

THE ROLE OF COLLEGIATE SPORTS PARTICIPATION IN PREPARING WOMEN FOR
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

by

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(Under the Direction of Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. This qualitative inquiry utilized interviews with 11 female former college athletes who are presently in executive leadership positions in two-year colleges or the business and industry sector. The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis was employed to analyze the data. As a result of the data analysis, the following major categories emerged from the data: competition, getting along with others and working together, leadership and being in charge, learning opportunities, social context and networking, mentoring, and other activities that played a role in preparing for leadership. Within those categories, there were also several emergent themes. Findings in the study provided details of the role collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership and addressed the guiding research questions.

Several conclusions were drawn from the study's findings. Some of the noteworthy conclusions included the determination that there are numerous leadership traits that are acquired from or developed through collegiate sports participation and the study participants felt many of those traits played a role or are necessary in attaining or performing their executive leadership

position. A compelling finding is the perception by the majority of the participants that working together and teamwork is a very important leadership trait, both in collegiate sports competition and in successful executive leadership. Additionally, the social context of collegiate sports creates an environment that is conducive to the acquisition and development of leadership skills.

INDEX WORDS: Executive Leadership, Women's Leadership, Female Executives,
Collegiate Sports Participation

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my daughter, Christina, as she works towards finishing her undergraduate degree. I wanted to show her, that with a lot of hard work and perseverance, anything is possible. As I have often said to her, “Just keep working at it and you’ll get it done.” So, to my daughter, I say, “If I can finish this, you can finish your degree and go on to be successful in a job you’ll enjoy. Anything worth achieving is something you are going to have worked hard to attain.”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Throughout the history of women in the American workforce, numerous social, political, and economic factors have impacted and impeded their participation and advancement, particularly in executive positions. Blackwelder (1997) stated, “Historically, gender conventions linked to patriarchy have discouraged employers from hiring women for positions in which they would supervise men” (p. 6). Dating back to the 1700s, women have worked in many of the less regarded, lower-paying jobs. Although women were often pressed into all kinds of work, particularly during war times, they often had to yield to men regaining jobs, especially the better-paying ones, due to those social, political, and economic factors (Kessler-Harris, 1982). In many situations, male workers discouraged women in the workforce from organizing, both formally and informally, so as to maintain male domination and women’s subordination in the workplace as well as the home (Baxandall & Gordon, 1995). Until recently, men were viewed as the primary breadwinner; and through the early 1960s, laws favored the employment of men over women. Throughout the 1950s and into the early 1960s, many companies and even federal agencies, such as the United States Postal Service (USPS), discriminated against women. The federal government permitted supervisors to specify the gender of civil service appointees until 1962 and promoted employment policies that discriminated against women (Kessler-Harris).

The 1960s and 1970s brought change in employment laws that certainly aided and improved women’s opportunities and equity for women in the workplace. In addition to the

establishment of the President's Commission on the Status of Women and inception of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, there were other federal laws and executive orders implemented that made it illegal for employers to pay women less than men in the same jobs, barred discrimination on the basis of race and sex, and expanded affirmative action policy that forbid discrimination based on gender (Imbornoni, n.d.). By 1979, the growing number of women in the workforce had an impact on the workplace and society. Albeit still facing inequality in the workplace, women became the fastest growing segment of the American labor force ("Working women will soon be a majority," 1979; Loeb, 1979; "The new pay push for women," 1979).

Costa (2000) stated that the unmarried office girl paved the way for subsequent entry by married women into the labor force and in turn, the married women led the way for the rise of the modern career woman. By the year 2000, women now annually earned 40% of all doctoral degrees and encompassed over 40% of all graduates from medical and law schools (National Science Foundation & Division Of Sicen Resource Studies, 1999; American Medical Association, n.d.; American Bar Association, n.d.).

But though there have been advances in the employment and promotion of women in the workforce, there is still much progress yet to be made in equal pay and opportunity for promotion into the highest paying executive positions. With regard to chief executive officers (CEOs), women were earning 64% of the men's chief executive salaries (Catalyst, 1999). In a more recent 2006 study of top-earning executives and corporate officers, Catalyst (2007) found that only 15.6% of Fortune 500 companies had female corporate officers, down from 16.4% in 2005, and only 6.7% of the top-paying executive positions at those companies were held by women.

In addition to differences in wages, there have been and continue to be numerous barriers for women in the workplace, particularly for those seeking executive positions. The term “glass ceiling,” originally coined by Hymowitz and Schelhardt (1986), suggested that there has been an invisible barrier for women in ascension into management. This “glass ceiling” may be due to a variety of reasons. Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien (2002) intimated that current career development theories reflect male world views. Some of the premises of those theories include separation of work and family roles with women still bearing the majority of child care responsibilities; focus on individualism and autonomy; importance of work as a focal point in people’s lives; a linear, progressive nature of career development; and the structure of advancement opportunity. Chiu (1998) reported that female lawyers had lower job satisfaction than their male counterparts due to limitations for promotion and influence opportunities, financial compensation/financial rewards, and time demands. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) affirmed that one of the biggest barriers to advancement for women is career interruption by choice to focus time and attention on care of children. Dreher (2003) stated that a possible barrier may be that women see limited opportunity to reach senior management because of their gender and thus their desire and motivation to compete at the highest level is greatly dampened or even extinguished.

One of the possible barriers for women going into executive leadership in the workforce may be inadequate preparation for those positions. Mentors who teach and model the appropriate leadership behaviors, characteristics, and qualities, as well as guide women desiring to go into leadership positions could result in more female executive leaders. Occhipinti (2006) interviewed female banking executives and found that mentoring and networking are two important aspects of moving up the corporate ladder and breaking the glass ceiling. One of the problems for aspiring female executives is the shortage of female mentors to support and guide those below

them in the ranks. With few women in upper management and executive positions, there are only a small number to network with to further make known the names of the ones in line for advancement.

These identified barriers may explain much of why there are so few women in leadership positions. However, research has also indicated possible strategies for increasing the number of females in executive leadership positions. Kilian, Hukai, and McCarty (2005) identified successful interventions resulting in more women getting into upper management. These strategies included senior management commitment, manager accountability, networks, mentoring programs, identification and development of diverse top talent, and fostering a work-life balance. Goodman, Fields, and Blum (2003) found that companies who placed a greater emphasis on development and promotion of women throughout the organization enhanced the likelihood of women succeeding to the highest level of management. Another successful strategy utilized by those organizations is ensuring that an adequate number of women were in the pipeline coming from lower-level management positions.

In addition to those aforementioned strategies, a possible factor in successful preparation of women for leadership positions could be sports participation, particularly collegiate sports participation. A relevant question is: Might sports participation, particularly that involving collegiate sports, and its characteristics benefit women desiring to go into executive leadership positions? The benefits of sports participation are numerous and range from improved physical health to the emotional and social attributes of increased self-confidence, self-esteem, and better interpersonal skills, all qualities assumed to be important in leadership. “Athletics are among the most widely cited influences on an individual’s career. Because there are so many athletes in the top echelons of business, the ‘dumb jock’ stereotype appears highly inappropriate” (Boone,

Kurtz, & Fleenor, 1988, p. 22). Furthermore, Boone, Kurtz, and Fleenor found that 38% of big corporation CEOs played intercollegiate sports and that a CEO is 12 times as likely to have participated in intercollegiate athletics as the typical college student. “As more women break through the corporate glass ceiling, researchers are on the lookout for what they have in common. One trait emerging is a background in athletics” (Jones, 2002, p.1). Jones identified some of the former collegiate athlete CEOs such as Meg Whitman, eBay®, who played lacrosse and squash at Princeton University, Gatorade® President Sue Wellington, captain of the Yale University swim team, and Melissa Payner, CEO of Spiegel Catalog, who was an intercollegiate gymnast at Ohio State University and Arizona State University. Teamwork, leadership, discipline, perseverance, courage to take risks, and ability to learn from failure are some of the qualities that the CEOs stated they acquired from competitive sports and qualities that are particularly beneficial to females in the competitive world of corporate business.

Research also indicated some conflicting evidence regarding the benefits of athletic participation, specifically related to self image and self esteem. Kamal, Blais, McCarrey, Laramee, and Ekstrand (1992) found that female athletes experienced larger decreases in self-esteem due to negative information feedback than did male athletes. Horn (1985) also noted that the lack of immediate and meaningful feedback from coaches can adversely affect the self-esteem and self-confidence of both male and female athletes. Contrarily, Kuga and Douctre (1994) revealed that sports participation had a positive impact on an athlete’s self-image and the longer an athlete competed, the increased likelihood that he or she will attribute positive sociological gains in self-image to athletic participation. With these mixed findings, it appeared that further research was needed on the benefits of sports participation, particularly relevant to its role in women’s leadership.

A theoretical framework grounded in various leadership theories relevant to female executive leadership was utilized to underpin this study. Transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, participative leadership, and their respective theoretical characteristics were examined.

A qualitative research method was employed due to its defining features that fit the purpose of the study and the need for rich, descriptive data. Sogunro (2001) identified various characteristics of qualitative research as active interaction or participation with the sample population with ongoing observation and interviews in collecting data, utilizing a small population, researcher as the research instrument, a subjective nature of inquiry, an uncontrolled research context, content and interpretive analyses of themes, patterns, and narrative synthesis utilizing coding, and inductive analysis through critical reflection and creativity.

Statement of the Problem

There are many definitions or descriptions of leadership. A concise, comprehensive definition of leadership is that of “a process in which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2004, p. 63). Sperry (2002) stated, “Executive leadership, also called senior leadership, or strategic leadership, is a unique type of leadership. It involves leadership at the systemic level, with primary responsibility for formulating strategy and ensuring the best possible alignment or ‘fit’ between the organization and its external environment and its stakeholders” (p. 11).

In 2003, working women comprised 47% of the U.S. labor force (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005). However, women remain underrepresented in executive leadership positions and evidence suggested that the number of women in these positions was not increasing significantly. In 2006, only eight Fortune 500 companies had female chief executive

officers, and only 15.6% of the corporate officers were women. With such a small rate of change, it is forecasted that it will take women 47 years to catch up to men in corporate officer positions with Fortune 500 companies (Catalyst, 2007). “The lack of progress of women breaking the glass ceiling into the upper ranks of corporations in the 1990s brings to the forefront the importance of female underrepresentation as an important ethical issue for large corporations” (Oakley, 2000, p. 322).

Moreover, underrepresentation of women as CEOs in two-year colleges was prevalent as well. Although there were 13,580 female executive, administrative, or managerial personnel in two-year public institutions, with women constituting 52.8% of the professionals in those positions throughout the United States (National Center on Education Statistics, 2007), the American Association of Community Colleges (2008) reported only 28% of two-year college presidents are women.

Although there are many barriers for women moving into executive leadership positions, research evidence indicates factors which may lead to successful preparation of women for executive leadership. In the two-year college setting, Allen-Brown (1998) ascertained the importance of a supportive environment as a significant factor in the achievement of educational leadership. Further noted was that traditional systems seemed to provide support for males, but not for females and minorities. Mentorship, encouragement, and support for women are necessities for career advancement into leadership positions. Brown (2005) concurred with that finding and stated mentorship and multiple mentoring relationships are critical in aiding women in the advancement upward in the levels of higher education administration and increasing the number of female college presidents.

Another possible strategy for better preparing women may be sports participation. Oppenheimer Funds, a leading mutual fund company, and the MassMutual Financial Group, its parent financial services organization, in a 2001 survey “From the Locker Room to the Boardroom: A Survey on Sports in the Lives of Women Business Executives,” suggested that sports participation may be beneficial in preparing women for executive leadership positions (MassMutual Financial Group, 2002). However, research found on the benefits of sports participation has been concerned with childhood and high school sports participation, not intercollegiate sports participation. It can be suggested that collegiate sports, with its interactive, interpersonal setting and numerous leadership opportunities that materialize during collegiate competition, may also be beneficial in preparing women for executive leadership positions.

The transformational, charismatic, and participative theories of leadership provided a theoretical framework for this study. A review of the literature indicated that transformational, charismatic, and participative leadership are characteristically similar and are reflective of women’s leadership. A commonality of those three leadership theories is the emphasis on the leader-follower relationship. Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996) stated that relationship is a necessity in effective leadership and maintained that women may be more successful in this type of leadership due to their being more caring, considerate, and supportive.

Women’s leadership appears to be more cooperative, collaborative, and interpersonal in nature, uses more participation and consensus in decision-making, is more oriented to elevating one’s self worth, and is less hierarchical than men’s leadership (Book, 2000; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1995). Congruent with those characteristics, Burns (1978) and Bass (1981) asserted that one of the principal traits of transformational leadership is the focus on individuals interacting with each other to achieve a common goal for the greater good of the group. Jogulu and Wood

(2006) affirmed that transformational leadership depicts a leadership model often utilized by women. Garcia-Retamero and Lopez-Zafra (2006) stated this form of collaborative leadership “may make women superior leaders for many contemporary organizations, even though they may have fewer opportunities for leadership than do men” (p. 52). Powell and Graves (2003) and Northouse (2004) concurred in affirming that a less autocratic, more participative leadership style is better suited for global organizations of the 21st century.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What leadership traits did women acquire from collegiate sports?
2. What role did these leadership traits play in attaining executive leadership positions?
3. How did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills?
4. In what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills?
5. What leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports (e.g., clubs, social events, work, etc.)?

Significance of the Study

This study contributed to the knowledge base of what role collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership. As will be seen in the review of the literature, much of the research identified the benefits of sports participation, inclusive of those

benefits particular to females, the role or impact of childhood sports participation on female executive leadership, or the impact of sports participation on high-level professionals. Richman (2001) studied the impact of high school sports participation on the attainment of female executive leadership positions. However, the research found was not specific to *collegiate sports competition and female executives*. I was unable to find other research specific to *the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership* in the workforce. Thus, this study's focus appeared to be somewhat unique and significant and could fill a gap in the research.

There also appears to be a considerable body of literature relevant to women who are four-year college or university executive leaders, but very limited research pertaining to two-year college leaders who are women. Thus, this study included women who are in executive leadership positions at two-year institutions as well as those who are in executive leadership positions in other career fields.

The results of this study contributed to the identification and understanding of the role that collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership. In 2007, only 13 of the Fortune 500 company CEOs were women, constituting only 2.6% of the total number of CEOs, a slight increase in number from the total of eight CEOs in 2006. The percentage of Fortune 500 company corporate officers was only 15.4%, actually a slight decrease from the 15.6% the previous year (Catalyst, 2008). With the lack of a significant increase in the number of female executives, the results of this study may indicate an avenue of effective preparation of women for executive leadership positions resulting in more women advancing into those positions. Kanner (2004) stated that women control 88% of all purchases in the United States. Thus, if women may have additional insight into the purchasing decisions of their own

gender, it would be safe to conclude that the inclusion of women on companies' top management team would benefit those companies.

There is further significance of this study. First, knowledge about the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing future female executive leaders could benefit coaches, college administrators, policymakers, women's sports, and particularly student athletes desiring later executive leadership positions. Secondly, with the findings of this study indicating that collegiate sports participation plays a positive role in the acquisition of leadership traits, the number of female college athletes could increase.

Summary

This chapter described the background of the study. The problem of the study was discussed. The theoretical framework of the study, comprised of the transformational, charismatic, and participative leadership theories, was briefly introduced. This chapter also discussed the purpose of the study and identified the research questions which will guide this study. Finally, this chapter addressed the theoretical and practical significance of this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. The benefits of sports participation, particularly relevant to females, have been researched and are noted in many studies detailed within this chapter. But research evidence appeared to be lacking in its investigation of the benefits of collegiate sports participation, specifically pertaining to female college athletes, and its subsequent role in preparing women for attaining executive leadership positions. A review of the literature indicated a dearth of research on this topic and suggested a need for further investigation. This chapter focuses on a review of the literature pertinent to this study.

This chapter reviews relevant literature from several disciplines including adult education, applied and social psychology, executive leadership, gender studies, leadership and management, physical education and sports studies, and women's leadership. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section offers a discussion on women in the workforce and leadership, focusing on the history and evolution of women in the workforce, the underrepresentation of women in executive leadership positions, barriers to leadership for women, and successful approaches to preparing women for leadership positions. The second section provides a theoretical framework on female executive leadership which will form the foundation of this study. The third section examines women's sports. This section focuses on the history and development of women's sports with particular emphasis on women's collegiate

sports. Also, an examination of the 1972 Title IX Act and its impact on women's sports is presented. The last section investigates the literature on female sports participation with specific attention to the benefits of sports participation.

History and Evolution of Women in the Workforce

This section will explore the history and evolution of women in the workforce beginning with the 1600s and continuing into the beginning of the 21st century. Social, political, and economic factors affecting women in the workforce will be examined.

American colonies of the 1600s

American colonists of the 1600s, in an effort to attract women settlers, offered incentives to any married man who brought his wife, children, and servants to the colony. For example, in Maryland, the male settler and wife were each offered 100 acres of land as well as 100 acres for "manservant" and 60 acres for "womanservant." Single women were also encouraged to settle in the colonies and initially received the same acreage as their male counterparts. Thus, as pay, early single colonial women obtained large tracts of land. However, colonial promoters tried to lure single women to the colonies by a promise that they would soon find matrimony. Due to the high cost of labor in the colonies, both poor and married women came to colonial America. As payment for passage to the New World, most signed contracts with merchants and shipmasters as indentured servants to do any work the employer required. In 1619, the first group of Africans was brought to Jamestown, Virginia, as indentured servants, not slaves. The second half of that century brought about changes throughout the colonies in laws, codes, and court decisions in which the black servant was transformed into a slave. Female slaves performed various duties of cooking, spinning and weaving, laundry, or performed duties of a nursemaid or waitress (Foner, 1979). Wives of colonial settlers performed similar household duties including cooking and

preparation of food, cloth, candles, and soap as well as tending to the kitchen garden and supervising the farm animals (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

1700s to 1850s eras

By the late 1700s, the social, economic, political, and demographic pressures of patriotism facilitated the advance of women into the post-revolutionary period wage labor force. “Benjamin Rush, an early advocate of manufacturers, predicted in 1775 that women and children would make up two-thirds of the manufacturing labor force” (Kessler-Harris, 1982, p. 21).

Cotton mills in the early 1800s needed men, women, and children to work. The New England textile mills were the first significant opportunity for large numbers of women to work outside the home in non-domestic type of work. At first, female workers were orphans, widows, or town poor, but by the 1820s and 1830s, thousands of women had left the farms to work in the New England mills. Although each male worker established his own wages by negotiation and was paid according to the prevailing rate in the region for skilled or unskilled labor, women continued to be paid a lower wage, due in major part to the influx of many women who left farms and who refrained from employment in competing jobs such as in manufacturing of household items or as domestic workers. Working conditions for the women were poor and included humid, badly ventilated buildings. Most of the time, the windows were not opened or were nailed shut to preserve the humidity in the plant as it was thought that the enclosed humidity would keep the threads from breaking on the machines. Many of the women lived in boarding houses and often these boarding houses were overcrowded with fifty or sixty young women who slept ten or twelve in a room, two in a bed, and ate in a large communal dining room. Factory women participated in many labor strikes in the 1820s and 1830s in protest and revolt against the awful working conditions. These strikes persisted periodically into the 1840s as

female workers argued, unsuccessfully, for cutting the workday to 10-hour workdays. When strikes persisted, became hostile, or workers would not sign special contracts that allowed factory owners to require the workers to continue to work 12-hour workdays (some states such as New Hampshire had enacted legislation limiting workdays to 10 hours, but companies could require employees to sign a contract to work longer), some plant owners closed their factories (Foner, 1979). Beginning in the 1840s, many of the working women were immigrants and company owners took economic advantage of the fact that they could pay immigrant workers less; thus, hours, wages, and working conditions worsened (Costa, 2000).

The immigrant and American-born working women of the 1850s continued to experience generally depressed working conditions in jobs typically known as women's occupations. Their employ consisted of jobs in areas such as domestic and personal service, including hotel maids, waitresses, and cooks, as well as personal servants, housekeepers, and laundresses; the sewing trades, including dressmakers, seamstresses, tailoresses, cap and vestmakers, milliners, and artificial-flowermakers; upholsterers; bookbinders; and cigarmakers. These occupations were already overcrowded, but became significantly more so with the steady flow of immigrants into the United States. Women's wages in these occupations were often half the men's wages in the same occupations; and during this time, the wages seldom increased and sometimes actually decreased. The trade and craft unions at this time were hostile to women in industry (Foner, 1979).

Civil War to 1870s eras

With the advent of the Civil War, an estimated 300,000 women, who may not have searched previously for employment, entered the job market. Although during this time, the job opportunities expanded and improved for professional and educated women (e.g., nurses,

teachers, clerical workers), overall working conditions did not improve for women, particularly for those unskilled women who were now required to work. Women were a visible “underclass” in working society. With fathers, brothers, and spouses going off to war, and many not returning, the Civil War exacerbated the plight of the woman economically, psychologically, and socially. In exposing women’s poor economic conditions and removing the potential for self-blame, the Civil War indirectly gave them the right to protest and unionize. Women formed working trade unions and protective organizations. Empathetic men, or those who did not want to compete with them, saw this as an opportunity to join and unite against fairly obvious unsatisfactory working conditions (Kessler-Harris, 1982). In the 1870s, employment agencies worked with protective unions to try to assist with placing women in satisfactory employment (Foner, 1979).

Late 1800s to early 1900s eras

After the depression of the 1870s, women turned to work, not for luxuries or amenities, but rather to help keep themselves and their families alive. By the turn of the century, one in every five women was now in the labor force. In the 1900 census, women were represented in 296 of 303 occupations listed. After the Civil War, the number of female office workers in a variety of occupations increased. The increase in the late 1800s of the number of banks, insurance companies, and public utilities, led to more complex business operations in those offices with more correspondence, recordkeeping, and general office work. High school female graduates comprised the supply to meet the demand of the new jobs. With more males entering the teaching field, the teaching opportunities for females became more limited, leading to an increased number of women entering the clerical field (Foner, 1979). The division and specialization of labor increased during this time due to the typewriter and other machines being utilized. Those women who had attended commercial (business) schools or had taken

commercial classes in high school that gave them specific skills in duplicating, typewriting, and bookkeeping and accounting, were in particular demand. The clerical sector provided women with better working conditions with cleaner, less arduous work, and better pay than did the manufacturing arena.

Societal pressure frequently caused women to leave the labor force upon marriage and thus, unlike men, women were very seldom promoted to higher level or management positions (Costa, 2000). In the office sector, substantial wage discrimination was first observed (Goldin, 1990). Also, “discrimination was institutionalized in the first part of the 20th century in the ‘marriage bars’ in school districts and firms that in the United States and Britain simply prohibited the employment of married women” (Goldin, 1990, p. 160). Goldin further stated that when demographic change greatly reduced the supply of young female employees, the “marriage bar” disappeared. And with the multitude of clerical positions available during the first part of the century, women could return to the labor force after their first child was born without a heavy penalty for the time out of the workforce (Costa). Still, in 1905, a quarter of women wage-earners still held domestic jobs. In the early 1900s, most of the very arduous or worst jobs went to black women. Those strenuous jobs, such as stripping tobacco, often entailed working without breaks or backrests and/or body support (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

Post World War I era

Jobs that women gained during World War I declined in number once the hostilities ended. Women continued to be paid less than men. By 1920, in a process not caused by World War I but certainly accelerated by it, women gained employment in sectors created by the United States’ new place in world affairs, international finance, and worldwide markets. Corporations and the communications industry continued to grow and hired a plethora of telephone operators,

bookkeepers, and clerks, nearly all of whom were women. With some nationwide prosperity after the war, advertising and sales became prominent and the demand for saleswomen, female buyers, designers, decorators, and copywriters existed. Although women may have lost some jobs in the manufacturing sector, the loss was more than made up by women being hired into white-collar areas. By 1920, women now worked more in office positions (25.6%) than in manufacturing (23.8%), in domestic service (18.2%), or in agriculture (12.9%) (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

The right to vote and participate in the political process came in 1920 for women. Although the newly won vote brought no immediate political victories or equal standing in employment, it gave women a sense of freedom and reasonable equal standing (Kessler-Harris, 1982). During the same year, The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor was formed to collect information about women in the workforce and safeguard good working conditions for women (Imbornoni, n.d.).

