

MURCZEK, KENNETH EDWARD, Ed.D. Stress and Burnout in NCAA Division I Head Women's Volleyball Coaches. (2019)
Directed by Dr. Diane L. Gill. 39 pp.

The role of the athletic coach is ever-changing and coaches must shift among instructor, mentor, friend, organizer, educator, and counselor roles (Lyle, 2002). The multiple roles a coach serves for the athletes and organization can create stress. Stress can lead to exhaustion and eventually over an extended amount of time lead the coach into burnout. Burnout is a multidimensional condition that affects those working in the human service occupations, such as coaching, in which day-to-day interpersonal interaction is an integral part of work (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). The objective for this project was to assess stress and burnout in NCAA Division I women's volleyball coaches during their traditional fall season. Male and female head coaches ($n = 120$) completed an online survey that measured perceived stress and burnout. Additionally, the coaches identified their top three sources of the stress and the strategies they use for coping.

The results showed that most ($n = 85$) NCAA Division I women's head volleyball coaches scored in the moderate range (14-26) on the Perceived Stress Scale ($M = 19.63$) and also on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The MBI is broken down into three subscales of depersonalization ($M = 6.64$), personal achievement ($M = 35.75$), and emotional exhaustion ($M = 21.58$). Although the largest number of coaches ($n = 45$) were in the moderate range on emotional exhaustion, which is the main component of burnout, nearly one-third ($n = 35$) were in the high range. The responses to open-ended exploratory questions were organized and indicated that winning or losing created the most stress for coaches with physical activity being the most common method for coping.

Perceived stress was positively correlated with both emotional exhaustion ($r = .646$) and depersonalization ($r = .503$) and negatively related ($r = -.386$) to personal achievement. While the current study focused specifically on one coaching demographic it provides a framework for future researchers to explore perceived stress and burnout with coaches of different sports and levels.

STRESS AND BURNOUT IN NCAA DIVISION I HEAD WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
COACHES

by

Kenneth Edward Murczek

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Greensboro
2019

Approved by

Committee Chair

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation, written by Kenneth Edward Murczek, has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair _____

Committee Members _____

Date of Acceptance by Committee

Date of Final Oral Examination

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CHAPTER I

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Athletic sport coaching is a demanding profession that challenges coaches mentally, physically and emotionally. Coaches have suffered physiological responses to stress during competitions and developed psychological disorders over their coaching tenure. The stress coaches endure can lead to health issues and ultimately result in coaches leaving the profession. Researchers have found high-performance coaches experience increased burnout and decreased well-being throughout their competitive seasons (Bentzen, Lemyre, & Kentta, 2016).

Burnout is a multidimensional syndrome marked by exhaustion and withdrawal from one's work as the result of prolonged stress (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Coaches at every level are at risk for burnout because they serve a critical role in the athlete's development both athletically and socially without having the proper training or resources to meet the demands. For example, regardless of the athlete's level the coach has several responsibilities such as: providing motivation, developing the athlete's skill set, and being in constant communication with parents, boosters, alumni, and administrators. Currently, limited or no resources are provided for coaches at the youth, collegiate, and professional levels to help deal with the stress of coaching. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulates athletes of 1,268 North American

institutions and helps more than 480,000 college student-athletes who compete annually in college sports with resources for well-being and burnout, but offers few resources and limited support specifically for coaches (NCAA, 2019).

The current study contributes to the research on stress, burnout, and interventions for athletic coaches. Specifically, this project identifies patterns of stress and burnout in collegiate volleyball coaches, as well as sources of stress and strategies used for stress management. The findings can be used to develop recommendations and resources to help coaches reduce stress and keep them coaching.

Review of Relevant Literature

The role of the college coach is multifaceted and ever-changing; they must serve as instructor, mentor, friend, organizer, educator, and counselor (Lyle, 2002). These coaches guide athletes in physical skills, technical skills, mental skills, and tactical skills, as well as facilitating their personal and social development (Fletcher & Scott, 2010). The general public may only associate athletic coaches with developing the athlete's physical skills as it pertains to his or her sport; however, coaches also contribute to wider societal agendas such as improving health, youth engagement, social inclusion, and lifelong learning (Fletcher & Scott, 2010). The coach serves as a role model for the athletes by their daily interaction and in some cases as a surrogate parent.

In 2017, 330 Division I head women's volleyball coaches represented colleges and universities around the United States under the governing body of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA, 2017). Approximately, 4,500 Division I student-

athletes participated in women's volleyball last year with the head coach serving many different roles for each of his or her student-athletes.

