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Emily Dane-Staples

St. John Fisher College, edane-staples@sjfc.edu

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### Abstract

Employment research has asked diverse questions about job satisfaction, gender appropriate work, wage and compensation satisfaction and parity, and advancement. Most existing research has explored gender discrimination in traditional professions such as engineering, law, education, and medicine; notably absent is the billion dollar industry of sport. This research sought to remedy that shortcoming by exploring attitudes towards wage equality across gender for eight different professions, including coaching positions and that of a professional athlete. Survey results found that most respondents were in favor of wage equality across all professions, but the sport professions showed the greatest amount of variation. Differences in attitude were attributed to a respondent's gender, personal sport participation, and gender majority of the profession they would be entering. Additionally, qualitative responses indicated that revenue/profit factors and outcome-based considerations were influential in making attitude determinations.

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June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018

# Update in Attitudes towards Wage Equality in Gendered Professions

Emily Dane-Staples, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Sport Studies  
*School of Arts & Sciences*  
*St. John Fisher College*

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## Update in Attitudes Towards Wage Equality in Gendered Professions

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U.S. Sports Academy

**Author:** Emily Dane-Staples

**Corresponding Author:**

Dr. Emily Dane-Staples

3690 East Avenue

Rochester, New York, 14618

Phone: 585-899-3803

Fax: 585-385-7311

edane-staples@sjfc.edu

Emily Dane-Staples, PhD is an Associate Professor of Sport Studies in the School of Arts & Sciences at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York

## Update in Attitudes Towards Wage Equality in Gendered Professions

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### ABSTRACT

Employment research has asked diverse questions about job satisfaction, gender appropriate work, wage and compensation satisfaction and parity, and advancement. Most existing research has explored gender discrimination in traditional professions such as engineering, law, education, and medicine; notably absent is the billion dollar industry of sport. This research sought to remedy that shortcoming by exploring attitudes towards wage equality across gender for eight different professions, including coaching positions and that of a professional athlete. Survey results found that most respondents were in favor of wage equality across all professions, but the sport professions showed the greatest amount of variation. Differences in attitude were attributed to a respondent's gender, personal sport participation, and gender majority of the profession they would be entering. Additionally, qualitative responses indicated that revenue/profit factors and outcome-based considerations were influential in making attitude determinations.

**Keywords:** Gender, Salary, Occupational Segregation

### INTRODUCTION

The transformation of the American workforce in the past century has been remarkable. These changes and growth, complete with the belief in an ideology of mobility and opportunity, have created a diverse employment landscape (24). Legal and social frameworks have altered employment opportunities and forms of compensation (17, 30). The Fair Labor Standards Act, Equal Pay Act, Fair Pay Act, and the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [US EEOC] have been enacted to address employment issues (5, 13 and 34). Until the passage of Title IX in 1972, the presence of women in many professions was sparse, if non-existent (25). As preventative educational discrimination law based on gender was now present, women were guaranteed the right to pursue any profession of their choice.

According to Forbes, the 2014 sports market in North America was worth approximately \$60.5 billion (16). Within the industry, employment opportunities abound both on and off the field. Average player salaries for the four primary professional leagues in the United States were all above \$2.11 million during the 2014-15 seasons (12). The boom of sport popularity has resulted in a greater need for the many support staff needed to produce such a thriving enterprise. Off the field, coaches top the list of visibility and often salary, however employment surrounding sport include physical therapists, statisticians, marketers, agents, and public relations experts amongst many others that are all needed perpetuate this billion dollar operation (1). As a career in sport is now a real possibility for men and women, research regarding this as an employment option is long overdue. Employment research has explored many diverse areas; this research sought to uncover attitudes about wage equality in various professions, including sport.

### **Gendered Work**

Over time, both women and men have become more egalitarian in their gender-role attitudes (30); these social norms have become internalized and are reflected in work preferences (20). Despite the employment law allowing the presence of both genders into professions equally, there remains the long-term effects of what history had allowed. Amongst others, two different ways to explore gendered differences in work will be discussed here: trait-matching and sex-matching (27).

