

5-2022

The Role of Coaches to Assist Collegiate Student-Athletes for a Career After Athletics

Austin Thiessen
austinthiessen20@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openriver.winona.edu/leadershipeducationcapstones>



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), and the [Leadership Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thiessen, Austin, "The Role of Coaches to Assist Collegiate Student-Athletes for a Career After Athletics" (2022). *Leadership Education Capstones*. 79.

<https://openriver.winona.edu/leadershipeducationcapstones/79>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Leadership Education - Graduate Studies at OpenRiver. It has been accepted for inclusion in Leadership Education Capstones by an authorized administrator of OpenRiver. For more information, please contact klarson@winona.edu.

The Role of Coaches to Assist Collegiate Student-Athletes for a Career After Athletics

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Department of Leadership Education

College of Education of Winona State University

By

Austin P. Thiessen

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Science

April 28th, 2022

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
Chapter 1 – Introduction.....	6
Purpose of the Study.....	6
Background of the Problem.....	7
Research Questions.....	9
Limitations.....	9
Summary.....	9
Chapter II – Review of Literature.....	10
Theoretical Framework.....	10
Self-Efficacy.....	11
Career Goals.....	12
Background of Athletes Transitioning out of Sport.....	12
Athletic Identity.....	12
Academic Support Systems.....	13
Coaches Impact on an Athletes Transition.....	14
Best Practices for Coaches.....	15
Summary.....	16
Chapter III – Research Methodology.....	16
Research Design.....	17
Sample and Setting.....	17

Instruments.....	18
Data Collection and Procedure.....	18
Data Analysis.....	19
Summary.....	20
Chapter IV: Results.....	20
Description of Sample.....	20
Results.....	21
Research Question One.....	21
Research Question Two.....	23
Summary.....	26
Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusions.....	26
Discussions and Conclusions.....	27
Theoretical Connection.....	27
Research Question One Discussion.....	28
RQ1 Theme: Communication.....	28
Research Question Two Discussion.....	30
RQ2 Theme: Relationship Building.....	30
RQ2 Theme: Career Goals.....	30
Conclusions.....	31
Leadership Implications.....	31
Recommendation for Future Research.....	33
Summary...../.....	34
References.....	35

Appendix A.....44

Appendix B.....45

Abstract

This paper explored the importance of how coaches can assist student-athletes transitioning from an athletic career to a career outside of sports. The purpose of this study is to better understand the best methods for coaches to use to complete a successful, out of sport transition. This research focused on a Division III university in the Midwest. The research design was a combination of qualitative and data collected through interviews and surveys. The data from this study focused on a survey sent out to student-athletes along with separate interview questions to student-athletes and coaches who decided to participate. Student-athlete participants were required to have completed one full year of athletic responsibility requirements to participate. Coaches were required to have coached for five years and coached seniors who have transition out of sports into post-sport career. Student-athletes were asked to respond to a variety of questions about how coaches have assisted or not assisted them in a transition out of sports. Coaches were asked to respond to a series of question about how they could help student-athletes transition out of athletics. The results suggest coaches play a key factor in ensuring a successful transition out of sports.

Chapter I: Introduction

Sixty percent of athletes report not engaging in planning for their post-sport lives (Demulier, 2015). Student-athletes get indulged in their sports and they lose sight of life after sports. The main goal of college is to prepare students for a career. The person that an athlete has the most contact with is their coach. Coaches must lead student-athletes in the right direction as they leap from playing sports to finding a career.

Purpose of the Study

One thing athletics and the workforce have in common is competition. Athletes compete in sports for positions, and individuals compete for careers in the job world. College athletes focus on the competition of their respective sport but do not prepare for the competition that results after they transition out of sports. The purpose of this study is to understand how coaches can contribute to moving student-athletes from a sport to a job. The study will also look at the best practices coaches can use to make student-athletes most prepared. Student-athletes must find a balance to compete for a job in the job market (Navarro, 2015). Navarro states that student-athletes pick majors that best fit their schedule instead of finding a major that suits them for life (2015). The coach's job is to prepare student-athletes for the transition out of athletics (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017).

The physical, mental, and time-consuming demands it takes to be a collegiate athlete reduce the amount of time available to plan for a career (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017). The collective impact of stressors can lead to unwelcomed consequences such as anxiety, depression, and substance abuse (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017). Schlossberg (1981) said the definition of transition is "an event or not event that resulted in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behavior and relationships" (Schlossberg,

1981, p.5). Therefore, collegiate coaches play a vital role in aiding their student-athletes as much as possible (Menke & Germany, 2019). Understanding what athletes feel as they transition out of sport is critical to a successful transition.

Finding how coaches can help and the best practices to aid in the transition of athletics to a job is the reasoning behind this qualitative research. Coaches' roles are constantly changing to improve performance enhancement. The stage of development figures out the nature of the coach's job the athlete is in (Johnson, 2011). Coaches must take part in being knowledgeable and up to date about how their athletes are doing academically (Dilley-Knoles, Burnett, & Peak, 2010). The study will investigate coaches' practices to transition college athletes out of their sport and into their jobs.

Background of the Problem

While trying to compete athletically, athletes also must compete academically. Student-athletes have reduced time for academic planning, hindering a successful transition out of the sport (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017). During college, it is the first-time young adults venture out and become independent. Being independent means juggling school and non-school responsibilities (Evans, Forney, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Independence requires balancing school and sport for student-athletes. Balancing school and sport can be stressful. Increased stress levels can result in reduced time for academic and career planning. Athletes do not perform as well as the general student body, resulting in lower academic scores and less preparedness for transition out of sports (Maloney & McCormich, 2012). Student-athletes, particularly those in high profile sports, scored lower academically than their peers not participating in athletics (Lally & Kerr, 2005). Sixty-seven percent of graduated football student-athletes showed that they did not research a career prior to graduation (Navarro & McCormich, 2017). With limited time to explore careers,

athletes have limited academic identity development, leading to a strong identity in athletics. According to Alfermann, Stambulova, and Zemaityte, "only 40 percent of athletes plan accordingly for the period following their transition out of sport" (2004). Student-athletes must become involved in activities outside of sports to offset a strong athletic identity. It provides them with educational information on professional experiences with other students and professors (Kuh, 2001). Active participation and interaction with faculty and peers in class help but more supportive programming for college student-athletes is necessary (Gaston & Hu, 2009).

A shift out of sports means a shift in one's identity. Athletes train to play professionally and resist examining other career paths (Houle & Kluck, 2015). Student-athletes who strongly show the role of being an athlete tend to ignore other career and educational skills unrelated to their sport (Moiseichik, Stokowski, Hinsey, Turk, 2019). Student-athletes may receive help on how skills gotten through athletics can translate to the job world (Watson, 2015). Transferable skills create a path athletes can take to start a successful transition to life after sport. The key to this path is getting athletes to recognize the transferable skills gained through a lifetime of athletics.

