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Factors Influencing Involvement in Disability Sport Coaching

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Factors Influencing Involvement in Disability Sport Coaching

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Abstract

There are plenty of studies done on coaches in able bodied sport but very little done on coaches in disability sport. The purpose of this study is to look at experiences that lead people to become disability sport coaches and their overall job satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction they have in their role. A total of 13 disability sport coaches were interviewed either face to face or by phone in the Greater Rochester, NY area and were acquired through a mixture of purposeful and snowball sampling. Data was analyzed through both a qualitative thematic analysis along with some basic statistical tests. The results signify that having experience playing a sport is a must for anyone looking to getting into disability sport coaching. The results also conclude that with the exception of player coaches are highly satisfied in their roles in terms of both job satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction. An overwhelming majority of the coaches in the study plan to continue until they are they physically able to or they find a proper replacement.

Factors Influencing Involvement in Disability Sport Coaching

In 1960 the Paralympic games had only 400 athletes by the time of the 2004 games in Athens, Greece, there were over 4,000 athletes representing over 130 countries. This shows the increase in opportunities presented to athletes with disabilities over the past several decades (Cregan, Bloom, & Reid, 2007). Similarly, over the past 50 years, the Special Olympics has seen tremendous growth and has come to play a very important role in American society. The Special Olympics has grown to become an organization with approximately 4.4 million athletes representing 170 countries (Cybulski, Culver, Kraft & Formeris, 2016). Opportunities in sport for those with intellectual disabilities have been on the rise in recent years (Harada & Siperstein, 2009). Sport is a tool used to link those of different cultures, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds; it also can be a link between those of different abilities (Harada & Siperstein, 2009).

As sport opportunities for those with physical and intellectual disabilities have grown, so has the need for people to coach these athletes. Organizations such as the Special Olympics, Paralympics, Challenger Baseball, unified sports among many others all have need for quality coaches. This project will explore how current coaches of athletes with disabilities became coaches, if they are content in the role, and for how long they plan to continue coaching.

Duarte & Culver state that there have been a few studies done on coaching in disability sport (2014). The research done on coaching of disabled athletes lags behind that of their able bodied counterparts (Cregan et. al, 2007). Townsend, Smith & Cushion acknowledge that “we know very little about coaches who work in disability sport” (2015, p. 80). Due to the increase in sporting opportunities for athletes with disabilities to be involved in, there is a greater need for research done on the coaches of these athletes (Cregan et al., 2007). The growth in the opportunities and participation in disability sport, has created demand for coaches and it is important to know more about this understudied population.

Literature Review

Coach Background and Training

Coaching education.

Coaching, unlike many other professions, does not require a college degree in order to work in it (Duffy, Bales, Crespo, Dick, Vardhan, Nordmann, & Curado, 2011). Research on coaching education in the past has focused on elite level coaches and coaching able-bodied athletes at the collegiate or Olympic levels. This goes with the fact that coaching education at the disability sport level is minimal (Cregan et al., 2007). There is a lack of research done on the results on the effectiveness on coaching education (Rodgers, Reade, & Hall, 2007). Coaching education, manuals, and clinics are not as abundant in disability sport as they are with able-bodied sports, giving disability sport coaches less resources to work with in regards to education (Cregan et al., 2007). This impacts these coaches by having fewer quality resources conveniently at their disposal.

Besides volunteer coaching, other forms of coaching include pre-coach, professional and self-coaching. Pre-coaches are those who support coaches mainly at youth levels. These are often parents or young adults in a helper role without obtaining formal qualifications (Duffy et al., 2011). Professional coaches are paid and are subject to a licensing or certification process along with developing volunteer coaches (Duffy et al., 2011). In many cases Martin and Whalen (2014) suggest that until recent years, many disability sport athletes have had to coach themselves. This is known as a self-coach (Martin & Whalen 2014).

University education can make an important contribution to a coach's professional knowledge. Previous studies have indicated that for disability sport coaches, coach education opportunities are very limited (Duarte & Culver, 2014; Cregan et. al, 2007). At Slippery Rock University an undergraduate minor is offered in Adapted Physical Activity (Silman-French & French, 2013). At the College at Brockport (SUNY Brockport), Physical Education students are required to take an Adapted Physical Activity and Sport class where students can volunteer for programs such as the Rochester Rookies wheelchair track team and a gymnastics programs for

autistic children (Silman-French & French, 2013). Also in New York, SUNY Cortland offers an Adapted Physical Education (APE) concentration that is twelve credit hours at the undergraduate level (Silman-French & French, 2013). In the study done by Duarte & Culver, an adapted sailing coach identified a Physical Education background as an important contributor to her coaching career and coaching knowledge (2014). Due to the scarcity of the educational programs Duarte & Culver (2014) suggests that “the paucity of learning situations available to disability sport coaches raises the question of how these coaches are learning.” (p. 442).

Graduate students in the College at Brockport Physical Education Program are counselors and coaches at Camp Abilities which is a sports camp for visually impaired kids. Along with that, Brockport Graduate Physical Education students volunteer at the Special Olympics or at local schools for the deaf (Silman-French & French, 2013). Along with a graduate concentration that is fifteen credit hours. The fifteen credit hour graduate program that focuses on gaining experience and knowledge working with disabled children and adults (Silman-French & French, 2013). Slippery Rock University offers a Master of Science Program are offered in Adapted Physical Activity. The Master of Science Program allows for a six credit hour internship, along with offering experiential learning opportunities in the local community around the Slippery Rock Campus (Silman-French & French, 2013).

Along with school based education, the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs offers an eight-hour coaching certification course. This course covers topics that include sport psychology, philosophy and management (Martin & Whalen, 2014). On an international level, in 1997 the International Council for Coach Education (ICCE) was created along with the adoption of the Magglingen Declaration to address challenges related to coaching education and standards along with identifying coaching competencies (Duffy et al., 2011). A negative to large scale coaching education is that it can be decontextualized, a mixture of large scale education and experts with on-site education can lead to a more effective

outcome (Duarte & Culver, 2014). For novice coaches, clinics and workshops can be very beneficial; more so than with experienced coaches (Duarte & Culver, 2014).

Why training is important.

This lack of preparation for being able to work with disabled athletes can lead to negative results. At the community level where volunteer coaches are prevalent, very few coaches have the knowledge to work with athletes with disabilities and learning challenges (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). Coaches who are not prepared to work with athletes with hidden disabilities such as Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can lead to negative results for both the athlete and the coach (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). Regarding coaches of kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), coaches are often volunteers and have little access to special support and knowledge to effectively coach with disabled athletes (Rosso, 2016). Since coaches are not viewed as educators, parents or guardians do not feel the need to tell coaches of an athlete's disability or learning challenges as they would with teachers (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). On the flip side of that, coaches who have worked with students with ADHD before and have more experience with ADHD students are more likely to have higher perceptions of efficacy (Beyer et al., 2008).

Besides the educational aspects, coaches must be aware of a disabled athlete's medical conditions, transportations and other needs in order to create an optimal training situation for the coach and athlete alike (Cregan et al., 2007). Martin & Whalen (2014) state that "disability sport coaches believe they have the dual challenge of understanding their athlete's sport and their disability" (p. 16). Coaches must be aware of the challenges that face their athlete when interacting with the environment around them. Disability sport coaches, similar to their able-bodied counterparts, are put into a position where they are not just coaching the athlete but supporting the mental development of the athletes in addition to coaching (Martin & Whalen, 2014). Coaches need to develop separate but equal programs for students with disabilities who

might not possess the qualities to participate in traditional athletic teams and cater to the needs of every athlete (Silman-French & French, 2013).

Another challenge for disability sport coaches is finding quality coaching references (Martin & Whalen, 2014). With disability sport and disabled athletes there is a greater need for individualized training (Cregan et al., 2007). This can create challenges for coaches who do not have experience working in disability sport or with people with disabilities. This can be problematic because there is a lack of resources when it comes to coaching disabled athletes, a coach must be able to understand all the individualized training needs and accommodations for a disabled athlete (Cregan et al., 2007). This can be a challenge at the same time because most disability sport coaches have only prior experience with able bodied athletes (Martin & Whalen, 2014).

Sport coaching is mainly delivered on a volunteer basis worldwide (Duffy et al., 2011). Volunteer coaches are coaches who work on a volunteer basis who coach at youth levels, performer developments and high performance areas. These coaches have few qualifications and training (Duffy et al., 2011). Volunteer coaches allow for clubs and communities to offer sport programs at a lesser cost, especially at the youth level (Duffy et al., 2011). This strategy of offering programming at a lower cost comes at a risk as organizations are left with little choice than to allow those with little specialized training to work with these athletes (Cregan et al., 2007).

Learning from Experience.