Trait-matching in employment posits that men and women are matched to jobs based on assumed possession of particular skills and abilities. Women are assumed to be particularly skilled in jobs with high emotional labor requirements where their task is to evoke an emotional state in the client and where voice or facial contact with the public is paramount (14). Many times, this gender performance is called “doing femininity” and based on profession can either be seen as an asset or a liability (15). Traditionally, men have been thought to excel in physical demands and intellectual tasks. Masculinities are often associated with strength, competition, and aggressive forms of dominance (28). When looking for the person who “has what it takes” to succeed in the multi-billion dollar highly competitive industry of sport, these masculine traits are assumed to be present in all men

which leads them to be a “natural choice” for hiring managers (10, p 27-28). In fact, male athletic directors at the high school and collegiate levels are more likely to hire male coaches than female coaches (26). The “glass slipper” metaphor is particularly good at explaining the trait-matching approach to employment (2). Certain professions appear to be, by their nature and distinct characteristics, to be the “just right” fit for a particular gender (2).

The sex-matching model, often used jointly with discussions of occupational segregation, explains gendered professions by examining those who currently occupy various positions (5, 27). By knowing the current ratios of men to women, those entering the workforce are then matched to their place (occupation) based on their gender. The sports world, both historically and currently, is dominated by men (3, 19). This has led to the perceptions that men, therefore, know more about sport and bring greater skills and abilities to a position of employment in sport. Across all professions, more than half of employed women in the workforce would have to change jobs to achieve occupational distribution by gender (14). In sport, this ratio of men to women is even more disparate, and there are many potential reasons for women’s under-representation and men’s over representation in jobs within the industry including tokenism, homologous reproduction, and the glass ceiling (4, 18 and 29).

### **Wage Inequity**

Grounded in these gendered professions and attitudes towards work, it is easy to understand the wage inequality that has resulted. According to Gibelman (13), the sex of the worker performing the task is the best single predictor of compensation; the gaps in wages exist at every level of employment and grow as the leadership role increases (25). Women and men both place a lower monetary value and greater output expectation on work completed by women (20). Across most sectors of the economy, women earn about 76% of a male’s total earning (14). Gibelman (13) uncovered that as the percentage of women in a given profession increases, the average weekly salary decreases. In a study of coaches and athletes, the greater the percentage of female athletes under a coach’s command, the lower their salary (19).

Wage inequity is common in many different professions (25); often based on what is considered trait-based men’s and women’s work. Overall, “jobs for which men are thought to be more capable pay about 24 percent more than jobs for which women are thought to be capable” (14). These factors perpetuate a system that places a premium on male salaries (7). An initial study into coaching salary differential done by Knoppers et al. (19) found that male coaches received more money for coaching female athletes than did female coaches. This salary difference was later confirmed by Zimbalist (36) and by Brook and Foster (6). Although, Brook & Foster (6) interpreted their findings to be less about sex discrimination and more about differences in revenue production between men’s and women’s programs as the root of salary discrepancies. As men’s teams generate more revenue and publicity than women’s teams, coaches of men’s teams seem justified in commanding a higher salary (6).

However, just because they can be justified, does not make them legal within the scope of the EEOC (33). For coaches specifically, the lens by which “substantially equal” is viewed includes skills, effort, responsibility, and working conditions (33). The commission’s guidelines explicitly refute the use of revenue differences, market differences, prior salary, and gender of athlete’s coached amongst others to justify wage discrimination between male and female coaches (11). Despite these legal prohibitions, inequality persists in many sport-based professions (31).

The structure of the workplace has been found to contribute to wage inequality. Research demonstrates that women often start at lower positions and salaries compared to men, even in the same profession (34). Over the course of a career, these differences grow exponentially. Women are more often hired into coaching women’s teams, and they are often lower paying positions (19). A higher turnover rate exists in sport when wages are low, and when women leave a profession, even temporarily, they often lose their connections and may regress professionally (5, 19). Male coaches are more likely to be heavily recruited and command a higher salary, which allows them to skip steps in the growth process more often than female coaches who are seen as needing to pay their dues (26). In coaching, the impact of experience and win/loss record plays a greater role on the salary of women than men (19). Women also generally spend fewer years in the labor market due to family responsibilities, which interrupts advancement and income possibilities (4, 35). In the field of sports reporting, where individuals are expected to be available 24-7, this presents a particular problem for women looking to advance their careers (15).