Post Great Depression era

The optimism of the 1920s turned into destitution for many after the stock market crash of 1929 and subsequent Great Depression in the 1930s. During the 1930s, American society took a public stance of family unity, but urged women, in the interest of availing jobs to men, not to work. Once again, American societal circumstances had found a way to diminish women's chances of workforce participation. Visible campaigns to eliminate married women from the workforce in the 1930s persisted as state and municipal governments began to pressure married women to leave civil service in 1930 and 1931. The 1932 Federal Economy Act, Section 213, decreed, that in the event of personnel reduction, married female employees should be fired first if their spouse also held a job with the federal government. Many federal female employees were

terminated, with 77% of the nation's school systems refusing to hire married women as teachers and half of the school systems firing women who had married (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

World War II era

With the onset of World War II, the United States, with many of its working men off to battle, found women to be invaluable workers in jobs and areas that were previously closed to them. The statistics show a dramatic flood of women into the labor force from 1940 to 1944—over 5,000,000 females entered employment and showcased their effectiveness in production and quality. Although this era may have been termed by some as a turning point for women in the workforce, the evidence offers little to support that opinion (Kessler-Harris, 1982). Female workers were vital to the production of wartime equipment such as tanks, airplanes, ships, and other necessary military equipment. The defense industries and American government created advertising and marketing toward women encouraging them to work in the war effort. One of the most famous propaganda posters was “Rosie the Riveter” dressed in a work shirt and handkerchief, saying “We Can Do It!” However, even with the monumental work efforts by women and their capability to produce when urgently needed, most female workers were fired and their jobs given to returning servicemen once the war ended. Others just quit their jobs when their spouses returned home. Females remaining in the workforce found their employment opportunities were restricted by gender and their pay was less than their male counterparts in comparable positions (Loveday, 2005). Women were also subject to male management's recommendations and pressure to be well-groomed, bring glamour to the job, and be very feminine. Males were often hostile, whistled at, and made catcalls to those women who remained in well-paid plant or industry jobs. Although many women joined trade or craft unions, women's wages were still far from equal to men's wages. During the war and shortly thereafter, the

average full-time female worker only earned 55% of what her full-time male co-worker earned (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

1950s to early 1960s eras

The 1950s started an era where wage-earning work took a more central position in women's lives. In 1950, women were 29% of the workforce whereas in 1965 and 1975, women constituted 35% and 40%, respectively, of the entire workforce in the United States. Where work had encompassed a short phase of a woman's life, now most stayed working after marriage and frequently returned to work after the youngest child began school (Kessler-Harris, 1982). The emergence of part-time work changed the work patterns and employment opportunities for many married women. Employment opportunities became available due to a declining supply of young, unmarried females who were increasingly attending school, lower ages at first marriage, and the baby boom as companies sought to accommodate the married working women (Goldin, 1990). In 1950, only half of the working women worked full-time jobs (Kessler-Harris).

During the 1950s and into the early 1960s, many companies and federal agencies, including the United States Postal Service (USPS), discriminated against women. A woman's gender disqualified her from civil service jobs in the U.S. Post Office until the mid-1960s. Furthermore, until 1962, supervisors were permitted by the federal government to specify the gender of civil service appointees and advocated employment policies that discriminated against women. Although numerous and various kinds of discrimination complaints flooded the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, essentially nothing was done to rectify the situation due to the bureau's ties to Labor Department bureaucracy and the lack of political power of the Labor Department to act on the bureau's behalf (Kessler-Harris, 1982).

1960s to 1970s eras

In 1961, President John Kennedy established the President's Commission on the Status of Women. Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was appointed chairwoman of the commission. The Commission issued a report in 1963 that documented considerable discrimination against women in the workplace and made specific recommendations for significant improvement, including fair hiring practices, paid maternity leave, and affordable child care. Political and societal pressure continued regarding the topic of equal working rights for women. On June 10, 1963, the United States Congress passed the Equal Pay Act which made it illegal for employers to pay women less than what men would receive in pay for the same job. In 1964, the historic Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was passed that barred discrimination in employment on the basis of race and gender. Also, it established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate complaints and impose sanctions (Imbornoni, n.d.). These governmental anti-discrimination policies and laws, coupled with the feminist movement prevalent in the 1960s, may have played a role in women's labor force participation. Previously accepted discrimination may have influenced the willingness of employers to hire women, willingness of employees to work with women, and conversely, women's willingness to work with men and their hostility and harassment (Costa, 2000).

An additional four federal rulings or laws of the late 1960s and 1970s further emphasized equality for women in the workplace. In 1967, President Lyndon Johnson's Executive Order 11375 expanded his affirmative action policy of 1965 to cover discrimination based on gender. That order resulted in federal agencies and contractors taking action to ensure that women and minorities enjoy the same educational and employment opportunities as white males. During 1968, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruled that sex-segregated help

wanted ads were illegal. Later in 1973, this ruling was upheld in the U.S. Supreme Court, opening the way for women to apply for higher-paying jobs that previously were open only to men. A 1970 U.S. Court of Appeals decision mandated that jobs held by men and women needed to be “substantially equal, but not identical” to fall under the protection of the Equal Pay Act. Employers no longer could change the job titles of women workers in order to pay them less than men. In 1974, in a case of *Corning Glass Works v. Brennan*, the Supreme Court ruled that employers cannot justify paying women lower wages than men because that is what they historically had received under the “going market rate.” The ruling further stated that a wage differential that occurred “simply because men would not work at the low rates paid women” is unacceptable (Imbornoni, n.d.).

Those changes in federal laws and rulings, political and societal environment, and feminist movement of the 1960s may have facilitated the increase in full-time working women. Kessler-Harris (1982) reported that 70% of working women in 1975 were employed full time. Since 1970, large numbers of women have entered careers (Costa, 2000). Goldin (1997) characterized women of the 1950s as “family then job” and the women of the 1970s as “career then family” or “career and family.” Since 1960, of those married to college-educated men, college-educated women have participated in the workforce at a much higher level than high-school-educated women married to high-school-educated men. Starting with 1970, more college-educated women were going into careers than was previously reported (Costa).

1970s to 2000s eras

By the end of the 20th century, 35.9% of working women were in professional positions (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999). But women were still lagging behind in employment of corporate line jobs (management positions with profit-and-loss or direct client responsibility) as

they encompassed only 7% of those positions in corporate America. Relevant to postsecondary leadership positions, the percentage of community college presidents who were women, was still low, but increased to almost 28% from only 11% ten years prior (Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). It may be assumed that the difficulty of combining family and work responsibilities has restricted women's move to the top positions (Costa, 2000). U.S. Department of Labor (2006) statistics indicate that 46% of the U.S. workforce is female. In 40% of dual-earner households, the wife's salary is equal to or greater than the husband's. Coincidentally, between 1977 and 2002, men employed full time markedly increased their time in household and child care tasks, whereas women's time in those tasks decreased or remained the same (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2003; Freeman, 2000). It may be suggested that the previous notion in which it is the sole duty of the working wife and mother to be responsible for child care and domestic upkeep is being slowly dispelled.

Underrepresentation of Women in Executive Leadership Positions

A review of the literature suggests there is strong evidence that women are under-represented in executive leadership positions. In 1997, only seven Fortune 1000 companies had female chief executive officers (CEOs). Of those companies, only two CEOs were women in Fortune 500 companies (Oakley, 2000). As recently as 2006, only eight Fortune 500 companies had female CEOs (Kelleher, 2006). It is also noteworthy that almost 50% of the Fortune 1000 firms had no women in any high-level executive positions as recent as 2000, and firms that had upper-level female executives generally only had one or two. As for a pipeline into the CEO position, the percentage of female CEOs is expected to increase slowly in the next five to ten years with estimates, based on current trends, that perhaps 6% of Fortune 1000 CEOs will be women by the year 2016 (Helfat, Harris, & Wolfson, 2006). In a survey by Stuart (2006), it was

found that fewer than 10% of chief financial officers (CFOs) in Fortune 500 or Fortune 1000 companies are females. *The Economist* (“Be a man,” 2003) reported a comparable statistic stating:

While it is true that industry can point to twice as many women (15.7%) in senior management positions in big American firms as they did in 1995, the real story is that a huge number of boards do not have women serving; and of those that do, the number of women is so small as to make their places invisible. (p. 64)

In the two-year postsecondary education sector, women were underrepresented in various administrative positions. Women comprised only 27% of the two-year institution presidents, 29% of the occupational or vocational education director positions, and 30% of the chief financial officer positions (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002).

The term “glass ceiling,” created by Hymowitz and Schelhardt (1986) implied that there was an invisible barrier for women and minorities in their upward movement in management. The glass ceiling phenomenon appears to be conspicuous in many career fields. A few examples include the banking, information technology, and high-tech fields. A study, “Women at the Top,” by the Financial Women International Foundation (as cited in Occhipinti, 2006) revealed that women hold only 12.6% of the top jobs at the 50 biggest banks in the United States and 30% of those banks had no female executives. The study asserted that there is almost a “Catch 22” for women in banking. To gain more representation at the highest levels, females need mentors of which there are very few. In research performed by the Graduate School of Management at the University of California, Thibodeau (2006) found in the 200 companies surveyed that only four had female chief information officers, only six had female CEOs, and 11 had female chief financial officers. A total of just 8.2% of women were in any executive position. Tai and Sims

(2005) studied gender bias in high-technology companies. Using a sample of 318 full-time employees from seven different high-tech companies, the results indicated that positions held by males were significantly different than females with similar levels of experience and education, both of which can be assumed to be related to promotion. Females in the sample were less likely to hold upper management positions. Although both women and men were being promoted, the level of promotion was different and higher for males. These findings coincide with prior research findings relevant to women in management (Brett & Stroh, 1999). Konrad and Cannings (1997) also noted that gender participation in job performance supported the advancement of men significantly more than women.

In addition to an unequal number and level of executive opportunities for females, lack of equitable pay for female executives is also evident. In a 1997 study of 57 female senior managers and 1,772 male senior managers, Lublin (1998) found that women were receiving a median of 68 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts.

However, there are some promising signs for female executives. Fryxell and Lerner (1989) found that highly noticeable under-representation of women created pressure from stakeholders for more visible participation from women in corporate boards and upper management positions. Helfat, Harris, and Wolfson (2006) stated that in companies with high-level women executives, those executives were younger, had less company tenure, and even less tenure in their current positions than their male colleagues. This suggests that those companies were hiring and promoting women into the highest executive ranks. The data also suggested that once women are in the executive hierarchy, they do well in executive standing or rank.

Eyring and Stead (1998) found other positives for female executives in noting that almost all the top ranking companies in their study had upper management that actively demonstrated

support for the promotion of women, fostered participation of women in executive education programs, and facilitated the passage of women into positions that lead to the highest executive positions. In addition to shareholder pressure, there is also the ethical viewpoint. An awareness of the lack of women in top executive positions has caused many corporations to review their advancement policies and procedures. Adler and Izraeli (1994) claimed international firms are seeking to promote more women into senior management due to global competition driving them to maximize the effectiveness of their human resources. Kanner (2004) stated the lack of progress of women, and minorities, breaking the glass ceiling into the upper executive ranks has also brought into the consumer eye the important ethical issue of diversity and representation of diverse groups in corporate leadership and management. It seems safe to conclude that continued media focus on this ethical concern could bring about positive change in U.S. corporations.

One may conclude that a variety of reasons exist for the scarcity of women in executive positions. Although talked about with disdain, one may surmise that the “good old boy” network still exists in the corporate world. Gordon (1992) and Byrne (1996) stated that women are paid less in the same executive positions and allowing too many women “into the club” could be a threat to the continuously expanding salaries and perks of the select few males at the top. Tannen (1994) stated that women are less likely to promote themselves and thus are not recognized as often as men. In addition, women are also more likely to ask for things to be done in a somewhat less assertive manner which can be perceived by men as a lack of confidence or failure to exercise authority effectively. In the male dominated world of upper management, women may be forced to change their style to more of a command-oriented language in order to be perceived as strong, decisive, and in control of a situation. Lastly, sexual stereotyping is a possible reason for the shortage of women in executive leadership positions. Heilman, Block, Martell, and Simon

(1989) concurred with findings of Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosencrantz (1972) in that male managers characterizing the styles of both male and female managers, found females to be less self-confident, less analytical, less emotionally stable, less consistent, and possessing poorer leadership abilities than their male counterparts. Both studies also found that managers consistently associated the more desirable traits with male managers and the less desirable traits with female managers.

The issue of women not being equally represented in upper management and executive positions is of great importance with consequences that could negatively impact a firm's performance. Women possessing the talent and capability to work effectively at the highest executive level are a great, and possibly rare, resource to any company. If many gifted women choose to abandon the opportunity to compete for executive positions, the overall quality of this valued labor pool will decline. The lack of women in executive positions could create a rigid, homogenous leadership for organizations that may lead to a dearth of new and innovative business ideas ultimately leading to a firm's deterioration or demise. "Given the current competitive and global market of free enterprise, it would seem that corporations would have a stake in developing a highly qualified talent pool of executive women" (Dreher, 2003, p. 559). Helfat, Harris, and Wolfson (2006) concluded that "getting more qualified women into the executive hierarchy is a critical and urgent priority. The development of that talent pool is a goal that will require leadership and commitment from the most senior executives of business organizations" (p.61).

Barriers to Leadership Positions for Women

Northouse (2004) identified three categories of common barriers to leadership for women:

Organizational barriers—higher standards of performance and effort for women, preference for homophily (gender similarity) as a basis for promotion decisions, ignorance and inaction by male CEOs and “silent majority” male peers, imbalance of inadequate recognition and support with excessive difficulties, lack of definitive developmental opportunities

Interpersonal barriers—male prejudice, stereotyping, preconceptions, lack of emotional and interpersonal support, exclusion from informal networks, and lack of white male mentors

Personal barriers—lack of political savvy, work-home conflict (p. 276)

Many of these same barriers limiting women in corporate or industry advancement were also identified as obstacles in progression for women in postsecondary education leadership. Tallerico (2000) noted that women often face male-dominated organizational hierarchies, spend more time and energy to achieve career advancement comparable to their male colleagues, and thus face psychological burdens and interpersonal barriers. Traditional organizational structures combined with societal and gender stereotypes continue to pose significant interference for women advancement. Ballantine (2000) stated that gender stereotyping and selection of sameness hindered women’s access to senior leadership positions in two-year colleges. Tedrow and Rhoads (1999) and Vaughan (1989) reported that the good old boys’ network was still prevalent and had to be contended with by women.

A now common term, “glass ceiling,” originally conceived by Hymowitz and Schelhardt (1986), is thought of as a hidden barrier for women in their quest for advancement into higher level leadership and management positions. This phenomenon is not only evident in corporate hierarchies, but in educational organizations as well (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, & Vanneman,

2001). In a study of female administrators in the Wisconsin Technical College System, Kimberling (2002) also found that respondents affirmed the glass ceiling concept still existed. This glass ceiling may be due to several obstacles or reasons. A review of the literature indicates agreement with those factors as barriers to leadership for women. One of the foremost obstacles appears to be family and home responsibilities. Liff and Ward (2001) and Metz and Tharenou (2001) stated that women believe time spent fulfilling family responsibilities is time that cannot be spent at work, and thus many women believe that family responsibilities are a barrier to career advancement. Wirth (2001) determined that the gender inequality in family and home responsibilities, inclusive of the care of dependent children, continued to be a major obstacle for women in their equal representation in management positions.

Rigg and Sparrow (1994) stated that the old boys' network is alive and well in corporate America and it is not only lacking in support of women moving into leadership positions, but there also is active resistance by males against women going into leadership or management. In addition to creating organizational impediments to stall women's advancement in management, they promote unity between men and attempt to threaten, sexualize, marginalize, control, and divide women. Empirical research has shown that women continue to be discriminated against in the downplaying of their work contributions and devaluing of their performance on the job (Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Bhatnagar & Swamy, 1995).

It is also recognized that women are often excluded from important networks within and outside the company. This exclusion can be significant in delaying the career progress of females in an organization (Powell, 1993; Wacjman, 1996). Additionally, another similar roadblock for women moving up into the highest executive positions is that many high-ranking corporate women are in what is termed "staff support" positions such as human resources and public

relations, rather than presently in or being promoted into positions that have “line experience” in areas such as marketing or operations which typically are considered to be “in the pipeline” for the top position of CEO (Lublin, 1996).

Research studies have shown that one of the most persistent obstacles for women going into and being promoted into management and upper management positions appears to be the stereotype that both male (Schein, 1973) and female (Schein, 1975) managers held that men were more likely to have the characteristics or traits associated with management success. The characteristics associated with both managers and men included those such as being emotionally stable, aggressive, having leadership ability, self-reliant, competitive, self-confident, objective, ambitious, well-informed, and forceful. Later studies showed the durability and persistence of this perceived relationship between what are characteristics of managerial success and what is male, particularly with male respondents (Deal, 1998; Eagly, 2005; Schein, 2001).

Although there has been an increase in women’s workforce participation rates, the difficulty of combining work and family has slowed the women’s move to the top in their respective careers. More women than men are willing to sacrifice their careers to spend time with children and family responsibilities, and those reaching the top are disproportionately childless (Costa, 2000). Citing a 1996 report from the Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor, “Facts on Working Women” (1997) stated that women still are often discriminated against regarding pay with family and work issues playing a part. Benokraitis (1997) and Swim and Cohen (1997) stated the distinction between old-fashioned and modern sexism illustrated how negative attitudes toward women, which were once overt, now existed more covertly. The powerful, negative attitudes still existed and were either more indistinct, have been accepted as normal, were behind the scenes, or were difficult or impossible to observe. Those overt and

subtle forms of sexism were obstacles to women's advancement and resulting attitudes and behavior contribute to sex typing of jobs (Cejka & Eagly, 1999).

Successful Approaches to Preparing Women for Leadership Positions

Elmuti et al. (2003), in reporting the Glass Ceiling Commission Report (GCC) findings, identified several strategies for overcoming the "glass ceiling" and barriers for women into leadership positions. Approaches or procedures could include CEO support, women becoming part of the development of the company's strategic plan, company addressing stereotypes and preconceptions about women employees and leaders, company tracking progress and placing emphasis and accountability throughout the entire company. Buzzanell (1995) also identified various strategies for advancement of women into leadership. Recommended strategies include placing women into informal networks within the company or business, developing women at all levels, recognition of the usefulness of women in international or global assignments, establishing formal mentoring programs and relationships, training managers to deal with gender issues, and creating objective, unbiased performance appraisals. Many of these approaches are not complex in nature, but research suggests that for these approaches to be successful, support throughout an organization, inclusive of upper management to the CEO, is a must (Eyring & Stead, 1998).

Powell (1999) identified possible beneficial approaches for women with families that included flexible work schedules, elder and child care assistance, and temporary family leaves of absence. These strategies may not only help with advancement of women into leadership roles, but also aid in retention of female employees. Tharenou, Latimer, and Conroy (1994) found that training and encouragement were simple but effective tactics to aid women in career advancement. Vinnicombe and Singh (2003) named three specific factors important to women

successfully moving into leadership positions: gaining a mentor, seeking out and taking on challenging assignments, and gaining visibility in the organization. The evidence suggested a low percentage of women remain in leadership positions in business and industry, but research also indicated there are practical approaches that appear to be successfully preparing more women for those leadership positions.

The literature indicated that many of the successful strategies for preparing and assisting women for promotion into the highest ranks of leadership are company or organization driven. Progressive companies realize that women are a major resource of talent and develop approaches to aid women in movement up the organizational ladder. The aforementioned successful strategies included networking and mentoring programs.

Theoretical Framework of Leadership

Leadership has been defined in many ways. Nahavandi (2000) defined leadership as influencing individuals and groups within an organization, aiding those personnel in establishing goals, and guiding them toward achieving those goals. Bolman and Deal (1997) described leadership as “a subtle process of mutual influence fusing thought, feeling, and action to produce cooperative effort in the service of purposes and values of *both* the leader and the led” (p. 296). In today’s global and diverse society, female executives face many situations and demands. Gardner (1995) stated, “The greatest challenge the leaders face is to bring about significant and lasting changes in a large and heterogeneous group” (p. 292).

The subsequent sections will detail three leadership theories that are found to be relevant to or descriptive of effective female leadership. Because of their similarities, these three theories provide a useful theoretical framework for this study. One of the common threads in these theories is the focus on the leader-follower relationship. Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996)

maintained that relationship-orientation is a major part of successful leadership and further asserted that due to women being more nurturing, considerate, and caring, that, theoretically, women have an advantage in establishing a relationship with their followers and being rated higher than men in transformational leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) was the first to write about the differences in transactional and transformational leadership. These differences originated from the study and observation of politicians and political leadership styles. Burns developed a definition of transactional leadership in which a person initiates contact with another person for the purpose of exchanging things of economic, political, or psychological value. This process does not necessarily have an enduring or long-term relationship between the two parties. On the contrary, Burns found that transformational leadership occurs with one or more people interacting with others in a single common purpose leading one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. This type of leadership can result in the fulfillment of human potential and have a transformational effect on the parties involved.

Bass (1985, 1998) further reported that transformational leadership incorporates the establishment of oneself as a role model by gaining the trust and confidence of followers. Transformational leaders state future goals and develop plans to achieve those goals. Transformational leaders mentor and empower their followers, encourage them to develop and reach their full potential and thus, contribute more capably to the organization. In extensive research of transformational leaders, Bass (1981) identified characteristics of these leaders including trustworthiness, willingness for self sacrifice, high morality, focusing on achievement for the greater good, strong role model, hands-on knowledge of their followers, challenging their

followers, and utilizing those challenges to develop leaders from the followers. Burke and Collins (2001) stressed that transformational leaders develop positive relationships with their followers in strengthening employee and organization performance. These leaders “encourage employees to look beyond their own needs and focus instead on the interests of the group overall” (p. 245).

Four components of transformational leadership have been identified in factor analysis studies ranging back to Bass (1985). These four components are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Bass and Riggio (2006) briefly described the four components of transformational leadership and noted that those have undergone a refinement in conceptualization and measurement over the years. Each of the components can be measured with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), a prominent and empirically validated instrument used in identifying factors of both transactional and transformational leadership. Lowe, Kroek, and Sivasubramaniam (1996), in reviewing the literature on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), stated that transformational leaders have been shown to be highly successful, were perceived by their followers to be more effective than transactional leaders, and had better work outcomes. Bass and Avolio (1990) affirmed, “Transformational leadership moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. They become motivated to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group or organization” (p. 177).

Idealized Influence

Transformational leaders behave in a manner in which they can serve as role models for their followers. Their behavior results in their being admired, respected, and trusted and followers want to emulate them. Those leaders are seen as being persistent, determined, and

having extraordinary capabilities. Thus, idealized influence has two features: the leader's behaviors and the characteristics that are attributed to the leader by the followers and other associates. The two aspects comprise the interactional nature of idealized influence. Also, leaders who are seen as having idealized influence are those who are willing to take risks, but are consistent, not arbitrary in their behaviors. These leaders demonstrate high standards of moral and ethical conduct and thus, can be relied on to do the right thing (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Inspirational Motivation

The behavior of transformational leaders inspires and motivates those people around them. The leaders project enthusiasm, optimism, team spirit, and provide challenges and meaning to their followers' work. Leaders get followers involved in the planning, development, and envisioning of goals. Leaders show commitment to the goals and shared vision and clearly communicate their expectations to the followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Northouse (2004) stated, "In practice, leaders use symbols and emotional appeals to focus group members' efforts to achieve more than they would in their own self-interest. Team spirit is enhanced by this type of leadership" (p. 176).

Intellectual Stimulation

Northouse affirmed that leaders stimulated followers to be creative, innovative, and challenge their own current beliefs and those of the organization. Followers should look for new approaches and creativity in finding solutions to problems and situations. Leaders don't publicly criticize followers' mistakes or ideas, even if those ideas are different from their own (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Individualized Consideration

Leaders provide and ensure a supportive climate in which they pay close attention to followers' needs for achievement and growth and recognize individual needs and desires. For example, the leader will recognize that certain employees need more encouragement and attention and others will be more autonomous with less task structure necessary. Interactions with followers are personalized. Two-way communication is encouraged and leaders will delegate tasks to develop followers. Leaders act as a coach or mentor and assist followers in reaching higher levels of potential. The leader assesses the progress of the follower to see if additional individual support or direction is needed (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In studies indicating a prevalent style of leadership for women, the transformational leadership theory depicting a style characteristic of female leaders was evident in the literature. Jogulu and Wood (2006) stated that transformational leadership is to a large extent characteristic of a feminine model of leadership which focuses on cooperation, lower levels of control, collaboration, and collective problem-solving and decision-making. Mandell and Pherwani (2003) confirmed that theory in a study of managers which indicated that females scored higher than males on the transformational leadership scale. In contrast to a transactional leadership style often characteristic of male leaders and/or often identified with strong masculine qualities of competitiveness, hierarchical authority, higher control for the leader, and analytical problem solving, women generally followed a "feminine model of leadership built around cooperation, collaboration, lower control for the leader, and problem solving based on intuition and rationality" (Klenke, 1993, p. 330).

The transformational style of leadership with characteristics such as caring, concern for others, and nurturing is needed in today's global society with contemporary organizations. This

requisite, different style of leadership appears to indicate that “women are better suited than men to serve as leaders in the ways required in the global economy” (Powell & Graves, 2003, p. 153). Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and Van Engen (2003) confirmed the link between transformational leadership and effective leadership in a meta-analysis of 45 studies. In all aspects related to leadership effectiveness, women exceeded men through noticeably higher scores on all subscales of transformational leadership.