Many coaches draw on their own experiences as athletes and try to learn from prior coaching missteps to improve their coaching abilities. A coach's prior experiences, preparation and past success can lead to a coach's sense of self efficacy (Teatro, Thompson, Kulinna, van der Mars, & Kwan, 2017). Previous life experiences are influencers of choices made by coaches in certain situations (Koh, Lee, & Lim, 2018). At the professional level, many sports hire coaches solely due to their personal experiences as an athlete; however, coaches can

learn from education as well as personal experience (Rodgers et al., 2007). Learning is a lifelong process that begins as a child where we begin to internalize experiences (Duarte & Culver, 2014). In a case study on an adapted sailing coaches' life experiences, Duarte & Culver explain that social interactions were a major factor in developing the subject as a coach, along with mentors such as college professors, colleagues and fellow athletes (2014). In a study done by Hodgson, Butt, & Maynard, several coaches identified professional development courses and having mentors positively developed their coaching attributes (2017). Learning from others is an important factor in development for both able-bodied and disability sport coaches among all levels of coaching (Duarte & Culver, 2014). Martin and Whalen (2014) explain that a coach looking to get into disability sport without having a disability can be challenging

“because most coaches lack the life experience of living with a disability, therefore disability specific knowledge must be learned. This would suggest that experiences in the disability sport one aspires to coach would be of value” (p.18).

Due to this disability sport coaches heavily rely on athletes and parents for acquiring knowledge related to disabilities (Cregan et al., 2007). To add to this challenge most coaches of disabled athletes are able bodied themselves and do not have the experience of playing that sport with a disability (Cregan et al., 2007).

An experience that is significant to many coaches was playing a sport as an athlete. Coaching practices are often influenced from a coach's experience playing as an athlete (Rodgers et al., 2007). With team sport coaches, especially at the more elite levels, most of them were successful but not superior athletes who began coaching novice levels and worked their way up the ladder to higher or elite positions (Cregan et al., 2007). Coaches who have playing experience at a high level are more likely to apply good coaching techniques, behaviors and practices (Rodgers et al., 2007). Rodgers et al. (2007) say that

“those coaches who were elite competitors are more likely to have experienced success in their performance and are more likely to have been coached by elite coaches. As athletes, they were more likely to have engaged in the very behaviors representing desirable coaching practice” (p.167).

Studies have shown that coaches with extensive playing and coaching backgrounds along with higher levels of coaching education have higher levels of coaching efficacy, compared to those who do not (Teatro et al., 2017).

Robbins, Houston, & Dummer (2010) suggest that “in order to create the most effective training program or identify possible coaches it is critical to first understand the mentality of individuals in coaching positions” (p. 43). In the study done by Cregan et al. (2007) of disability swimming coaches, many participants did not plan to become coaches for a career choice but the enjoyment and love for the sport led them to coach. Many of these coaches did not intend to coach disabled athletes, originally planning on coaching able-bodied athletes (Cregan et al., 2007). However, upon this arrival at his coaching choice these individuals will need to understand the unique challenges that come with coaching and working with disabled athletes.

There are sets of challenges that come unique to disability sport education, training and coaching athletes with disabilities (Robbins et al., 2010). General coaching education mainly focuses on performance related issues which can result in coaches having a hard time working with parents. This happens due to a lack of preparation of dealing with non-performance related issue such as socialization or working with athletes with intellectual disabilities (Beyer, Flores, & Vargas-Tonsing, 2008).

Coaches Doing Their Job

Sport coaching is a complex process that includes planning, implementing and evaluating sport programs to meet the needs of involved stakeholders along with setting goals or expectations (Koh, Lee, & Lim, 2018). The coaching process in various ways tries to influence the learning and development of an athlete in a positive manner. Coaching is something that is delivered but is not a one-way street, it is a complex social system with both coaches and athletes (Hodgson et al., 2017; Townsend, Smith, & Cushion, 2016). A good coach, according to Šukys, Dargenė, & Karanauskienė (2017) must be: professional, be able to

create a good psychological climate, have the ability to manage emotions, and also be the person in authority.

Coaching athletes with disabilities requires many of the same skills as coaching able bodied athletes including, goal setting, developing skill progressions, and providing consistent, appropriate feedback (Cregan et al., 2007). Cregan and colleagues (2007) suggest “that coaching an elite able bodied athlete is similar in many respects to coaching an elite athlete with a disability” (p. 340). In a study done between collegiate wheelchair basketball coaches and able bodied NCAA basketball coaches, only minor differences were found between wheelchair and stand-up basketball coaches (Robbins et al., 2010). Similarities included both wheelchair and stand-up basketball coaches wanting athletes to focus on theme oriented goals and hold themselves accountable for their action along with working hard. In addition to that both wheelchair and stand-up coaches understand the importance of addressing situational needs of all athletes and the need to assess individual differences (Robbins et al., 2010). Regarding Special Olympic coaches, they share many similar strategies with their able-bodied counterparts when it comes to developing life skills and building relationships with their athletes (Cybulski, Culver, Kraft, & Formeris, 2016). In general, coaching practices differ more whether the sport is a team sport or an individual sport rather than the ability of the athlete being coached (Rodgers et al., 2007).

Coaching Behavior & Philosophy.

Coaching expectations often influence their coaching behavior towards an athlete (Robbins et al., 2010). Accepted coaching authorities indicate that desired coaching practices include communication, decision making, athlete performance, instruction, mental preparation and strategy (Rodgers et al., 2007). With communication especially, a lack of coach-athlete communication can lead to negative experiences for the athletes, emphasizing the need for a coach to effectively communicate (Cybulski et al., 2016). With such challenges a coach needs to be able to handle tough situations in a proper manner. Robbins et al. (2010) found that

“coaches ... advocated the importance of being resilient, and thus, possessed the ability to handle setbacks and deal with negative criticism” (p. 448). Coaches of disabled athletes can minimize the amount of setbacks and criticism by setting realistic goals for themselves along with their athletes and their team as very important for their success (Cregan et al., 2007).

Coaches who have high expectations for their athletes may be able to negate any negative stigma associated with a disability in an athlete (Robbins et al., 2010). Beyer et. al (2008) claim that

“coaches' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities will not only influence their own behaviors, but will also likely influence the behaviors of the rest of the team towards those individuals” (p. 556).

Being able to build autonomy and creativity are important characteristics in coaching disabled athletes (Cregan et al., 2007).

Another important coaching behavior is coaching efficacy. Coach efficacy is an important variable related to coach behavior and in the outcomes of athletes. This includes being able to predict coaching behavior and athlete satisfaction (Teatro, Thompson, Kulinna, van der Mars, & Kwan, 2017). A coach's efficacy can help better understand an athlete and their psyche which can lead to improved performances. A coach knowing the skills, abilities and talents of an athlete is an important factor in the development of those characteristics in athletes (Teatro et al., 2017). And when coaches aren't made aware of an athlete's skills and abilities, it can create many problems. For example, an athlete with hidden disabilities, may be labeled as unmotivated, lazy, oppositional or defiant (Beyer et al., 2008). This may be completely untrue, but without open communication between all parties, the sport experience is then harmed for both the athlete and the coach.

Challenges of being a coach.

There are many challenges that coaches face when doing their job. Not all coaches promote a positive sport environment (Cybulski et al., 2016). Coaches are required to make

tough decisions, deal with adversity and are held to high expectations which can result in stress (Hodgson et al., 2017). This stress can impact their effectiveness as a coach along with the athletes they work with (Thelwell et al., 2016). Another challenge coaches face is transferring knowledge to other educators (Cybulski et al., 2016). This is a challenge due to the fact that other educators and support teams often communicate directly with the athletes along with the coaches. As athletes with intellectual disabilities are each distinctively different, Special Olympic coaches have the challenge of understanding an athlete's makeup and tailoring their coaching style to each athlete's needs (Cybulski et al., 2016).

Coach & Athlete Relationships.

A coach-athlete interpersonal relationship is critical to the experience of both a coach and an athlete (Martin & Whalen, 2014). A positive coach-athlete relationship can enhance athlete performance, satisfaction and well-being (Thelwell, Wagstaff, Chapman, & Kentta, 2016). Many Special Olympics coaches in the study mentioned building relationships with their athletes which in turn helped them to develop trust (Cybulski et al., 2016). "Some of the coaches explained that once trust was gained, athletes were more open to share things about their personal lives" (Cybulski et al., 2016, p. 12). Along with this, coaches cite that maintaining positive relationships with athletes, parents and their therapists is important as well (Martin & Whalen, 2014).

In addition to coaching a particular sport, many coaches find that they are often a leader and a mentor for their athletes. Most often in a sport setting, coaches have the most influence on an athlete's experiences. Coaches provide leadership and interact with athletes often (Cybulski et al., 2016). A coach in one study said "I try to be a role model, I try to set a good example...A leader of sorts too, I'm sure they look up to me." (Cybulski et al., 2016). In general, athletes appreciate coaches and recognize the impact coaches have had on their successes as an athlete and as a person (Robbins et al., 2010).