Person attributes have also been found to contribute to continued wage inequality. Research has demonstrated that “men’s sense of personal entitlement to pay is higher than women’s” (23, p. 136). Lalive and Stutzer (20) also note the fact that more men are more likely to negotiate for a desired wage where women will not. Individual levels of risk tolerance, preference for competition, and personal aspirations have all been shown to contribute to wage disparity (7). Some will look to these reasons and engage in victim blaming, “well, the women should just negotiate more” or “choose a field that pays better,” but these reasons ignore the systematic nature of these practices that have been allowed to continue (5). Economists posit that if we truly lived in a competitive marketplace, then any skill differences that were once based on gender should have been balanced out and eliminated the wage gap (8). This has not occurred despite the entrance of women into a diversity of fields so something else must be at work.

To date, most research on wage equality, gendered division of labor, and attitudes towards employment equity have used those already working, did not include their educational training, and used mainly traditional professions. This is a problematic approach. Festinger’s Theory of Cognitive Dissonance explains that people will seek professions that already match their gender-role attitudes so that dissonance is eliminated (30). Further, Social Role Theory indicates that as people begin to work in various professions, they begin to adopt or

internalize the attitudes that validate their work (30). This use of Social Role Theory coupled with Festinger's Theory would indicate that individuals would seek employment in a field that would support their existing ideas about gender roles and wage needs and would then report satisfaction in those choices because they have adopted attitudes that allow them to feel this way.

Using those already working also fails to account for how those individuals arrived in those professions. Leaper et al. (21) found that unrelated adults (which would include teachers and professors) have a strong impact on young people in the area of mentoring. Many of the traditional careers still exist in law, health professions, engineering, and education, but as society has grown, so have employment fields. Research has also found generational differences in the treatment of young women in traditionally male-dominated professions. Younger men are more open to the idea of women in a variety of professions than are older generations (17).

The current generation was also raised in a Title IX era where we have seen a great influx of strong, successful women athletes that are usually viewed as the norm (26). These women who love to compete have taken those skills to their jobs and provide those employers a greater return on investment compared to organizations with a lower percentage of former female athletes as employees (25). These egalitarian women have higher earnings than those who hold more traditional gender beliefs and are part of the de-gendering of the workplace (17, 30). It is unclear how this current generation of future employees perceive their choice of profession compared to the others available and ultimately view the wage expected in various professions. The current research sought to answer the following:

1. What are the attitudes towards wage equality in various professions?
2. What differences occur in attitudes towards wage equality based on a
  - o A respondent's gender?
  - o A respondent's sport participation?
  - o The presence of women in one's life that have athletic experiences?
  - o The ratio of men to women in their targeted profession?

## **METHODS**

### **Sample Selection**

Research indicates that feelings of entitlement regarding pay, that a person should receive a particular outcome (salary) by virtue of what they have input (intelligence, skills, etc.), is established in those who have not yet entered a professional field (8, 22). This allows undergraduate students an acceptable population to study. As it was desirable to have a large cross-section of participants from specific disciplines, a cluster sample of undergraduate courses from a small liberal-arts institution was selected in the following manner.

A master list of all undergraduate courses was compiled. Any course holding a general education, learning community, online, seminar, or field experience designation was eliminated as those classes are populated by any matriculated student (rather than containing a high density of students in a particular program) or had a very small class size. The researcher then selected every 10th course resulting in a total of 23 courses. Five instructors chose not to participate which resulted in a total of 298 participants coming from 18 classes. Females comprised 59% of the respondents and the majority were of junior standing (n=120) with seniors next most common (n=99). Freshman and sophomores constituted the remaining 79 participants. The gender ratio of the sample was within 1% of matching the gender ratio of the entire undergraduate population of the institution.

### **Variables and Instrument**

Eight different professions were selected for this research and were classified by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) as male-dominated (engineer, CEO position), female-dominated (nurse, elementary school teacher), or neutral (lawyer). As this research sought to infuse specific sporting professions, three additional positions were added: High School Head Coach, Professional Athlete, and Collegiate Head Coach. The assessment of which gender dominates a field in sport is not calculated by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, but The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) (31). This source demonstrates that the selected sport fields are dominated by men.

Five different demographic questions were also added to assess what types of influence and modeling certain attributes may be present in shaping opinions (21, 24). The first two related to sport participation: one, personal sport experience and two, important women in their lives who have sport experience. Personal participation ranged from never competing, participation before high school, during high school, and at the collegiate level; respondents were able to select all that applied to them. Respondents were also asked to report the sport participation (in any capacity at any level) of the following women in their lives: close friends, partner (significant other), sister, and mother. The final three demographic questions asked students to report their year in school, primary major, and gender (see Table 1 for respondent demographics in these classifications).

