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## Leadership Behaviors of Athletic Coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

Jeff Schouten



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
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LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS OF ATHLETIC COACHES IN THE COUNCIL FOR  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

By  
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership behaviors of coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities using the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport. A secondary purpose was to gain greater insight into the democratic and positive feedback leadership behaviors of male and female coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU).

Three hundred and ninety-six head coaches in the CCCU participated in the study; 320 (80.5%) males and 76 (19.5%) females. The participants completed the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (Zhang, J., Jensen, B.E., & Mann, B.L., 1997).

The results of the study showed that there is a significant difference in the coaching behaviors (training and instruction, situational consideration, autocratic, democratic, social support, and positive feedback) of head coaches in the CCCU when comparing the sports coached. Results of the RLSS indicated that the softball and track and field coaches perceived themselves as exhibiting the highest rates of positive feedback to their athletes. Track and field and volleyball coaches exhibited the highest rates of democratic behavior in their coaching. It was also discovered that there were no significant difference between male and female coaches in the coaching dimension when evaluating the different coaching leadership behaviors by gender. Coaches that scored high and low in the positive feedback and democratic behavior categories were asked to participate in a follow up interview. Two themes emerged from the interviews with coaches when questioned about their democratic behavior: gender differences and communication with players. Two themes also emerged related to the coaches use of positive feedback: correcting mistakes and team-building. Additional information emerged from the interviews relating to how coaches in the CCCU prioritize different aspects of their job and their relationship with God.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001). Based on this definition, Northouse identified four components central to leadership: leadership is a process that is not a characteristic or trait, but an interactive occurrence between leader and follower; influence, which deals with how the leader affects his or her followers; leadership occurs in groups, which provides the context for leadership to occur; goals, which means leadership is concerned with guiding a group of individuals towards a goal. These four components impact how a leader influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Leaders may have different individual leadership styles and traits that are seen as they interact with their followers and can be beneficial or detrimental on their followers. Ultimately, the effectiveness of the leader will impact how a group works toward the achievement of a goal.

In athletics there are many ways in which a coach can have an impact on his or her players to reach both individual and team goals. Good leadership enhances athletes' personal growth and development, motivation, and performance. Leadership is a vital force for a successful organization, and effective leadership can help the organization develop new directions and promote change toward proposed objectives (Bennis & Nanus, 1985).

Leadership has been defined in many ways. There are a multitude of factors affecting leadership behavior, and various studies have explored personal traits, leadership behavior, relationships between the leader and his or her followers, and how aspects of the situation impact the leader's behavior (Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 2002).

The complexity of leadership studies is a result of the different ways in which leadership is identified. Trail (2004) defines leadership as a "behavioral process aimed at influencing members to work toward achieving the group's goals". Bass (1985) suggests that leadership is a process of "transforming followers, creating visions of the goals that may be attained, and articulating for the followers the ways to attain those goals." Leadership involves an interaction

between leaders and followers. Trail (2004) contends that the leaders' behavior most directly affects how the team functions as a social unit in bonding and obtaining the team goals.

Our culture is one that is interested in leaders and how they conduct themselves whether it is the business or athletic arena. People are interested in books, articles, and dialogue about the emergence of leaders and how they themselves can have an effect on those with whom they associate. The best seller list in newspapers across the country shows the increased desire of people to learn more about leaders within our society. Every week these lists feature biographies of leaders, books on leadership, and memoirs of politicians, soldiers, and business executives involved in leadership activities (Smucker, Peterson, & Slattery, 2002).

Leadership involves more than planning and organization. It involves communicating and having an emotional attachment and impact on those around the leader. Relationships are formed and the quality of those relationships may have a direct impact on the success of the team in reaching its goals. To be successful, leaders need to motivate, organize, and direct as well as listen to their followers (Smucker, Pederson, & Slattery, 2002).

### Statement of the Problem

There is a continued focus on athletics and the coaches that lead their respective teams. College and university level coaches are responsible for providing leadership to their players and for producing successful, winning seasons. Very little research has been done on athletic coaches self-reported coaching behaviors in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) when comparing sports coached and the gender of the coaches. The CCCU is an international association of intentionally Christian colleges and universities. Founded in 1976 with 38 members, the Council has grown to 111 members in North America and 70 affiliate institutions in 24 countries.

Leadership behaviors have been examined by the Leadership Scale of Sport that was developed by Chelladurai in 1980 and the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) that was later developed by Zhang, Jensen, Mann (1997). These scales have examined coaching leadership behaviors across all age groups. The focus of the Leadership Scale for Sport is on the following behaviors: autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, amount of training and instruction, and social support. The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport included the same five

coaching behaviors and also added ‘situational consideration’ as a behavior. Since no research has investigated the leadership behaviors of CCCU coaches, this study is needed.

### Significance of the Study

Research has shown that athletes prefer different types of leadership behaviors from their coaches. Female athletes prefer a democratic style of leadership rather than autocratic style (Hastie, 1993; Serpa, 1990) while male athletes have shown a preference for autocratic styles of leadership rather than democratic styles (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Erle, 1981; Terry & Howe, 1984; Beam, Serwatka, & Wilson, 2004). Additionally, research has also shown that experienced players prefer more autocratic behaviors from their respective coaches (Schubiger, 1993; Chelladurai & Carron, 1983). There is a need for coaches to self report their coaching behaviors. This self-reflection will allow coaches to learn more about their coaching behaviors and how they relate to their players. As coaches self-reflect on their personal coaching behaviors, they will gain a greater understanding of how they can best lead their respective athletic teams.

The coaches’ self-reflection of their coaching behaviors can also be beneficial to athletic directors when filling positions on their staff. For instance, if a women’s sport is in need of a coach, it would be advantageous for an athletic director to have prospective candidates self-report their coaching behaviors using the RLSS since female athletes desire a democratic form of leadership rather than autocratic (Hastie, 1993; Serpa, 1990). While it would only be one component of the hiring process, it could be a valuable tool that aids in the process of selecting the best coach.

There are other areas of importance when examining the self reported coaching behaviors of the coaches in the CCCU. Will the coaches within the CCCU score high on the social support behavior on the RLSS? It can be assumed that coaches in the CCCU are Christians and possess Christian traits such as love and compassion, which might be exhibited in the social support leadership characteristic that focuses on the concern and welfare of the athlete. Coaches within the CCCU are expected to have high character and make decisions that are morally accepted which are also examples of Christian traits.

Is it certainly possible that there may be no difference in the coaching behavior areas (autocratic, democratic, situational consideration, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support) of the CCCU coaches if they were compared to coaches in non faith-based institutions. For example, certain dimensions of the RLSS will score similarly among participants (autocratic, democratic, and training and instruction). This study will not compare faith-based with non faith-based coaches, but it will be possible to discuss this data in light of the existing literature that has been conducted on non-secular institutions and provide an entry into future research.

Additionally, coaches have a desire to win, but in smaller sized institutions (the majority of institutions in the CCCU are under 10,000 students) the focus on winning may be less than in larger Division I and II universities. This may allow coaches to spend more time in areas such as positive feedback and social support, two categories measured by the RLSS that focus on developing the athlete beyond just the physical dimension.

### Limitations to the Study

The following limitations are present in this study:

1. The honesty of the coaches cannot be measured for responses to both the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport and the interviews.
2. Some coaches may not complete all questions of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport.
3. Not all of the coaches in the CCCU responded to the survey.
4. Not all of the coaches that scored high or low in the positive feedback or democratic areas agreed to interview.

### Delimitations to the Study

The following delimitations are present in this study:

1. The institutions included in the study were derived from NAIA, NCAA Division III, and a small number of NCAA Division II. The population does not consist of one division, therefore, results may benefit other levels as well.
2. The research study focused on head coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. The study may also benefit assistant coaches on the college/university level and/or coaches across age groups and levels.

## Definition of Terms

Autocratic Behavior: Coaching behavior that involves independence in decision-making and stresses personal authority (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Council for Christian Colleges and Universities: An international association of intentionally Christian colleges and universities. It was founded in 1976 with 38 members and has grown to 111 members in North America.

Democratic Behavior: Coaching behavior that allows greater athlete participation in decisions pertaining to group goals, practice methods, and game tactics and strategies (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Positive Feedback: Coaching behavior that reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Preferred Leader Behavior: Coaching behavior preferred by the athletes on a team (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Situational Consideration: Coaching behaviors aimed at considering situational factors such as time, game, environment, individual, gender, skill level, and health condition (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Social Support: Coaching behavior characterized by a concern for the welfare of individual athletes, positive group atmosphere, and warm interpersonal relations with members (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Training and Instruction: Coaching behavior aimed at improving the athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training; instructing them in skills, techniques, and tactics of the sport; clarifying the relationship among the members; and structuring and coordinating the members activities (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature will examine research that relates to coaching leadership. Areas of interest include research tools that are used in leadership theories, assessing coaching leadership, leadership preference of athletes, leadership characteristics of coaches, gender and leadership, and leadership characteristics of athletes.

#### Leadership Theories

Several approaches have been taken to examine the concepts of leadership. Theories have emerged that attempt to provide further insight into how leaders are developed and have an impact on their population. Situational leadership, behavioral studies, contingency theories, transformational leadership, and the leader-member exchange theory are all examples of how researchers have attempted to further understand leadership. It has been shown that there is no one best leadership style, but successful leaders are those who can adapt their behavior to the demands of their own situation.

##### *Situational Leadership Theory*

The situational leadership theory (SLT) consists of two categories of leader behaviors, initiating structure and consideration. Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1977, 1982) developed the situational leadership theory model in an attempt to explain the effectiveness of leadership across the two behavior situations and dimensions. The SLT approach suggests that certain combinations of task and relationship behaviors may be more effective in some situations than in others. Task behaviors are the behaviors acted out by the leader where as relationship behaviors are the responses of the follower to the leader. The differences in situations may refer to the gender or age level of the athletes within the coaching realm. In order for a leader to be effective, the SLT contends that the leader must make a plan regarding the best way to respond to a situation (Marta, Leritz, & Mumford, 2005).

##### *Behaviorist Approach*

The behaviorist approach assumes there is a set of leadership behaviors that can be externally observed and measured in terms of their results among followers. This approach can be seen within athletic teams by observing how the athletes respond to the coach verbally and non-verbally. Stogdill (1974) refers to these leadership behaviors as “any behavior of an individual while involved in directing and coordinating the work of his group members and may involve such acts as structuring the work relations, praising or criticizing group members, and showing consideration for their welfare and feelings”. The behaviorist approach focuses on how the leader is observed for followers while trying to motivate his or her team members to move forward to reach their desired goals when observation occurs in an athletics setting.

The behaviorist approach envisions leadership as a set of processes that result from the actions of an individual that creates some type of influence on an individual (Wielkiewicz, Prom, & Loos, 2005). It can be seen as the leader carrying out certain tasks and abilities, which result in a response by the followers.

#### *Contingency Model*

Fiedler’s (1967) contingency model of leadership is known as one of the earliest and well-known contingency theories. The contingency model contends that the leader’s effectiveness will be determined by selecting the right leader for the right situation or changing the situation to match the leadership strengths of the leader. Some leaders are better than others in some situations but less effective in other situations (Hughes, Ginnett, & Gurphy, 2002).

The contingency theory of leadership suggests that there is no one style or method of leadership that is appropriate for all situations or circumstances (Thomas, 2005). The contingency model also suggests that effective leadership can be learned and that the primary skill of the leader is to determine which skill would be best for a particular type of situation (Curtis & Sherlock, 2006). The ability of the leader to determine most appropriate style or method of leadership for the situation depends not only on the knowledge of the individual regarding leadership techniques, but also on the effectiveness of the information seeking behavior of the leader (Tidwell & Sias, 2005). The leader must have a good understanding of the characteristics of his or her followers. These characteristics can consist of gender, age, or skill level in the athletics. If a leader understands his or her strengths in relation to the characteristics

of his or her follower, they will be better able to lead their followers to reach the followers' desired goals.

### *Transformational Leadership*

Studies in leadership suggest that leader behavior depends less on inherited traits than on group needs and tasks (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). Extensive research has shown that leaders who exhibit positive leadership behaviors such as intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence achieve greater employee performance, effort, satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness (Lowe, Kroek, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Transformational leadership focuses on the leader-follower relationship that benefits both the individuals involved and the organization as a whole (Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders are said to appeal to higher ideals and moral values of followers, heighten followers' expectations, and spur them to greater effort and performance on behalf of the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bryman, 1992).

According to Kent and Chelladurai (2001), Bass' (1985) view of transformational leadership is comprised of three significant dimensions. *Charismatic leadership* concerns "the faith and respect in the leader and the inspiration and encouragement provided by his or her presence". *Intellectual stimulation* is defined as "the arousal and change in followers of problem awareness and problem solving, of thought and imagination, and of beliefs and values, rather than arousal and change in immediate action. *Individualized consideration* refers to the leader treating each subordinate "differently according to each subordinate's needs and capabilities".