Coaches include the development of moral values and social skills in to a sport context (Šukys et al., 2017). Some Special Olympics coaches encouraged their athletes volunteer at other events to build character and positive feelings (Cybulski et al., 2016). Coaches tend to link the concept of moral education with the concept of fair play (Šukys, et al., 2017). There are multiple strategies coaches can implement to help athletes develop life skills. The first one is to assess an athlete's internal and external assets to understand their make-up. The second model involves coaches being able to emphasize teaching life skills with direct and indirect methods to their athletes (Cybulski, et al., 2016). Coaches look for athletes who are eager to learn as well. For collegiate wheelchair basketball coaches, they look for athletes who want to improve their game along with taking care of their health (Robbins, et al. 2010).

Understanding Disability Sport

“Disability sport is a broad term used to designate sports that accommodate people with ambulatory, sensory, and intellectual disabilities” (Duarte & Culver, 2014, p. 441). One type of disability sport on the international level is the Paralympic Games. The Paralympic Games is the highest level of competition for athletes with intellectual impairment (Bisen, McCulloch, and Vanlandwijck, 2018). The Paralympics were developed after the World War II era to give a chance for wounded veterans to compete and socialize through sport with events that mirrored the structure of the Olympic Games, were originally known as the Stoke Mandeville Games (Bundon & Clarke, 2015). In order to compete in the Paralympic Games, an athlete needs evidence of the impact an impairment has as related to sport performance (Bisen et al., 2018). This slightly differs for the requirements to play collegiate wheelchair basketball where any individual with a severe leg injury or lower body paralysis being eligible to play (Robbins et al., 2010). Wheelchair basketball is a sport that is growing from the junior and collegiate levels to the Paralympic level, as it is one of the most popular sports for athletes with physical disabilities (Robbins et al., 2010). Another organization in the Southern United States that gives people with physical disabilities the chance to play sports is BlazeSports America (Anderson, 2009).

This is an organization founded in 1998 and offers opportunities for high quality sport training and competition opportunities for athletes with physical disabilities. Partnering with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) they have extended their community-based programs nationwide (Anderson, 2009). These are just a few examples of popular disability sport organizations in America and around the world.

Another well-known disability sport organization on the international level is the Special Olympics. The Special Olympics is an organization where people with intellectual disabilities regardless of skill level can compete in sport competitions. Participants of the Special Olympics come from 170 countries and have a worldwide total of 4.4 million athletes (Cybulski et al., 2016). Positive impacts of Special Olympics involvement can include increasing social skills, confidence and competence (Cybulski et al., 2016). This is supported by a study done by Harada & Siperstein (2009) where a majority of the Special Olympic athletes in the study (54%) said that fun and enjoyment was the main motivator for participation with friendship being the next highest at 21%. This is also supported in the study by family members of Special Olympic athletes where the top three motives for athlete participation were friendship (35%), fun and enjoyment (27%) and achievement (20%) (Harada & Saperstein, 2009).

There are several barriers athletes with disability face when it comes to sport participation and inclusion in society. Historically, many people with disabilities were often isolated and mistreated, having been issued low expectations and treated with negative attitudes (Harada & Siperstein, 2009). Only 30% of adults with disabilities in the United States participate in sport-based physical activity at least four times a month; this is less than able-bodied people (Mcloughlin, Fecske, Castanded, Gwin, & Graber, 2017). A disabled person does not fit the model of a normal person or athlete (Anderson, 2009). Much less is known about the actual sport experiences of athletes with intellectual disabilities as opposed to those who are able-bodied (Harada & Siperstein, 2009). Women with disabilities are at an even bigger disadvantage. Many people still struggle to identify people with disabilities as athletes and this is

particularly true with women regardless if they have a disability or not (Anderson, 2009). As a result, disabled women are limited by both their gender and disability (Anderson, 2009).

There are several different learning strategies and legislation passed to help people with disabilities become better included in educational and extracurricular settings. For those with intellectual disabilities especially, there are strategies that can create a more inclusive environment for all athletes involved. One such method is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines that suggest using several methods for delivering, clarifying and comprehending content (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). The UDL calls for Multiple Means of Engagement including goal setting, knowing athletes interests, peer demonstration and providing a clear and consistent structure (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). This is similar to what Rosso (2016) suggests that there should be a balance between group and individual activities along with predictable activities for athletes with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The UDL calls for Multiple Means of Action and Expression including, giving individualized feedback to athletes, letting athletes to choose to sit or stand during instruction, provide various types of feedback and use of whiteboards (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013). This is similar to what Rosso (2016) suggests that engagement strategies designed to increase motivation can yield success in autistic athletes by including goal setting, external reinforcement and verbal-cueing. Lastly, the UDL call for multiple means of representation including use of visual markers, cue words, attaching new information to prior knowledge and station activities (Sherlock-Shangraw, 2013).

Due to these struggles people with disabilities face, it is important to understand significant pieces of legislation that have been passed to attempt to help those with disabilities. Much of this legislative action started with the Disability Rights Movements in the 1960s which grew as part of a larger scale of social activism during the time (Bundon & Clarke, 2015). The first major piece of legislation passed after this time was The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, specifically section 504 which helps people with physical intellectual disabilities (Smith, 2001). Under section 504 schools must afford students with the equal opportunities as those without

disabilities (Smith, 2001). Section 504 and the ADA cover people with ADHD, learning disabilities, students who transition out of special education programs and socially maladjusted students. It also covers people with a history of drug abuse, students with health needs and those with communicable diseases such as HIV or AIDS (Smith, 2001). To be classified as disabled under section 504 of the ADA a person must have a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of a person's major life activities, with a record of that impairment or is regarded as having such impairment (Smith, 2001). To be covered under 504 provisions, a person must be otherwise qualified, meaning that a person must be qualified to do something before the presence of a disability can become a factor of discrimination (Smith, 2001).

Another key piece of legislation passed was the Education for all Handicapped Children act in 1975 (Fish, 2008). Next, in 1976, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization proclaimed that all people regardless of gender or disability can participate in sport (Anderson, 2009). Fourteen years later, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 passed creating requirements for access to places that receive federal funds except for churches and private clubs (Smith, 2001). The implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 helps alleviate the negative effects of physical barriers for athletes with physical disabilities. Despite these laws, societal, health and financial barriers still exist (McLoughlin et al., 2017). Section 504 is a section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 are two key federal legislative acts that protect the rights of those with disabilities and prevent discrimination of these people. In order to provide an equitable education for students protected under section 504 and the ADA, accommodations and modifications are often necessary such as attendance policies, seating arrangements or testing accommodations. These accommodations can help students in both the classroom and in extracurricular activities (Smith, 2001). Section 504 and the ADA are having a growing impact on public schools and the schools cannot ignore the provisions of these two pieces of legislation, this had led to parents requesting more services for their kids under these laws (Smith, 2001).

In that same year, 1990, with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a main component of that legislation was the creation of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) which is in Part B of the legislation (Fish, 2008). This compares to the IEP in Part 2 of IDEA which was created for schools and parents to collaborate and share responsibility so that special education students can receive educational services that give those students equal educational opportunities (Fish, 2008). An IEP simply covers any students receiving special education services (Fish, 2008). An IEP provides similar modifications and accommodations as a 504 but in addition to that, IEP regulation mandates meetings with a regular education teacher, special education teachers, the student (14+), a local educational agency representative along with any individual familiar with the student to develop an educational plan tailored to that specific student's needs. These meetings provide key collaboration between educators and parents (Fish, 2008). A challenge with IEP meetings can be confusing and complex for parents leading to dissatisfaction with special educational systems. Many parents come into these meeting with insufficient special education knowledge (Fish, 2008). While there have been challenges with these pieces of legislation more awareness has been brought to them in the twenty first century. Similar to this regarding the IEP meeting study done by Fish (2008), the parents that participated emphasized to become more proactive in educating themselves with special education law to improve IEP meeting outcomes and to better advocate on behalf of their children.

Purpose Paragraph

Previous literature has suggested that there has been little research done on the coaching of disability sport (Duarte & Culver, 2014; Cregan et al., 2007). There are also very few educational opportunities and resources that are available for disability sport coaches. Learning opportunities for those looking to get into disability sport coaching are very limited (Duarte & Culver, 2014). Much of the previous research done on coaching science and education has focused on able-bodied coaching at the elite levels such as the Olympics

(Cregan et al., 2007). This study explores the following research questions (1) What are the experiences of disability sport coaches that lead to future coaching behavior? (2) What are the experiences of disability sport coaches that lead to job satisfaction? (3) What are the experiences of disability sport coaches that lead to intrinsic satisfaction?