Coaching Roles

The athletic coach can be very influential on the development of their athletes' life skills because of the relationships that are fostered during training, traveling, and competitions. Gould and Carson (2008) defined life skills as those internal personal assets, characteristics, and skills such as self-esteem and hard work ethic that can be facilitated or developed in sport and are transferred for use in non-sport settings. Coaches create an environment for the athletes that provides an opportunity for them to learn how to become a leader, manage their time, build their self-confidence, resolve conflict, become accountable for their actions, and to work within a team. Most college coaches strive to have their players graduate from their respective program with an experience that has built a solid foundation for them to succeed after college in the work force.

The responsibilities that come with being a coach make the job stressful (Kelley, 1994). Stress has been defined as a mismatch between the perceived demands of a situation and one's perceived capabilities and resources for meeting those demands (Lazarus, 1990; Smith 1986). Olusoga, Butt, Hays, and Maynard (2009) found that world class sports coaches experience a diverse range of stressors, including: conflict, pressure and expectation, managing the competition environment, athlete concerns, coaching responsibilities to the athlete, consequences of sport status, competition preparation, organizational management, sacrificing personal time, and isolation. For instance,

investigators identified the coach having to deal with conflict within the organization as a key theme, indicating that communication skills might be important in helping coaches function effectively as part of a wider organizational team.

Given the multiple roles coaches must assume, and the technical, physical, organizational, and psychological challenges involved, coaches should be regarded as performers in their own right (Thelwell, Weston, Greenlees, & Hutchings, 2008). Coaches are often judged solely on the result of the competition by the public and their administration. However, once the match begins the impact a coach can make is limited because they cannot personally perform the skill or compete for the players. The result of the competition is ultimately in the hands of the athletes and not having total control of the final outcome for the coach can cause stress. Coaches feel stress that is both applied internally and externally by their environment (McLean & Mallett, 2012).

Stress in Coaching

Some coaches put a lot of pressure on themselves internally to win matches, watch countless hours of film, make recruiting calls/emails nightly, and do not put a high priority on taking care of their own physical or mental health. External stress can come from administrators giving their coaches unobtainable goals for the program, under funding, working without a contract, having negative media attention, feeling pressure from loved ones to spend more time with them, and dealing with social issues that might arise from players making poor decisions (McLean & Mallett, 2012). Stressors placed on the coach daily can lead to the feeling of exhaustion and ultimately leads to burnout

(Kelley, 1994). Exhaustion describes a depletion of both physical and emotional capacity and is perceived to be caused by being stressed over a long period of time (Lundkvist, Gustafsson, Davis, & Hassmen, 2016).

Burnout

Burnout is a commonly used term among professionals in all fields and develops from being exhausted over an extended amount of time. Herbert J. Freudenberger, the New York psychologist, who 'coined' the phrase 'burnout' in 1972, describes the specific condition as an emotional state characterized by an overwhelming and enduring feeling of exhaustion or aggravation. It is the physical or emotional exhaustion that results from long-term stress or ongoing frustration, characterized by chronic fatigue as a major symptom: one feels physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The condition typically develops gradually as the person's creativity and effectiveness diminish into fatigue, skepticism, and an inability to function effectively. The person can become cynical and develop behaviors that are indifferent, which result in becoming increasingly ineffective in their job. Maslach added to the literature after Freudenberger and defined burnout as a multidimensional syndrome marked by exhaustion and withdrawal from one's work as the result of prolonged stress (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory, which has become one of the most often used measures of burnout in the research across many different professions.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory consists of three interrelated domains: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion illustrates feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by work. Depersonalization describes a loss of concern for the people whom one is working with. Personal achievement is a sense of competence about one's job and possessing the feelings of accomplishment. According to the Maslach Burnout Inventory, burnout is identified by a greater level of emotional exhaustion, increased depersonalization, and a lowering of personal achievement. Burnout has been associated with decreased job performance, health consequences, and an increased propensity to leave the profession among service workers in a variety of fields, including teaching (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

The professions of coaching and teaching are closely related because in both practices an individual is trying to help a student or athlete learn knowledge and skills. Coaching specifically involves many different levels of interacting with and influencing other people, each of whom is an individual with unique problems, hopes, and baggage (Jones, 2007). Factors that contribute to burnout among coaches are gender, communication with athletes, boosters, administrators, and the media (Kelley, 1994).

The coach has a responsibility to interact with many different people on a daily basis and serve as a leader for his or her student-athletes. The grind of the job can eventually lead to a feeling of burnout and ultimately either result in the coach resigning or getting fired from their position. Bentzen et al. (2016) discovered that high-

performance coaches on average had an increase of burnout and a decrease of well-being when tracked throughout their seasons. Burnout can lead to turnover in coaching. Though sports organizations recognize that continuity among sports coaches is important in sustaining quality sports programs, turnover in coaching has remained high (Raedeke, 2004).