### *Leader-Member Exchange Theory*

Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) focuses primarily on the vertical dyadic relationship between the leader and a follower. Kent and Chelladurai (2001) contend that a high quality of the interpersonal exchange relationship between member and the immediate supervisor enhances mutual respect and support. These exchanges are defined as transactions between leader and follower that are mutually influential and enable the development of deeper social relationships over time.



The above approaches demonstrate the complexity of leadership. Many variables need to be accounted for when evaluating leaders, such as the situation of the leader and follower, the ability of the leader to lead, and the respect given to and from leader and follower. The following section explains the Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS) developed by Chelladurai and Saleh (1980).

### The Leadership Scale for Sport

The Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS) was developed by Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) and is focused on the utilization of the multidimensional leadership model (Chelladurai & Carron, 1978). The LSS has three versions: athlete preference, athlete perception, and coach self-evaluation. The content validity of the LSS was determined during the development of the LSS as 160 university physical education majors responded to the questionnaire that consisted of 99 items. A revised sample was then retained that included 50 items and then further revised to 40 items (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980).

The athlete preference version of the LSS has shown to have good internal reliability (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980; Chelladurai, Imamura, Yamaguchi, Oinuma, & Miyauchi, 1988; Isberg & Chelladurai, 1990), with an exception being the autocratic dimension. Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) reported that, for each subscale of the LSS, a Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency. The autocratic dimension of the preferred behavior subscale was lowest ( $\alpha = .45$ ). All other coefficients were considered acceptable (ranged from .71 for social support to .82 for democratic). The characteristic low internal consistency score in autocratic behavior is thought to reflect the fact that two or three distinct facets of leadership behavior are included within the autocratic component (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1999).

The main behavior areas that the LSS measures of coaches are: training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, social support, and positive feedback. Training and instruction behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that is aimed at improving athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training, and instructing athletes in the necessary skills of their sport. Democratic behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that allows the coach and athletes to work together in the decision-making process. These decisions can be aimed at goals, strategies, or practice planning. Autocratic behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that

stresses personal authority for the coach and involves independent decision making by the coach. Social support is a coaching behavior that is characterized by the coach showing concern for the welfare of his or her athletes. Social support is a coaching behavior that is defined as promoting a positive group atmosphere and provides warm interpersonal relationships with the group members. Positive feedback is defined as a coaching behavior that reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance.

### The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport

The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) was developed by Zhang, Mann, and Jensen (1997). The RLSS is a revision of the Leadership Scale for Sport that was developed by Chelladurai and Saleh in 1980, which measures training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, social support, and positive feedback. Training and instruction behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that is aimed at improving athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training, and instructing athletes in the necessary skills of their sport. Democratic behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that allows the coach and athletes to work together in the decision-making process. These decisions can be aimed at goals, strategies, or practice planning. Autocratic behavior is defined as a coaching behavior that stresses personal authority for the coach and involves independent decision making by the coach. Social support is a coaching behavior that is characterized by the coach showing concern for the welfare of his or her athletes. Social support is a coaching behavior that is defined as promoting a positive group atmosphere and provides warm interpersonal relationships with the group members. Positive feedback is defined as a coaching behavior that reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance. Additionally, the RLSS measures a sixth area, situational consideration. Situational consideration is defined as coaching behaviors aimed at considering situational factors such as time, game, environment, individual, gender, skill level, and health condition.

Different participants were involved at each stage of the revision process. The researchers focused on the addition of items for each of the proposed factors. At first, 18 intercollegiate coaches from different sports were involved in the initial modification. The coaches were interviewed individually for input of new items. Through the interview process, 240 new items

were added to the original 40 items. Subsequently, three linguistic experts who were English professors from Massachusetts were involved in the linguistic check process. Although improvements and corrections were made to the items, all of the items were retained. After the linguistic check, 17 experts in coaching leadership theory from various colleges and universities participated in the test process of content validity. The experts reviewed the items and the standard for accepting an item was set at 70% agreement among the members of the panel. Finally, intercollegiate athletes ( $n= 696$ ) in Massachusetts were used to investigate the construct validity and internal consistency reliability of the revised versions of athlete perception and athlete preference. Intercollegiate coaches ( $n= 206$ ) of different sports from New England were used to investigate the revision of the coach self-evaluation version. This fourth stage also used factor analysis to determine factors and to test the internal consistency of the factors (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

Over the three versions, 74 items had factor loadings equal to or greater than .40 on one factor without double loading (i.e., loading on more than one factor). A total of 14 items were dropped so that no component had more than 12 items. This led to 60 items being retained. The alpha coefficients for the three versions were significantly greater than .70 with the exception of the autocratic component. In the revision of the LSS to the RLSS, Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997) reported the following internal consistencies when evaluating the coach self-evaluation version of the RLSS:  $\alpha = .83$  for training and instruction;  $\alpha = .93$  for democratic;  $\alpha = .35$  for autocratic;  $\alpha = .81$  for social support;  $\alpha = .85$  for positive feedback; and  $\alpha = .81$  for situational consideration. No further recommendations were given in regard to future use of the autocratic component of the scale.

When recording results using the RLSS, subscale scores are averaged and leadership behaviors are ranked. The coach is recognized as using leadership behaviors most to least frequently. Determining the appropriate coaching behaviors for a team depends on several variables. One variable is the age of the athletes because “within the scope of required leader behavior and actual leader behavior, difference might exist between coaches at different levels” (Jambor & Zhang, 1997). Other variables consist of the ability and skill levels of the athletes along with the personal characteristics of the coach.

The following sections give a further understanding of the leadership preferences of athletes, athlete perception of leadership, and coaches' self evaluation of their leadership behaviors.

### Preferred Leadership of Athletes

Hastie (1993) researched Australian and Canadian girls' high school volleyball players using the LSS. The reported measures of internal consistencies of the LSS in the study were:  $\alpha = .72$  (training and instruction),  $\alpha = .75$  (democratic),  $\alpha = .74$  (autocratic),  $\alpha = .76$  (social support), and  $\alpha = .73$  (positive feedback). The purpose of the study was to identify preferences of coaching behaviors and whether there was a difference among age, gender of the coach, and nationality. The results showed that Australian and Canadian female athletes preferred positive feedback to be the most important leadership behavior, followed by training and instruction, democratic behavior, social support, and autocratic behavior respectively. As the age of the athlete increased, the more they desired social support and autocratic behavior in both the Australian and Canadian athletes.

Sherman, Fuller, and Speed (2000) investigated the coaching preferences of 312 Australian athletes aged 18-35 at equitable levels of competition across three sports. They used the LSS to identify the coaching preferences of the athletes. Inter-item reliability was high in 4 of the 5 LSS components and ranged from  $\alpha = .71$  (social support) to  $\alpha = .82$  (positive feedback). The autocratic ( $\alpha = .59$ ) component revealed the lowest internal reliability. Results indicated the preference of athletes to be, from most-to-least preferred: positive feedback, training and instruction, democratic behavior, social support, and autocratic behavior. Although not significant, females preferred positive feedback and training and instruction slightly more than males, whereas males preferred autocratic behavior slightly more than females. These findings are consistent with previous research done by Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) and Erle (1981).

Chelladurai and Carron (1983) assessed the leadership preferences of high school midget, high school junior, high school senior, and university level basketball players using the athlete preference version of the LSS. The internal consistency values reported in the study were  $\alpha = .83$  for training and instruction and  $\alpha = .70$  for social support. The results showed that preference for training and instruction progressively decreased from high school midget through junior to senior

levels and increased on the university level. The preference by athletes for social support behavior from their coaches progressively increased from the younger levels to the older levels. The preference for social support progressively increased from the high school midget to university level. Additionally, Serpa (1990) discovered that younger female basketball players in Portugal preferred more social support and democratic behavior, while older players preferred more autocratic behavior. Additional studies have shown that more experienced players preferred more positive feedback (Erle, 1981) and autocratic and social support (Chelladurai & Carron, 1983) when compared to less experienced players.

Gender has been shown to be a significant determinant of preferred leadership in both students and athletes. For example, Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) sampled 160 physical education students and found that males preferred more supportive and autocratic leadership behavior than female students. In a similar study involving athletes, Riemer and Toon (2001) examined collegiate tennis players using the athlete preference version of the LSS and found female athletes to prefer more social support behavior when coached by males. Internal consistencies of the LSS ranged from .67 (autocratic) to .86 (training and instruction) for the athlete preference version and .59 (autocratic) to .88 (training and instruction) for the athlete perception version. Additionally, Erle (1981) studied 335 male and female intramural and intercollegiate hockey players. The results indicated that males preferred more training and instruction, autocratic behavior, and social support from their coaches than the females. The female players preferred more democratic leadership behavior from their coaches when compared to the male players. Findings produced by Beam, Serwatka, and Wilson (2004) also support the difference between male and female athletes on the NCAA Division I and II levels. Their findings showed that male athletes preferred more autocratic behavior than females and that female athletes preferred higher levels of democratic leadership behavior than males. While using the RLSS, they reported the following internal consistencies of the athlete preference version:  $\alpha = .83$  for training and instruction;  $\alpha = .93$  for democratic;  $\alpha = .35$  for autocratic;  $\alpha = .81$  for social support;  $\alpha = .85$  for positive feedback; and  $\alpha = .81$  for situational consideration. No further evidence of reliability or recommendations were given.

Prior research conducted by Terry and Howe (1984) also showed that male and female varsity athletes had similar preferences for leadership behaviors except for the autocratic dimension where male athletes preferred higher levels than female athletes. In a similar study, Terry (1984) investigated the coaching preferences of elite male and female intercollegiate athletes participating in a number of dual-gender sports by using the LSS. Reliability coefficients ranged from  $\alpha = .71$  (social support) to  $\alpha = .82$  (democratic). Internal consistency coefficients ranged from  $\alpha = .45$  (autocratic) to  $\alpha = .83$  (training and instruction). Again, the results indicated that male athletes prefer more autocratic behavior than female athletes do. This supports Chelladurai and Saleh's (1978) findings that male athletes prefer more autocratic and social support behavior and female athletes prefer more democratic behavior.

As seen in the research, the factors examined in both the RLSS and LSS show differences between male and female athlete leadership preferences. Female athletes desire a leader who is democratic and adapts to the situation of the athlete.

### Perceived Leadership of Coaches

Research has been done that examines how athletes perceive the leadership behaviors of coaches. Liukkonen and Salminen (1996) found that high ability Finnish athletes perceived their coaches to be more autocratic and less democratic, rewarding, and socially supportive when compared to low ability athletes when measured by the LSS. The internal consistency estimates were acceptable in training and instruction ( $\alpha = .82$ ), democratic ( $\alpha = .76$ ), social support ( $\alpha = .69$ ), and positive feedback ( $\alpha = .75$ ), but not in autocratic ( $\alpha = .30$ ). Garland and Barry (1988) found that more able college football players, as compared to less able college football players, perceived their coaches to emphasize more training and instruction, provided more social support, and gave more positive feedback. Also, more able players perceived their coaches to be more participative and less autocratic. These two studies obtained contradictory results. Both studies involved participants who had high ability levels in their respective sport, yet the Finnish athletes perceived their coaches to be more autocratic while the college football players perceived their coaches as being more democratic in coaching behavior.

Garland and Barry (1990) also investigated the perceptions of leader behaviors as a variable influencing athletic performance. Their focus was on 272 collegiate football players

who were surveyed using the perceived version of athletes' perception of the LSS. The perceived version of the LSS measures how athletes perceive their coaches' coaching behaviors. The results showed that players who perceived their coach as offering more training and instruction, a high democratic style, and less of an autocratic style experienced higher levels of performance. Also, being more socially supportive and offering more positive feedback was associated with higher levels of performance. Bray, Millen, Eidsness, and Leuzing (2005) focused on aerobic instructors and found that the enjoyment of their clients was greatest when they used a variety of positive leadership styles such as instructional and motivational when compared with more autocratic styles of leadership. Their results provided support to previous research done by Fox, Rejeski, and Gauvin (2000) in the area of aerobics, which indicated that when participants adapted to the leadership style of their instructor they enjoyed their activity more.

Loughead and Hardy (2005) contend that coaches and peer leaders exhibit different leadership behaviors. They researched 238 athletes from 15 teams representing widely independent and interdependent sports teams. Coach and peer leader behaviors were measured using the LSS. Cronbach's alpha scores were computed for coaches' behavior from the sample and were found to be acceptable: training and instruction  $\alpha = .92$ , positive feedback  $\alpha = .89$ , democratic  $\alpha = .87$ , and autocratic  $\alpha = .83$ . The results of the study indicated that coaches and peer leaders exhibited different leadership behaviors. In particular, coaches were perceived by athletes as exhibiting greater amounts of training and instruction, as well as exhibiting greater amounts of autocratic behavior than peer leaders. Conversely, peer leaders were perceived by athletes to display the leadership behaviors of social support, positive feedback, and democratic decision-making behaviors to a greater extent than coaches.

