

EXPLORING INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC COACHES' DEVELOPMENT: THE
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

BY

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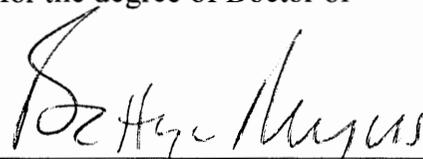
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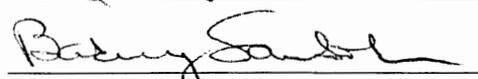
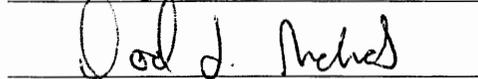
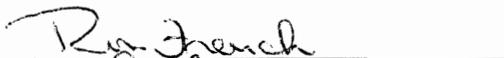
To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Lisa Lynne Langston entitled "Exploring Interscholastic Athletic Coaches' Development: The Athletic Director's Perspective." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Kinesiology.



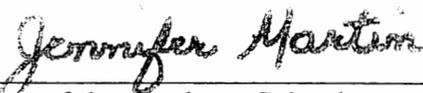
Dr. Bettye Myers, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:



Department Chair

Accepted:



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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my mother, Mary Corbin, and my grandmother, Annie Parr, who have given me a lifetime of unconditional love and support. They share their wisdom, inspiring me to greater endeavors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With a time-consuming profession, entering into a doctoral program was a questionable undertaking. The journey to completing the process and this dissertation was not done in isolation. I have been truly blessed by God's goodness. It is with deepest appreciation that I acknowledge the people whom I owe a debt of gratitude for their unwavering support and assistance.

To my family, I thank them for their love and patience, and for understanding my love of learning. I am a lifetime learner.

To my friends--DC, JC, NH, SH, CS, PS, JM, and NB, I thank them for their loving friendship and encouraging words throughout this process.

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To my colleagues and our leader, Herb Stephens, Jr., I thank them for their cooperation and understanding during this process. It is hoped that this dissertation provides more insight into our noble profession.

To Dr. Adelaide Griffin, I thank her for her guidance and for sparking my curiosity about the control process.

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To my advisor and committee chairperson, Dr. Bettye Myers, I thank her for her guidance, patience, understanding, and support throughout the years. Her words of wisdom have served me well--thank you.

ABSTRACT

LISA LYNNE LANGSTON

EXPLORING INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC COACHES' DEVELOPMENT: THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

MAY 2010

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how interscholastic athletic directors would control for the professional preparation and development of athletic coaches. Research questions guiding this study were (a) what should be professional qualifications for coaches entering the coaching profession; (b) what training system or professional development process should be required for coaches; and (c) what type of performance appraisal system should be used for coaches.

The participants were athletic directors, with no coaching responsibilities, of school districts with three or more high schools competing at Texas' largest two classifications in football, boys' basketball and girls' basketball. The participants were 9 men and 3 women. The years of experience as athletic directors ranged from 1 to 47. Face-to-face interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed to produce textual data. The data were coded and analyzed using inductive techniques and revealed nine themes.

Based on the participants' perspective, the primary function of coaches is comparable to that of the classroom teacher. However, individuals entering the coaching profession lack proper preparation for the position. Support for a coaches' certification or recertification process to improve the profession varied widely.

Sport knowledge is improved through attendance at clinics. Current clinic offerings, however, do not adequately address the nontechnical aspects of coaching. Although professional development requirements are viewed as beneficial, barriers and issues must be resolved before any state requirements should be established.

Recommendations that resulted from the study for athletic administrators were (a) become familiar with national standards for sport coaches; (b) require first-year coaches to keep a reflective log; (c) compile a profile of new coaches to assess and direct training and development activities; (d) formalize a systemic growth process utilizing national standards to match the progression from a basic coach to a master coach; (e) provide input to state-based professional coaching associations regarding topics for coaching clinics; (f) explore self-reflective or self-evaluation process to focus on individual improvement; and (g) create a state-based coach's certification and professional development requirement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

My senior year at an urban Texas high school, my teammates and I finished the basketball season with an impressive record of 26 victories and only 4 defeats. It was the second season as head coach for our 25-year-old math teacher/coach, who was promoted to the head girls' basketball position after serving 1 year as the freshmen boys' basketball coach. After the successful season, it was speculated that I missed an All-State designation because my coach was not a member of the major coaching organization that granted such an honor. However, I was selected to participate in an all-star game featuring players from around the state.

As a member of the North All-Star squad, I practiced with my teammates in preparation for our big game. Our team was coached by a well-known and well-respected Central Texas women's junior college coach. As the coach took us through a series of practices, it became increasingly apparent that I lacked some basic technical basketball knowledge. I had not being taught the basic principles of man-to-man defense. Despite this, I earned an athletic scholarship to play basketball at a major Division I university. My freshman year of college, as the fall on-the-court practice commenced, I noticed that everyone on the team shot a left-handed lay-up correctly except me. I did not recall being taught how to correctly execute a left-handed lay-up. I am certain it was not a point of

emphasis during my high school practice days. I was fortunate; my athletic ability had allowed me to compensate for the fundamental basketball skills and knowledge I lacked.

Approximately 15 years after my high school senior season, my former high school coach and I had a chance meeting at a girls' state basketball tournament game. The coach, who was still coaching, but at a rural high school, said, "I wish I had known back during your playing days what I know now." What had my former coach learned during the years to make such a declaration and who assisted with or was responsible for the growth process? The coach's acknowledgement of culpability for the lack of coaching competency during my playing days allowed my unexpressed resentment to dissipate but also piqued my interest in coaches' education and development in an interscholastic athletic setting. However, my 9 years of experience as an assistant athletic director in an urban school district provides much of the framework or *motivating force* for this study.

According to rules set forth by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), the governing body for Texas public school interscholastic athletics, high school head coaches and assistant coaches must be full-time employees of the school district they represent. The exception is that a retired teacher or school administrator who served in either or both capacities for 20 or more years "may serve as an assistant coach in all athletics and as a head coach for golf, tennis, team tennis, cross country, track and field, swimming, and wrestling" (Constitution and Contest Rules, 2007, p. 164). No further statement regarding the qualifications for employment of high school head or assistant coaches is documented.

The *UIL Coaches' Manual Junior High Athletics* (2008), conversely, states that “the school board decides who may coach junior high school teams. The [middle school] coach is not required to be a full time [district] employee” (p. 19). However, in the seventh and eighth grade athletic plan, it is mentioned that school districts should “provide qualified faculty leadership who understand this adolescent age group, the objective of this modified sports program, and the emphasis on safety and welfare of the student” (Constitution and Contest Rules, 2007, p. 238) to lead the athletic program. Many multiple high school districts attempt to employ only certified educators as high school and middle school coaches; however, this practice does not ensure the quality of the individual’s coaching ability.

According to Flannery (2003, ¶ 3), the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) assistant director and director of the NFHS Coach Education Program, “Being a teacher does not qualify someone to coach, just as learning to become a teacher of math does not qualify someone to teach English.” Having a role in the hiring process for high school and middle school coaches in our district, the researcher knows that individuals may be hired for a coaching position solely because they are certified in the only teaching position available. This situation is prevalent in minor high school sports and girls’ sports.

Over 30 years ago, Fuoss and Troppmann (1977) stated “it is paramount that athletic programs be conducted by members of the faculty who have been trained and credentialed in the field of physical education and athletics” (p. 46). In 2009, certified physical educators were the only teachers who may have taken any type of formal

coaching education courses. Unfortunately, the allotment of physical education positions is limited on high school and middle school campuses. A high school may have three to four times the number of core subject teachers such as math or science than physical education teachers. This situation increases the probability of individuals serving in the important role of an interscholastic coach without any formal coaching education courses or training.

At the middle school level, many teachers become coaches by default. With a smaller group of teachers, but the same pressure for academic excellence as their high school counterparts, many middle school principals hire teachers first and consider fielding qualified coaching candidates second. This creates a coaching vocation that Flannery (2003, ¶ 10) terms an *accidental occupation*, a situation where individuals who do not plan to go into coaching are inadequately prepared to coach. As a supervisor of many individuals fitting into this category, the researcher is resigned to the fact that ample training must be provided the *accidental* coaches. However, time constraints limit opportunities for training; further, most training is technical in nature.

The NFHS is attempting to address the issue of the untrained, inadequately prepared or accidental novice coach. The NFHS is the national service and administrative organization for high school athletics. The organization “provides leadership and national coordination for interscholastic athletic competition in the United States by publishing playing rules for 16 boys’ and girls’ sports and [by] providing educational services and programs for the members of 51 state associations whose members make up the NFHS” (Robinson, Lizandra, & Vail, 2001, p. 239). In January 2007, NFHS launched the

signature course for the NFHS Coach Education Program: the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course (Williams, 2007, p.11).

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) is an equal partner with the NFHS. The aim of the NIAAA is to “promote a positive working relationship between the state high school athletic associations and state athletic administrator associations” (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association [NIAAA], Home, 2005). The state high school athletic association for Texas is the University Interscholastic League (UIL), and the Texas High School Athletic Directors Association (THSADA) is the state athletic administrator association. The NIAAA Board of Directors passed a unanimous motion Sunday February 11, 2007, endorsing the following statement:

The NIAAA proudly endorses the NFHS Coaches Education program and pledges to encourage all members and State Athletic Director Associations to provide professional development for coaches by using the NFHS coaches’ education program courses (p. 1).

Interestingly, “the UIL Legislative Council [which is the rule making committee] passed an amendment in October 2007 to require all first-year coaches and any coach who is not a full-time employee of the school district to complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, effective August 1, 2008” (Harrison, 2008, p. 17). Dr. Charles Breithaupt, the UIL Athletic Director, speaking to athletic administrators at the Mid-Winter Conference of the Texas High School Athletic Director Association

(THSADA), stated “this is just a course to give basic information, not a certification” (personal communication, March 17, 2008).

For the first time in its existence, the UIL required formal coaching-related training for coaches, albeit for new or part-time coaches only. This important step essentially created a system of control for novice coaches; however, it does not address veteran coaches. It is worth noting that school districts could have had or may have educational requirement for their coaches. From 2000 to 2005, the researcher’s district required its middle school coaches to become certified through the American Sport Education Program (ASEP) Coaching Principles Course. As an instructor of the coaching course formerly endorsed by NFHS, the researcher took the new online NFHS coaching course to conduct a comparison.

The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course specifically addresses interscholastic athletic coaches and is student-centered. The five course chapters are Educational Athletics, The Coach as Manager, The Coach and Interpersonal Skills, The Coach and Physical Conditioning, and The Coach as Teacher. The course refers to the top five educational outcomes for athletic participation as: Citizenship, Life Skills, Healthy Lifestyle, Sportsmanship, and Promotion of Learning. The course focuses (a) on instructing coaches about their role and their responsibility in ensuring positive outcomes for students participating in interscholastic athletics; and (b) on the basic skills and knowledge needed by coaches to assist with achieving positive outcomes. Although the course is beneficial, it is a one-time solitary learning experience with no follow-up requirement.

Researchers have examined how coaches learn and develop (e.g., Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006; Erickson, Côté, & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre, Trudel, & Durand-Bush, 2007; Lyle, 1999; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006); however, it is typically from the coaches' perspectives. In addition, the participants in these investigations, generally, had taken a formal coaching education course or were involved in a well-developed coaching certification program. Moreover, neither the settings where the studies were conducted nor the context of the findings were related to interscholastic athletic coaching.

Malete and Feltz (2000), however, conducted a study involving interscholastic coaches in “an attempt to determine if a particular coaching education program could have an effect on the beliefs of coaches in their capacity to affect the learning and performance of their athletes as measured by the Coaching Efficacy Scale” (p. 416). Their findings actually supported the need for a longer, more sustained effort to educate coaches. “A longer program could also include more time for mastery experiences for coaches, where they could have opportunities to practice using positive feedback techniques, effective instruction of a skill, or maintaining control during a simulated practice,” (Malete & Feltz, p. 416).

Cushion, Armour, and Jones (2003) had professed that “those responsible for looking at new forms of coach professional development could find it useful to draw upon the experiences and findings of researchers in the field of education” (p. 222). Guskey and Huberman (1995) estimated, “the current emphasis on professional development comes from growing recognition of education as a dynamic, professional

field” (p. 1). Perhaps fueled by the latter perspective, Texas discontinued the practice of granting lifetime teacher certificates. Starting September 1, 1999, the Standard Certificate was issued to individuals who completed preparation and/or testing requirements after that date (State Board of Educator Certification [SBEC], 2006). The Standard Certificate for classroom teachers, which must be renewed to remain valid, requires completion of 150 clock hours of continuing professional education (CPE) every 5 years. Individuals who hold lifetime certificates are grandfathered (SBEC, 2006).

The perceived purpose and the importance of this policy change were documented in the Texas Education Code (TEC). The Certification of Educators (1995, §21.031), states that the State Board “ensure that all candidates for certification or renewal of certification demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state.” In addition to the certification code, there is an educator’s Appraisals and Incentive code (1995, §21.351). The researcher’s district uses the education commissioner's recommended teacher-appraisal system, the Professional Development and Appraisal System. In 2009, Texas coaches had only a safety-related certification requirement comprised of an annual First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training (Texas Education Code, 2003, §33.086).

As it relates to coaches’ knowledge and skills that are necessary to improve student-athletes’ performance or to ensure educational outcomes for athletic participation, neither a certification code nor an appraisal code exist. Beyond the criterion for employment, coaches’ development and how it relates to the goals and objectives of

interscholastic athletic is an issue worthy of exploration. In Texas, association between coaches' performance and continuous professional development is an unknown area of study.

Inglis (2001) stated "there is a need to understand what sport managers identify as critical management problems" (p. 66). Studies or research was not found related to athletic directors and their management of interscholastic athletic coaches. It is believed that a need exists for an investigation into the management of coaches, especially since coaches ultimately determine whether educational outcomes for interscholastic athletic participation are achieved.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how selected interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers of 4A and 5A high schools in Texas, would control for the professional preparation and professional development of athletic coaches. The aim was discover, from the interscholastic athletic director's perspective, factors or strategies for systematic and verifiable growth of coaches.

Statement of Problem

The purported value of interscholastic athletics is well documented. The value, however, is not inherent. The quality of adult leadership, the coaches, is paramount to the integration of interscholastic athletics as a beneficial component of the educational system. Again, the new NFHS course requirement, which only affects new or part-time coaches, is neither a component of a coaching certification process nor a continuous professional development process. Moreover, it does not address grandfathered coaches

who may not be “utilizing the best and most current teaching, coaching, and training methods through affiliation with professional associations and publications” as cited in the Athletic Code for Coaches (Constitution and Contest Rules, 2007, p. 164). It bears questioning also how veteran coaches are being held accountable for upholding this code for coaches.

Jensen (1988) stated that “professional development opportunities have two purposes: (a) to prevent employees from becoming outdated and less competent, and (b) to cause them to become better prepared and more competent” (p. 124). When questioned about attending the Texas Girls Coaches Association (TGCA) summer coaching school, a 7-year veteran middle school volleyball coach, who was ASEP-certified, stated that it was not known that attendance at coaching school was an expectation for coaches. By the coach’s own admission, she had just been doing the same things year after year. This, hopefully, isolated situation presented evidence of glaring problems. During that coach’s 7 years of service, the sport of volleyball had undergone a radical change from the traditional side-out format to a rally-scoring format. This change had a significant impact on the sport. Had the coach not self-reflected to understand the need to possibly do some things differently? Obviously, there was not a system in place to document or address the need for professional growth in this coach’s estimation.

Research Questions

Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated that the grounded theory research method “is one of emergence” (p. 33). Therefore, research questions should “provide flexibility and freedom to explore” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 40) issues in depth. Based on a review of

literature that included themes such as control as a function of management; coaching standards; coaches' development; and the researcher's experience as an athletic administrator in an urban multiple high school setting, the following research questions that guided this study were:

1. What should be professional qualifications for coaches entering the coaching profession in 4A and 5A Texas high schools?
2. What training system or professional development process should be required throughout a coach's career?
3. What type of performance appraisal system for coaches should be in place that would indicate mastery and would provide for quality experiences for student-athletes?

Significance of Study

Marshall and Rossman (1989) stated that "in applied fields demonstrating a study's significance for policy and practice is usually more straightforward than showing how it contributes to knowledge" (p. 31). This study, in the framework of Sport Management, can be categorized as a study in an applied field. Therefore, the following statements supported the study's significance:

1. The study might assure school district stakeholders that interscholastic athletic coaches' professional growth and development is being controlled in the absence of a state-required certification and renewal process.

2. The findings might give some assurance that interscholastic athletics is educational and is beneficial to the students who participate in the interscholastic athletic programs.
3. The study might reveal best practices that could assist interscholastic athletic directors with performing their job as sport managers more effectively.
4. Further, the study may identify the potential for a UIL policy that gives direction for the formation of a coaches' training model and development program.

Limitations

The limitations for this study were:

1. The study was limited to the researcher's interviewing ability.
2. The study was limited to the comments provided by the 12 participants.
3. The results and findings of the study are limited to the analysis and interpretations of the researcher.
4. The findings are not subject to generalizations.

Delimitations

The delimitations for this study are listed below.

1. The study was confined to athletic directors in a North Texas area school district with three or more high schools that compete in Class 4A and/or 5A football, boys' basketball, and girls' basketball. Class 4A and class 5A are the two largest UIL classifications and are based on school enrollment.
2. The study was confined to the experiences of the study's participants.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined as:

Athletic director: An athletic director refers to any individual whose primary job function is overseeing an interscholastic athletic program and is a member of a school district's central administrative staff. Further, the individual has no coaching responsibility.

Generally, in multiple high school systems, the athletic director is assisted by one or more assistant athletic directors.

Continuous professional development: Continuous professional development is “the concept that the members of a profession should commit themselves individually to improving their knowledge and understanding throughout their careers, and keeping up to date with all developments within their chosen professions. This also entails learning from their own experiences and making a conscious effort to identify deficiencies and weakness in order to redress these through formal training and development” (Heery & Noon, 2001, ¶ 1).

Control process: “A process that helps an organization to determine whether or not its objectives are being achieved and whether or not adjustments need to be made to meet them” (Law, 2006). For the purpose of this study, control, control system, and control process are interchangeable terms.

Grounded theory: According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), grounded theory is “theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed . . . begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data” (p. 12).

Interscholastic: For the purpose of this study, an interscholastic athletic program refers to a sports program that is affiliated with a public high school with the exception of two private schools. Dallas Jesuit and Houston Strake Jesuit were authorized by the University Interscholastic League to become participants in public school athletics.

Span of control: For the purpose of this study, span of control refers to “the area of activity and number of functions, people, or things for which an individual is responsible” (Soanes & Stevenson, 2005).