Method

Description of Research

This research is explanatory in part because the research is attempting to explain why coaches get involved in coaching disability sport (Jones, 2015). The research will be explained using primary data collected through face to face interviews with disability sport coaches (Jones, 2015). Due to the data being qualitative, the research being conducted will use the Interpretivist paradigm as the interest is in the unique experiences of disability sport coaches (Jones, 2015).

Participant Selection

The participants of the study were 13 coaches of disability sport at the youth, collegiate adult levels (Koh et al., 2018; Cregan et. al, 2007). The sample of disability sport coaches were all chosen from the greater Rochester, New York area. These coaches worked with both team and individual sports. The participants selected represent a variety of sports and several different organizations including Special Olympics New York, Challenger, Rochester Area Blind Athletes and SportsNet (See Appendix A). The sample studied were a cross-section due to the fact we are taking a sample from the overall population (Jones, 2015). A cross-section approach is most commonly used in interviews and questions and is a common research design in sport-related research (Jones, 2015). Consideration was taken to create a balance between coaches of physical disabilities and coaches of athletes with intellectual disabilities. Participants were selected using a mixture of purposeful sampling and Snowball Sampling. Purposeful sampling allows for the deliberate selections of participants who could provide rich qualitative data to answer the research question (Cybulski, et al., 2016). Access to the samples was acquired in part by the researcher's personal network which is private information. In part, access to the

sample was acquired in public on websites of disability sport organizations in the Rochester, New York area to gain contact information of potential participants for the study. Many of the candidates were accessed through snowball sampling from participants which is private information.

Variables and Measures

One of the independent variables measured in the study is the age group coaches by the participants. This is measured by a nominal scale because it has an absolute zero (Jones, 2015). Another independent variable measured in the study are factors leading to wanting to become a coach. This includes life experiences and personality traits. In the study done by Duarte & Culver the participant in the case study was led to her coaching role in adaptive sailing by several life experiences including being a teacher and volunteering at adaptive swimming programs in her high school years (2014). There is no scale of measurement with this because it is qualitative data (Jones, 2015).

The next independent variable measured in the study is personal engagement in the sport. This is measured by the participant's experiences as an athlete. Understanding this is important because Rodgers et al. suggest that coaches who have experience playing that sport as an athlete are likely to apply good coaching practices and coaching practices are influenced from their experiences as athletes (2007). This can be measured in a ratio scale to measure the amount of experience they have had as an athlete in terms of years of experience as an athlete could have an absolute zero (Jones, 2015). A variable measured quantitatively in terms of a coached background and experience is whether they have and coach training or formal education such as a college degree that helps them with their job. The participants in the study done by Hodgson et al., suggest that coaches who have having mentors in their coaching careers along with taking coach development courses have positively impacted the development of their coaching attribute (2017). A nominal scale was used to measure this due to the fact we can put these items into different categories (Jones, 2015).

Another independent variable the researcher looked at was experience as a coach. This includes a number of years being a coach and number of seasons coached in the past three years and measured on a ratio scale because there is an absolute zero (Jones, 2015). Along with years coached, the researcher looked to uncover challenges the coaches faced while coaching disabled athletes. This includes challenges when communicating with athletes with disabilities along with challenges relating to being able to include or accommodate athletes and any potential financial challenges (Cybulski et al., 2016). Being able to coach athletes, especially those with disabilities, comes with their own unique sets of challenges that can impact a coach's job satisfaction (Martin & Whalen, 2014). The researcher asked the participants whether their coaching position is paid or volunteer which is an independent variable measured with a nominal scale (Jones, 2015). This is important variable to measure because volunteer coaching role allows for programs to be offered at a cheaper rate allowing for more people to participate. Volunteer coaches are especially prevalent in community based programs along in disability sport (Duffy et al., 2011). Additional independent variables include, examples of good events and experiences working with athlete support teams. Coaches in disability sports often act as a liaison between the athlete and their parents, therapist or support staff to gain a better understanding of their athlete's needs (Cregan et al., 20017) Since all these variables are sets of qualitative data no scale of measurement was used with this data (Jones, 2015).

The first dependent variable measured in the study is the future coaching behavior and will be measured a nominal scale of continue and quit (Jones, 2015). The second dependent variable in the study will be the job satisfaction of disability sport coaches. A coach's expectations for a team directly influence their behavior towards their athletes (Robbins et al., 2010). In addition Coaching Efficacy has an important impact on other outcomes of athletes (Teatro et al., 2017). This variable is measured on a nominal scale of high and low (Jones, 2015). The third dependent variable measured is Intrinsic Satisfaction which is measured on

nominal scale of high to low (Jones, 2015). Coaches often serve as mentors to their athletes and create long last relationships with their athletes (Martin & Whalen 2015; Cybulski et. al 2016).

Data Collection instrument

Semi structured interviews were used as the chosen method to collect data. Using semi structured interviews allows for rich data collection while avoiding bias from the researcher or participant (Robbins et al., 2010). This method has the advantages of giving freedom to the research participants and giving flexibility in expressing their thoughts and opinions during the interview. This allows for the participants to greater express their meanings associated with their experiences (Šukys et al., 2017). Preliminary interview questions for the participants were prepared with the purpose of gathering socio-demographic data (Šukys et al., 2017).

The interview had total of 27 questions asked. Interviews lasted from a range between 15 and 60 minutes (Šukys et al., 2017; Koh et al., 2018). The first questions asked were precursors aiming to uncover the experiences and factors that got them to their current coaching role (Jones, 2015). This section of the interview asked open ended questions aiming to understand the participant's motivations to become a disability sport coach (Harada & Siperstein, 2009). Next, a series of questions aimed to understand their current coaching role by having the subjects describe the "what" and "how" factors to their current role (Jones, 2015). The "describing the" section focuses on in the socio-demographic understanding of the participant being interviewed (Šukys et al., 2017; Koh et al., 2018). The third and last section of the interview asked questions regarding the future coaching behavior and uncovered how long the participant plans to continue coaching along with their job satisfaction. In the last two sections many of the questions being asked, especially with the independent variables will be open ended to allow for the collection of rich qualitative data and to allow for the participants to elaborate in depth about their experiences (Jones, 2015). All of the interview questions are in Appendix B.

Data Collection Procedure

To begin the data collection process the researcher brainstormed places and organizations where the researcher could find participants to interviews. Such organizations included the Special Olympics of New York Genesee Region, Section V United Sports, Rochester Accessible Adventures, and Miracle Field/Challenger Baseball among others. Following the brainstorming process, research was conducted on these organizations (Jones, 2015). To add more names to the potential list of interview subjects, the researcher looked up potential contacts of Unified Basketball coaches on the athletic pages of websites of school districts in and around Monroe County, New York. Next the researcher utilized his professional network and reached out and network with potential interviewees. After reaching out to potential interview candidates the researcher asked for permission to interview the candidates selected to participate in the study (Jones, 2015). All potential contacts' information was put into a spreadsheet to create a master email list (Jones, 2015).

As Hodgson et al. suggests following the institutions ethics approval, participants were emailed outline the objectives of the data collection and research (2017). Before interviews were given, a pilot test was conducted with an individual, followed by a revision of the interview questions and consent form (Thelwell et al., 2017; Jones, 2015). Once permission was granted from the participants, interviews were scheduled and a cover letter was sent out about the study (see Appendix C). Informed consent was received from all participants before data collection began (Hodgson et al., 2017). The ethical consent statement was reviewed with participants before the interviews began (see Appendix D). A different cover letter and ethical treatment statements were given to the participants from Special Olympics New York (see Appendices E & F). Each participant was interviewed in an environment convenient to them either in person or over the phone (Koh et al., 2018). Six interviews were conducted in person and seven interviews were conducted over the phone. The iPhone voice memos were used for face to face interviews and a tablet audio recorder was used for over the phone interviews. All

participants were given the opportunity to have a pseudonym assigned to them in order to maintain their confidentiality (Bundon & Clarke, 2015). Non-respondents were followed up with an email letter (See Appendix G) (Jones, 2015).

Data Analysis Plan

All interviews were digitally recorded and then later transcribed (Bundon & Clarke, 2015; Jones, 2015). First the researcher familiarized himself with the data that was transcribed followed by the data being read over several times (Šukys et al., 2017). Next codes were given to the responses based on the questions and based on reading and rereading the data set. These codes help categorize data and identify themes within the findings (Bundon & Clarke, 2015; Robbins et al., 2010; Šukys et al., 2017). The data analysis for the study was designed to maintain all the data and provide the ideas of the participants as accurately as possible (Robbins et al., 2010). A thematic analysis was chosen to identify patterns across the data and in order to answer the research questions adequately. This type of analysis is appropriate when the people's opinions, attitudes and personal experiences are being discussed (Šukys et al., 2017). Themes were reviewed to determine if they made a clear pattern and if the themes represented the entire data set (Cybulski, et al., 2016).