### Coach Self-Evaluation

As was previously reported, both the LSS and the RLSS have three versions: athlete preference, athlete perception, and coach self-evaluation. More studies have been conducted from athletes' perspectives on leadership than from coaches' self-perceptions. The version of coach self-evaluation is the least represented in literature.

Jambor and Zhang's (1997) research has centered on coach self-evaluation of leadership. They used the RLSS to research the differences in leadership behaviors between male and female

coaches at the junior high, high school, and college levels. The results showed that male and female coaches do not respond differently to the behaviors of the RLSS when self-reporting their coaching behaviors, rather differences in preferred coaching styles are often related to the gender of the athlete when athletes are evaluated by the athlete preference model of the RLSS. Eagly and Johnson (1990) found female leaders to be more democratic and less autocratic when compared with their male counterparts in the area of business management.

Jambor and Zhang (1997) also found significant differences between junior high, high school, and college level coaches. When evaluating themselves, high school coaches rated themselves higher in democratic behaviors than college coaches. Junior high coaches indicated they used training and instruction and social support significantly less than high school and college coaches. College coaches indicated they used more autocratic coaching behaviors than both junior high and high school coaches. Overall, leadership behaviors were significantly different between coaches in all three levels of competition. Jambor and Zhang (1997) reported the following internal consistencies (Cronbach's alphas) when they evaluated the coach self-evaluation version of the RLSS:  $\alpha = .84$  for training and instruction;  $.66$  for democratic;  $\alpha = .70$  for autocratic;  $\alpha = .52$  for social support;  $\alpha = .78$  for positive feedback; and  $\alpha = .69$  for situational consideration.

Bennett and Maneval (1998) researched youth baseball coaches of athletes aged 9 to 12 years old using the LSS. They reported similar leadership behaviors of youth coaches found in previous research (Dwyer & Fisher, 1988; Horne & Carron, 1985). Their results showed that youth coaches indicated they used positive feedback most frequently with training and instruction second. Additionally, coaches indicated they used high social support, moderate democratic behavior, and low autocratic behavior.

There is a need for more research to be done in the area of coaches' self-evaluation of their leadership behaviors. As coaches become more aware of their own leadership characteristics they will be better able to match the preferences and perceptions of their athletes.

### Leadership Characteristics of Coaches

The leadership characteristic's of a coach has been seen as an important factor affecting the development of athletes in competitive sport situations. These characteristics may vary



according to the age level or environment of the athletes in which the coach works with. The following sections present research that has examined the leadership characteristics of coaches of different age groups.

Chaumeton and Duda (1988) found that coaching behaviors at the high school level start to gear more toward the outcome and performance based on the outcome, whereas college coaches execute behaviors that would be considered outcome orientated. An example of this would be the amount of playing time that is given to an athlete. Players at both the high school and college levels that displayed the higher levels of skill were given more playing time. Results revealed significant variations in coaches' use of outcome-oriented and process oriented reinforcements and desirable and undesirable behaviors as a function of competitive level and situation. The higher the level of competition showed coaches exhibiting behaviors that attempted to push their players at higher levels to reach desired results. Further, the results suggested that an increasing emphasis is placed upon winning at higher levels of competition.

Bloom and Salmela (2005) investigated the coaching behaviors of expert Canadian coaches. Their focus was on similar aspects related to coaching. The coaches displayed similar coaching preferences in regard to why they were involved in the coaching profession. Their goals for their teams were similar in that they desired that their teams reach their maximum potential. They interviewed sixteen expert coaches in basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, and volleyball. Expert coaches were chosen on the following criteria: First, they had to have accumulated at least ten years of coaching experience at the university level or higher. Second, they had to be present Canadian university head coaches. Third, they had to have developed at least one player who had taken part in a major international competition such as the Olympic, Pan American, or Francophone Games. Fourth, they had to have built a successful program throughout their careers, as evidenced by winning one national or five conference titles. Finally, they had to be identified by an expert panel as one of the most knowledgeable and respected coaches in their sport.

They found that expert coaches have an ongoing quest for personal growth and knowledge acquisition, display a strong work ethic, communicate effectively, empathize with players, and are good teachers while providing social support. Social support leads to a higher

level of satisfaction among athletes, which further recognizes research done by Serpa (1990), Chelladurai and Carron (1983), and Reimer and Toon (2001).

## Gender and Leadership

Both men and women have the capacity to be leaders. In our society emphasis is placed on men as having stronger leadership skills and men are often able to obtain leadership positions more easily (Eagly, 2007). Eagly and Carli (2007) feel that both men and women have the capacity to lead. In their research they have found that psychological characteristics of good leaders are neither masculine nor feminine, but rather good leaders are inclusive of traits from both genders in equal measures. They also promote the idea that men are more assertive in the workplace than women. Men, more than women, tend to manage in a command and control style and exhibit more social dominance than women. Women tend to adopt a more democratic or participative style of leadership, while men adopt more of an autocratic or directive approach to leadership (Chliwniak, 1997; Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). Leadership styles and practices are often different for women than for men (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Helgeson, 1990) yet management and leadership models are still typically based on theories of male leadership behaviors such as autocratic and command and control (Chliwniak, 1997; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001).

Through a meta-analysis of 87 studies that tested the relationship of leadership styles and measures of leaders' effectiveness (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), transformational leadership was associated with greater effectiveness. Since most women adopt a transformational or democratic style of leadership (Eagly & Johnson, 1990), they are able to ensure that their followers are mentored, empowered, and encouraged to develop to their full potential in order to contribute more effectively to the organization (Eagly, 2007). In addition, women reported feeling more comfortable working in environments that endorse a democratic leadership style (Berdahl & Anderson, 2005). Tedrow and Rhoads (1999) see men and women as having the same leadership capabilities when it comes to conducting tasks, but they differ in relationships. Accordingly, male cultured leadership is seen as less relationship orientated and more autocratic while female leadership is more empathetic in development of relationships and democratic in nature.

Leadership theorists also suggest that the democratic or transformational style of leadership is most effective (Buckingham, 2007; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly, 2007; George, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

### Characteristics of Christian Higher Education

Christian schools of higher education provide an alternative to public institutions of higher learning and a place for people who seek a Christian based education. Christian schools of higher education hold closely to a set of values and beliefs that set them apart from secular institutions (Savoye, 2000). Administration, faculty, staff, and students need to work together to achieve the mission of the institution. Blanchard and O'Connor (1997) indicate that members that share the values and purpose of the organization have a connectedness to the organization that produces commitment and personal satisfaction.

Wolterstorff (2002), a renowned Calvinistic higher education scholar, described Christian higher education as one that imparted the Christian world and life view. He added that the uniqueness of Christian education was evidenced by the absence of the dichotomy that had been perpetuated between the sacred and the secular.

In a study of fourteen institutions from seven different faith traditions based on Christianity, Hughes and Adrian (1997) defined the Christian university as one that maintained its distinctiveness in the face of the challenge of a pluralistic culture while in pursuit of academic excellence and reputation.

Many of the Christian faith based institutions in our country also offer athletics. Little research has been done on coaches at these institutions in regard to their leadership behaviors. Research needs to be done to determine what the coaches' leadership behaviors are and how their behaviors influence the players on their teams.

### Conclusion

In summary, the body of research reported here provides information on the key elements of leadership in athletics. The LSS and RLSS have been used to measure leadership behaviors from the perspective of athletes and coaches. The LSS and RLSS has three versions: athlete preference, athlete perception, and coach self-evaluation. The LSS measures five components:

training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, positive feedback, and social support. The RLSS measures the same five components along with a sixth component, situational consideration.

Leadership in the area of athletics is vital for a team to succeed. Coaches need to evaluate their leadership abilities so that they can have a continued positive impact on their teams and so that they can have a better understanding of what type of leadership behaviors they exhibit to their players. Little research has been done on the self evaluation version of the RLSS, therefore additional research is needed and coaches can benefit from gaining further understanding of their leadership behaviors. Further research can also benefit athletic directors as they search for athletes to lead their respective teams.

Male and female athletes prefer different types of leadership behavior from their coaches (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Riemer and Toon, 2001). Research has shown that females desire more democratic leadership while males desire more autocratic leadership (Beam, Serwatka, & Wilson, 2004).

Additionally, no research has been done on the coaching behaviors of coaches at Christian faith based colleges and universities. With additional focus in this area, there will be further understanding of what the leadership behaviors are of coaches at Christian faith based institutions and how their behaviors impact their players.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership behaviors of coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities using the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997). A secondary purpose was to gain greater insight into the democratic and positive feedback leadership behaviors of male and female coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

This chapter begins with a description of the research questions and also provides a description of the methods used in the study including the participants, data collection, procedures, and data analysis.

#### Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the self-reported coaching behaviors of the head coaches by sport coached within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities?
2. Do differences exist by sport coached among coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities?
3. Do differences exist by gender in coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities?
4. What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low in the positive feedback category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport?
5. What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low in the democratic category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport?

## Research Setting

The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) is an international association of intentionally Christian colleges and universities. Founded in 1976 with 38 members, the Council has grown to 111 members in North American and 70 affiliate institutions in 24 countries. The mission of the CCCU is to advance the cause of Christ-centered education and to help institutions transform lives by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth. The CCCU consists of colleges and universities within the Council are required to meet the following criteria for membership: an institutional commitment to Jesus Christ to all of campus life; integrate biblical faith with academics and student life; have hiring practices that require a personal Christian commitment from all full-time faculty members and administrators; be accredited and primary orientation as a four year liberal arts institution; have fund-raising activities consistent with the standards set by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability; be committed to participating in Council programs; cooperate with and support of other Council institutions; and be financially responsible in its operation ([www.CCCU.org](http://www.CCCU.org)).

## Participants

### *Survey Participants*

Seven hundred and thirty-one head coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) were asked to participate in the study. The coaches represented the following sports: baseball, softball, football, volleyball, women's basketball, men's basketball, women's soccer, men's soccer, men's track and field, and women's track and field.

### *Interview Participants*

Coaches who scored high and low in the democratic and positive feedback categories were contacted and asked to participate in a follow-up interview.

## Data Collection

### *Revised Leadership Scale for Sport*

The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) was used to gather insight into the coaching behaviors of the coaches in the CCCU. The RLSS (Appendix A) is a revision of the Leadership Scale for Sport that was developed by Chelladurai and Saleh in 1980, which

measures training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, social support, and positive feedback leadership behaviors. Additionally, the RLSS measures a sixth leadership behavior area, situational consideration. The RLSS is a Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree – 5=strongly agree) and measures the types of leadership behaviors that coaches perceive themselves as demonstrating. When recording results using the RLSS, subscale scores are summed and averages obtained.

Different participants were involved at each stage in the development of the RLSS. The researchers focused on the addition of items for each of the proposed factors. At first, 18 intercollegiate coaches from different sports were involved in the initial modification. The coaches were interviewed individually for the input of new items. Through the interview process, 240 new items were added to the original 40 items. Secondly, three linguistic experts who were English professors from Massachusetts were involved in the linguistic check process. Although improvements and corrections were made to the items, all of the items were retained. Thirdly, 17 experts in coaching leadership theory from various colleges and universities participated in the test process of content validity. The experts reviewed the items and the standard for accepting an item was set at 70% agreement among the members of the panel. Fourthly, intercollegiate athletes ( $n= 696$ ) in Massachusetts were used in the investigation of construct validity and internal consistency reliability of the initially revised versions of athlete perception and athlete preference. Intercollegiate coaches ( $n= 206$ ) of different sports from New England were used in the investigation of the revision of the coach self-evaluation version. This fourth stage served the purpose of factor analysis and the test of internal consistency.

Over the three versions, 74 items had factor loadings equal to or greater than .40 on a correct factor without double loading (i.e., did not load on more than one factor). A total of 14 items were dropped so that no component had more than 12 items. This led to 60 items being retained. The alpha coefficients for the three versions were significantly greater than .7 with the exception of the autocratic component. In the revision of the LSS to the RLSS, Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997) reported the following internal consistencies when evaluating the coach self-evaluation version of the RLSS:  $\alpha =.93$  for democratic;  $\alpha =.85$  for positive feedback;  $\alpha =.83$  for training and instruction;  $\alpha =.81$  for social support;  $\alpha =.81$  for situational consideration; and  $\alpha$

=.35 for autocratic. The coach self-evaluation version displayed an acceptable alpha level in 5 of the 6 measured coaching behaviors (significantly greater than a standard of  $\alpha = .70$ ).

### Procedures for Data Collection

The researcher obtained permission from the Florida State University Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRBRIHS) to proceed with the study (Appendix C).