Charismatic Leadership

The charismatic leadership theory is most closely related to transformational leadership. Often, the two theories are viewed as being so similar as to be interchangeable or synonymous. But it can be argued that transformational leadership is more expansive and charismatic leadership is an element of it (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

House (1977) revealed a theory of charismatic leadership that suggested charismatic leaders behave in unique ways. House asserted those leaders “have special charismatic effects on their followers” and some of the charismatic characteristics of this type of leader “include being dominant, having a strong desire to influence others, being self-confident, and having a strong sense of one’s own moral values” (p. 171). Like transformational leaders, charismatic leaders serve as strong role models and clearly display their beliefs and values that they want to their followers to adopt. Followers see the leaders as competent. These leaders communicate goals and vision of an ideological nature often consisting of moral connotations. Also similar to transformational leaders, charismatic leaders have confidence in their followers’ abilities to meet high expectations which have been clearly communicated by the leaders. House also stated that charismatic leadership can result in follower trust in acceptance of the leader, acquisition of

leader beliefs by the followers, warmth and obedience towards the leader, emotional involvement and commitment to the leader's goals, higher goals for the followers, and follower confidence.

Conger and Kanungo (1987) and House (1977) identified many leadership behaviors that contributed to positive results, but three fundamental components seem to permeate organizations utilizing charismatic leadership. Charismatic leaders have a vision that galvanizes followers' needs and values and stimulates outstanding follower performance. Charismatic leaders' behaviors clearly demonstrate their commitment to the vision and the followers' role in carrying out that vision. As in transformational leadership, Bass (1985) stated the leader had care, concern, and consideration for the follower as an individual and recognized followers' accomplishments. The leaders communicated with a very powerful, positive, confident manner that strongly appealed to the followers.

Studies such as Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996) and Hackman, Furniss, Hills, and Patterson (1992) indicate that women are more likely to enact charismatic leadership than men, particularly in demonstrating charisma and individualized consideration. Utilizing follower ratings, Groves (2005) found that women scored higher in charismatic leadership than men. The study showed women to have greater social and emotional skills than men. Groves further suggested that as organizational leadership models continue to integrate charismatic leadership that necessitates strong social and emotional skills, women may have a certain advantage in employment selection and promotional opportunities.

However, there are negatives or a down side to charismatic leadership. Unethical charismatic leaders exercise power only for personal gain, promote their own personal vision (rather than the vision that is best for the organization), admonish those with critical or opposing views, and utilize one-way communication that is closed-minded to input and suggestions from

others or is insensitive to the followers' needs. Although these unethical leaders use charisma to attract and keep followers, they also employ power in a dominant and authoritarian manner to serve their own interests, to manipulate others for their own purposes and needs, and to attempt to win at all costs. In promoting their own self interests, this type of charismatic leader chooses obedient, dependent, and compliant followers. Followers of charismatic leaders view the leader as the moral standard bearer and thus, followers can rationalize very destructive actions and behaviors (Howell & Avolio, 1992). The charismatic leaders' ability to induce followers to blindly follow them in their mission could lead to increased opportunity for corruption and/or illegal or questionable practices. Those special abilities that charismatic leaders possess may allow them to lie or deceive followers or stakeholders (DeCelles & Pfarrer, 2004).

Since followers often have a very strong desire for change, some charismatic leaders may exploit that to achieve their own goals through framing or selling those goals around elements that the followers desire (DeCelles & Pfarrer, 2004). Because those followers yearn for change so intensely, they will not attend to incongruent information about their revered leader and thus, may not view the leader's or their behavior as unethical or corrupt (Nahavandi, 2000).

Participative Leadership

Northouse (2004) defined participative leadership as "leaders who invite subordinates to share in decision making. A participative leader consults with subordinates, obtains their ideas and opinions, and integrates their suggestions into the decisions regarding how the group or organization will proceed" (p. 126). Eagly and Johnson (1990), in a large meta-analysis of leadership styles of men and women, determined that women adopt a more democratic or participative leadership style than men. Eagly and Carli (2007) stated that participative leaders consider other's opinions when making decisions. "Stereotypically, women are more

participative and collaborative than men” (p. 125). Although many women leaders feel they are more accepted when they lead in a more collaborative manner, particularly in certain settings, Eagly and Carli noted that “in roles rarely occupied by women, many women leaders are just as autocratic as their male colleagues” (p. 127).

House and Mitchell (1974) determined “participative leadership is considered best when a task is ambiguous because participation gives greater clarity to how certain paths lead to certain goals—it helps subordinates to learn what leads to what” (p. 92). This type of leadership is effective when the followers or subordinates are autonomous and have a strong need for control of their work situation as they perform well when being involved in decision making and in the structure of their work.

History and Development of Women’s Sports

As early as the 1400s women of royalty participated in sports such as fishing and horseback riding. Later in the 1500s, Mary, Queen of Scots, became known as an avid golfer and during her reign, the so-called “birthplace of golf,” St. Andrews, was built. In the early 1800s, women competed in events such as horse racing, gas-powered balloon flights, and the first women’s golf tournaments (<http://www.northnet.org/stlawrenceaauw/timeline.htm>). However, early nineteenth-century American scholars, based on Calvinist tradition, believed that women participating in sports were similar to dancing in terms of lack of morality. Moreover, at this time, upper-class Americans and Britons looked at physical activity with disdain and relegated women to that of washerwomen. They believed that ladies should do nothing more arduous than strolling in the garden or taking carriage rides (Suggs, 2005a).

Women’s sports primarily evolved from non-competitive physical education activities due mainly to physicians encouraging women to participate in exercise to maintain or improve

their health. Tracing back to 1830, doctors recommended that exercise in moderation would strengthen and regulate women's bodies to overcome persistent illness and the fact that women were viewed as weaker physiologically and the frail sex (Cahn, 1994). While excessive exercise was thought to be harmful, moderate physical activity was considered to be particularly beneficial in keeping women healthy for childbirth (Suggs, 2005a). Prior to 1870, physical activities for women were mostly recreational in nature rather than sport-specific and were informal and non-competitive (Gerber, Felshin, Berlin, & Wyrick, 1974). When the number of college women increased dramatically from 11,000 in 1870 to 85,000 in 1900, educators recommended exercise for women to cope with the academic stress and as a possible prevention or alleviation of supposed nervous disorders and reproductive difficulties resulting from stress. Physical education programs for college women were created and offered. As female physical education faculty were trained, women became involved in a variety of sports including baseball, boxing, and wrestling. This interest in physical education for higher education appeared to stimulate and complement women's competitive sports that were sprouting up outside colleges and universities across the United States. Although physical fitness "experts" of this time espoused controlled exercise, others encouraged women to engage in more competitive, athletic sports activities. These women's new sports endeavors of baseball, boxing, and wrestling were also played by women who now competed for prize money at events before paying spectators. These athletes were not only often seen as "unladylike," but there also were allegations of prostitution, which was seen as the ultimate degradation of females. At the same time, sports such as horseback riding, archery, swimming, golf, tennis, and cycling became popular leisure activities for upper-class women. These sports achieved credibility more readily due to their association with the wealthier class and the fact that they were non-contact (Cahn, 1994). Those

sports and other noncompetitive recreational activities, such as croquet and bowling, also provided opportunities for women (Sparhawk, Leslie, Turbow, & Rose, 1989).

During the 1870s and 1880s, informal athletic clubs for women, with physical activities of a more competitive nature, became popular (Women's Sports Foundation, 2001). Also, in the 1870s, clubs began opening tournament competition to women resulting in many sports moving beyond basic recreation to more serious levels of competition. By the late 1800s, sporting organizations such as the National Archery Association, the United States National Lawn Tennis Association, and the United States Golf Association were sponsoring and holding the first women's national championships. Young women in high schools and colleges now engaged in intramural or informal sports activities and competitions. In 1891, the game of basketball was invented with immediate and tremendous popularity among women athletes (Cahn, 1994). Shortly thereafter, before the turn of the century, a group of women formed the Women's Basketball Rules Committee and published the first basketball rules specifically for the women's game (Woolum, 1998).

Entering the twentieth century, women's involvement in sports increased due to greater access to athletics. Growth in school athletics, public and recreational sports, and elite competitive sports gave female athletes a foundation for athletic participation. Many physical educators and advocates of women's sports espoused the positive physical, psychological, and emotional benefits of sports participation, but critics believed that sports could even damage women's bodies and harm their reproductive systems. Some of the public, particularly media, thought that participating in sports would cause women to lose their femininity and develop a masculine, unattractive, muscular body structure as well as become overly aggressive. Physical education departments developed separate, less rigorous programs for women aimed at

promotion of health, fun, and sportsmanship while maintaining a feminine image (Cahn, 1994). In places where sports access was limited, the development of female athletes often came through the formation of private or special clubs for women, such as the Chicago Sports Club, or associations and organizations specifically for women's sports competition, including the Women's National Bowling Association (WNBA), now the Women's International Bowling Congress (WIBC), and the Women's Swimming Association of New York (WSA) (Woolum, 1998).

In the 1920s, with an increasing capitalistic society, working and middle classes had increased leisure time which facilitated sports being enjoyed by a greater number of Americans. Due to strong corporate profits and management's fears of labor unrest, industries began to offer employee recreation to help in obtaining and keeping a loyal and productive company workforce. This was the beginning of company leagues and teams that have grown in number and flourish in today's society. Community organizations such as the YMCA and city parks and recreation departments offered recreation and sports activities for both adults and children (Cahn, 1994). The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) also took a major interest in women's sports after World War I. From 1914 to 1926, the AAU sanctioned women's competitions in swimming, diving, track and field, basketball, and handball as well as playing a prominent role in aiding the inclusion of American women into the Olympics (Woolum, 1998). In 1920, the United States sent its first women's teams to the Olympic Games and won medals in skating and swimming. American women swimmers won four of five gold medals in swimming and diving events and continued their dominance throughout the next two Olympics of the decade (Cahn).

For the next several decades, American society remained divided in its support for women's participation in sports. Women's athletic participation remained controversial, fueled

by the rift between those who saw women's sports participation as too strenuous, aggressive, competitive, and/or too masculine and those who viewed women's sports as healthy in fostering confidence, independence, and promoting good physical, emotional, and mental well-being. To combat the negativism, advocates of women's athletics promoted sports participation as aiding women in obtaining a healthy, feminine image. Others modified male sports competitions and games to reduce strain on the female body. One such example is the modification of the men's basketball game in which the women's game had more players on each team on the court at one time and was played on two half-courts, rather than the faster-paced, demanding full-court game. In the 1930s and 1940s the sport of softball emerged and became popular as a variation of baseball. This sport became wildly popular with female industry worker, small town, and recreation department teams (Cahn, 1994).

With many men away at war during the 1940s, female baseball players came to the forefront. What may have originally started out as an entertainment novelty, became a successful showcasing of women athletes. In 1943, Phillip K. Wrigley, then owner of the Chicago Cubs major league baseball team, started the All American Girls Softball League, which later became the All American Girls Professional Baseball League. The league was overhand fast-pitch baseball, utilizing the same rules as men's baseball (Woolum, 1998). After a slow start, the league became tremendously popular, operated until 1954, and drew millions of fans over those years. The league went to great lengths to ensure the players retained their femininity in addition to possessing good baseball skills. The players were not only taught the fundamentals of the game, but also how to showcase feminine characteristics; the league mandated that the women wore skirts, had hair that was shoulder length or longer, and wore make-up, with the teams all having feminine sounding team names (Lutter, 1994; Woolum). Although increasingly

successful through the years, the league later shut down due to financial difficulties, recruiting problems, competition with men's professional major and minor league baseball, and society's insinuation of lesbianism (Cahn, 1994).

For many decades, conceivably beginning in the 1930s, and somewhat persisting today, society labeled female athletes as lesbians and/or possessing what were primarily thought of as masculine or male athletic traits. Heterosexual female athletes often have had to demonstrate their femininity. Some lesbian athletes have used the competitive sports arena as a platform to express their sexuality, develop social networks, and develop a sense of self. Their participation in sports allowed them to feel less isolated and safer because of the involvement of heterosexual women. By the 1950s, the majority of women's interest in competitive sports was waning due to high involvement of lesbian athletes and society's continued lack of acceptance and recognition of women in sports (Cahn, 1994).

The rebelliousness and social unrest of the late 1960s and early 1970s, inclusive of the feminist movement and youth culture, broke down barriers and combined with the fitness boom, sparked renewed interest in competitive sports for women. The number of females in high school, college, and professional sports increased substantially. At this point in women's sports history, "comparatively more women take part in organized sports competition than at any other time in history" (Gerber et al., 1974, p. 8). Women, like professional tennis player Billie Jean King, were more assertive and public in their demands for equality for women's sports. King led and symbolized the beginning of the modern revolution in women's sports. This attitude and movement, coupled with the 1972 Title IX Amendment, not only increased female sports participation, but also brought focus and recognition to women's athletic endeavors (Lutter, 1994; Women's Sports Foundation, 2001). During the 1960s, African-American female athletes

started to receive the recognition and accolades long withheld. Their success in sports such as track and field along with the civil rights movement aided the continuation of their involvement in sports and helped cultivate a feeling of community in the African-American population (Cahn, 1994).

The last 25 years have led to continued focus and recognition of women's sports. During the 1987-88 school year, the first National Girls' and Women's Sport Day was celebrated. The day was highlighted by sporting events, female athlete guest speakers at celebrations throughout the United States, walks for fitness, and promotional photos of female athletes displayed (Mottinger, 1998). Although access to sports participation is better than ever before, women's athletics still have many gains that need to be achieved. "Ultimately women's efforts to attain meaningful, leisure, unrestricted access to sport, and athletic self-determinism will be part and parcel of transforming the broader social relations of gender within which sporting life takes place" (Cahn, 1994, p. 279).

History and Development of Women's Collegiate Sports

Women's collegiate sports are thought to have evolved out of physical education programs designed to give college females some moderate exercise in keeping them healthy for childbirth. The Boston Normal School for Gymnastics starting training women in the 1880s, and graduates went on to teach physical education programs at the many new women's colleges starting up around the country. Colleges found numerous women eager to teach physical education since many careers were not open to women at that time, and few colleges and universities would hire females to teach academic subjects (Suggs, 2005a).

Women first became active in collegiate sports in 1892 when basketball was introduced at Smith College. The sport had rapid growth and soon spread to other colleges. Initially,

women's physical education faculty opposed such competition in that they felt they would lose control over their programs as they felt men had done with their athletics (Gerber et al., 1974). In 1894, the first intercollegiate competition between two institutions was scheduled as a tennis tournament between Bryn Mawr and Vassar, but was cancelled because Vassar faculty would not allow their female athletes to participate in intercollegiate competition (Hult, 1994). Thus, on April 4, 1896, the first teams to compete in intercollegiate athletics were the women's basketball teams of University of California at Berkeley playing Stanford University. The game was held, but the Cal-Berkeley women refused to play in front of a mixed audience stating that it would lower a certain standard of womanhood (Suggs, 2005a).

In 1899, the National Women's Basketball Committee was founded. In 1917, it became the Committee on Women's Athletics of the American Physical Education Association. Its original purpose was to develop and implement standard rules of basketball, but it also controlled the "unrestrained" competition among college women. The organization limited the number of intercollegiate games, instead preferring to emphasize intramural contests (Suggs, 2005a). Later in the 1920s, the Women's Division-National Amateur Athletic Federation (NAAF) was formed to aid in organizing women's intercollegiate competitions (Park & Hult, 1993). The NAAF provided a forum in which women's physical educators and leaders in women's sports could discuss and formalize beliefs for girls' and women's athletic competitions. The goals were "play for play's sake," limit travel and awards, and protect the female athletes from being overly exploited or publicized. The federation also sought to place qualified women in leadership and supervisory positions in athletics and physical education (Gerber et al., 1974). Multiple and tight controls dominated the early stages of women's intercollegiate sports.

The early women's teams did not hold tryouts or practices or have school uniforms and their coaches were physical education teachers. This was done purposely to try and keep the competitions low key to preserve the women's modesty and perceived daintiness. Also, it was thought that "under prolonged and intense physical strain, a girl goes to pieces nervously" (Suggs, 2005a, p. 23).

In the early 1900s, women's sports became popular at colleges across the country and the number of competitive events increased. However, the nature of intercollegiate athletics was in philosophical conflict with women's physical education teachers and thus, in the 1920s and 1930s, intercollegiate varsity events were still somewhat uncommon (Gerber et al., 1974).

Popular in the 1930s and 1940s, and continuing into the 1960s, were "Play Days." This was when a group of students, particularly physical education majors, would drive to another college and choose up sides or teams and play various sports. These teams were intentionally not meant to be "intercollegiate" in nature, and these days were intended to be more social than competitive, by design (Suggs, 2005a). By 1936, 70% of colleges surveyed stated they used this as a predominant form of sports participation for their women (Hult, 1994). In contrast, 11% of colleges in 1930 and 13% of colleges in 1936 had varsity-style intercollegiate women's teams (Suggs, 2005a).

In 1957, collegiate women seeking greater athletic opportunities were aided by the Division for Girls and Women in Sport (DGWS) changing its official position statement. The formal position changed to state that intercollegiate programs for women may exist, and by 1963, was amended again to declare that it was "desirable" for women's intercollegiate athletic programs to exist (Gerber et al., 1974). Three years later, the DGWS designated a Commission on Intercollegiate Sports for Women (CISW) to assist in administering women's intercollegiate

competitions. In 1967, the CISW was renamed the Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (CIAW). The 1960s were changing societal times and included the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and increased feminist activism. This focus on equal rights aided the movement for women's collegiate athletics to become more on a level with men's athletics. In 1969 and the early 1970s, national championships were held in a few sports for women. Female athletes now pushed for an institutional membership organization similar to what men's collegiate athletics had in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). In 1971, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) replaced the CIAW (Gerber et al., 1974).

The increased positive regard for women's intercollegiate athletics continued to grow in the 1970s (Hult, 1994). In the beginning of the 1971-72 academic year, the AIAW had 278 institutions which grew to over 800 by 1981 (Hulstrand, 1993). The AIAW focused on the female student-athlete's education and not on athletic performance, rejecting the prevalent "win or die" attitude of the NCAA. The emphasis of the AIAW was participation in sport as the most important facet and downplayed winning (Sperber, 1990).

In the fall of 1974, the NCAA agreed to a meeting with the AIAW in hopes that the AIAW would join the NCAA. The AIAW wanted equal rights and power in rules and decision-making upon joining, but the NCAA did not see the AIAW as a deserving equal. The NCAA with its wealth, political influence, and long history were an opposition that the AIAW could not compete with or overcome. The NCAA introduced women's championships for intercollegiate sports and was financially capable of paying for the competing teams' expenses in the national championships, charged no additional membership dues for women's sports teams, guaranteed women more television coverage, and created financial aid, recruitment, and eligibility rules for

women that mirrored those for men. The loss of membership fees and income, championship sponsorship, and media rights led to the demise of AIAW. By June 30, 1982, the AIAW had ceased operations (Festle, 1996).

The two most recent decades have seen enormous growth in the number of female college athletes. Over 202,000 female student-athletes competed in the academic year 2003-04 in NCAA and National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) sports (Suggs, 2005b). The evidence seems to suggest that the growth will continue for women's intercollegiate athletics.

Title IX and Female Sports Participation

In 1972, Congress enacted Title IX of the Educational Amendments to the 1964 Civil Rights Act which prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program or activity, including intercollegiate athletics, receiving federal financial assistance (General Accounting Office Reports, 1999). Title IX specifically stated, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2007). By the end of the 1970s, the number of female college student athletes had doubled the number that had participated earlier in that decade. Many of those women received athletic scholarships (Suggs, 2005a). Title IX seemed like a reasonable solution to the perceived inequity in sports, but significant opposition was evident. Many institutions and their male athletic coaches felt that this new federal law would negatively impact men's intercollegiate sports. The biggest opposition came from the NCAA, the governing body for men's college sports. The NCAA insisted that men's programs would be greatly damaged or even destroyed due to budget cuts, reduction in athletic scholarships, and other resources being allocated to women's programs (Cahn, 1994).

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare issued Title IX enforcement regulations in 1975 with a mandatory compliance date of 1978. Failure to comply could bring sanctions against an institution including fines. Yet, by 1979, not one institution had been fined for failure to comply with the law. The NCAA realized its futility in attempting to get the law revised. In 1980, realizing the government's initiative to enforce Title IX, the NCAA no longer opposed women's sports and took a leadership position in providing improved financial support. Just as significantly, the NCAA sponsored, organized, and held women's national championships the then organization of women's college athletics, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW), could not provide. Women's collegiate sports programs switched to the NCAA and by 1982, the AIAW was defunct. With NCAA leadership and support, women's intercollegiate sports gained increased national recognition (Cahn, 1994).

Title IX brought attention to collegiate sports for women and caused major changes to opportunities for female athletes at all levels. During the 1971-72 academic year, 29,977 females participated in collegiate sports. Twenty-nine years later in 2000-01, that number increased over 400% to reach 150,916 female college athletes (Priest, 2003). In 2003-04, over 494,000 student athletes participated in collegiate sports with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), more than 202,000 (41%) of whom were women (Suggs, 2005b). The enormous growth of participation opportunities for female college athletes can also be seen in the tremendous increase in the average number of sports offered per school. In 1972, the average was a little over two, with the number growing to an average of 5.61 in 1978 (the mandatory compliance date for Title IX), and increasing to an average of 8.14 intercollegiate sports per college or university for females in the year 2000 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2000). In 2004, an average of 8.32 intercollegiate female sports

per school was reported with 8,204 teams for female athletes in the NCAA (“Participation opportunities,” 2004).

In the past three decades since the Title IX enactment, colleges have asked for clarification on how they can meet one of the basic requirements: “In effectively accommodating the interests and abilities of male and female athletes, institutions must provide both the opportunity for individuals of each sex to participate in intercollegiate competition” (Suggs, 2005c, p. A33). Since 1979, the U.S. Department of Education has used a three-part test to determine whether women have enough opportunities to play sports at a particular institution. Schools may comply with the test by meeting one of three criteria: (1) having the proportion of athletes that are women the same as the proportion of students who are women, (2) having a history and continuing practice of expanding athletic programs for women, or (3) being able to demonstrate that the women’s sports program fully and effectively accommodates the interests of female students and potential students (Suggs, 2005d).

Even with the monumental increase in the number of women participating in collegiate sports, there still have been occasions in which an institution was found not to be in compliance with Title IX equity requirements. In 1993, members of the women’s volleyball and gymnastics teams at Brown University filed a lawsuit against the institution because cuts in the athletic department led to unequal funding for women’s sports. The athletes stated that these cuts were in violation of Title IX, and the court agreed (Goldberg, 1993). A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit ruled that complying with the third option did not mean accommodating women’s interests and ability to the same degree as men’s. Rather, the court said, it meant completely accommodating them. Brown University later appealed unsuccessfully to the U.S. Supreme Court. Also, a 1996 policy clarification by the U.S. Department of

Education reinforced and emphasized the appeal court's ruling in stating that if a college had women who were interested in a particular sport, talented enough to sustain a team in that sport, and had reasonable expectation of competition, a college had to start a women's team in that sport if it wanted to comply with the third part of the test. Moreover, the department said it would not only assess the interests of the currently enrolled college students, but also of high school students in that college's recruiting region, members of amateur athletic associations, and community sports leagues (Suggs, 2005d).

The continued expansion of women's college sports opportunities has had continued obstacles, specifically from some men's minor sports and their coaches. In 2002, the National Wrestling Coaches Association unsuccessfully sued the U.S. Department of Education on how it enforces Title IX and the fact that the application of the law has unfairly hurt men's sports teams (Flores, 2002). More recently, in March 2005, the department issued a further clarification to the third part of its test for Title IX compliance. For colleges to be able to demonstrate that their women's sports programs are fully and effectively accommodating the interests of their female students and potential students, the department ruled that all colleges had to do is survey (an email survey is acceptable) their student populations about athletic interests and abilities using the instrument designed by the U.S. Department of Education. If the survey does not show enough female students with the talent and desire to compete in a sport that can find opponents in the college's normal competitive region, then the institution is presumed to be in compliance. Furthermore, a lack of response will be interpreted as a lack of interest and thus indicate compliance with the third part of the three-part test. Athletic directors and NCAA personnel alike were critical of the ruling. Edward A. Leland, athletic director at Stanford University and co-chairman of a Department of Education panel that published 23 recommendations for change to

Title IX in 2003, stated that the new test is “overly simplistic.” Leland further stated “It’s like having a budget referendum, and for people who don’t go to the polls, to count them as a ‘no’ vote” (Suggs, 2005c, p. A33). Judith M. Sweet, the NCAA’s Senior Vice President for Championships and Education Services, denounced the method as an unreliable means of measuring interest because many students do not reply to email or Internet surveys. The senior executive further stated that “This approach is contrary to the intent of Title IX itself and appears to be designed to enable schools to show that females are not interested in participation” (Walters, 2006).