Table 1: *Respondent Demographics*

	Gender	
	Male	Female
<b>Personal Sport Participation</b>		
Never	2	7
One time period	11	25
Two time periods	32	78
Three time periods	76	66
<b>Presence of Women with Sport Participation</b>		
No sporting women	6	7
One category of sporting women	22	47
Two categories of sporting women	37	49
Three categories of sporting women	30	55
Four categories of sporting women	26	18
<b>Gender Majority in Anticipated Field</b>		
Male-dominated field <sup>a</sup>	29	4
Neutral field <sup>b</sup>	78	83
Female-dominated field <sup>c</sup>	11	84

Notes. a. Male-dominated fields included majors of Physics, Computer Science, Math, Statistics, Criminology, and Sport Management. b. Female-dominated fields included Nursing, Education, Psychology, Linguistics/Languages, and Anthropology. c. Neutral fields included those majoring in History, English, Political Science, Business (Accounting, Finance, Management, Marketing, Human Resource Management, and Economics), Sciences (Biology and Chemistry), Sociology, Communication, and Legal Studies.

These variables were constructed in both a paper and electronic survey. Informed consent statements were present on both versions and were required for a survey to be considered valid. The first part requesting attitudes towards pay equity was measured on a strongly disagree to strongly agree, 5-point Likert scale. The questions were prefaced with the following statement “Assume that the man and woman are equally qualified (education, experience, talent, etc.) and are performing the same job”, then students were asked to rate their level of agreement on a series of phrases beginning with “both should receive equal pay as...” with the eight professions inserted following the prompt. According to System Justification Theory, individuals have a fundamental need to believe that they live and work

in a system that is just and fair (23). This scale adopts this same logic while recognizing that it is leading respondents to a socially desirable answer of equality. This allowed for a stronger interpretation of any differences found in the results as respondents would be responding against what we expect to be their baseline appropriate response. Professions were placed in a random order.

In response to our basic psychological need to believe in justice and fairness, individuals create reasons (beliefs) to justify the inequalities that they see around them (23). One qualitative item was asked following the equality agreement questions to ascertain what their justifying beliefs were for any professions where they were neutral or undecided. The five demographic questions followed the pay equity questions. Only small grammatical changes were made to adapt the paper to electronic versions; no substantive alterations to the questions were made.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Instructors who had their courses randomly selected were contacted about their willingness to participate in the study. The eighteen that consented were asked to choose their preferred mode of delivery (electronic = 3; classroom = 15). The researcher constructed a consent email announcement with the Qualtrics survey link embedded and then forwarded it to the instructor who then distributed it to their students. For instructors who wished to have paper distribution, upon the date jointly chosen, the researcher visited the class, read a script introducing the study and inviting students to participate or abstain, and then left the room with the instructor. Once the surveys had been collected, a student representative brought the completed surveys out in a sealed envelope. All surveys were stored in a locked area until the totality of data was acquired. To prepare for analysis, all electronic responses were downloaded and organized into a spreadsheet. All paper surveys were checked for completeness and then entered into the same spreadsheet. All data entry was double checked by a non-participant assistant. Pay equity questions were recorded in the manner in which they were presented, two demographic questions remained unchanged, but the remaining three required some re-coding.

Personal sport participation responses were re-classified based on developmental time segments to signify the overall number of periods of participation. Individuals who had never participated remained the same, those who indicated participation at a single time (prior to high school, high school, or college) were grouped together, and those who indicated participation in two time periods were grouped together, and so on. The presence of females with sport participation in a respondent's life was also re-classified using a similar mechanism. Using the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (32), available majors were classified as those who are indicative of male-dominated fields (less than 33% of the workforce is female), neutral fields (34%-65% of the workforce is female), and female-dominated fields (at least 66% of the workforce is female).