The coaches within the CCCU were contacted via an individualized email by the researcher during the fall of 2009 to request their participation in the research study (Appendix D). Approval was obtained from the coach by replying to the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) which was emailed to the coaches. The survey management system from Florida State University's College of Education was used.

Two weeks after the original request, a follow-up email was distributed to coaches who had not responded. Two weeks after the follow-up email, a third request was emailed to the coaches who still had not responded. Each email that was sent was individualized to each coach. After the third round of requests, the researcher was able to obtain a 54% return rate of participants.

After the RLSS was collected and analyzed, interviews with the coaches who scored the highest and lowest for the democratic and positive feedback leadership characteristics were conducted via telephone. The coaches who reported survey scores in the high and low categories of democratic and positive feedback behavior were contacted via email and telephone repeatedly (up to four times) to solicit their willingness to participate and to schedule an interview date and time. The interviews were scheduled at the participant's convenience. The interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed for further analysis.

### Data Analysis

Data were entered into PASW Statistics 18.0 for analysis. Demographic variables and variables used in the analysis were examined with descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, means, and standard deviations. For categorical or nominal data, frequencies and percentages were conducted. Frequency is the number of participants that fit into a certain category and percentage is the percent of the sample that coincides with that category. Means



and standard deviations were carried out on interval/ratio data. The arithmetic mean of the variables is defined as the sum of the scores divided by the number of scores. Standard deviation measures the spread of values in a set of data, otherwise known as the statistical dispersion. If the data points all are valued close to the mean value, then the standard deviation is close to zero and does not deviate much from the norm (Howell, 1992).

*Preliminary Screening.* Prior to conducting the exploratory factor analysis, preliminary screening was conducted in PASW Statistics 18.0 (SPSS Inc., 2010). Data were first screened for missing data. When data are missing at random, accurate parameter estimates can still be computed. Unfortunately, it can be difficult to determine if data are missing at random in practice (Rubin, 1976). However, when the amount of missing data is small (i.e., < 5% of data points), the patterns of missing data are non-consequential (Kline, 2005).

#### *Research Question One*

RQ1: What are the self-reported coaching behaviors of the head coaches by sport coached within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities?

To examine research question one, descriptive statistics were conducted to assess the self-reported coaching behaviors of head coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were reported by gender, sport, and coaching behavior based on the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS).

#### *Research Question Two*

RQ2: Do differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, social support, positive feedback, and situational consideration) by sport (baseball, football, volleyball, softball, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's track, and men's and women's soccer) coached?

H2<sub>o</sub>: No differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration) by sport coached?

H2<sub>a</sub>: Differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration) by sport coached?

To examine research question two, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to assess whether or not differences exist among the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support and situational consideration) by gender (males vs. females).

The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) looks at the mean differences among groups on a combination of dependent variables and determines the likelihood that those differences occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The MANOVA creates a linear combination of the dependent variables in order to create a grand mean on a set of dependent variables to have the ability to assess group differences. In this case, the dependent variable of coaching behavior has six levels (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support and situational consideration). Differences on these scores were compared by the two groups (males vs. females). While multiple ANOVA's could be conducted to analyze the same variables, the use of multiple ANOVA's inflate the type 1 error rate; here, the MANOVA helps control for that inflation.

Secondary analysis consisted of six ANOVA's conducted on each of the six dependent variables (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration) to assess for specific differences among the variables by group.

### *Research Question Three*

RQ3: Do differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support and situational consideration) by gender (male vs. female)?

H3<sub>0</sub>: No differences exist by gender of the coaches of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

H3<sub>a</sub>: Differences exist by gender of the coaches of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

To examine research question three, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to assess whether or not differences exist among the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration) by sport (baseball, football, volleyball, softball, men's and women's

basketball, men's and women's track, and men's and women's soccer). Secondary analysis consisted of six ANOVA's conducted on each of the six dependent variables (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration) to assess for specific differences among the variables by group.

#### *Research Question Four*

RQ4: What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low on the positive feedback category of the RLSS?

To examine research question four, male and female participants who scored highest on the positive feedback behavior category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) were selected for follow-up interview.

#### *Research Question Five*

RQ5: What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low on the democratic category of the RLSS?

To examine research question five, male and female participants who scored highest on the democratic behavior category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) were selected for follow-up interview.

For both research questions four and five, qualitative data analysis was used. Qualitative data analysis began with transcribing the audio-taped interviews into electronic documents. Responses to specific interview questions were sorted and organized so that all participant responses to each question could be viewed together. Because similarities and differences across participants (cross-case analysis) is more important than themes within one interview transcript, responses to each interview question served as the unit of analysis. Using this cross-case method of analysis helped to preserve the uniqueness of each case (Meloy, 1994; Patton, 1992).

An interpretative framework was used to assess the reasons that coaches responded differently to the RLSS. Inductive analysis (codes, categories, and themes) was used to analyze the interview transcripts to gain a greater understanding of the coaches' use of positive feedback and their democratic leadership style (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The strategy of inductive design

was used to allow the important analysis dimensions to emerge from patterns found in the cases under study (Patton, 1992). The researcher looked for patterns, themes, and categories that emerged from the data, to establish connection in the data, and determine the results.

Using constant comparative analysis the researcher looked for recurrent themes or regularities that may become categories for focus throughout the collection and analysis. Multiple techniques that enhance credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability were used to ensure methodological rigor, thus establishing trustworthiness of the inquiry: (a) an audit trail, specifying the steps involved in the methodological procedures followed in the study; (b) cross-checking interviews for consistency to locate negative cases that could challenge emerging themes; (c) a rich description of the site, participants, and procedures; and (d) member-checking, by providing the primary participant with a copy of the manuscript and asking for feedback on content and accuracy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These techniques were used to assess the research for truth, value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

#### *Sample Size, Power and Significance*

In research, it is important to establish a priori the sample size necessary for the statistical analysis with considerations of power, population effect size, and level of significance (Cohen, 1992b). Cohen (1992b) wrote,

Statistical power analysis exploits the relationships among the four variables involved in statistical inference: sample size (N), significance criterion ( $\alpha$ ), population effect size (ES), and statistical power. For any statistical model, these relationships are such that each is a function of the other three. For example, in power reviews, for any given statistical test, we can determine power for given  $\alpha$ , N, and ES. For research planning, however, it is most useful to determine the N necessary to have a specified power for given  $\alpha$  and ES (p. 99).

Determination of an acceptable significance level for determining when to reject the null hypothesis (i.e., the probability of committing a Type I error) is important. The standard values for significance level represented by  $\alpha$  are set at 10%, 5%, and 1% (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2006). An  $\alpha = .05$  corresponds to  $(1 - \alpha) = 0.95$  probability of a correct statistical conclusion when the null hypothesis is true (Lipsey, 1990). A .95 probability is equivalent to a 95%

confidence level to reject  $H_0$  (Aczel & Sounderpandian, 2006). For the purposes of the proposed research, the level  $\alpha = .05$ , the most commonly designated value in social science research for this parameter, will be used for the analysis (Lipsey, 1990).

The power of significance test is the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is false. An acceptable level of power for the proposed study is .80, making the Type II error four times as likely as the Type I error. Since it is typically more serious to make a false positive claim than it is to make a false negative claim, .80 is an acceptable level and will be considered in determining the sample size a priori (Cohen, 1992a).

According to Cohen (1992a), effect sizes for an ANOVA are small if they are .10, medium if they are .25, and large if they are .40. In choosing an effect size, researchers decide how small a difference they are willing to accept and still find the results worthwhile. To allow a very small effect size, a large sample is required, and to allow a large effect size, a small sample size is required. The power of a test is proportionate to the sample size with greater power from a larger effect size. A medium effect size is appropriate for the proposed study and was used in the determination of the sample size (Cohen, 1992a).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership behaviors of coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities using the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport. A secondary purpose was to gain greater insight into the democratic and positive feedback leadership behaviors of male and female coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. The purpose of this chapter is to report the results of this study.

#### Participants

##### *Survey Participants*

The 731 head coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) that were asked to participate in the study represented the following sports: baseball, softball, football, volleyball, women's basketball, men's basketball, women's soccer, men's soccer, men's track and field, and women's track and field. Three hundred and ninety-six individuals participated in the study, a return rate of 54%. Of the three hundred and ninety-six individuals who participated in the study; 320 (81%) were males and 76 (20%) were females. Frequencies and percentages for the sport coached are presented in Table 1. Frequencies and percentages for years of coaching experience are presented in Table 2. All of the sports, including women's sports teams, contained a higher percentage of male coaches than female coaches, with one exception. Two coaches of women's track, a male and a female, responded to the survey. A total of 146 male coaches coached female athletes while all the responding female coaches ( $n=76$ ) coached female athletes. In regard to years of coaching experience, 58% of the coaches had ten or less years of coaching experience.

Table 1. *Frequencies and Percentages for Sport Coached*

Sport	Frequency	Percent
Baseball	55	13.6
Football	23	5.7
Soccer	96	24.0
Track and Field	38	9.4
Basketball	91	22.8
Softball	39	9.9
Volleyball	58	14.6

Table 2. *Frequencies and Percentages for Years of Coaching Experience*

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
Not Answered	44	9.9
1-5 years	158	35.4
6-10 years	99	22.2
11-15 years	51	11.4
16-20 years	42	9.4
21 or more	52	11.7

### *Interview Participants*

Coaches who scored high and low in the democratic and positive feedback categories were contacted and asked to participate in a follow-up interview. The coaches that did not

respond to the initial request for an interview were contacted again (up to four times). A total of fifteen coaches (6 male and 9 female), who scored the highest and lowest on the democratic and positive feedback behavior categories agreed to a follow up interview. Pseudonyms were used for the names of the coaches in the study.

### *Screening*

All variables were screened for missing data. Preliminary screening was also conducted in PASW Statistics 18.0 (SPSS Inc., 2010). Of the original 446 cases, there were 38 with no data on the RLSS. An additional twelve participants did not complete all items (i.e., they stopped partway through). Missing data on these twelve participants are therefore not missing at random (Rubin, 1976). The remaining 396 cases contained a very small amount of missing data points that were missing at random (<.01%).

### *Exploratory Factor Analysis*

The RLSS is a pre-established, multidimensional measure that includes 60 items, loading on 6 factors. However, due to the uniqueness of the sample population (i.e., athletic coaches at Christian colleges and universities) an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted on 350 participant-responses to attempt to replicate the factor structure of this survey. That is, the EFA was conducted to determine if the RLSS subscale items in the model proposed by Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997)—democratic, autocratic, situational consideration, social support, positive feedback, and training and instruction—were supported by the responses of the coaches in the CCCU.

Additionally, a random sample of 46 participants were selected as a hold-out sample to compute the Cronbach alpha's for the factors obtained from the exploratory factor analysis conducted with 350 participants. The Cronbach's alphas of both samples (EFA sample  $n=350$ , hold-out sample  $n=46$ ) were compared to see if the hold-out sample alphas were similar to the EFA sample alphas.

The purpose of having 350 respondents in the factor analysis and 46 respondents in the hold out sample was to allow for as many respondents as possible for the factor analysis. Ideally, you want to have a large enough sample so that you have 10 respondents per item (Costello &



Osborne, 2005). The current factor analysis included 36 items, therefore 360 respondents should be used in the factor analysis. In an effort to have a large enough hold out sample to effectively compute alphas, but still keep the factor analysis sample as large as possible, a hold out sample of 46 was chosen which resulted in 350 respondents in the factor analysis.

The items of the RLSS were examined through a preliminary Exploratory Factor Analysis, using Principal Component Factor Analysis with varimax rotation, to extract six factors. The results were examined for the extent to which items loaded on each of the leadership subscale behaviors proposed for the athletic coaches' survey. The reason for using the varimax rotation was to maximize the variance of the loadings and to minimize cross loadings of items that may load on more than one factor. This option also allows for the excluding of items. Items were eliminated that did not have factor loadings above .375 to maintain as many items as possible. The following items were removed from each component: Democratic (items 25 and 51), Positive Feedback (items 31, 18, and 56), Situational Consideration (items 5, 11, 32, 24, 43, and 60), Social Support (items 48 and 58), Training and Instruction (items 3, 12, 22, 37, 39, and 27), Autocratic (items 21, 28, 40, and 59). After removing the items, a second Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted using Principal Component Factor Analysis with varimax rotation. Following the theoretical subscales proposed by Zhang, Jensen, and Mann (1997) (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support, and situational consideration), a fixed six-factor solution was selected. The factor loadings for leadership behaviors of the RLSS are presented in Table 3. Table 3 displays the factor loadings for the retained items of the RLSS. The democratic, positive feedback, social support, and training and instruction components demonstrated stronger internal reliability than the autocratic and situational consideration components. Many of the stronger and consistent items in these four components displayed items with strong factor loadings within each of its components and did not cross-load with other components.