Purpose Statement

My long-term goal is to develop resources for coaches that helps them more effectively manage their stress and in turn reduce exhaustion and burnout in the coaching profession. The purpose of this project was to determine levels and the relationship of stress and burnout experienced among NCAA Division I head women's collegiate volleyball coaches along with identifying their sources of stress and current coping strategies. The following aims were addressed:

1. Determine levels and the relationship of coaching-related stress and burnout among NCAA Division I collegiate head women's volleyball coaches.
2. Identify sources of stress and coping strategies used by coaches.

The goal for this project is to raise awareness of perceived stress and burnout in the coaching profession. An additional goal is to provide coaches with suggestions of coping strategies to stay in the profession longer and to be more effective in their coaching role. My experience over the last 25 years playing volleyball at club, high school, college, and professional level along with coaching both as an assistant and head coach gives me first hand exposure to stress and burnout in the coaching profession.

Methods

To address the purpose and aims a survey was created and sent to the 262 NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches who were current members of the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA). The surveys included established measures of stress and burnout as well as demographic items and open-ended questions regarding the source of their stress and coping strategies. Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the survey was sent to all volleyball coaches on the AVCA list with the initial email in October 2018 and a follow up reminder email was sent two weeks later. Participants were notified that completion of the survey would take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Participants and Procedures

NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches were contacted via email to participate in the study. My project was supported by the AVCA and they assisted in recruiting participants. The collegiate coaches were registered and current members of the AVCA. Out of the 262 head coaches emailed, 141 returned the survey, but only 120 completed all items on the PSS and MBI which are included in the statistical analyses, and 132 completed the open-ended items. The mean age of the participants was 44.13 years ($SD = 8.5$) with 64 females and 56 male coaches represented in the samples. Overall, 92 of the coaches were married, 20 were single, with 7 divorced, and 1 separated. The race/ethnicity of the coaches were 99 white, 5 African American, 3 Asian, 7 Hispanic, and 6 listed as other. The average total years of Division I head coaching

experience was 11.98 ($SD = 9.2$) and the total years at their current institution was 8.20 ($SD = 8.2$).

Survey Measures

The survey measured perceived stress and burnout levels in NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches. Demographic information of age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, total years of head coaching experience, and total coaching years at their current institution was also collected. In addition, two exploratory open-ended questions asked about sources of their stress and strategies for managing their stress.

Perceived Stress. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used to measure perceived stress levels. The PSS is the most widely used instrument for measuring perceived stress levels (Cohen, Kamarack, & Mermelstein, 1983). The PSS contains 10 items (e.g., How often have you felt upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?) rated on a 5-point Likert scale of occurrence over the past 4 weeks (0 = never, 1 = almost never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = fairly often, 4 = very often). The PSS asks about the degree to which situations in a person's life are considered stressful, and a person's feelings and thoughts about current levels of stress. Evidence for validity has been demonstrated by positive associations with several psychological stress variables, including a person's response to stressful situations (Cohen et al., 1983). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .844 supported the reliability of the PSS in this sample. Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived

stress. Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress. Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress. Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

Burnout. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) – Human Services Survey (Maslach & Jackson, 1996) was used to assess coaches’ burnout levels. The purpose of this instrument is to determine how human service professionals perceive their career and the people they diligently serve (Maslach & Jackson, 1996). The MBI-Human Services Survey assesses intrinsic feelings related to the job. The 22-item instrument was designed to measure the three subscales of burnout—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1996). This instrument has been implemented in previous research to determine burnout levels in athletes and coaches (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984; Kelley, 1994; Kelley & Gill, 1993; Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Pastore & Judd, 1993; Price & Weiss, 2000; Raedeke, Granzyk, & Warren, 2000).

Emotional exhaustion (EE) measures feelings of being emotionally strained and exhausted from work. Depersonalization (Dp) assesses one’s detachment and callous response toward recipients (players), coworkers, and the job itself. Personal accomplishment (PA) measures feelings of self-efficacy, competence, and individual success in one’s profession. The respondent rates how often he or she feels each statement about their position. The emotional exhaustion survey has 6 items, all with responses from “Never” (0 points) to “Everyday” (6 points) with a score interpretation indicating low (less than 16) and high (27 or more). The depersonalization subscale is a

5-item measure with a score interpretation of low (less than 6), and high (13 or more).

The personal achievement subscale is an 8-item measure representing low (less than 31) and high (39 or higher). The responses are summed to derive a total score for each subscale of the MBI. High scores on the EE and Dp subscales and a low score on the PA subscale represent a high level of burnout. On the other hand, a high PA score and low EE and Dp score reflects a low burnout level. Average scores on all three subscales represent a moderate level of burnout (Maslach et al., 1996).

Exploratory Questions. Participants provided written responses to the following open-ended questions to address specific aim #2: Please identify your top 3 sources of stress and your top 3 ways to manage your stress.