To make sense of the quantitative data in this research, the researcher coded the data before being inputted into Windows SPSS software to run descriptive statistical tests (Jones, 2015). After that data was checked to ensure accuracy and that no errors were made (Jones, 2015). Missing values were accounted for as the last step in data preparations before analyzing the data (Jones, 2015). Since the quantitative data in this research is descriptive the researcher will look to find statistics including the mean, ratio and frequency of the data (Jones, 2015). No inferential statistics were used in this research (Jones, 2015).

Results & Discussion

Out of the thirteen participants in the study, five of the participants were female and eight of them were male. The mean average years coached for the participants was 11.4 years with a median and mode of 8 years. The highest amount of experience with coaching was 37 years and the minimum was one year. This sample encompasses a broad range in terms of years of coaching experience. Over the past three years the sample has average 4.46 seasons coached during that time span, with a maximum of 13 and a minimum of 21. The sample, on average, coached two teams with a maximum of six and a minimum of one. Nine out of the thirteen participants only coached one team. Out of those who coached multiple teams, two of the participants coached three teams, one coached five teams and another coached six teams, The two highest totals of teams coached came from George and Gerrard who both coach for Challenger. Most of the participants in the study, 9 out of 13 coached a broad range of ages, where two participants coached youth focused programs and two coaches coached adult focused programs.

A key point to make is that 12 of the 13 participants in the sample do this on a volunteer basis. This agrees with what Duffy et. al (2011) states about coaching mainly being delivered on a volunteer basis worldwide. Karl was the only one that said that she was paid for doing her role but also has had experience coaching in volunteer roles in the past including, coaching with Special Olympics and an adapted rugby team.

For experiences of coaches that lead to future coaching, one experience that is a must is having experience as a player or athlete. All 13 of the participants in the study stated that they played the sport(s) as an athlete that they subsequently coached. Most of them were players in the sports they coached as an athlete at least at a recreational level. Only one candidate Karl said that she played some of the sports she coached, but she coached the most sports of the population in the study. The mean average years of playing experience for patients in this study is 14 years with 9 of the 13 participants having more than 10 years of playing experience. From

this we can conclude that having experience playing a coach is a must for people getting into coaching.

Several participants brought up their experiences teaching and tutoring people as a life experience that lead them to become a coach of athletes with disabilities, Kellogg's states that "So I'm a former high school English teacher and I think it's my personality, led me into some undesignated leadership position." Gerard had teaching experience but as Sunday School Teacher. Gerard stated that "I've even taught like Sunday school, the young kids elementary kids and it's just being around kids." To a greater extent, Heather had a whole career in teaching as opposed to a year in Kellogg's case.

"Actually when I was in high school initially my career path was going to be as a phys-ed teacher, but when I met with the guidance counselor, they told me that being a phys-ed teacher was very difficult because not as many people were employed at that position and suggested that I look into other types of educational fields and back in the late 60's - early 70s. We were one of the high schools that actually had an integrated classroom within the school setting and I was fortunate enough to be able to volunteer and decided the path I was going to take was into Special Education. Not really knowing much about Special Olympics at that point in time when I was first hired as a Special Education teacher is when I first became really aware of Special Olympics, and my love of sports was a great fit and working in the Special Education field. And at that time education in Special Olympics for very intertwined" - Heather

Several participants also stated that their education was the primary motivation for getting involved in the coaching of athletes with disabilities. In tying teaching to giving back to community, Ashley said in her interview that "But I am also a teacher. I love to get back to the community as much as I can." Karl had a degree in Special Education but chose a career in Therapeutic Recreation, she has the following to say about her educational experiences.

"I was a dual major in coaching and special ed and I got involved in a water sports program adapted water sports and basically just going to that program seeing it." -Karl

Another finding in the study was that there was a clear relationship between education and experience. 11 out of the 13 participants had education beyond their life experiences

whether this is coaching certification, a college degree that helps them or other forms of classes. In terms of life experiences, several participants indicated that previous coaching experience with able bodied athletes led them to become coach in disability sport. There is a wide mixture as to what forms of education helped them.

As it relates to education most of the participants have college degrees but in many different fields. Six out of the 13 participants said that their degree helps them in their coaching role. We can conclude from this that a certain degree or program specifically qualifies a person to be a coach of a disability sport team. This is in alignment with what Duffy et al. (2017) stating that coaching does not require a degree in able to be qualified of the position. Several participants in the study stated the education in general was directly helpful to their ability to coach. John Smith was a participant where transferable skills helps him out in the process.

“In think any level of education is definitely helpful. And so a lot of the people who I’ve umm. Work within our own soccer club who I have assigned players of special needs to play their teams, are people who usually fit one of the two profiles. Either they’ve been trained in such a way as a teacher, clinical social worker or otherwise to have..... already have a professional sensitivity and understanding the child's needs that have had a very deep level and are able to connect with them very quickly and effectively so that it helps make the parents more comfortable as well because they have a better, you know shorthand that they’re quicker to situations.” -John Smith

“I have a bachelor's degree. That is not directly related to the coaching, but I believe it helps me take a more serious and organized approach to believing that I can you know, push something forward and move ahead on an initiative like this.” -John Smith

From this one can infer that there are transferable skills that are acquired from a college degree that can apply to a coaching role with disabled athletes.

Beyond college education, four of the participants cited that coaching certifications were helpful. Ashley is one of the candidate that finds that she has coaching certifications were helpful in both teaching the sport and working with athletes with disabilities.

“It's USASF is the cheerleading organization that USASF air about is the

organization I have my cheerleading coaching credentials third in both tumbling and building is what they call it. But I also USASF also offers a special needs cheerleading training certificate and I've also completed that program as well and I completed that program so that I would be able to train my helpers that helped me" -Ashley

Erin has certifications from USA Hockey and in Figure Skating. She has also gone through training with the Special Olympics. David has a certification as a level one ski instructor from the Professional Ski Instructor Association. X-Men was required to take an online course to coach basketball. Karl does not have a coaching certification but her specialized certification helps her in her coaching role. There is no one specific educational course, certification or degree that leads one to become a disability coach. It is largely based on organization; none of the three participants in the study from Rochester Area Blind Athletes or the three participants from Challenger cited that there were coaching certifications that they were required to take. These people's coaching knowledge was based on life experience. George and Gerrard from Challenger both cited coaching their kids in sports as something that helped them with their Challenger Coaching Role.

Another interesting dynamic in this study is that those who coached team focused sports were less likely to have a coaching certification than those who coached individual sports. None of the coaches who coached baseball (6), soccer (3) or basketball (4) cited a coaching certification as a piece of education that helps them in their coaching role. Baseball and basketball are the two most common sports coached in the study and soccer is tied for third. Three out of the four coaches who have coaching certifications coach individual sports, the only exception is Ashley who coaches cheerleading.

Another experience that came up, especially for those who coach individual sports, is that their job or occupation has helped them with their role. Four out of the five participants who coached individual sports said that their coaching role has helped them. One of the participants, Erin is a Social Worker and the other two (Karl & Tina) are Recreational Coordinators. An

interesting outlier that appeared is David claiming that his work as a Business Coach is an outside of sport experience that has helped him in his role as an Adaptive Ski Coach. Both David and Karl coach through SportsNet.

"Honestly, it's experience with the population that I'm serving. So that actually helps more than the sport experience. So what helps me more than having any kind of experience in sports or affinity towards sports is my experience in the area of communicating with individuals with different abilities." -Karl

"I am doing that as a Business Coach at the Rochester Institute of Technology helping entrepreneurship students evaluate their ideas and see if they can bring them to fruition in the marketplace." - David

These life experiences stated above accentuate the finding in the case study done by Duarte & Culver (2014) that concludes that a cultivation of several life experiences translate in to one become a coach of adults with disabilities. Similarly the participant in the Duarte & Culver (2014) study was an English teacher, like Kellogg's was, and had prior experience working with kids with disabilities as several subjects in this study have stated.

Almost all of the coaches, 12 out of the 13 participants in the study said that they plan to continue coaching. An interesting dynamic that appeared in this section is that two out of the three player-coaches interviewed said that their role was not as fulfilling as they thought it would be. X-Men and Kellogg's are both coaches of competitive sports for athletes with disabilities and both of them stressed challenges of financing their program and balancing playing a coaching X-Men stated "I've not only been coaching. I've been playing too, so it kind of been like player coach. And it's not always easy being a player coach." X-Men originally stated that "When I first took on the role, I thought I would just be a temporary coach until we found someone". Kellogg's was thrown into a similar position. In addition the Economic status of people with disabilities creates a challenge especially for Kellogg's has this to say about the socio-economic status of Blind people "people were blind or visually impaired have the lowest employment rate of all disabilities. So, you know, they do have by and large significant

economic underprivileged...” This shows a lack of ability for athletes to fund travel expenses and other costs to participate. Kellogg’s also stated that “organizations that provide grants want to fund the athletes more than they want to fund volunteers”. They have to depend on fundraising to cover the organization’s costs. Kellogg's also shared this frustration with her role and the internal issues the team faces.

