representation. SCT was used to examine in- and out-groups within the sport management student population helping to framework different perceptions of men and women regarding both sport management education and the sport industry.

This study also provides practical implications for sport management education. The academy can respond to the findings of this study and our peers' findings by continuing a concerted effort to grow awareness of the existing gender inequities within the sport industry. This effort should be incorporated into the classroom and continued research that elevates the personal experiences of inequity for out-group populations such as women. We also recommend that sport management programs explore more extracurricular professional development opportunities specifically targeted at men that share the experiences of women and inequities within the industry. Anecdotally through class assignments, the authors have found that many men sport management students are surprised to hear about women's experiences of inequity, sexism, and harassment within the industry. Hearing those stories and reflecting upon them in the presence of their in-group peers could be a valuable experience for growing perceived awareness of the inequities within the industry.

Those experiences may also be equally crucial for women sport management students to absorb. We propose that sport management programs continue to advocate for mentorship programs where women students can be matched with women professionals, even if those professionals are outside the area of the student's future career interest. While an assistant athletic director at a college may not be able to give specific career guidance to a woman student interested in pursuing professional player development, we believe the relationship can still prepare the student for success.

Limitations

As indicated by the findings of this research, sport management students' perceptions of both the sport industry and the sport management discipline may be related to the gendered experiences of students. That is, female sport management students reported different views of equality, support, and expectations upon entering the sport industry and sport management discipline. The research was not without limitations. The study's sample size was only 136 respondents, did not include many graduate students, and did not involve multiple institutions. While this sample size was about two-thirds of the undergraduate sport management population of the institution where data were collected, the conclusions should not be generalized based upon the university's population, mission (e.g., urban serving institution in a predominantly suburban area), and location (e.g., geographical location/region that is not densely populated).

An additional limitation involves understanding and measuring organizational structures. When discussing student experiences, feelings, and perceptions and organizational structures, the context can be influential. It should be noted, then, that the university's sport management faculty (both fulltime and adjunct faculty) is largely homogenous and composed overwhelmingly of self-identified men, which could influence students' understanding or perception of both

the sport industry and sport management discipline. As a result, student personal experiences could be the driving force for understanding results as compared with recent calls for more in-depth organizational dissections (e.g., Sveinson et al., 2022). That is, by relying on student perceptions, the research may not be fully addressing or identifying organizational structures within sport or sport management. While students' perceptions are important for identifying the power and stability of in- and out-group memberships, more information is needed to fully connect those group membership views with constraining organizational structures.

A final limitation involved aligning the theoretical framework and the survey instrument. Specifically, relating SCT to the current questionnaire was an initial, exploratory attempt to begin connecting self-reported category membership (in-group vs. out-group) with basic perceptions of the sport industry and sport management discipline. While researchers attempted to ensure face validity with thoughtful conversations regarding questionnaire items, future research needs to be conducted to develop a fully valid and reliable instrument relating to SCT. Once scholars have developed such an instrument, then it can be deployed to a variety of industry and educational settings measuring across multiple categorical options. As a result, this research should be viewed as descriptive and a starting point for understanding the social psychological dynamics of group membership, sport management discipline, and the sport industry.

Future Research

While adding to the research to better understand the perceptions of men and women sport management students, there are several intriguing future directions for scholars to explore. SCT could be used to better understand the perceptions of students that self-identify as sexual and gender minorities and could be incredibly valuable in comparing perceptions of inequity within in-groups and out-groups of self-identified sexual orientation within sport management education. We also recommend incorporating mixed-methods approaches in exploring our understanding of SCT in sport management students. Structured interviews or focus groups using open-ended questions may offer further explanation of the differing experiences of in- and out-groups and provide researchers with critical contexts survey data may not reveal on its own. Another interesting direction would be longitudinal research incorporating sport management students' perceptions of inequity. This specific line of research could be helpful in assessment of sport management curriculum and professional development programming. For instance, if this study was replicated on just first-year students, do those perceptions change significantly over the course of their time in the sport management program and prescribed courses or programming. This might also promote the ability for scholars to study the longitudinal change in perceptions from sport management student to sport management practitioner and use that information to better prepare students for a variety of professional situations and circumstances they may face. Drawing upon past, current, and future research, sport management educators can be better prepared to create educational experiences and settings that address structural inequities of both our discipline and the sport industry.