Data Analysis

The survey was hosted by Qualtrics remotely through the university website. At the conclusion of the survey, the data were downloaded directly into SPSS for data reduction and analysis in a password protected account. The SPSS program was used in calculating descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation analyses for the Perceived Stress Scale and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Similar responses to the open-ended exploratory questions were grouped together and organized into categories within Microsoft Excel.

Results

The survey was sent to 262 NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches. Initially, 54% of the coaches responded ($n = 141$) but only 120 of the coaches completed

all parts of the 40-question survey and 132 coaches completed the open-ended questions. The gender of the participants was nearly split with 64 females (53.3%) and 56 males (46.7%).

The descriptive information for the burnout levels of the coaches with subscales of emotional exhaustion (MBI-EE), depersonalization (MBI-Dp), personal accomplishment (MBI-PA) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) are listed in Table 1. Overall, participants scored in the average level for each of the 3 subscales MBI-Dp ($M = 6.64$, $SD = 5.087$), MBI-PA ($M = 35.75$, $SD = 7.014$), and MBI-EE ($M = 21.58$, $SD = 10.37$) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) ($M = 19.63$, $SD = 6.029$).

Table 1

Descriptive Information on Coaches Perceived Stress and Burnout

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>N</i>
PSS	19.63	6.029	6.00	35.00	120
MBI-EE	21.58	10.37	2.00	50.00	119
MBI-PA	35.75	7.014	14.00	48.00	120
MBI-Dp	6.64	5.087	0.00	24.00	120

Note. PSS = Perceived Stress Scale; MBIPA = Personal Accomplishment; MBIEE = Emotional Exhaustion; MBIDp = Depersonalization

Table 2 shows the number of coaches in the low, moderate, and high classifications based on the norms established by Maslach and Jackson (1981) for the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The Perceived Stress Scale developed by Cohen (Cohen et al., 1983) also uses a low, moderate, and high classification based on the

participants score. As Table 2 shows, 35 (30%) coaches were high on EE, the primary indicator of burnout and 6 coaches (5%) had high emotional exhaustion, high depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment, indicating a high level of burnout.

Table 2

Number of Coaches in Classification of Perceived Stress and Burnout

Measure	Low	Moderate	High
PSS	17	85	18
MBI-EE	39	45	35
MBI-PA	34	36	50
MBI-Dp	72	35	13

Note. PSS - Perceived Stress Scale: low ≤ 13 , moderate 14-26, high ≥ 27

MBI-Emotional Exhaustion: low ≤ 16 , moderate 17-26, high ≥ 27

MBI-Personal Accomplishment: low ≤ 31 , moderate 32-38, high ≥ 39

MBI-Depersonalization: low ≤ 6 , moderate 7-12, high ≥ 13

The results in Table 3 indicate strong positive relationships between perceived stress and both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. In addition, there is an equally strong negative correlation between personal achievement and perceived stress.

As can be seen in Table 4, female coaches ($M = 20.41$) scored higher in perceived stress than male coaches ($M = 18.73$) and also in emotional exhaustion (female $M = 23.20$, male $M = 19.69$).

Table 3

Pearson Correlations among Perceived Stress, Personal Achievement, Emotional Exhaustion, and Depersonalization

	PSSTotal	MBIPA	MBIEE	MBIDp
PSSTotal	1			
MBIPA	-.386**	1		
MBIEE	.646**	-.349**	1	
MBIDp	.503**	-.354**	.613**	1

Note. PSS = Perceived Stress Scale; MBIPA = Personal Accomplishment Subscale, MBIEE = Emotional Exhaustion, MBIDp = Depersonalization. Statistically Significant Correlation: ** $p < .001$ (2-tailed)

Table 4

Gender Differences in Coaches Perceived Stress and Burnout

Variables	Male		Female		F	Sig
	M	SD	M	SD		
PSS-Tot	18.73	5.9	20.41	5.9	2.328	.130
MBI-EE	19.69	10.16	23.20	10.36	3.459	.065
MBI-PA	36.91	6.97	34.73	6.95	2.922	.090
MBI-Dp	6.41	5.38	6.84	5.09	0.215	.644

Note. PSS-Tot = Perceived Stress Scale Total; MBIPA = Personal Accomplishment; MBIEE = Emotional Exhaustion; MBIDp = Depersonalization

The open-ended exploratory questions asked the coaches to rank their top three sources of stress and strategies to manage their stress. The coaches indicated their number one reported source of stress was win/loss of competition ($n = 48$), followed by team and player issues ($n = 23$), and balance between work, life, and family ($n = 13$). When

considering all three ranked sources, win/loss was most often cited (76 times) followed by team/player issues (72 times) and having a balance between work, life and family (53 times). Several coaches cited their administration (34 times) as a source of stress when all three sources were combined. Coaches feeling the pressure to win has been cited in the literature as a stressor for decades (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984) and was also supported as the most common stressor in NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches.