According to Brewer, Van Raalte, and Linden, Athletic identity is defined "as the degree to which an athlete identifies with the athlete role" (p.237). Social constructs create athletic identity. Family members, peers, teammates, and coaches affect a student-athletes athletic identity. When significant others positively reinforce athletic identity, it strengthens the athlete's identity (Menke & Germany, 2019). Coaches spend many hours with student-athletes, factoring in practices, workouts, travel time, and competitions. This amount of time allows coaches to supply substantial support through a student-athletes career (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017).

In a perfect world, athletes would find time to manage academics and athletics to comply with rules and regulations. That is not always the case. Rules often change, creating loopholes exploited by individuals trying to gain an edge in any capacity possible (Smith, 2015). Coaches have ignored the validity of athletes being academically eligible (Adams, Coffee, & Lavallee, 2015). Athletes need support from their coaches to have a successful transition. Coaches spend the most amount of time with student-athletes. In a recent study of student-athlete feelings of social support, athletes view coaches as the primary source of support during the transition (Adams, 2015). Coaches can change the feeling of student-athletes. Coaches also harbor different perspectives about what works best for student athletes' transition (Adams, 2015).

Research Questions

RQ1: What is the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career?

RQ2: What best practices can coaches use to help transition athletes?

Limitations/Delimitations

This study was limited to the students and coaches at one mid-sized midwestern institution. The volunteer survey was sent out to all 385 student athletes. A week later a follow up email was sent out. Only twenty athletes responded to the survey. With five years of coaching required only three coaches met the criteria. Of the twenty student athletes that responded only three reached out to be interviewed.

Summary

Chapter 1 supplied the purpose and background for the study. There will be a review of the literature the historical overview of the problem in Chapter 2.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The main goal of college is to put students in a position to land a job. For student-athletes, this becomes complicated due to the amount of time needed to succeed in a sport. Athletes must spend many hours a week working on crafting skills to improve. (Wolverton, 2008). Spending a copious number of hours developing in sports results in a solid social identity as an athlete. Many athletic departments focus on working to stay current with the challenges of the game and lose focus on developing the athlete as a person (Huntrods & Pascarella, 2017). With the help of coaches, athletes can transfer the skills learned in athletics into skills needed for a job. This chapter will discuss the theoretical framework within the research about athletes transitioning from sports to the job world and the historical overview of collegiate athletes transitioning out of sports.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). SCCT "provides a unifying framework to understand better, explain, and predict the processes through which people develop vocational interests and make occupational choices" (Blustein, 1999 p.349).

SCCT is found by social constructs such as career goals, self-efficacy, and the outcome expected to happen. All are crucial to the thought process of career planning. This model explains that one is more likely to plan a career if one is to have high self-efficacy (Lent, 1994). Self-efficacy is defined as "the self-evaluation of one's abilities to complete a given task or attain a given level of achievement or performance" (Bandura, 1986, p.170).

In the context of sport, (Alfermann, 2004 p.63) defined "athletes' readiness for career transition with the same regard to their pre-retirement planning which can be similar to career

planning in the SCCT." The career planning for student-athletes reflects the extent to which athletes have thought about what they will do with their lives after they retire from the sport. The most valuable predictor in an athletes' career planning is conscientiousness. Conscientiousness can be correlated with higher self-efficacy and post-sport career goals (Demulier, Le Scanff, & Stephan, 2013).

Self-Efficacy

Deciding about a future career can be challenging. Carefully planning and evaluating career options while taking the right path to get there is essential. A person's confidence in making career decisions is known as career decision-making self-efficacy (CDSE) (Burns et al., 2012). Student-athletes with low CDSE often avoid the process of career development outside of sports. Student-athletes during college years avoid specific decision-making tasks such as choosing a major, learning about their skills, and seeking out relevant career information (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Low CDSE and other factors translate to wrong career decision-making goals outside of their collegiate sport.

Student-athletes are more likely to suffer from a lack of career maturity and a vision in career plans than non-athletes (Watson & Kissinger, 2007). Low CDSE can be improved with workshops chosen to increase self-awareness on career decision-making. Solberg states CDSE is a fluid situation and can be improved (1998). The way to improve CDSE is to get student-athletes to realize they have control of their destiny. To improve the thought process of controlling destiny, one must have a strong internal locus of control. Individuals with a strong internal locus of control believe they control the outcomes in life and specific decisions change these outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Confidence in control of one's destiny relates to self-efficacy. High self-efficacy will result in higher CDSE (Solberg, 1998).

Career Goals

The question "what am I going to do with the rest of my life" becomes troubling for some students—especially student-athletes, who must juggle the identity of being a student and an athlete. Career development stems from realistic career plans from career goals, interests, and abilities (Crites, 1978). When student-athletes first enter college, their career plans revolve around athletics (Lally & Kerr, 2005). Individuals invest heavily in sports careers and do not plan for future career goals. Circumstances student-athletes met reinforce decisions to strive for careers in athletics. Coaches play a role in finding decisions to strive for goals in athletics (Lally & Kerr, 2005).

Background of Athletes Transitioning out of Sport

On average, college-athletes spend upwards of 40 hours (about one and a half days) per week playing, practicing, and training for their sport (Jacobs, 2015). College sports come with highly structured, intense workouts and a socially challenging environment. To follow NCAA eligibility rules, universities must supply medical services, tutoring, and academic recommendations ensuring athletes can compete in their sport (Gaston and Gayles, 2015). The time invested creates a high athletic identity for their sport. "High athletic identity can become personal identity where self-esteem and self-worth are tied to sport participation" (Luyckx, et al, 2013 p.160)

Athletic Identity

An astounding 98% of college athletes do not make it to the next level and play professionally (Menke & Germany, 2019). Athletes spend a considerable amount of time invested in sports. Once an athletic career ends, it leaves a gap in the lives of athletes. Understanding the thought process an athlete is going through after they end their career in

sports is critical to aid in the transition. College athletes usually have been playing sports their entire lives. This causes their identity to be centered around the role of an athlete. Positive reinforcement from sports results in academic identities becoming less significant than athletic identity (Stryker, 1980).

Identity serves as a cerebral stimulator that influences the way one copes, interprets information, and inspires behavior that coincides with the role of an athlete (Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013). The stronger the athletic identity, the more challenging it will be to transition out of the sport. Transitions are "events or nonevents that result in changed relationships, routines, assumptions and roles" (Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2011, p.39). Retirement from sport is referred to as a psychosocial transition. Psychosocial transitions occur when a repeated action ends, causing a significant change in an individual's daily life (Parkes 1988). The psychosocial transition can be challenging. That is why it is crucial to utilize the academic support systems.