Title IX has unequivocally led to increased participation for females in college sports, but the research suggests that there are still significant gains that need to be made, especially in the areas of athletic budgets, number of female coaches, and coaches’ salaries. Yiamouyiannis (2003) found that women still receive \$133 million less than men in college athletic scholarships annually, which is only 36% of the athletics operating budgets and only 32% of the recruiting dollars at NCAA Division I institutions. Suggs (2005b) reported that in 2003-04, women’s teams accounted for less than 30% of operating expenses for athletics teams as a whole. The data also showed that, on average, NCAA Division I student bodies were 54% female, but athletics programs were only 43% female, creating a disparity of 11%. Acosta and Carpenter (2000) reported that 45.6% of the coaches of women’s teams are females, the lowest representation of females as head coaches of women’s teams in history. By contrast when Title IX was enacted in 1972, 90% of women’s teams were coached by females. Also significant is the fact that for 534 new jobs, only 107 women were hired as head coaches of women’s teams in the years of 1998-99 and 1999-00. One of the biggest areas in which equity for females considerably lags is the average salary for Division I head coaches. In 2000, the average salary of the coaches of

women's collegiate teams was \$38,191, while coaches of men's teams earned an average of \$61,534 (Jacobson, 2001). This apparent disparity raises the issue of whether salaries should be market-driven by the revenue generated by their respective sports rather than by compliance with Title IX.

Benefits of Sports Participation

The research identified and described in this section indicated the benefits of sports participation are numerous and range from improved physical health to the emotional and social attributes of increased self-confidence, self-esteem, and better interpersonal skills, all qualities assumed to be important in leadership. A Council of Europe Report (Svoboda, 1994) suggested that sports participation provides opportunities to meet and communicate with other people, to assume different social roles, learn particular social skills such as tolerance and respect for others, to acquire the ability to adjust to team or collective objectives (e.g., cooperation and cohesion), and experience a variety of emotions. The report went on to stress the contributions of sports participation relevant to personality development and psychological well-being (e.g., self-concept, self-esteem, self-confidence, energy, mood, tension and stress, efficiency, and overall well-being). Kelinske, Mayer, and Chen (2001) stated that women who played sports seemed to exhibit the same advantages as men in perseverance, networking, learning to be a team player, and advancing competitive behavior. Koivula (1999) found several studies that suggested the following:

Sports participation on a regular basis resulted in positive effects on physical health (Dishman, 1988; Martin & Dubbert, 1982; Paffenberger & Hyde, 1988; Paffenberger, Hyde, Wing, & Hsieh, 1986; Siscovick, Laporte, & Newman, 1985; Stephens, Jacobs, & White, 1985), psychological enhancement, stress reactivity, and mental well-being such

as reduced depression, anxiety, tension and stress, and increased vigor and clear-mindedness (Bahrke & Morgan, 1978; Berger, Friedman, & Eaton, 1988; Berger & Owen, 1983; Blumenthal, Williams, Needels, & Wallace, 1982; McCann & Holmes, 1984; Morgan & Goldston, 1987; Prakasa & Overman, 1986; Raglin & Morgan, 1987; Senkfor & Williams, 1995; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975; Thayer, 1987; Wilson, Berger, & Bird, 1981). (p. 361)

The Institute for International Sport (1999) sent a survey to randomly selected high-level professionals in various occupational fields (such as academia, business, entertainment, government, law, and medicine) regarding the impact of sports participation on their respective careers. Survey results indicated that participation in sports has had a positive impact on the careers of many well-known Americans. Findings indicated that 88.5% of respondents who had been active in sports believed that the competitiveness they learned in sports had transferred over into their successful careers. Furthermore, the survey, which included governors, college presidents, and CEOs who answered the poll, pointed out that 63.5% of the respondents felt that their sports participation had a major impact on their career, with 94% of the group indicating that the impact was positive. Another finding of the survey was 70% of the respondents believed that learning to deal with defeat has helped them more in their career than learning how to win.

Since much of one's sports participation occurs during adolescence and pre-adolescence, the possible benefits of participation during those ages have been examined in many studies. A recent study by Harrison and Narayan (2003) demonstrated that participation in sports was associated with adequate exercise; healthy self-image; and a lower likelihood of emotional distress, suicidal behavior, familial substance abuse, and history of physical and sexual abuse. In a study of suburban high school students, Steiner, McQuivey, Pavelski, Pitts, and Kraemer

(2000) found that sports participation was linked to fewer mental health and general health problems. Pate, Trost, Levin, and Dowda (2000) analyzed data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and found that sports participants were less likely than non-participants to report suicidal behavior and cigarette smoking, but alcohol use rates were similar. A similar YRBS done in North Carolina (Garry & Morrissey, 2000), yielded comparable results in regard to alcohol and cigarette use, as well as a lower likelihood of sports participants engaging in fights and carrying weapons. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2001) in a 2000 National Survey of Household Drug Abuse reported that adolescent sports participants had lower rates of cigarette, alcohol, and illegal drug use than non-participants.

Seefeldt and Ewing (1997) stated that the report from the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports in Washington, D.C. indicated the benefits of youth sports participation included better health through increased activity and skill-building, social and moral development especially with regard to delinquency and aggressive behavior, and deterring negative behavior such as gang membership. Bechtol (2002) identified long-term effects of high school sports participation in 13 areas: (a) being competitive, (b) being goal oriented, (c) being physically active, (d) making friends, (e) developing leadership skills, (f) enhancing self-esteem, (g) displaying sports paraphernalia, (h) practicing sports philosophy, (i) working as a team, (j) acquiring skills not taught in a classroom, (k) managing time, (l) volunteering, and (m) working with diverse groups. Kleiber and Kirshnit (1991) found that playing different positions and different sports and learning to lead as well as to follow influenced an adolescent's formation of self. Otto and Alwin (1977) also argued that extracurricular activities such as sports give students the opportunity to practice the attitudes, skills, and values that will prepare them for future success. Hanks and Eckland (1976) asserted many believe that young people who were involved

in sports in high school will be looked on favorably when they enter higher education and occupational roles due to being seen as possessing important skills and being “well-rounded.” Sports unite groups of people for a common goal and create a sense of unity, identification, and personal identity. These important networks will be an advantage to athletes when they enter and advance in their careers (Otto & Alwin, 1977).

More recently, Bailey (2006) examined the scientific evidence that has been gathered on the contributions and benefits of sports and physical education in schools and educational systems. The research was presented in terms of children’s developmental domains such as physical, lifestyle, affective, social, and cognitive. The review of the evidence suggested that sports and physical education participation have the potential to make distinct contributions to children’s fundamental movement skills and physical competencies, precursors to participation in later lifestyle and sports/physical activities. The evidence also suggested that participation can support the development of social skills and behaviors, self-esteem, favorable school attitudes, and in some circumstances, aid in academic and cognitive development. Stephens and Schaben (2002) also found that sports were not only related to athletic competence, but also enhanced academic performance. Hanks and Eckland (1976) and Otto and Alwin (1977) noted that feelings of recognition and accomplishment gave young people the confidence to achieve success in other areas, such as academics.

Benefits of Sports Participation Specific to Women

The research suggested that sports participation may be of particular benefit to females. Ference and Muth (2004) stated it appeared that both team sports and exercise may be important in enhancing self-concept in middle school females. Team sports may help female participants develop social self-perception as well as self-perception about competence and ability.

Ackerman (2002) found that female athletes stated being an athlete helped them gain a greater sense of self worth. Consistent with research on male and mixed-gender samples, Richman and Shaffer (2000) reported that greater pre-college sports participation predicted higher self-esteem in an exclusively female sample. Baum (1998) found that the female sports participant possessed higher self-esteem, but also exhibited less anxiety and depressive symptoms, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The challenge, achievement, risk-taking, and skill development gained from sports participation may help females gain confidence in themselves and their abilities (Jaffee & Manzer, 1992). Pipher (1994) revealed that sports provided a powerful social environment in which females learned new skills, learned to cooperate with others, and established important alliances. Female athletes also utilize skills gained in sports competition to better handle conflict and often transfer those conflict resolution skills learned on the sports field into everyday activities (Bredmeier & Shields, 1986). Girls who participate in sports enter larger, less intimate networks that are based on achievement and may give them an advantage in other areas of achievement as well (Lever, 1978).

Oppenheimer Funds, a leading mutual fund company, and the MassMutual Financial Group, its parent financial services organization, commissioned a survey in 2001 titled “From the Locker Room to the Boardroom: A Survey on Sports in the Lives of Women Business Executives” (MassMutual Financial Group, 2002). The results of the survey, performed by an independent market research firm, indicated that playing sports contributed to subsequent business success. The findings indicated that 81% of the 401 female senior executives polled, played organized sports while growing up. Those executives stated that playing team sports has contributed to their business success in that sports facilitated the acquisition of leadership skills, greater discipline, and the ability to function as a team, all desirable skills and attributes for

business leadership. They credited sports with teaching them invaluable skills and lessons that have advanced their ability to succeed in the workplace. More specifically, of the executive women who played organized sports after grade school, 86% said sports helped them be more disciplined, 81% stated sports taught them to function better as a team, 69% said sports facilitated their development of leadership skills, 68% said sports gave them valuable lessons in learning to deal with failure, and 59% stated that sports gave them a competitive edge over others. The respondents further stated that women who still participate in sports make more productive employees and over half (52%) felt that women who participate in sports are more respected by their professional colleagues. Of the 401 female senior executives, 74% had children and of those, an overwhelming 96% stated they would offer or have offered encouragement to a daughter to play sports as they have/would offer a son. With the results of this report indicating the road to the boardroom may frequently begin on the playing fields, this emphasizes the importance of this study in examining the possible role collegiate sports participation has on preparing women for executive leadership.

Summary

This chapter discussed women in the workforce and leadership with an overview on the history and evolution of women at work. The review of the literature illustrated the underrepresentation of women in executive leadership positions and the numerous barriers to executive leadership for women in both industry and postsecondary education fields. Although progress has been made towards increasing the number of women in the highest leadership levels, there is still more improvement to be made in equity for female executive leadership. There are successful approaches to increasing the number and preparation of women for leadership positions.

This review of the leadership literature indicated that transformational, charismatic, and participative leadership theories are reflective of women's leadership. These styles of leadership focus on the leader-follower or leader-subordinate relationship and emphasize the involvement of the follower or subordinate in organizational decision making. The literature also indicated that in many situations, women's caring, concern, and consideration for the follower/subordinate as an individual is evident and is effective in eliciting employee work success.

Also reviewed in this chapter is the history and development of sports with particular focus on women's collegiate sports. Finally, the chapter discussed the benefits of sports participation with particular attention to the benefits specific to women.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to answer the research questions guiding this study. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. The guiding research questions of this study were:

1. What leadership traits did women acquire from collegiate sports?
2. What role did these leadership traits play in attaining executive leadership positions?
3. How did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills?
4. In what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills?
5. What leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports (e.g., clubs, social events, work, etc.)?

This chapter is organized into the following sections: design of the study, sample selection, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, research bias and assumptions, and chapter summary.

Design of the Study

A qualitative research design, utilizing a constant comparative method of analysis, best fit this study as it allows for in-depth examination of the possible role and relevance of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. Creswell (2007) stated, “We

conduct qualitative research because we want to understand the context or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or an issue” (p. 40). This study sought to uncover the experiences of collegiate sports that research participants believe have impacted their executive leadership. “A key philosophical assumption upon which all types of qualitative research are based is the view that reality is constructed by individuals in interaction with their social worlds” (Merriam & Simpson, 1995, p. 97). Creswell (1994) defined qualitative research as “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (pp. 1-2). A quest for meaning, understanding, and the acquisition of descriptive data necessitates the use of a qualitative research method for this study. Merriam (2002b) stated:

The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context. (pp. 3-4)

Thus, understanding the meaning and interpretation of a collegiate sports experience to different individuals and how it prepared them for executive leadership was the foundation of this qualitative study. Patton (1985) explained qualitative research as:

...an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the

nature of that setting—what that means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what’s going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting....The analysis strives for depth of understanding. (p. 1)

Another distinctive characteristic of qualitative research is the use of an inductive process (Merriam, 2002b). Patton (2002) further explained:

Qualitative inquiry is particularly oriented toward exploration, discovery, and inductive logic. Inductive analysis begins with specific observations and builds toward general patterns. Categories or dimensions of analysis emerge from open-ended observations as the inquirer comes to understand patterns that exist in the phenomenon being investigated. (pp. 55-56)

Patton contrasted inductive analysis with the hypothetical-deductive approach of experimental designs, where the main variables and specific hypotheses are identified *before* data is collected. Researchers, utilizing the qualitative approach, learn and discover information from the participants and through the gathering and analysis of this data, inductively build theory (Creswell, 2005). Whereas the quantitative approach yields findings that are broad and generalizable, the qualitative approach typically produces descriptive, detailed information about a smaller number of people and/or cases which increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations, but is not intended for generalizability (Patton, 2002).

Qualitative research consists of questions of what and why, the research design and theory emerging as the study unfolds, and researcher as part of the process and as the instrument that obtains and analyzes data. Qualitative study also utilizes those interpretive research questions with intention of leading to meaning and discovery, patterns and theories for meaning and understanding, with a natural setting, longer, more intense relationship with the participants,

and use of induction. (Sogunro, 2001). Merriam and Simpson (1995) maintained, “In qualitative research it is the rich, thick descriptions, the words (not numbers) that persuade the reader of the trustworthiness of your findings” (p. 101).

Patton (2002) stated the qualitative researcher seeks to understand how the participants construct meaning in their natural settings. Since the researcher is the instrument in data collection and analysis, the researcher should identify his/her subjectivities and consider how those subjectivities may influence data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2002b). Patton (2002) asserted that “the credibility of qualitative methods, therefore hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing the fieldwork—as well as things going on in a person’s life that might prove a distraction” (p. 14).

Qualitative research, with its emphasis on interpretations and meanings in a particular context, was appropriate for this study in determining the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. That is, this study sought to gain rich, descriptive data relevant to how female executives view the role their collegiate sports participation played in preparing them for their current leadership situation. Also, data was obtained relevant to how social context affected their leadership skill acquisition. Creswell (1998) stated that issues or problems related to culture, gender, or marginalized groups are usually topics researched utilizing qualitative methods. Thus, this research utilized a qualitative study approach with interviews of research participants. The interview guide was developed and subsequently refined with guidance and feedback from my professor in a “Qualitative Data Analysis” course. The resulting questions constituted the basis for the line of questioning in the interviews of the research study participants.

Sample Selection

Sample selection is a major difference in qualitative versus quantitative research. Patton (2002) contrasted the two types of research by saying that qualitative inquiry typically focuses on small samples that are selected purposefully to permit in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, whereas quantitative methods typically utilize larger, randomly selected samples with the intention of generalizing with confidence from the sample to the population it represents. Because this study focused on the in-depth understanding of a phenomenon combined with an intention of learning the most from the sample, purposeful or purposive sampling was used. “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Bernard (2000) further asserted, “Purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (p. 176). Thus, purposeful sampling is appropriate for this study due to its usefulness in focusing on female participants who have played intercollegiate sports and who are now in executive leadership positions.

Merriam (1998) noted that “to begin sampling, the researcher must determine the selection criteria essential in choosing the right people to be studied” (p. 12). Patton (1990) and Merriam stated that the number of participants required in qualitative research is not set. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended sampling “to the point of redundancy” (p. 202). Patton and Merriam agreed that the ideal sample size in a qualitative research study is when redundancy or replication is achieved. Thus, my study included eleven participants as redundancy or replication was reached at that point. Five of the participants were from executive leadership positions in industry or the corporate sector and six were from the two-year college segment. For this study, industry or corporate executive leaders are defined as individuals who are chief executive

officers, chief financial officers, vice presidents, department directors, or company national managers. The two-year college executive leaders were those at the president, vice president, dean, or director level. Six of the participants were individuals whom I already knew or who were identified by my colleagues. Utilizing snowball or chain sampling, that is asking the participants who else would be good participants to include, resulted in the identification of other research participants. I also utilized various postsecondary professional and leadership association listservs to locate other participants (Appendix A). The listservs employed were the National Association of College Women Athletic Administrators, the Office of Women in Higher Education for the American Council on Education, the University of Georgia Community and Technical College Leadership Initiative Cohort 4, the Georgia Southern University Female Athlete Alumni, the Technical College System of Georgia 2008 Executive Leadership Academy, the Technical College System of Georgia Deans of Instruction, and the Technical College System of Georgia Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs. The participants were former college athletes who participated in intercollegiate athletics in various sports and at different size institutions, are now in upper management positions (executive or senior leadership positions as indicated by their organization's organizational chart), and are females between 40 and 55 years of age. This age group was selected because the participants will have played collegiate sports after the implementation of Title IX legislation and it was assumed that the participants would have had time to move up the corporate or organizational ladder into executive leadership positions. In a study with 545 female executives, LaRosa (1990) found a mean age of 49.7 years. A similar finding of 49 years of age emerged in the Standard and Poor's (n.d.) published data, *ExecuComp Data: 1992-2003*. In a more recent study, Gayle, Golan, and Miller (2009) found a mean age of 50.9 years for over 8000 female executive participants. Although Weisman and

Vaughan (2007) reported an average age of 57 years for two-year community college presidents, it was also noted that over 90% of those presidents had held other executive positions within two-year institutions preceding their serving a two-year college presidency.

Data Collection

Data collection in this study consisted of interviews with the research participants. Interviews were used to gain insight into participants' perceptions, thoughts, and feelings of the possible role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. Patton (2002) stated, "We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions....We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things" (p. 341).

Before the scheduling of interviews, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application, including a Human Subjects Research Application, was submitted to The University of Georgia Institutional Review Board for approval (Appendix B). After minor modifications of the study design were submitted to the IRB, the research study proposal was approved (Appendix C). A semi-structured interview approach was utilized with the use of a general interview guide. The interviews were conducted with each participant on an individual basis at a time and location convenient for the participant. At the beginning of each interview, I gave the participant a brief introduction and explanation of the study. The research participant first read, completed, and signed the Consent Form (Appendix D). After both the participant and I signed the Consent Form, a copy was given to the participant and a copy retained in my research study file. To confirm eligibility, the participant was asked, "Have you played college sports at the intercollegiate level? If so, has collegiate sports participation been a factor or played a role in the preparation or attainment of your executive leadership position?" The participant then completed

the Participant Data Sheet (Appendix E). The data yielded included the participants' age, intercollegiate athletic background, college degrees earned, college majors, years of graduation, and current executive leadership position.

An interview guide was used to aid in focusing the line of questioning (Appendix F). Patton (2002) asserted that "an interview guide is prepared to ensure that the basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed" (p. 343). That approach resulted in some uniformity of questioning, but still allowed for probing and exploration of relevance. The initial interviews were face-to-face with the participants with four of the interviews being conducted via videoconferencing. The length of each interview was one to two hours. All interviews were audio-tape recorded with field notes taken during the sessions. The interviews were transcribed using a microcassette transcription machine. When follow-up interviews or questioning were used for member checking or needed for clarification of meaning or acquisition of additional data, then those interviews were face-to-face or via telephone.

Data Analysis

I utilized the constant comparative method, an often-used qualitative analysis approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). Another common characteristic of qualitative research is that data collection and analysis are performed simultaneously as was done in this study.

Schwandt (2001) defined the constant comparative method as:

Data...are coded inductively, and then each segment of the data is taken in turn and (a) compared to one or more categories to determine its relevance and (b) compared with other segments of data similarly categorized. As segments are compared, new analytic categories may be discovered. (p. 30)

Creswell (2005) stated this method is designed to develop and connect categories by comparing data in the incidents to different incidents, incidents to categories, and categories to other categories. Merriam (1998) affirmed, “Categories and subcategories (or properties) are most commonly constructed through the constant comparative method of data analysis” (p. 179). For the purpose of this study, the terms subcategories and themes will be used interchangeably.

In this study, I first reviewed the descriptive data for patterns from the participants’ responses. In analyzing the patterns, I identified major categorical themes relevant to sports participation, leadership, social context related to interaction and interpersonal relationships on and off the field, and gender as those themes are pertinent to my research questions. Patton (2002) stated, “There’s no hard-and-fast distinction. The term *pattern* usually refers to a descriptive finding...while a *theme* takes a more categorical or topical form... (p. 453).” After identifying various themes in the data, I then grouped and coded the themes into categories by commonalities resulting in the development of theoretical characteristics of those categories. The coding of themes was conducted in order to help organize the data into meaningful categories. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) stated that initial coding is intended to “identify themes, patterns, events, and actions that are of interest to the researcher and that provide a means of organizing data sets” (p. 32). As Strauss (1987) affirmed, further analysis resulted in the recognition of relationships between the categories. The recognition of relationships provided insight and information into the role collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership.

Coffey and Atkinson (1996) also asserted that “a key issue is what to do with data once they have been selected, cut up, fragmented, coded, and categorized. The move from coding to

interpretation is a crucial one” (p. 46). Delamont (1992) stated that once coding is performed, the data will have to be interrogated and systematically explored to create meaning.

Validity and Reliability

“All researchers aspire to produce valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner. And both producers and consumers of research want to be assured that the findings of an investigation are to be believed and trusted” (Merriam, 2002a, p. 22). Merriam et al. (2002) identified strategies for promoting validity and reliability, some of which were utilized in this study. Member checks (the taking back of data and interpretations to the participants to see if they are accurate and plausible, particularly data and interpretations obtained from transcription), peer review/examination (discussions with colleagues, in this case, my major professor and one of the study participants to see if emerging themes and patterns are reasonable and credible), and audit trail (a detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decisions in the study), for reliability, were built into the study. These strategies were particularly important in strengthening the internal validity of this study. Merriam (2002a, p. 25) stated, “Internal validity asks the question, How congruent are one’s findings with reality?” With qualitative researchers being the principal instruments for data collection and analysis, the understanding of reality is the researchers’ interpretations of the participants’ understandings and interpretations of the phenomenon of interest.

External validity or generalizability is the degree to which the findings of a study can be applied to other situations. In a qualitative study, the reader will not be able to generalize in the statistical sense as is held in a quantitative study. But, Merriam stated, “If one thinks of what can be learned from an in-depth analysis of a particular situation or incident and how that knowledge can be transferred to another situation, generalizability in qualitative research becomes possible”

(2002a, p. 28). Thus, the extent of generalizability in qualitative research is determined by the readers and not established by the researcher. As Merriam et al. (2002) asserted, providing rich, thick description can ensure generalizability from a qualitative standpoint. Thus, in this study, I provided enough descriptive information for readers to make an informed decision as to the determination if findings can be transferred to their situation based on the similarity of situations. This descriptive information focused on detailed data elicited from the participants relevant to their respective collegiate sports experiences and current executive leadership position.

Merriam (2002a,) defined reliability as "...the extent to which research findings can be replicated" (p. 27). Merriam further asserted "the more important question for qualitative researchers is *whether the results are consistent with the data collected*" (p. 27). In social sciences, due to the involvement of human behavior, the reproduction of a qualitative study may not yield replicated results. Rather, the more significant point in qualitative research reliability is given the data collected, do the results make sense? To ensure reliability, I utilized both peer examination of discovered themes and patterns and an audit trail. Discussion with my major professor and one of the study participants led to confirmation that the emerging themes and patterns were viable and plausible. The study participant, being an award-winning English instructor with an excellent background in review and analysis of verbal and written communication content and grammar, closely examined the interview transcripts and coding scheme to ensure that I was making appropriate analyses and interpretations. Merriam characterized an audit trail as describing in detail "how data was collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (p. 27). In this study, I employed a descriptive audit trail.

Researcher Bias and Assumptions

Peshkin (1988) stated that subjectivities are characteristics of researchers that may affect the results of a study. It is important to identify and be aware of those subjectivities and their possible effects. Since I am the principal instrument for data collection and analysis, I realized that my assumptions and biases may have affected the research findings. Being a former collegiate athlete myself and believing that competing in collegiate sports positively impacted my later leadership abilities, I assumed that collegiate sports participation would have a positive role or effect on women in their executive leadership.

My ex-wife is a former collegiate athlete and has served in nursing leadership positions in her professional career. She has stated the importance, from a positive standpoint, of competing in collegiate athletics relevant to its role or effect on her subsequent leadership. My daughter is currently a senior at a major university and just finished four years of competing in intercollegiate sports. I have observed her leadership with her former teammates and believe her collegiate athletic experiences will have a positive effect on subsequent leadership situations in her life and work.

I have been affiliated with sports throughout my life and my experiences have been very positive, both from a personal and family viewpoint. That, combined with the media's prevalent perception of sports competition being beneficial to individuals, was certainly a bias that I had to be aware of throughout my research study.