Coaches identified using physical activity ($n = 28$) as their top strategy for coping with stress followed by organizing/communication ($n = 20$) and time away from work ($n = 18$). After totaling all three categories of coping strategies, resting/relaxing with family/time away was identified (88 times) followed by physical activity (67 times) and communicating/organizing (63 times). Furthermore, no coaches reported using drugs as a method to manage stress and only nine cited consuming alcohol. A full list of all the responses for the exploratory questions can be found in Appendix B.

Discussion and Implications

The current study specifically targeted NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches and measured their levels of stress and burnout. Overall, most of the coaches fell into the moderate range for both perceived stress and burnout. Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) found very similar results in their study with college coaches and when compared to health and human service workers coaches were less burned out. The moderate stress levels and relatively low burnout levels may reflect the specific sample. Specifically, these coaches have been in their current coaching position for over 8 years,

which is considered significant in the profession, and suggests they have received multiple contract extensions. These coaches may have developed effective strategies to deal with their stress and may ultimately enjoy higher levels of job satisfaction when their personal achievement is associated with lower levels of perceived stress, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization. The findings in the current study are limited to NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches who responded to the survey. Coaches that were more stressed or burned out might have decided not to participate. Stress and burnout rates may be higher in the general coaching population, and may vary based on sport, coaching position and athletic department administration.

However, 18 coaches (15%) reported high levels of perceived stress and 6 coaches (5%) were burned out. According to Maslach (Maslach & Jackson, 1986), a high degree of burnout is reflected in scores high in emotional exhaustion, high in depersonalization, and low in personal accomplishment. It is concerning that 35 coaches (30%) were high in the emotional exhaustion subscale because it's considered the core dimension of burnout.

Gender differences were not statistically significant, but they are consistent with the literature. One of the first studies focusing on gender with collegiate head coaches by (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984) found that female coaches report higher levels of stress than male coaches. The MBI-Dp scores for depersonalization are similar between the genders in the current study, which is also consistent with Caccese and Mayerberg's research.

The coaches' responses indicated that winning and losing is the biggest source of stress for the coaches. The coaches ultimately have a limited impact on the final result of the competition because they are not actually competing. Frey (2007) found a lack of control over the athletes created stress on coaching performance. Gould and colleagues (Gould, Greenleaf, Guinan, & Chung, 2002) have argued that coaches should be considered "performers" themselves. The researchers found coaches are required to deal with difficult situations such selection, tactics, and athlete performance-related issues, while ensuring that their own psychological and emotional states are at an optimal level. The NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches in the current study are treated very similar to the players during competitions because they are introduced at the beginning of the match, sit or stand on the sideline, and follow the same protocol to address the officials. However, the coach must also select the starting players, provide instructive feedback to the athletes, make offensive and defensive adjustments, and provide leadership to the team regardless of the score or result of the competition. Thelwell et al. (2008) substantiated the findings with NCAA Division I head women's volleyball Coaches citing the issues with athletes as a major stressor for coaches. The researchers found the coaches having trouble with athletes not willing to develop new skills, not responding to coaching, being reluctant to new ideas, and not communicating injuries.

Identifying winning or losing as the top stressor in this survey could have been influenced by many factors. The coaches were in their traditional competitive fall season

and had the added stress of in-season recruiting. Kelley (1990) found coaches stress varies over the course of a competitive season with the greatest stress perceived toward the end of the competitive season. Different stressors might have been identified during the off season and the survey did not ask for specific information on when coaches felt most stressed.

Coaches use many different coping strategies in relieving their stress, and physical activity was the most widely used method by the coaches. Frey (2007) also found coaches used exercise as a method to manage their stress. A coach from the current study said “I like to do things physically, so a lot of times I’ll try to ride the bike or lift weights or something. I find that I ride the bike a lot faster when I’m stressed.” When considering all three ranked strategies for coping with stress, resting or relaxing with family was rated second followed by time away from the job. Previous research, (Stebbing, Taylor, Spray, & Ntoumanis, 2012) also found having a stable work-life balance was critical for coaches to psychologically flourish. The survey results are encouraging in that coaches are exercising and finding time to relax for stress relief as opposed to unhealthy strategies such as drug use. A reporting bias might have occurred because the coaches did not want to go on record anonymously and report their usage of legal or illegal substances.

The results of the current study open the door for future research on collegiate coaches and the development of programs and strategies to aid coaches in dealing with stress and burnout. Recommendations for both coaches and administrators may range

from having specific time allocated for coaches during the work week to relax or interact with other coaches to creating a semester long coaching education class. Cassidy, Potrac, and McKenzie (2006) created a coaching education program for rugby coaches in New Zealand and this program could be adapted by athletic departments to aid in the development of their coaches. The researchers found value in having coaches interacting with each other and focusing on the process of coaching rather than only the technical aspects of what to coach.