Academic Support Systems

There has been a rising concern about the challenges associated with the student-athletes performing well academically in men's football and men's basketball (Southall, Eckard, Nagel, & Hale, 2012). As students enter their first year of college, they may be unaware of what resources are available to ensure success in academics. The NCAA has created the Academic Progress Rate (APR) initiative to combat these negative statistics. The APR was created in 2005, and its purpose was to supply added research for current practices and support systems for Division 1 athletes (Comeaux, 2015). In 1991, a bylaw was passed that required universities to supply general academic counseling to all Division I athletes.

Along with these requirements, there have also been initiatives to improve study skills and time management (Comeaux, 2015). These programs focus on developing athletes' skills to

achieve academically, but most support centers focus simply on keeping athletes eligible. Creating a subculture of low academic expectations for athletes. (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics 2001).

If a student-athlete needs other academic resources, they always have their academic advisor, coaching staff, and athletic administrators to seek more help. Coaches supply significant support to student-athletes during their collegiate athletes (Adams, Coffee, and Lavalley, 2015). Not only in athletics but also in academics. The time coaches spend with athletes allows them to see what strengths athletes have and how they can be used academically and athletically (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017). A recent investigation found that athletes viewed coaches as the primary support contact for social tribulations (Adams, 2015). At the end of athletes' careers, coaches play a significant role in transitioning out of sports. Coaches carry the tools to understand what type of added support could be needed to improve the transition for student-athletes.

Coaches Impact on an Athletes Transition

The people that athletes spend the most time with are their coaches. Coaches need to be trained in how to help athletes in more ways than coaching in their respective sports. Coaches have a role in helping the personal development of student-athletes (Banwell & Kerr, 2016). The relationship between coach and student-athlete needs to be healthy to support an elevated level of performance on and off the field. Coaches play a crucial role in the career development of an athlete (Tyranee, 2010). Communication between the coach and student-athlete needs to be precise. The coach needs to advocate helping the student-athlete strive to succeed in sports and the classroom.

Coaches also carry the tools to take the skills gained through athletics and fuse them into skills needed to succeed in a working environment. As job competition increases, having a unique skillset targeted for specific jobs has reached a new level of importance (Savickas, 2005). Higher education scholars suggest that the skills learned in college pave the way for forming one's identity and help make a career choice (Kidwell, 2005). Transferable skills are critical variables for athletes to successfully transition from athletics to future careers (McKnight, 2009). Earlier research states that overcoming adversity and opposition, time management and goal setting, and commitment and communication are vital talents that coaches can take out of student-athletes and bring them out in the workplace (Wylleman, 2004). Coaches must identify the best practices to impact the transition positively.

Best Practices for Coaches

The best practices coaches can use are programmatic and therapeutic (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017). Programmatic practices deal with career-related needs. This includes exploring interests, resume reviews, interview skills, and increased job search strategies (Wylleman, Alfermann, and Lavallee., 2004). The National Collegiate Athletics Association uses the Everything DiSC assessment tool. The DiSC assessment's goal is to show the behavior style of an athlete. The four behavior styles are Dominance (D), Influence (i), Steadiness (S), and Conscientiousness (C) (Sugerman, 2011, p.87). The DiSC valuation can improve an athlete's experience in sport and their transition out of the sport. No matter what career is chosen, the self-knowledge gained translates into a career (Sugerman, 2011).

Therapeutic approaches focus on student-athlete mental health and wellness. Areas to help address mental health and wellness are counseling and coping skills. Counseling looks to change identity and realize the social support needed to transition out of college athletics. Coping skills deal with stressors connected to the actual transition (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2017).

One of the essential components of a successful transition out of sport is recognizing the transferrable skills gained through athletics. Student-athletes may receive help from guidance to understand how skills gained through athletics carry over to the world of work (Navarro, 2015). In a study investigating athletic career transition specific to transferable skills, skills learned in athletics apply to life outside of sport and help ease the transition (McKnight, 2009).

Summary

This chapter discussed the background of the transition of collegiate athletes from their sport to choosing a career path. The background discussed athletic identity, academic support systems, and the correct practices coaches can use during a transition. The theories to be examined were the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) and the Self Determination Theory. In chapter three, the research will speak on the processes for this study. The process includes the overall design and why specific individuals were interviewed for this study. Furthermore, it includes the data. How the data was analyzed, and what information is provided.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

Collegiate athletes have had to balance academics while dealing with the demands of athletics dating back to the 1900s. There have been new initiatives that help student-athletes get the extra help needed to succeed both academically and athletically. With the pressure to remain eligible in an athlete's respective sport, the goal of higher education is sacrificed (Navarro & McCormick). In return, student-athletes cannot explore long-term career planning due to the focus of athletics (Gayles & Hu, 2009). Athletes cannot succeed in both without the help of their coaches. Coaches play a vital role in transitioning the student-athletes from athletics to post athletics. The purpose of this study is to find the best practices that the coaching staff can use when aiding a student-athlete with the transition out of sports.

The study's specific research practices, design, and layout are discussed in chapter three, along with the general background information of participants, why they were gathered, and the instruments used in this study.

Research Design

A qualitative approach was used in this study to show practices coaches can use to best prepare students for a career after athletics. Qualitative studies seek to understand why people behave differently due to specific thoughts and feelings (Sutton, 2015). Qualitative research was used because it helps create a sense of the interpreted material into a more visible view and to learn about the problem directly from the participants who hold the problem (Creswell, 2009). This study aims to learn from collegiate athletes and how coaches can learn practices to improve the transition out of athletics.

The research was compiled through interviews and surveys. Collecting this data allowed the researcher to gather trends to understand themes. It answered questions on how college coaches can help student-athletes with career preparedness after sports.

Sample and Setting

The sample of this study was composed of student-athletes and coaches at a Division III university found in Mideastern, WI. The researcher selected participants through purposeful sampling with the help of earlier networking of contacts. Purposive sampling chose individuals with characteristics relevant to the study and most informative (Anderson, 2010). An email was sent out to the student-athletes and coaches asking for volunteers to participate in a research study. Twenty individuals took the survey. Three athletes and three coaches volunteered to interview for the study. The university has around 800 undergraduates and participates in Division III athletics. The college is in a county with over 100,000 residents. Due to the research being qualitative, the sample size was small because of the detailed and intensive work needed for the study (Anderson, 2010).