Table 3. *Summary of Subscales and Survey Items for the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport*

<i>Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS)</i>		
Item #	Components/Survey Items	Factor Loading
<b>1: Positive Feedback- 9 items (n= 350 <math>\alpha</math> =.85, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.84 )</b>		
31	I express appreciation to my players	.828
20	I congratulate a player after a good play	.782
29	I tell an athlete good job	.772
49	I compliment good performances	.652
53	I give credit when it is due	.645
52	I clap hands when an athlete does well	.567
42	I praise good performance	.566
41	I encourage an athlete after a mistake	.472
45	I recognize individual contributions	.420
<b>2: Democratic- 10 items (n=350 <math>\alpha</math> =.83, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.70)</b>		
55	I ask the opinion of athletes on important decisions	.755
7	I ask the opinion of athletes on strategy	.737
57	I let athletes help with policy formulation	.733
9	I encourage athletes to make suggestions	.659
30	I get approval from athletes	.634
50	I give athletes freedom	.571
47	I let athletes decide on plays	.544
4	I utilize suggestions of team members	.513
13	I let athletes try their own way	.388
14	I see the merits of athletes' ideas	.376
<b>3: Training and Instruction-5 items (n=350 <math>\alpha</math> =.70, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.71)</b>		
38	I clarify training priorities	.698
8	I clarify goals for athletes	.637
34	I prescribe the methods to be followed	.623
19	I explain technique to each athlete	.613
23	I stress the mastery of greater skills	.486
<b>4: Social Support- 6 items (n=350 <math>\alpha</math> =.70, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.71)</b>		
54	I help athletes with personal problems	.725
2	I encourage close relationships with my athletes	.581
17	I am interested in the well-being of team members	.547

Table 3 Continued.

<i>Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS)</i>		
Item #	Components/Survey Items	Factor Loading
33	I encourage athletes to confide in me	.522
26	I look out for the personal welfare of my athletes	.507
16	I remain sensitive to the needs of my athletes	.364
<b>5: Autocratic- 3 items (n=350 <math>\alpha</math>=.48, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.44 )</b>		
6	I disregard athletes' fears and dissatisfactions	.658
35	I dislike suggestions from athletes	.616
46	I present ideas forcefully	.582
<b>6: Situational Consideration- 3 items (n=350 <math>\alpha</math>=.35, n=46 <math>\alpha</math>=.32)</b>		
10	I adapt my coaching style to fit situation	.587
1	I coach to the level of my athletes	.541
44	I assign tasks to others	.461

Table 3 displays the factor loadings for the retained items of the RLSS. The democratic, positive feedback, social support, and training and instruction components demonstrated stronger internal reliability than the autocratic and situational consideration components. Many of the stronger and consistent items in these four components displayed items with strong factor loadings within each of its components and did not cross-load with other components.

#### *Scale Reliabilities*

Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency were conducted on each of the survey subscales: democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, situational consideration, social support, and autocratic (Table 4). Also known as the coefficient alpha, the Cronbach's alpha provides the mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items in a scale (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar, 2006). George and Mallery (2003) suggested the following rules of thumb for evaluating alpha coefficients, "> .9 Excellent, > .8 Good, > .7 Acceptable, > .6 Questionable, > .5 Poor, < .5 Unacceptable." Nunnally (1994) and Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommend a cut-off level of .7 when evaluating alpha coefficients.

Table 4. *Cronbach's Alphas on Research Variables*

Research Variables		Cronbach's $\alpha$	Number of Items
Democratic	(n=350)	.83	10
	(n=46)	.70	
Positive Feedback	(n=350)	.84	9
	(n=46)	.85	
Training/Instruction	(n=350)	.70	5
	(n=46)	.71	
Social Support	(n=350)	.70	6
	(n=46)	.71	
Autocratic	(n=350)	.48	3
	(n=46)	.44	
Situational Consideration	(n=350)	.35	3
	(n=46)	.32	

The 396 participants in the study were divided into two groups. One group consisted of a sample of 350 and was used for the Exploratory Factor Analysis. The second group was a hold-out sample of 46. The results of the Cronbach alphas for both samples and the number of items retained in the scale are listed in table 4. As seen in table 4, the autocratic and situational consideration components resulted in unacceptable alpha levels while the other four components (democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support) resulted in acceptable alpha levels. Due to the unacceptable levels in the autocratic and situational consideration components it was determined that those two components would not be analyzed in the ANOVAs of this study and that the results of the study would focus on the following

components: democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support. Although the situational consideration component has tested acceptable in past studies (Jambor & Zhang, 1997). The elimination of the autocratic dimension must be considered in future studies because of its consistent showing of low alpha levels (Beam, Serwatka, & Wilson, 2004; Riemer & Toon, 2001; Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997).

### *Quantitative Data: Coaching Behaviors by Sport Coached and Gender*

The coaching behaviors of the head coaches in the study were analyzed by sport coached and gender.

#### *Research Question 1*

RQ1: What are the self-reported coaching behaviors (democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support) of the head coaches by sport coached within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities?

Table 5 displays the means and standard deviations of the self-reported coaching behaviors by sport coached. The results showed that softball ( $n=39$ ) coaches perceived themselves as exhibiting higher rates of positive feedback and training and instruction behaviors to their athletes and lower rates of democratic, and social support behavior.

Track and field ( $n=38$ ) coaches exhibited higher rates of positive feedback and training and instruction behaviors to their athletes and lower rates of democratic, and social support behavior.

Volleyball coaches ( $n=58$ ) exhibited high rates of training and instruction and positive feedback while showing lower rates of social support and democratic behavior.

The football coaches ( $n= 23$ ) scored highest among the coaches for ‘training and instruction’ and ‘social support’ and lowest in ‘democratic’ behavior.

The baseball coaches ( $n=55$ ) exhibited higher rates of training and instruction, and positive feedback behavior and lower rates of democratic behavior.

The soccer coaches ( $n=96$ ) exhibited high rates of training and instruction and positive feedback and lower rates of social support and democratic behavior.

The basketball coaches ( $n=91$ ) exhibited high rates of training and instruction and positive feedback and lower rates of democratic and social support behavior.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations of Coaching Behaviors by Sport

Coaching Behavior	Sport													
	Baseball		Football		Soccer		Track Field		Basketball		Softball		Volleyball	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Democratic Behavior	2.64	0.54	2.50	0.58	2.81	0.52	2.90	0.49	2.64	0.50	2.78	0.53	2.72	0.44
Positive Feedback Behavior	4.04	0.44	4.12	0.56	3.96	0.44	4.31	0.46	4.07	0.44	4.28	0.39	3.99	0.53
Training/ Instruction	3.95	0.50	4.29	0.48	3.97	0.45	4.23	0.42	3.99	0.44	4.07	0.36	4.02	0.46
Social Support Behavior	4.28	.042	4.42	0.53	4.11	0.52	4.26	0.51	4.25	0.42	4.34	0.35	4.08	0.50

### *Research Question Two*

RQ2: Do differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (training and instruction, democratic, social support, and positive feedback) by sport (baseball, football, volleyball, softball, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's track, and men's and women's soccer) coached?

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to assess whether or not differences exist among the six coaching behaviors (democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support by sport (baseball, football, soccer, track and field, basketball, softball, volleyball). One-sample KS tests were conducted for each coaching behavior by sport, many of the KS test were significant suggesting that the assumption of normality was violated; however, Stevens (2002) states "that non-normality has only a slight effect on the Type I error rate, even for vary skewed distributions...the  $F$  statistic is robust with the respect to the normality assumption". Levene's test of equality of error variances was not significant for any of the coaching behaviors, suggesting the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met. The results of the MANOVA were significant suggesting simultaneous differences exist on the six coaching behaviors by sport and that the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 6 presents the results of four ANOVA's, one for each coaching behavior by sport.



Table 6. ANOVA Results of Coaching Behaviors by Sport

	Sport														F	p
	Baseball		Football		Soccer		Track & Field		Basketball		Softball		Volleyball			
Coaching Behavior	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Democratic Behavior	2.64	.54	2.50	.58	2.81	.52	2.90	.49	2.64	.50	2.78	.53	2.72	.44	2.99	.007
Positive Feedback Behavior	4.04	0.44	4.12	0.56	3.96	0.44	4.31	0.46	4.07	0.44	4.28	0.39	3.99	0.53	4.59	.001
Training/ Instruction	3.95	0.50	4.29	0.48	3.97	0.45	4.23	0.42	3.99	0.44	4.07	0.36	4.02	0.46	3.04	.006
Social Support Behavior	4.28	0.42	4.42	0.53	4.11	0.52	4.26	0.51	4.25	0.42	4.34	0.35	4.08	0.50	2.32	.032

### *Research Question Three*

RQ3: Do differences exist on the six coaching behaviors (autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, social support and situational consideration) by gender (male vs. female)?

To examine research question three, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to assess whether or not differences exist among the four coaching behaviors (democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support) by gender (males vs. females). The results of the MANOVA was not significant suggesting differences do not exist on the six coaching behaviors by gender and that the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 7. *Means and Standard Deviations for Coaching Behavior by Gender*

	Gender			
	Male		Female	
Coaching Behavior	M	SD	M	SD
Democratic Behavior	2.73	0.53	2.73	0.42
Positive Feedback Behavior	4.07	0.46	4.06	0.45
Training/ Instruction	4.03	0.46	4.02	0.42
Social Support Behavior	4.22	0.47	4.23	0.42

### *Qualitative Results From Conducted Interviews*

Interviews were conducted for research questions four and five to examine the positive feedback and democratic coaching behaviors of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). An introductory question that was asked to the participating coaches was, “What are your priorities as a person and a coach?”

Three of the fifteen coaches interviewed stressed the importance of putting God first in their lives. Donna, a softball coach stressed the following:

“The spiritual aspect of my life is very important to me. Jesus is my savior so that probably dictates a lot of the things I do in my life.”

The importance of God first in their life was also emphasized by Casey, a women’s basketball coach:

“These parts are very interrelated, as a coach and as a person both, I try to glorify God in all that I do and I think that comes first and foremost in everything I do. And then as a team you want to do your best, and you want to be successful, and I guess those are the things that I try to hang my hat on.”

Amy, a volleyball coach, also emphasized the importance of glorifying God and having her team grow both physically and spiritually:

“We are a Christian institution so my goal for my girls is for maximum growth in a Christian framework. My motivation is to coach in a way that is glorifying God with the gifts he has given us and for the girls to understand how that looks personally to them.”

It can be seen from these three coaches that they emphasize putting God first in their lives and their coaching and having their players grow spiritually during their time together. The other coaches stressed the importance of striving for excellence and having a strong work ethic.

The following sections summarize the information gathered from the interviews that focused on the positive feedback and democratic coaching behaviors.

#### *Research Question Four*

To examine research question four, male and female participants who scored highest on the positive feedback behavior category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) were selected for follow-up interview. Five coaches who scored high on the positive feedback behavior category agreed to be interviewed: Dori, Amy, Randy, Casey, and Alleen.

Dori is a softball coach in Michigan and has been coaching for over twenty-five years. She started her career coaching volleyball and has been the head softball coach for the last 18 years. Dori is not married and has a great passion for helping her athletes feel part of the team family, an atmosphere she promotes within her teams.

Amy is a volleyball coach in Kansas and has been a head coach for 12 years. She feels that she has great knowledge of the game which she credits to learning from other coaches around her.

Randy is a men's basketball coach in Illinois and is in his first year as a head coach on the college level. He has 13 years of coaching experience in various capacities on the high school level and has also served as an assistant principal on the high school level. Randy credits his coaching philosophy and strengths to the coaching he received as a player on both the high school and college levels.

Casey is a women's basketball coach in Iowa. He is in his fourth season as a head coach on the college level and previously coached 17 years on the high school level in a number of different sports. Casey was also a men's soccer coach on the college level prior to his time leading the women's basketball program.

Alleen is a softball coach in Mississippi. She has coached softball on the college level for the last 33 years. During the researcher's interview with Alleen many of her softball players stopped by her office with questions and to talk with her.

Only one coach, Don, who scored low on the positive feedback behavior category, agreed to be interviewed. He has coached males on the high school level for twenty-one years in a variety of sports. He currently coaches both the men's and women's soccer team on the college level in North Carolina and has held this position for two years.

Positive feedback is the coaching behavior that reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995). This can be done by a coach telling an athlete 'good job' or by working with the athlete so that he or she understands the proper way to conduct a skill with the hope that the skill will continue to be performed in the correct manner. Interviews with the coaches concerning their use of positive feedback resulted in two themes emerging: correcting mistakes and team-building.

