Racial Diversity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Good, Bad, or Indifferent?

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What are the merits (if any) of increasing diversity in administrative and coaching positions in college sports?

The benefits.

Are there reasons not to diversify the leadership ranks of college sports?

The costs.
Similar exercise when teach a class....

● **Is diversity good?**
  – Does diversity lead to positive outcomes?

● **Is diversity bad?**
  – Does diversity lead to negative outcomes?

● **Is it indifferent?**
  – Diversity does not impact outcomes in any way.
What if you were not White?

- What if you were not Latino?
- What if you were not Male?
- What if you were not African-American?
- Would your world change?
As it relates specifically to your job and/or occupation, would you prefer to be?

- White
- Latino
  - Mexican
  - Cuban
  - Puerto Rican
- African-American

Would your professional world change?
For those associated with intercollegiate athletics:

Does your race impact your workplace and/or your career?
Can study this question from an individual, group, or a structural lens.

Easy Answer to this Question:

Until the proportion of African Americans in coaching and leadership positions mirrors the available labor pool for these positions, diversity does impact our college sports organizations.
Fig. 1. Proportion of African Americans in the US population, as players, assistant coaches, and head coaches. Notes: Data gathered from www.census.gov, DeHass (2007, 2008). Historically Black Colleges and Universities excluded.
### NCAA Football DI-FBS

*Head Coach, Offensive and Defensive Coordinator, and Assistant Coach Cross Tabulations by Race and Time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positions Coached</th>
<th>Head Coaches</th>
<th>Offensive Coordinator</th>
<th>Defensive Coordinator</th>
<th>Assistant Coaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1990 (n = 86)</td>
<td>1990 (n = 83)</td>
<td>1990 (n = 87)</td>
<td>1990 (n = 571)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2005 (n = 117)</td>
<td>2005 (n = 102)</td>
<td>2005 (n = 111)</td>
<td>2005 (n = 758)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010 (n = 116)</td>
<td>2010 (n = 119)</td>
<td>2010 (n = 128)</td>
<td>2010 (n = 785)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3 (3.5%)</td>
<td>6 (7.2%)</td>
<td>9 (6.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (2.6%)</td>
<td>12 (11.8%)</td>
<td>9 (7.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 (11.2%)</td>
<td>3 (7.2%)</td>
<td>22 (17.2%)</td>
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</table>

*Notes: Head Coaches: \( \chi^2 (2, n = 319) = 9.05, p = .01 \); Offensive Coordinators: \( \chi^2 (2, n = 304) = 1.58, p > .05 \); Defensive Coordinators: \( \chi^2 (2, n = 326) = 7.21, p < .05 \); Assistant Coaches: \( \chi^2 (2, n = 2114) = 36.26, p < .000 \).*

*Bopp & Sagas (2010)*

*AN EXAMINATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN NCAA DI-FBS FOOTBALL COACHES: A FIVE YEAR UPDATE*
If diversity in the ranks of college sports is not “indifferent”….it matters.

It has an impact.

- **Benefits or Positive Outcomes**
  - Is diversity in leadership good?
    - Does it have a positive influence on individual and/or organizational outcomes?

- **Costs or Negative Outcomes**
  - Is diversity in leadership bad?
    - Does it have a negative influence on individual and/or organizational outcomes?
Problem (Cost) or Opportunity (Benefit)?

● Problem?
    ● Heterogeneity in ascribed demographics (i.e., age, race, gender) leads to negative group (and individual) processes and performance

● Opportunity?
  – “Business Case” for Diversity
    ● Inclusive environments can utilize the full creativity and talents of diverse employees
    ● Can lead to positive group (and individual) processes and performance
    ● Can lead to positive social outcomes

Cox (1993); Cox et al. (1991); Hicks-Clarke & Iles (2000); Richard (2000); Williams & O’Reilly (1998)
If Diversity Does Impact Our Workplace, in What Ways?