The criteria for the student-athletes were that they are rostered in a collegiate sport and have taken part in all athletic requirements for at least one entire season at a four-year university and were in good academic standing. Selection criteria for coaches included five or more years of total coaching experience and experience in coaching seniors transitioning out of collegiate sports.

Instruments

During this study, the use of surveys and interviews were used by a principal investigator. A 10-question survey combined with short answer and multiple-choice questions was sent athletes at the institution. The multiple choice questions were designed to gather demographic

data. Qualtrics was used to send out the survey. Qualtrics is an online survey software that allows data to be collected, processed, and stored easily.

Interviews were also conducted to allow for a more open-ended and honest conversation (Miller & Moyers, 2017). Open-ended questions supplied athletes a platform to voice their opinions on how they have directly been changed by lack of career preparedness. Three student-athletes and three coaches were interviewed. Open-ended questions are included in Appendix A. Gaining multiple viewpoints helps diversify the data and bring innovative ideas (Mou, Zhào, & McNamara, 2007). Questions that were asked to the coaches can be seen in Appendix A.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was sent through the IRB, and once approved, a survey was emailed out using the application process Qualtrics. A follow-up email was sent a week after the initial survey was sent. The survey was open for two weeks. As the research was processed, no data could be found back to the individual. Each student-athlete and coach were able to remain anonymous throughout the research process. The survey was issued through the athletic department and sent out to every athlete in the athletic department. Each student was asked to click on the link that led them to the Qualtrics application process. The information given through Qualtrics was transferred to a password-protected external hard drive that only the researcher had access to. Interviews were conducted for two weeks. The interviews were emailed out beforehand and were recorded and transcribed to the password-protected hard drive.

Data Analysis

The goal of the data analysis was to collect and compare information from student-athletes and coaches on the transition out of athletics. Using the survey data, the researcher analyzed how student-athletes felt they were prepared for a career after athletics. Descriptive

statistics were calculated to analyze multiple choice questions. The researcher looked for common themes to analyze the short, open-ended questions. Data analysis in qualitative research is a process that gathers all the data and includes four key steps: immersion in the data, coding, creating categories, and the identification of themes (Green et al., 2007).

Thematic coding was used for both the student-athlete interviews and the coaching interviews. Interviews were transcribed before any analysis was completed. Thematic coding allows the researcher to record and transcribe the interviews, code the interview data, and organize the data into common themes. This process helped categorize the data to decide which research question they best answer.

Summary

Chapter three included the research design, sample and setting, instruments, data collection procedure, analysis, and summary. The research design was qualitative and included surveys and interviews. Chapter four will speak on the unbiased results of the data and the themes that appeared through interviews and surveys, while an in-depth discussion will take place in chapter five.

Chapter IV: Results

This study examined the best practices coaches can use to better prepare athletes for athletics careers. The study was qualitative and included surveys and interviews. The survey included multiple-choice and short answer questions. The multiple-choice answers were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The interviews were analyzed by transcribing, coding, looking for common themes, and forming the results. After reviewing the data, common themes were found using surveys and interviews that were successively combined.

Description of Sample

A survey was sent to 200 athletes at the institution, with 21 athletes responding. Interviews were conducted with three coaches and three players participants. Each student-athlete participating had to be in good academic standing while completing all requirements necessary from the athletic department for one full season. The coaches interviewed had to have at least five years of coaching experience and have experience coaching seniors with no eligibility remaining. The research sample's institution is from a mid-sized Midwest NCAA DIII school.

Results

To gain a better understanding of the best practices coaches can use to prepare student-athletes for a career after athletics, two research questions were proposed:

Research Question One: What is the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career?

Research Question Two: What best practices can coaches use to help transition athletes?

RQ1 and RQ2 had survey and interview questions that connected with the purpose of each research question. There were common themes found in both questions. Due to a few participants not responding to all the questions there are discrepancies in how many participants responded to certain questions.

Research Question One

Questions used to answer research question 1 were:

Survey Question 1: What year in school are you academically?

Survey Question 2: How many times a week do you think about a long-term career other than athletics?

Survey Question 3: What degree of certainty do you have knowing what career you want to pursue after your career in athletics?

Survey Question 5: How comfortable do you feel speaking to your coach or asking your coach for help on planning for a career after athletics?

Survey Question 6: What are your career goals?

Survey Question 7: What is your expected outcome after a career in athletics?

Athlete Interview Question 1: What year in school are you academically and athletically?

Athlete Interview Question 2: How prepared do you feel with finding a job once your athletic career is over?

Athlete Interview Question 4: How comfortable do you feel with bringing concerns about career guidance to your coach?

Coach Interview Question 4: What do you feel coaches struggle most when preparing student-athletes for transitioning out of sports?

Survey Question 1: What year in school are you academically?

There are a total of 20 participants. Half of the student-athletes (50%) were seniors. The other half (50%) were freshman, sophomore, junior, or other. The respondents were asked in survey question 2 to contemplate how many times a week they think about a long-term career other than athletics. Eight out of twenty-one (38%) thought about a career once a week. Six out of twenty-one (29%) thought about a career once a month. Five out of twenty-one (29%) thought about a career once a month, and only two out of twenty-one (10%) thought about a long-term career every day. There were no participants that answered never to the question.

In response to survey question 6, "What are your career goals," nine of the twenty-one (43%) volunteers stated that they wanted to continue a career in athletics. Six out of twenty-one (29%) said they wanted to get a job and be happy with life. Three out of twenty-one (14%) said they wanted to be a teacher.

Survey question 5 and athlete interview question 4 "How comfortable do you feel with bringing concerns about career guidance to your coach?" Seven out of twenty-one (33%) felt comfortable, Six out of twenty-one (29%) felt a little comfortable, and six out of twenty-one (29%) felt extremely comfortable. The student athletes who were interviewed felt comfortable going up to their position coaches because they put academics first. Student-athlete interview 1 stated:

At my college, our coaches put academics above everything else. We are students first and athletes second. I feel very comfortable coming up to any of my coaches, specifically my position coach, about my questions.

Survey question 3 and athletic interview question 2, "How prepared do you feel with finding a job after college?", and 38% claimed they felt a degree of some certainty being prepared to find a career after college. Student-athlete 3 said:

I felt somewhat prepared. Going through it, I did not have much thought about a career until my season came to an end. Looking back, I could have done more.

From a coach's perspective, Coach interview question 4 "What do you feel coaches struggle with when preparing student-athletes for the transition out of sports" a common theme of building relationships occurred. Coach 1 talked about the relationship you build with them. Coaches struggle with the variety of avenues that players can take, and it becomes difficult to point them in the right direction. Coach 2 spoke about being honest with a player and about having difficult conversations with players who have their mind set in stone about continuing to play:

The biggest thing coaches struggle with is telling a player who is dead set on continuing to play in the NFL or overseas that it is time to focus on your degree. It is time to take school seriously. You must shift your focus, and those tough conversations have no perfect answer. The coach's role is to feed them honest information to help prepare them.