Summary

This chapter presented the methodological strategies and process I used to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in female executive leadership. The research design, sample selection, data collection, and methods of data analysis were described. A qualitative research

design was used with purposeful sampling. Data was collected utilizing semi-structured interviews. Data analysis was achieved using the constant comparative analysis method. Additionally, the important issues of qualitative research validity and reliability and my underlying assumptions and biases were discussed.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study in two sections. The first part gives brief participant profiles and the second part addresses findings related to the research questions with particular emphasis on the identified categories and themes. The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What leadership traits did women acquire from collegiate sports?
2. What role did these leadership traits play in attaining executive leadership positions?
3. How did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills?
4. In what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills?
5. What leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports (e.g., clubs, social events, work, etc.)?

The Participants

Purposeful sampling was utilized in this study to focus on women who played collegiate sports and who are presently in executive leadership positions in the two-year college sector or in business and industry. The 11 participants were Caucasian women, ages 40 to 55 years of age, and included six executives from the two-year college workforce and five women from the

business and industry setting. See Table 1 for an overview of participant information. The participant information included pseudonym, age, degrees earned, colleges and universities from which the degrees were earned, college majors, years of graduation, intercollegiate sports played, name of college or university for which participant competed, and current executive leadership position.

Table 1: *Overview of Participant Information*

Participant Pseudonym	Age	Degrees Earned, Majors, College and University, Year of Graduation	Collegiate Sports Played and Name of College or University	Current Executive Leadership Position
Susan	52	Ed.D., Curriculum and Instruction, State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany, 1991; M.S., Teaching English as a Second Language, State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany, 1980; B.A., English, Skidmore College, 1977;	Field Hockey Skidmore College	Two-Year Community College President
Pam	55	M.A., Curriculum Planning and Design, Johnson State College, 1975; B.S., Physical Education and Recreation, Plymouth State College, 1974;	Skiing, Field Hockey Plymouth State College	Two-Year Community College President
Ann	50	M.S., National Security Strategy, National War College, 1999; M.A., Politics and Economics, Brasenose College of Oxford University, 1983; B.S., Operations Research, United States Air Force Academy, 1981;	Basketball United States Air Force Academy	Brigadier General in United States Military
Ethel	52	Ed.D., Policy, Research and Administration in Higher Education, University of Massachusetts, 1996; M.S., Biomedical Engineering,	Softball Oakland University; Ice Hockey Rensselaer	Two-Year Community College President

		Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1985; B.A., Biological Sciences, Oakland University, 1979;	Polytechnic Institute	
Margaret	46	M.A., English, Emory University, 1989; B.A., English, Mary Baldwin College, 1984;	Swimming Mary Baldwin College	Dean of Instruction for Curriculum and Professional Development for Two-Year Technical College
Mary	53	M.S., Mathematics, University of Tennessee, 1979; B.S., Mathematics and Sports Administration, Mercer University, 1975;	Basketball Mercer University	Sr. Associate Athletic Director for Academic Affairs and Senior Woman Administrator for Four-Year University
Wanda	55	Ed.D., Educational Leadership, NOVA Southeastern University, 2002; M.Ed., Math Education, Mercer University, 1995; A.B., Education, Wesleyan College, 1974;	Tennis Wesleyan College	Vice President for Academic Affairs for Two-Year College
Greta	44	B.S., Communication Arts with Emphasis in Public Relations, Georgia Southern College, 1987;	Basketball Georgia Southern College	Public Relations and Information Director for Two-Year College
Nancy	45	M.B.A., Business Administration, University of South Carolina, 1990; B.S., Recreation Resources Administration, North Carolina State University, 1985;	Volleyball North Carolina State University	Director of Sales and Distribution for a National Foods Distributor
Gail	40	B.B.A., Business and Marketing, Georgia Southern University, 1991;	Volleyball Georgia Southern University	Vice President for Telephone Communications Company
Felicia	46	No degree earned; completed required minimum credit hours for A.S. degree;	Tennis University of Georgia and Florida State University	Director of Institutional Advancement for K-12 Private School

The initial interviews with the participants were face-to-face with four of the interviews being done by videoconferencing. The interviews took place between September 2008 and March 2009. The participants were at their workplace when the interviews were conducted with the exception of one participant who was interviewed in a conference room at my place of employment.

Individual Participants

Susan. Susan is currently a two-year college president. She responded quickly to my request for an interview after learning of the research study from one of the other study participants. The interview was done via videoconferencing with Susan participating from the conference room at her community college. She was outgoing and energetic with a pleasant demeanor. Playing two years of intercollegiate field hockey at a small college in the 1970s, she mentioned that the athletic environment then was not “very high pressure.”

In addition to the current executive leadership position she has held for three years, Susan has served in several other college leadership positions. These previous positions were at various levels of the collegiate organizational hierarchy and included work as a college president, interim president, chief academic officer, dean, division director, and department chair. She has also served in leadership positions on Chamber of Commerce boards.

Pam. Pam has been a community college president for seven years. She noticed my request for research participants through the American Council on Education listserv and quickly responded via email that she would be willing to participate in the research study and immediately commented on the fact that collegiate sports did make a difference in preparing her for executive leadership. Pam was interviewed via a videoconferencing system located in her college’s conference room. She was very direct in her answers throughout the interview.

Prior to becoming a community college president, Pam had extensive economic development experience, previously serving over 18 years as the vice president for a state business and industry association. She strongly emphasized the role of the community college in assisting in the economic development and growth of area business and industry.

Ann. Ann is a brigadier general in the United States military. Ann responded that she would be willing to participate after learning of the study from an individual with the American Council on Education. The interview was conducted via videoconferencing with Ann participating from a large conference room at the military facility where she is currently located. She was very outgoing and personable throughout the interview. In playing four years of collegiate basketball at a service academy in one of the first coed groups, she mentioned that this was “an early developmental time for sports for women and for the presence of women at the academy.”

Ann has served in many executive leadership positions in over 25 years of military experience. Her leadership roles have included director and commander positions in strategic planning, national security, and public relations. She holds a high profile position in the United States national defense.

Ethel. Ethel has been a community college president for three years. She learned of the study from a colleague who had noted the request for participants on the American Council on Education listserv. Ethel promptly emailed me her interest in participating in the study and enthusiastically stated that she met all of the study’s criteria as well as she would try to think of other possible participants. She did locate one other potential participant which I interviewed for my study. Videoconferencing was utilized in the interview with Ethel participating from the conference room at her college. Ethel had a very outgoing, friendly, effusive personality. She

spoke freely of the benefits of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. The recollections of her collegiate sports experiences were both very insightful and, at times, humorous as she laughed often throughout the interview. Her periodic self-deprecating sense of humor was amusing, but the confidence in her ability to capably be in charge was evident as she stated, “My personality is one where I’m always in charge....(laughing) I mean, I’m the oldest child; you know, the oldest child is always in charge so I always was in charge or always wanting to be in charge.”

Prior to becoming a two-year college president, Ethel had wide-ranging experience serving over 15 years in various academic leadership positions such as a vice president for workforce and economic development, dean of instruction, executive director of workforce development, department dean, and department chair.

Margaret. Margaret has been a dean of instruction at a two-year technical college for the past four years. She eagerly and quickly responded to the request to participate in my study saying, “Your study sounds very interesting and I bet it is unique and not much is out there on that topic.” Margaret was helpful in posting my email requesting additional participants on her leadership doctoral program listserv. Margaret was very outgoing during the interview and apologized for sometimes “...getting off the interview questions and talking about things that may not help your study” and also stated, “I’m not sure how much my information is going to help you.” The interview was conducted in a faculty development conference room at the participant’s college.

Margaret had also been a general education department chair for over five years at another technical college. She articulated that her transition into leadership “was somewhat of a gamble,” but after being named the technical college instructor of the year for her state technical

college system, she said she was very confident that she could now handle the position and wanted to be in a college leadership position.

Mary. Mary is presently a senior associate athletic director and senior female administrator at a four-year university. At the onset of the interview, Mary was very direct, almost intense, and brief with her responses. As the interview progressed, she became more relaxed and elaborated on many of her thoughts. The interview occurred in a large conference room in the university center's athletic department.

During her current 10 year tenure as an athletic administrator, Mary has chaired one of the NCAA competitions committees and a university student athlete academic advisory council. Prior to getting into athletic administration, she has had other leadership opportunities including managing a printing business and playing professional basketball where she was a team captain.

Wanda. Currently, Wanda is a vice president for academic affairs at a two-year technical college. Wanda was very enthusiastic about participating in the research study. She was also very helpful in listing the email, requesting additional participants, on a state technical college listserv and identifying another research participant. Although Wanda appeared very outgoing in the interview, her responses were brief relative to other participants. The setting for the interview was a conference room at the participant's place of employment.

Additionally, Wanda has held two-year college academic leadership positions for four years as a dean of instruction and over eight years in a department head position. These positions were subsequent to her owning and operating a small retail business. Wanda stated that her collegiate sports experience definitely gave her "the confidence to compete" for those educational leadership positions.

Greta. Greta is a director of public relations and information for a small two-year college. Greta found out about the research study from her president and another one of the study participants. She was very eager to be interviewed and stated, “I think it would be fun to talk about my college sports experiences and how important they were to me.” She asserted the significance of learning teamwork in playing college basketball, especially against tough opponents, and how important working as a team is in the workforce. Greta was very outgoing, talkative, and passionately talked about college sports and how she loved playing college basketball many years ago. She was interviewed in her office at the two-year college where she worked.

Besides the four years of experience in her current position, Greta previously worked in director capacities for three years in public relations for a medical center, six years in marketing for private organizations, and seven years in institutional advancement and development in a college and youth services organization. She stated that she really loved being able to work in public relations and marketing leadership positions where she could “plan and direct comprehensive strategies to help organizations meet their business goals and objectives.”

Nancy. Nancy is a director of sales and distribution for a national foods distributor. I learned of this participant from another executive in the study. When I contacted Nancy, she said she would be very interested in participating in the study if she met the requirements. When I told her that she did meet all of the participant criteria, she replied that she had some time to interview in the next few weeks and that she had also served in executive positions with two large corporations when she was a human resources manager. Nancy appeared somewhat reserved in the interview, but opened up as the interview proceeded, even laughing occasionally

toward the latter part of the interview. A conference room at my place of employment was used for the interview.

Before her present position of nine years in food sales and distribution, Nancy's employment included leadership roles in human resources with various large corporations. Nancy alluded to her completion of management and leadership training programs with those companies.

Gail. Gail is a vice president of a telephone communications company, a position she has had for over four years. She learned of the study through a university women's listserv. Gail's competitiveness, energy, and enthusiasm were evident in the interview, which was held in a conference room at her place of employment. She vigorously spoke of the value of competing in collegiate athletics and how it helped her rapidly ascend into upper-level executive leadership positions. She stated, "Team sports prepare people to work as a team and succeed as a team." She further asserted, "Playing sports gives you a confidence."

Before becoming a vice president at her present company, she held other leadership positions such as general manager and service manager. While in college, she was the on-site lead representative for a major computer corporation.

Felicia. Felicia is currently a director of institutional advancement for a private school that offers grades kindergarten through high school. When I called to ask if she would be interested in participating in the study, she replied enthusiastically, "I would love to participate. It would be fun and very interesting. College sports definitely helped me [in preparation for leadership positions]." Felicia interviewed in a meeting room where she was employed. She spoke affectionately of her collegiate sports experiences and elaborated considerably on the value of those experiences with respect to the many leadership skills she acquired.

In addition to her present position which she has been in a very short time, Felicia has also had several other leadership positions in the workforce and in the community. These director posts have included tennis and promotions at private country clubs and tennis programs at a four year college. She also has been president of an area tennis foundation, vice president for the board of directors for a non-profit organization, and tournament director for a community fundraiser.

Overview of Findings

These five research questions guided the study:

1. What leadership traits did women acquire from collegiate sports?
2. What role did these leadership traits play in attaining executive leadership positions?
3. How did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills?
4. In what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills?
5. What leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports (e.g., clubs, social events, work, etc.)?

The semi-structured interviews yielded a plethora of interesting and remarkable data. The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis was utilized to analyze the data and to develop a coding scheme. As a result of the data analysis, the following major categories emerged from the data: competition, getting along with others and working together, leadership and being in charge, learning opportunities, social context and networking, mentoring, and other activities that played a role in preparing for leadership. Within those categories, several notable

themes or subcategories were constructed. The following table provides an overview of the major categories and themes that materialized (Table 2).

Table 2: *Overview of Categories and Themes*

Major Categories	Major Themes
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence gained from competition • Persistence and dealing with disappointments and losing • Challenges and drive to be the best • Preparation and practice • Respect
Getting along with others and working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting people to cooperate and work together • Conflict resolution and communication • Teamwork • Camaraderie and support • Recognizing the talents of others • Adaptability
Leadership and being in charge	
Learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to manage people and situations • Delegation of responsibility • Time management • Discipline and commitment • Responsibility • Learning to teach
Social context and networking	
Mentoring	
Other activities that played a role in preparing for leadership	

The coding scheme (Appendix G) resulted from the units of data found in the interview transcripts. Merriam (1998) stated:

A unit of data is any meaningful (or potentially meaningful) segment of data; at the beginning of a study the researcher is uncertain about what will ultimately be meaningful. A unit of data can be as small as a word a participant uses to describe a feeling or phenomenon, or as large as several pages of field notes describing a particular incident. (p. 179)

The frequency counts of the units of data which constitute the emergent categories and themes are shown in Appendix H. The recurring identification, description, and elaboration on those categories and themes by the participants indicate relevance and significance in relation to the guiding research questions.

The goal of this section is to provide descriptive data relevant to the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. This data will be primarily in the form of excerpted quotes from the interview transcripts. The major categories and themes are discussed in this section utilizing selected participant responses. Focus is on the emergent categories and themes as related to this study's five guiding research questions.

Competition

The themes of confidence gained from competition, persistence and dealing with disappointments and losing, challenges and drive to be the best, preparation and practice, and respect emerged from the data and are all related to the category of competition. The participants perceived these themes as important leadership traits and believed those traits played a role in preparing them for executive leadership.

Gail, a vice president for a communications company, spoke of the analogy between the competing in college sports and the competitive world of the communications industry.

Elaborating on the similarity between competing and scoring points in college volleyball with competing in sales and service with other communications companies, she stated:

There is a lot of competitiveness [in both]....In volleyball...you have to get your teammates, you know, fired up to score points....In my...leadership position, I have to get the sales force and CSRs [customer service representatives] and techs fired up, [as] completing the sales and providing the service is just like scoring the points.

Confidence Gained from Competition

Several of the participants spoke of the confidence they gained from competing in collegiate sports and how they utilized and transferred that confidence to situations they have encountered in their leadership positions. They felt confidence was a positive leadership trait and aided them in attaining a leadership position. Wanda shared how she felt the confidence she gained from competing in college tennis helped her in competing for college leadership positions.

I didn't used to have a lot of confidence in myself [before playing college tennis and competing against an undefeated opponent]....I gained confidence in myself....I definitely feel like the experience helped me get to where I am today [vice president for academic affairs at a two-year college]....Without it [competing in college sports], I don't know that I would have had the confidence to compete as much as I have for the different positions I've competed for.

Gail perceived her collegiate sports experience, particularly one event, to be one that has helped her get through the hard times at work due to the confidence she acquired from surviving the intense, hard practices.

[A significant experience that stands out] ...would be hell week, two a day volleyball practices. When I've had hard decisions or hard times at work, I've thought back to hell week and said if I could survive those practices, then I could survive anything. Just being able to finish that intense practice, the running, the weight training, the practice games, I knew I could do anything.

Ann, a brigadier general in the United States military, aptly described and strongly emphasized the similarity of being confident enough to take the shot at the end of a game and having that confidence to focus and give a great speech to those in her command or safely land an aircraft in battle. She elaborated:

This is the way I connect it in my mind; there are times when you have to have your "A-game;" you have to give a knockout presentation; I have to be good; the speech I do next has to rock the room right now....I just have to be great right now. And, as a direct [result], I mean, I've been there, having the ball at the end of the game with two seconds left, you know, and not being able to see the basket so you got to take the shot. I didn't always make it, but I *wanted* [italics added] to take the shot and I just focused....Again, there's in the darkest, stormy night in an airplane, when things aren't going very well, just pull it together and focus...or where it's the first time someone sees me...and I have to win them over in a command of hundreds of people, thousands of people, and right now I have to have my "A-game"....you have to focus and be there and bring your "A-game and be ready because those moments [of leadership], um, come when they come

and you have to be ready to rise then and so I think that's been a fairly direct correlation again [between situations competing in sports and workforce/military leadership] whether it's on the flight deck of the airplane or whether it's with hundreds of people...

When asked if collegiate sports participation changed her and if the changes were beneficial later relevant to executive leadership, Susan, a two-year college president, succinctly stated:

I think it [collegiate sports participation] was a confidence builder and I think that's been important...I think that it also gave [me] the confidence to say, "yah," I can be at this school and yah, I can compete with these people at least on this level and that's been important [subsequently], you know, in a career.

Persistence and Dealing with Disappointments and Losing

Persistence and dealing with disappointments and losing was another theme that emerged from the data. Several of the participants viewed this theme as a positive and significant trait acquired from collegiate sports participation, one that aided them in attaining leadership positions, or benefited them in the execution of their leadership position. One of the participants, Ann, remarked how persistence gained from competing in college sports served her well in her subsequent military leadership positions:

What I've found as I've gotten more senior [in level of management], especially in my senior year as a colonel and now the last couple years as a general, um, it's this sense of persistence when you are trying to bring change management into an organization...and I, uh, try to fall back on this sense of persistence that over time will prevail. And, if you do the right things, you can win a big one; you may not win them all, but you'll win a big one and you have to hang in there when you're getting crushed in the fourth quarter; you

don't pack it up; you just hang in there to keep trying to get it right over time...for the next game.

Gail illustrated a comparison of dealing with disappointment and losing in sports competition with disappointments and losses in business. She stated:

And you have to learn to adjust to disappointment and losses in business like you do in sports like, um, losing a star player. You have to learn to deal with that loss and work around it and still win the game. It's like when I have to let go of an employee. Um, recently I had to let an employee go. We didn't need a graphic artist right now...and everybody was worried about the business, you know, with the economy. So, um, I told everyone that we are not closing down. I told them that we have to keep the momentum going. We have to make those sales and provide that service even though we lost one of our players.

Ethel, a two-year college president, spoke of the value of learning to lose and being able to handle the losses you encounter in the workplace. She said she reflected on how competing in collegiate sports helped with learning to lose and gave this analogy:

Some of the "ahas" were...the desire to win, but the ability to lose, um, knowing that you can lose gracefully and graciously because in this business, in executive leadership, you [figuratively] lose a lot more than win...but I think that relationship in sports of being able to win and being able to lose, being able to lose graciously and accept that you've lost and move on to the next day was important...I'm able now to make those connections.

When relating how intercollegiate sports competition helped her continue to apply for college leadership positions after being unsuccessful in initial attempts to obtain those positions, Wanda offered this quote:

[One of the important things learned from competing was] learning to keep on keeping on. If I hadn't kept on, I would still be in the classroom [still teaching and not in a college leadership or administrative position]....I have not gotten everything that I have applied for in the way of higher positions by any means. At the time, I didn't get it the first time I applied and I didn't give up and I think not giving up had a lot to do with my tennis. And I kept applying and then I got them...I do feel like that has a lot to do with the competition I had in tennis....I was disappointed when I didn't win matches as well as when I didn't get the jobs I applied for. The experiences on the court help me deal with the disappointment.

Challenges and Drive to be the Best

Another emergent theme under the category of competition was challenges and drive to be the best. Wanda described the similarity of needing to have challenges and overcoming those challenges in both college sports and work as she stated, "I guess the challenge is what I like the best....I wanted to be the best [tennis player]. I wanted to be the best in my job, too." Ann spoke about how she was not the fastest, quickest, or best college basketball player, but that she pushed herself in college sports and that trait transferred to her executive leadership style. She stated:

But there were players better than me, but I would go out and I would chase them down in the wind sprints to try to help them be better than me. There were people who were faster and had better shots, but they didn't necessarily go for it as hard so we would push

each other. I mean those are the things that have carried over [into her leadership and work]. I try to remain pushy in a constructive way now.

Susan expressed the need of having the drive to meet challenges and working hard to meet those challenges and how that is similar in her leadership role as a college president. She elaborated:

You know, there's some myth that this should be easy. It's not. And so I think that a lot of that comes from, on the field, yeah, you sweat, it's a good thing and in this role, I think it's important, you know, to share with people that it's hard and you're working and you're sweating. There are challenges and you're not sure [that you can meet those challenges easily] and I think that probably has some relationship to sports as well.

Greta called that drive you get as an athlete "a belief, a commitment" and stated that drive, that "willing to go the extra mile" is essential for successful leadership. Similarly, Nancy spoke of "being pushed mentally as well as physically" in college sports and the benefit of transferring that to her present leadership position as a sales director in a hectic, very competitive marketplace.

Preparation and Practice

The theme of preparation and practice was shared by four of the participants. Preparation and practice is an integral component of collegiate sports in getting athletes ready for upcoming opponents and the actual games and matches. Two of the participants, who are college presidents, insightfully shared their perceptions of how preparation and practice they undertook in collegiate sports participation were valuable in later development and execution of leadership. Susan described the comparison and importance:

Um, I also think though that the strategy piece, the understanding, the taking the time to think about, you know, when you're playing, you take time to think about an opponent,

try to understand what they are good at, try to understand where you are in relation to their strength, and how you might be able to use your own strength to prevail, um, all of that strategic analysis, um, kind of, you know, slotted out in a brief moment before a game. Well, all of that is important in my current role and has been really since I entered administration a long time ago: the ability to size up what you are up against, what you've got to work with, and how best to deploy what you've got to work with to get where you want to be. And, I think that playing sports pulled a lot of that together. I probably wouldn't have thought about it at the time, but in retrospect, I can see a really close connection between how you approach a game, how you prepare both as an individual player and as a team, and what a coach brings and how a coach talks you through that and how I work now.

Pam shared a similar perception of how coaches and players prepare for competition by evaluating their skills and reflecting on possible strategies to win the game or match. She explained:

Um, that's not unlike my role right now. How do you get from point A to point B without, you know, um, even changing your resource base, or, um, how do you get from point A to point B by enhancing your resources. So, yeah, as a parallel, um, obviously the scale is completely different [now in my present position] and I've got a full staff and faculty to worry about and multi-millions of dollars at this stage, but, um, yeah, it is not unlike some of those basic decisions [made playing college sports] of point A to point B and why is B [winning and being successful] important.

Respect

Respect was another theme that emerged from the data. Wanda perceived respect as a requisite trait of leadership. As a two-year college vice president for academic affairs, she compared earning respect from the faculty with earning respect from her teammates. Wanda stated, “And I was just a teacher like them and [thus] I had [already] gained their respect.” Wanda commented that her ability to earn respect stemmed from the confidence and experience she had gained in securing the respect of her college tennis teammates. She declared, “I think I did it [earned respect from the faculty] because of sports. I think that was where I started out in going out and getting respect of others.” By having interacted professionally with the faculty for many years, Wanda had demonstrated her skill and proficiency in handling situations very similar to how she had shown her teammates in college tennis that she could compete with opponents who were previously undefeated.

When she was in a prior position as a female employee in a plant that was predominantly comprised of male employees, Nancy described that it made her “feel very good” the employees requested that she become the new human resources manager upon the retirement of the current manager. She stated that she learned to treat others with respect, regardless of whether she liked or disliked them, and learned “how to play in the sandbox” and earn respect from when she played intercollegiate volleyball and had to respect each other’s abilities and contributions to the team.

Getting Along With Others and Working Together

Six major themes related to the category of getting along with others and working together emerged during data analysis. Most participants shared the belief that the themes of getting people to cooperate and work together, conflict resolution and communication,

teamwork, camaraderie and support, recognizing the talents of others, and adaptability were important characteristics of effective executive leadership and felt that collegiate sports participation developed skills in those areas.

Ethel expressed the importance of working together for the overall good of the team or organization instead of having to be right or getting one's way. She stressed how competitive sports teach this in stating:

Um, I think one of the things it [competitive sports] also teaches you is that you don't always have to be right. You know in sports, you don't always win. And in leadership, you don't always have to be right....I think you learn the ability to compromise....I think you learn the ability to work for the greater good of the team when you play a team sport because again, even though you are competing and you want to win, you also want the *team* [italics added] to win so you learn to be a part of something bigger than just yourself. And I think that's what sports teaches, um, people.

Getting People to Cooperate and Work Together

A significant theme that emerged from the data was the ability to get people to cooperate and work together. Pam, a two-year community college president, emphasized the worth of learning to work together in competitive intercollegiate sports and the value of being able to transfer that skill to executive leadership and the workplace. She stated:

I think that the notion of collegiate sports and working with a team and making sure that you are pulling together as a team is very similar to executive leadership, um, in the way that you function with other people, recognizing similarities and differences, so that you have the end goal in mind...very typical of any sports and sports management....if you're not [functioning] as a team, then you're, you're very fractured in the methodology of

getting to the end point. If you're a team and you've got a lot of individual players, their goals are not necessarily the same...so there are some real parallels from what I would personally reflect on...You learn how to interact with individuals differently, but try to bring them together as a group and that's very parallel to what I do on a regular basis.