References

Acosta, R.V., & Carpenter, L.J. (2014). *Women in intercollegiate sport: A longitudinal, national study. Thirty-seven year update, 1977–2014*. [Unpublished manuscript]. <http://www.acostacarpenter.org/>

- Ball, J.A. (2012). The gender gap in undergraduate business programs in the United States. *Journal of Education for Business*, 87(5), 260–265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2011.617792>
- Barnhill, C.R., Czekanski, W.A., & Pflieger, A.G. (2018). Getting to know our students: A snapshot of sport management students' demographics and career expectations in the United States. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2015-0030>
- Beauchamp, M., & Dunlop, W. (2014). Self-categorization theory. In R. Eklund & G. Tenenbaum (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of sport and exercise psychology* (pp. 620–622). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483332222.n254>
- Boyle, R. (2006). Gendered sport? Gendered sport? In R. Boyle (Ed.), *Sports journalism: Context and issues* (pp. 144–159). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446247181.n8>
- Brewer, M.B. (2001). Ingroup identification and intergroup conflict: When does ingroup love become outgroup hate? In R. Ashmore, L. Jussim, & D. Wilder (Eds.), *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction* (pp. 17–41). Oxford University.
- Burton, L.J., Barr, C.A., Fink, J.S., & Bruening, J.E. (2009). "Think athletic director, think masculine?": Examination of the gender typing of managerial subroles within athletic administration positions. *Sex Roles*, 61(5–6), 416–426. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9632-6>
- Burton, L.J., Grappendorf, H., & Henderson, A. (2011). Perceptions of gender in athletic administration: Utilizing role congruity to examine (potential) prejudice against women. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 36–45. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.25.1.36>
- Burton, L.J., & Leberman, S. (2017). An evaluation of current scholarship in sport leadership: Multilevel perspective. In L.J. Burton & S. Leberman (Eds.), *Women in sport leadership: Research and practice for change* (pp. 16–32). Routledge.
- Chen, S., Adams-Blair, H., & Miller, A. (2013). Professional expectations of sport management students as related to academic curricular alignment support and preparation. *Universal Journal of Management*, 1(3), 132–137. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujm.2013.010303>
- Claringbould, I., & Knoppers, A. (2008). Doing and undoing gender in sport governance. *Sex Roles*, 58, 81–92. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9351-9>
- Claringbould, I., & Knoppers, A. (2012). Paradoxical practices of gender in sport-related organizations. *Journal of Sport Management*, 26(5), 404–416. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.26.5.404>
- Coakley, J. (2017). *Sport in society: Issues and controversies* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- College Sports Information Directors of America. (2020). Compensation and career satisfaction survey. *Athlete Viewpoint*. <https://cosida.com/sports/2020/4/29/2020CoSIDASalarySurvey.aspx>
- Cronk, B. (2014). *How to use SPSS: A step-by-step guide to analysis and interpretation* (8th ed.). Pyrczak Publishing.
- Darvin, L. (2020). Voluntary occupational turnover and the experiences of former intercollegiate women assistant coaches. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 116, Article 103349. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2019.103349>
- DeLuca, J.R., Mudrick, M., Hayes Sauder, M., & Taylor, E.A. (2022). Understanding student perceptions of diversity and inclusion. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 16(1), 30–41. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2020-0023>
- Ezarik, M. (2021, October 22). Savvy students get the guidance. *Inside Higher Education*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/10/22/college-mentor-relationships-reach-savvy-students-most>
- Franks, S., & O'Neill, D. (2016). Women reporting sport: Still a man's game? *Journalism*, 17(4), 474–492. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884914561573>