Once all data were coded, it was entered into SPSS for analysis. Basic descriptive statistics

found means for all Likert-scale questions regarding salary equity opinions and frequency tabulations for all demographic questions. t-tests and ANOVA were used to explore various demographic differences in attitudes towards wage equality. Subsequent item analysis was conducted on attitudes towards wages across all professions to examine how the wage items correlated with one another. This analysis showed that attitudes towards professional athletes did not correlate well with the scale of wage attitudes (item-rest correlation=.59), and scale reliability was improved when the item was dropped, thus subsequent analyses were run treating the professional athlete as a unique profession. Wage equality models were run with OLS regression. Thematic coding was done for the open-ended question with a constant comparison method utilized (4).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondent demographics show some unique differences in background and experience. In exploring gender differences for demographic items, there were significant differences for personal sport participation ( $\chi^2(6) = 25.72; p < .01$

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Table 2; *Attitudes Towards Wage Equality by Gender*

Occupation	All Respondents	Male	Female	t-test
Lawyer	4.74	4.51	4.90	-5.304**
High School Head Coach	4.66	4.34	4.91	-7.031**
Nurse	4.75	4.53	4.92	-6.103**
Engineer	4.73	4.53	4.90	-5.465**
CEO	4.74	4.52	4.91	-5.695**
Professional Athlete	4.31	3.63	4.79	-9.339**
Elementary School Teacher	4.77	4.60	4.93	-5.793**
College Head Coach	4.59	4.19	4.88	-7.002**

Note: Averages on scale from 1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree; \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 3: *Attitudes Towards Wage Equality by Personal Sport Participation*

Occupation	Number of Periods of Sport Participation				<i>F</i>
	Never	One	Two	Three	
Lawyer	4.78	4.86	4.80	4.68	1.626
High School Head Coach	4.78	4.89	4.74	4.56	3.033*
Nurse	4.78	4.89	4.78	4.70	1.323
Engineer	4.78	4.81	4.79	4.69	.873
CEO	4.78	4.86	4.79	4.68	1.383
Professional Athlete	4.22	4.84	4.38	4.14	4.244**
Elementary School Teacher	4.78	4.86	4.84	4.79	1.493
College Head Coach	4.78	4.89	4.49	4.60	2.800*

*Note:* Averages on scale from 1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree; Periods of participation were never, prior to high school, during high school, or during college. \* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

No group differences were found towards wage equality based on the sport participation of a female in a respondent’s life (see Table 4), however differences were found towards wage equality in professions based on the gender majority of the field a person anticipated entering (see Table 5). Students who were entering male-dominated professions were less supportive of wage equality across all professions than were students who would be entering gender-neutral fields or fields dominated by women.

Table 4: Attitudes towards Wage Equality for Persons Reporting Varying Numbers of Sporting Women in their Lives

Occupation	Number of Categories of Sporting Women					F
	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four	
Lawyer	4.62	4.69	4.78	4.76	4.84	.815
High School Head Coach	4.69	4.63	4.73	4.63	4.73	.409
Nurse	4.62	4.69	4.78	4.79	4.82	.788
Engineer	4.62	4.63	4.77	4.78	4.86	1.497
CEO	4.54	4.66	4.77	4.78	4.86	1.443
Professional Athlete	4.46	4.49	4.30	4.27	4.14	.805
Elementary School Teacher	4.69	4.70	4.81	4.80	4.86	1.047
College Head Coach	4.54	4.64	4.64	4.55	4.59	.200

Note: Averages on scale from 1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree; Categories of important females included no one, close friends, partner, sister, and mother. \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 5: Attitudes Towards Wage Equality by Gender Majority in Anticipated Field

Occupation	Gender Majority in Profession			F
	Male-Dominated	Neutral	Female-Dominated	
Lawyer	4.45	4.72	4.89	4.748**
High School Head Coach	4.06	4.67	4.91	14.508**
Nurse	4.36	4.77	4.90	8.908**
Engineer	4.42	4.73	4.89	6.236**
CEO	4.39	4.75	4.89	7.021**
Professional Athlete	3.21	4.28	4.74	18.500**
Elementary School Teacher	4.48	4.79	4.91	6.554**
College Head Coach	3.85	4.64	4.60	13.315**

Note: Averages on scale from 1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree; \*\*  $p < .01$