University Interscholastic League (UIL): “The purpose of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) is to organize and properly supervise contests that assist in preparing students for citizenship. It aims to provide healthy, character building, educational activities carried out under rules providing for good sportsmanship and fair play for all participants” (UIL, About, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the UIL (2009) refers to the entity that governs Texas interscholastic athletics and that provides leadership and guidance to athletic coaches, athletic administrators, and school personnel.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to explore how interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers at 4A and 5A high schools in Texas, would control for the professional preparation and development of athletic coaches. As such, this study was conducted from the framework of sport management. Broadly, sport management is defined as “the responsibility for performance” (Covell, Walker, Sicilano, & Hess, 2007, p. 5). Sport managers or athletic directors, as they relate to this study, are “always responsible for the organization’s realization of its goals” (Covell et al., p. 5)

Literature related to the purpose of this study consisted of five topics: control as a function of management, coaching standards, interscholastic athletics and the role of the athletic director, credentials of interscholastic coaches, and coaches’ development. The literature review defined control and outlined the process of control. It also presents coaching standards, based on 2006 industry standards. The goals of interscholastic athletics and the responsibility of the athletic director to goal achievement are discussed. The credentialing or a lack thereof, of interscholastic coaches was examined. Literature on coaches’ development was the final topic reviewed. The topic was scrutinized from four perspectives: differentiating between training and development, investigating whether interscholastic coaching is a profession, investigating the role of professional development, and examining research on how coaches develop and learn.

Control as a Function of Management

The management process includes planning, organizing, implementing, and then controlling (Bridges, 1992; Krotee & Bucher, 2007). “Theoretically, control is the only function of management that could be eliminated, but only if planning, organizing, and implementing were performed perfectly,” (Bridges, p. 154). Control involves comparing or measuring actual performance with a planned or predetermined performance or target and, if needed, taking corrective actions to ensure that objectives are achieved (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Mosley, Pietri, & Mosley, 2008).

The goal of control is to ensure employee performance comparable to the standards for a job and, if not, to determine the causes for deviations from the job standards (Bridges, 1992). More specifically, the performance must be effective in achieving the goals of an organization, and the manager’s role is to recognize and eradicate issues that hinder the process (Jensen, 1988). Additionally, the control process can be viewed as an “an ongoing process of evaluation, involving (1) defining standards, (2) measuring actual results against the standards, and (3) taking appropriate actions to prevent problems and overcome weaknesses” (Jensen, p. 45). Ultimately, the perspective on control is that “people produce results, and control involves changing the behaviors of these people when the real results vary from the ideal” (Railey & Railey, 1988, p. 110).

Bridges (1992) and Mosley, Pietri, and Mosley (2008) suggested almost parallel thoughts regarding the characteristics of effective control systems. The control activities must be focused and tailored toward achieving the organization’s needs and objectives; must be cost-effective; and present information in a timely manner. Whereas Mosley et

al. stated that controls should be accurate, concise, and accepted by the people they affect, Bridges expounded the essence of objectivity, the need of flexibility to adapt to change, and the requirement of top management's support of the process.

According to Jensen (1988), "the control function is to ensure high quality performance and results in an orderly fashion. It involves the setting and achieving of performance standards and the application of the organization's policies and procedures," (p. 45). Mosley et al. (2008) detailed a four-step control process that elucidates Jensen's statement with a clear course of action.

1. The first step is *Establishing Performance Standards*. A standard, which becomes the foundation of the supervisor's or manager's control activities, is defined as a unit of measurement that can serve as a reference point for evaluation results of an individual. There are two types of standards:
 - a. Tangible standards are clear and concrete, and can be expressed in terms such as money or numbers. "An example of a tangible standard is the number of rushing yards produced by an offensive line football coach," (p. 380).
 - b. Intangible standards, related to human characteristics such as desirable attitude, are challenging to measure because they are not expressed by numerical means. "An example of an intangible standard is the leadership qualities displayed by an athletic coordinator," (p. 380).

2. The second step is *Measuring Performance* for compliance with the established standards. This step involves monitoring performance and presents two issues:
 - a. How often to measure performance, which is addressed through a strategic control point that is identified as a performance measurement point that occurs early enough in an activity to allow for any corrective action needed to accomplish the objective.
 - b. How to measure performance, which is achieved by four basic methods. The methods are (a) personal observations; (b) written or oral reports by or about employees; (c) automatic methods; and (d) inspections, tests or samples.
3. The third step, *Comparing Performance with Standards and Analyzing Deviations*, utilized the information obtained in the previous step. An often overlooked aspect of this step is seeking to understand the cause for the difference between planned and actual performance. “Many supervisors jump to the conclusions about the causes of the problems; as a result, the corrective action they take is ineffective” (p. 384).
4. The fourth step is *Taking Corrective Action If Necessary*. It is important to find out the opinions of those close to a particular problem to determine why standards are not being met. Once the *whys* are determined, and then action is taken. The step is likened to the coach who makes adjustments, fine-tunes, or makes modifications at halftime in response to problems encountered earlier

in the contest. The coach takes corrective measures to get players to performance at a certain standard.

While Mosley et al. (2008) detailed the steps for a control process, Jensen (1988) commented on the pragmatic nature of control.

Controls are often unpopular among those being controlled A negative reaction can often be avoided or lessened, if the manager is careful about interpreting and implementing control measures It is important for employees to be able to see where their work contributes to the goals of the organization. This will help each one to know that measuring his or her performance is legitimate and necessary. Also, employees will better understand the reasons for adjustments when the evaluation results show a need for corrective action (p. 46).

The most applicable literature with reference to control for this study was in the sport management books, *Creative Management Techniques in Interscholastic Athletics* (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977) and *Management of Physical Education and Sport* (Krotee & Bucher, 2007). In terms of control, Fuoss and Troppmann (1977) declared that “the athletic director is primarily responsible for the evaluation of the coaches’ performance” (p. 39). According to Krotee and Bucher (2007), the means of control for the athletic director must include keeping their coaches informed of their performance through regular monitoring and evaluation procedures and of their accountability concerns through regular reports and research. Further, the managers must share information with

their coaches regarding progression towards goals and identify areas of needed improvement and development (Krotee & Bucher).

The control process ensures the proper execution of plans and, in accordance with Mosley et al. (2008), consists of setting job standards or expectations, and methods and procedures for monitoring and assessing whether standards are met (Krotee & Bucher, 2007). Fuoss and Troppmann (1977) proposed several ideas to assist the athletic director with controlling and reporting. Two relevant suggestions for this study are:

1. “Set up a framework upon which an evaluation of goals and objectives may be based” (p. 40).
2. “Continually evaluate the progress of the program to determine the effectiveness in meeting the needs of students” (p. 40).

However, the process of control for athletic directors would begin with establishing standards for coaches.

Coaching Standards

In March 1994, the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) facilitated a National Coaching Summit hosted by the U. S. Sports Academy and attended by over 200 organizations and other individual experts (National Association of Sport and Physical Education [NASPE], 1995, p. 1). The focus of the summit and subsequent discussions was on “ways to improve the quality of coaching” (p. 1). The process led to the 1995 release of the *Quality Coaches Quality Sports: National Standards for Athletic Coaches* (NSAC) (p. 1), “a consensus description of the essential knowledge and experience required of coaches at various levels of competition” (Clark,

2000, p. 61). In the initial debut, there were 37 standards grouped in eight domains. The eight domains were:

- Injuries: Prevention, Care and Management
- Risk Management
- Growth, Development and Learning
- Training, Conditioning and Nutrition
- Social/Psychological Aspects of Coaching
- Skills, Tactics and Strategies
- Teaching and Administration, and
- Professional Preparation and Development (NASPE, 1995, p. 2).

The competencies associated with the 37 standards are divided into five levels, ranging from minimum qualification for an entry-level coach to a mastery of all standards for a fully competent master coach (NASPE, 1995). The NSAC provided a progression to gauge a coach's growth and development (NASPE, 1995).

The intent of the NSAC was “to provide direction for administrators, coaches, athletes and the public regarding the skills and knowledge that coaches should possess” (NASPE, 1995, p. 2). According to Clark (2000), the non-sport specific NSAC provided a framework for creating educational programs that meet the needs of prospective coaches and a framework for working with coaches. Organizations can construct training programs based on the NSAC that are beneficial to coaches of a specific sport and/or a level of the sports programming (Clark, 2000). For example, training could be designed

for the youth soccer sport association and their volunteer coaches or for a school district and with paid teachers-coaches.

In the article, *The Future of Athletic Coaching*, Maetozo (1981) proclaimed “the only certain prediction concerning the future of athletics and athletic coaching is that there will be change” (p. 41). In 2006, *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches, 2nd Edition* (NSSC) was the result of a revision of the 1995 version of coaching standards with an increase to 40 standards. Additionally, each of the 40 standards in the NSSC was identified under a domain and presented with an explanation of its purpose, and accompanied by benchmarks to provide concrete examples of actions and orientations that constitute coaching competence (NASPE, 2006). The benchmarks, a new feature, are “performance guides which can be used in developing and assessing coaching competence, and can be applied to any sport or coaching program” (NASPE, p. 4). The eight Domains of Coaching Competencies in the NSSC are as follows:

- Philosophy and Ethics
- Safety and Injury Prevention
- Physical Conditioning
- Growth and Development
- Teaching and Communication
- Sport Skills and Tactics
- Organization and Administration, and

- Evaluation (NASPE, pp. 5-6).

The intent of the NSSC was unchanged from the 1995 NSAC, to give direction to athletic administrators in regards to the areas of expertise required of coaches (NASPE, 2006). Further, the NSSC gave context to coaches' performance for which coaches can reflect and assess their progress to the next level of competency (Clark, 2000). Progression through the various levels of competencies and meeting sequential standards should be of particular interest to athletic directors who supervise coaches in the educational setting.

Interscholastic Athletics and the Role of the Athletic Director

The United States is likely to align sports with a school setting more so than other countries around the world (Woods, 2007). In other countries, sports programs are associated with communities and supported by local sports clubs (Woods, 2007). The setting of the sports program dictates different responsibilities to the participants. "In evaluating the place of athletics in education, it must be remembered that athletics exist for the education of the youth [or students] rather than the youth [or students] existing for the performance of athletic activities," (Healey & Healey, 1976, p. 15). According to Healey and Healey (p. 15), the administration of and the curriculum for athletics should be directed as other programs within the school setting. Forsythe and Keller (1977) stated that "emphasis shall be upon teaching *through* athletics in addition to teaching the *skills* of athletics" (p. 7).

The NFHS has led high school sports since 1920. In 1977, the NFHS made the following proclamation:

Interscholastic athletics shall be an integral part of the total secondary school educational program that has as its purpose to provide educational experiences not otherwise provided in the curriculum, which will develop learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge, skills, and emotional patterns and will contribute to the development of better citizens (Forsythe & Keller, 1977, p. 7).

In 2009, the NFHS had a focus on the future of interscholastic school-based sports. To accomplish the mission, the NFHS focuses on providing standards and rules for competition that enhance the experience for the participants while assisting the individuals who administer interscholastic athletics and activities (NFHS About, 2009). However, the NFHS has no power to enforce its rules to ensure the integrity of interscholastic athletics (Robinson et al., 2001). Therefore, the responsibility to the ideals of interscholastic athletics lies with the athletic director (Flannery & Swank, 1999).

The athletic director, depending on the school district, “is responsible *to* certain people such as the principal, superintendent, and a board of education . . . [and] is also responsible *for* other people such the athletes, the coaches” (Flannery & Swank, 1999, p. 4). As such, the athletic director is responsible for providing the vision for effective performance by coaches that contribute to the success of the athletic program (Covell et al., 2007). Moreover, Covell et al. (2007) cited management theorist Drucker in stating that “the most effective way to achieve a shared understanding of the organization’s vision is through well-defined goals. The challenge for school sports . . . [is] how to define program goals,” (p. 124).

In setting goals and objectives for the interscholastic athletic program, Fuoss and Troppmann (1977), in accord with Healey and Healey (1976), noted that the program is “primarily conducted for the student participants.... the goals of athletic participation should be to contribute to the health and well-being of the student-athletes as well as the development of physical skills, emotional maturity, social awareness, moral values, a sense of cooperation, a spirit of competition, self-discipline, and understanding of the democratic process” (p. 46).

Forsythe and Keller (1977) placed the issue of interscholastic athletics beyond establishing or having stated program goals. In 1977, they asked whether interscholastic athletics can continue to prove its educational worth. The responsibility, again, lies with the athletic director (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977). Fuoss and Troppmann (1977) stated “the athletic director must administer the athletic program as a part of and in accord with the total school curriculum,” (p. 46). Forsythe and Keller (1977) emphasized that the future value of interscholastic athletics as an educational endeavor is dependent upon the awareness and purposeful actions of the coaches and athletic director.

Interscholastic athletics has strong support in the United States, based on the longevity of programming (Woods, 2007). However, “coaches must not lose sight of the educational aspect of interscholastic athletics if they [coaches] are to help retain broad support for their programs” (Woods, p. 116). If significant educational values are to be accrued from interscholastic athletics, they will be determined primarily by the attention coaches give in their planning to teach these values. Forsythe and Keller (1977) emphasized that coaches have the responsibility of ensuring that school sports

participation is educational and that athletic directors have the responsibility for the administration to make certain this is done.

Credentials of Interscholastic Athletic Coaches

Years ago, when most coaches were physical education teachers and learned how to teach skills progression, and understood and possessed a coaching philosophy based on tenets of education, athletic directors were less likely to experience problems involving their coaches and parents, players, and officials (Flannery, 2003). In reference to coaches, Esslinger (1971) stressed that “untrained leadership cannot elicit the potential educational values inherent in athletics” (p. 27). Forsythe and Keller (1977) stated that the goal to enhance the education of students and to contribute to the development of good citizens will not “be achieved by chance” (p. 11). Flannery (2003) stated that “it should not be assumed that positive learning automatically occurs because students are involved in sports” (¶ 8). The coaches leading the athletic program will determine whether educational outcomes are gained by the student participants.

Coaches are role models who influence young people (Flannery, 2003). Consequently, their behaviors have a great bearing on what students learn from their athletic experience (Flannery, 2003). Lopiano, (as cited in Krotee & Bucher, 2007), suggested “that if the competent, ethical, and well-trained coach is the key to elimination of undesirable behavior for which sports is now being criticized, it seems obvious that the better organized we are in preparing and training this individual and the more reflective we are in employing and retaining a coach, the better our programs will be” (p. 153).

In 1977, Forsythe and Keller stated that athletic directors and school officials were experiencing difficulties in securing enough qualified coaches. In 2003, Flannery found that the situation continued as many of the interscholastic athletic programs are led by coaches from the community who have had no prior training in educational-based athletics. In 2009, there was no evidence to indicate that the situation involving coaches and their training has significantly changed. The importance of qualified and quality coaches is that “the quality of coaching determines the quality of the sport experience for students” (Clark, 2000, pp. 63-64).

Strong opinions are elicited by the thought of credentialing of coaches. “If athletics is a part of the educational curriculum and if there is concern over the qualifications of teachers in the academic area, then there should be equal concern over the qualifications of athletic coaches,” (Healey & Healey, 1976, p. 185). The education system predicated on the philosophy that quality education requires quality leadership and that significant educational gain is dependent upon thoroughly and professionally trained adults in the classrooms (Esslinger, 1971). Tim Flannery, NFHS assistant director and director of the Coach Education Program (2003) stated that “as a society, we expect doctors, teachers, automobile mechanics, and hair dresser to be certified--professionally prepared--for their profession or occupations. Are high school coaches any different, their work less valuable, or their impact less important?” (§ 2)

If a coach understands the principles involved in communication, models the appropriate behavior that will provide young people with an adult mentor, can attend to the health and care of athletes who become injured, knows how to teach

skills in progression from simple to complex, along with other information coaches need to be effective, then young people are more likely to have an enjoyable and positive learning experience (Flannery, 2003, ¶ 8).

Whereas Flannery (2003) provided insight about qualities coaches should possess, Holden (1971) gave a real-life context to the concerns about quality coaches. Each fall, a multitude of high school students become first-time interscholastic athletic participants, and the sports venues where they practice and compete are accepted as an extension of the classroom (Holden, 1971). It is, therefore, “essential that each student who enters [the athletic classroom] receive maximum protection and the finest instruction” (Holden, p. 14).

In the United States, the number of students entering athletic classrooms is staggering. In 2003-2004, 6,845,042 boys and girls participated in the NFHS-sanctioned interscholastic athletics (NFHS Participation, 2009). The participation for 2008-2009 increased to 7,529,641 boys and girls (NFHS Participation, 2009). With the increase in participation comes an amplified need to hire more qualified coaches. As a result, Covell et al. (2007) claimed more schools are compelled to employ inadequately trained coaches. Concerns about the preparation of coaches and quality of coaching are longstanding issues.

In 1971, the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (AAHPER) Division of Men’s Athletics assigned a task force to study the fundamental needs for teachers who coached (Esslinger, 1971). The Task Force suggested that:

The best way to *liquidate* unqualified coaches is for each state to establish certification standards for teachers of academic subjects who desire to coach. Such standards should be designed only for coaching--not for teaching physical education. The Task Force states that the standards should represent the basic understandings and competencies without which no individual should coach (Esslinger, 1971, p. 28).

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), in January 2004, assembled a panel of national, state, and local education policy-makers and committed stakeholders to assess the state of high school athletics. The mission involved recommending policies for adoption by states, districts, and schools advocating that participation in athletics supports academic achievement (National Association of State Boards of Education [NASBE], 2004). The findings resulted in the *Athletics & Achievement: The Report of the NASBE Commission on High School Athletics in an Era of Reform* (2004). According to the report, the panel agreed that “well-prepared coaches are the key ingredient to a quality athletic program, just as good teachers are the key ingredient to quality education” (NASBE, p. 23). Furthermore, the panel stated that “the sheer number of coaches suggests the need for greater oversight, the fact of their influence also makes it important for policymakers to gain an understanding of the role of coaches” (NASBE, p. 23). The panel placed the responsibility of creating standards for coaches on state boards of education (NASBE, 2004). It was recommended that:

State boards of education should provide for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements and, if absent or

insufficient, establish both certification and professional development requirements for all coach (NASBE, 2004, p. 24).

Maetozo's (1981) prognostication that "preparation and certification of athletic coach will continue to receive attention" (p. 38) had validity. Over 20 years later, Horine and Stotlar (2004), in agreement with Flannery (2003) posed the question of "why not require certification of coach?" (p. 315). Within a school setting, in addition to the classroom teacher, the band director, guidance counselor, and the driver education instructors are all certified in their respective area of expertise (Horine & Stotlar, 2004).

According to NASBE (2004), the rationale to move toward certification of coaches is instigated by a general concern associated with the increasing number of high school coaches from outside the teaching profession. Fuoss and Troppmann (1971) viewed the trend toward coaching certification as a benefit to the hiring process; it should increase the number of qualified candidates for a teaching position who would also have a coaching certificate. Krotee and Bucher (2007), although pleased with the increased attention and the focus on coaching certification, consider providing for the health, safety, and welfare of the students as the primary concern for training. However, the issue of credentialing of coaches cannot stop at training. A concern, as well, for the development of a coach must be addressed.

Coaches' Development

To gain insight into coaches' development for the purpose of this study, a review was required of training and development from the human resources perspective; an investigation of the profession of school-based coaching; and an investigation of

professional development in the educational setting. Lastly, studies about coaches' development and how coaches learn were reviewed.

Human Resource Perspective on Training, Development, and Performance Appraisals

According to Sims (2002), training is often used in conjunction with development; yet, "the terms are not synonymous" (p. 165). Human resource professionals draw a distinction between the two terms. Sims stated that "employee training can be defined as a planned attempt to facilitate employee learning of job-related knowledge, skills, and behaviors or helping them correct deficiencies in their performance" (p. 165). Development, on the other hand, "is an effort to provide employees with the skills needed for both present and future jobs" (Sims, p. 165).