#### *Correcting Mistakes*

Correcting mistakes of players is important in coaching because it allows the coach to continually encourage players to perform at an adequate level or to improve the performance of the athlete. Mistakes by athletes can be corrected if proper feedback is given from coach to

athlete. If a fundamental skill is not being executed properly by a player the coach must correct the mistake so that the player can improve. Feedback should be a focus of coaches and it should be something that is deliberate and done routinely. Alleen, a female softball coach who scored high (4.58) on the positive feedback category, summarized her positive feedback behavior as follows:

“I give feedback on every play and every at bat. If they get out and it’s still a good swing, or a good decision, or they swung at the right time, I give feedback right then and there. If they have been struggling because they have been swinging at really bad pitches and they still got out but they hit a hard ground ball to shortstop I give feedback right then.”

Randy, a male men’s basketball coach who scored 4.33 on the positive feedback category also sees the importance of giving feedback to his players on a regular basis:

“Well, I feel feedback both positive and negative is needed all of the time. Players need to know where they stand and also what they need to do to improve or reach excellence. We don’t have the kids watch tape with us, but our student assistants chart a lot of things and then they give feedback to the players. We also post notes after games on what we did good and what we need to do different. So, that seems to work the best in regard to communicating with them.

Don, a male men’s and women’s soccer coach who had one of the lowest scores on the positive feedback category, did not feel that it was important to continually offer positive feedback to his athletes, especially as it relates to how players perceive their standing on the depth chart and what they need to do to improve their athletic performance:

“I probably don’t do a very good job of that. I think I make an assumption that they can see where they stand and what they are supposed to be doing on the college level. I think it is just my personality which isn’t an excuse. I just don’t need a lot of pats on my back to do my job so I don’t pass that on to them too and I think that if you are going to give positive feedback it needs to be legit, you can’t just say something to say it. And sometimes I need to search to find something positive so I just keep my mouth shut and sometimes people take that the wrong way.

## *Team Building*

Working together as a team is an important concept for both players and coaches. Some teams naturally get along with one another on and off the playing field or court while other teams may not be as efficient in their play because of struggles with team unity. On the college level teams are often made up of highly talented players from different backgrounds and parts of the world. A coach is often the person responsible for getting the players to develop into a unit and move in a positive direction. Some players may be selfish and not see the importance of being a team player and this can be detrimental for the team as a whole.

When asked about their use of positive feedback, the coaches talked of their use of positive feedback as a way to build team unity. When referring to how he uses feedback to encourage players who might not buy into his coaching to see the importance of understanding their role on the team so that they can improve individually and as a team, Casey, a male women's basketball coach said::

“If a player doesn't buy in to our program, I try to make them leaders. I try to make sure that they understand that they can always improve and that they can always get better and mature.”

Dori, a softball coach who scored 4.75 in the positive feedback category, focuses on pre-season team activities for her team to build up team unity:

“My parents own a farm about two hours from campus. I take the team out there each fall and we do team-building activities as a group. We play all sorts of games and it is a great way for the new players to get to know the upperclassmen. It is something that we have done over the years and it is a lot of fun and it brings everyone closer together off of the field.”

Amy, a volleyball coach who scored 4.75 in the positive feedback category, also emphasized the importance of her team working together:

“Team chemistry is probably the number one strength of our team. That is something I really enjoy and something we spend time on whether it is getting together as a team before and during the season or as we work together in service projects as a team so that

the players realize that working together is important. The players see that I am passionate about team chemistry and I provide that feedback to them too.”

It is important for coaches to provide feedback to their players. Two ways this is done is by correcting the mistakes of their players in order to improve overall performance and by building team unity. The coaches who scored high on positive feedback in the RLSS emphasized the importance of giving continual feedback to their athletes during participation. These coaches also saw the importance of athletes working together as a team to move in a positive direction. One aspect of positive feedback is seen by Alleen who tries to give feedback to her players on each play. On the contrary, Don, the coach who scored low on this category, realized that he needed to improve in this area. He spoke of often assuming that his players understood what they do well or on what they need to improve so he rarely gave them the appropriate feedback they need to improve.

#### *Research Question Five*

To examine research question five, male and female participants who scored highest and the lowest on the democratic behavior category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) were selected for follow-up interview. Participant responses to interview questions were examined for themes, and coded and categorized for reporting.

The male and female coaches who scored the highest and lowest on the democratic behavior category of the RLSS were asked to participate in a follow-up interview. Five coaches who scored high in the democratic behavior category agreed to participate in an interview. Two of the four coaches who scored high in the democratic behavior category also scored high in the positive feedback category (Dori and Casey). Three other coaches agreed to participate; Anna, Rick and Chris. Rick is a softball coach from Minnesota and has coached on the college level for 20 years. Anna is a volleyball coach in Oklahoma and is currently in her third year of coaching on the college level. Chris is a men’s and women’s track coach from Washington. Two coaches who scored low in the democratic behavior category agreed to interview; John and Don. Don also scored low in the positive feedback category.

Democratic coaching behavior allows greater athlete participation in decisions pertaining to group goals, practice methods, and game tactics and strategies (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995).

Two themes emerged from the interviews related to democratic leadership characteristics: player communication and gender differences. Communication with their players was evident by the coaches who were interviewed that scored high in the democratic dimension of the RLSS. Communication may exist between player and coach in a number of ways. One example of this would be a player and a coach discussing with one another the type of strategy that their team should employ against an upcoming opponent. Another example would be a player and coach communicating with one another on how a player ranks on a depth chart in regard to playing time. A democratic leader seeks communication between themselves and their players as opposed to an autocratic leader who would prefer to make individual decisions regarding the team. Democratic leaders also see the importance of female athletes benefitting from their democratic styles. All of the coaches interviewed coached female athletes and they stressed the importance of communicating their thoughts and intentions with their female athletes.

#### *Player Communication*

Coaches have the opportunity to communicate with their players in a number of different ways. The coaches that reported higher scores in the democratic category of the RLSS saw the importance of team and individual meetings with their players and having an open door policy with them so that they were available to their players if they had questions or concerns. The following coaches who scored high in the democratic area of the RLSS described how they interacted, communicated, or worked with their athletes. Dori, a female softball coach gave the following examples of how her democratic behavior is shown in her coaching:

“Since I haven’t found mister right yet..... my players are very important to me. I try to sit down with each of them and have lunch or breakfast with them so that I know about them and so that is very rewarding to me. My door is always open, I am here all the time. I have been here since 5 o’clock this morning so I hope they see me as approachable. I hope they see me as someone that cares about them. It is a constant battle to work with communication because again as a coach you have the power but I hope my communication is effective because I always tell my players that if they don’t understand something to ask me.”



Anna, a volleyball coach, is in her third year as a head volleyball coach. She played on the Division I level and wants to be honest with all of her players. She shared how she and her coaching staff communicates with the athletes:

“I have an open door policy, if you have questions you can come in and talk about it. We’ll be straight up with them.”

An open door policy is common for coaches that exhibit high amounts of democratic coaching behavior. This allows for players to have a welcomed opportunity for further communication with their coaches.

Erin, a softball coach, has learned the importance of communication based on her past experiences as a player with her coaches. Erin experienced very little communication between herself and her coach on the college level. This experience gave Erin an opportunity to learn from that experience and openly give communication to her athletes.

“I think that was what was the most frustrating for me early on in my college career was just not understanding why, why this was happening or what was going on because our coach never, never talked to us. He talked to us once a year, you know, and it was basically what you already knew and there was no talking back or discussion or anything like that.”

Erin went on to explain how she has learned from that experience:

“I try to explain to my players where they stand on all issues. I don’t want them to be left out in the dark and they don’t like surprises and neither do I.”

John, a football coach from Oklahoma, scored low in the democratic area of the RLSS. John was the only football coach that agreed to participate in an interview. He does not see himself as a democratic coach because of the large number of athletes on his team. He cannot get feedback from each player in regard to practice or game strategy because of this large number. John describes why a democratic style would not work for him as a football coach:

“In football we are working with over one hundred athletes. As coaches we need to make the decisions for the group. We can get small amounts of feedback, but I will get more feedback from my assistant coaches than I will from my players.”

Don, a men's and women's soccer coach who scored low on the democratic category, describes how he needs to improve in the area of communication:

“I don't communicate a lot with my players. I mean I try to, but it's just not the approach I take. Players are welcome to come talk to me about playing time and their standing on the depth chart but I don't contact them on where they stand, but I probably should do more of that.”

Don's approach to communication is that he does not initiate communication with his players. He would rather have them come to him instead of him initiating the talk.

### *Gender Differences*

Research has shown that female athletes desire a democratic leader (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Erle, 1981; Beam, Serwatka & Wilson, 2004; Peng, 1997; Terry, 1984). Athlete participation in decision making and interaction between coach and player is an important aspect of democratic leadership behavior. Many of the coaches in the study were coaches of female athletes and it is important for them to understand that their athletes desire a democratic leader. Dori explained how her interaction with her players is very important as she works with her softball players and also how female athletes differ from male athletes:

“Women are all about relationships and guys are about winning. Women do want to win but they don't want to lose the relationship to do it. Actually, if you have a great program or a great group of girls when they can do both they can have great relationships and be successful at the same time.”

Rick, a softball coach who has also coached male athletes in the past, also saw the importance of democratic leadership when working with female athletes:

“I coach women and this can be different than with guys, but I need to communicate with them as much as possible. I need to be honest all of the time whether they like what I say or not. We have a great staff and we share ideas with one another a lot and our athletic director promotes that type of environment too.”

The same was echoed by Chris, a men's and women's track and field coach who is in his third year as a college coach and spent considerable time as a high school coach:

“With women especially, I see them responding well to my democratic style. I think that they respond to my style more positively and I probably tend to be more democratic in my approach with college athletes than I was with athletes in high school. I feel that if athletes have more ownership or input into what we are doing it becomes more rewarding for them. If they ever have questions or want to discuss anything with me my door is always open.”

A similar thought was shared by Don, who expressed the challenge he has as a coach of both male and female soccer players. He went on to explain how communication with his female athletes is an important aspect of having a proper relationship with his players. Don scored in the lower level of coaches in the democratic behavior:

“There is absolutely no doubt, that communication has been the biggest challenge for me as I have now coached women for two seasons where as in the past I had only coached men for 21 seasons. Communication seems to be the biggest challenge or problem I have had. Guys just seem to want to be led, they don’t quite need to have that social relationship with their coach. They can just go out and do things. The girls want to have this sense that the coach and relationships go well beyond the game of soccer. It’s not that the guys don’t want that, they just go whether or not they get it or not. The women want to feel that sense of a social connection with you and that has definitely been a struggle for me because we have had several conversations here in my office with players and such just because of communication problems. But, there are some girls that I do communicate with more than others and I will go to them for input but usually those girls will just say no she’s being ridiculous and it isn’t nothing.”

The coaches of female athletes saw the importance of demonstrating a democratic leadership behavior. This was evident in the responses of the coaches who scored both high and low on the democratic category. Communication was an area of importance for coaches that scored high on the democratic area. Communication between player and coach can take place in regard to game and practice strategy or on how a player ranks on a depth chart. Coaches of female athletes expressed their understanding of female athlete’s need for communication and for having a social connection to their respective coach. This was seen by coaches who coached

female athletes (Dori) and also coaches who coached both male and female athletes (Don and Chris).

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership behaviors of coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities using the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport. A secondary purpose was to gain greater insight into the democratic and positive feedback leadership behaviors of male and female coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. This chapter provides a discussion of conclusions drawn from the results and recommendations for future research will also be suggested.

Other areas of inquiry important to this study involve examining the following aspects of the coaches within the CCCU. For instance, will the coaches within the CCCU score high on the social support behavior on the RLSS? It can be assumed that coaches in the CCCU are Christians and possess Christian traits such as love and compassion, which might be exhibited in social support which focuses on the concern and welfare of the athletes. An additional area of inquiry involves the notion that coaches in the CCCU may respond similarly to coaches that are non-Christian.

Three hundred and ninety-six individuals participated in the study; 320 (80.5%) males and 76 (19.5%) females, a return rate of 54%. All of the sports, except women's track, contained a higher percentage of male coaches than female coaches. Two coaches of women's track, a male and a female, responded to the survey. A total of 146 male coaches coached female athletes while all of the responding female coaches (n=78) coached female athletes which is important because female athletes desire different types of leadership behaviors than male athletes. The subjects in this study were relatively inexperienced (58% had ten years or less experience) which may infer that they are still learning what their most effective leadership behaviors are.

The population researched in this study was coaches in the CCCU. Coaches in the CCCU are required to self-identify as Christian in order to be employed. Therefore, it was assumed by the researcher that the coaches involved in the study are Christian. The Christian faith involves high character and many of the athletic departments of institutions within the

CCCU expect their coaches to not only develop their athletes physically, but to also develop them spiritually.

The interviews of the coaches who scored high and low in the positive feedback and democratic areas of the RLSS provided valuable insight into the significance of this study. Not only did they provide perspectives on their coaching behaviors, they also expanded on what their priorities were as a coach and as a person. It was made evident by the responses of three coaches that they saw the importance of putting God before their work. They considered having a role in their players' spiritual growth an important aspect of their job as a coach at their respective institution.

