

Title: THE ORGANIZATIONAL TASKS OF A CHAMPIONSHIP WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACHING STAFF

Authors: Ashton Dooley, Bryan McCullick, and Paul Schempp

Lead Author Contact: wad82128@uga.edu

Category of Submission: Coaching Research Abstract

Stream: Either "1 – High performance coaching"

While the last decade has produced a rapid surge of sport coaching research that has provided scholars and practitioners with a vast and reliable body of work on the nature of coaching, an important aspect of the act has been given short shrift. Despite its importance, studies have largely ignored the organization component of coaching and devoted much of their efforts to a keen focus on the training and competition aspects (Côté & Salmela, 1996). Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of that work, interestingly, focuses on the study of individual coaches and their work as individuals. This study investigated the organizational tasks of a championship National College Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I women's basketball coaching staff (Staff). Organizational tasks were operationally defined as the behaviors and actions that the Staff performed in order to establish "optimal conditions for training and competition" (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995, p. 9) components of coaching. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, observations, field notes, and document retrieval. Analysis included a four-step inductive process that allowed for the identification of themes and commonalities within and across the data. The findings revealed that the Staff's organizational tasks were best categorized as being three distinct types: a) Reconnaissance, b) Maintenance, and c) Promotional. Reconnaissance tasks were those tasks whereby the Staff was required to collect information important to the team's future endeavors (e.g., scouting opponents, recruiting future players). Maintenance tasks were those unrelated to the instruction or playing of basketball but necessary for sustaining team operations (e.g., monitoring athletes' academic progress). Promotional tasks included actions dedicated to increasing the visibility of the program in the public sphere (e.g., media obligations, social media presence). While a few studies have investigated organizational tasks involved in coaching (Côté, & Salmela, 1996), this study provides one of the initial in-depth analyses of the organizational tasks undertaken by an elite-level team-sport coaching staff. Knowing what organizational tasks large coaching staffs carryout is a direct response to the exhortation of Cushion and Lyle (2010) to provide research relevant to practicing coaches. Furthermore, the isolation of essential organizational tasks may provide an impetus for scholars to design future studies that shed light on this often overlooked but equally important part of the coaching process. The findings have implications for practicing coaches, as they provide a template for how coaches may navigate their own organizational tasks.

References

Côté, J., Salmela, J., Trudel, P., Baria, A., & Russell, S. (1995). The coaching model: A grounded assessment of expert gymnastic coaches' knowledge. *Journal of sport and exercise psychology, 17*(1), 1-17.

Côté, J., & Salmela, J. H. (1996). The organizational tasks of high-performance gymnastic coaches. *The sport psychologist, 10*(3), 247-260.

Cushion, C., & Lyle, J. (2010). Conceptual development in sports coaching. In, J. Lyle & C. Cushion (Eds.), *Sports Coaching* (pp. 1-11). New York: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

Presenting Author Biography

Ashton Dooley (wad82128@uga.edu) is a second-year Ph.D. student at the University of Georgia in the Department of Kinesiology with a concentration in Sport Pedagogy. He earned his Master of Science in Kinesiology with a concentration in Sports Management and Policy from the University of Georgia in 2017 and his Bachelor of Science in Sports Management from North Carolina State University in 2015. His research interests are in expertise in coaching, organizational structure, and organizational culture.