Because coaches are performers too, formal psychological skills training and the development of mental toughness might help them cope more effectively with the demands of coaching (Olusoga et al., 2009). Mindfulness may be an effective intervention or professional development that administrators could offer to increase coaches' satisfaction and well-being (Longshore & Sachs, 2015). In the sports psychology realm, mindfulness focuses on being in the present moment and on the process along with letting go of the uncontrollable and past performances. Taylor (1990) created a five-step stress management program to address the special needs and concerns of coaches. The program provides an applied model of stress management that athletic departments could offer as a resource for their coaches to use in reducing their stress.

Organizations could look to offer childcare facilities, provide opportunities for families to attend tournaments alongside the coach (Shaw & Allen, 2009), and potentially look to increase flexibility with regards to working days and number of working hours.

Currently, NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches have been known to negotiate either paid on campus childcare or special payment for a nanny.

In conclusion, higher levels of perceived stress and burnout have been found in athletic trainers, teachers, or other human service type workers when compared with NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches. However, the results demonstrate the positive correlation between perceived stress, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization which supports the negative relationship between perceived stress and personal achievement. The coaches identified winning or losing as the most common stressor, but most of them have found various coping strategies to not allow them to become burned out. Coaches deal with stress and exhaustion, it is imperative to identify activities that individuals enjoy along with finding time daily or weekly to perform them for stress relief.

CHAPTER II

DISSEMINATION

The dissemination of the research is planned to take place at the Home University in the spring of 2019. The Executive Associate Athletics Director/Senior Woman Administrator has invited me to present my dissertation findings to the Home University Athletic Department. The Home University Athletic Department meets monthly and typically has a round table discussion regarding a hot topic in college athletics. I have created a one-page handout for each attendee that I will use as an outline to discuss my findings and stimulate conversation around the topic of stress and burnout in collegiate coaching. Attendees will be comprised of both assistant and head coaches from the various varsity sports that are offered within the Athletics Department.

Introduction

All coaches will receive the one-page hand out (Appendix C) when entering the room. I will begin the presentation by explaining my current position of Assistant Women's Volleyball Coach and my previous collegiate coaching experience over the last 18 years both as an assistant and head coach at the junior college, Division II, and Division I level. In addition, I will share one of the most popular misconceptions in the coaching profession, that you can outwork your opponents. Coaches at every level feel like they can always prepare themselves, the staff, and the team better by watching more

film, providing more repetitions, and analyzing statistics of both their team and the upcoming opponent. At some point, the head coach will have diminishing returns on their investment of preparation time until the actual competition takes place. I have gone through this vicious cycle by staying up till 4 a.m. preparing filming to only be irritable with my team at breakfast and the afternoon practice because of sleep deprivation. Furthermore, by the time we arrive for our pregame, review the scouting report and competition begins I am exhausted. Initially, this coaching mantra of outworking your opponent and having this experience happen to me several times spurred my interest in focusing on collegiate coaches for my dissertation.

The final decision to focus on burnout and stress in NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches came after reading a three-part article titled, "I'm not the lone wolf" regarding the health issues that Urban Meyer faced at the time he was the Head Football Coach at the University of Florida (Sneed, 2016). Meyer told the reporter that "Chasing Ambien with beer to sleep, losing forty-pounds of weight and having chest pains" was the price he was paying to stay in football." Meyer's wife is a psychiatric nurse and told Urban "You've got to have an outlet. You've got to do something. You've got to stay healthy." She also stated, "It was just a big mountain of pressure, stress, lack of control and not accepting that he couldn't control everything. He's a perfectionist. He wants to win every game. He wants to win every championship. And that's just not even clear thinking. You can't. You just can't." Coaching is a demanding profession that

challenges individuals mentally, physically, and emotionally regardless of the sport or the level.

Video

A video of Michigan State University Head Men's Basketball Coach Tom Izzo will be shown to the group on coaching stress ("What A Heated," 2014). The 3-minute video was part of a segment that Nightline and ESPN's Sport Science did on "What a heated basketball game can do to a coach's body." Coach Izzo agreed to swallow an ingestible thermometer, wear a bio-harness, and have an accelerometer latched to his side all in an effort to monitor his vital signs during a game. These devices measured heart rate, respiratory rate, core body temperature, skin temperature, calories burned, and the number of steps taken.

Questioning

I will ask the group the following questions to create dialogue with the coaches. Can you relate to the video as you reflect on your behavior while coaching during a competition? Has any of the information that has been presented thus far surprised you? What causes your greatest amount of stress as a college coach? How do you manage your stress? Researchers have found mindfulness training and creating a mentorship program as recommendations for coping with stress. Do you think these would work? Can you think of other strategies the administration could implement to help?