Training and development, according to Mathis and Jackson (2006), are based on the assessment of the needs of the organization and the employees. However, focusing on development benefits the organization by increasing the capabilities of an organization's most valuable resource: its employees (Mathis & Jackson, 2006). According to Mathis and Jackson, the effectiveness of training is measured by performance appraisals of employees. If individual improvement is the objective, performance appraisals can be utilized to devise developmental opportunities and activities. Thus, the effectiveness of development is measured by the ability to fill job openings with internal qualified personnel as needed. A definitive statement about training and development, understandingly, is that "in studies that asked employees what they want out of their jobs, training and development ranked at or near the top" (Mathis & Jackson, p. 309).

Defining a Profession and Professional Development

Presented are three ideologies about the term, profession. In general terms, a profession can be defined as: “(a) a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation, (b) a principal calling, vocation, or employment, and (c) the whole body of persons engaged in a calling” (Profession, 2009). Morocco and Solomon (1999) present a comprehensive definition of profession as it relates to the educational setting.

A profession is a group of individuals who have pursued specialized knowledge, defined by the group itself as important. Professionals are identified not only by their specialized learning but also by their socialization into membership organizations and their affiliation with colleagues who are the source of new knowledge and lifelong learning. Professionals usually defined their own standards of excellence, mentor and monitor their peers to ensure high-level skills, establish licensing and credentialing procedures, and provide career ladders so that practitioners can be rewarded for progress in attaining ever higher levels of skill (p. 247).

Flannery (2003) described the criteria for a profession as “there is a body of specified knowledge; the knowledge is systematically taught; and there is verification of knowledge learned” (§ 10). Based on Flannery’s (2003) criteria, coaching is an occupation, not a profession. “It is difficult to make coaching a profession when the majority who practice this occupation stumble into it, when it does not require any formal

preparation, and when a person coaches for a few years and are paid poorly for this important, demanding work” (Flannery, ¶ 10).

In 2002, the NFHS, in partnership with the American Sport Education Program (ASEP) devised a comprehensive, multilevel, national coaches’ education and credentialing program (ASEP, p. 1). The premise of the joint venture was “recognizing coaches as professional” (ASEP, p. 2). The NFHS and ASEP believed that steps were needed to recognize coaches as professionals and to align coaches with teachers, lawyers, nurses, and hundreds of other professionals (p. 2). The steps necessary to enable coaches to be perceived as professionals were:

- Deliver a specialized body of knowledge to coaches systematically and verify that the information was learned.
- Encourage membership in a national organization that is dedicated to the improvement of professionalism among its members.
- Provide publications, resources, and materials that will aid coaches in fulfilling their role as key influencers of young people through sport and activities (ASEP, p. 2).

In 2006, the NFHS and ASEP (2009) partnership ended. The NFHS took over the role of developing its coaching education program. The exclusive focus of the program is interscholastic coaching and professional development (Williams, 2007, p. 11).

According to Jensen (1988), “professional development opportunities have two purposes: (a) to prevent employees from becoming outdated and less competent, and (b) to cause them to become better prepared and more competent” (p. 124). Irrespective of

the purpose, Moore (2006) stated that professional development should be defined in a more person-centered manner rather than provider-centered method. According to Moore, “professional development consists of planned learning experiences *designed by or in collaboration with individuals* who have the intention of advancing knowledge and skills to be used in their employment” (p. 61). In respect to coaching, Cushion et al. (2003) acknowledged that the findings of research in the field of education should be utilized for new approaches to coaches’ professional development (p. 222).

Guskey and Huberman (1995) claimed that the “current emphasis on professional development comes from growing recognition of education as a dynamic, professional field” (p. 1). Professional development, according to Lindstrom and Speck (2004), is a proactive endeavor that meets the need of classroom educators in a systemic manner. If the professional learning community cultivates an ongoing process of rejuvenation and renewal, it can be immune to impulsive, trendy movements (Lindstrom & Speck, p. 11). Finally, Sweeney (2008) asserted effective teacher development programs must be built on “solid research, tested theory, and expert practitioner wisdom” (p. 11).

Theories on Coaches Development and How Coaches Learn

For reasons that are multifaceted and wide-ranging, “the United States is the only major sporting nation without a national coach’s education program” (ASEP, 2002, p. 1). According to Clark (2000), coaches in many countries have formal training requirements, which may include a testing process, a certification process, or a licensure process that must be completed prior to being allowed to coach (p. 55). As a result, research studies of

coach development and how coaches learn are conducted outside the United States (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006).

The issue of relevance of research based on *outsiders* is addressed by Lyle (1999), who stated that the research from sports systems based in the United States and Eastern Europe has limited relevance to coaching in the United Kingdom. Sports programs may differ by countries; thus, the research from one country may not apply to coaching practices in another (Lyle, 1999). Lyle (1999), however, provides a starting point to review research concerning coaches' development. According to Lyle, "practitioners in all occupations, particularly professions and pseudo-professions, become more expert through experiences, interaction with others, and a mix of formal and informal educational and training opportunities" (p. 4).

Research on coaches' development and how coaches learn is focused on the premises of knowledge acquisition and experiences (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). Reflective practices and mentoring are contributing factors to the acquisition of knowledge and experiences that lead coaches toward competency (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006).

For example, Erickson et al. (2007) sought to empirically answer two questions in their quest to contribute to coaching education programs; they wanted to know "how do coaches become high-performance coaches and what experiences are necessary for one to

become a high-performance coach” (p. 302). The study participants, identified as high-performance coaches, all had some formal coaching education, which reflects the fact that Canada has a well-established coaching certification program (Erickson et al., 2007). High-performance coaches were defined as coaches who coached highly skilled athletes for performance, rather for recreation or athletic development (Erickson et al., 2007).

Erickson et al. (2007) identified 5 stages of developmental sport experiences for high-performance coaches of team sports and individual sports, as well as presented the implications toward coaching education and structured development for each stage.

1. The first stage was *diversified early sport participation*. Future coaches need exposure to various sports in different environments that focused on fun.
2. *Competitive-sport participation* was the second stage. To cultivate future coaches, as many athletes as possible should be allowed to serve in leadership roles, which is requisite experience for those who become high-performing coaches.
3. *Highly Competitive Sport Participation/Introduction to Coaching* was the third stage. In this stage, athletes are in their final stage of athletic participation. Additionally, this stage coincides with the decision to pursue coaching and often opportunities exist for the athlete to participate in low-level coaching positions.

4. *Part-time Early Coaching* is the penultimate stage. The most pressing implication seems to be the pairing of these new coaches with a more experienced coach.
5. *High-performance Head Coaching* is the final stage when coaches get their first, full-time, paid head coaching position (Erickson et al., p. 314).

Abraham et al. (2006) aimed to “validate a coaching schematic that, through its design and content, would accurately reflect the coaching process” (p. 550). The participants were United Kingdom coaches with a minimum of 10 years coaching experience and were characterized as experts based on several criteria (Abraham et al., 2006). Performing and coaching experience were identified as the 2 major sources of knowledge for the coaches (Abraham et al., 2006). Abraham et al. (2006) credited the coaches’ self-reflective nature as contributing to coaches having learned from their experiences. Abraham indicated several coaches viewed academic requirements or course requirements as important; however, the coaches also recognized the requirements as being only “a part of the overall development process” (Abraham et al., p. 560).

Another method of development described by coaches as invaluable was the knowledge gained from other coaches (Abraham et al., 2006). Lastly, “all coaches identified the importance of constantly trying to search out information that could enhance their coaching and that, consequently, much of their development had come through serendipitous means such as reading books, encounters with sport scientists, other coaches and experiences outside of sport” (Abraham et al., p. 561). Abraham et al.

(2006) concluded that there were extensive approaches to coaches' development and that there was a lack of any fundamental structure to join the development approaches.

Other researchers studied different aspects of the learning and development process of coaches that could represent a more systematic approach. Gilbert and Trudel (2001) stated that "reflection provides a framework for explaining how coaches learn to coach through experience" (p. 30). Nelson and Cushion (2006) proclaimed, similarly, that "reflections offer a conceptual framework to connect and understand coach education, theory, and practice" (p. 181).

According to Nelson and Cushion (2006), "those responsible for provision of coach education should be urged to shape learning around practical, contextualized coaching experience and have practitioners reflect upon it" (p. 182). Nelson and Cushion's position counters Gilbert and Trudel's (2001) concerns that not all coaches reflect. A coach's education program based on the premise of reflection would allow a coach to address a coaching dilemma, decide on a course of action, and then evaluate the strategies utilized in an attempt to resolve the situation (Nelson & Cushion, 2006).

According to Gilbert and Trudel (2001), it is critical for coaches to have access to expert coaches to facilitate the reflective process. Nelson and Cushion (2006) supported the use of mentors in supervised field experience to facilitate the reflective process. "By having practitioners critically reflect upon coaching experiences, mentors could help the trainees become increasingly aware of the dynamics specific to their coaching context, current level of coaching knowledge, and individual coaching philosophy, plus how these directly relate to coaching practice" (Nelson & Cushion, p. 182).

Werthener and Trudel (2006) sought to present a new theoretical perspective for how coaches learn using Moon's generic view of learning involving an elite coach case study. The three types of learning situations addressed were:

1. Mediated learning situations where learning is directed by another person, such as formalized coaching courses;
2. Unmediated learning situations where the learner takes the initiative and is responsible for choosing what to learn; and
3. Internal learning situations where there is a reconsideration of existing ideas in the coach's cognitive structure (Werthener & Trudel, 2006, p. 201).

Werthener and Trudel (2006) stated that "recognition of the roles played by three types of learning situations will impact on our traditional way of nurturing the development of coaches" (p. 209). Central to the learning situation is the development of relevant coaching material and delivery of the material by skilled instructors (Werthener & Trudel, 2006).

Cushion et al. (2003) examined how coach education and continuing professional development can utilize critical reflection and mentoring to position learning in the practical experiences of coaching. The central question posed in their research was "how might coaches become more reflective" (Cushion et al., p. 224). "It would take the concerted efforts of those positioned within the cultural and social hierarchy of sports coaching with power to influence to become committed to reflective practice, thus ensuring a connection between the educational mission of coach education, experienced coaches, and coach educators" (Cushion et al., p. 224).

The implications for coach education are understanding how knowledge and experience are transitioned and transformed into practices (Cushion et al, 2003). According to Cushion et al. (2003), new knowledge and insight are gained by reflecting and reinterpreting past coaching experiences. “Coach education programs should include supervised field experiences throughout, possibly in a variety of contexts, to enable coaches to consider difference, make mistakes, reflect and learn from them, and try again” (Cushion et al., p. 225).

Cushion et al. (2003) argued that evidence suggests, within coaching, that both the experience of the coach and interaction with skilled coaches are essential to the development of a coach’s performance and his or her coaching practice. Cushion et al. (2003), in accord with Nelson and Cushion (2006), advocated mentoring as an important component of a coaching education program. Critical to a successful mentoring program is for “mentors to have established the appropriate position in the sporting and coaching hierarchy” (Cushion et al., 2006, p. 223).

Lemyre et al. (2007) studied how Canadian youth-sport coaches at either the recreational or the development-performance level learned. The latter group could be aligned with interscholastic coaches. Lemyre et al. found that almost all coaches in their study had completed the first level of the Canadian coach education program with mixed appreciation for the program. The certification process guaranteed a level of knowledge acquisition; however, certification and the acquisition of knowledge do not guarantee competency (Lemyre et al., 2007).

Conclusion

As sport managers, interscholastic athletic directors are responsible for achieving the goals of interscholastic athletics. The major control function for athletic directors is to evaluate the performance of their coaches to determine whether goal achievement has occurred and to take corrective action when it does not. Standards exist for coaching competencies, as evident by the *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* (2006). Nevertheless, concerns exist that without a credentialing process, many coaches are working without a significant focus on professional training or development. Further, researchers (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006) have suggested a reflective process and a mentoring program are essential to the development of coaches. Based on this review of literature it is suggested that research ascertaining interscholastic directors' perspective on the professional preparation and professional development of their athletic coaches is a warranted area of exploration.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This qualitative study explored how interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers, would control for the professional preparation and development of athletic coaches. The data were collected through interviews with 12 athletic directors from a North Texas area school district area.

The validity of data collected was addressed using five strategies. During the face-to-face interviews, ambiguous or vague comments were followed with a probing question to gain clarity of the athletic director's perspective. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher to produce textual data. The accuracy of the researcher's ability to transcribe was confirmed by use of a professional transcription service.

The accuracy of the athletic directors' perspectives was verified by a collection of supporting material and information available through a school district's website. Additional verification was conducted by the use of publications and information from relevant organizations such as the University Interscholastic League, Texas High School Athletic Directors Association, Texas High School Coaches Association, and Texas Girls Coaches Association. An external auditor, who is employed by an educational organization as a qualitative researcher, was used at the conclusion of the study to assess

the project, check the accuracy of themes, and provide an additional element of triangulation (Creswell, 2003).

Selection of Methodology

Strauss and Corbin (1998) termed qualitative research as “any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures” (p. 11). According to Berg and Latin (2004), a characteristic of the qualitative research paradigm is that “reality is defined by participant” (p. 215). This study was characterized as an exploration of the stories and experiences of interscholastic athletic directors to seek understanding of phenomena associated with working with their athletic coaches (Berg & Latin, 2004, p. 215).

Lichtman (2010) identified 10 critical elements of qualitative research. The elements are:

1. Qualitative research provides an in-depth description and understanding of the human experience, with a focus on description and interpretation.
2. Qualitative research is dynamic and there are many methods to conducting the research.
3. There is no one approach to conducting qualitative research, which can be challenging for novice researchers.
4. Qualitative research involves inductive thinking, moving from the specifics to general.

5. Qualitative research has a holistic approach; the condition being studied is examined from the whole perspective rather than specific variables that are often associated with quantitative research.
6. Qualitative research occurs in authentic settings of the participants.
7. Central to conducting qualitative research is the researcher, who collects the data, analyzes the data, and interprets the data.
8. Qualitative research requires an in-depth examination of a few features to reveal the innermost element rather than a superficial investigation of many features.
9. Qualitative research is dominated by words, which are analyzed to discover themes, with results presented in writing.
10. Qualitative research is conducted in a nonlinear manner. The data collection and analysis are likely to occur simultaneously.

According to Lichtman (2010), research questions of how and why can be answered using a qualitative research approach. This study sought to understand athletic directors' experiences, from their perspective, in how they would control for the start of their coaches' careers and for the continued professional growth of coaches. Therefore, a qualitative methodology was the appropriate research approach for this study.

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, reflexivity is an issue with which the researcher must contend (Creswell, 2003). Marshall and Rossman (1999) stated that "the challenge for qualitative researchers is to demonstrate how their personal interest will not bias the

study” (p. 28). Creswell (2003) summarized reflexivity as “the introspection and the acknowledgment of biases, values and interests that a researcher brings to qualitative research” (p. 192). As a declaration of trustworthiness, the researcher’s involvement is shaped by the researcher’s athletic past as a former high school sports participant, a former collegiate sports participant, a former high school head coach, and as a current assistant athletic administrator.

The researcher’s personal experiences as described bring a certain level of bias to this study. However, the researcher acknowledges that the experiences of the researcher and the experiences of the study’s participants are not the same. The participants, by nature of their official job titles, functions, and official responsibilities, are dissimilar from the researcher. The researcher’s role was not to inform, but rather to uncover and explore the stories and experiences of the participants.

Participants

The participants targeted were interscholastic athletic directors, who had no current coaching responsibilities, in a North Texas area school district with three or more high schools that compete in Class 4A and/or 5A football, boys’ basketball, and girls’ basketball. Class 4A and class 5A are the 2 largest UIL classifications and are based on school enrollment; the alignment is reclassified biennially. The number of athletic directors meeting the criteria was 16 prior to commencement of the study.

The school districts with interscholastic athletic directors who met the study’s criteria were Arlington, Birdville, Carrollton-Farmers Branch, Dallas, Denton, Fort Worth, Frisco, Garland, Irving, Keller, Lewisville, Mansfield, McKinney, Mesquite,

Plano, and Richardson (see Appendices A and B for the UIL 4A and 5A alignment). The targeted participants encompassed in the Region III area of the THSADA, of which, the researcher is a member (see Appendix C). The athletic director for the school district in which the researcher is employed was excluded as a potential participant.

Athletic directors in a multiple high school setting were selected for three reasons. First, the research questions guiding this study could have placed an athletic director who also has coaching responsibilities in a role-conflict. It would be difficult to determine whether the perspective given in the interview was that of an athletic director or a coach. Generally, athletic directors in multiple high school districts have administrative duties only. Thus, selecting athletic directors from larger school districts eliminated the potential for role conflict.

Second, athletic directors in the identified setting had a large span of control. The span of control refers to the number of individuals under the supervision of the athletic director. The number of coaches directed by these athletic directors was anticipated to be a sizable number, perhaps no less than 125. The setting was likely to have a greater or higher level of variation in determining coaches' development and growth, or indices for such.

Third, and finally, athletic directors in multiple high school settings were less likely to be the sole persons responsible for hiring coaches. Consequently, coaches were likely to be employed with a vast array of coaching experience. Operating in a hiring structure such as this was likely to be marked by a complex professional growth rate for the athletic director's cadre of coaches. Hence, the athletic directors were likely to have

witnessed wide-ranging experiences with the gamut of coaches under their direction and were likely to have a broader viewpoint of coaches' professional needs.

The direct contact information for each potential participant was readily available to the researcher. Athletic directors who met the stated criteria were contacted directly by telephone to discuss their participation in the study. It was stated, during the telephone call, that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that participation in the study could be discontinued at any point. During the initial telephone call, informed consent was also discussed.

Thirteen athletic directors contacted agreed to participate in the study. Scheduling of interviews proved to be a challenge. Five interviews were scheduled and had to be rescheduled due to unplanned work-related conflicts with the potential participants. Additionally, due to an uncontrollable circumstance, one scheduled interview was canceled and not rescheduled. As required by the Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board (IRB), an informed consent form that stated the study's purpose, potential risk, and potential benefits was signed by the participant prior to beginning an interview (see Appendices D and E). The participation rate for athletic directors contacted and interviewed was 92%. Additionally, saturation was thought to have occurred when a participant scheduled to be interviewed two days later called another participant during an interview.

The participants completed a demographics survey before starting the interview (Appendix F). As shown in Table 1, the 12 participants included 9 men and 3 women. The participants' years of experience as an athletic director ranged from 1 to 47 with an

average of 11.7 years. Six participants had Mid-Management Certificates, the certification required to serve as a Texas academic campus administrator. Fifty-eight percent of the participants were a Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) through the NIAAA certification program. One participant was a Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA).

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Athletic Director	Gender	Years at District	Years as Athletic Director	Holds Mid- Management Certification	Level of NIAAA Certification
Participant A	Male	18	8	Yes	CAA
Participant B	Female	21	13	No	CAA
Participant C	Female	26	12	Yes	CAA
Participant D	Male	34	9	No	CAA
Participant E	Male	6	6	No	CAA
Participant F	Female	16	4	Yes	CAA
Participant G	Male	27	3	No	None
Participant H	Male	12	12	Yes	None
Participant I	Male	16	16	No	RAA
Participant J	Male	32	9	No	CAA
Participant K	Male	61	47	Yes	None
Participant L	Male	16	1	Yes	None

Note. CAA stands for Certified Athletic Administrator. RAA stands for Registered Athletic Administrator.