According to the results, the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career includes creating a relationship with student-athletes that allows them to feel comfortable approaching their coach and talking openly about a career after athletics. Coaches also need to communicate the importance of making career planning a priority early in college. The earlier student-athletes start to formulate an identity with academics the less likely student-athletes are to have a high identity associated with sports.

Research Question Two

The question used to answer research question 2:

Survey Question 4: How helpful have your coaches been in planning a career after athletics?

Survey Questions 8: How do you feel your coaches have prepared you for life after athletics?

Survey Questions 9: What do you believe coaches could do to better prepare you for life after athletics?

Survey Question 10: Do you believe skills you have learned from sports will translate over to a career outside of athletics?

Athlete Interview Question 3: Of those transferable skills you have learned, has your coach given you any direction on how those will benefit you when applying for jobs?

Athlete Interview Question 5: What would you have done differently to prepare for a career after athletics?

Coach Interview Question 1: How many years have you been a coach?

Coach Interview Question 2: What skills that are taught in athletics are most transferable to a career after athletics?

Coach Interview Question 3: What do you believe best practices to help student-athletes be most prepared for life after athletics?

Coach Interview Question 5: What do you believe puts a student-athlete in the best position to be successful after their career in athletics comes to an end?

Survey Question 4: How helpful have your coaches been in planning a career after athletics?

Survey Question eight asked, “How do you feel your coaches have prepared you for life after athletics?” and athlete interview questions 4 asked “What would you have done differently to prepare for a career after athletics?”. Seven out of seventeen (41%) students responded that

their coaches have taught them skills that will prepare them for a life after athletics. Six out of seventeen (36%) people who answered the question claimed their coaches could have brought more attention to life outside of athletics. Four out of seventeen (24%) responded with something other than skills their coaches have prepared them with or that their coaches have not prepared them.

This leads to coach interview question 3. “What do you believe to be the best practices to help student-athletes to be most prepared for life after athletics?” All three coaches responded that communication is key. Coach 1 talked about how the best practice is communication with the athlete about what they want and their expectations. Coach 2 explained that at times you need to explain to an athlete that the main goal is to receive an education. Coach 3 spoke about the importance of handling constructive criticism.

Being able to listen to what a coach is saying and take that into consideration is important because it shows that you can take constructive criticism. Constructive criticism shows that you are willing to change your ways and learn. At times student-athletes believe they have all the answers. Listening can become a valuable skill.

Survey Question 10 asked, “Do you believe skills you have learned from sports will translate over to a career outside of athletics?”. All twenty-one respondents (100%) claimed that the skills they learned will translate to their career after athletics. Coach interview question 2 asked, “What skills that are taught in athletics are most transferable to a career after athletics?” All three coaches said that time management is one of the most transferable skills from athletics to the workforce.

Survey question 9 “What do you believe coaches could do to better prepare you for life after athletics” resulted in seventeen out of eighteen respondents (95%) providing a recommendation on what their coaches could have done better to prepare them for a career after

athletics. Examples include, speaking more directly about a career after athletics, help me realize different paths other than athletics, help students learn how to use skills that they have used in athletics in interview questions to make up for lack of experience, and be more involved with campus life. One respondent claimed that their coaches could have done nothing else to prepare them for a career.

Coach interview question 5 “What do you believe puts a student-athlete in the best position to be successful after their career in athletics comes to an end” created three different responses from the coaches. Coach 1 stated that the best position to be successful is to explore all their options. Coach 2 said giving them opportunities to lead and allowing them to grow as leaders. Coach 3 said making sure that athletes feel as though they are being taken care of.

The best practices coaches can use to help transition athletes include explaining how skills learned in sports can translate over to a career. Skills such as time management, focus, attention to detail, and discipline are characteristics that employers will look for to replace experience. Coaches can also seek outside help to increase student-athletes interview and resumé skills. Having an exceptional resumé and giving the correct answers to questions puts student-athletes in a position to be hired.

Summary

Chapter four gave an informative analysis of what the survey and interview questions related to which research question and provided results. Chapter five will discuss the themes found and what comparisons will be made to additional studies. The further information will be noted and studies. The researcher will discuss the implication of this project and what further research might hold.

Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to identify the role coaches play in assisting college athletes with the transition out of athletics and to recognize the best methods for coaches to use when helping athletes transition out of sports.

Discussions and Conclusions

The research questions framed to identify how coaches can properly prepare student-athletes for a career after athletics are as follows:

RQ1: Research Question One: What is the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career?

RQ2: Research Question Two: What best practices can coaches use to help transition athletes?

The theme for RQ1 was communicating the need to think about a career early and often. The emerging theme for RQ2 was how coaches can connect with athletes which enables coaches to form a relationship with student-athletes.

Theoretical Connection

Transitioning from athletics to a career can be a difficult period in a student-athletes life. The framework was based around the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). This theory has been used successfully to understand and predict career coaches (Flores & O'Brien, 2022). When choosing a career, the less dramatic the change, the smoother the transition will take place (Baillie & Danish, 1992). SCCT is based on the type of occupation an individual chooses. The type of career an individual chooses is based on their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy has to do with the confidence one has in their abilities. When speaking with athletes in the interviews they explained how their coaches have taught them skills that will translate over to a career outside of

athletics. Time management, discipline, and receiving constructive criticism are ways coaches can help student-athletes.

Student-athletes who continue their athletic careers in college tend to have a high identity with sport that has been developed continually as they progress throughout sport in their lives. The participants in this study states that their coaches play a crucial role in their development in sport and their career. The athletes who had a positive relationship with their coach felt their coach had their best interest in mind. Building this relationship is important to the student athletes and coaches. If a coach can build a positive relationship with the student-athlete, they can form a mutual level of respect. All three coaches that were interviewed spoke about how communicating with an athlete is crucial to the transition from athletics to a career. It allows the coaches to have open conversations about athletics and how important it is for athletes to succeed in academics too.

Research Question One Discussion

Research question one asked “What is the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career?” To answer this question, the researcher analyzed the interview and survey results. The role of coaches to help athletes transition out of their sports, include ensuring that their athletes are comfortable talking to them, assisting in professional skill development, and forming a positive interpersonal relationship.