Gail related the importance of working together and focusing on a common goal so that an organization can be successful. In college sports, she stated that she and her teammates learned to work together to win volleyball games. A later significant benefit to her was this same ability enabled her to move much more quickly up the company organizational leadership ladder:

We are in a business situation. I want her [one of Gail's employees] to perform well because I want the company to perform well; we all have a central goal which is to make money and sell phone systems. We all have a central goal, just like that on that soccer team [Gail played soccer in high school] or that volleyball team; our central goal was to win and to be the best team we could be and to be successful. So without having that, those people that you were involved with [in order] to have or to get that attainment of something, it would have been totally different. I would have been years behind in management or any kind of expertise and that's really one of the reasons I moved up so far and so fast in the company, I truly believe. I mean, to be, you know five years out of college and be a general manager of a company...

In facilitating individuals to work together, Mary stressed the importance of getting each employee or teammate to feel involved and knowing that they had a meaningful role on the team and organization. Mary explained:

And you have to make them feel like their role is extremely important. And I believe...from an executive standpoint, that is very important. You will only be as good

as the rest of your team—whether that be your leadership team, your administrative staff, your basketball team, or anything else. You will only be as good as the weakest link is. And so I think that through, you know, my experience playing, that I did learn to get people involved and to make them feel like they were a part of the team, an integral part of the team, not just that I'm supposed to be here, but [that] they were an integral part of the process.

Ethel, a two-year college president, emphasized how learning to work together as a team is an important leadership trait, is significant in transferring those skills to the workplace, and is harder to comprehend for those who have not played competitive sports. Ethel thoroughly elaborated:

Well, I really think that's really, it's the ability to work with a team. It's the ability, you know, the thing about, um, when you play team sports, you don't like everybody on your team, you know, and as humans, we don't like everybody [laughing], you know, *we just don't like everybody* [italics added]. And when you're on a team, you know, it's just, I mean that's the reality, but you learn to work together and you learn that, you know, you work together as a team then, everybody, um, benefits and so you learn that in sports and so it translates over into what you do in the workplace that you know if the team's successful, then we all benefit. Um, I think the thing that is harder, um, for people who, and I think this, this is the part that for me [in my belief] for people who have never played sports and don't understand the sort of the team concept is: you know, when things go bad in an institution or when you have a, when you're in the leadership and you have something go wrong at the college, and people say, "Well, it's communication, you don't communicate well, or we're not transparent enough," it's not just about the leader,

it's about the team. People who have never participated in a team [in sports] have a hard time acknowledging that that's their role and that those of us who have participated on teams, who played sports, know that this is all of us and not just about one person. Uh, and so I think that's, that's a really interesting difference between people who have participated in team sports and people who haven't is they, they have a hard time, they want to make it the leader's fault, um, where it's not necessarily always the leader's fault. It's everybody that participates in the team's responsibility and so I think those are the things that translate over...you also know that it's the greater good of the team that really is what helps move everybody forward...we're going out there to score goals or hit singles, you know, and to win. Um, we didn't like each other, you know, we just didn't necessarily like each other and I didn't want to spend time with them, um, but on the other hand, it translates, and it's the same thing in this business. When you've got a cabinet, you know, a president's cabinet or president's leadership team, whatever you have, not everybody in the room likes each other and that's okay because we're humans. We all, you know, we all have different personalities, but when you are in that room, the most important thing is what's for the greater good of the institution and you have to take those personalities and put them aside. And, people who haven't played sports have a harder time with that. They have a harder time, um, with the conflict. I worked, I worked in my former institution and it was a very dysfunctional president's leadership team. I was a vice president at the time and one of my colleagues was just someone who could not leave it outside of the room. Um, I mean conflict was constant and she never played sports and I could just see it in that she had no idea how to be a member of the team...and so, I think, that's what sports teach you is that, you know, we don't like each

other, but when we come together, we're a unit, and we're a unit that has to move forward and the unit needs to win and the unit needs to accomplish and I so I think those are really important lessons.

Conflict Resolution and Communication

Another theme that emerged from the data was conflict resolution and communication. Mary, a senior administrator at a four-year university, remarked on how she felt playing collegiate sports and being a captain on the team prepared her and developed leadership and conflict resolution skills for the workforce:

And, I, that definitely without question, because you know [that playing on a team and being a team captain] provide you with the background that you can be a leader because you are constantly put in that role over and over and over again. You're resolving conflicts between teammates, between coach and teammates, between, you know, maybe between administration and team asking for things that the administration may not want to give up willingly.

Nancy perceived communication as being essential to effective leadership in problematic situations. As a director for a national foods distributor and former human resources manager, she related how learning to communicate with her college volleyball teammates in tight games transferred to situations she has encountered and continues to encounter in the workplace:

Well, communication...you know, that's the huge word right there, communication. Can you encourage people in a difficult situation? Can you model for them the behaviors that you need to have to happen to make things go the right way?...[putting things in a] positive light...motivating them. I mean all those are key things that you know if you've been a leader on a team....You know a lot of those skills come through without a doubt. I

mean, you're communicating; you're, you know, you've got to persuade, not in a negative way.

Ann, a brigadier general, summed up her acquisition of communication skills in college sports competition and the advantage of being able to transfer those skills to military leadership situations where personnel must be able to understand and expeditiously carry out the orders. She compared the rapid recognition of a defense on the college basketball court, the assimilation of that information, and subsequent communication of the information to teammates to what she experiences in her leadership position. She elaborated on the similarity by saying "Oh my gosh, it's a zone, is it a match-up zone or, you know, what are they doing now, or even, you know, ...what do I need to do to make this work?" She said that in the middle of a basketball game, you had to recognize, react, and communicate the information quickly to her teammates much like she has had to do with pilots and other personnel in the military. She emphasized the ability to digest the information and communicate that information in short "bursts" in both a basketball game or in the workplace. She stated, "...you can communicate it [information and data] in short bursts and people can get it. You can [then] make progress in an office or on the court."

Teamwork

A positive trait of collegiate sports participation that most participants shared in their accounts was teamwork. Teamwork was identified 32 times in the interviews. Not only did the theme of teamwork appear as one of the most frequently expressed, but the participants repeatedly emphasized the considerable importance of teamwork in both collegiate competition and the workforce.

Gail felt that the teamwork learned from competing in sports prepared a person for the teamwork needed to successful in the workplace and in leadership. She stated:

...team sports in general prepare people to work as a team in a business or, you know, in the capacity where they have to, again, they have to learn to get along with people you don't necessarily like and you have to understand you're here to win a game or you're here to sell a phone system....I feel like the overall team experience, um, you know, has been beneficial in my executive leadership.

Margaret also spoke of the benefit and enjoyment of learning teamwork from her college swim team experience, albeit in what is normally seen as an individual sport:

Um, but I enjoyed being part of that [college swim] team so that's part of what led me back, too [getting back into competitive swimming] and part of what I enjoyed and what I learned from teamwork is, you know, is the striving for individual excellence, but also working together with other people as a *team* [italics added].

In somewhat of an opposite, unpleasant situation, Felicia shared an account of how working as a team in college sports when the team was struggling helped her in a later workplace situation when morale was down after layoffs. She affirmed that teamwork was the most important factor in getting through those tough situations. Felicia remarked, "You know, you've got to, at that point you've got to, you know, go with the hand that you are dealt and so, get the team together [working as a team utilizing teamwork] and keep the morale up of your team."

Greta viewed facilitating teamwork as a major priority in her present executive leadership position. Her words provided some background into her feelings of the importance of teamwork:

It [learning teamwork in college sports] translates into [what we do] now because the same thing we do here is we have to work as a team. You cannot win, you cannot win anything...what our word is today is "teamwork" and you cannot win by yourself....what we do is we talk about it; we talk about how teams, how a team could come together and

what does it mean to be a team. So, it definitely translates into what you are doing today....I think still it goes back to teamwork....and so [it is] here in this small college...

Ethel, currently a two-year college president, believed that teamwork and working toward what is best for the overall team or institution, helped her gain an executive leadership position and be successful in that position. After hearing a keynote speaker at a national conference of women in education, the speech made her reflect and continue to emphasize the importance of teamwork and the overall team or organization, rather than individual accomplishments. She said:

That keynote speech that day and it was again, it's something that I realized is the ability to be part of a team, um, and realizing that the greater good to the team is, is for the greater good of yourself and those are lessons you learn in sports; um, learn that sometimes you let somebody else take the limelight, um, because it's for the greater good of the team...I'm able now to make those connections...the relationships of sports and leadership.

Camaraderie and Support

Camaraderie and support was another theme identified in the review and analysis of the data. Five of the participants perceived the ability to promote camaraderie and support of others as an important leadership trait and one that may often develop as a direct or indirect result of the interactional and social context of college sports and playing on a team. Margaret viewed camaraderie and supporting one another as teammates as a typical, recurring theme when she swam in college. But, there was one noteworthy event in which her swim team got snowed in for a week that resulted in significant bonding with her teammates. Margaret expounded on the

similarity of that experience to a recent incident she had in her present leadership position. She elaborated:

You know it [getting snowed in for a week during swim practice] was a, it was a bonding experience. We, you know, made the best of it; we had fun; we really got to gel together as a team. I think much more than we would have otherwise because, you know, all you have is each other in that situation....It [having a tornado that destroyed part of the college campus where she is a dean] was very similar; you have a crisis, you know, whether it's a serious one or minor one, which is getting snowed in and it really defines people....we worked together...in a day, pretty much, we were back up and running.

Mary similarly perceived the camaraderie with her teammates on her college basketball team as being important and long-lasting and a good leadership trait that can be beneficial in promoting enduring professional relationships in the workplace. She described living together, cooking for each other, and supporting each other which developed the closeness between teammates and how that supporting one another can become a good habit in the workplace and life. In describing what they experienced as teammates, she emphasized the bonding by saying:

Oh, we had great relationships....I think that [cooking for each other, living together, etc.] developed some of the camaraderie....I think that, you know, we had a very strong relationship and probably, even to this day, you know, we might not all be living close to each other, but we could pick up the phone... and talk about things [personal and professional situations]. So, we had a very good, very positive relationship.

Recognizing Talents of Others

Recognizing the talents of others is an emergent theme under the category of getting along with others and working together. Participants stated that this was a positive leadership

trait and one that was advanced through collegiate sports and the teamwork inherently involved in collegiate athletic competition. Felicia, a director of institutional advancement at a private school, believed that the ability to recognize the talents of others was beneficial in college sports and in the workplace. She related that perception by sharing this analogy:

Another thing, too, is recognizing the talents of others. You know, being on the team and uh, you know, you may see two people are playing doubles together and then you might see someone's over there playing singles and you think, you know what, I think they would be good paired up with them, you know, they've got their strengths which meshed together and that sort of thing....Same thing in business. You may have, you know, I mean this is something like kind of silly, but on the little board we have behind the wall where you write upcoming events and I'm always doing that...sometimes there are people that work in there [that] are very artistic and they, you know, I'll see them doodling or something like, "What are you doing?" and they say, "Well, I like to draw!" and I'm like, "Well, why aren't you the one drawing that [list of upcoming events with pictures drawn of the events] up there?" And they start doing it and then that makes them feel good because they walk in everyday and see that they did something that everybody recognizes so, you know, that's another thing is recognizing the talents on your team that you don't necessarily, you may not have hired them for, but then you realize that they can do something else and you utilize their talent whether it's, you know, in my department or the whole team.

Greta, a public relations and information director at a two-year college, supported Felicia's belief by offering this comparison between college sports and the workplace relevant to recognizing the talents of others and then delegating that responsibility:

Specifically, when I was watching Pat Summit [women's championship basketball coach at University of Tennessee] and the girls' team, and they were talking about that, that each of one of them had a role and then they knew their role. They knew their boundaries, they knew what their strengths and weaknesses were, and the same here at, in executive leadership, you know your weaknesses and you go to the ones that have the strengths; if you need a certain strength, you go to those. You know that this person had a better, uh, right-handed shot so you are going to go to the right-hand side. You know this person can do a better job editing, so you go to that person. So, it's just the same type of thing, just a different avenue, different realm, is sports go right into here because you know what's out there, you know what to go after, who can take care of that certain aspect....The same type of thing. I know they will do it and so you rely on them, just like anything in executive leadership.

Adaptability

Participants viewed adaptability as another positive leadership trait that was developed in collegiate sports competition. This theme emerged when participants shared their perceptions of adapting to different coaches and teammates and the similarity to the workplace when one has to adapt to various supervisors, employees, and contrasting personalities.

When asked about significant events in college sports that may have impacted her subsequent executive leadership, Felicia recounted her experience of transferring from one college tennis team to another and having to adapt to her new coach and teammates and the parallel to the leadership workplace:

I went from being on one team to another team [University of Georgia to Florida State University] so certainly you have to adapt to your new team and so when I was, when

you're, when you are in executive leadership, there's people that change and so you're, you know, I went from being under one coach to being under a different coach with a totally different coaching style, leadership style.... Yes, adaptability... I've been under five managers here and then I had a, you know, a boss at Wesleyan [previous position she held at Wesleyan College]... so I've had different bosses and then I've worked on different teams [a term she also uses for workplace units] and then people come in and out of different teams ...you have to adapt from one team that I was real close to the girls, but I needed, you know for myself and my game, I needed to transfer to this other team...so there's some definite adaptability...there's so much to be able to work with and for people and over people [leading and managing people], you have to have a high level of adaptability.

Nancy, who has leadership experience in corporate human resources and presently as a sales director in a national foods distributor, referred to adaptability in relation to employees' having expectations that are lower than hers:

I can be intense, I can be "all-out," and I have to understand what they [her subordinates] are looking for out of this business as opposed to me [my goals and expectations]. Um, not everybody wants to be at my level, my leadership level in the company and so it actually took me a few years [laughing] of banging my head against the wall [to realize that].

Leadership and Being in Charge

In reviewing and analyzing the data, an overall category of leadership and being in charge emerged. Participants perceived being in charge as a broad leadership trait, one that some felt they "always" had, was developed through collegiate sports participation, and is a positive

characteristic in female executive leadership. Margaret and Susan's perceptions clearly exemplified the data. Margaret stated that an aforementioned snowstorm resulted in her having to take charge in the role of "the coach" for a week as the team's swim coach could not even get to where the team was training. She stated that it was "probably one of the first times, too, I was put in a leadership role....It was probably the first time that I got to be, that I was looked at as a leader." Margaret stated that by simply being a senior on the team, she found herself, almost by default, having to step up, be in charge, and had to "keep everyone focused on the task at hand." She compared that with a later experience in her workplace whereby her college had a tornado that caused significant damage to the campus and she was one of the higher-level administrators that took charge and had the campus back functioning in a matter of a couple of days. Susan, a two-year community college president, supported that belief in saying, "the assertion on the [playing] field, I think that sort of teaches some things that are useful in executive leadership." She stated that after her collegiate competitive career was over, she reflected on the fact that she would liked to have been a captain of "that cruddy team" so as to help make changes in making the team better. Her reflection led her to the conclusion, that in the workplace, "I'm not going to be in that position where I'm in the middle where I can't, if things aren't going well, I want it to be up to me to make them go better."

Learning Opportunities

The category of learning opportunities encompasses six emergent themes. The data indicated the themes of learning to manage people and situations, delegation of responsibility, time management, discipline and commitment, responsibility, and learning to teach. The categorical title of learning opportunities seemed appropriate as several of the participants spoke of the importance of being able to experience and learn from various opportunities. Thus, the

data was reflective of participant perceptions of leadership traits that they acquired from those various situations.

Learning to Manage People and Situations

The theme of learning to manage people and situations originated from the data. Initial coding suggested that the theme of learning to manage people could be separated, but upon further reflection, it was thought that learning to manage people and situations was the appropriate theme. Learning to manage people and situations was expressed 33 times in the participants' accounts. Typical of the data was the belief that learning to manage people and situations is a very important leadership trait that is acquired in college sports and is later used in executive leadership.

When asked about collegiate sports experiences that are similar to what she encounters in her leadership position, Mary responded with assertion and without hesitation. She stated:

I think that, you know, as you go through your collegiate sports career that, you know, you are learning to deal with people, *you are learning how to manage people* [italics added]. I was the team captain. You are learning how to get everybody on board and do the same thing.

Mary further elaborated on experiences that made an impact on her later management of workplace leadership situations:

...it's those day to day practices where you have an opportunity to learn and learn how to deal with some things....You learn how to manage a situation so that you have control of it...that play is in your control and so what you are learning is how to dictate what others do....You learn how to respond to pressure. Okay, you learn to make quick decisions. And I think, *and not decisions that have no foundation to them* [italics added], but you

learn to process so that you can make a quick decision. Administratively you need to be able to do that because there are some things you are going to have to make fast decisions on. And I think that, you know, the playing experience, I probably learned that...And you know, as I said, you also in learning to make quick decisions, you , I mean, you learn to pull things together pretty fast...I think that collegiate, I didn't say this earlier, but I believe collegiate athletics makes you more attentive to your environment...you have to be more observant that you have to respond to the things that are around you and you have to learn to do that very quickly and so, you know, you can't waste time picking up on things.

Nancy, when asked about any significant events in her collegiate sports participation and how collegiate sports participation changed her, described a situation whereby a new volleyball coach wanted to rebuild the team during Nancy's senior year. Through that experience, Nancy felt she learned to manage critical situations with determination which particularly impacted her workplace leadership. She stated:

That, that my leadership skills were built because of some of that [dealing with the new coach and her trying to rebuild the team], that going on at the same time, this is my senior year. I don't want this [year] to go down the toilet even though this woman, our new coach, this is her rebuilding time; *this is not my rebuilding time* [italics added]. I mean I can remember pretty much having conversations with the other two seniors....So, I think, I think the emergence, you know, of even more leadership comes out.

In a somewhat different perspective, Ethel, a two-year college president, as she spoke of the connection between college sports and leadership, remarked that sports taught people to behave in certain situations. She expounded on that benefit:

I think, you know, when you look at the statistics of, you know, athletes going on to be successful, it's all of those things: it's learning, you know, it's learning to be part of a team, how you behave as a member of a team, um, learning to win and lose, learning to be gracious. Um, all of those things are all of the lessons that you learn in sports and again I see in people that haven't played sports because they can't do it, um, they just, they just don't know how to behave that way.

Delegation of Responsibility

In describing the similarities of collegiate sports participation and subsequent executive leadership, two of the participants described learning to delegate and relying on others on their college team and how that developed their leadership skills. Susan, a two-year college president, utilized this analogy:

Um, I think also, you know, you learn to rely on people to do their job. A team isn't really successful if everybody tries to run the point. You have to rely on the point guard to do that. Um, and that's very similar to running an institution....I think that, that delegation was never a question for me because I had played sports in high school and college. I always assumed that people on the team were gonna [*sic*] pick up [do their job and/or perform their role]. I knew I had to count on them to pick up and do their piece.

Felicia, a former collegiate tennis player before going into institutional advancement and promotions, provided this insight into how she first started to delegate responsibility by starting to play more doubles in college rather than just singles:

Well, I think for me personally, um, and I played a lot of doubles...so that was, you know, a teamwork type....But, I did play a lot of singles as well and the thing that I work on today is, um, allowing myself to let others do some things [in promotions and

fundraising events]...I'm getting better and better each year at relinquishing some of, some of the things, and it's, some of it's from the standpoint of that I don't want to impose on others, but a lot of it's from the standpoint of, of I want to make sure it gets done right...so I've, it's um, that's been a, kind of a learning curve for me ever since I started working was delegating.

Time Management

In illustrating how collegiate sports participation changed them and the advantage this gave them when they later become executive leaders, both Nancy and Mary emphasized the importance of time management. Without hesitation, Nancy stated collegiate sports participation changed her and the change was beneficial. She stated:

Uh, yes, I do believe it [collegiate sports participation] did [change me] and they were positive. Um, I think I mentioned before, *the time management* [italics added]. I mean, you know, just how do you keep the balls juggled....Where are your priorities? What do I have to do today? What's the priority today?"

When asked about what experiences in college sports were similar to what she is experiencing in her present leadership position, Mary indicated that being able to manage her time as a college student-athlete was one of the essentials she learned and later impacted her professional life as a women's sports administrator at a four-year university. She expressed this perception:

Yeah, you know, you learned to manage time...And so, I think, that was very good... I think you also learn to, you know, manage your time, because, it's not, well, it's not a job, but it's a job...you also have to be able to, like I said, respond to pressure, you've got to be able to manage your time so that you can be a full-time student and also get the

number of hours of practice in. So, you learn about time management whether you want to or not.

As a senior athletic director for academic affairs, Mary has to advise students so she emphasizes the importance of time management to them as it was and is to her:

Well, I absolutely think it is [time management being important] now because, ah, you know, the students that are coming in now, they have the same demands on their time that I had and so when I'm sitting and talking to them, and one of the parts of my job right now is, ah, is academic support services for a student-athlete and a good bit of that is to help them figure out how they can get all of these things done that are on their plate. So, when they sit down and say, "Gosh, I've got practice and I'm too tired to practice and I can't do it, I can't do that." I'm like, "Yes, you can and here's how you can do it and I know you can do it because I know I did it."

Discipline and Commitment

The theme of discipline and commitment emerged when the participants were asked to describe collegiate sports experiences that were similar to what they experienced in executive leadership and how collegiate sports changed them. Discipline, toughness, and commitment were descriptors of female executives and the participants used sports metaphors to depict the need for those traits. Mary viewed discipline as being learned on the sports fields and transferring to the workplace. Mary articulated that college sports instilled discipline by saying:

A lot of it [learning and change] has to do with, you know, discipline, and a lot has to do with, and I get this question all the time, is, well, you know, your collegiate sports environment is like the military, which in many ways is because you are learning to, to respond on a, at the drop of a hat.

Nancy used the word “commitment” to describe being a college athlete and in upper level leadership with her present company. She says she still can’t understand her employees not being totally committed and saying that they don’t want to do something above and beyond the routine duties of the job to be successful. She said she often remarks to them, “What do you mean you don’t want to?” She tells them that certain tasks will be hard and she says she looks at her sales team and will say, “Why aren’t *you* [italics added] doing this?”

Margaret, Greta, and Susan shared the feeling that women as executive leaders have to tough and committed. Margaret, a two-year college dean, remarked, “Um, certainly with the female vice presidents that I’ve watched, I’ve been interested in seeing that and my perception is that a lot of women in that position feel they have to be tough.” Greta elaborated on the qualities of successful female leadership and the need to be tough and committed:

Willing to go the extra mile...but you also have to be firm, especially for women.

Women are so different. So, they have to look at things [in the workplace] differently.

You cannot be weak; you cannot show weaknesses as a, especially as the president of a college; if you show weakness, they will run over you. Um, you have to be on your game 24/7. You have to be, especially for females in executive roles, they watch you, everybody watches you, and they like a winner, but they sure like to pull you down, too.

They are treated differently. Just like in executive leadership, they are treated differently and looked at differently.

Susan, a two-year college president, used a metaphor from field hockey in describing the need to be firm, but diplomatic:

So, you know, but you can’t raise your stick real high, so there’s a little bit of a nuance, um, that I think was helpful, at the very least for me, as a functional metaphor for a lot of

the encounters with the board or with the legislature. You know you are trying to hold your ground, you are playing by the rules, um, you don't foul, but you understand where your power is without fouling. Those kind [*sic*] of things, just the whole metaphor of setting your speed. In this role, the ability to set your speed is really important.

Responsibility

Another emergent theme was responsibility. Felicia and Ethel stated that their strong sense of responsibility emanated from their playing college sports and had a definite impact on the development of their leadership skills. Felicia indicated that when she got to college, unlike high school and junior tennis, there was no one to tell you what time to "hit the courts" and what time "for the van to leave" to go to tournaments. That immediately made her "more mature, more responsible." She also stated that she had a responsibility to the team which she perceived to be beneficial in later obtaining a leadership position:

You are also, you have a responsibility to the team. I was on full [athletic] scholarship so you have a responsibility to the team to make sure you're at practice on time, that you eat right, you take care of yourself, and you are at matches on time. So, there's, there's a lot more than just going off to college and being a college student.