Item analysis was done and found that attitudes towards wage equality for professional athletes do not correlate highly with attitudes toward the other professions. When the professional athlete attitudes were included,  $\alpha=.94$ , and when it is dropped, alpha increased to .97. When including them as simultaneous predictors, gender and gender composition of anticipated field remain negative predictors towards wage equality. However, when professions are separated, the number of females with sport experience in one's life is not a significant predictor of attitudes towards wage equality for professional athletes, but it is a positive and significant predictor of attitudes towards equality in the other professions ( $b=.08$ ,  $t=2.54$ ,  $p<.05$ )

The qualitative analysis of respondent explanations for professions where they were neutral or undecided on wage equality were enlightening. By far, the sport professions had the most neutral or undecided responses (professional athlete = 26, High school coach and college coach = 17 each). Thematic analysis uncovered that revenue generation, profits, or other money reasons were mostly commonly cited as reasons to justify or explain neutral responses of attitude towards wage equality. Explanations such as "pay is determined by how much profit a company makes" and "professional sports...bring in so much money that they deserve to be paid more" were common reasons across all professions, but especially sport professions.

The next most commonly cited reasons for pay inequity were sport specific differences that encompassed popularity and attention or demand for a particular product. The expectation that athletes will be "paid for their popularity" and that "women's sports do not receive as much attention therefore they cannot be paid as much" indicate different levels of entertainment between men's and women's sports and consumer based demands.

Across many professions, respondents focused their reasoning on an outcome-based approach. That the success of an individual, however that is defined, will lead to differences in wages. In undecided responses for non-sport professions, statements such as "how well they do their job" or "the success rate and outlook for the future of a company" indicate that pay should be reflective of achieving some measure of success. Within the sport professions, the determination of "how good a team is" and expectation of winning as a measure of success was commonly cited. One respondent even stated that "becoming better would be an incentive to get paid more" indicating that success equaling more pay was an expectation.

The final theme uncovered in the qualitative responses had to do with person attributes that reflect gender-based work, attributes, and stereotypes. One respondent stated "factors such as taking time off for maternity leave sometimes play a factor in employment and/or pay rates" explicitly named a gender attribute as an explanation for possible wage equality. Another respondent indicated that primarily, wage inequality was based on the sport, but that "some women are better a coaching (certain sports) based on personality." It is unclear

what specific links were being made, but there are clearly some underlying gender assumptions present. Commentary also addressed particular sports and their inequality. One respondent stated “if it is football then male coaches should get paid more because they do a lot of work and preparation”. When explaining the professional athlete pay inequality, one participant stated “different sports take different amount of tolls on the body”, likely implying that the more taxing sports, such as football, should have proportionate compensation.

There were five responses that explicitly claimed that pay differences were not about gender. Some respondents were hesitant to broadly classify their expectations about wage equality as individuals “earn their salary based on their skill not their gender” and that “regardless of gender, pay should reflect the players worth and ability”. However, one junior nursing major rated undecided/neutral on all professions with the explanation of “society is how society is” indicating a very pessimistic outlook for the future.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This research presents an important update in attitudes towards wage equality in a post-Title IX era where occupations are more equally available to both men and women. College-age students in this study, on average, agreed with the idea of wage equality across the sampled professions for persons who are equally educated and qualified regardless of gender. The profession that the respondents had the greatest consensus of wage equality was that of an Elementary School teacher; the greatest variation in attitude towards wage equality was for professional athletes.

The addition of sporting professions (high school head coach, college head coach, and professional athlete) to this subject of study has shown that these professions have the lowest levels of agreement. That is, compared to other professions, attitudes towards wage equality in sporting professions have greater variation. Given the significant differences in the population about the number of periods of sport participation, this could help to explain this variation. Sixty-three percent of the male respondents had participated in sport for three distinct periods in their lives whereas only 38% of the female respondents had done so. As sport has been so historically dominated by men, it is understandable that many men may feel that sport is their domain and an area where they should/do dominate. It would, therefore, follow that they feel they should be better compensated for what they (men) do compare to the relative newcomers, female athletes.

Across all professions in this study, male respondents report less favorable attitudes towards wage equality; these differences are statistically significant. It is possible that this is a mere reflection of the current state of wage inequality in the United States. As found by multiple researchers, wages earned by men are greater than the compensation for work completed by women (6, 14, 20 and 34). The attitudes presented in this study could be described as a mirror to what the current expectation is upon entering the workforce.