As shown in Table 2, the top three ranked sports in which the participants had been a head coach were football at 67%, track and field at 33%, and baseball at 25%.

Table 2

Demographics of Participants: Sports as a Head Coach

Athletic Director	Baseball	Basketball, Boys	Basketball, Girls	Cross Country	Football	Golf	Soccer, Boys	Soccer, Girls	Softball	Track and Field
Participant A				X						X
Participant B			X	X						X
Participant C			X							
Participant D					X		X	X		
Participant E		X			X					X
Participant F									X	
Participant G	X				X	X				
Participant H					X					X
Participant I					X					
Participant J	X				X					
Participant K	X				X					
Participant L					X					

Seventy-five percent of the participants had formal coaching courses prior to beginning their coaching careers (see Table 3). The same percentage of participants had served as an instructor of non sports-specific courses. Three participants had served as an instructor for a nationally recognized coaching program.

Table 3

Demographics of Participants: Experience with Formal Coaching Education

Athletic Director	Formal Coaching Course Prior to Coaching	As Coach, Instructor of Non-Sport Specific Knowledge	As Athletic Director, Instructor of Non-Sport Specific Knowledge	Course Instructor National Coaching Program
Participant A	Yes	No	No	No
Participant B	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Participant C	Yes	No	Yes	No
Participant D	Yes	No	Yes	No
Participant E	Yes	No	No	No
Participant F	No	No	Yes	No
Participant G	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Participant H	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Participant I	No	No	Yes	No
Participant J	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participant K	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Participant L	No	Yes	No	No

Instrument

The interview questions for this study were designed to put the participant at ease and to discover data related to three guiding research questions. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) suggested the “come on slow” (p. 88) approach to asking interview questions to try and establish rapport. It was suggested that “the best way to start off interviewing is by asking open-ended, descriptive questions . . . allow people to tell you what is important to them” (Taylor & Bogdan, p. 102). Further, Taylor and Bogdan described the “general qualitative interviewing strategy as follows: ask open-ended, descriptive questions about general topics; wait for people to talk about meaningful experiences in their lives or what is important from their points of view; and, probe for details and specific descriptions of their experiences and perspectives” (p. 106).

Pilot Study

Walker (2007) used a pilot study to uncover appropriate areas of the independent variable for use in a mixed method main study. The independent variable, corporate social responsibility (CSR), was an unexamined area. Wagschal (2010) used a pilot interview to help simplify and finalize an interview guide for a qualitative study exploring NCAA Division I coaches’ perception of the sport psychology field. Bussey (2008) used a pilot study to determine the effectiveness of the instrument in a qualitative study examining athletic directors’ perception on ethical issues in interscholastic athletics. According to Bussey, “the most important benefit of the pilot study was the opportunity to hone interviewing skills” (p. 37).

A pilot study was conducted for this investigation. The first interview served as the pilot study. The intent of the pilot study was to assess the effectiveness of the interview questions as well as clarification of the interview process. The interview questions (approved by the dissertation committee) were:

1. What is the difference between a teacher and a coach?

Probe: What is the common thread between a teacher and a band director?

Preface for next two questions, the quality of the interscholastic athletic experience of students is directly related to the quality of the adult leadership, the coach.

2. You have been given the responsibility of writing legislation to address 4A and 5A coaching candidates, what would be your required prerequisites for employment?

Probe: What role would a state-mandated coach's certification process and recertification process have in your legislation?

3. How would you address the problem of coaches who are currently employed to ensure they meet or could meet the new starting benchmark for entering the coaching profession?
4. How would you go about setting up requirements for a continuing educational process for coaches?

Probes:

- a. What would the entire process look like?
- b. What role would mentoring have in the process?

- c. What role would self-reflection have in the process?
5. Based on your experience as an interscholastic athletic director in Texas, what would you anticipate to be the benefits of implementing your proposed legislation and the continuing education program?
 6. Based on your experience as an interscholastic athletic director in Texas, what strategies have you employed to introduce educational opportunities for coaches in your district?
 7. Based on your experience as an interscholastic athletic director in Texas, what would you anticipate to be issues of implementing your proposed legislation and the continuing education program?

After conducting the first interview, the researcher concluded that the interview questions elicited responses relevant to answering the research questions guiding this study. Further, the delivery of the interview questions was thought to be appropriate with the researcher taking the time to clearly articulate each question. The participant did not ask for any questions to be repeated.

An initial concern, however, was with the brevity of the interview. After listening to the digital audio file, it was determined that the participant gave direct, concise responses to each question. Therefore, the participant significantly impacted the length of the interview.

Another unforeseen concern was with taking field notes during the interview. Rather than using a field note form, notes were written directly on the pages from which the interview questions were read. This process, it was assumed, would allow the

researcher to make notations that directly linked to the question asked. The interview followed a conversational tone until the researcher started jotting down notes. When the researcher stopped writing, the participant continued speaking easily. The researcher concluded, in a bit of forecasting, that note taking during the course of the interview might be an issue.

Procedures

After the pilot study, the researcher felt comfortable and confident in starting the data collection process. The interviews were conducted in the administrative office of the athletic directors with one exception. One interview, conducted during a school holiday break, was conducted in a private residence at the request of the participant. Three attempts to conduct the interview during the course of the participant's office hours had led to last-minute cancellations by the participant.

Prior to each interview, the participant was given the opportunity to read the informed consent form that stated the study's purpose, potential risks, and potential benefits. Each participant signed the informed consent form before the interview commenced. Additionally, participants completed a demographics survey before starting the interview (Appendix B).

Each interview was digitally recorded using the Philips Digital Voice Tracer 7680. After each interview, digital files were downloaded and stored on a laptop computer. The digital files were, then, converted to wave sound files and listened to multiple times by the researcher and transcribed to produce textual data for analysis. To

verify the accuracy of the researcher's transcription ability, six files were transcribed by a professional transcription service. The researcher's transcription ability proved reliable.

Data Management

The identifiable data, the signed informed consent forms, the demographics surveys, and the field notes collected from the interview were stored in a locked file cabinet in the upstairs living quarters at the secure residence of the researcher. The identifiable data of the recorded interviews were immediately saved onto a personal laptop computer and deleted from the recording device. The files from the interview sessions were backed up and stored on an external hard drive as a precaution from theft or malfunctioning of the laptop computer. The external hard drive was stored in the same manner as the other identifiable data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was thought to be the most challenging aspect of the research project. Three sources were valuable in gaining a thorough understanding of coding and analysis of data associated with the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated that "analysis is the interplay between researchers and data" (p. 12). Foss and Waters (2007) discussed identifying the unit of analysis to assist with coding data. "The unit of analysis should be a concept, idea or action that illuminates the significant features of your data so that the [research] question you asked can be answered" (Foss & Waters, p. 187).

When another transcription of an interview was analyzed, the constant comparative methods strategy came into play, which Taylor and Bogdan (1998) described as the act of

“simultaneously coding and analyzing data in order to develop concepts” (p. 137).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) add that the line-by-line is used less “at later stages of the research inquiry” (p. 71). “The final step in the process is to identify key concepts that reflect the meaning you attach to the data you collect” (Lichtman, 2010, p. 200).

However, “at the heart of qualitative data analysis is the task of discovering themes” (Ryan & Bernard, 2009, ¶1).

The themes were identified using techniques outlined by Ryan and Bernard (2009). The techniques Ryan and Bernard demarcated included the physical manipulation of text using the cut and sort procedure of text; a careful reading of larger blocks of texts that involved comparing and contrasting of text; and an analysis of words that included searching for word repetitions, key-indigenous terms, key-words-in context. Additionally, the qualitative research software, QSR NVivo Version 8.0, was used to assist with the inductive analysis process.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This Chapter contains a purpose statement, a summary of the methods used in the study, and a description of the participants. The remainder of the Chapter details the analyses of the data and nine themes that emerged.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers of 4A and 5A high schools in Texas, would control for the professional preparation and professional development of athletic coaches. The aim was to discover, from the interscholastic athletic director's perspective, factors or strategies for systematic and verifiable growth of coaches. Twelve interscholastic athletic directors from North Texas area school districts with three or more high schools that compete in Class 4A and/or 5A football, boys' basketball, and girls' basketball were interviewed for this study. The athletic directors work solely in an athletic administrative capacity; they have no coaching responsibilities.

Data collected for this study came from face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions. The digitally recorded interviews were transcribed to produce textual data for analysis. Nine themes were revealed through the inductive analysis process in an effort to answer the research questions.

Eleven of the 12 participants knew the researcher, which led to a relaxed environment during the interviews. The relationship that existed between the known

participants and the researcher is characterized as professional acquaintances or collegial in nature. The fact that a relationship existed with 11 participants led to two consequences. First, it contributed to the researcher taking minimal field notes, which was perceived as a distraction by some participants. Therefore, notes were written after leaving the interview site. Second, the researcher's perception of the known participants concluded that some of the interscholastic athletic directors had given previous thought to various subject matters related to the interview questions and to this study. Further, the researcher perceived all participants as exceptionally candid in their responses and genuinely interested in the purpose of the study. Ultimately, the researcher left each interview with the compelling thought that each participant would reflect further on the interview questions.

The athletic directors that participated in the study included 9 men and 3 women. The group's average years of experience as an athletic director was 11.7 years, with 47 years being the high and 1 year being the low. Six participants held Texas Mid-Management Certificates. Seven participants are Certified Athletic Administrators (CAAs), and another participant was a Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA) through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association certification program. All participants had served as a Texas high school head coach. Nine participants had formal coaching courses prior to beginning their coaching careers.

Presented in the remainder of the Chapter are themes discovered from data collected from the participants. The inductive data analysis produced nine major themes. The themes are presented in framework approximating to the review of literature.

Theme 1: Interscholastic Athletic Coaches are Integral to the Educational Setting

The athletic directors perceived the function of coaches and teachers as similar. This was a central theme that emerged from all interviews. The participants expressed limited differences between the primary function of a teacher and a coach. Coaches were thought to “facilitate student learning,” to “guide kids,” and to “teach people life lessons.” Nine athletic directors remarked explicitly with some version of “I don’t think there is really any difference between a teacher and a coach.” One of the nine athletic directors noted, “I don’t see a lot of difference in trying to impart knowledge to kids.” Another athletic director from the nine stated, “I think if you’re a coach, you’re a teacher.”

Seven of the 12 athletic directors commented that the setting and/or the subject taught accounted for the differences between a coach and a teacher. One athletic director commented that a teacher and a coach are pretty synonymous. The difference lies in the venue where they do their teaching. The core subject teacher teaches in a classroom whereas the coach teaches his or her sport on the field or in the gym.

Another athletic director offered this perspective:

I really don’t think there is a difference. I think that in the 18 years that I taught and coached I saw a direct correlation between the two. I really think that the classroom is just different. I see coaching as being like a science teacher because you have a lab and I see being a basketball coach or football coach is teaching in that lab, which is a basketball court or football field.

There was a perception that coaches add value to the educational system in a manner that is not comparable to most regular classroom teachers. This perspective emerged from three additional differences expressed regarding coaches and teachers. The nature of the coach/student-athlete relationships, the passion associated with coaching, and the job performance of coaches as classroom teachers were the other three noted differences.

The additional three differences were expressed by the athletic directors as single points or expressed as interconnected points. For example, one athletic director commented:

I think for a coach; it goes beyond teaching. The main thing is the relationship with kids. It's carrying teaching one step further outside of the classroom. Also, I think coaching is a not a job; it's a way of life, a way of thinking.

Another athletic director perceived coaches as more vested in coaching than teachers are in teaching because the former spend "a lot more time with kids" than the latter. The athletic director continued to say "it becomes more personal with a coach than it does with a teacher." A third athletic director stated the following viewpoint:

The difference in teaching and coaching I've found is I think coaches are more passionate about their sport than a lot of teachers are about their subject but not in all cases. But I've just said that you'll find coaches will go to coaching clinics on the weekends, on their own time and spend their own money. I haven't seen a lot of the academic people do that. I mean that's just a fact. Now, I'm sure that some

of them go, but I think that sports are more of a passion to coaches than maybe the academics are to teachers.

This athletic director commented further that coaches teach values that are not taught in the academic world. Such values as “discipline, pride, poise, class, accountability, decision-making skills” are not taught in an academic classroom.

Another athletic director noted how a relationship can be built or exists between coaches and their student-athletes that accounts for a difference between coaches and regular classroom teachers. The athletic director remarked:

The difference is the venue where you actually get to teach that kid. The relationship you get to form with them in practice and in athletic setting lend itself to a more personal relationship because more time is spent together and because of the emotional issues involved in sports. Often, unfortunately, the kids put more of a priority over athletics sometimes than academics.

This athletic director was the only participant to render any negative commentary in the discussion demarcating coaches and teachers. Interestingly, the findings did not indicate any misplaced perspective on sports by the coaches.

The perceived value that coaches add to the educational system encompassed more than just the realm of athletics. Five athletic directors commented specifically on coaches’ performance as classroom teachers. They held the perspective that “good coaches were good teachers.” One athletic director commented that “the better coaches are usually the best teachers.” Another athletic director remarked that “the expectation that we have of our coaches is that you’re going to be a great teacher.” This perspective is

reflective of the overall theme held by the athletic directors interviewed for this study; coaches are integral to the educational setting.

Theme 2: Intangible Qualifications are Important for Individuals Entering the Coaching Profession

All 12 athletic directors interviewed shared a perspective on what qualifications are needed when entering the coaching profession at the 4A and 5A level. Irrespective of classification, the UIL qualification for high school head and assistant coaches is that the individual must be a full-time employee of the school district; middle school coaches must be approved by the school board (Constitution and Contest Rules, 2007). The perceived essential qualifications indicated by the athletic directors were varied. The qualifications vacillated between tangible knowledge, skills and activities, and intangible knowledge, skills and activities. However, one intangible qualification or skill appeared as an important paradigm among several athletic directors.

Three athletic directors perceived the current tangible state requirements for all school district employees, such as passing “a criminal background check” and a modification of the current requirements for coaches as sufficient. All three athletic directors wanted the minimum qualification that coaches are certified educators. One of the three athletic directors stated, “I think that entering the profession, part of the way we do now, we look for great teachers with background knowledge in our sports.”

Another of the three athletic directors gave the following explanation:

I think the mandates that we already have, that you have a college degree and you must be a certified teacher. I believe in that so much because in other states

coaches don't have to be a certified teacher. You can work at Sears and coach the volleyball team and I disagree with that because I say that athletics is a part of education.

It is worth noting that school districts may have more stringent requirements or specific qualifications beyond the UIL rules. Thus, a school district may stipulate that it only employs certified educators. Therefore, this athletic director may be speaking from the perspective of the school district by which the athletic director is employed.

Three other athletic directors mentioned completion of formal training or some type of formal courses as a desired qualification for persons entering the 4A and 5A level of coaching. Two of the three athletic directors discussed specific topics that should be covered prior to employment as a coach. One athletic director would want a course on building relationships and establishing rapport with people. The athletic director thought "that is what we are missing in a lot of areas of coaching." The other athletic director perceived completion of parent education courses and sensitivity training as necessary before an individual is allowed to coach students. The athletic director stated the following:

Coaches are the biggest role models that a child is going to come in contact with.

The coach spends the most time with that child in sports, more than even some of the parents do. So, I would consider probably requiring some parent education classes to be quite honest because a lot of time coaches come into coaching and they don't have children of their own. They don't know that what they say and how they say it really affects the child as a whole. Another class or program for

pre employment would probably be sensitivity training because everyone needs to know how to deal with adverse situations and we are not all alike in terms of our personalities, our values, and our egos. And, sensitivity training would get you to see the other person's side, to show that it's okay to be compassionate, it's okay to have empathy.

All 12 athletic directors perceived qualifications that could be classified or defined as intangible as essential to possess by persons entering the coaching profession at the 4A and 5A level. The intangible qualifications ranged from "looking for a person with leadership qualities that's going to be a role model" to "hiring someone who has great moral character" to wanting "somebody that really cares about kids." Generally, the qualifications were elusive and could only be ascertained through the selection process of interviewing a potential coaching candidate rather through the screening process of reviewing a coaching candidate's resume. For example, one athletic director stated that "an expert in their field and a genuine care for and love of kids, those two things are the biggest things I look for when I go to hire 4A and 5A coaches."

Six athletic directors perceived interpersonal skills, particularly communication skills, as an important intangible qualification for 4A and 5A coaching candidates. The perception was that "communications skills had to be there" and that "people skills are the number one thing outside of the X's and O's." The X's and O's refer to technical and tactical aspects of coaching a sport. Specifically, the knowledge relates to understanding the principles and strategies to utilize during the course of play. The ability for a coach to convey or communicate his or her sport knowledge was deemed essential to effectively

teaching and coaching students. One athletic director remarked, “It is interpersonal skills and how you interact with student-athletes and parents and other coaches that really is what makes coaches successful.”

One athletic director’s statement about intangible qualifications characterized the overall perspective of this theme. The athletic director stated the following:

We always say we want people who are kid-centered. I like to take that a little further and say people skills because you have to communicate with adults, as well as students, and with your colleagues. Innovative, I like people who think outside the box but most of all, prior to great character and someone who has a real passion for teaching and coaching. I want someone that it is not a profession, necessarily, but it is a way of life.

It was interesting that this athletic director was the only athletic director to mention past sports participation as a qualification for coaches. Erickson et al. (2007) had identified past sport participation as an important developmental experience to becoming a high performance coach.

Theme 3: Support for a Coaches Certification Process Varies Widely

Eight of 12 athletic directors involved in this study have participated in the NIAAA certification process. Seven athletic directors who participated in this study are certified athletic administrators (CAAs), and one athletic director is a registered athletic administrator (RAA). The athletic directors’ participation in an athletic administrator’s certification process had a negotiable impact on their perspective about a coaches’ certification process.

Three athletic directors were opposed to or not ready to discuss the need for establishing a state-mandated coach's certification process. Two of these three athletic directors hold a NIAAA certification distinction. Two athletic directors were, unequivocally, against a coaching certification process. Both athletic directors expressed that a teaching certification was sufficient enough for coaching. One of the two athletic directors explained the rationale behind his belief.

You got to have a Texas certificate, a teaching certificate. You know they have courses that certify; my soccer coaches are certified soccer coaches. I don't put a lot into that because X's and O's don't mean much to me.

Another athletic director, viewing the certification of coaches with skepticism, stated "I don't know that I am ready at this point to talk about legislation and certification for coaching." The athletic director did not divulge the reason behind this stance.

Two other athletic directors with CAA distinction did not specifically propose or oppose a coach's certification process. They did, however, provide reflective observations about the concept. One athletic director spoke of the perceived merit of such a process based on known requirements in other states. The athletic director commented,

When I think about it, when we go to NIAAA conference, a lot of states are doing that and we don't do those kinds of mandates . . . When I sit and listen to people in other states, evidently, they think there is a lot of merit. We, in Texas, probably might look up at it as one other thing to do. But we might be missing the boat a little by not requiring our coaches to do some of those things.