Ethel perceived a responsibility of college athletes in upholding a good image and favorable representation of the institution and its importance in developing positive leadership:

There's a different perception of you when you play college sports than there is when you play sports outside of that and you learn that, um, that people not only judge you, um, as an athlete, but they judge you as to how you look and how you act and I think that's an important lesson in terms of leadership...Um, and so I think that part of the sports was an important part of it, that collegiate sports was learning how important

people's perceptions are, um, so I think that carries into leadership and that you have to always remember the way you behave, the way you carry yourself, um, is how people perceive you. And I think, and I think that was a lesson learned in that, in sort of the way that they, you know, that they did make us sort of behave and clean up and look the professional look like you were representing the university at all times and I think that's an important lesson. Um, and I think, and I'll tell you I think I've learned it, um, in a way that, you know, how much your attitude can influence people when you're in a leadership position, um, how your attitude and the way you carry yourself and expressions on your face and those types of things really can influence people and I think you learn that. I think we've learned that in terms of being an athlete when we had to behave for the university, um, and it transcends. It's not, you know, it's not just about, you know, um, the clothes you wear, but it's in the behavior and the way you carry yourself, um, so I think those are the important lessons, too.

Learning to Teach

The theme of learning to teach emerged as executive leaders shared their perceptions about the importance of teaching and coaching in their leadership. Pam, a two-year college president, has a background in teaching and when asked about teaching and coaching's connection to leadership, stated:

Well, I also, because my background is in teaching, um, you know, being a, being a good teacher is also being, knowing when to coach and [what] a teachable moment looks like....So that certainly, you know, that, that's, I learned that as part of the sports experience, and as part of, you know, being a faculty member....There is a moment in

time that's a teachable moment for when you are trying to influence others and it all runs very much in parallel.

Mary perceived that her playing experience helped her learn to be a teacher and that transcended into her present executive leadership role:

And I think that, you know, the playing experience, I probably learned that, I learned how to be a teacher. As a player, I learned how to be a teacher because I was teaching other people how to play basketball, whether it be my own teammates or in [summer college basketball] camp or whenever. I was learning those kind of things and so now, as an administrator in an executive role, you are also teaching because you are teaching as people come into this program then they are also looking for mentors, which those are their teachers so you already have a, I think, a background that can say, "Here's some of the things that you can expect to run into."

Susan, a two-year college president and former collegiate field hockey player who loves basketball, utilizes teaching and basketball analogies in working with her executive staff:

What I love about teaching, it is teaching the whole court, and when you work, when I work with executive staff people, that's what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to teach the whole court. I'm trying to teach the whole field. I'm trying to get people, you can play good offense if you have good defense. So, as an offensive player, you have to know what's going on at the other end of the field and you have to care about it and you have to hope that it's as good as it can be because that only improves what's going to happen on your end of the field, if you will. And so working with staff in a team building capacity, that's really what I'm thinking of. That's really what I'm talking about.

Susan felt her style of leadership was “teach, coach, model, demonstrate” and she believed that certain characteristics or attributes of college sports helped prepare her for executive leadership.

She stated:

Skill. That you focus on building skill and that skill can be built and you, if you can get better, whether it's better at a slapshot or better at a lift or better at a block, you can get better at it and that there are people who can teach you how to be better at whatever matters....Yeah, I am not a “Leaders are born person. I'm a leaders are developed.” You can be a leader if that's what you want to do. There are people who can teach you the skills that you need to exercise the leadership that's right for you.

Social Context and Networking

The category of social context and networking emerged as the participants shared their perceptions about their interactions and interpersonal relationships with their college teammates on and off the field as well as other social relations and networking experiences they had while playing college sports. Participants felt that the social context of collegiate athletics had a positive influence on their executive leadership skills.

Gail felt her interpersonal skills were significantly advanced and those skills were being utilized in her present leadership position:

Definitely college sports developed my interpersonal skills. You know, you don't always like, get along with everyone on the team and you have to put the team and the success of the team ahead of your personal feelings for an individual team member. I developed social skills and people skills in volleyball that I use now in my management/sales position to, um, manage the different personalities in my staff. I have to be able to interact positively with all the office staff here at work and with the prospective

customers in the field. When playing volleyball, I learned how to interact with my teammates that I didn't get along with and that ability, you know, those skills that I learned while I was playing sports help me to build positive relationships in work.

Gail also described the similarity between interacting with members of opposing college volleyball teams and networking at trade shows in her present position.

If you think about meeting people and consider that networking, you know, when you went on bus tours with the volleyball team, um, meeting the players on the other teams, um, you know, I guess that was like networking. And it's, you know, very similar to the trade shows I go to now, um, where we are meeting people who are selling phone systems in other areas and we discuss sales tactics and where we meet the manufacturers of the systems we are selling.

Ann, a general in the United States military and former Rhodes Scholar, viewed her collegiate sports experience as one that lead to leadership and networking connections that are very valuable in her present position:

You know, twenty-five years later, um, I do have a fairly broad network of people between sports, um, and the links that I made there were fortunately for me were pure fun, um, and [many of the people] participate still [in workplace-related conferences] and talk about leadership from the athletes and coaches, to the Rhodes Scholar networks, and so the opportunity outside of Washington, I have a chance to meet people from very diverse walks of life and so that as a leader, it gives you perspective to be able to draw connections, to be able to help people at their time of change, to say, look there is another way to do this, so other people are approaching this problem, or there's someone who solved this problem...just having that common sports experience gives you that basis,

that opening with the person, that connection, and then connection grows into something else, but you on some level, you have a level of understanding and then you build on that whether it's, whatever direction it takes you.

Mary, a senior associate athletic director at a four-year university, when asked about networking, perceived that networking is of paramount importance now and began networking with various coaches while she was doing the summer basketball camps in college. She wanted to hear their experiences and what they do in teaching basketball. She felt that networking was a good practice and making those contacts was very beneficial in current and future jobs:

Oh yeah, networking, networking is going to be huge in anything you go into. But, I did a lot of networking when I was in college primarily because I worked camps every single summer, at that point in time, all over the southeast....Now, okay, still huge, you know, you can never, I don't think you can ever do enough networking. It's always going to help you be successful.... you know, you may not be networking to get a job or get a better job, you may be networking because it's going to help you in the current job that you have to find out solutions to problems and experiences that other schools and other people are having. And so, the networking is two-fold. It's networking because, you know, you are out looking for a job or you want to make a change, then it's going to help you because you will obviously know more people. But, it's also helping you be more effective in the job that you have because it's, you, you are, you have then the opportunity to call people who are in different roles at different universities and find out how they handle their problems.

Felicia, a director of institutional advancement who has to be able to establish rapport

with people in asking for donations to her school's foundation, stated she was shy when she was younger, but felt that college sports helped her "come out of her shell" and she remembered going on tennis trips [away tournaments] and talking with coaches and parents of her team and opposing teams and how that gave her the ability to start a conversation and be involved in a conversation. She stated that "it helps me in networking now" and that "there's no doubt in my mind that the success of my charity [fundraising] event has to do with, with, not just networking, but how I network with people."

When asked to describe any networking she did while competing in college and of what benefit that was to her in the workplace, Greta remarked how she would start talking to someone and when she stated she played college basketball at Georgia Southern, that sometimes would lead to job offers or other associations. She stated:

Gosh, networking is everything. It's all who you know....And, and it's amazing how you would talk to them or talk to somebody they knew and it [they having known that you played college sports at Georgia Southern] would just open doors for you. Every, almost every job that I've ever had is because of someone who, is who I knew.

Ethel felt being on the college softball team taught her how to network and to take advantage of those opportunities. Another social benefit derived from college sports participation for her was the ability to compete with others, but maintain relationships with those people. Ethel perceived that to be a good lesson to carry over into the workplace:

When we stepped on the ice or we stepped on the softball field, it was about winning, but afterwards, it was the ability to, we were able to have a great friendship and a great relationship. So, you learn how to be competitive, but you still maintain a relationship. You learn how to be competitive and win and still have a relationship and you learn how

to lose and still maintain a relationship and I think those probably, I think for women in sports, and I think even for guys in sports, they are just the most important lessons that you can learn.

On networking, Ethel remarked:

Um, but I think I learned that there were other, um, avenues and other people available to me, um, through being on the softball team, um, and then I learned to reach out to them so I think that was, I think it's a lesson of being able to network and reach out to other people and know that there are other people that can help you with things that you want to participate in...I wouldn't have known the resources were there until I played sports so I think it really opened up a lot of doors for me, um, and now in life I know that it's okay to do those kind of things, look for where those doors are and let's look for those networks and those people you can reach out to.

Mentoring

Mentoring emerged as a category from the data analysis and several of the participants shared accounts that seemed to indicate the importance of mentoring. The data seemed to indicate that mentoring as a leadership trait was more evident in the workplace than in the college sports environment. Several of the participants stated that they did not have a mentor while playing college sports and/or that their college coach was not their mentor.

Ethel stated that she definitely did not have a mentor when playing college sports, but felt a recently retired president of a college in Vermont was her mentor and had been her mentor for "twenty-some years." However, she stated her mentor helped Ethel "realize the relationship between sports and leadership." She stated by listening to that president's keynote speeches, she reflected on how sports competition has shaped her executive leadership. She learned that "being

able to lose graciously and accept that you've lost and move on to the next day was important.”

Another “aha” moment Ethel recounted from the speeches was doing things “for the greater good of the team” is far more important than having the limelight for one's self.

Susan viewed mentoring as the “most important work” she does as a two-year college president and perceived mentoring as “absolutely” important for those going into executive leadership positions. Her mentors, a president and a dean, were accessible and willing to take time to observe Susan and give her feedback. She viewed that positive experience as one that led to her belief that mentoring is very important work and can lead to successful outcomes with future college leaders.

Participants expressed the importance of modeling and observing their mentors. Felicia, a former professional tennis player, reported the feeling that mentoring was very important in her leadership as a director of institutional advancement, in that she “modeled” what her mentor, a professional tennis tour director and executive, did in carrying out charity events. She said she saw what her mentor had done and was able to learn from observing. Mary, a dean at a two-year technical college, stated she learned from female vice presidents in a way that they had a “mentoring relationship,” and proudly elaborated on her most influential mentor:

But, probably my strongest female mentor is my mother [a retired dean of graduate nursing]. And I think that's why I didn't have to actively seek other mentors because, you know, I have a mother who is very career driven, who's very successful, who has had leadership positions in academia. She's been an associate dean of nursing, a dean of graduate nursing. She stepped in as, um, a, I'm trying to remember, she was at the university as some assistant chancellor position. I can't even remember now. Seventy-three years old and come out of retirement and still working for the university in a

leadership role with success. So, you know, I've seen that example all my life. I mean, she, she got two masters and a doctorate, and raised four children. I mean, I had "super mom," so you know, I never tried to aspire to that level, but I certainly learned a lot about life's balance from watching her.

Other Activities That Played A Role in Preparing for Leadership

Another finding was the category in which the participants described other various activities that led to the acquisition of leadership traits. Gail perceived her college internship with IBM and selling vacuum cleaners as events that made her believe she had the confidence and desire to be in a leadership position:

Um, well I mentioned that I was interviewed by IBM for a college intern position and I got the job over the twenty other students who interviewed for the position. And, I worked in Hoover Vacuum Cleaner sales for awhile before IBM. I would say, um, both of those positions helped me in my leadership position. I realized working for IBM and Hoover that I wanted more than just a "*sales*" [italics added] job. I wanted to be in charge. I wanted to be "captain" of the team. So, I would say the internship with IBM and the summer job with Hoover, you know, definitely influenced my decision to pursue a leadership position.

Two of the participants, Pam and Susan, believed that their experiences as a Girl Scout developed their leadership skills. Pam related participating in a myriad of activities when she was growing up. She stated she played "any sport I could get my hands on," did cheerleading, and took part in going "many a different place" with students of different area high schools. But relevant to the development of her leadership skills, she felt that the considerable amount of time she spent in Girl Scouts aided her in the acquisition of skills in leading girls' activities and

“working [together] as a troop.” Susan’s account supported Pam’s belief of leadership development from Girl Scouts in stating that her experience as “patrol leader, troop leader, the whole nine yards, um, I see a lot of that experience as ground work for what I do now [in her present executive leadership position as president of a two-year college].

Nancy and Susan also perceived previous jobs they held as developing leadership skills. Susan stated that her prior positions contributed to how she viewed and understood the workplace as an “organizational world.” In working with a past employer, Nancy felt the management training program in which she worked in several positions throughout the plant developed her leadership and communication skills and earned the respect of many male employees. That earning of respect played a part in her being selected as the human resources manager at the plant as Nancy stated, “When the man who was the HR manager at that facility retired, they were looking for somebody new, the guys in the shop requested me.”

Although Ethel stated multiple times in the interview the importance of the role collegiate sports participation played in preparing her for executive leadership, she did believe that high school sports, where she developed leadership traits such as the ability to take charge of a situation, also had a part in preparing her for executive leadership. She remarked:

In high school sports where, you know, I wasn’t the best athlete, I was a mediocre athlete, but a couple times coaches, you know, sort of put me in leadership positions, not necessarily the captain of the team because the captain was always the best player, but put me in leadership positions in things that we did because I think they realized that I had strong leadership skills and I hadn’t thought about that prior to that, but I do remember a couple of different incidents where I was asked to sort of be in charge of

something or take the leadership role in something and um, I think they recognized that I had those skills.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study. The first part of the chapter provided brief background information on each of the 11 study participants. The participants included six executive leaders from the two-year college sector and five from the business and industry workplace environment. The second part of the chapter described the findings relevant to the five research questions of the study. The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis was employed to review and analyze the data, which consisted mainly of excerpted quotes from interview transcripts, resulting in the major categories and themes. Seven major categories emerged from the data. Within three of the categories, there were also significant emergent themes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. To obtain the data, I conducted face-to-face interviews with 11 participants. Five of the participants were in business or industry executive leadership positions and six were from the two-year college sector. For this study, industry, business, or corporate executive leaders are defined as individuals who are chief executive officers, chief financial officers, vice presidents, department directors, or company national managers. The two-year college executive leaders were those at the president, vice president, dean, or director level. This chapter presents discussion and conclusions drawn from data analysis and interpretation.

Conclusions and Discussion

Purposeful sampling was appropriate for this study in order to focus on participants who have played intercollegiate sports and who are now in female executive leadership positions. However, the findings and conclusions from this qualitative study are not to be over-generalized. The extent of generalizability in qualitative research is determined by the readers. Merriam et al. (2002) affirmed that by providing rich, thick description, generalizability can be ensured from a qualitative perspective. Thus, in this study, a sufficient amount of descriptive information, comprised primarily of excerpted quotes from the interview transcripts, was provided for readers

to make an informed decision relevant to the opinion if the findings of this study can be applied to their situation based on the similarity of situations.

Appendix H indicates the categories, themes, and the respective frequency of occurrence that emerged from the constant comparative analysis. The participants did not always have similar perceptions, beliefs, or views. Nonetheless, the categories and themes are significant as a result of their relevance to existing literature or the fact they were shared by several participants. Chapter 4 contains descriptive data, mainly excerpted quotes of participant interviews, which detail the emergence of those categories and themes.

The findings of the study reveal important particulars relevant to collegiate sports participation and its role in preparing women for executive leadership. The significant conclusions that can be drawn from the study's findings answer the five guiding research questions:

1. What leadership traits did women acquire from collegiate sports?
2. What role did these leadership traits play in attaining executive leadership positions?
3. How did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills?
4. In what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills?
5. What leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports (e.g., clubs, social events, work, etc.)?

The first two guiding research questions of this study, relevant to what leadership traits are acquired from collegiate sports participation and the role those traits play in executive leadership, were addressed extensively. First, the responses of the interviewees reveal that there

is a multitude of positive leadership traits that appear to be garnered or developed from collegiate sports participation. The participants felt many of those traits played a role or are necessary in attaining or executing leadership positions. The participants felt that the acquisition of those identified leadership traits aided them in being better prepared for selection into executive positions and for managing situations they now experience as an executive. Secondly, one of the more compelling findings is the perception by the majority of the participants that working together and teamwork is a very important leadership characteristic, is acquired or developed through collegiate sports participation and is needed in and carried over to today's workplace by female executive leaders. This finding is consistent with the results of a 2001 survey commissioned by Oppenheimer Funds and the MassMutual Financial Group in which female executives stated playing team sports contributed to their workplace success by facilitating *the acquisition of leadership skills*, greater discipline, and *the ability to function as a team*, all skills and attributes the respondents believed to be beneficial for business leadership (MassMutual Financial Group, 2002).

Moreover, many of the acquired leadership traits were representative of transformational, charismatic, and/or participative leadership. Most of the study participants repeatedly said that a parallel between being successful in college sports and being successful in the workplace is the ability to work together toward a common goal or mutual benefit by putting away each other's differences and individual needs or desires. Participants continually stated that ability is a major part of teamwork, one of the most significant themes of this study. Working together for the good of the group is particularly reflective of transformational leadership. Bass (1981), in describing characteristics of transformational leaders, included the willingness for self sacrifice and focusing on the achievement for the greater good as two of those traits. Burke and Collins

(2001) stated that transformational leaders urge followers to focus on the goals and issues of the overall group rather than their individual needs. Burns (1978) maintained that transformational leadership is one in which individuals work together toward a single common purpose. The participants felt that executive leadership entailed getting people to work together even though they may not personally like each other or have the same type of personalities. Study participants stated that they have experienced situations where it was evident that certain members of their leadership team had not played team sports due to the inability of those members to put away personal agendas and individual differences and thus not being capable of working together toward a goal or objective that is of importance to the overall organization.

The literature indicated that transformational and participative leadership are often representative of female leadership and these types of leadership are seen as more of a collaborative, cooperative style of leadership. Emanating from the data in this study was the theme of getting people to cooperate and work together, as well as the theme of conflict resolution and communication. Those themes are characteristic of the transformational and participative theories of leadership. Jogulu and Wood (2006) stated that transformational leadership is largely typical of a feminine model of leadership focusing on collective problem-solving, distributed decision-making, cooperation, collaboration, and a lower degree of control. Klenke (1993) corroborated in stating that female leaders typically exhibited “leadership built around cooperation, collaboration, lower control for the leader, and problem solving based on intuition and rationality” (p. 330).

Also, as is seen in transformational leadership, Bass (1985) asserted the charismatic leader is one who demonstrates care and concern for the followers and recognizes the abilities and accomplishments of those followers. Consistent with that finding, a major theme of this

study was the recognition of the talents of others. Furthermore, study participants felt camaraderie and support was an important and prevalent theme.

Although previous literature, such as Eagly and Johnson (1990) and Eagly and Carli (2007), indicated that female leaders are more democratic, participative, and collaborative in their leadership than their male counterparts who are often seen as more competitive in their style of leadership, an interesting finding is that the participants felt competition was a positive benefit acquired from collegiate sports participation. It may be that qualities such as confidence derived from competition, persistence and the ability to deal with losing and disappointments, overcoming the challenges, the drive to be the best, and learning how to respect teammates and earning others' respect, all themes of this study, are learned through the intense level of collegiate competition and when combined with the learned skills of getting people to cooperate and work together, resolution of conflicts, good communication, and teamwork, results in a leader who is both competitive, but able to facilitate collaboration and cooperation in a successful and productive workplace. Earlier literature indicates many of those characteristics are representative of charismatic leaders. House (1977) identified charismatic leaders as being self-confident, possessing a strong desire to influence others, and serving as strong role models. Bass (1985) saw similarities between charismatic leaders and transformational leaders in that they displayed confidence, but exuded care, consideration, and concern for their followers and recognized the followers' achievements.

One of the major themes, challenges (overcoming challenges) and drive to be the best, which emerged from the data, may be one of the attributes that aids former collegians in attaining an executive leadership position. Some of the participants saw the drive to be the best coupled with a persistence and "never give up" attitude, especially necessary in grueling

practices, as being very advantageous in difficult workplace situations, and may be of particular benefit in an organization's tough economic times. The highly competitive atmosphere of collegiate sports can be a factor in forcing athletes to be resilient and deal with losing and other related disappointments, another positive trait of executive leadership related by the interviewees.

The findings of this study support previous related research literature and answer another guiding research question in what ways do women feel collegiate sports participation developed their leadership skills. Jaffee and Manzer (1992) stated the experience of encountering challenges, risk-taking, development of skills, and subsequent achievements in sports participation leads to females gaining self confidence in their abilities and themselves. Participants stated that an additional leadership trait gained or developed from the high level of collegiate sports, related to competition, is confidence, more specifically the confidence to perform under pressure. Participants asserted the necessity in executive leadership of having to call the shots, take charge, or make final decisions, but being able to do that with less difficulty under pressure due to the confidence they gained from "taking the shot" or producing in pressure-packed college games. Bass (1985) stated that charismatic leaders exude confidence in communication and behavior and that is very appealing to their followers. Multiple participants believed that confidence gained from intense collegiate competition helped them compete for and often gain promotions, including their present executive leadership position. It can be assumed that many of the leadership traits identified by this study's participants, and viewed as beneficial in female executive leadership, may be acquired through other non-athletic activities and/or via competitive sports participation at a level other than intercollegiate sports. But, a critical point is that this study's participants repeatedly perceived collegiate sports participation,

specifically, as being a conduit for the attainment or development of those qualities, due in part to the high level of competition and nature of collegiate sports.

The findings of this study also address the research question of how did the social context of collegiate sports shape the acquisition of executive leadership skills. There have been an abundant number of studies that identified the benefits of sports participation. One of the foremost, described in a Council of Europe Report (Svoboda, 1994), maintained that sports participation provides those learning opportunities through its social environment for individuals to experience situations to be able to meet and communicate with others, assimilate social skills such as respect and tolerance, and acquire team skills of cohesion and cooperation. Consistent with the results from the study detailed in the Council of Europe Report, another conclusion from this researcher's study is that the social context of collegiate sports appears to be important in creating an environment that is conducive to the acquisition and development of leadership skills. Study participants perceived the social setting of intercollegiate sports with its emphasis on teamwork, cooperation, conflict resolution, communication, camaraderie and support, and the exposure to situations in which participants learned to handle interpersonal situations as being a good testing ground for present and future leadership opportunities. Bredmeier and Shields (1986) promoted the belief that conflict resolution skills learned on the athletic fields often translate into everyday interpersonal interactions.

Another benefit of the social environment of collegiate sports participation is the many networking opportunities for student athletes to establish contacts for present and future advancement. To aid in the advancement of women into leadership positions, Buzzanell (1995) recommended making available networking opportunities in the company and in the respective business. Many of the participants shared the perception that networking is crucial in their

present leadership positions. The study participants not only believed in the importance of networking while playing their respective sport in establishing contacts to help them with their games and future career possibilities, but just as valuable was gaining the strong interpersonal skill of effective networking in college that they felt they would need in the workplace.

An interesting conclusion that may be drawn from the findings is related to the importance of mentoring. Although a few of the participants stated they had a mentor during their collegiate sports career, usually one of their teammates who had already played a couple of years at the college level, most of the participants did not have a mentor, such as a coach or teammate, during their collegiate playing time. Moreover, five of the participants indicated that they perceived the opposite of a mentor or role model in observing a teammate or coach's behavior as "what not to do." Those five participants also stated that their coach was either somewhat young, inexperienced in coaching, and/or had played or coached in men's intercollegiate athletics. For one of the participants, her coach actually had coached another sport, had never coached her particular sport, and became coach of the women's team only due to being asked by the college's athletic director. Three of the participants commented that they felt getting a coach with only experience playing or coaching men's intercollegiate athletics or one who had not coached that particular sport was somewhat common during the 1970s due to the lack of female coaches for women's intercollegiate sports, the relatively low pay to coach women's sports, and the lack of publicity for women's collegiate sports. Conversely, many of the participants described having a mentor in their leadership position and believed that mentoring was important in their leadership development and in advancing other potential leaders. This supports the position of Buzzanell (1995) and Vinnicombe and Singh (2003) who identified mentoring relationships as a significant advancement practice for women moving up the

organizational ladder into leadership posts. Two of the participants stated their interesting insight into why mentoring may be more meaningful in a leadership track than in women's collegiate sports. Although Ethel felt that collegiate sports taught student athletes an accepted way of behaving when representing the college, Margaret and Wanda believed that the workplace, especially in a leadership environment, presented more of a stricter, regimented, expected model of behavior and manner of operation than the collegiate sports setting. Thus, having a mentor and modeling the behavior of one's mentor is more important for those moving up the leadership continuum in gaining acceptance and respect and being in accordance with workforce mores.

Relevant to the fifth guiding research question of what leadership traits did women acquire from activities other than sports, the participants perceived that certain leadership traits can be acquired through those endeavors. It could be proposed that one of the facets of collegiate sports competition that results in the development of leadership ability is the opportunity to be involved in situations where one has to take charge and successfully handle that situation. Several of the participants viewed other activities they were involved in similarly in that they were exposed to conditions where they were allowed to lead a group or be in charge. The salient point for those executive leaders, regardless of the activity and much like their experiences in collegiate sports participation, is being given the opportunity to lead and be in charge of a situation. The interviewees believed that experience is one which bred confidence and where learning to manage situations was developed. They perceived that to be most beneficial in future leadership undertakings.