It is also important to note that out of the 15 coaches that were interviewed, only Donna, Casey, and Amy stressed the importance of putting God first in their life and having their players grow spiritually. The other coaches focused more on striving for excellence within their coaching and having a strong work ethic as one of their main priorities. It is reasonable to have expected the coaches to discuss God as a priority in everything they do, perhaps they interpreted the question to be related to attaining the physical or skill development of their players or perhaps the coach simply did not feel comfortable sharing her or his faith with the researcher.

The coaches that reinforced the importance of putting God first may not have scored significantly different from the coaches that did not refer to their faith or God in the interview. It cannot be assumed that the latter coaches are not Christians or do not have a relationship with God. Rather, it provides an interesting aspect to this study because it shows that coaches who coach at a CCCU institution may exhibit coaching behaviors that are similar to coaches that may be Christian, but work at a secular institution. It may be difficult to distinguish priorities of coaches by just looking at the scores of the RLSS. One reason may be that coaches who are Christian teach technical and tactical skills in their sport the same way as an atheist or a Christian at a secular institution. The difference in their coaching behaviors may be evident instead by the attention they give to having their players grow spiritually by leading in prayer before games or in team devotions throughout an athletic season. Therefore, certain coaching behaviors of the RLSS may be answered similarly by both coaches at Christian and secular institutions. Examples of this would be training and instruction, democratic, and autocratic behaviors. These behaviors

can be demonstrated by coaches from all faith backgrounds and institutions. Also, the area of social support may also be similar among coaches from different types of institutions because a coach can still show love and compassion whether they have a Christian faith or not.

The study focused on five research questions: 1) What are the self-reported coaching behaviors of the head coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities? 2) Do male and female head coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities differ in their self-reported coaching behaviors? 3) Do differences exist between sports coached among coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities? 4) What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low in the positive feedback category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport? 5) What are the leadership perspectives of the coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities who scored high and low in the democratic category of the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport?

The RLSS was tested for reliability and internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency on each of the survey subscales: democratic, positive feedback, training and instruction, situational consideration, social support, and autocratic. The sample of coaches was analyzed using a hold-out sample to support the testing of the factor structure for the survey. One sample consisted of 350 coaches and the hold-out sample consisted of 46 coaches. Also known as the coefficient alpha, the Cronbach's alpha provides the mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items in a scale (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar, 2006). George and Mallery (2003) suggest the following rules of thumb for evaluating alpha coefficients, "> .9 Excellent, > .8 Good, > .7 Acceptable, > .6 Questionable, > .5 Poor, < .5 Unacceptable." The autocratic behavior component demonstrated a low Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha = .48$ ) and was therefore not used in the analysis. These results were consistent with previous research (Beam, Serwatka, & Wilson, 2004; Zhang, Jensen, & Mann, 1997; Sherman, Fuller, & Speed, 2000; Liukkonen & Salminen, 1996). Since little research has been done to examine the quality of this subscale, more attention needs to be given to how beneficial this component is. For example, which items need to be revised to produce acceptable reliability scores. The situational consideration component ( $\alpha = .35$ ) was also not used in the analysis. This low alpha

score is not consistent with past research, thus further analysis of the coaches in the CCCU from a qualitative standpoint is recommended concerning this component of the RLSS. The interviews in this study did not provide any additional information on the situational consideration component because the questions centered on the democratic and positive feedback components of the RLSS.

Many items in the RLSS were eliminated in the exploratory factor analysis due to poor factor loadings. One reason why items in the RLSS may load poorly in this study is perhaps the uniqueness of the participants in this study. Since it is reasonable to assume that the coaches involved in the study are Christian—since they coach at Christian institutions and are asked about their beliefs when they are hired— perhaps it is possible that they viewed the questions differently than coaches in secular settings. This assumption can be directed at all of the components of the RLSS since items were removed across all of the subscales. Further research should be aimed at the coaches in the CCCU from a qualitative standpoint to further understand how they interpreted the items of the RLSS which led to the poor loading of the items, especially in the autocratic and situational consideration components. For example, some coaches may feel that they do not want to be portrayed as an autocratic coach because they may have falsely identified an autocratic type of leadership as one that does not show care or concern for the player. Other coaches may interpret the autocratic dimension correctly, but still misunderstand the items in the autocratic dimension. Follow up questions that focus on how they do or do not understand the items associated with the autocratic component of the RLSS would give a clearer picture of that component and what needs to be changed to strengthen the items. In this study the situational consideration component also demonstrated poor reliability. Follow up questions could be given to coaches to gain a further understanding of how they interpreted the items in the situational consideration component of the RLSS.

The results showed that softball ( $n=39$ ) and track and field ( $n=38$ ) coaches perceived themselves as giving the highest rates of positive feedback to their athletes. This is important for these coaches because their teams have female athletes. Hastie (1993) found that female athletes prefer positive feedback from their coaches more than any other coaching behavior of the RLSS.



Sherman, Fuller, and Speed (2000) also found that female athletes aged 18-35 desired positive feedback in their coaches more so than any of the other coaching behaviors when using the LSS.

Track and field and volleyball coaches exhibited the highest rates of democratic behavior in their coaching. The volleyball and track teams in this study consisted of female athletes, which is good news because past research has shown that females desire democratic leaders (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Erle, 1981; Beam, Serwatka & Wilson, 2004; Peng, 1997; Terry, 1984). If these coaches can continue to offer democratic leadership to their players it will allow them to meet the desired preference of female athletes if they are similar to past research involving the preference of coaching behavior by female athletes.

The football coaches ( $n=23$ ) scored highest among the coaches for training and instruction and social support and lowest on democratic behavior. The low score is consistent with the qualitative results from John, the football coach that agreed to a follow-up interview. John explained that a democratic form of leadership would not work for him as a football coach because he is in charge of a large number of players and that he needs to make decisions for the whole group instead of getting input from the players in regard to practice or game strategy. Football teams often have rosters of 80-100 players. 'Social support' refers to a coaching behavior that shows concern for the welfare of individual athletes and promotes positive group atmosphere and warm interpersonal relations with members (Reimer & Chelladurai, 1995). The high score on social support is surprising due to the large number of athletes that the football coaches are leading and the difficulty of reaching out to all of the athletes in an individual manner, but it does support past research by Garland and Barry (1988) who found that college football players perceived their coaches to emphasize more training and instruction, social support, and positive feedback.

The baseball coaches ( $n=55$ ) perceived themselves as exhibiting higher rates of training and instruction, and positive feedback behavior and lower rates of democratic behavior.

The basketball coaches ( $n=91$ ) perceived themselves as exhibiting high rates of training and instruction and positive feedback and lower rates of democratic and social support behavior. Training and instruction behaviors are important for basketball coaches because past research

done by Chelladurai and Carron (1983) found college level basketball players preferred training and instruction more than junior high or high school players.

#### *Coaching Behavior by Gender*

The study also focused on the difference between male and female coaches and sport coached in the CCCU in regard to their leadership behaviors. Three hundred twenty male coaches and seventy-six female coaches took part in the study.

When comparing female and male coaches in regard to their democratic behavior, both reported a mean of 2.73. Other studies have also shown that women express higher rates of democratic leadership behavior than men (Chliwniak, 1997; Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). The results from this study are consistent with other studies that have focused on the types of leadership behaviors that are exhibited by men and women in leadership positions. Eagly and Johnson (1990) found female leaders to be more democratic when compared with their male counterparts in the area of business management.

According to this study, male and female coaches displayed similar self-reported leadership characteristics. Research has shown that male and female coaches do not respond differently with respect to their behaviors on the RLSS (Jambor & Zhang, 1997). In their research they found that male and female coaches on the junior high, high school, and college levels did not respond differently to the behaviors of the RLSS, rather differences in preferred coaching styles are often related to the gender of the athlete. In the current study, no significant differences were found when comparing male and female coaches in the CCCU, which supports previous research (Jambor & Zhang, 1997).

The positive feedback and democratic behaviors were further researched via interviews with coaches who scored high and low in the positive feedback coaching behavior. The themes that emerged from the interviews were correcting mistakes and team building. The coaches that scored high in positive feedback behaviors discussed the importance of giving feedback to students on a continual basis. They saw the importance of correcting mistakes and giving useful and honest feedback to their players so that they could improve their performance to benefit the

team. Feedback needs to be continuous, whether if it is to reinforce an activity or to correct it. Alleen reinforced this concept when she said “I give feedback on every play”.

Randy saw the importance in giving feedback to his male basketball players and does so through the use of videotapes where he and his assistant coaches can point out the positives and negatives of their team’s performance.

On the other hand, Don recognized his reluctance to give the appropriate amount of feedback to both his male and female soccer players. It is important to note that when discussing the positive feedback category Don understood positive feedback as referring to the way a player understands what he or she needs to do to improve in particular areas of the game, which is perhaps far more than positively reinforcing a behavior performed by the athlete, as it is defined by Reimer and Chelladurai (1995). Don assumed that his players understood what skills they need to improve since they are on the college level and thus feedback from him is not essential. This could be detrimental to his female athletes since Hastie (1993) discovered that female college athletes desire positive feedback behavior from their coaches more than any other coaching behavior of the RLSS.

Team building was also a theme that emerged from the interviews when discussing positive feedback. Coaches stressed the importance of all players contributing to the team and recognizing their role within the team. Many coaches of female athletes (volleyball, softball) saw the importance of doing team-building exercises in the pre-season to strengthen the overall morale of the team as they began the season. Amy said that her players can see the passion she has for team chemistry in her and that team-building activities are important for the team on and off the field. It was interesting that none of the coaches of male athletes mentioned this aspect of team-building in the interviews.

Interviews were also conducted with coaches who scored high and low in the democratic coaching behavior. The themes that emerged from the interviews were communication and gender. The coaches that considered themselves to be democratic in their leadership style stressed the importance of interacting with their athletes and communicating with them. Many of them stressed the importance of having an open-door policy with their players that they can meet together before, during, or after the season to talk about personal or team issues. Erin also saw

the importance of communicating with her athletes on a regular basis because she felt that her coach in college was very poor in communicating with his players. She learned to be a better communicator because she does not want her players to feel the same way. John, on the other hand, did not feel that he could be a democratic leader due to the large number of football players that he is responsible for to lead.

Although coaches' ratings on the RLSS did not show gender differences, it is important to note that differences did show up in the interviews pertaining to how coaches treat male and female athletes differently. Two of the coaches, who coached both males and females, noted that they could see the difference in how both males and females respond to them and their leadership. Don coached males for twenty-one years before coaching both male and female soccer players the last two years saw the importance of making an effort to communicate with his female athletes differently than his male athletes. Many of the coaches stressed that male athletes are all about winning where as female athletes are more relationship driven. Chris, a men's and women's track coach, said that his female athletes respond in a positive way to his democratic style of coaching. During the interviews both of these coaches centered their responses on how they treat their female athletes. It was evident that they reported the importance of communicating with their female athletes.

This study provides some initial evidence that supports the use of the RLSS as a tool for helping coaches identify their leadership style. This self-reflection will allow coaches to learn more about their coaching behaviors and how they relate to their players. As coaches self-reflect their personal coaching behaviors, they will gain a greater understanding of how they can best lead their respective athletic teams. It is also important to note that the reliability scores of the RLSS are extremely low for both the autocratic and situational consideration coaching behaviors. Caution must be used in future research when examining those two coaching behaviors, especially the autocratic component, while using the RLSS.

The coaches' self-reflection of their coaching behaviors can also be beneficial to athletic directors when filling positions on their staff. For instance, if a women's sport is in need of a coach, it would be advantageous for an athletic director to have prospective candidates self-report their coaching behaviors using the RLSS since female athletes desire a democratic form of

leadership rather than autocratic (Hastie, 1993; Serpa, 1990). It does not have to be the only aspect of the hiring process, but it can be a tool that aids in the process of hiring a coach and further questions could be developed by the athletic director which may aid in the process.

### Summary

The primary objective of this study was to measure the leadership behaviors of coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS) was administered to head coaches in the CCCU to measure their coaching behaviors in six coaching leadership areas: autocratic, democratic, positive feedback, situational consideration, training and instruction, and social support. A secondary purpose was to gain greater insight into the democratic and positive feedback leadership perspectives of male and female coaches in the CCCU. To achieve this objective, interviews were conducted with coaches that scored high and low on the coaching behavior categories of democratic and positive feedback. Results of the RLSS indicated that the softball and track and field coaches perceived themselves as exhibiting the highest rates of positive feedback to their athletes. Track and field and volleyball coaches exhibited the highest rates of democratic behavior in their coaching. All of the volleyball teams and the women's track teams had female athletes which is important because past research has shown that females desire democratic leaders (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Erle, 1981; Beam, Serwatka & Wilson, 2004; Peng, 1997; Terry, 1984). The results of the study also showed that there is a significant difference in the coaching behaviors (training and instruction, democratic, social support, and positive feedback) of head coaches in the CCCU when comparing the sports coached. It was also discovered that there was a significant difference between male and female coaches in the autocratic dimension when evaluating the different coaching leadership behaviors by gender. Coaches that scored high and low in the 'positive feedback' and 'democratic' behavior categories were asked to participate in a follow up interview. Themes that emerged from the interviews were gender differences and player communication for democratic behavior and correcting mistakes and team-building for positive feedback.