"The skills that I've gained the people that I've met that relationship that I felt but it's been very difficult because it's also brought a great deal of conflict within the team and with individuals that I prefer I never asked for that, you know, I mean, I never intended and I don't deal with the conflict while I'm more of a. Big happy family person. So when you have somebody who isn't happy with the coaching or this or that that's that's not that fulfilling that's been really frustrating especially since we're all here." - Kellogg's

X-Men shared similar concerns that combined running the program and being able to coach stating that “we're always fighting trying to get sponsorships to help on that side of things.” Both Kellogg's and X-Men have role in program organizing, this could appear to be too much to play, coach and have a program coordinator role. This has created extra stress on these participants including Kellogg’s who stated "I'm currently thinking, you know assistance for coaching and somebody to take over my team manager role. I would just like to play again." Travel costs are common denominator between these two cases, X-Men states we “struggle hard to have finances to purchase additional chairs and to fight how to get the finances to be able to go on our way out of town.” As competitive based programs, it is important for these groups to be able to travel in order to play quality competition, the team depends on being able to play teams out of town to maintain that level of competition. With this information we can conclude that player-coaches are less likely to have a higher level of job satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction. Having the role of program organizing, playing and coaching is too much for a person to handle. This can be a result of a lack of resources and coaches available to coaches’ disability sport. This relates to Martin & Whalen (2014) stating that in some case athletes with disabilities had had to coach themselves. This also reinforces the point Thelwell et.

al (2016) made that coaches can struggle with managing the demand of the experience of coaching which can result in an impact on their effectiveness of coaching along with the athletes they work with. Tina also stated that in addition to her coaching role she did some training with her athletes to help develop certain movements and muscle to be better equipped to play beep baseball.

On the other side, many coaches found their role fulfillment greater than they could have expected. Both of these coaches said that their role was as fulfilling as they thought it would be and they have made an impact on the lives of the athletes they coached. These participants had a much higher level of intrinsic satisfaction than the other two player-coaches states above.

When asked how fulfilling her role was, Ashley stated

“Absolutely if not more than what I thought it was going to be going in. I knew. I've always loved working with kids of all abilities or athletes. I would love to work with adults as well. And I had a wonderful time. And it keeps me coming back it keeps me working on fundraising and making connections and everything even outside of that. “

In simpler terms Karl stated that when asked the same question "Yeah sure has and then some."

Many coaches believe that they have made a significant impact on their athlete's lives. Some felt like coming in they would not have made an impact but think that they did. George stated he “never intended to think I would have an impact but I think I do”. Some of the coaches said that even the athlete made an impact on them such as Gerrard who stated that “I would hope so they probably made more of an impact on me. I hope I made an impact on them. I mean I get feedback that we do so everything that we do." Joe also made a similar statement saying "I don't know that I'd go that far but like I feel like they appreciate being part of the team and team needs to have people in in leadership roles". To elaborate on this reciprocal feeling of intrinsic satisfaction Tom states that

“Well, I again I'm going back to my earlier statement. I think we're all here for a

purpose and when you look at when you think of Challenger baseball players any child with physical and/or developmental challenges you. Do you see an opportunity to learn about compassion caring you see how your daily challenges are nothing compared to what these athletes experience yet at the same time. They're always happy. They're always enjoying themselves. So if you put things in perspective, it's just a great learning process for people.”

This supports Martin & Whalen’s (2014) assertion that a coach-athlete inspirational relationship is critical and the assertion made by Townsend et al. (2016) that a positive coach-athlete relationship can articulate an athlete’s performance and satisfaction. This teacher is showing it can have an impact on coaches as well. These find overall support what Townsend et al. (2016) claim that Coaching is a social process involving interaction between and coach and athletes.

In terms of how coaches will determine when they quit, the most common answer was when the physically cannot coach anymore. This shows that a lot of disability sports coaches are highly committed to their role and enjoy the role that they are doing. George simply stated the he would stop coaching “when I can't walk out onto the field anymore”. Six out of the thirteen candidate said the age or being physically able to do the role would determine when the quit. Another commonality was being able to find a proper replacement for their role. X-Men combines being physically able to coach and find a proper replacement by stating

“I will do it for as long as they need me to do it. And as long as I have the health and strength to do it and until we get someone we think to fill that role and I don't have to do it anymore”

A couple of candidates said they might have plans to move out of state but would like to continue coaching in disability sport.

“So I will be with this program for this next season for this second season that will be here. I know I'm going to be finishing my degree program here in Rochester soon so I'm not entirely sure where I'll go next. It'll depend on where I get a job I guess. But regardless of where I go I hope to get involved in another program whether it be special needs cheerleading team with a local gym or even challenger baseball challenger basketball anything I can really help out with. I would love to.” -Ashley

From this we can conclude that the coaches in this sample are highly satisfied in their role and that satisfaction will lead them to continue coaching.

In addition, a major factor in determining when to quit was being able to find a proper replacement. Four of the participants explicitly stated when interviewed that finding a proper replacement reason that would intend to quit. Joe stated the direction of the team which we can imply finding a proper replacement as part of that. The team Joe coaches is deciding whether they want to be more competitive that they currently are. If so there might be a need for a different coach. In the same organization as Joe, Kellogg's stated that she is looking for assistance with coaching so she can focus on solely playing again. John Smith cited that down the road this would be his number one factor when determined to quit by saying

“Number one factor is because I have thought about this just as part of getting old but it would be that what I would like to be down. The road is that there is some someone or multiple people. I feel I would have the Trust In passing leadership the program onto. That they would be able to execute on the multiple levels that you need to be able to for it all to come together and work.”

John Smith was key in that startup of the program he coached so this is a very understandable reason to step down. He is greatly involved in the running of the program in addition to coaching. Erin states that is challenging to find coaches to help out and does not want to quit on her kids if he ever had to step down from her position. She states that she is personally very invested coaching. She does not intend to quit anytime soon though.

Another common theme that emerged for coaches determining when to quit is having more time to spend with her family. Ashley plans to start a family in the foreseeable future and states that

“I think what will maybe make me quit for you few years is when I have some children of my own and beginning to build a family and I might not have as much time I guess time would really be too high to allocate because I see I know a lot of new moms and they are on their plea in addition to working. So yeah I think that would be maybe the one thing that would stop me for a little while but not

forever I think I would have pick right back if they were of age that I could bring them with me.” -Ashley

Similarly Erin mentioned that starting a family in the near future would make her stop coaching for a while. George commented on having grandchildren and how they are time consuming and that can stressful at times throughout the season. George stated that it’s going to be hard for me to someday let go... I don't know if I ever can”. If he has to quit, it would because of his family. A common denominator is that several of the coaches will have a tough time letting go of their coaching role or coaching disability sport. Heather claims she will still volunteer even if she cannot coach anyone, she states that

"if I stop coaching I may still be able to volunteer. But coaching is a big commitment. So there are a lot of aspects in the organization that you can have a fulfillment without having the time. It's time consuming, but it's very rewarding."

Ashley and Gerrard both stated that they might have plans to move out of state but want to continue coaching in disability sport. Gerrard has even done research on formal teams. The fact the many of these coaches plan to do this until there are not physically able to signify that they will have a hard time letting go and are in it for the long haul. Younger coaches such as John Smith and Erin state that they have no plans on quitting anytime soon or in the foreseeable future. This shows that that there is a high level of job satisfaction among the majority of these coaches and are committed to helping improve the lives of the athletes they coach. This becomes very much personal for many of the respondents. This leads to high levels of intrinsic satisfaction as well. There is a deep level of commitment from the coaches of their athletes and seeing the program being successful. The coaches in the study are clearly invested in creating this opportunity to play sport available for their athletes.

Despite this commitment to coaching, many respondents discussed the challenge of recruiting players and coaches. Four coaches claimed that this was their biggest challenges. Heather claims that finding coaches is a challenge for Special Olympics. She also claims that

she knows it will be hard to find someone to replace all the work that she does for Special Olympics, it will take a couple of different people to fill her role. Some coaches don't directly say this is a challenge but it can be implied from the data that recruiting coaches or help is a challenge. Ashley stated that she could use more helpers to assist during practices. She described these as able-bodied kids who are between 5-21 who can help out at practice. David also claimed that finding ski instructors is a challenge he faces. This is especially a challenge with adaptive skiing where lots of individual attention for each athlete is needed, for safety reasons. We also imply that people like X-Men or Joe or John Smith who did not say that recruiting is specially a challenge but said that he will quit when he finds a proper replacement for them will determine when they quit.