An alternative explanation is found in the qualitative responses that revenue generation, profits, and success are justified reasons for wage inequality to exist. These rationales support Brook & Foster's (6) interpretation of wage differences having to do with revenues, but clearly violate the EEOC's (33) legal mandates regarding coaches. Respondents indicated that "a point of being fiscally sound" is the primary driver of pay inequities across professions.

Variations in attitudes towards wage equality show the longer one participates in sport, the less likely they are to agree with wage equality across professions although these differences were only significant for the sport professions. Sport is an area that traditionally values male work over female work, and the documented inequities between men's and women's sport are expansive (4, 10). Therefore, the longer a person participates in sport, the more often they are exposed to the existing inequities that privilege men over women. This may normalize the inequity and subsequently influence attitudes towards wage equality.

The idea that people who have a greater quantity of women who are/were athletes in their lives influencing their attitudes towards wage equality was not confirmed. There were no significant differences between groups with increasing numbers of female athletes in their lives correlating with a subsequently increased level of agreement with wage equality across professions. While both female professions, nursing, and elementary school teacher, saw increases in agreement towards wage equality as the number of important sporting females increased, so too did the male professions of engineer and CEO. Males who have more close females with athletic experience are more likely to support wage equality for professions other than professional athletes than are males without the presence of women with athletic backgrounds, but this was not statistically significant. It would seem that the presence of sporting women as a possible model or example of women being present in a traditionally male-dominated field is not directly influencing attitudes towards wage equality.

There seems to be support for Festinger's Theory of Cognitive Dissonance where people will seek to enter professions that already match their gender role attitudes (30). Attitudes towards wage equality based on the anticipated field of entry show that those planning to enter male-dominated fields are less likely to support wage equality than are those planning to enter neutral or female-dominated fields. While these differences were strongest for the sporting professions, all groups showed a collective difference. Further analysis identified that male respondents who also planned on entering male-dominated fields were the most strongly opposed to wage equality for all professions but especially for professional athletes.

Finally, the study supports both trait-matching and sex-matching research on reasons for occupational segregation (27). Qualitative responses speaking to stereotyped personality traits and the work ethic necessary to do a particular job clearly demonstrate trait-matching explanations. The differences seen in participant responses illustrate support for sex-matching rationalization.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

This research updates outdated research regarding wage equality across professions, but still had limitations that impacted the validity of the results. Sport participation is a reflection of what is available to an individual which is confounded by a host of other geographic and socio-economic factors. These other factors could also be contributing to attitudes towards wage equality and any sport specific differences that may also be present. Additionally, some sports such as soccer are played equally between men and women, and the women have had greater success at the international level (8). Participation in sports that are not dominated by a single gender may lead to more favorable attitudes towards equity compared to those who have participated in male-dominated sports such as football or ice hockey.

Further, the use of CEO in the instrument is a positional label rather than a discipline specific job. While the use of this position could represent some of the lingering attitudes towards women in leadership positions, it was not an appropriate use of a discipline-specific occupation and may have interjected error. Another instrument design error occurred when recording the presence of the women who participate in sport that are in an individual's life; no options were allowed for respondents to indicate the possibility of such a category. That is, if one did not have a sister, or was not raised with a mother-figure present, the maximum number of categories they could report would be altered.

### **APPLICATIONS IN SPORT**

Contrary to the current pay structure in most professions, these respondents indicated that they felt that men and women in various professions should be paid equitably if they have the same level of education and experience. This supports the findings of Brittan and Onder (5) and Stickney and Konrad (2007) that the next generation of job seekers, having been exposed to greater amounts of cultural diversity, will likely be able to change the current wage dynamics. Despite these beliefs, these job seekers will be entering a workplace that separates gendered work by walls, ceilings, doors, and cliffs (25). Employers can expect future employees to have pre-existing notions of fairness when it comes to compensation and may have to overcome some of the justifications found in this research in order to effectively manage salary expectations.

Organizational culture and discipline history will continue to shape what are defined as acceptable work practices until innovative strategies are enacted (34). Legal access to the industry is attempting to overcome some of the sex-typing of roles, but the trait-matching

aspects need to be effectively managed within an organizational setting. These findings can be used as a point of congregation to begin discussing what is believed versus what is occurring in practice. By blending sound business principles, understanding the impact worker satisfaction can have on work product, and the attitudes towards wage equality across professions discovered in this research, organizations should see value in attempting to align what has traditionally been a lopsided practice of wage distribution.

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