RQ1 Theme: Communication

This theme focused on what type of role the coaches play in the transition of a student athlete. The participants who answered these set of questions talked about the relationship between the coach-student. “It is important to understand how players interpret coaching practices and how those practices impact student-athlete performance” (Rezania and Gurney,

2014). Coaches have direct communication with student-athletes. The message that student-athletes hear is the message they get from their coaches. In the student-athlete interviews, three out of three said they felt comfortable about bringing concerns about career guidance to their coach. Athlete 1 said:

I feel comfortable coming up to any of my coaches with any questions that I have. Specifically, my position coach. I have been in classes with both and feel they have prepared me tremendously.

All participants touched on how they had at least one coach that they felt comfortable with talking about their future.

Multiple participants stated that they felt prepared for a career after athletics because of their coach. “Student-athletes look to their coach for cues and information regarding what to do and how to do it” (Rezania & Gurney, 2014). The students with a strong relationship with their coach felt prepared. Based on the data presented, a student-athlete who felt comfortable speaking with their coach felt more confident in their ability to find a career once their time in athletics had come to an end. The role of the coach should be to establish a strong relationship with the student-athletes when they are underclassmen. This will create a strong bond between athlete and coach over the years as a student-athlete to prepare them for the transition out of athletics.

The three coaches interviewed felt the biggest struggle coaches have when preparing student-athletes for a transition out of sports is communication. Coaches must form personal connections with athletes to communicate the skills they are learning in athletics will translate to a career out of sports. “Interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes are a central part of the coaching process” (Choi & Kim, 2020). Being the individual that young adults spend the most time with is a crucial responsibility to their success outside of sports. Coach three said “

Coaches have to connect with athletes and find out what interests they have besides sports. At times this can be difficult, and you may have to educate student-athletes that they may not have the ability to play at the next level and need to think about different options. Prepare them for life outside of sports.

Coaches are given the role of being mentors for student-athletes. Many athletes will take to heart the advice given out by a coach.

The role of the coach is to ensure that the relationship between a student-athlete and coach is strong enough that athletes feel comfortable asking questions about career development. Coaches can form this relationship by getting student-athletes involved in activities outside of sports. Providing information on different clubs, groups, and organizations outside of sports.

Research Question Two Discussion

Research question two asked “What are the best practices coaches can use to help transition athletes?” Research question two was answered by synthesizing the interview and survey results. The most important practices that coaches can use to help student-athletes were to use additional resources offered by the university, maintain an open relationship with student-athletes, and put a focus on academics early.

RQ2 Theme 1: Relationship Building

It is important for athletes to get involved with clubs, organizations, or extracurricular activities because this helps combat their high athletic identity (Smith, 2011). When athletes get involved with social activities outside of sports it allows them to grow interests in something other than sports. Student-athletes become more equipped and prepared to transfer their identity into something other than athletics when they get involved in different clubs and activities. The best way for coaches to motivate athletes to get involved is to form a relationship with them. Participants that were surveyed and interviewed claimed that they wish they had gotten involved

earlier. Getting involved earlier allows students to make new connections, form new relationships, and learn to transfer their identity in something other than sports. When student-athletes involve themselves, it allows them to learn new skills. Résumé building, interview skills, and job search strategies combined with the soft skills learned through athletics will set up student-athletes for a successful transition out of sport.

RQ2 Theme 2: Career Goals

Setting career goals is an important aspect when transition out of sports. Goal setting is familiar to student-athletes in an athletic setting. Switching to a career setting will help with making strides from an athletic career to a career outside of athletics. “One must actively engage in self-exploration and occupational preferences to develop mature career plans” (Lally and Kerr, 2005). Based on the research, a theme emerged that most athletes had a plan on what they wanted to do when they graduated from a career in sports. Having a plan allows athletes to devote more of their identity to a career. Having a high self-efficacy when it comes to career planning will increase the likelihood of having a successful transition. Student-athletes gain high self-efficacy in career planning by setting career goals. The best way for coaches to help with this transition is to help increase student-athletes confidence in their ability to find a job after sports.

Conclusions

After conducting a survey and interviewing three student-athletes and three coaches, reviewing the literature, and analyzing the findings in chapter four, the researcher came up with these four conclusions:

1. Coaches must communicate with their student-athletes.
2. Coaches need to assist athletes with career building skills.

3. Athletes should set goals for their career.
4. Have a plan of what to expect from a career will increase confidence.

Leadership Implications

This study highlights the versatility required of coaches to be impactful leaders. A coach is defined by wins and losses. A successful coach can win on the field and off the field. Creating relationships with student-athletes that allows them to grow as athletes and leaders. Sports are an avenue to acquire skills applicable to sports and transferable to a career. The participants in this study explained how being in sports have provided them with skills that would translate over to a career, how their coaches have prepared them for a career after sports, their occupational goals after a career in athletics comes to an end, and whether they would have done things differently earlier in college.

Conclusion 1: Coaches must communicate with their student-athletes

Implication: A student-athlete's schedule revolves around the demands of their specific sport. During those hours athletes spend most of their time listening, practicing, and strategizing with their coaches. Coaches must form healthy relationships with their athletes due to the influence they have. If a coach can get an athlete to buy into the game plan, then they can get student-athletes to buy into planning for post-sport career. Ensuring that student-athletes can communicate with their coaches is vital to the success of their transition out of sports. Having an authority figure will give an athlete confidence to answer questions and provide academic support.

Conclusion 2: Coaches need to assist athletes with career building skills

Implication: Athletes spend their entire sport careers practicing to better their skills. The skills learned in athletics often translate over to careers in the workforce. Discipline, hard work, ability

to take constructive criticism all translate to the workforce. Building a resume, interview skills, and applying for jobs need to be discussed by coaches to their athletes. Coaches wear multiple hats. One of them is being a teacher to their student-athletes. Since coaches and athletes spend so much time together, athletes often feel most comfortable with their position coaches. This provides coaches an opportunity to support athletes' academic needs. If coaches do not possess the necessary tools to help athletes succeed, they can point the athletes in the right direction. Bringing in outside help that is more qualified in certain areas will assist athletes with career building skills.

Conclusion 3: Athletes should set goals for a career.

Implication: Goal setting is something that all athletes are familiar with. Setting goals for their fitness, nutrition, and statistics are common themes within sports. Transitioning that ability to set goals for a career is something athletes can relate to. Sports cannot be the focus 100% of the time. When athletes set goals for a career it opens the opportunity for them to join clubs or pursue interests outside of sports. Getting involved in an activity outside of sports creates an identity that is more realistic with a post-sport world. Student-athletes who participate in activities outside of sports are more prepared to end their career in sports.

Conclusion 4: Have a plan after athletics

Implication: When student-athletes participate in athletics it is important to remember the main goal is to prepare them for life after college. Coaches can do this by creating a support system for student-athletes. Professors, family, friends, and coaches all are part of a student-athletes support system in college. This plan starts to develop the first day of college for student-athletes. With the help of professors, coaches, and family it allows athletes to create an identity that does not

completely evolve around sports. This support system will help student-athletes gain confidence in their ability to complete tasks that are outside of sports.