The interviews were also used to gather further insight into how the coaches exhibited their behavior with their athletes. Coaches that coached both male and female athletes (soccer

and track and field) stressed the importance of exhibiting higher rates of democratic leadership to their female athletes. Previous research supports the need of democratic leadership by coaches to female athletes (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Erle, 1981; Beam, Serwatka & Wilson, 2004; Peng, 1997; Terry, 1984).

The female coaches in the study also scored higher on the democratic behavior category than the male coaches. The results are consistent with past research that has shown female leaders adopting higher levels of democratic leadership than males (Chliwniak, 1997; Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003).

Surprisingly only three of the fifteen coaches interviewed placed an emphasis on God as it related to their priorities as a coach and person. During the interview process it was evident that these three coaches put God before their coaching. It was important to these coaches to have their players grow spiritually along with physically and to carry out the work that God has prepared them to do while also helping their player become a stronger athlete.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study and related review of research, the following recommendations were made for future research:

1. A similar study measuring 'athlete's perception' and 'athlete's preference' of leadership behaviors among athletes in the CCCU using the RLSS.
2. A similar study focusing on the self-reported leadership behaviors of athletic directors in the CCCU.
3. A similar study that compares the coaching behaviors of coaches at faith-based institutions with coaches at state colleges and universities.
4. A qualitative study focusing on the coaches in the CCCU pertaining to certain components of the RLSS.
5. A similar study measuring the leadership characteristics of coaches on the NCAA Division I level.
6. A replication of this study focusing on the other coaching behavior dimensions of the RLSS, such as training and instruction.

7. A replication of this study focusing on individual sports on the college and university level.

### Closing Remarks

It was seen in this study that the coaches in the CCCU self-reported different coaching behaviors when evaluated by the RLSS. The results can be beneficial to coaches on all levels as they evaluate their coaching behaviors to see if it matches what their athletes' desire in their coaches. This is important when looking at the gender of the athletes and the sport in which they participate. The interviews gave further insight into the democratic and positive feedback behaviors of the coaches in the CCCU and the results may be beneficial to current coaches and also athletic directors as they hire coaches in the future. As had been seen in some previous research, this study also found poor reliability with the autocratic behavior subscale.

## APPENDIX A

### REVISED LEADERSHIP SCALE FOR SPORT

## Leadership Behaviors of Athletic Coaches

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### The Revised Leadership Scale for Sport

Each of the following statements describes a specific behavior that you may exhibit as a coach. For each statement there are five alternative answers, as follows: *Never* (0% of the time), *Seldom* (25% of the time), *Occasionally* (50% of the time), *Often* (75% of the time), *Always* (100% of the time). Please answer all of the questions and remember this is your behavior that is required and there are no right or wrong answers. Simply point and click on your answer.

1. In coaching, I coach to the level of the athletes

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

2. In coaching, I encourage close and informal relationship with the athletes

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

3. In coaching, I make complex things easier to understand and learn.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)



Always (100% of the time)

4. In coaching, I put the suggestions made by the team members in to operation.

Never (0% of the time)

Seldom (25% of the time)

Occasionally (50% of the time)

Often (75% of the time)

Always (100% of the time)

5. In coaching, I set goals that are compatible with the athletes' ability.

Never (0% of the time)

Seldom (25% of the time)

Occasionally (50% of the time)

Often (75% of the time)

Always (100% of the time)

6. In coaching, I disregard athletes' fears and dissatisfactions.

Never (0% of the time)

Seldom (25% of the time)

Occasionally (50% of the time)

Often (75% of the time)

Always (100% of the time)

7. In coaching, I ask for the opinion of the athletes on strategies for specific competition.

Never (0% of the time)

Seldom (25% of the time)

Occasionally (50% of the time)

Often (75% of the time)

Always (100% of the time)

8. In coaching, I clarify goals and the paths to reach the goals for athletes.

Never (0% of the time)

Seldom (25% of the time)

Occasionally (50% of the time)

Often (75% of the time)

Always (100% of the time)

9. In coaching, I encourage the athletes to make suggestions for ways to conduct practices.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

10. In coaching, I adapt coaching style to suit the situation.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

11. In coaching, I use alternative methods when the efforts of the athletes are not working well in practice or in competition.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

12. In coaching, I pay special attention to correcting athletes' mistakes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

13. In coaching, I let the athletes try their own way even if they make mistakes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

14. In coaching, I see the merits of athletes' ideas when they differ from the coach's.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

15. In coaching, I show 'o.k.' or 'thumbs up' gesture to the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

16. In coaching, I remain sensitive to the needs of the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

17. In coaching, I stay interested in the personal well being of the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

18. In coaching, I pat an athlete after a good performance.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

19. In coaching, I explain to each athlete the techniques and tactics of the sport.

- Never (0% of the time)

- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

20. In coaching, I congratulate an athlete after a good play.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

21. In coaching, I refuse to compromise on a point.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

22. In coaching, I use a variety of drills for practice.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

23. In coaching, I stress the mastery of greater skills.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

24. In coaching, I alter plans due to unforeseen events.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)

- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

25. In coaching, I let the athletes set their own goals.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

26. In coaching, I look out for the personal welfare of the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

27. In coaching, I use objective measurements for evaluation.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

28. In coaching, I plan for the team relatively independent of the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

29. In coaching, I tell an athlete when the athlete does a particularly good job.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

30. In coaching, I get approval from the athletes on important matters before going ahead.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

31. In coaching, I express appreciation when an athlete performs well.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

32. In coaching, I put the appropriate athletes in the lineup.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

33. In coaching, I encourage athletes to confide in the coach.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

34. In coaching, I prescribe the methods to be followed.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

35. In coaching, I dislike suggestions and opinions from the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

36. In coaching, I conduct proper progressions in teaching fundamentals.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

37. In coaching, I supervise athletes' drills closely.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

38. In coaching, I clarify training priorities and work on them.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

39. In coaching, I possess good knowledge of the sport.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

40. In coaching, I fail to explain his/her actions.

- Never (0% of the time)

- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

41. In coaching, I encourage an athlete when the athlete makes mistakes in performance.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

42. In coaching, I praise the athletes' good performance after losing a competition.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

43. In coaching, I put an athlete into different positions depending on the needs of the situation.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

44. In coaching, I assign tasks according to each individual's ability and needs.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

45. In coaching, I recognize individual contributions to the success of each competition.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)



- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

46. In coaching, I present ideas forcefully.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

47. In coaching, I let the athletes decide on plays to be used in a competition.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

48. In coaching, I perform personal favors for the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

49. In coaching, I compliment an athlete for good performance in front of others.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

50. In coaching, I give the athletes freedom to determine the details of conducting a drill.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

51. In coaching, I get input from the athletes at daily team meetings.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

52. In coaching, I clap hands when an athlete does well.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

53. In coaching, I give credit when it is due.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

54. In coaching, I help the athletes with their personal problems.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

55. In coaching, I ask for the opinion of the athletes on important coaching matters.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

56. In coaching, I reward an athlete as long as the athlete tries hard.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

57. In coaching, I let the athletes share in decision-making and policy formulation.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

58. In coaching, I visit with the parents/guardians of the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

59. In coaching, I keep aloof from the athletes.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

60. In coaching, I increase complexity and demands if the athletes find the demands are too easy.

- Never (0% of the time)
- Seldom (25% of the time)
- Occasionally (50% of the time)
- Often (75% of the time)
- Always (100% of the time)

## Leadership Behaviors of Athletic Coaches

### Coach Information

Please answer the following items.

61. Name\*

62. Gender

Female

Male

63. Name of college or university where you currently coach

64. What division is your institution? (Select One)

NAIA

NCAA Division I

NCAA Division II

NCAA Division III

Other

65. Years of experience as a head coach on the college or university level

1-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

21 or more years of experience

66. Which sport are you currently the head coach of? (Select One)

- Baseball
- Softball
- Football
- Men's Basketball
- Women's Basketball
- Women's Volleyball
- Men's and Women's Track and Field
- Women's Track and Field
- Men's Track and Field
- Men's and Women's Soccer
- Women's Soccer
- Men's Soccer

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following questions will be used in the follow up interviews with the coaches that agree to participate. The same questions will be used for each coach that is interviewed.

The RLLS that you took showed that you have an autocratic/democratic leadership style. An autocratic leadership style means that you desire personal authority and independent decision making as a coach. A democratic leadership style means that you as a coach work with your athletes in decision making matters. I want to ask you several questions about your leadership style.

1. What are your priorities as a coach and as a person as you live your life daily?
2. Describe your coaching strategies in regard to practice and competition?
3. What do you see as your strengths as a coach? What do you feel your players see as your strengths?
4. What do you see as your challenges or weaknesses as a coach? What do you feel your players see as your challenges or weaknesses as a coach?
5. Since you are a highly democratic coach and research has shown that females prefer a democratic leader, do you think your players would respond differently to you if you were more/less of a democratic leader? How?

6. How do your players respond to your democratic style? Can you give an example? Do you feel that your players appreciate the opportunity to provide input to you?
7. Can you think of any players you think didn't respond well to you? Why?
8. How do you coach players which have a bad attitude (e.g. Terrell Owens)? Give reasons.
9. You currently coach women/men, would you change anything about your coaching style if you coached men/women?
10. Do you tailor your coaching behaviors from a past coach that you have had? Was he or she an autocratic/democratic leader too? Give an example. Or did you see weaknesses in the way that he or she led their team which made you want to be an autocratic/democratic leader?
11. If a player confronts you regarding game strategy or playing time, how do you respond to that particular athlete?
12. As a coach that gives a lot/little positive feedback, how do you communicate feedback with your players?

## APPENDIX C

### HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER

Office of the Vice President For Research  
Human Subjects Committee  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742  
(850) 644-8673 • FAX (850) 644-4392

#### APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 10/20/2008

To: Jeffrey Schouten [jps05d@fsu.edu]

Address: 2801 Chancellorsville Drive, Apt 116, Tallahassee, FL 32312  
Dept.: SPORT MANAGEMENT/PHYSICAL ED.

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research

An Examination of the Leadership Behaviors of the Athletic Coaches in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be **Expedited** per 45 CFR Â§ 46.110(7) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 10/15/2009 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be



submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Susan Lynn, Advisor [[slynn@fsu.edu](mailto:slynn@fsu.edu)]

HSC No. 2008.1563

## APPENDIX D

### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

My name is Jeff Schouten and I am a doctoral student at Florida State University in the department of physical education. I request your participation in a research study titled, “An examination of the leadership behaviors of the athletic coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities”. The purpose of the research is to examine the leadership behaviors of the athletic coaches within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities by using the Revised Leadership Scale for Sport. Your participation will involve completion of an online survey which will take approximately 10 minutes. After the RLSS is returned and analyzed, the five male and female coaches that report the highest and lowest survey scores in the positive feedback and democratic behavior categories will be asked to participate in a follow-up interview. The coaches will be contacted via email to solicit their willingness to participate and to schedule an interview date and time. Each interview will be conducted via telephone and will last approximately thirty minutes. The interviews will be scheduled at the participant’s convenience. Participants may complete the survey and decline to be interviewed. The interviews will be audio recorded and later transcribed for further analysis. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts if you agree to participate in this study. Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of my participation in this study are to help advance the understanding of the leadership behaviors of coaches. The results of this study may be published, but your name or identity will not be revealed to the extent allowed by the law.

Any questions you have concerning this research study or your participation in it, before or after your consent, will be answered by Jeff Schouten (712-722-6232), IRB Chair (Dr. Thomas Jacobsen), or department chair in physical education (Dr. Tom Ratliffe). If you have questions about my rights as a participant in this study, or if you feel that you have been placed at risk, you can contact the chair of the IRB committee. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. By participation in the survey you give your consent to this research study.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jeff Schouten currently teaches and coaches at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa. Jeff graduated from Dordt College in 1996 and spent 5 years as a K-8 physical education teacher. He received his master's degree in physical education in 2003 from Emporia State University. Along with teaching in the health, physical education, and recreation department at Dordt College, he also coaches the baseball team. He has been a member of Dordt's faculty since the fall of '03.

Jeff is married to Liza and they have two sons, Ryer and Tanner, and one daughter, Summer.