- Hall, R.M., & Sandler, B.R. (1982). *The classroom climate: A chilly one for women?* Association of American Colleges.
- Hancock, M.G., Darwin, L., & Walker, N.A. (2018). Beyond the glass ceiling: Sport management students' perceptions of the leadership labyrinth. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2), 100–109. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0039>
- Hancock, M.G., & Greenwell, T.C. (2013). The selection of a sport management major: Factors influencing student choice from a consumer-oriented perspective. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 7(1), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.7.1.13>
- Hardin, R., Taylor, E.A., & Sleadd, E. (2021). Female students' experiences of sexual harassment in the sport management internship setting. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 15(2), 87–94. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2020-0021>
- Harris, F.K., Grappendorf, H., Aicher, T., & Veraldo, C. (2015). Discrimination? Low pay? Long hours? I am still excited: Female sport management students' perceptions of barriers toward a future career in sport. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 35, 12–21. <https://doi.org/10.21423/awlj-v35.a128>
- Harris, F.K., Grappendorf, H., Veraldo, C., & Aicher, T. (2014). A concern for the future of sport management: Female students' perceptions toward their sport management degree. *Global Sport Business Journal*, 2, 28–43.
- Hindman, L.C., & Walker, N.A. (2020). Sexism in professional sports: How women managers experience and survive sport organizational culture. *Journal of Sport Management*, 34(1), 64–76. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2018-0331>
- Hughes, M., & Kroehler, C.J. (2005). *Sociology: The core* (10th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Hums, M.A. (1994). *Successful recruitment and retention of minority students in sport management* [Paper presentation]. North American Society of Sport Management Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Jones, D.F., Brooks, D.D., & Mak, J.Y. (2008). Examining sport management programs in the United States. *Sport Management Review*, 11(1), 77–91. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(08\)70104-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(08)70104-9)
- Kluch, Y., Taylor, E.A., Wright-Mair, R., & Boring, D. (2023). "I felt like . . . They left me to fend for myself": A mixed-method examination of sense of belonging among minoritized groups in sport academic programs. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 17(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2021-0014>
- Lapchick, R. (2021a). *The 2021 racial and gender report card: Women's National Basketball Association. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/326b62_c5eba4f7dc97498686f9eb2ad2afafa5e.pdf
- Lapchick, R. (2021b). *The 2021 racial and gender report card: National Football League. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/326b62_5afc0093dedf4b53bdba964fa0c1eb0c.pdf
- Lapchick, R. (2021c). *The 2021 racial and gender report card: National Basketball Association. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/138a69_4b2910360b754662b5f3cb52675d0faf.pdf
- Lapchick, R. (2022a). *The 2021 DI FBS leadership college racial and gender report card. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/403016_2885084836ea46ffad0e44454ccadab6.pdf
- Lapchick, R. (2022b). *The 2022 racial and gender report card: Major League Baseball. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/403016_5c311ff6920442b780924552fd8fdc88.pdf
- Lapchick, R. (2022c). *The 2022 complete sport racial and gender report card. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, University of Central Florida.* https://www.tidesport.org/_files/ugd/403016_5c311ff6920442b780924552fd8fdc88.pdf
- Lapchick, R., Lewis, L., Kane, M.J., & Hartmann, D. (2018). *Sport as a catalyst for racial progress and gender equity.* Retrieved from the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy. <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/195765>
- Leberman, S., & Shaw, S. (2015). "Let's be honest most people in the sporting industry are still males": The importance of socio-cultural context for female graduates. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 67(3), 349–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2015.1057212>
- Levens, V.B., Goettel, N., Chong, F., & Farris, R. (2001). Do we practice diversity in business schools? *International Journal of Educational Management*, 15, 167–171. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540110394401>
- Moore, M.E. (2008). Gender openness in managerial education: A sport management focus. *Gender in Management*, 23(5), 355–370. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410810887374>
- Moore, M.E., & Huberty, L. (2014). Gender differences in a growing industry: A case study of sport management education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 3, 19–25.
- Moore, M.E., Parkhouse, B.L., & Konrad, A.M. (2004). Diversity programs: Influencing female students to sport management? *Women in Management Review*, 19(6), 304–316. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420410555079>
- Morris, E., Vorris, R., & Mahoney, T.Q. (2019). You study like a girl: Experiences of female sport management students. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 13(2), 63–72. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2018-0020>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). *Fast facts.* <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372>
- Oakes, P.J. (1987). The salience of social categories. In J.C. Turner, M.A. Hogg, P.J. Oakes, S.D. Reicher, & M.S. Wetherell (Eds.), *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory* (pp. 117–141). Blackwell.
- Park, J., & Williams, A.S. (2022). Perceived barriers to careers in sport and stereotypes toward women in sport: Exploring division I female college athletes' experiences in athletic and educational Settings. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 15, 1–23.
- Parker, K. (2021, November 8). What's behind the growing gap between men and women in college completion? *Pew Research Center.* Retrieved June 27, 2022, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/11/08/whats-behind-the-growing-gap-between-men-and-women-in-college-completion/>
- Parks, B.J., & Robertson, M.A. (2002). The gender gap in student attitudes toward sexist/nonsexist language: Implications for sport management education. *Journal of Sport Management*, 16(3), 190–208. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.16.3.190>
- Peachey, J.W., & Burton, L.J. (2011). Male or female athletic director? Exploring perceptions of leader effectiveness and a (potential) female leadership advantage with intercollegiate athletic directors. *Sex Roles*, 64(5–6), 416–425. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-010-9915-y>
- Reimer, N.K., Schmid, K., Hewstone, M., & Al Ramiah, A. (2020). Self-categorization and social identification: Making sense of us and them. In D. Chadee (Ed.), *Theories in social psychology* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Reynolds, K.J., Turner, J.C., & Haslam, S.A. (2000). When are we better than them and they worse than us? A closer look at social discrimination in positive and negative domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(1), 64–80. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.78.1.64>
- Sauder, M.H., Mudrick, M., & DeLuca, J.R. (2018). Perceived barriers and sources of support for undergraduate female students' persistence