Recommendations for Future Research

For the conclusion that coaches must communicate with their student-athletes more research needs to be done on what type of communication methods coaches can use to get their message across. All student-athletes have different learning skill sets and may require the message being delivered in another way. More research could be done on the type of communication that would form the best relationships with student-athletes.

The conclusion to have a plan after athletics needs further research on how student-athletes can join activities that do not aid their strong athletic identity. Sports have the capacity to open doors that student-athletes may not normally be able to open. Additional research needs to be conducted on what the best activities sports can use to focus student-athletes attention on a career out of sports. This will allow them to use their transferable skills from sports and apply it to a career plan.

Summary

Coaches are a key component to the success of a student athletes' success in sports and their academics. Student-athletes spend large amounts of time communicating with their coaches and become influential on the outcome of their student-athletes. Being prepared to start a life after athletics depends on the relationship coaches have with their student-athletes. If coaches can help athletes realize that athletics are a temporary and academics is what will sustain them for their post sport career it will decrease high athletic identity and increase self-efficacy.

References

- Anderson, C. (2010). Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 74(8), 141. <https://doi.org/10.5688/aj7408141>
- Adams, C., Coffee, P., & Lavalley, D. (2015). Athletes' perceptions about the availability of social support during within-career transitions. *Sport á Exercise Psychology Review*, 11(2), 37-48.
- Alfermann, D., Stambulova, N. and Zemaityte, A. 2004. Reactions to sports career termination: A cross-national comparison of German, Lithuanian, and Russian athletes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 5: 61–75.
- Anderson, M., Goodman, J., & Schlossberg, N. K. (2011). Counseling adults in transition: Linking Schlossberg's theory with practice in a diver world. New York, NY: Spring Publishing Company.
- Bandura, A. 1986. *Social foundations of thought and action: A Social Cognitive Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bjornsen, A. L., & Dinkel, D. M. (2017). Transition experiences of division-1 college student-athletes: coach perspectives. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 40(3), 245–.
- Blustein, D. L. 1999. A match made in heaven? Career development theories and the school-to-work transition. *Career Development Quarterly*, 47: 348–352
- Brewer, B. E., Van Raalte, J. L., & Linden, D. E. (1993). Athletic identity: Hercules' muscle or Achilles heel? *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 24, 237–254.

- Bruner, M. W., Munroe-Chandler, K. J., & Spink, K. S. (2008). Entry into Elite Sport: A Preliminary Investigation into the Transition Experiences of Rookie Athletes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 20*(2), 236–252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200701867745>
- Burns, G. N., Jasinski, D., Dunn, S., & Fletcher, D. (2013). Academic Support Services and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy in Student Athletes. *The Career Development Quarterly, 61*(2), 161–167. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-0045.2013.00044.x>
- Cremin, C., & Anderson, B. C. (2019). Commitment and satisfaction in the classroom and on the field: evidence from a Division I liberal arts college. *Applied Economics, 51*(9), 858–880. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2018.1497848>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Demulier, V., Le Scanff, C., & Stephan, Y. (2013). Psychological Predictors of Career Planning among Active Elite Athletes: An Application of the Social Cognitive Career Theory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 25*(3), 341–353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2012.736444>
- Dilley-Knoles, J., Burnett, J. S., & Peak, K. W. (2010). Making the grade: academic success in today's athlete. *The Sport Journal, 13*(1).
- Evans, N.J., Fomey, D.S., Guido, F.M., Patton, L.D., & Renn, K.A. (2010). Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gaston Gayles, J., & Hu, S. (2009). The influence of student engagement and sport participation on college outcomes among Division I student athletes. *Journal of Higher Education, 80*(3), 315–333.

- Heird, E. B., & Steinfeldt, J. A. (2013). An interpersonal psychotherapy approach to counseling student athletes: Clinical implications of athletic identity. *Journal of College Counseling*, 16, 143–157. doi:10.1002/j.2161-1882.2013.00033.x
- Huntrods, C. S., An, B. P., & Pascarella, E. T. (2017). Impact of Intercollegiate Athletic Participation on Leadership Development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(2), 198–214. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2017.0015>
- Johnson, S., et al. (2011). A coach's responsibility: Learning how to prepare athletes for peak performance. *The Sport Journal*. 21. <https://thesportjournal.org/article/a-coachs-responsibility-learning-how-to-prepare-athletes-for-peak-performance/>
- Kidwell, K. S. (2005). Understanding the college first-year experience. *Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 78, 253-256.
- Kuh, G.D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change*, 35(3), 10-17. doi: 10.1080/00091380109601795
- Lally, G.A. Kerr. (2005). The career planning, athletic identity, and student role identity of intercollegiate student athletes *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 76 (3) (2005), pp. 275-285,
- Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D. and Hackett, G. 1994. Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 45: 79–122.
- Maloney, Michael T., and Robert E. McCormick. "An Examination of the Role That Intercollegiate Athletic Participation Plays in Academic Achievement: Athletes' Feats in the Classroom." *The Journal of Human Resources* 28 (1993): 555-70. JSTOR.Web. 17

Aug. 2012.

Menke, D. J., & Germany, M.-L. (2019). Reconstructing Athletic Identity: College Athletes and Sport Retirement. *Journal of Loss & Trauma*, 24(1), 17–30.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15325024.2018.1522475>

Miller, W. R., & Moyers, T. B. (2017). Motivational Interviewing and the Clinical Science of Carl Rogers. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 85(8), 757–766.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000179>

Moiseichik, M., Stokowski, S., Hinsey, S., & Turk, M. (2019). Athletic identity and career maturity of women's basketball student athletes. *Journal of Sport*. 7(1), 1-22.