Job satisfactions of the coaches in the study were impacted by their interaction with support teams that include therapists, group home staff, transportation agencies and parents. Seven out of the 13 participants claimed that interactions with support teams of their athletes impacted their job satisfaction. Four of these seven participants said these interactions had a positive impact on their job satisfaction, one participant said it had a mixed impact and two participants said it had a negative impact on their job satisfaction. Those who had a positive impact on job satisfaction claimed that it made their job easier like Karl who had the following to say

“So, you know, we're looking at what their doctors and therapists and behavioral specialist and speech pathologist and. Physical therapist everything we're looking at what all of those people have to say about this person. What kind of Assessments they've done give us a better idea of support will need to give and whatever. I have a question on. Hey, I don't know if this person would be a great fit or would this program set this individual up for success with this sport be the best option for this person. With this level of ability I go ahead and give a call to you know, the PT or the OT or the teacher or especially the parent. But yeah, so we're kind of always reaching out to those support teams and they're reaching out to us in a lot of cases” -Karl

With those who had their job satisfaction impacted the findings suggest that those who have a career working for a non-for-profit or something closely tied to working with people with disabilities found their job satisfaction to be impacted. Four out of the seven who claimed they that their job satisfaction was impacted fit this jurisdiction. In addition six out of the same seven participants either have a career in education or recreation when asked if his job satisfaction was impacted by support teams Tom said that “it gives it purpose. I run a nonprofit that educates kids to help kids with special needs. So it's definitely part of our mission.”.

On the negative side Tina claimed that dealing with support teams was very time consuming and that to her is “I find it really frustrating that I am working with adults, you know with normal intelligence and. They still need the handheld and I find that very frustrating.” This is coming from a person who is a recreation coordinator for a living. Heather who had experience with people with disabilities found that it was hard to deal with the transportation side of the support teams. Her biggest challenge as a Special Olympics coach is transportation and coaching athletes from a large geographic district. She found it frustrating when transportations services cannot pick them up and instead she would give these athletes a ride.

Erin, who is a social worker, was the only participant who had a career related to working with people with disabilities who said her job satisfaction was not impacted. She can mix this in with her work and does the exact same thing she would do a coach in her job when it comes to working with support teams. She stated that “I just I mean for me it's part of my two worlds colliding my work and life coaching. So for me, I don't really see it that big of an issue I could see where people probably could but again. I think it's a little bit of a different relationship with a lot of our athletes.”

For those who felt their job satisfaction was impacted but did not have a career related to education or recreation, two out of the three participants in this category claimed that having those staff on site helped them out immensely. In David's scenario the support staff were important to the overall safety of the rattlers and had the following to say.

“so we have therapist some of our staff our therapist you have people that home health staff companies some of our students we are we have to be engaged in a safety standpoint with the lifting of the people that are controlling the ski lifts because without them. If you can be a very unsafe situation of loading and unloading people, so they all know us we welcome them to our luncheons and we are constantly trying to communicate to I or through verbal or through hand gestures when we're loading and unloading to make sure that the student has the best loading and unloading experience possible.”

In Ashley's scenario the support staff helped her get through practice and allowed for individual attention to being given to athletes. Ashley claims he helped her by saying

“Therapists I would say. So a few of the athletes do have therapists that are either with them at school or at home and in the very beginning some of them weren't really all that comfortable yet necessarily with me or the helpers because they didn't know us as well and so some of the parents invited the helpers to come to practice and help kind of facilitate the practice. And they I would meet them and they would again similar to how the parents would tell me this is you know you have to say the word and that's it. Knowledge hands the helpers. We're also super helpful or the Edensor therapists because they were also able to say I've been working with this athlete for X amount of years and you know they don't like it when you do this or they really need you to do this. And like you know you really need to stand in front of him and kind of mere waking what the motions and movements he needs to be doing because that's how he learns best. “

These two coaches were both positively impacted by their interaction with athlete support teams. This data reinforces the need for more individualized training with disabled athletes (Cregan et. al, 2007). We can conclude from these support staff interactions that coaches must be aware of an athlete accommodation and transportation need to create an optimal training situation (Cregan et. al, 2007). David and Ashley both have an educational career background. David is a business coach at RIT and Ashley is a College Professor and is a doctoral candidate for sustainability.

All but one participant in the study claimed that they have worked with athlete support teams before. Joe was the only exception, but other coaches interviewed in this study from the same organization claimed they have worked with support team before. The results make it clear that people that want to go into disability sport coaching should expect to work with the support teams of their athletes. To what extent and how each participant's job satisfaction is

impact varies by each scenario. Many coaches especially, those who said it did not impact job satisfaction, accepted that this was part of their job.

Martin and Whalen (2014) state that coaches of athletes of disabilities must be aware of challenges that face their athletes when interacting with environment around them. This was uncovered in the study with those who work with intellectual disabilities, specifically with sensory related issues. John Smith stated that this was one of his biggest challenges when practicing in and indoor facility.

“There's a couple challenges in indoor setting can have some things that. Are not beneficial to the soccer program like this and these were the challenges that we started to figure out from day one. We didn't realize until we actually got there over doing it one. Is that the. Place where we focus on has some fans on the ceiling as two very bright lights has a lot of netting. So like the it has a lot of sensory problems for these kids exactly. For as much as we could have figured that out ahead of time. It didn't come to mind again. The first time we went out there a couple of the kids from one of one of them is too loud. And another was just very enamored by visual stimuli and. That was that took some adjusting for us for the volunteers to find some different approaches.” - John Smith

Ashley had a similar experience at a cheer competition stating that

“I also we've gone new one competition and that competition I had. The organizers weren't that helpful with making sure that we're either first thing in the morning or last of the day. We're kind of in the middle of the program and this was difficult because a lot of my kids get really overwhelmed by my lights loud music a lot of people.”

Erin who coaches with Special Olympics claims that LED lighting can cause sensory issues an athlete she coaches that has a sensory disorder. Tina who had 15 years of experience coaching Special Olympics stated that she had sensory issue with her Special Olympics athletes as well. Karl also said she has challenges before with a girl with a sensory disorder. This make for five out of the six coaches who work have a focus of working with intellectual disabilities stating that sensory issues are a challenge that have to overcome.

Limitations

This study only looks at coaches from the greater Rochester, New York area and nowhere else in the world. With only 13 participants in this study, the sample size is rather small and could be expanded for future research to cover a larger cross-section. By the nature of this study using large amounts of qualitative data and an Interpretivist paradigm, researcher bias is inevitable in the data collection and data analysis section of the study (Jones, 2015). When measuring years coach and experience as an athlete some player gave a mixture of quantitative and qualitative answers stating phrases like “whole life” or “through college” that require the researcher to estimate the number of years which could lead to data being skewed slightly.

Directions for Future Research

For future research a researcher can take this study and apply it to any other major metropolitan area or region in the United States, since this study looks at one specific metropolitan area. To go a step further, this study can be expanded to do a study on participants on a national and even global scale to see if the results align with the findings in this study. In addition to the participant selection, there are variables that could be added including exploring future differences between player coaches and non-player coaches. With the results differing between those who were player coaches and those who were not, a study looking specifically at a large population of player coaches would provide more clarity in understanding that population. Since this study looks at both competitive and non-competitive disability sport, a study focusing on non-competitive or competitive disability sport specifically to in order better understand those populations.

Conclusion

Coaching in disability sport can be a rewarding job yet posed with many challenges. Being a disability sport coach gives people the opportunity to make a huge impact on the lives of the athletes they coach both on and off the field. Many of the coaches in this study are greatly committed to seeing their teams and programs succeed and offer an opportunity to their

athletes what would not otherwise be present for them. This is met with the challenges of dealing with a lack of resources, both with human and financial capital. For disability sport to grow in the future, there needs to be a commitment to having more support of volunteers, and additional bodies on hand to help not with only the coaching but also the programming aspect of disability sport. Being able to relieve coaches of the duties of programming or even playing in addition to coaching would greatly impact the job satisfaction of disability sport coaches and allow them to focus on their passions for sport and helping others. In addition, for disability sport organizations to grow, more financial resources will need to be made available to them.

