

ROSE COLORED
GLASSES:
INEQUALITIES
IN COLLEGIATE
ATHLETICS

HESA 9999: Dissertation
Defense

Emmie Cass



THEME 1 - UNDERAPPRECIATION

- “I do think that we all know that male sports obviously get a lot more attention. Not just in the fan base world but also in between schools. I came from a very, very, very good softball program before I came here, and regardless of what we did, we could win. I mean, we were in the conference championship twice in both my years there, and we didn't have AD, the president, or anybody. But they would go to every single baseball game every single football game.” (D2, softball)
- “When I first got to college, nobody really showed up to our games, but every time I went to a men's game, I'm like, wow, it's [sic] a lot of people in this gym, so it definitely bothered me a little bit because we worked just as hard. So I think that was one of my biggest issues is just people not really showing up from women's sports cause I guess it wasn't important that we're women and who cares, you know, so I think that was one of the biggest problems.” (D1, Basketball)



THEME 2 – LACK OF EQUALITY IN INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- Support staff
 - I would say maybe, like, the support systems. All the men's team having like multiple managers, and they have, you know, people that come help out, like tons of assistant coaches. We don't have that, so it's just three coaches, and our GA (graduate assistant), but our injured players have to do our film, and our injured players have to talk to the recruits, whereas I know some of the men's sports have so many managers. They have a water kit; they have someone to do the film. (D1, Lacrosse)
- Scheduling
 - I think the problem was here at [my institution] was we shared the gym with every sport so whenever I try to get in and get up some shots, everybody was always in the gym. It was like, you know, we have volleyball in the gym. They have practice right now so when do I get in to shoot? Do I come back late at night? Which I did and I didn't like it because it was late at night you know, 10-11pm. (D1, Basketball)
- Facilities
 - [Our locker room] is really nice, that it's right off the field, but it is kind of small. We all are, kind of, just on top of each other because of the amount of girls we have on the team, and it would be nice to have like our own space so we're not elbowing and all up in each other's grill during the whole process of getting ready. (D2, Soccer)



THEME 3 – EQUALITY

- The difference, I think, it's so dependent on the sport, I guess. Speaking from, you know, our football and basketball standpoint is, they do get a lot more funding, they do get a lot more, you know, gear, they get a lot more, you know press, a lot more media. Male sports definitely get more attention than women's sports. (D1, Volleyball)
- Rather than just do[ing] it instead of making it all about Title IX. So, I guess just making sure that everything should be [the] world 'athlete' there. We're all kind of going through the same struggles and all living out our dreams. So, just making it[s] because those are things that we all should have, not just because it's Title IX. I think it's the biggest thing because there's a law, or whatever it's called. I mean, that's the reason why you should do it. [It] should just be done because everyone's equal, everyone's a student-athlete. But just doing it because that's the right thing to do. Treating everyone equal. Everyone should get upgrades to their facilities, and everyone should be posted on social media or supported or endorsed for games and things like that. (D1, Softball)



ANALYSIS

- The findings of this research are connected to the research questions that inequality remains in men's and women's collegiate athletics.
- Additional findings for consideration:
 - travel accommodations for the female programs
 - the impact football has on an institution
 - the equipment and gear men's collegiate teams receive versus the equipment and gear women's collegiate teams receive.
- Football vs. remaining athletic programs
- The deficiency in equality for men's and women's athletics in facilities, equipment, travel accommodations, and budgets could be due to a limited economic resource of the institutions.
- not an economic issue, but rather an institutional issue that requires attention and honest interest in the women's athletics programs



CONCLUSION

- Research Question 1: Emerging themes from this question were travel accommodations, equipment, and support from their institutions or fan support.
 - Through the coding data analysis process, it was clear that the participants did feel a level of inequality within women's collegiate athletics.
- Research Question 2: Through coding and themes presented in this research, participants categorized as the only female sport program at their institution identified a perception of inequality pertaining to recognition and opportunities that was not equal.
 - Although programs that share a coaching staff are often treated as one, there is still a perception of inequality that female student-athletes within these sport programs experience.
- Research Question 3: Participants identified every student-athlete needs to be treated equal by their institution, no matter their gender.
 - these participants repeatedly mentioned that institutions should treat every student-athlete equally and offer them the same opportunities.



RECOMMENDATIONS & INFORMING STAKEHOLDERS

- Recommend Title IX compliance be reviewed for institutions with football programs, and how institutions can reach compliance with more guidance as recommended by previous scholars (Frazier & Caines, 2015; Haglund, 2005; Tibbetts, 2020)
- Institutions complete internal research in athletic departments to ensure Title IX compliance
- Athletic department staff, institutional policy makers, and institutional stakeholders undergo training for Title IX yearly, and complete training for any new updates to the guidelines
- Athletic Director, Deputy Athletic Director, Senior Women's Administrator and Assistant Athletic Directors meet with women's sport programs bi-annually for check-ins on support and changes that need to be met for inequality issues
- All student-athletes participate in Title IX training
- Each institution form a small group of student-athletes, one from each program, that focuses on making policies and changes of reported inequality



RECOMMENDATIONS & INFORMING STAKEHOLDERS

- The stakeholders in this research are the ones closest to women's collegiate athletics: Athletic Directors, Deputy Athletic Directors, Assistant Athletic Directors, Senior Women's Administrators, Compliance Staff, and Women's Program Head Coaches. External stakeholders include the Faculty Athletic Representative, athletic donors, and community engagers
- The importance that stakeholders review this research, and the findings are essential.
- As one of the major emerging themes, "underappreciation," stakeholders can take action to remediate this perception by enhancing visibility, increasing community engagement, and implementing equitable policies at their respective institutions.



LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

- Additional research methodologies
 - Various geographic areas, not only the southeast
 - Quicker access to participants
-
- Division III addition for future research
 - Geographic areas or conferences
 - Football programs vs non-football program institutions
 - Include NIL



QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