<https://oaks.kent.edu/sport/vol7/iss1/2>

Mou, W., Zhao, M., & McNamara, T. P. (2007). Layout Geometry in the Selection of Intrinsic Frames of Reference From Multiple Viewpoints. *Journal of Experimental Psychology. Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 33(1), 145–154. [https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-](https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.33.1.14)

[7393.33.1.14](https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.33.1.14)

Navarro, K. M. (2015). An Examination of the Alignment of Student-Athletes' Undergraduate Major Choices and Career Field Aspirations in Life After Sports. *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(4), 364–379. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2015.0034>

Navarro, Kristina and McCormick, Heather (2017) "Outcomes-Based Career Preparation Programs for Contemporary Student-Athletes," *Journal of Applied Sport Management: Vol. 9 : Iss. 1.* <https://doi.org/10.18666/JASM-2017-V9-I1-7593>

Parkes, C. M. (1988). Bereavement as a psychosocial transition: Processes of adaptation to change. *Journal of Social Issues*, 44, 53–65. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.1988.tb02076.x

- Rezania, & Gurney, R. (2014). Building successful student-athlete coach relationships: examining coaching practices and commitment to the coach. *SpringerPlus*, 3(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-3-383>
- Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalised expectancies for internal versus external locus of control for reinforcement. *Psychological Monographs*, 80, 1-28. doi:10.1037/h0092
- Savickas, M.L. (2005). Career construction: A developmental theory of vocational behavior. In D. Brown & Associates (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (4th ed., pp. 149-205). San Francisco, CA
- Schlossberg, N. K. (1981). A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. *The counseling psychologist*, 9(2), 2-18. <http://pikespeaksymposium.pbworks.com/f/Schlossberg+Transition+Theory.pdf>
- Schoettle, A. (2016). NCAA wants new TV deal: March Madness contract is 85 percent of revenue. *Indianapolis Business Journal*, 36(47), 1–.
- Sherry, M., & Zeller, K. (2014). Gender and Motivation: A Study of the Athletic and Academic Motivations of Division I Female College Basketball Players. *Women's Studies*, 43(1), 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00497878.2014.85242>
- Smith, D. R. (2015). It Pays to Bend the Rules: The Consequences of NCAA Athletic Sanctions. *Sociological Perspectives*, 58(1), 97–119. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121414556844>
- Smith, E. (2011). The transition: From college athletics to a post-athletic life. *Research Papers*. Paper 111. https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/g_s_rp/111/

Stryker, S. (1980). *Symbolic interactionism: A social structural version*. Menlo Park, CA:

Benjamin Cummings.

Sutton, J., & Austin, Z. (2015). Qualitative research: data collection, analysis, and management.

The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy, 68(3), 226–231.

<https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456>

Taylor, K. M., & Betz, N. E. (1983). Applications of self-efficacy theory to the understanding and treatment of career *mdtcXúon. journal of Vocational Behavior*, 22, 63-81.

doi:10.1016/0001-8791(83)90006-4

Torres-McGehee, T. M., Pritchett, K. L., Zippel, D., Minton, D. M., Cellamare, A., & Sibilia, M.

(2012). Sports nutrition knowledge among collegiate athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, and strength and conditioning specialists. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 47(2), 205–211.

<https://doi.org/10.4085/1062-6050-47.2.205>

Watson, J. C , & Kissinger, D. B. (2007). Athletic participation and Wellness: Implications for counseling college student-athletes, *journal of College Counseling*, 10, 153-162.

doi:10.1002/j.2161-1882.2007.tb00015.x

Wolverton, B. (2008). Rise in Fancy Academic Centers for Athletes Raises Questions of Fairness. *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

[http://chronicle.com.wsuproxy.mnpals.net/article/Rise-in-Fancy-Academic-](http://chronicle.com.wsuproxy.mnpals.net/article/Rise-in-Fancy-Academic-Centers/13493)

[Centers/13493](http://chronicle.com.wsuproxy.mnpals.net/article/Rise-in-Fancy-Academic-Centers/13493)

Wylleman, P., Alfermann, D., & Lavallee, D. (2004). Career transitions in sport: European perspectives. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 5, 7-20.

Doi:10.1016/S14690292(02)00049-3

Yukhymenko-Lescroart, M. A. (2021). The role of passion for sport in college student-athletes' motivation and effort in academics and athletics. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 2-2, 100055–. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100055>

Yoi, Jeong, Y., & Kim, S.-K. (2020). The Relationship between Coaching Behavior and Athlete Burnout: Mediating Effects of Communication and the Coach-Athlete Relationship. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(22), 8618–. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17228618>

Appendix A

Prospective Participant Email

Dear respective participant,

My name is Austin Thiessen. I am a graduate student from the department of Educational Leadership at Winona State University. I am conducting anonymous surveys about the topic of student-athletes transition from sport to post-sport life. I am looking to gain information on how student-athletes can be better prepared for career decision making and what factors influence that decision. You are eligible to partake in this study because you currently participate or coach at a collegiate level.

There is an option to be interviewed for this study. If you wish to be interviewed, please contact me by my cell-phone number or email. The interviews will be held separately from this process during a time most optimal for both parties. The interview process is not required and does not need to be complete to participate in the survey.

There is a link at the bottom of this study if you chose to participate in this study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older and participate in a collegiate level sport. The survey is completely voluntary, and you can stop participation at any time during the survey.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the survey or interview process.

Thank you for taking the time to volunteer for research project,

Sincerely,
Austin Thiessen

Graduate Student – Winona State University
262.365.3416
austin.thiessen@go.winona.edu

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Research Question One (RQ1): What is the role of the coaching staff to assist athletes with the process of moving from athletics to a career?

Research Question Two: (RQ2): What are the best practices coaches can use to help transition athletes?

1. What year in school are you academically?
 - a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Other

2. How many times a week do you think about a long-term career other than athletics?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once a month
 - c. Once a week
 - d. Multiple times a week
 - e. Every day

3. What degree of certainty do you have knowing what career you want to pursue after your career in athletics?
 - a. Little to no certainty
 - b. Some certainty

- c. A good amount of certainty
 - d. A high level of certainty
4. How helpful have your coaches been in planning for a career after athletics?
- a. Not helpful at all
 - b. A little helpful
 - c. Helpful
 - d. Extremely Helpful
5. How comfortable do you feel speaking to your coach or asking your coach for help on planning for a career?
- a. Not comfortable
 - b. A little comfortable
 - c. Comfortable
 - d. Extremely comfortable
6. What are your career goals?
7. What is your expected outcome after a career in athletics?
8. How do you feel your coaches have prepared you for a life after athletics?
9. What do you believe coaches could do to better prepare you for a life after athletics?
10. Do you believe skills you have learned participating in sports will translate over to a career outside of athletics?

Interview Questions: Student-Athlete

1. What year in school are you academically and athletically?
2. How prepared do you feel with finding a job once your athletic career is over?
3. Of those transferable skills you have learned, has your coach given you any direction on how those will benefit you when applying for jobs?
4. How comfortable do you feel with bringing concerns about career guidance to your coach?
5. What would you have done differently to better prepare for a career after athletics?

Interview Questions: Coach

1. How many years have you been a coach?
2. What skills that are taught in athletics are most transferable to a career after athletics?
3. What do you believe to be the best practices to help student-athletes be most prepared for life after athletics?
4. What do you feel coaches most struggle with when preparing student-athletes for the transition out of sports?
5. What do you believe puts a student-athlete in the best position to be successful after the career in athletics comes to an end?