The other athletic director perceived a need for discourse to “try to figure out exactly what we all believe is really important.” The athletic director remarked that coaches “get a lot of bad information.” The purpose of the discourse, according to this athletic director, would be to come to a consensus of required knowledge to augment the current safety and health-related requirement for coaches.

Six athletic directors perceived a coach’s certification process as “very helpful” or a necessity. Three of the six athletic directors have CAA credentials and another athletic director has the RAA distinction. One of the two noncertified athletic directors, after reflecting on the subject, stated “maybe there, in fact, needs to be some type of certification.” The other noncertified athletic director explained “that a coaching certification could be very helpful. I think that if the right people designed the program, it could be very helpful to young people coming into the profession.”

One of the four certified athletic directors, who thought there should be a coach’s certification, perceived continual learning as important as well, stating that coach should be “students of learning.” This athletic director was the only person interviewed that specifically addressed a renewal of certification for coaches beyond the initial process. “A recertification class that is required, I think would be a must.” The athletic director believed that a recertification is warranted because there is always something new to learn or something that coaches may have forgotten, and a recertification process allows subjects to be revisited.

The other three certified athletic directors deemed a coach’s certification process as necessary. One athletic director, in direct opposition to two athletic directors who

opposed a coach's certification process, stated, "I don't think we prepare people when you are going through your teaching certification." Thus, the athletic director commented that if he was writing legislation for coaches' mandates, a coach's certification process "would have to be in there."

Another athletic director who believed that a coach's certification "would be good" addressed the content of the process. The athletic director expressed that the process has to include more than just paperwork or bookwork to be effective. In the athletic director's estimation, components of the process should be based on some hypothetical situations, experiences, case scenarios, and how the coach would solve the problems. For the coach's certification to be meaningful, it should require the coach to "really think something through." The athletic director felt that an internship in coaching was a viable method for a coach's certification process.

The last of the three certified athletic director's perceived the need for a coach's certification to be great. The athletic director commented:

If I am writing legislation, it would be a lot more formal training than is received.

I think there should be. I'm in favor of a coaching certification. I know we are trying to do some of that, but I think there should be something added, just like in teaching you are certified to teach a subject. You should be certified to coach.

This athletic director continued with thoughts about a coach's certification process and implementation of the process. In detailing the process and his belief about the future of coaches' education in Texas, the athletic director expressed the following:

So I think just the formal training and the courses that are required and just like student teaching, we do student teaching in subject areas. I think they ought to be required to do that in coaching as well. I would say curriculum courses in college and student teaching or a portion of student teaching should involve coaching. It would require a commitment on the part of the coach toward more professionalism. And my legislation it would be a requirement to be able to coach. I think we are moving toward that a little bit with the new coaches requirement by the UIL but I would go further than that and I would say it would come from colleges themselves.

The general theme amongst the six athletic directors who favored a certification process was that veteran coaches would be required to participate in some type of training. Interestingly, one of the six athletic directors stated that veteran coaches would be grandfathered from the certification process but would have a continuing education requirement. This athletic director remarked that it would be too difficult for the veteran coaches to go back and get the new training. Another of the six athletic directors viewed the situation involving certification for veteran coach and new coaches differently. The athletic director provided as evidence a real-life instance concerning the recent UIL coaching course requirement for first-year and part-time coaches. The athletic director remarked,

I made everyone of my coaches take the NFHS course because, to me, it benefits them, even if it said only for first-year coaches. I made them all take it and I paid for every one of them to take it because I think it is important, very important.

Theme 4: Local Control is Important to the Continuing Education Process for Coaches

It is suggested in the literature that, although used in conjunction, there is a difference between training and development (Sims, 2002). Training facilitates current job-related knowledge, skills, activities or assists with correcting deficiencies in employees' performance. Development focuses on current and future jobs. In terms of this study and in accordance with Mathis and Jackson (2006), focusing on development benefits both the school district and the coach by increasing the capabilities of the coach.

Nine athletic directors provided specific perspectives on a continuing education process for coaches, either a training system or a professional development process. Four athletic directors discussed current formal or informal procedures that they have in place to address the educational needs of their coaches. A fifth athletic director was finalizing plans for a new continuing education process. The processes, which lean more toward training than development, ranged from a series of meetings to a set of standards implemented through the district's hierarchical coaching structure. The other four athletic directors shared perceptions on a developing and/or implementing a statewide continuing education process or program for coaches.

One athletic director explained the continuing education process currently implemented in his district.

I can talk about what we do here in our school district. We have a new coaches program, with usually five or six meetings per year for people who are first-year coaches. They get a kind of introduction of the topics that they will experience

throughout their first year of coaching. It is a forum for them to have a kind of round table discussion of the issues they are facing.

The athletic director who was finalizing a plan of action for a new continuing education process was doing so out of perceived needs facing the coaches of the district. Some of the perceived needs were simply learning how to coach; how to communicate with their athletes; how to motivate a diverse group of athletes; how to adapt coaching styles for different ways athletes learn. There was also a perceived need to focus on training to provide sports skills that athletes should possess.

The athletic director had witnessed the growth of the district from one high school and one middle school to a multiple high school and multiple middle school setting, which was perceived to impact the development of coaches as well as athletes in the district. The athletic director explained the situation and stated a plan to combat the situation with the following commentary.

I grew up in the time and coached in the time where there was just one middle school and one high school. So, I went down there as the head coach and said this is what we are going to do. It was easy but now, we are in a situation here where we have multiple middle schools that feed one high school. So you might have on your middle school basketball team, 15 kids that end up going to three different high schools. Now, how do you send one coach down there to get anything done? What we have learned is that, from a central standpoint, these are the things we want accomplished. I am going have to take the lead as the director to say here is where we want our kids; here is what we are going to get done. I cannot rely on

my head coaches to do it. We have tried to do that but it is confusing. We will do a year long calendar, like we will have it ready to go this summer and all our meetings, all our staff development days, all those things are going to be in this one calendar that we give to our coordinators. So when you come into this district as a coach, you will know where you are going to go from the day school starts to the end of school year.

This athletic director perceived that the responsibility for the training or development of coaches needed to shift from head coaches to the central athletic director. It is interesting to note that another athletic director's perspective about training or development of coaches was in direct opposition to this belief. The athletic director stated, "I think our coaches govern that pretty well because if they're not current, they're going to get beat. I think that most of our coaches are pretty conscientious." This athletic director perceived the development process of coaches as a "trickle down effect." The head coach was responsible for making sure assistant coaches, including middle school coaches, attended coaching clinics and followed the head coach's philosophy. The perception expressed by this athletic director was that training and development of coaches "falls back on the head coaches."

Four athletic directors discussed coaches' continuing education as a statewide paradigm. Three of the four perceived the process in a systematic manner similar to teachers' professional development or "kind of like new teacher's training." One of the three athletic directors stated that "every three years coaches are required to get a certain number of continuing education hours that could be done at the local level through online

courses.” Another of the three athletic directors thought the educational process should be broken down by years of experiences. The athletic director perceived the needs and subsequent curriculum of coaches should be different for beginning coaches and veteran coaches.

The one differing athletic director of the four, who expatiated on the topic of continuing education of coaches, was also concerned with the curriculum. The athletic director stated candidly, “I don’t see there is a lot of value in continuing education right now because there is not a lot of good continuing education in the coaching area at this point.” The athletic director remarked on the perceived current problem with coaches’ development opportunities and a perceived solution. “I am not big into continuing education and X’s and O’s. I am into continuing education and psychology of handling kids, handling parents, and organizational structure.” The perceived direction of growth for coaches, according to this athletic director, should involve “approved curriculum that deals with leadership, vision, philosophy, planning, and coaching.”

The importance of local control was a common thread among all the athletic directors, regardless of their perspective about a continuing education process for coaches. This perception included the four athletic directors who perceived that training or development could be established as a statewide paradigm. One of the four athletic directors expressed:

I think that the process probably should be, not mandated but regulated by each district, and I would like some flexibility. I would think there needs to be flexibility in that each district is different, with different demographics, different

socioeconomic status, etc., and I think each district kind of needs to be able to have the flexibility, maybe within some guidelines, of choosing what would be the most helpful for their coaches.

Theme 5: Professional Development Requirements would Benefit Coaches

All participants perceived benefits to implementation of any legislation and/or a continuing education process that they proposed. There would be a “foundation of expectation for coaches” and a “focus on continuous improvement” for coaches. The perceived benefits related to coaches ranged from establishing professional standards to strengthening the coaching profession to simply having “a lot better coaches in the state of Texas.”

One athletic director provided the following analogy.

You take somebody that was a car mechanic for 25 years ago. If they have not improved on their skills as a car mechanic 25 years later, they are not going to be doing much business. I think that teachers and coaches are kind of equated in some aspect to this situation. You have got to keep updated. You have got to be knowledgeable of the changes that are taking place.

Another athletic director perceived that implementation of his proposed continuing education process would assuage threats to interscholastic athletics. The athletic director explained:

The benefit, I think more than anything, would be our credibility. Right now, we've got legislators that are trying to run our business for us. We've got legislators trying to tell the UIL what they think is best. I think if we have these

things in place, then we're governing ourselves. We don't have to have people looking over our shoulders and there's accountability. There is credibility and maybe we can get people to back off a little bit because I think we are the experts. We're the professionals in our field.

Interscholastic athletics exist for the student participants (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Healey & Healey, 1976). Surprisingly, only two athletic directors mention students when discussing the benefits or the beneficiaries of their proposal. One athletic director remarked about how students would benefit if inexperienced coaches were better prepared. The athletic director asserted:

The benefits hopefully, ultimately, would be the kids. We would train coaches to come in and be more prepared to deal with those tough situations. I think it is right to assume that most educators or coaches come to the profession because they do care for people and care for kids. But I think sometimes we put them in such tough positions that they cannot be successful. They turn sour and they lose focus of why they got into this profession and lose focus that it is about the kids because their just struggling with the situation that we have not prepared them to be in. So coaches coming in would benefit and then our student-athletes would benefit.

Another athletic director gave the following commentary in expressing how professional requirements for coaches strengthen the coaching profession and athletics, a program that benefits students:

I think it would make it a stronger profession. I think that if we wrote that legislation and we all lived by that legislation, then there would be no stopping this program. I think athletics is one of the strongest programs that you can offer for young people to be in. And, if we banded together and we are in the same boat, going the same direction, with the same intensity, the same desires and passions, then there would not be these questions about whether or not we need to spend money in this program or whether we should cut it or whether we should make some changes in it or water it down in some form or fashion. I think it would be so strong and so beneficial; it would be so that people would see the benefits across the state of Texas.

Each athletic director perceived requiring more attention to professional requirements, professional development or a continuing education process for coaches as beneficial. The implementation of a continuing education process was perceived to be favorable for interscholastic athletics, coaches, student participants, and the coaching profession.

Theme 6: The Major Strategy Used to Provide Educational Opportunities for Coaches is

Attending Coaching Clinics

All participants provided strategies that were used to provide or support educational opportunities for their athletic coaches. Coaching clinics was the prevalent strategy used to introduce educational opportunities for their coaches. Nine athletic directors mentioned coaching clinics either as external or outside opportunities, internal or in-house opportunities, or both for coaches. Coaching clinics were perceived as a

means for coaches to “grow professionally,” to “aid in helping our coaches become more educated,” and to assist in areas where “we are missing the boat a little.”

Seven of the nine athletic directors encouraged their coaches to attend coaching clinics directed by outside organizations. Technology makes sharing information about clinics a simple task. One athletic director gave an example of how messages about clinics are communicated to district coaches. The athletic director stated:

Basically, we use what everybody else uses. Anytime we get any type of clinic information, whether it is for female or male clinic, everybody on our intranet program, we just punch it in to a message and send it to every coach in the district.

Six of the nine athletic directors discussed in-house clinics for their coaches. The rationale for providing in-house clinics included the desire to keep coaches updated on rules changes; to address a targeted audience with a specific concern; and, for three of the six, to be economically responsible. Another rationale given by one athletic director for in-house clinics was the perception that outside clinics were not providing the knowledge that this athletic director desired for coaches.

The athletic director explained:

We always say, we want you to get staff development, go to clinics and bring this back, we are going to continue to do this. Some of that works, but we found that there are specific things that we want our coaches to do that are not getting done or we know that is not happening. They are not getting that at workshops, they're not getting that at clinics that are currently offered in the state.

Another athletic director expressed displeasure with the offering clinics. Although the athletic director provides monetary assistance for head coaches and assistant coaches to attend clinics, the director remarked, “The thing that’s disappointing is that those clinics, 99% of them are X’s and O’s clinics.”

Theme 7: Mentoring is an Essential, but Underused Means of Knowledge Acquisition for Coaches

Nine of the athletic directors interviewed for this study perceived mentoring as having a major role or as an essential element in the continuous growth process for coaches. Mentoring was thought to be “a huge, huge part of the process” and to be immensely important. However, only two of the nine athletic directors currently have a semblance of a mentoring program in place. One of the other seven athletic directors suggested that mentoring likely occurs in an informal manner. The athletic director stated that young coaches are probably being taken “under the wings” of a coach revered by the young coach.

Additionally, mentors are used to assist coaches with a reflective process to, among other things, increase awareness of the coaches’ understanding of their current coaching knowledge, their personal coaching philosophy, and their coaching practices. Four of the nine athletic directors explicitly addressed the characteristics of a mentor. The four athletic directors perceived that mentors had to be willing to teach other adults, had to have a certain level of expertise, had to be “really good,” and had to be “a role model.” One athletic director remarked with a word of caution about selecting mentors. The athletic director clarified:

It is really important to be careful who you choose to be a mentor because a person who is a good coach may not be a good mentor. You need to find people that have a desire to teach other adults about coaching, the life of a coach and the expectation of a coach. It's like a great athlete doesn't make a great coach.

In reference to the role of or the purpose of mentoring, eight of the nine athletic directors perceived mentoring as an approach to assist new coaches with compliance issues related to state laws and UIL rules. Additionally, mentors were perceived to be a safe sounding board for inexperienced coaches. One athletic director provided an insight about the persons who would be considered as mentors and about the role of the mentor.

The athletic director commented:

Sometimes people think mentoring means people that have been there for a while and I do not necessarily think that is what mentoring is. I think mentoring is finding the jewels, find that gem, the quality people and matching them with someone who is in need of some assistance.

Another athletic director commented on the perceived collegial aspect of mentoring. The athletic director discerned a cyclical nature to mentoring as evident by the following explanation:

I think that mentoring is part of our responsibility as educators and coaches. As we have been through it, it is our responsibility to go back and help those young ones coming in and help mold them, helping them see the right way to do things, the right way to handle people, the right way to handle kids, the right way to

handle parents, the right way to do things, and mentor them so that they could one day do the same thing for the next new group of coaches.

One athletic director's perception of mentoring was that athletic administrators should serve as mentors for coaches. The athletic director provided a self-reflecting remark and a frank commentary about others.

I mentor my coaches a lot. We have orientation at the beginning of the year. I do a head coaches course on mentoring where we have an off-season and in-season... Mentoring is one of the most underdeveloped areas in our coaching world today. We do not mentor our coaches enough and some districts do not at all.

Based on the athletic directors interviewed for this study, mentoring was perceived as essential for increasing knowledge and for the developmental process of coaches. However, few athletic directors currently have a formal mentoring program in place. As suggested by one of the athletic directors, mentoring is likely a serendipitous activity toward knowledge acquisition (Abraham et al., 2006).

Theme 8: There are Barriers to Establishing a Coaches' Professional Development Program

Although all participants perceived benefits to a coaches' professional development requirement, they also perceived barriers or issues to establishing a coaches' professional development process based on their suggested processes, programs, or requirements. The perceived barriers were based on the athletic director's anticipated issues and/or issues or barriers based on their current experiences as an athletic director. Two athletic directors discerned the pragmatic issues related to a change of standards or a

change in requirements. One of the two athletic directors explained the change paradigm with the following statement:

Because of human nature, it is change and people a lot of times are resistant to change. I would think, initially, coaches might be resistant to going through some kind of program.

However, the athletic director also perceived that it would be the athletic director's responsibility to help coaches understand "the significance of and the need for such a program."

For the other 10 athletic directors, the perceived difficulties related to developing and implementing what one athletic director desired, "a great system." A professional development system was thought to consist of a curriculum and the implementation process. For three athletic directors, they perceived who had input on the development of the curriculum as an issue. One of the three athletic directors stated:

I would think the issues are the whole bureaucracy of allowing the people that really know what coaching is about and what athletics is about; allowing those people to put the curriculum together. I think that would be important.

Three athletic directors perceived implementation of a process or program as an area of concern. From one athletic director's perspective, the implementation process should be established and carried out over a period of years. A second athletic director was concerned with how the process would be delivered and communicated to coaches. The third athletic director's perspective stemmed from the recent coaches' requirements instituted by the UIL, such as the NFHS course requirement for first-year coaches or by a

state law such as the safety training. The perception was that the rules are established but without a clear understanding of the parameters for implementation of the requirement.

The athletic director's perception of the situation was clarified with the following:

I think some of issues too might be that when things are new like that, newly legislated like that. I don't think all the kinks are worked out and then we are expected to try and find out what those kinks are and work them out. So I think that would be an issue. For example, right now, some things we have to implement, no timelines have been given so you are kind of out there in the wind. You just got to do it. Nobody says what the recourse is if you don't do it. But if it is legislated, we just know we have got to find a way to get it done.

Time and funding are two additional perceived issues that, to some extent, are linked to this athletic director's perception regarding implementation of new legislation. This athletic director was one of six who commented on the perceived barrier to a professional development process related to time. The dimensions of time could simply consist of when to conduct training. One of the six athletic directors presented the situation in the following manner:

Time I think would be an issue. To do something like that, the way it ought to be done, I would imagine it takes a great deal of time as far as getting coaches together and working through some of these things together. When you have coaches teaching and coaching all day and I only get them one time a year in August, so it would probably mean some kinds of after hours things ,which would . . . I am sure the coaches would jump right on that.

Another athletic director's perspective about time included perceived time constraints currently placed on district coaches who are teachers. The athletic director expressed that financial compensation might be warranted if coaches are required additional training for coaching. The athletic director stated:

Right now, in our district, they have so much teacher professional development that they have to abide by or get taken care of every year. They have 18 hr of training outside of the school day. We haven't found the time unless we compensate them. We have not found the ability or the time to fairly put that onto our coaches.

A third athletic director gave his perspective on how to counter the barrier related to time. The perception is based on his experiences with attempting to obtain time to train his coaches. Interestingly, this athletic director was the only participant that used the term "interscholastic coaching" during the interview. The athletic director stated:

I would force administrators to dictate 2 to 4 hr of in-service for coaches. Right now, we have to beg to get time. We give it lip service to coaches that it is real important and all that. But you talk about given some of your in-service time, principals go, oh, wait, wait a minute. So I would mandate in the law that you are forced to give coaches 2 to 4 hr, I would love more than that but I know you're not going to get it, but 2 to 4 hr of actually in-service time.

Funding was another perceived barrier that would likely hinder establishing a professional development process. Five athletic directors commented on the issue of financing a developmental process for coaches. Two of the five athletic directors related

the issue to current experiences based on UIL and state law requirements. One of the two athletic directors expressed the following concern:

Money, it is always money. It comes down to money. The thing that happens with all of us is we have mandates that come from the state that are not funded. So then, when you start having to do things that you really want to do it, you just dig that debt deeper.