Dissertation Findings

I will discuss the results of my study that included 120 NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches that completed my survey. The average score on the Perceived Stress Scale was 19.47, which is considered a moderate stress level, with 17 coaches scoring in the low zone. The scores on the three subscales in the MBI burnout inventory were mainly in the average range with 72 coaches scoring in the low category for depersonalization. Only 5% of the coach's scores indicated they were burned out with all three scores, but 35 (30%) coaches had high scores of emotional exhaustion and 18 were high in perceived stress. The top responses for what causes your stress were: winning/losing, player/team issues, and balancing work/life/family. The top responses for how do you manage your stress were physical activity, organizing and communicating/socializing, and relaxing/spending time with family. The findings for NCAA Division I women's volleyball head coaches extend beyond just this sample because other studies with different sports have found similar results with regards to stress, burnout, and the source of stressors.

In conclusion, coaches need to focus on what they can control and allocate time daily to the tasks/activities they have identified aid in relieving their stress. Every individual seeks different hobbies or personal interactions that provides them a sense of enjoyment and it's critical to make these a part of their daily or weekly routine. Coaches on all levels from the elite level college sports to the local high school all experience

stress. Stress that builds up over time leads to exhaustion which eventually makes individuals become burned out.

CHAPTER III

ACTION PLAN

Athletic coaching is happening around the world with athletes of all different ages, levels, and sports. The coach leads athletes through the training sessions and during all competitions. The role of the coach is ever changing because of the different relationships he or she has with each individual athlete. Balancing all of the roles a coach serves can become stressful and over time can lead to burnout.

The action plan consists of both short- and long-term plans that will not only impact the specific demographics in my research project, but coaches of different sports from around the world. Stress and burnout in NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches warrants future research because thousands of coaches specifically fall under the NCAA umbrella at the Division I, II, and III level. My research supported previous studies showing that coaches of different disciplines are all dealing with similar stressors and using like coping mechanisms. Short term plans include working with the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) and presenting the findings of my study with long term plans focusing on developing a podcast.

The AVCA has inquired about me writing an article in their *Coaching Volleyball* magazine on stress and burnout on collegiate volleyball coaches. In addition, presenting at the annual AVCA convention on strategies and methods to aid coaches in dealing with

their coaching related stressors. The convention lasts four days and is the largest annual gathering in the world of volleyball coaches. The conference is run yearly in conjunction with the NCAA Division I women's volleyball national championship. The AVCA will help me reach a specific target audience of volleyball coaches, but I have future plans of reaching coaches of other disciplines as well with the podcast.

The one-page handout that I use as a guide for my planned lecture in the spring of 2019 with the Home University Athletic Department will be posted on my two websites for the coaches to reference. The websites are www.kenmurczek.com and www.kenmurczekvolleyballcamps.com. After receiving feedback from my coaching peers on the presentation, adjustments will be made for future improvement. High school, junior college, and four-year university athletic departments will be the target audience contacted to schedule upcoming lectures on my material.

Lastly, I have a long-term plan to create a 10-minute interview series that will be stored as a podcast for listeners to download. Coaches from different sports and levels will be invited to participate in the series. The coaches will be asked several scripted questions on stress and burnout. For instance, what causes their stress and what coping strategies do they currently use. In addition, how much impact do they believe they have on their team's final result of winning/losing in competitions? During the interviews, findings from my study on NCAA Division I head women's volleyball coaches will be shared with the coaches. The discussion will provide perspective from coaches outside of the NCAA Division I head women's volleyball ranks.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Demographic Questions:

- Q1 What is your age
- Q2 What is your gender
- Q3 What is your race/ethnicity
- Q4 What is your marital status
- Q5 How many total years of Division I head coaching experience do you have
- Q6 How many years have you been the head coach at your current institution

Open Ended Questions:

- Q7 What are your top 3 sources of stress
- Q8 What are your top 3 strategies to manage your stress

Perceived Stress Scale:

- Q9 In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly
- Q10 In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life
- Q11 In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and “stressed”
- Q12 In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems
- Q13 In the last month, how often have you felt that you that things were going your way
- Q14 In the last month, how often have you felt that you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do
- Q15 In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life
- Q16 In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things
- Q17 In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control
- Q18 In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them

Maslach Burnout Inventory:

