

// DESK ANALYSIS

The first step was to analyze the existing literature in order to better understand the condition of female coaches in sports in general and specifically in the world of football.

Several authors [1-6] have documented the disproportionately few women in coaching positions. Furthermore, it has been argued that, in sport, coaching is the area with the most significant gender imbalance [7]. Researchers around the world have reported that there is a dearth of women coaches. [8-10]. As an example, in Canadian Interuniversity Sport, participation by female athletes is nearly equal to participation by male athletes, but 80% of the coaches are males. In the UK, a recent report by Sports Coach UK [10] has shown that of 1.1 million regularly practicing coaches, approximately three quarters are men. Kilty [11] undertook a comparative review of challenges and barriers experienced by women coaches and administrators. Kilty [11] noted that whereas the number of opportunities for girls and women to participate in all aspects of sport in the USA has increased since the advent of Title IX in 1972, the proportion of women in coaching and other leadership positions have declined.

Moreover, Acosta and Carpenter [8] have observed a decline in the number of women coaches since the enactment of Title IX in 1972 when 90% of collegiate women's teams were coached by a woman. Title IX forced colleges and universities (at least those that receive federal funds) to provide equal funding for men's and women's sports. Although this was a big boon for female college athletes, it had the exact opposite impact on female coaches. When Title IX was enacted, money flooded into women's sports, and universities were forced to offer significantly higher salaries to coaches for these teams. Suddenly, men were interested in these jobs. And they were hired. By 2008, only 42% of women's intercollegiate athletic teams were coached by a woman. (Other than 2006, this is the lowest ever figure [8]). In total (both men and women's teams), only 20% of all collegiate teams are managed by a woman head coach [8]. These statistics contrast the record number of women's collegiate sports teams and participation since the inception of the 1972 legislation.

Kilty [11] summarised four categories of "external" barriers for women in coaching and leadership positions, including:

- Unequal assumption of competence of women coaches compared to men

Hiring from a principle of similarity, termed "homologous reproduction"[12] - those coaches and administrators perpetuate "accepted standards" of coach characteristics by hiring new coaches who are like old ones and like themselves

- Homophobia - which in this case means a prejudicial attitude toward women who work in a predominantly male context as being more "male-like" and having a high probability of being lesbian

- An overall lack of female mentors and role-models