- in the sport management major. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2), 69–79. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0025>
- Schaefer, R.T. (2011). *Sociology matters* (5th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Schailee, H., Derom, I., Solenes, O., Straume, S., Burgess, B., Jones, V., & Renfree, G. (2021). Gender inequality in sport: Perceptions and experiences of generation Z. *Sport, Education and Society*, 26(9), 1011–1025. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2021.1932454>
- Simon, B. (1993). On the asymmetry in the cognitive construal of ingroup and outgroup: A model of egocentric social categorization. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 23(2), 131–147. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420230203>
- Sosa, J., & Sagas, M. (2008). Assessing student preconceptions of sport management faculty: Where do women and Latinos stand? *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 7(3), 266–280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192708317671>
- Sveinson, K., Taylor, E., Keaton, A.C., Burton, L., Pegoraro, A., & Toffoletti, K. (2022). Addressing gender inequity in sport through women's invisible labor. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(3), 240–250. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2021-0229>
- Swanson, J.L., Daniels, K.K., & Tokar, D.M. (1996). Assessing perceptions of career-related barriers: The Career Barriers Inventory. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 4(2), 219–244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106907279600400207>
- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behavior. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Taylor, E.A., Johnson, A., Hardin, R., & Dzikus, L. (2018). Kinesiology students' perceptions of ambivalent sexism. *NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education*, 11(3), 233–246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407882.2017.1423080>
- Taylor, E.A., Smith, A.B., Rode, C.R., & Hardin, R. (2017). Women don't know anything about sports: Contrapower harassment in the sport management classroom. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 11(2), 61–71. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2016-0013>
- Taylor, E.A., Smith, A.B., Welch, N.M., & Hardin, R. (2018). "You should be flattered!": Female sport management faculty experiences of sexual harassment and sexism. *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal*, 26(1), 43–53. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2017-0038>
- Turner, J.C. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Basil Blackwell.
- Whisenant, W., Lee, D.L., & Dees, W. (2014). Role congruity theory: Perceptions of fairness and sexism in sport management. *Public Organization Review*, 15(4), 475–485. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-014-0281-z>
- Women in Sport. (2018). *Beyond 30%: Workplace culture in sport*. <https://www.womeninsport.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Beyond-30-Workplace-Culture-in-Sport-report.pdf>
- Yiamouyiannis, A., & Osborne, B. (2012). Addressing gender inequities in collegiate sport: Examining female leadership representation within NCAA sport governance. *SAGE Open*, 2(2), Article 21582440 12449340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244012449340>