- Q19 I feel emotionally drained from my work
- Q20 I feel used up at the end of the workday
- Q21 I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day of the job
- Q22 I can easily understand how my athletes feel about things
- Q23 I feel I treat some athletes as if they were impersonal objects
- Q24 Working with people all day is really a strain for me
- Q25 I deal very effectively with the problems of my athletes
- Q26 I feel burned out from my work
- Q27 I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work
- Q28 I've become more callous toward people since I took this job
- Q29 I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally
- Q30 I feel very energetic
- Q31 I feel frustrated by my job
- Q32 I feel I'm working too hard on my job
- Q33 I don't really care what happens to some athletes
- Q34 Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
- Q35 I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my athletes
- Q36 I feel exhilarated after working closely with my athletes
- Q37 I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job
- Q38 I feel like I'm at the end of my rope
- Q39 In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly
- Q40 I feel athletes blame me for some of their problems

APPENDIX B

EXPLORATORY RESULTS ON STRESS

Table 5

Top 3 Sources of Stress Reported by Coaches

Source of Stress	Number of Responses
1st Source of Stress	
Win/loss of competition	48
Team and player issues	23
Balance between work, life, and family	13
Administration	10
Lack of time	10
Recruiting	8
Work/job	5
Personal	3
Financial	3
Parents	2
Assistant coaches	2
Bad volleyball	1
Competitions	1
job security	1
not sleeping	1
Program support (ATC, marketing, academic advising, institutional procedures, etc.)	1
2nd Source of Stress	
Team/player issues	31
Recruiting	18
Balancing between work, life, and family	17
Win/loss	14
Budget/salary	11
Administration	10
Staffing	7
Travel	5
Lack of time	5
Competition	2
Assistant coaches	2

Table 5

Cont.

Source of Stress	Number of Responses
2nd Source of Stress (cont.)	
Competitiveness	1
Helicopter parents	1
Self-imposed desire to prove people wrong and be perfect	1
Dealing with unprofessional people	1
Decisions	1
Fundraising	1
Home	1
Lack of exercise	1
Multitude of responsibilities	1
3rd Source of Stress	
Balance between work, life, and family	22
Team and player issues	18
Wins/loss	14
Administration	14
Budget/Salary	12
Assistant coaching/staffing	9
Coaching/planning	7
Recruiting	7
Travel	5
Job security	4
Fundraising	2
Time	2
Lack of resources	2
Coaching beach	2
Referees	1
Rules	1
Self-expectations	1
Playing well	1
Youth of our team	1
State of college athletics	1
Other	1

Table 6

Top 3 Strategies for Managing Stress Reported by Coaches

Strategies for Managing Stress	Number of Responses
Managing Stress – 1st Response	
Physical activity	28
Communication and organization	20
Time away from work	18
Narrow focus	10
Meditation	9
Sleeping	8
Faith	7
Working hard	7
Reading	4
Recruiting	3
TV/games	3
Music	3
Cooking	2
Team	2
Player ownership	2
Work	1
Early day	1
Winning	1
Alcohol	1
Managing Stress – 2nd Response	
Physical activity	26
Organizing and communication	23
Rest/vacation	19
Family time	18
Meditation	10
Socializing and working	8
Sleep	4
Recruiting	4
Learning/reading	4
Eat	4
Grateful and why coaching	3
Alcohol	3
Assistant coaches	2
Camp	1

Table 6

Cont.

Strategies for Managing Stress	Number of Responses
Managing Stress – 3rd Response	
Family/relaxation time	32
Organizing and communication	20
Physical activity	13
Socializing	11
Meditation and prayer	11
Self-improvement and service	8
Relaxation/activity	6
Alcohol	5
Reading and education	5
Recruiting	2
Fundraising and administration	2
Assistant coach	2
Negative	2
Winning	1
Financial	1

APPENDIX C

HANDOUT

STRESS AND BURNOUT

The role of the athletic coach is ever-changing and coaches must shift among instructor, mentor, friend, organizer, educator, and counselor roles (Lyle, 2002). The multiple roles a coach serves for the athletes and organization can create stress. Stress can lead to exhaustion and eventually over an extended amount of time lead the coach into burnout.

Top 3 causes of coaches stress:

1. Winning/Losing
2. Player/Team Issues
3. Balancing Work/Life/Family

Top 3 ways coaches manage their stress:

1. Physical activity
2. Organizing and communicating
3. Relaxing and spending time with family

Burnout is a multidimensional syndrome marked by exhaustion and withdrawal from one's work as the result of prolonged stress (Maslach and Jackson, 1986). Coaches at every level get burned out because they serve a critical role in the athlete's development both athletically and socially without having the proper training or resources to meet the demands. The stress results above are from my study on NCAA Division I Head Women's Volleyball Coaches and 5% of the coaches were burned out with 30% scoring high on emotional exhaustion.

Outside Reading Suggestions

- Urban Meyer - I'm not the lone wolf.
- Tom Izzo - How a basketball coaches body reacts in heated competition.
- The Energy Bus - Book.

Urban Meyer - Bleacherreport.com, Tom Izzo - Video ABC Nightline News, Jon Gordon - Author