The other athletic director expressed a similar thought.

As a district, keeping up with all the state mandates that just come across and implementing them is the challenge, obviously across the state and especially in our district. It is a budgetary challenge. I mean they want everybody to have CPR.

They want everybody to have this and that but where is the funding for it?

The athletic directors perceived various barriers or issues to creating and implementing a professional development process for coaches based on their own proposed process or program. However, the overall perception was that if a process was required by UIL or legislated by the state, the athletic directors would be responsible and create a course of action to implement and finance the process or program.

Theme 9: Self-Reflection has a Key Role in the Performance Appraisal System for Coaches

Ten athletic directors from this study perceived self-reflection as significant to succeeding as a coach. One athletic director expressed the connection between self-reflection and development for coaches. The athletic director stated that for a new coach, “it is important that he or she reflects on how the day went, or the month went

because that allows for goal setting and growth in the future.” Another athletic director provided the following perspective that exemplifies the importance of self-reflection. The athletic director remarked:

Coaches’ self-reflection, I hope we would have taught that. We talk about that in our preseason meetings, our first meeting of the year when we are all together. I have that one conversation with our entire coaching staff about evaluating yourself. I think that it should be something, if you are a successful individual and I don’t think it matters what business you are in, I think if you don’t evaluate the job that you do on a daily bases, you don’t have a very good chance of getting better.

Seven of the 10 athletic directors associated self-reflection with a performance appraisal system or as part of the evaluation process for coaches. A vertical organizational structure was used in the school districts of the seven athletic directors. Each high school campus had a coordinator who evaluates the head coaches of each sport. The head coach of each sport, in turn, evaluates the assistant coaches in their program.

Only one participant’s response established the specifics of a process used to train campus coordinators and head coaches to lead the evaluation process for their coaches. The athletic director also provided rationale for this type of performance appraisal system or evaluation process. Multiple observations are required to adequately evaluate a head coach’s performance. The athletic director perceived it as impossible for the athletic

director to fairly evaluate a large number of head coaches when observation opportunities are limited.

The overall focus of the evaluation process presented by the seven athletic directors was to help coaches improve their performance. Self-reflection appeared to be a key component to aiding in the process. The coaches' ability to contribute to the discussion about their performance was viewed as essential. The importance, from one athletic director's perspective, is that coaches are given the opportunity to talk about "what they deal with on a daily basis" and how it impacts their coaching.

Another athletic director was planning a change in his or her district's evaluation process for coaches to a process that would emphasize self-reflection. The process was similar to the evaluation process described by two other athletic directors. The process starts with the athletic director conducting preseason meetings with head coaches to discuss the head coach's goals for the program and ended with a postseason meeting to reflect on the season.

Reflective questions about the performance of the head coach and assistant coaches are part of the process. The athletic director perceived reflection and the ability for coaches to be able to communicate thoughts where they are; what they want to learn as a coach; what they want out of coaching; what their goals were; how they planned to increase their knowledge; and how the new knowledge would be used in the coaching practice as important for the development as a coach.

Another athletic director's perceived writing down reflective thoughts about various aspect of their coaching performance as important for coaches' development. The

self-evaluation instrument requires head coaches to list their top three strengths; to list three areas where they as a coach think they need to develop more as a head coach; and to do the same for their program. According to this athletic director, the process forces head coaches to reflect sincerely about their weaknesses and their strengths. When the athletic director has an evaluation session with the coach, the director has the opportunity to discuss what might have been heard about the coach's weaknesses and about the coach's perceived strengths. The process leads to discourse that allows the athletic director to mentor coaches and the coaches the opportunity to reflect honestly in a nonthreatening environment.

Head coaches are required to conduct a similar process with their assistant coaches. The athletic director commented about the outcome of the reflective, self-evaluation process and the affect the process has on coaches' development. The athletic director stated the following:

I have told them that I do not fire coaches. I feel like I raised the bar high enough regarding expectations that you are going to be uncomfortable working for me if you are not meeting the expectations I have and that usually takes care of it. That is how we handle it.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Presented in this Chapter is the discussion of the findings of this study. The Chapter begins with a summary of the study followed by a conclusion of the results. Then, the discussion about the results in reference to literature and the recommendations for professional preparation and development of coaches are presented. The Chapter concludes with recommendations for further research.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers at 4A and 5A high schools in Texas, would control for the professional preparation and development of athletic coaches. The aim was to discover, from the interscholastic athletic director's perspective, factors or strategies that could be used for systematic and verifiable growth of coaches throughout their interscholastic coaching careers. Qualitative data were collected from athletic directors in North Texas area school districts with three or more high schools that compete in Class 4A and/or 5A football, boys' basketball, and girls' basketball to answer the following research questions:

1. What should be professional qualifications for coaches entering the coaching profession in 4A and 5A Texas high schools?

2. What training system or professional development process should be required throughout a coach's career?
3. What type of performance appraisal system for coaches should be in place that would indicate mastery and would provide for quality experiences for student-athletes?

A review of literature on control, as a function of management, provides the framework for understanding the athletic director's role as a sports manager. The steps for a control management system or process are establishing performance standards for a job; measuring performance; comparing performance with the standards and analyzing deviations; and taking corrective actions if necessary (Mosley et al., 2008). In general terms, a manager's responsibility is to put in place a control management system or process as assurance to accomplishing the goals and objectives of an organization. In terms of interscholastic athletics, the athletic director is ultimately responsible for monitoring and evaluating coaches' performance (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Krotee & Bucher, 2007).

Thirty-seven national coaching standards were developed and published as a result of a 1994 National Coaching Summit focused on improving the quality of coaching. In 2006, the standards were revised and increased. The result was *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* (2006). The publication covers 40 standards of essential knowledge and experiences for coaches and presents a progression of competencies levels for coaches toward mastery to which coaches can reflect and assess their coaching performance.

For interscholastic athletics to retain support, coaches must not lose sight of the educational aspect of interscholastic athletics (Woods, 2007). Coaches have the responsibility of assuring that educational outcomes are gained by the student participants, and athletic directors have the responsibility of administering athletic programs to be certain that the outcomes are obtained (Forsythe & Keller, 1977).

Healey and Healey (1976) stated that qualifications of athletic coaches should be as much of a concern as qualifications for academic teachers. Flannery (2003) was concerned that coaches entering the profession are ill-prepared and advocates a coaches' certification process. The NASBE (2004) report recommended that state boards of education should establish, if lacking or insufficient, a certification and professional development requirement for all coaches.

This investigator sought to explore perceptions of how athletic directors would control for the professional preparation and development of interscholastic athletic coaches and discover factors or strategies that would lead to systemic and verifiable growth of coaches. Twelve athletic directors from North Texas school districts, with no coaching responsibilities, participated in the study. The participants are athletic administrators of school districts with three or more high schools competing at Texas' largest two classifications, 4A and /or 5A, in football, boys' basketball and girls' basketball.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews at the offices of 11 participants and one interview, at one participant's request, in a private residence. The first interview conducted by the researcher served as a pilot study. An initial concern was with the

brevity of the interview. After listening to the audio file and transcribing the interview, it was determined that the participant gave direct responses and that the responses were relevant to the three research questions guiding the study. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim to produce textual data.

The data were analyzed using a qualitative inductive process aided by the qualitative research software, QSR NVivo Version 8.0. An external auditor, employed by an educational organization as a qualitative researcher, was used at the conclusion of the study to assess the project, check the accuracy of themes, and be an additional component of triangulation (Creswell, 2003).

Nine major themes emerged from this study. They are:

1. Interscholastic athletic coaches are integral to the educational setting.
2. Intangible qualifications are important for individuals entering the coaching profession.
3. Support for a coaches certification process varies widely.
4. Local control is important to the continuing educational process for coaches.
5. Professional development requirements would benefit coaches.
6. The major strategy used to provide educational opportunities for coaches is attending coaching clinics.
7. Mentoring is an essential, but underused, means of knowledge acquisition for coaches.
8. There are barriers to establishing a coaches' professional development program.

9. Self-reflection has a key role in the performance appraisal system for coaches.

Conclusion

Interscholastic athletic coaches are essential to the educational setting. Their primary function is comparable to that of the classroom teacher. Individuals entering the coaching profession lack proper preparation for the position. Based on the athletic directors interviewed for this study, desirable qualifications for coaches are intangible skills more likely to be uncovered during the interviewing process. Interpersonal skills, particularly communication skills, are necessary to succeed as a coach.

Technical and tactical aspects of coaching are improved through attendance at clinics, the most prevalent strategy used to introduce educational opportunities for coaches. Current clinic offerings do not adequately address the non sport-specific aspects of coaching. Among the study's participants, support for a coaches' certification or recertification process to improve the profession varied widely.

Although professional requirements are viewed as beneficial, numerous barriers and issues, such as time and funding, must be resolved before any requirements are established. Self-reflective performance appraisals systems were used by a few school districts, and the systems appeared focused on individual development. Until current standards change, the assurance of coaches' competency will be, in many cases, the delegated responsibility of head coaches and campus athletic coordinators.

Discussion

The major assumption of this study is that the quality of coaches is paramount to the integration of interscholastic athletics as a beneficial component of the educational

system. As managers, it stands to reason that athletic directors must be concerned with the quality of coaches for the benefits to be comprehended and achieved. The quality of coaches is impacted by the qualifications of individuals entering the profession and by the training or developmental process individuals go through during the course of their coaching careers. The assurance of quality is monitored through a performance appraisal system for coaches. The promotion of the ideals of interscholastic athletics and the accomplishment of educational outcomes are responsibilities that lie with athletic directors.

Grant Teaff, Executive Director of the American Football Coaches Association and former Baylor University Football Coach, was a guest speaker at a Region III Athletic Directors' monthly meeting. All athletic directors who participated in this study were members of this group, and several were in attendance. Mr. Teaff articulated the importance of coaches' education and the role his organization plays in educating football coaches of various levels. He stated that athletic directors pursued athletic administration because, as former coaches, they understand the value of coaches (personal communication, February 17, 2010).

Coaches are recognized as integral to the educational setting. The athletic directors involved in this study described the function of coaches as similar to classroom teachers. They are focused on student learning. Coaches and classroom teachers *just* teach different subjects in different types of classrooms. The athletic classroom creates an environment that allows value to be added to the educational setting. Coaches teach students life skills that are unmatched in academic classroom settings.

According to athletic directors, coaches are more passionate about coaching and willing to put forth more effort to their craft. They are able to bond and develop special relationships with students. Additionally, great coaches are thought to be great classroom teachers. The perception is that coaches are performing effectively based on the vision provided by the athletic directors (Covell et al., 2007). However, no literature could be located to support or to refute the athletic directors' assumptions, particularly regarding the coaches' effectiveness as classroom teachers.

If athletic directors are to be concerned with the quality of coaches, they should understand that quality is impacted by the qualifications and training individuals have upon entering the profession. All athletic directors in the study are former Texas high school head coaches. Nine of the 12 athletic directors indicated on their demographic survey that they had formal coaching courses prior to beginning their coaching careers. Of the nine, eight athletic directors' official record of educator's certificates verified that they are certified in physical education (State Board for Educator Certification, 2009).

The finding supported Flannery's (2003) contention that coaches were better prepared in the past when most coaches were physical educators. The preparation was due to coursework. For example, physical education majors likely took courses in motor skills development designed to educate individuals on how to teach skills progression. Coaching philosophy courses were, also, likely education-based. In 1971, Esslinger had proclaimed a major in physical education was "the best preparation for the position of head coach" (p. 27). Fuoss and Troppmann (1977), similarly, professed that teachers credentialed in physical education should lead athletic programs.

In Texas, high school coaches must be full-time employees of a school district (Constitution and Contest Rules, 2007). Thus, most coaches are certified classroom teachers but likely in subjects other than physical education. One reason given by athletic directors in support of a coaches' certification process was the perceived notion that traditional college or university teacher certification programs do not prepare individuals for coaching careers. This assertion related somewhat to Flannery's (2003) claimed that "being a teacher does not qualify someone to coach, just as learning to become a teacher of math does not qualify someone to teach English" (§ 3).

Two athletic directors believed a teaching certificate was a sufficient qualification for coaches and were opposed to a coaches' certification process. The directors did not consider that nearly half of Texas' new teachers come from the alternative teacher certification route, which includes people with degrees in academic areas other than education (National Center for Education Information, 2005, ¶ 33). Hence, the quality of coaches entering the profession can only be perceived as deficient.

Substantial literature supported the need for a certification process or program for interscholastic athletic coaches (Esslinger, 1971; Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Healey & Healey, 1976; Horine & Stotlar, 2004; Krotee & Bucher, 2007; Maetozo, 1971; NASBE, 2004). The lack of majority support for a coaches' certification is perplexing when the certifications of the athletic directors are taken into consideration. Seven athletic directors hold a CAA certificate and one holds a RAA certificate through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) certification program.

Six athletic directors have Mid-Management Certification, which certifies them to be campus administrators. As an administrative position, it is not known whether the Mid-Management Certification was a mandatory qualification for the athletic director's position. Nonetheless, support for a coaches' certification varied widely amongst the athletic directors.

The perception, for some directors, was that coaches enter the profession unprepared for the responsibilities and challenges they will face. The athletic classrooms for coaches include the outside of school day athletic practices and competition, as well as, during the course of the school day, athletic classes. It is essential that coaches provide the best instruction to the students in their athletic classroom (Holden, 1971).

According to three athletic directors, the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course requirement for first-year and part-time coaches is a start to addressing the issue of coaches' professional preparation. However, one of the three athletic directors was adamant that more formal training is needed. If the director was writing state legislation for employment prerequisites for coaches, a "lot more formal training than is [currently] received" would be required. This declaration supported literature. Malette and Feltz (2000) reported the need for a longer, more sustained effort to educate coaches.

There is concern for the quality of coaches entering the profession. Another athletic director surmised the following about career preparation for coaches:

Bottom line is that the profession we're in, we're in it because of children and every decision, I think, needs to be made in the best interest of a kid. And preparing coaches to whether it's to be better at X's and O's or whether it's to be

more prepared to handle a catastrophic occurrence . . . Coaches, we deal in kids lives.

Beyond possibly shortchanging students of their sport skills, untrained coaches put students' health, safety, and well-being at risk. One athletic director gave introspection about novice coaches. He stated:

How many mistakes did I make early on trying to figure out the right path? Heck, I was about as immature as anybody was. You got kids coaching kids out there early on. Sometimes you do not reach a point in your career until later and you finally have realized that this is kind of the deal [of coaching].

Another athletic director commented that new, inexperienced coaches are hired and are told "hey coach, learn as you go." Even if these are isolated coaching concerns or occurrences, the potential educational values and the goals of interscholastic athletics are less likely to be recognized and enjoyed by students (Esslinger, 1971; Forsythe & Keller, 1977; Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Healey & Healey, 1976; Woods, 2007).

When asked about the common thread between band directors and teachers, only one athletic director perceived a connection between educational requirements for the two positions. The common thread, according to this athletic director, was that both positions had degrees. The other athletic directors did not consider in addition to classroom teachers, band directors are positions that require certification in a specific area of expertise (Horine & Stotlar, 2004). Why are coaches not required to be certified (Flannery, 2003; Horine & Stotlar)? As one athletic director emphasized, "Coaching is more than just X's and O's" or trying to win a ball game.

A need exists to recognize the difference between academic teaching and athletic *teaching*, and a credentialing process is needed to address the deficiency in preparation for coaches. One athletic director hinted that Texas, in comparison to other states with coaching requirements, might be “missing the boat.”

The findings regarding advocacy for a coaches’ certification supported the literature. Esslinger (1971) advocated each state establishing a coaches’ certification process designed for teachers who teach core subjects. The NASBE (2004) report recommended each state board of education establish a coaches’ certification process to ensure excellence in the athletic classrooms. A greater oversight was identified as needed for coaches because of their influence on students.

A reflective thought exists between the dichotomy of coaches in the profession and coaches entering the profession. A positive aspect of coaching noted by athletic directors was the relationship that exists or can be built between coaches and students. The relationship was said to be created due to the amount of time coaches spend with students and because of the emotions involved in competitive athletics. Some students spend more time with coaches than with their parents. Yet, a weakness of individuals entering interscholastic coaching ranks was a lack of professional preparation. Coaches are ill-prepared to handle certain coaching aspects.

Interestingly, the athletic directors did not consider a possible inappropriate relationship that may develop due to the perceived more personal nature of the coach-student relationship. A coach resigned in February 2009 from a North Texas-area

school district amid allegations of sexual misconduct with a student-athlete (Goolsby, 2009). The district did not meet the criteria for this study.

Discussing improper relationships between coaches and students is an unpleasant subject; however, it is likely that an athletic director in this study has had the misfortune of having dealt with this situation. An untrained individual might be more inclined to cross the line or be unaware of the line of propriety with a student than an individual trained to “demonstrate ethical conduct in all facets of the sport program” (NASPE, 2006, p. 8)

The quality of coaches can be further impacted with a training or development process. Human resource professionals delineate training as activities geared toward improving an employee’s current job performance and development as activities geared toward providing for an employee’s current and future jobs (Sims, 2002). As managers, athletic directors are expected to address the training and developmental needs of all coaches within their school district.

For some athletic directors, the expectation to aid their coaches with training and development activities is a perceived challenge. For other athletic directors, the perception is that they are currently meeting the expectation. Five athletic directors have training systems in place or were finalizing plans for a training system. Most systems described lean toward training rather than development. Essentially, the five athletic directors have control management processes in place. The processes involved either directing behaviors of inexperienced coaches or changing behaviors of underperforming coaches (Railey & Railey, 1988).

For one athletic director, the training was a component of a comprehensive program that targeted first-year coaches and the issues they would likely face their first year in the profession. This approach supported literature. Control activities must be focused and tailored toward achieving the organization's needs and objectives (Bridges, 1992; Mosley et al., 2008).

Another athletic director's training and development system focused on coaching standards that the athletic director believed were not being met. The coaching standards the athletic director expounded on included topics such as communication skills, how to properly motivate students, and coaching styles for different learners. These coaching standards are among topics in *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* (NASPE, 2006).

Further, the athletic director surmised the *why* of issues that hampered the coaches' performance and development. The perception was that growth of the town had lessened the effectiveness of the former training and development methods. The athletic director planned a new course of action, which focused on coaching standards to accomplish the district's goals for athletics. Students would benefit most from the new training and development process.

This athletic director's approach to addressing training and developmental needs of coaches has merit. The finding supported literature on control as a function of management (Bridges, 1992; Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Jensen, 1988; Krotee & Bucher, 2007; Mosley et al., 2008; Railey & Railey, 1988). As part of the control process, Jensen (1988) reported that managers have the responsibility of recognizing and eradicating

issues that hinder performance. The process involves defining the standards, measuring the standard, and taking action to prevent problems. In examining and determining the *why*, the athletic director was then able to complete Mosley et al.'s (2008) final step of the control process, *Taking Corrective Action If Necessary*.