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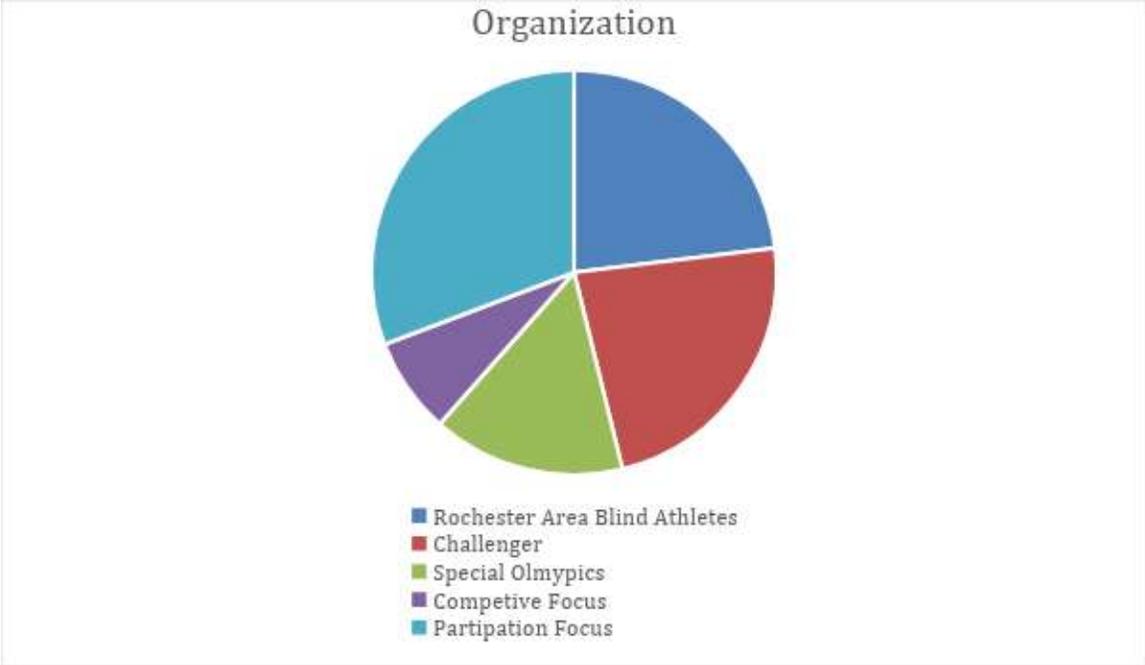
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Appendix

Appendix A



Appendix B**Interview Date:****Pseudonym:****Precursors**

1. What life experiences led you to becoming a coach of athletes with disabilities?

2. What ultimately motivated you to become a coach of athletes with physical or intellectual disabilities?

3. Did you play the sport you are currently coaching as an athlete?
 4. How long did you play that sport?

5. What formal education, either degrees or certifications, do you have that you feel help you as a coach?

6. Outside of your experiences in sport, do you have any experiences, skills or traits that you feel qualify you for your coaching role?

CurrentDescribing the "what"

7. How many teams of athletes with disabilities do you currently coach?

8. How many years experience do you have coaching disability sport?

9. How many seasons of disability sport have you coached in the past 3 years?
10. What age group(s) of participants do you coach?
11. Is your coaching position paid or volunteer?

Describing the "how"

12. What challenges do you face when coaching athletes with disabilities?
 13. Can you describe any challenges you have faced in dealing with communication?

14. Can you describe any challenges you have faced regarding inclusion?
15. Can you describe any challenges regarding financing?
16. Describe the relationships that you have with your athletes.
17. To what extent do you feel your coaching relationship extends beyond the sport setting?
18. How do you engage with the support teams of your athletes?
19. How frequently are you engaging with their support teams in addition to the athlete specifically? Percentage (if possible)
20. To what extent do your interactions with support teams impact your job satisfaction?
21. What are the biggest challenges you face when coaching athletes with disabilities?
22. What is a positive memory that you have from coaching?

Future

23. Has your coaching role been as fulfilling as you thought it would be? Why?
24. Do you feel like you have made an impact on the lives of the athletes you have coached? How?
25. Do you plan to continue to coach in disability sport?
26. What factors will help you determine when it is time for you to quit coaching?
27. Is there anything else that you wish to share with me that you think would help people understand coaching in disability sport?

Appendix C

Dear Participant,

My name is Evan Siebert and I am a student at St. John Fisher College. For my Senior Thesis I am conducting research on factors that lead people to get involved in coaching Disability Sport. Since you are a coach of a team, you are invited to participate in this research study by completing an interview.

Interviews can be conducted in person or over the phone, whichever you are most comfortable with. If you choose to participate in this study the interview will take approximately () minutes and will have (27) questions. There is no compensation for this interview along nor inherent risks. The interview will be audio recorded, but you will be assigned a pseudonym so your answers will be in no way connected to your actual identity. Information from all interviewees will be reported collectively and will not be shared outside the scope of this project unless permission is given by each participant. Participation is voluntary and you discontinue participation during any point during the interview. In order to meet the deadlines of my project, all Interviews must be completed by Friday November 9, 2018.

If you are willing to participate given the above parameters, please email me back at your earliest convenience to set up a time for your interview.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study and assisting me in my education. With the data collected, useful insight into factors motivating involving in disability sport coaching will be uncovered. Little known research has been done of this topic, thus your participation in the research will help Disability Sport Organizations know what to look for when recruiting a coach.

For any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study or complaints about the study being conducted, you may contact Dr. Eileen Lynd-Balta of the St. John Fisher Institutional Review Board at (IRB@sjfc.edu) or my primary instructor Dr. Emily Dane-Staples at edane-staples@sjfc.edu or 585-899-3803.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely

Evan Siebert
(585)-500-8925 / ees03572@sjfc.edu

Appendix D

I _____ hereby choose to participate in the research done by Evan Siebert

During this interview, I understand questions will be asked related to the topic of disability sport coaching. The focus of this research is to uncover factors that lead people to get involved in coaching disability sport. I understand that I have been selected for the study because I am currently a coach a disability sport team or have coached a team in disability sport before. I understand the interviews will be semi-structured, will have # questions, and should take around # minutes to complete.

I consent to the use of an audio recorder and know that the information recording will not be made accessible to the general public.

Participation in the interview is voluntary, I have the right to decline to answer any questions at any point during the interview.

By signing below, I give permission to have the audio recordings from the interview to be used by the researcher for the purpose of this study including papers and/or presentations.

Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Pseudonym I would like to identify as _____

Appendix E

Dear Participant,

My name is Evan Siebert and I am a student at St. John Fisher College. For my Senior Thesis I am conducting research on factors that lead people to get involved in coaching athletes with disabilities. Since you are a coach of a Special Olympics team, you are invited to participate in this research study by completing an interview.

Interviews can be conducted in person or over the phone, whichever you are most comfortable with. If you choose to participate in this study the interview will take approximately 30-60 minutes and will have 27 questions. There is no compensation for this interview along nor inherent risks. The interview will be audio recorded, but you will be assigned a pseudonym so your answers will be in no way connected to your actual identity. Information from all interviewees will be reported collectively and will not be shared outside the scope of this project unless permission is given by each participant. Participation is voluntary and you can discontinue participation during any point during the interview. In order to meet the deadlines of my project, all Interviews must be completed by Friday November 9, 2018.

If you are willing to participate given the above parameters, please email me at your earliest convenience to set up a time for your interview.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study and assisting me in my education. With the data collected, useful insight into factors motivating people to coach athletes with disabilities will be uncovered. Little known research has been done of this topic, thus your participation in the research will help sport organizations, such as the Special Olympics know what to look for when recruiting a coach.

For any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study or complaints about the study being conducted, you may contact Dr. Eileen Lynd-Balta of the St. John Fisher Institutional Review Board at (IRB@sjfc.edu) or my primary instructor Dr. Emily Dane-Staples at edane-staples@sjfc.edu or 585-899-3803.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely

Evan Siebert
(585)-500-8925 / ees03572@sjfc.edu

Appendix F

I _____ hereby choose to participate in the research done by Evan Siebert

During this interview, I understand questions will be asked related to the topic of disability sport coaching. The focus of this research is to uncover factors that lead people to get involved in coaching athletes with physical & intellectual disabilities. I understand that I have been selected for the study because I am currently a coach a Special Olympics team or have coached a Special Olympics team before. I understand the interviews will be semi-structured, will have 27 questions, and should take around 30 minutes to complete.

I consent to the use of an audio recorder and know that the information recording will not be made accessible to the general public.

Participation in the interview is voluntary, I have the right to decline to answer any questions at any point during the interview.

By signing below, I give permission to have the audio recordings from the interview to be used by the researcher for the purpose of this study including papers and/or presentations.

Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Pseudonym I would like to identify as _____

Appendix G

Dear,

Recently an email was sent to you asking to participate in an interview as part of a study attempting to uncover factors leading to Involvement in disability sport coaching. The interview should only take 30-60 minutes to complete and your responses are important in understanding how people get involved in disability sport coaching. Only by asking people like you to share your experiences related to disability sport Coaching we can understand how people get involved in this area.

I understand that you are quite busy and may not have had a chance to respond yet. If you are willing to participate, please respond to this email and we can work on setting up a time convenient to you for an interview. If you are unable to consent to participate or can think of others that might be willing, I would greatly appreciate you forwarding me their information.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Evan Siebert
(585)-500-8925 / ees03572@sjfc.edu

Emily Dane-Staples
(585) / edanestaples@sjfc.edu