- Understanding the impact of diversity on our college sports organizations is multifaceted and complex.
- The complexity has dictated the use of a multidisciplinary approach to studying the impact.
- Fields of sociology, management, psychology, law, economics, policy have been used.
Integrative Model of Categorical Demography in Sport Organizations: The Case of Career Attainment in the Sport Workplace

**Environment**
- Boosters, Alumni, Media

**Social Categorization**
- Ingroup/Outgroup Bias
  - Stereotyping
  - Cognitive Biases

**Individual Processes**
- Favoritism/Impartiality
- Preference/Indifference
- Fairness/Unfairness
- Prejudice/Tolerance

**Individual Outcomes**
- Differential treatment and experiences

**Developmental Experiences**
- Challenging assignments/pos.
  - Skill development
  - Career sponsorship
- Access to influential people
  - Lost opportunities
  - Exposure and visibility

**Treatment Discrimination**
- Individual discrimination
- Organizational discrimination

**Aversive discrimination**

**Work Experiences**
- Job satisfaction
- Supervisor support
- Stress
- Work env.
- Social interactions
  - Feelings of isolation
  - Social support

**Career/work motivation & opportunity**
- Self-limiting behavior
- Disempowerment
- Aspirations
- Stay intentions
- Opportunity

**Career Success & Attainment**
- Career satisfaction
- Promotions
- Salary
- Level (head coach, assistant coach, etc)
- Commitment

**Human & Social Capital**
- Network ties
  - Demo. Similarity
- Tie strength
- Education
- Experience
- Training

**Individual KSA’s**
- Individual networks
- Individual education
- Individual background (position played, university graduated from)
Diversity and the Career Attainment Process in the College Sport Workplace

Antecedents
Positive and Negative

Processes
Positive and Negative

Outcomes
Positive and Negative
## Antecedents of Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Role modeling</td>
<td>• Institutional Racism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Cultural pattern for young athletes to aspire to positions in which they see their role models succeeding in</td>
<td>– Impacts positions African-American athletes play as well as the coaching and leadership positions that they assume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Homologous Reproduction</td>
<td>• Stakeholder Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– NCAA basketball staffs</td>
<td>– Alumni and booster influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Black head coach</td>
<td>– “Perceived need to employ personnel with whom donors can identify” (Cunningham, 2010, p. 398)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asst. C = 45% Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– White Head coaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asst. C = 30% Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NCAA Diversity Initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Political Pressure</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Media Pressure</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Research Reports and Findings</td>
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</table>

Anderson (1993); Cunningham, (2010); Cunningham & Sagas (2005); Finch et al. (2010); Bopp (2010)
Stakeholder Power

Richard Lapchick has noted:

“I have had discussions with people in searches for coaches and athletic directors that the final decision was made to hire a White male because they were afraid of their alumni....would not contribute as much or as readily to an African-American athletic director or coach.”

As cited in Wong, 2002, pg. 1
# Diversity Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Multicultural Cultures**  
  - See diversity as an asset  
  - Proactive recruitment and hiring  
  - Mentoring activities | **Differential Standards**  
  - Failure by an African-American in one opportunity generalized to all, not the case for Whites |
| | **Differential Treatment**  
  - African-Americans valued less, given less complex tasks, pigeon-holed as recruiters, fewer returns on their human and social capital |

Cunningham (2010), Sack et al. (2005); Sagas & Cunningham, (2005)
## Diversity Outcomes

<table>
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<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Intentions to Coach</td>
<td>• Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- African-American athletes have indicated greater intentions to coach than Whites</td>
<td>- African-American athletes expect to encounter significantly more barriers to become a head coach in football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No differences have been noted among AA and W assistant coaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Better on Field Performance</td>
<td>• Turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Racial diversity positively associated with objective measures of overall performance</td>
<td>- African-American coaches intend to leave coaching much sooner than their White counterparts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Additional Role Models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cunningham (2010), Cunningham (2009); Sack et al. (2005); Sagas & Cunningham (2005)
Diversity Outcomes

Negative

- Lower Career Satisfaction
- Fewer Donations to Athletic Department?
- Self-Limiting Behavior
  - Limiting career goals and lowering attitudes because of environment
  - Discriminating against oneself
  - Not seeing African-American coaches being treated fairly is discouraging to young athletes

Recent views from African-American football athletes on their futures in coaching:

- “They put you in a position to make you feel equal, but it is just a title”
- Not seeing enough head coaches who are African American is discouraging and makes being a head coach “damn near impossible”
- “It is a White man’s world”
- African Americans must be better qualified than their White counterparts to get high-profile leadership positions

Cunningham & Sagas (2004); Cunningham & Singer (2010, p. 1720)
What are the merits (if any) of increasing diversity in administrative and coaching positions in college sports?

There are numerous.
Are there reasons not to diversify the leadership ranks of college sports?

There are none.