Although this athletic director's actions illustrate the function of control and exemplify the manager's responsibility to the control process, other athletic directors have limited ability to respond to the training and development needs of their coaches. Several athletic directors commented about being allotted annually only one day for training to work with coaches. The directors appeared frustrated and disappointed by their circumstances. Regarding professional development, one day is not enough time to provide quality training and development opportunities to ensure the quality of coaches and coaching for students (Malete & Feltz, 2000).

An extra duty day compensation schedule for coaches is a Texas industry standard that varies among school districts. Coaches in school districts with an extra duty day compensation schedule report for duty several days to weeks before the report date for regular teachers. The early report date allows time for training and development activities. However, compensating coaches in this manner takes a huge financial commitment by a school district. Typically, the extra duty day payment is at the coach's teacher daily-rate pay. If the researcher's district paid extra duty days, a coach with a bachelor's degree and 5-years, 10-years, or 20-years of teaching experience would be compensated \$259, \$268, or \$305, respectively for each extra duty day.

The athletic directors were not asked about the type of the coaches' compensation structure used in their districts. However, the 2009 – 2010 compensation schedules for coaches were available through a keyword search on the website for 9 of 16 school districts meeting this investigation's criterion. Two school districts used the extra duty day compensation schedule.

Athletic directors and coaches in school districts with extra duty day compensation have an advantage in training and development. Districts that do not offer an extra duty day compensation plan and are not allotted time on staff development days for coaches' training must find other means to assist coaches with professional development. The situation contributes to coaching clinics becoming the most prevalent strategy used to provide educational opportunities for coaches.

Half of the athletic directors conducted in-house clinics or intradistrict trainings for their coaches. The clinics or trainings may be arranged for various conditions or purposes: for a certain segment of the coaches in the district; to cover a specific topic, such as UIL rules for the football coaches; or target a specific group of coaches. For example, one athletic director conducted clinics for middle school track coaches and had the following to say regarding clinics for high school coaches:

From the high school standpoint, we probably don't do as good of a job as we do at the middle school . . . seems like we target the middle school coaches more but then we feel like, for whatever reason, they are not learning it like the high school coaches are. So, we probably need to start focusing a little more on the high

school coaches, too. They tend to think they already know it all; that's probably why we work with the middle school coaches a little bit more.

The purposes of professional development are to prevent coaches from becoming out of date and to increase competency (Jensen, 1988). Most athletic directors encouraged their coaches to attend clinics offered by various coaching associations. The motivation was for coaches to keep up to date. This finding supported the UIL Athletic Code for Coaches, which states that coaches are to utilize “the best and most current teaching, coaching, and training methods through affiliation with professional associations and publications” (Constitution & Contest Rules, 2007, p. 164).

Although coaching clinics are viewed as training to help coaches grow professionally, some athletic directors seemed disappointed with the clinicians and their presentations, and are concerned with the quality of the information. Additionally, most workshops focus on the technical and tactical aspects of a sport. The assumption is coaches are learning how to be better at the X's and O's and win more athletic contests rather than how to motivate students and achieve the overall goals of interscholastic athletic participation. The athletic directors concern is not without merit; it was suggested in literature that relevant coaching materials are essential to learning for coaches (Werthener & Trudel, 2006). Further, there is no certainty that the clinic offerings place an emphasis on or represent “technical advancement in coaching” (Fuoss & Troppmann, p. 130).

The findings supported literature. Attending coaching clinics is a respected standard of professional development for coaches (Flanney and Swank, 1999; Fuoss &

Troppmann, 1977). However, the findings countered literature on the systemic approaches to professional development (Lindstrom & Speck, 2004). The scopes of the offering, as suggested by the athletic directors, are limited.

The clinics' offerings are selected by coaches associations, the clinicians are often fellow high school coaches, and coaches are free to attend the lectures of their choosing. The finding supported Moore's (2006) concept of professional development, which allows individuals to focus on *self-development*. Moore stated that individuals are motivated to attend training activities that are rewarding to the individual. Further, the finding supported an aspect of Morocco and Solomon's (1999) definition of a profession. "Professionals are identified not only by their specialized learning but also by their socialization into membership organizations and their affiliation with colleagues who are the source of new knowledge and lifelong learning" (Morocco & Solomon, p. 247).

It was reported in literature that coaches' professional development should look to the field of education and to teacher development programs for approaches (Cushion et al., 2003). Hence, the programs should be built on "solid research, tested theory, and expert practitioner wisdom" (Sweeney, 2008, p. 11). The research-based approach to professional development for coaches is thwarted.

Research on coaching practices, coach development, and how coaches learn are often conducted outside the United States (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). The athletic directors, however, may consider themselves as expert practitioners. In discussing implementation of his proposed continuing education process

to assuage threats to interscholastic athletics, one athletic director stated, “I think we are the experts. We’re the professionals in our field.”

In a business setting, training and development, according to Mathis and Jackson (2006), are based on the assessment of the needs of the organization and the employees. In a school sports setting, training and development would be based on the athletic director’s assessment of coaches’ needs. This factor contributes to the athletic directors’ disappointment in coaching association’s clinics; the directors have no input on the topics covered at clinics. The needs the athletic directors have assessed for their coaches are not adequately addressed. Clinics do not offer the essential knowledge or address coaching standards that athletic directors deemed as important to the overall profession and to achieving the educational outcomes of interscholastic athletics (Bridges, 1992; Jenson, 1988; Mosley et al., 2008).

The findings associated with coaching clinics indicated omissions from the definition of and from the steps necessary for coaching to be perceived as a profession. A profession requires “specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation” (Profession, 2009). The findings did not indicate a sustained preparation process for coaches. Further, coaching would be perceived as profession if a specialized body of knowledge was delivered systematically and learning of information was verified (ASEP, 2002). The findings did not meet this necessary step of a profession. Based on the data collected and analyzed for this investigation, verification of learning of clinic material was not established.

Mentoring was viewed by the athletic directors as a strategy to assist with the professional growth process of coaches. Mentoring contributes to the acquisition of knowledge from others and to the experiences that lead coaches toward competency (Abraham et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005; Lemyre et al., 2007; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). Mentors were perceived to be coaches who excelled at their craft but also desired to teach adults. For one athletic director, the years of experience as a coach were less critical. A person's ability to serve as a good mentor was aligned with being a "quality" person who could assist a coach in need. However, mentors should be coaches that have obtained a certain level of expertise and a certain level of respect in coaching (Cushion et al., 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005; Nelson & Cushion, 2006).

Interscholastic coaches are expected to be role models. They have great influence over students (ASEP, 2002; Flannery, 2003; NASBE, 2004). From a good mentor, novice and/or youthful coaches could learn about the personal and professional expectations and responsibilities that come with the title and position of coach in a school setting.

Two athletic directors have a semblance of a mentoring program in their respective school districts. One of the two athletic directors, who served as a mentor for the district's head coaches, believed that coaches are not mentored enough. As a strategy to improve the quality of coaching, mentoring is "underdeveloped" and underused by school districts. Matching inexperienced coaches with a mentor is an important developmental experience (Erickson et al., 2007). Additionally, coaches helping coaches assist with defining coaching as a profession (Morocco & Solomon, 1999).

The other athletic director had a mentoring process that assigns mentors to new coaches. Mentors help new coaches get acclimated to school district and departmental procedures. This approach supported literature on the supportive nature of mentoring (Cushion et al., 2003). An additional component, according to this athletic director, was that the mentor has to evaluate that coach and see if they have what it takes to continue coaching. This component countered the literature regarding mentoring. If mentoring is to assist the mentor and the person being mentored, the nature of the relationship must be cooperative rather than evaluative (Cushion et al., 2003).

Self-reflection, rather than mentoring, was associated with the evaluation of coaches by 7 athletic directors. Additionally, self-reflection was viewed as a contributing factor to succeeding in the coaching profession and “critical to any productive system.” According to one athletic director, new coaches need to self-reflect on a daily basis to grow, continuously. The assertion supported literature. Abraham et al. (2006) credited coaches’ self-reflective nature as contributing to coaches having learned from their experience.

Another athletic director included a discussion about self-reflection in an all-coaches preseason meeting. The act of addressing self-reflection should encourage coaches to self-reflect. Gilbert and Trudel (2001) were concerned that not all coaches reflected. The message to coaches stressed the importance of reflecting and evaluating themselves daily if they wanted to perform better. This athletic director’s discourse, however, gave coaches some personal responsibility for striving to be a quality professional. Nevertheless, athletic directors are ultimately responsible for ensuring

students are coached by quality coaches (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Krotee & Bucher, 2007).

Another athletic director remarked that self-reflection would be the process for some long-tenured coaches, who have become stagnant, to recognize that it was time to end their career. The athletic director shared the following:

Some great coaches . . . it was just time for them to quit coaching and sometimes they don't see it and you got to help them see it. I had a basketball coach for example that had been there way too long . . . Was he a very good basketball coach? You bet. Was he a very good person? Yes, he was. Had he lost the vision, had lost the ability to relate to the kids? Yes. Yeah, so what do you do? It's time to make a change for what's best for the program. So, those are the one you try to get them to reflect on that and self analyze, those are your tough ones. But you know, you don't have to do that that often.

Performance appraisal systems are mechanisms to monitor the quality of coaches (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977). Some school districts have a performance appraisal system that requires an annual, self-reflective discussion between the coach and the evaluator that lessens the chances of a coach being continuously employed and able to underperform.

Three athletic directors directed similar self-reflective evaluation process for their coaches. One of the three athletic directors provides performance evaluation training for the head coaches. The other two athletic directors did not mention training or a performance rubric to assist with the evaluation process.

The athletic director who trained head coaches for the self-evaluation process gave an overview of the process. The head coaches of sports programs meet with the athletic director for preseason meetings to discuss their programs' goals for the season. At a postseason conference, in addition to a review of whether the program's goals were attained, the athletic director and head coach discuss the head coach's coaching performance and the performances of assistant coaches and middle school coaches under their supervision. The post-season conference occurs after the head coach had conducted individual self-evaluation conferences with members of his or her coaching staff. This process supported literature on the importance of preseason and post-season conferences with coaches (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977).

The focus of the reflective, self-evaluation process is improving a coach's performance to meet the expectations set forth by the athletic director. The means to improvement and learning was the reflective dialogue. Coaches were able to reflect on their experiences and obtain critical feedback from the evaluator to assist with the growth and development process (Cushion et al., 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001; Nelson & Cushion, 2006). Additionally, head coaches were expected to give evidence during their post-conference with athletic director to support their high school assistant and middle school coaches' self-evaluation forms. The athletic director stated, "I try to use that evaluation as an approach to mentor them and to really reflect. I'm not threatening with them at all and so I found that they open up to me."

The findings, in particular for this athletic director's performance appraisal system, supported literature and research in areas of performance appraisal, mentoring,

and self-reflective practices. The system and approach supported Mathis and Jackson's (2006) recommendation for performance appraisal design. If aiding an individual coach's development is the purpose, appraisals should be designed for development rather than to fulfill an administrative requirement. According to Fuoss and Troppmann (1977), "The main purpose of evaluation or appraisal of the coaches' performance is to improve coaching and learning" (p. 130).

The aspect of mentoring in the performance appraisal system substantiated Flanney and Swank's (1999) approach to evaluating coaches. They claimed that approaching evaluation of coaches with a mentoring manner increase the probability of coaches' improvement. Trust and credibility with the coach is essential for the process to thrive.

Finally, the finding supported self-reflection as a framework for how coaches learn, which is intermingled with mentoring. Cushion et al. (2003), in accordance with Nelson and Cushion (2006), reported that both the experience of the coach and interaction with skilled coaches are essential to the development of a coach's performance and his or her coaching practice. Whereas researchers (Cushion et al., 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Werthener & Trudel, 2006) have supported reflective practices as part of coaching education programs, in this study, the discussion surrounded the performance appraisal system or evaluation process. Self-reflection as an evaluative approach is a theme that emerged for this study and requires further analysis.

While the three previously discussed athletic directors had self-evaluation systems that focused on individual development, another athletic director expatiated about a differing evaluation methodology and philosophy. Other directors operated in comparable organizational structure and share a similar philosophy. However, the other directors did not expound in as much detail.

The athletic director outlined the process. Head coaches are responsible for the coaches under them, from to seventh grade coach up to top assistant coach. The director further detailed the philosophy of vertical teaming or alignment:

Head coaches of every sport have got to be your role models, your leaders. They've got to share their thoughts, their vision. I challenge our coaches to do that. My head coaches of every sport have an opportunity to be part of the evaluation of all the people that are under them . . . that provides the ownership that they need and the leverage. It's doesn't come down to just a personality issue, it comes down to the basic fundamentals, being productive, and having the same philosophy. Philosophy is huge in there and so it allows your coaches to get the people they need in their systems to be successful. There are no excuses. It falls back on the head coaches . . . there's different principles, different thoughts, different philosophies, and I'm not going to tell them how we're going to skin the cat per se. There is flexibility as long as it is sound. It is vertical teaming all the way through.

Although winning athletic contests was rarely mentioned during the interviews of the directors, this philosophy of vertical teaming and alignment seemed focused on

creating productive, i.e. successful, athletic teams and programs. However, in terms of this investigation, the philosophy results in reflective contemplation. The assurance and the responsibility of quality coaches are entrusted heavily to head coaches. Based on the analysis of the data collected in this study, limited time is available at the district level for professional growth opportunities and activities for all coaches. If the head coach leading an athletic program does not have the time for or is not focused on growth and development, then the competency levels for coaches within that program are bound for stagnation.

Further, what if the head coach is not qualified, how do the high school assistant coaches and middle school coaches continue to learn? How does the turnover of head coaches within a sports program affect the development of the program's assistant coaches and middle school coaches? Does this process contribute to systemic growth and development of coaches? Does the process verify learning? Does it make coaching a stronger profession in Texas?

The athletic directors, who operate in vertical alignment systems, must consider substantial literature. Athletic directors, as sports managers, are responsible for coaches' performance. (Bridges, 1992; Covell et al., 2007; Flannery & Swank, 1999; Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Jensen, 1988; Krotee & Bucher, 2007; Mosley et al., 2008; Railey & Railey, 1988). The ultimate responsibility for coaches' performance cannot be delegated.

Again, the assumption of this investigation is the quality of coaches is paramount to the integration of interscholastic athletics as a beneficial component of the educational system. The assumption is supported by literature (Clark, 2000; Esslinger, 1971;

Flannery, 2003; Forsythe & Keller, 1977; Holden, 1971; NASBE, 2004; Woods, 2007). The aim was to discover, from the interscholastic athletic director's perspective, factors or strategies for systematic and verifiable growth of coaches. Overall, the current situation of coaches' preparation and professional development, as perceived by the study's participants, serendipitously meet the assumption of the study. First-year coaches take the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course; however, there are no reflective exercises or requirements once the course had been completed (i.e., no verification of learning).

Moreover, dimensions of time and lack of funding hamper athletic directors' efforts to introduce continuous development opportunities for coaches. Strategies to assist their coaches' growth and development process are influenced by local district circumstances. For example, many directors are annually allotted one day for training and development activities. The circumstances lead athletic directors to encourage coaches to attend clinics to stay current. Unfortunately, the clinics focus mainly on technical and tactical aspect of coaching, to the disappointment of the directors. However, using self-reflection as an evaluation approach to conducting annual dialogue with coaches appears to be a strategy to monitor and discuss progression of coaching performance and to verify whether learning has occurred from one year to the next.

The main findings of this study make athletic directors susceptible to questions related to the study's assumption and could provide reasons to support a professional preparation and development requirement for coaches. However, the athletic directors involved with the study can be viewed as strengths to interscholastic athletics in Texas.

The athletic directors are concerned by the insufficient quality of coaches entering the profession and with the constraints that limits the training or developmental process during the course of their coaching career. To address the concerns, the athletic directors assumed the roles of teacher, leader, mentor, and standard bearer while promoting the ideals of interscholastic athletics. They understand that educational outcomes for the student are not gained by happenstance but rather through obligatory, purposeful pursuit by well-trained, well-informed coaches (Esslinger, 1971; Forsythe & Keller, 1977; Woods, 2007). One director described the role taken at the first day of coaches' in-service. In referring to coaches, the athletic director stated the following:

I am here to teach them I am a stickler on education, we are always learning. If you're not prepared to be here and to be a lifelong learner and a lifelong teacher and a role model for these kids then it's time to move on and I will help you move on because I want what's best for our kids.

The emerging theme of self-reflection as a design element for performance appraisal system or an evaluation process deserves investigation in light of athletic directors' responsibility for coaches' performance. Athletic directors, as managers, are responsible for monitoring and the evaluation of coaches' performance (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Krotee & Bucher, 2007). However, systematic monitoring and reporting of coaches' performance by the athletic directors involved in this study is unrealistic. The school districts meeting the criteria for the study ranged in size from 3 high schools to 23 high schools.

Maetozo (1981) proclaimed “the only certain prediction concerning the future of athletics and athletic coaching is that there will be change” (p. 41). Athletic directors involved with this study seemed prepared to provide valuable input and insight toward change. One athletic director has served on a national committee of the NIAAA and is familiar with other states’ coaching requirements. Critical thinking to create new policies and procedures is enhanced by the director’s knowledge and exposure to national industry standards regarding coaching education requirements.

This study involved athletic directors who desire to build a stronger profession and advocate a certification process and/or professional development requirement for coaches. The directors are *reticent leaders*. They have assessed the current state of the coaching profession and have a desire to bring about universal change, but they keep their vision and message silent. For example, one athletic director expounded how to address anticipated implementation issues with legislation based on proposed changes.

I see number one, time as [an issue] . . . and today with the economy what it is and the way school finance is, I think it is a huge battle and I don’t like to think that because that’s a negative to me. I have always believed that maybe I should get out there Sometimes I think that I don’t do enough of going out there and finding stakeholders and getting them involved because I am so passionate about what we do. I think if we could just do that [the proposed legislation] then we [interscholastic athletics] would be very beneficial to kids in our state.

The athletic directors involved with this study are amenable to change. Most directors mention the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course as the beginning of an era

of potential changes in the University Interscholastic League coaches' education requirements. One athletic director reflected on how proposed prerequisites for employment could be parlayed into legislation based current conditions toward a paradigm of change (i.e., the new coaching course requirement).

UIL is starting to put down some of little 'we-have-to-dos' and courses to take online. I think, through legislation, we could mandate some kind of online course on how to communicate with kids and how to build relationships with kids. So that might be a legislated mandate that could come down the pipe.

The athletic directors are aware of their tremendous responsibility and tasks assigned to the main assumption of this study. The quality of coaches directly impacts whether the sporting experience of students is educational and beneficial (Clark, 2000; Woods, 2007). The directors believed that they have a commonality with the UIL leadership.

One athletic director had the following to say about the current relationship between athletic directors and UIL:

The UIL, I think, has changed dramatically over even the last 5 years as far as how they are actually working with us. We have a more of a voice with them . . . that comes under Charles' [Dr. Charles Breithaupt, Executive Director] leadership and then you look at who they've gone out and hired and what they're trying to do. They want to hear the heartbeat . . . hear from us. Before, it was my way or the highway a little bit. These are the rules; do them . . . So, I think the whole thing has to evolve.