Implications for Practice

As I was unable to find previous research on the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership, the implication of this work is that it indicates

collegiate sports participation may be directly or indirectly a preparatory avenue for moving into executive leadership based on the perceptions of this study's participants. In a 2007 report published by Catalyst (2008), the number of female CEOs at Fortune 500 companies slightly increased by a total of five from 2006, but the number of corporate officers actually had a slight decrease of .2% from the prior year. In the two-year college sector at the highest level of executive leadership, the American Association of Community Colleges affirmed that only 28% of the presidents are women. Thus, additional approaches to preparing women for executive leadership positions are warranted.

All of the research participants who participated in this study believed that collegiate sports participation played a role in their preparation for executive leadership. Many of the participants felt that the competitive level of college sports and opportunities to take charge and manage a situation requiring leadership facilitated the development of leadership skills subsequently requisite in workforce executive leadership. Those experiences prove to be good practice or testing ground for the high-level decisions that must be made later in the workplace. Young women need to be encouraged by high school and college coaches and administrators to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level in order to be exposed to those types of leadership opportunities. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has periodically televised commercials advertising the fact that most of their student athletes go on to careers other than professional sports careers. This may be a good medium to suggest that college sports offers opportunities to exhibit leadership that will be invaluable in those other careers. With findings such as those from this study, college administrators and coaches can relate the benefits of collegiate sports participation in relation to the acquisition of leadership skills, inclusive of networking skills, which could advance women's ability to gain entrance into executive

leadership tracks. Another result of the publishing of the findings of this study, in relation to the positive role collegiate sports participation plays in preparing for female executive leadership, may be the increase in number of female college athletes and ultimately, the number of female executives in business, industry, and two-year college leadership.

Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following suggestions for further study are presented:

1. This study's participants included Caucasian women, 40-55 years of age. Additional examination of the role collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership should include interviews with participants from various racial backgrounds. This is particularly significant with the diversity in the present leadership workforce.
2. Results of this study indicated that participation in collegiate sports facilitates the acquisition and development of various leadership traits which are beneficial to women in preparation for executive leadership. It would be advantageous to follow up this qualitative investigation with both qualitative and quantitative studies designed to further illustrate this phenomenon. In view of the fact that most college athletes go on to professions other than their respective sport, it would be of value to utilize the present study's findings and additionally survey other former college athletes who are now female executives, in both business and industry and in the two-year college sector, to gain their input on possible workshops and training that institutions can offer to athletes in order to develop leadership skills that would aid them in both collegiate sport and future workplace leadership endeavors.

3. Although college athletes playing what is commonly thought of as an individual sport (e.g., golf, tennis, individual track events, etc.) are all participating on a collegiate team, future research could examine possible differences in the acquisition and development of leadership skills in athletes who compete in sports traditionally thought of as individual sports versus those who are competing in sports usually thought of as team sports.

Summary

This study sought to explore the perceptions of former college athletes relevant to the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing women for executive leadership. A qualitative study approach with purposeful sampling was utilized with the intention of gain rich, descriptive data through interviews with 11 participants. The participants included six two-year college executive leaders and five executives from the business, industry, or corporate sector, ages 40-55 years old. The conclusions that were drawn from the findings answered the five guiding research questions. From the various emergent categories and themes of this study, it was concluded that there are numerous leadership traits that are acquired or developed by participating in collegiate sports. The acquisition or development of those traits aided the participants in preparing for executive leadership positions. Consistent with the research literature that was found is the compelling finding that teamwork and other skills that are advanced through the interpersonal and social context of college athletics have an important connection to leadership development in collegiate sports participation and subsequently are of significant benefit to female executive leaders in the workplace. An interesting finding was that mentoring appeared to be more important in workforce leadership than in college sports participation.

Many of the emergent categories and themes of this study support the theoretical framework of the study which consisted of the transformational, charismatic, and participative leadership theories. That is, many of the emergent themes and categories could be associated with collaboration, cooperation, and focus on the overall good of the organization or team, all characteristic of transformational, charismatic, and participative leadership.

In conclusion, the outcome of this research indicated that collegiate sports participation plays a positive role in the preparation of women for executive leadership by facilitating the acquisition and development of certain leadership traits. Due in part to Title IX legislation, numerous collegiate athletic scholarships are available for women. The number of female college athletes has grown substantially since the inception of Title IX. With the continued small number of female executives in business and industry as well as the two-year college setting, collegiate sports participation may play an effective role in preparing more women for executive leadership positions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LISTSERV EMAIL REQUESTING RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Dear Colleagues,

As part of my dissertation research, I will be interviewing former college athletes who are presently in executive leadership positions in the business or industry sector or the postsecondary education field. More specifically, I have a need for research participants who would be willing to engage in an interview of approximately one to two hours and who meet the following criteria: former college athlete, 40-55 years old, FEMALE, presently in an executive or upper management level postsecondary/college administration position (i.e., President, VP, or Dean) in a TWO-YEAR TECHNICAL OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE. My dissertation topic is “Collegiate Sports Participation and Its Role in Preparing Women for Executive Leadership.” The research participants will be asked, “Have you played college sports at the intercollegiate level? If so, has collegiate sports participation been a factor in your attainment of an executive leadership position?” If you know of anyone who would potentially be interested in participating, please have them contact me. My office phone number is (478)757-3510 and email address is crw@centralgatech.edu. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Craig R. Wentworth
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Central Georgia Technical College
3300 Macon Tech Drive
Macon, GA 31206
Phone: (478) 757-3510
Fax: (478) 757-3672

APPENDIX B: REVISED IRB APPLICATION

Check One

New Application:

Resubmission*: Revision X (All changes must be highlighted)

**Human Subjects Office
University of Georgia
612 Boyd GSRC
Athens, GA 30602-7411
(706) 542-3199**

***NOTE: A new application is required every five years.**

IRB APPLICATION

MAIL 2 COPIES OF APPLICATION TO ABOVE ADDRESS

<p>(Check One) Dr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Check One) Faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes</p> <p>Principal Investigator UGA ID – last 10 digits only</p> <p>Dept. Of Workforce Education, Leadership, And Social Foundations, 225 River's Crossing</p> <p>Department, Building and + Four (Include department even if living off campus or out of town)</p> <hr/> <p>Mailing Address (if you prefer not to receive mail in dept.)</p> <p>(706) 542-4078 wls@uga.edu</p> <p>Phone Number (s) E-Mail (REQUIRED)</p> <hr/> <p>**Signature of Principal Investigator</p> <p>UGA Faculty Advisor: Dr. Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes Name</p> <p>Workforce Ed., River's Crossing Department, Bldg+ Four</p> <p>**Signature: Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes</p>	<p>(Check One) Dr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Check One) Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Craig R. Wentworth 810 115 3030</p> <p>Co-Investigator UGA ID – last 10 digits</p> <p>Dept. Of Workforce Education, Leadership, And Social Foundations, River's Crossing</p> <p>Department, Building and + Four</p> <hr/> <p>Mailing Address (if you prefer not to receive mail in dept.)</p> <p>(478) 737-9986 craiggolfs1@cox.net</p> <p>Phone Number (s) E-Mail</p> <hr/> <p>Signature of Co-Investigator (use additional cover sheets for more than one Co-Investigator)</p> <p>Wls@Uga.Edu (706) 542-4078 E-Mail (REQUIRED) Phone No.</p> <p>Date: 7/31/08 UGA ID – last 10 digits only</p>
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****Your signature indicates that you have read the human subjects guidelines and accept responsibility for the research described in this application.**

<p>If funded: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***Sponsored Programs Proposal#</p>	<p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Name of Funding Agency</p>
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*****By listing a proposal number, you agree that this application matches the grant application and that you have disclosed all financial conflicts of interest (see Q6a)**

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

Collegiate Sports Participation and Its Role in Female Executive Leadership

NOTE: SUBMIT 4-6 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR START DATE

APPROVAL IS GRANTED ONLY FOR 1 YEAR AT A TIME

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

Investigational New Drug Exceptions to/waivers of Federal regulations

If yes to the above, provide details:

Data Sets Existing Bodily Fluids/Tissues RP Pool Deception
Illegal Activities Minors Moderate Exercise Audio/ Video taping
MRI/EEG/ECG/NIRS/Ultrasound/ Blood Draw X-RAY/DEXA Pregnant Women/Prisoners

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Type responses to all 11 questions (all parts) listed below (12 pt. font only).*
2. *Do not answer any question with “see attachments” or “not applicable”.*
3. *Submit original plus one copy to the Human Subjects Office.*
4. *We will contact you via email if changes are required. Allow 4-6 weeks.*

IMPORTANT: Before completing this application, please determine if the project is a research project. Check the federal definition of research at <http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/faqs/hso.html#7> or call the Human Subjects office at 542-3199. The IRB only reviews research projects.

1. **PROBLEM ABSTRACT:** *State rationale and research question or hypothesis (why is this study important and what do you expect to learn?).*

Women remain underrepresented in executive leadership positions, both in business and industry as well as in the two-year college sector. Evidence suggests that the number of women in these positions is not increasing significantly. There are many factors that may impede the advancement of women into executive leadership. It can be suggested that lack of preparation for those executive positions is one of the factors impeding the advancement. Research found on the benefits of sports participation has been concerned with childhood and high school sports participation, not intercollegiate sports participation for women. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. Thus, an expectation of the study is to gain knowledge of the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership positions in business and industry and in the two-year college sector.

2. **RESEARCH DESIGN:** *Identify specific factors or variables, conditions or groups and any control conditions in your study. Indicate the number of research participants assigned to each condition or group, and describe plans for data analysis.*

A qualitative research design will be used to gain rich, descriptive data relevant to how female executives view the role their collegiate sports participation played in their current leadership situation. Eleven research participants will be interviewed and data obtained from those interviews will be analyzed using the constant comparative method, a qualitative analysis approach. Data will be coded and patterns, themes, and categories will be identified and analyzed.

3. **RESEARCH SUBJECTS:**

a. *List maximum number of subjects 11, targeted age group 40-55 (this must be specified in years) and targeted gender Female;*

b. *Method of selection and recruitment - list inclusion and exclusion criteria. Describe the recruitment procedures (including all follow-ups).*

The eleven participants will be selected using a purposeful sampling method. Five of the participants will be from executive leadership positions in industry or the corporate sector and six will be from the two-year college segment. Six of the eleven participants have already been identified. Utilizing snowball or chain sampling, that is asking participants who else would be good participants to include, may result in the identification of other research participants. Also, various postsecondary professional and leadership association listservs will be utilized to locate other participants (see Attachment 1). The participants will be former

college athletes who participated in intercollegiate athletics in various sports and at different size institutions, are now in upper management (executive or senior leadership positions as indicated by their organization's organizational chart), and are between 40 and 55 years of age. This age group is selected because the participants will have had time to move up the corporate or organizational ladder into executive leadership positions and played collegiate sports after the implementation of Title IX legislation.

c. *The activity described in this application involves another institution (e.g. school, university, hospital, etc.) and/or another country.* Yes No

If yes, provide the following details:

1) **Name of institution:**

2) **County and state:**

3) **Country:**

4) **Written letter of authorization (on official letterhead only)/ IRB approval:**

Attached:

Pending:

d. *Is there any working relationship between the researcher and the subjects?*
Yes No *If yes, explain.*

e. *Describe any incentives (payment, gifts, extra credit).*

Extra credit cannot be offered unless there are equal non-research options available.

None. No incentives will be offered or awarded.

4. **PROCEDURES:** *State in chronological order what a subject is expected to do and what the researcher will do during the interaction. Indicate time commitment for each research activity. And detail any follow-up.*

Before the interview is conducted, the purpose of the study and intended use of the study will be explained to the research participant. Participant confidentiality will be assured and permission to tape the interview will be requested. The participant will then be requested to read the consent form and asked if they understand the content of the form and if they have any questions. The consent form will be signed by the participant and researcher (Attachment 2). To confirm eligibility, the participant will be asked, "Have you played college sports at the intercollegiate level? If so, has collegiate sports participation been a factor in your attainment of an executive leadership position?" The participant will also be asked to complete a brief participant data sheet (Attachment 3). Completion of the consent form and data sheet should take only ten minutes or less. The participant will be asked a set of questions from the prepared interview guide (Attachment 4). The interview guide will aid in focusing the line of questioning. The initial interviews will be face-to-face with the participants and the anticipated length of each interview is one to two hours. If follow up interviews are needed for clarification of meaning or acquisition of additional data, then those interviews will be face-to-face or via telephone. All interviews will be audio-tape recorded by the researcher with field notes taken during the session. The interviews will be transcribed by the researcher.

Duration of participation in the study: 1-2 hours for initial interview; a total of 2-4 hours if follow up interview is needed; *Months*

No. of testing/training sessions: An initial interview with a possible follow up interview

Length of each session: 1-2 hours

Start Date: Anticipated start date is June 1, 2008

Only if your procedures include work with blood, bodily fluids or tissues, complete below:

Submit a MUA from Biosafety: Attached Pending

If you are exempted from obtaining a MUA by Biosafety, explain why?

Total amount of blood draw for study: ml Blood draw for each session: ml

5. **MATERIALS:** *Itemize all questionnaires/instruments/equipment and attach copies with the corresponding numbers written on them.*

Attachment 1 Listserv Email Requesting Research Participation

Attachment 2 Consent Form

Attachment 3 Participant Data Sheet

Attachment 4 Interview Guide/Interview Protocol

Check all other materials that apply and are attached:

Interview protocol Debriefing Statement Recruitment flyers or advertisements
Consent/Assent forms

If no consent documents are attached, justify omission under Q. 8

6. **RISK:** *Detail risks to a subject as a result of data collection and as a direct result of the research and your plans to minimize them and the availability and limits of treatment for sustained physical or emotional injuries.*

NOTE: REPORT INCIDENTS CAUSING DISCOMFORT, STRESS OR HARM TO THE IRB IMMEDIATELY!

- a. **CURRENT RISK:** *Describe any psychological, social, legal, economic or physical discomfort, stress or harm that might occur as a result of participation in research. How will these be held to the absolute minimum?*

No risks are expected. Participants will read, understand, and sign the consent form.

Is there a financial conflict of interest (see UGA COI policy)? Yes No

If yes, does this pose any risk to the subjects?

- b. **FUTURE RISK:** *How are research participants to be protected from potentially harmful future use of the data collected in this project? Describe your plans to maintain confidentiality, including removing identifiers, and state who will have access to the data and in what role. Justify retention of identifying information on any data or forms.*

DO NOT ANSWER THIS QUESTION WITH “NOT APPLICABLE”!

Anonymous Confidential Public *Check one only and explain below.*

Participation in the study will be held confidential. Participants' names will not be used on documents related to the research to protect the confidentiality of the research participants.

Audio-taping Video-taping

If taping, how will tapes be securely stored, who will have access to the tapes, will they be publicly disseminated and when will they be erased or destroyed? Justify retention.

Audio-tapes will be stored and locked up in filing cabinet in researcher's office and only the researcher will have access to the tapes. The tapes will not be publicly disseminated and will be destroyed 90 days after completion of the research project.

7. **BENEFIT:** *State the benefits to individuals and humankind. Potential benefits of the research should outweigh risks associated with research participation.*

- a. *Identify benefits of the research for participants, e.g. educational benefits:*

Results of the study may yield valuable information regarding the role of collegiate sports

participation in preparing females for executive leadership. The information may be of value to current executives in identifying potential future executives.

b. Identify any potential benefits of this research for humankind in general, e.g. advance our knowledge of some phenomenon or help solve a practical problem.

The results of this research may contribute to the identification and understanding of the role that collegiate sports participation plays in preparing women for executive leadership. The results may indicate an avenue of effective preparation of women for executive leadership positions resulting in more women advancing into those positions. Knowledge of the role and/or benefits of collegiate sports participation relevant to executive leadership would be of interest and value to coaches as well as administrators and legislators considering increased funding of women's intercollegiate athletics. Results of this research project could prove useful for increasing female collegiate sports participation.

8. **CONSENT PROCESS:**

a. Detail how legally effective informed consent will be obtained from all research participants and, when applicable, from parent(s) or guardian(s).

The consent form will be given to each research participant before the interview takes place. The participants will have the opportunity to read the form and ask questions about the study before they sign the form and agree to participate. A copy of the consent form will be given to the participant and the original will be retained by the researcher.

Will subjects sign a consent form? Yes No

If No, request for waiver of signed consent – Yes

Justify the request, including an assurance that risk to the participant will be minimal. Also submit the consent script or cover letter that will be used in lieu of a form.

b. Deception Yes No

If yes, describe the deception, why it is necessary, and how you will debrief them. The consent form should include the following statement: "In order to make this study a valid one, some information about my participation will be withheld until completion of the study."

9. **VULNERABLE PARTICIPANTS:** Yes No

Minors Prisoners Pregnant women/fetuses Elderly

Immigrants/non-English speakers Mentally/Physically incapacitated Others List below.

Outline procedures to obtain their consent/assent to participate. Describe the procedures to be used to minimize risk to these vulnerable subjects.

10. **ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES:** Yes No

If yes, explain how subjects will be protected.

NOTE: Some ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES must be reported, e.g. child abuse.

11. **STUDENTS**

This application is being submitted for :

Undergraduate Honors Thesis

Masters Applied Project, Thesis or Exit Exam Research

Doctoral Dissertation Research

Has the student's thesis/dissertation committee approved this research? Yes **No**

The IRB recommends submission for IRB review only after the appropriate committees have conducted the necessary scientific review and approved the research proposal.

APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL

From: Kim Fowler [mailto:kfowler@uga.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2008 10:09 AM
To: Wanda Stitt-Gohdes
Cc: Craig Wentworth
Subject: IRB Approval - Amendment - Stitt-Gohdes

PROJECT NUMBER: 2008-10856-1
TITLE OF STUDY: Collegiate Sports Participation and Its Role in Female Executive Leadership
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes

Dear Dr. Stitt-Gohdes,

The University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved your request for modifications to the above-titled human subjects proposal. It was determined that the amendment request continues to meet the criteria for exempt (administrative) review procedures.

You may now begin to implement the amendment. Your approval packet will be sent via campus mail.

Please be reminded that any changes to this research protocol must receive prior review and approval from the IRB. Any unanticipated problems must be reported to the IRB immediately. The principal investigator is also responsible for maintaining all applicable protocol records (regardless of media type) for at least three (3) years after completion of the study (i.e., copy of approved protocol, raw data, amendments, correspondence, and other pertinent documents). You are requested to notify the Human Subjects Office if your study is completed or terminated.

Good luck with your study, and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Please use the IRB number and title in all communications regarding this study

Kim Fowler
Human Subjects Office
612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602-7411
kfowler@uga.edu
Telephone: 706-542-3199
Fax: 706-542-3360 <http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso>

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled “Collegiate Sports Participation and Its Role in Female Executive Leadership,” which is being conducted by Craig Wentworth, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Central Georgia Technical College and a doctoral student at The University of Georgia, 478-757-3510, under the direction of Dr. Wanda L. Stitt-Gohdes, Professor, Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations, University of Georgia, 706-542-4078. My participation is voluntary and I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I can also ask to have information related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. I also understand that I will receive no compensation for my participation in this study.

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. The study seeks to gain descriptive data from female executives in business and industry and the two-year college sector who played intercollegiate athletics after the implementation of Title IX.

For this research study, I will be asked to do the following:

- Meet with the researcher in a face-to-face setting for a one to two hour interview.
- Also, if necessary, participate in a follow up interview face-to-face or via telephone if clarification of meaning or additional data is needed.
- Complete a participant data sheet to give the researcher background information relevant to my college degree(s) earned, from what colleges or universities the degrees were earned, major(s), year(s) of graduation, intercollegiate sport(s) played, and for which colleges or universities I played intercollegiately.
- I will be asked to answer interview questions and provide information and data relevant to my participation in collegiate sports and its role in my subsequent executive leadership.

No discomfort, stresses, or risks are expected. Participation in the study will be held confidential. Participant’s name will not be used on documents related to the research to protect the confidentiality of the research participants.

As a participant, I may benefit from gaining information regarding the role of collegiate sports participation in preparing females for executive leadership. Knowledge of the role and/or benefits of collegiate sports participation relevant to executive leadership may be of value in identifying potential future executives.

I understand that the interviews will audio-taped. I also understand that I have the right to review the tape or ask for its destruction at any time. Tapes will be transcribed by the researcher. All tapes will be destroyed 90 days after completion of the study. The tapes will be secured in the researcher’s office and only the researcher will have access to the tapes.

I understand that the researcher will answer further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project (Craig R. Wentworth at 478-757-3510 or crw@centralgatech.edu).

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Craig R. Wentworth, Researcher	Signature	Date
Telephone: 478-757-3510		
Email: crw@centralgatech.edu		

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

For additional questions or problems about your rights please call or write: The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT DATA SHEET

Age:

Degree(s) You Have Earned and From What Colleges or Universities Did You Earn Those Degree(s):

Major(s):

Year(s) of Graduation:

Intercollegiate Sport(s) You Played:

What College or University Did You Play Intercollegiately For:

Current Executive Leadership Position:

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL/INTERVIEW GUIDE

Before the interview is conducted, the purpose of the study and intended use of the study will be explained to the research participant. Participant confidentiality will be assured and permission to tape the interview will be requested. The participant will then be asked to read the consent form, whether they understand the content of the form, and have any questions. The consent form will be signed by the participant and researcher. To confirm eligibility, the participant will be asked, "Have you played college sports at the intercollegiate level? If so, has collegiate sports participation been a factor in your attainment of an executive leadership position?" The participant will also be asked to complete a brief participant data sheet. The participant will be asked a set of questions from the prepared interview guide. The initial interviews will be face-to-face with the participants and the anticipated length of each interview is one to two hours. If follow up interviews are needed for clarification of meaning or acquisition of additional data, then those interviews will be face-to-face or via telephone. All interviews will be audio-tape recorded by the researcher with field notes taken during the session.

Interview Guide Questions

1. Describe your collegiate sports experience.
2. Describe a collegiate sports experience that stands out for you.
3. Why did you participate in collegiate sports?
4. How did collegiate sports participation change you, if any? Were the changes beneficial to you later in life, especially in relation to executive leadership?
5. How did that make you feel when you had to.....
6. What collegiate sports experiences were similar to what you experience in executive leadership?
7. Describe any "turning points" or significant events in collegiate sports that affected your subsequent executive leadership? Were they positive or negative?
8. What sports tendencies or characteristics did you have to give up or alter, if any, in your current executive leadership position?
9. What led you to get into executive leadership?

10. Did you have a mentor when you first entered executive leadership? If so, describe your mentor and interaction or relationship with your mentor.
11. Did you have a mentor or role model when you played college sports? If so, describe your mentor and your interaction or relationship with him/her.
12. Describe your interactions and interpersonal relationships with your college teammates on and off the field. Elaborate on aspects of those relationships that were related to on or off the field leadership.
13. Recount any networking you did while playing collegiate sports. Of what benefit to you were those networking experiences?
14. Describe your competitive sports experience, prior to college athletics, which you feel impacted your executive leadership?
15. What activities other than collegiate sports had a role in your executive leadership? Describe the role of those activities.
16. Is there anything I should ask you to give me a better picture of your experiences in college sports and executive leadership?
17. Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX G: CODING SCHEME

- I. Competition
 - A. Confidence Gained From Competition
 - B. Persistence and Dealing with Disappointments and Losing
 - C. Challenges and Drive to be the Best
 - D. Preparation and Practice
 - E. Respect
- II. Getting Along With Others and Working Together
 - A. Getting People to Cooperate and Work Together
 - B. Conflict Resolution and Communication
 - C. Teamwork
 - D. Camaraderie and Support
 - E. Recognizing Talents of Others
 - F. Adaptability
- III. Leadership and Being in Charge
- IV. Learning Opportunities
 - A. Learning to Manage People
 - B. Delegation of Responsibility
 - C. Managing Different Situations
 - D. Time Management
 - E. Discipline and Commitment
 - F. Responsibility
 - G. Learning to Teach

- V. Social Context and Networking
- VI. Mentoring
- VII. Other Activities That Played A Role in Preparing for Leadership

APPENDIX H: CODING FREQUENCY COUNTS

Coding Categories	Frequency of Occurrence	Major Themes	Frequency of Occurrence
Competition	9	Confidence gained from competition	18
		Persistence and dealing with disappointments and losing	13
		Challenges and drive to be the best	10
		Preparation and Practice	6
Getting along with others and working together	15	Respect	6
		Getting people to cooperate and work together	11
		Conflict resolution and communication	5
		Teamwork	32
		Camaraderie and support (also applies to social context)	14
		Recognizing the talents of others	5
		Adaptability	5
Leadership and being in charge	17		
Learning opportunities	See major themes	Learning to manage people and situations	33
		Delegation of responsibility	5
		Time management	8
		Discipline and commitment	9
		Responsibility	5
		Learning to teach	8
Social context and networking	19		
Mentoring	13		
Other activities that played a role in preparing for leadership	7		

Note: Frequency counts for major categories only include the number of units of data that the participants related to a particular category. Frequency counts for major categories do not add in those for the associated themes.