Based on the data collected and analyzed for this investigation, the athletic directors expressed the framework for a larger discussion with UIL leadership about control management process for athletic programming (Fuoss & Troppmann, 1977; Mosley et al., 2008). Further, the UIL and the athletic directors seem poised for constructive discourse to answer a series of questions. What *should* it take to be a coach in Texas? What *should* it take to continuously serve a coach in Texas? More important, do Texas' current standards ensure educational outcomes are met and that students' athletic experiences are enhanced by coaches "who maintain a certain level of professional development throughout their careers" (Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, 2009)? If not, the next question is what should be done.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommendations to assist with the professional preparation and development of coaches. The recommendations support the assurance of quality coaches for the integration of interscholastic athletics as a beneficial component of the educational system.

1. Establishing performance standards is the first step in the control management process. National standards for coaches exist. It was undetermined if the athletic directors were familiar with *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* (NASPE, 2006). However, this publication could provide athletic directors with the information to assist with developing well-designed, research-based processes that could encompass their training, development, and evaluation needs. Further, as national

standards, the publication addressed the major domains of coaching and the voiced concerns of the athletic directors. A copy of *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* should be in the professional library of every athletic director. The information from the publication can inform all steps of the control process.

2. Coaches are entering the profession with limited preparation. To enhance the effectiveness of NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course, first-year coaches should be required to keep a weekly log of reflections. The written reflections would facilitate periodic conversations with the coach's evaluator or mentor.
3. Coaches' needs when entering the profession unprepared must be addressed. Athletic directors should have new coaches complete a profile of educational experiences, previous coaching experiences, and previous sports participant experiences. The data from the profiles would be compared to the essential knowledge for a basic coach (NASPE, 2006). Training and development activities would be planned based on gaps in essential knowledge.
4. Coaches should advance their careers in a systematic manner. Unfortunately, coaches sometimes advance to a higher position without meeting a certain level of competency because their teaching field matches the teaching field of the coaching vacancy. Athletic directors should use the national standards in *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches* (NASPE, 2006) to formalize a systemic growth process to match the progression from a basic coach to a master coach. Therefore, if a coach has

not yet met the competency level for the position, there is assurance that a process is in place to facilitate continued growth and development.

5. Oversight must be provided for coaching clinics sponsored by the professional coaching associations. The University Interscholastic League endorses coaches associations' clinics through the language of the UIL Athletic Code for Coaches. There is a need for collaboration among the coaching associations, UIL, and the Texas High School Athletic Directors Association to schedule speakers and clinicians to address non-sports specific aspects of coaching that are aligned the domains of the national standards. The Safety and Injury Prevention domain has been adequately addressed through state laws. The Sport Skills and Tactics domain is addressed thoroughly in current clinic offerings. The domains of Philosophy and Ethics; Physical Conditioning; Growth and Development; Teaching and Communication; Organization and Administration; and Evaluation are areas to emphasize in future clinics.
6. Performance appraisals systems based on self-reflection are an emerging topic. The self-reflective or self-evaluation process focuses on individual improvement. National coaching standards should be used to design the evaluation instrument and to initiate the reflective dialogue. This approach would bring a level of objectivity into the process. Further, athletic directors who do not use the self-evaluation system of evaluation should conduct a self-study within their districts to determine the effectiveness of their current

performance appraisals system. If the system is not meeting the goals that the director has for evaluation, then a change should be considered.

7. Athletic directors and the UIL should be proactive in creating a coach's certification and professional development requirement. Self-governance in the area of professional development activities is occurring for many coaches; however, it is in an undocumented, unverifiable, and unregulated manner. There is a concern among athletic directors that legislation could be mandated in the area of coaches' educational requirements coaches without seeking input or knowledge from the experts (athletic directors and UIL) in the field. Taking a proactive approach gives the leadership of interscholastic athletics the opportunity to self-determined, self-govern, and self-regulate the process. The quality of coaches would be expected to increase from a coach's certification and development requirement. Ultimately, the students of Texas would benefit from participating in athletic programs directed by highly qualified coaches.

Suggestions for Further Research

The investigator sought to explore how to control for the professional preparation and development of athletic coaches from the perspective of athletic directors' in an urban setting with multiple high schools. It is not known whether the experiences of athletic directors in smaller high school settings or in smaller classification of schools would impact the results. To augment this study, a similar study could be conducted for comparison of similarities and difference in findings between the groups. Additionally, a

similar study could be conducted and analyzed by gender and within a sport. After concluding the study, there were questions as to whether an athletic director's gender or the sport in which the person had been a head coach informs or influences his or her perspective.

Research involving coaches in the interscholastic setting is limited in the United States. Suggested further studies should give a voice to interscholastic coaches and uncover from their perspective of how the group comes to understand their growth and development. Studies with this purpose could suggest whether athletic coaches' needs are being met from the coaches' perspective.

A suggested study based on the finding of this study would be a longitudinal study of athletic coaches in Texas, without reference to the classification of school enrollment. The requirement of the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course is a standard for all first-year coaches. A longitudinal study, based on randomly selected first-year coaches, could follow coaches throughout the first 5 to 10 years of their coaching career. Of interest, initially, would be the coaches' reflection on the knowledge gained from the NFHS coaching course and the applicability during their first year of coaching. In absence of a standardized training and development model for Texas, the reflection process could be continued periodically through the years. The coach could reflect on their self-prescribed developmental activities and process.

Further, in accordance with Werthner and Trudel (2006), an understanding would be gained regarding the similarities and differences of coaches in a similar coaching context--interscholastically. A study of this design could possibly expedite the changes

and assist with resolving the issue of funding that the athletic directors in this study are seeking to ensure that student participants are positively affected by their experience with their coaches.

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APPENDIX A

UIL 2008-10 Official Football and 2009-10 Official Basketball District 4A Alignment

UIL 2008-10 Official Football and 2009-10 Official Basketball District 4A Alignment

Region 1		Region 2	
District 1	District 5	District 9	District 13
El Paso	Denton	Denton	Haltsville
El Paso Andress	Denton Guyer	Frisco	Longview
El Paso Austin	Denton Ryan	Frisco Centennial	Longview Pine Tree
El Paso Bowie	Lake Dallas	Frisco Liberty	Marshall
El Paso Burges	Lewisville The Colony	Frisco Wakeland	Mount Pleasant
El Paso Chapin	Little Elm	McKinney	Sulphur Springs
El Paso Irvin	Wichita Falls	McKinney North	Texarkana Texas
El Paso Jefferson	Wichita Falls Rider	Sherman	
District 2	District 6	District 10	District 14
Carutillo	Alledo	Carrollton Smith	Henderson
Clark Horizon	Azle	Carrollton Turner	Jacksonville
Clark Mountain View	Ft Worth Boswell	Dallas Highland Park	Kilgore
El Paso Del Valle	Mineral Wells	Greenville	Lindale
El Paso Parkland	N Richland Hills Birdville	Richardson Pearce	Nacogdoches
El Paso Riverdale	Saginaw	Rockwall	Whitehouse
El Paso Yateca	Springtown	Rockwall-Heath	
San Elizario	White Settlement Brewer	Royal City	District 15
District 3	District 7	District 11	Forney
Amarillo Caprock	Ft Worth Arlington Hts	Dallas Adamson	Lancaster
Amarillo Palo Duro	Ft Worth Dunbar	Dallas Carter	Masquita Potomac
Canyon	Ft Worth Eastern Hills	Dallas Kimball	Red Oak
Canyon Randall	Ft Worth North Side	Dallas Pinkston	Terrell
Dumas	Ft Worth Polycachnic	Dallas Seagoville	West Mesquite
Pampa	Ft Worth South Hills	Dallas Smith	
District 4	Ft Worth Southwest	Dallas South Oak Cliff	District 16
Abitone Cooper	Ft Worth Trimble Tech	North Dallas	Cleburne
Big Spring	Ft Worth Western Hills		Coriscoano
Hensford +	Ft Worth Wyatt		Ennis
Plainview	District 8	District 12	Midlothian
San Angelo Lake View	Arlington Seguin	Dallas Adams	Waco
Wotfforth Franship	Crowley	Dallas Conrad	Waco Midway
	Everman	Dallas Hillcrest	Waco University
	Granbury	Dallas Jefferson	Waxahachie
	Joshua	Dallas Lincoln	
	Marfield Legacy	Dallas Samuel	
	Marfield Timberview	Dallas Wilson	
	Stephenville		

APPENDIX B

UIL 2008-10 Official Football and 2009-10 Official Basketball District 5A Alignment

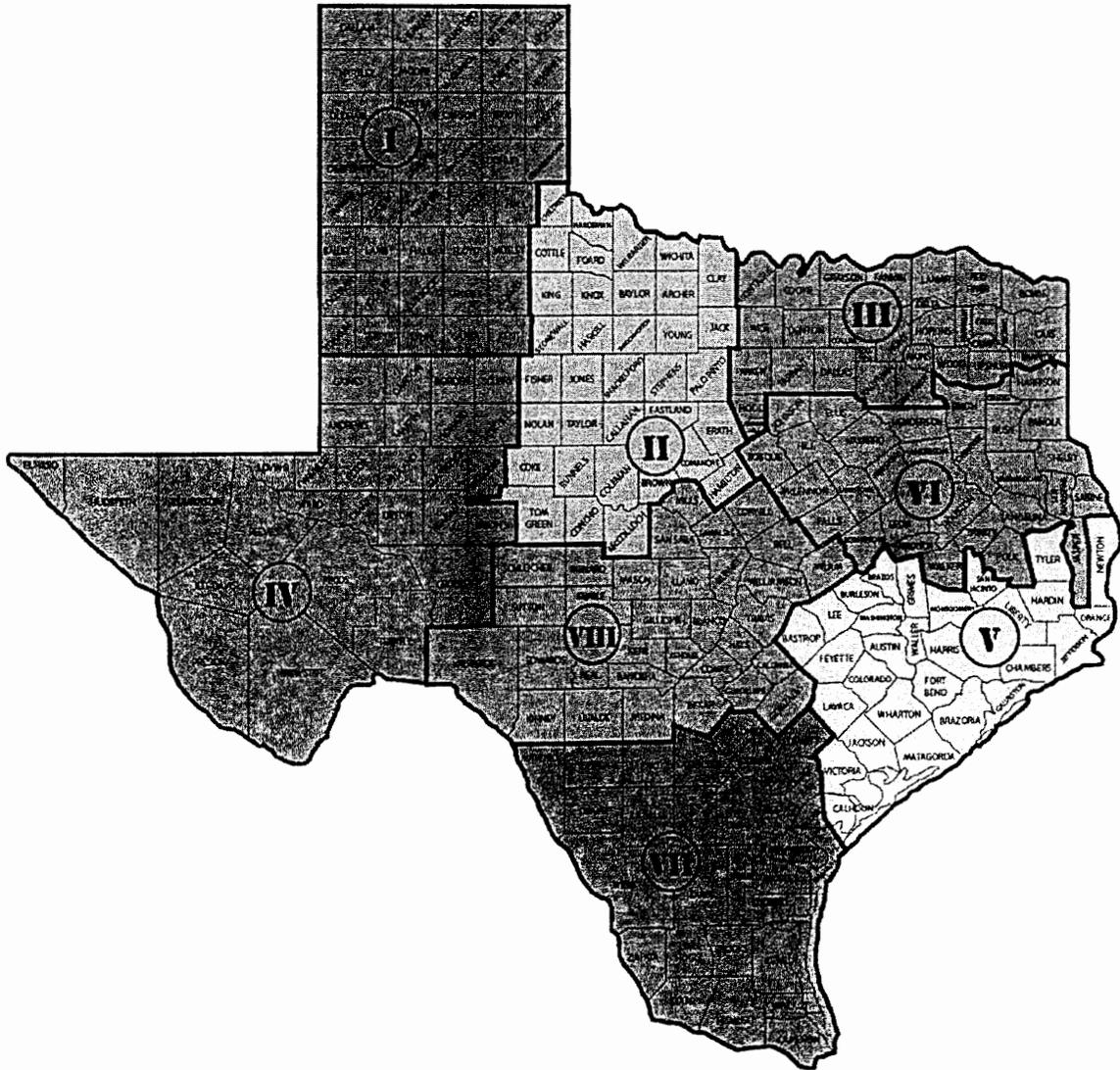
UIL 2008-10 Official Football and 2009-10 Official Basketball District 5A Alignment

Region 1		Region 2	
District 1 El Paso Americas El Paso Bel Air El Paso Coronado El Paso Eastwood El Paso El Dorado El Paso Franklin El Paso Hanks El Paso Montwood El Paso Socorro	District 5 Colleyville Heritage Eules Trinity Grapevine Hurst Bell Keller Keller Central Keller Fossil Ridge Northwest	District 9 Carrollton Creekview Dallas Molina Dallas Skyline Dallas Sunset Dallas White Richardson Richardson Berkner Richardson Lake Highlands	District 13 Klein Klein Collins Klein Forest Klein Oak Spring Spring DeCaney Spring Westfield Tomball
District 2 Amarillo Amarillo Tascosa Lubbock Lubbock Coronado Lubbock Monterey Midland Midland Lee Odessa Odessa Permian San Angelo Central	District 6 Coppell Lewisville Lewisville Flower Mound Lewisville Hebron Lewisville Marcus Southlake Carroll	District 10 Garland Garland Lakeview Cent Garland Naaman Forest Garland Rowlett Garland Sachse North Garland South Garland	District 14 Conroe Conroe Oak Ridge Conroe The Woodlands Conroe Woodlands College Park Lurkin New Caney
District 3 Arlington Burlison Ft Worth Paschal Haltom City Haltom N Richland Hills Richland North Crowley Weatherford	District 7 Cedar Hill Duncanville Grand Prairie Irving Irving MacArthur Irving Nimitz South Grand Prairie	District 11 De Soto Mesquite Mesquite Horn North Mesquite Tyler Tyler Lee	District 15 Houston Cyp. Creek Houston Cyp. Fair Houston Cyp. Falls Houston Cyp. Lakes * Houston Cyp. Ranch * Houston Cyp. Ridge Houston Cyp. Springs Houston Cyp. Woods Houston Jersey Village Houston Langham Crk
District 4 Arlington Arlington Bowie Arlington Houston Arlington Lamar Arlington Martin Mansfield Mansfield Summit	District 8 Allen Dallas Jesuit McKinney Boyd Piano Piano East Piano West Wylie	District 12 Belton Bryan College Station A&M Cons Copperas Cove Killeen Ellison Killeen Harker Heights Killeen Shoemaker Temple	District 16 Cedar Park Cedar Park Vista Ridge Georgetown Leander Round Rock Round Rock McNeil Round Rock Stony Ft. Round Rock Westwood

APPENDIX C

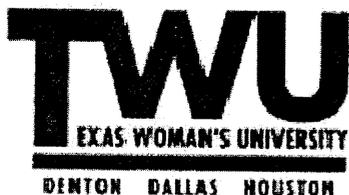
Texas High School Athletic Directors Association: Map of Regions by Counties

Texas High School Athletic Directors Association: Map of Regions by Counties



APPENDIX D

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
P.O. Box 425619, Denton, TX 76204-5619
940-898-3378 Fax 940-898-3416
e-mail: IRB@twu.edu

January 21, 2009

Dear Ms. Langston:

Re: Exploring Interscholastic Athletic Coaches' Development: The Athletic Director's Perspective

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and appears to meet our requirements for the protection of individuals' rights.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data collection at that agency. A copy of the approved consent form with the IRB approval stamp and a copy of the annual/final report are enclosed. Please use the consent form with the most recent approval date stamp when obtaining consent from your participants. The signed consent forms and final report must be filed with the Institutional Review Board at the completion of the study.

This approval is valid one year from January 21, 2009. According to regulations from the Department of Health and Human Services, another review by the IRB is required if your project changes in any way, and the IRB must be notified immediately regarding any adverse events. If you have any questions, feel free to call the TWU Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Nichols, Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

enc.

cc. Dr. Charlotte Sanborn, Department of Kinesiology
Dr. Bettye Myers, Department of Kinesiology
Graduate School

APPENDIX E

Consent to Participate in Research

**TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Title: Exploring Interscholastic Athletic Coaches' Development: The Athletic Director's Perspective

Investigator: Lisa L. Langston, M. Ed.....
Advisor: Bettye Myers, Ph. D.....

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You are being asked to participate in a research study for Ms. Langston's dissertation at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of the study is to explore how interscholastic athletic directors, as sport managers at 4A and 5A high schools in Texas, would control for the professional preparation and professional development of athletic coaches and to discover, from the interscholastic athletic director's perspective, factors or strategies for systematic and verifiable growth of coaches.

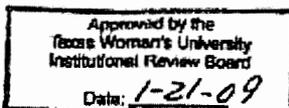
Research Procedures

For this study, the investigator will conduct face-to-face interviews of interscholastic athletic directors, who have no current coaching responsibilities, in a North Texas area school district with three or more high schools that compete in Class 4A and/or 5A football, boys' basketball, and girls' basketball. The interview will be done at a private location agreed upon by you and the investigator. You will be audio recorded during the face-to-face interview. The purpose of audio recording is to provide a transcription of the information discussed in the interview and to assure the accuracy of the reporting of the information. Access to the digital audio files of the interview will be limited to the investigator. Your maximum total time commitment in the study is estimated to be approximately one hour.

Potential Risks

Loss of confidentiality is a potential risk related to your participation in the study. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading and internet transactions. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The interview will be at a private location agreed upon by you and the investigator.

A pseudonym will be assigned to digital audio files and hard copies of transcriptions of the recordings. Access to audio files, hard copies of transcriptions and the recording device is limited to the investigator. The audio files from the interview will be deleted and hard copies of the transcriptions will be shredded within three years of the completion of the study. It is anticipated that the results of this study will be published in the investigator's dissertation as well as in other research publications. However, no names or other identifying information will be included in any publication.



Participant Initials
Page 1 of 2

Coercion is a potential risk associated with your participation in this study. Questions that you posed to the investigator during the course of the interview that involves the investigator's own perspective will be addressed only after the interview. Other potential risk related to your participation in the study include fatigue and physical or emotional discomfort during your interview. To avoid fatigue, you make take a break or as many as needed during the interview. If you experience physical or emotional discomfort regarding the interview questions, you may stop answering questions at any time.

The researchers will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researchers know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation and Benefits

Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. The only direct benefit of this study to you is that at the completion of the study a PDF version of the researcher's dissertation will be e-mailed to you upon request*.

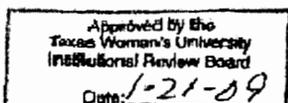
Questions Regarding the Study

You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers; their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

Signature of Participant

Date

*If you would like to receive a PDF of the researcher's dissertation, please provide an email address to which the file will be sent:



APPENDIX F
Demographics Survey

Demographic Data for Participants

1. Gender Female Male
2. Years at District _____
3. Years as the District's Athletic Director, including the 2008-2009 school year _____
4. Do you hold a Mid-Management Certification? Yes No
5. Do you hold a National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association certification—RAA, CAA or CMAA?
6. When you coached, you were the head coach of what sport(s)?
7. Formal coaching courses taken prior to starting coaching career? Yes No
8. As a coach, were you ever responsible for teaching a coaching course and/or seminar that covered topics other than the technical or tactical knowledge of a sport?

Yes No
9. As an athletic director, have you ever been responsible for teaching a coaching course and/or seminar that covered topics other than the technical or tactical knowledge of a sport? Yes No
10. Are you or have you ever been a Course Instructor for a national coaching education program?

Yes No