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BURNOUT IN COACHING HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

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I am submitting herewith a field study written by Shannon Leigh Johnson entitled "Burnout in Coaching High School Athletics." I have examined the final copy of this field study for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Education Specialist, with a major in Secondary Education.

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BURNOUT IN COACHING HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

A Field Study
Presented for the
Education Specialist
Degree
Austin Peay State University

Shannon Leigh Johnson
May 2003

DEDICATION

This field study is dedicated to my parents, Nelson and Wanda Johnson, for always believing in me and encouraging me to achieve my goals, and my brother, Jason Johnson, for his continued support and guidance.

Abstract

Stress threatens the well being of the individual. When stress becomes intense or chronic, burnout occurs. Burnout occurs in a person who is overcome by fatigue and frustration that is usually brought about when a job, a cause, a way of life, or relationship fails to produce the expected reward. Some occupations have different levels of stress that leads to burnout. An occupation that has varying levels of stress is a high school coach.

In an effort to measure stress and predict the possible burnout in coaches, 37 coaches in three large, rural high schools responded to a questionnaire on burnout from Maslach's Burnout Inventory. Each coach completed a demographics page that included age, total years experience as a coach, total years as a head coach, and gender. Each coach's response to the questions were tabulated to determine their individual stress level. The coaches were placed in one of four categories of stress levels according to the MBI. Female coaches were examined with the group as well as separately to see if gender had a significant impact on stress levels. It was hypothesized that selected high school coaches would be moving toward burnout using as a standard the Maslach Burnout Inventory scale. The hypothesis was rejected. Coaches and schools must recognize the signs of burnout. It is important for both coaches and schools to examine methods to reduce stress levels and decrease burnout levels of coaches.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In today's fast paced society, stress is readily observable in many occupations. The negative effects of stress are great. These include confusion, inability to make decisions, avoidance of people, as well as, physical and psychological problems. Some occupations, of course, have different levels of stress that leads to burnout. An occupation that has varying levels of stress is high school coaching. Athletics has become an important part of every school's curriculum. Stress and burnout are critical issues for teachers and coaches who work at the high school level. Coaches are called upon to be colleagues, peers, teachers', and coaches. Consequently, their duties and responsibilities are usually very complex and demanding. As a result of the demands of the job, coaches experience varying degrees of stress.

Importance of the Problem

Many exceptional coaches are leaving the coaching field because of problems associated with burnout. Increased job demands, excessive workloads, conflicting roles, pressure to win, high expectations, and striving to satisfy both professional and personal needs often cause burnout in the high school coach. The coach is placed in a situation where there is almost continual stress. The coach may have continuous and often emotionally volatile interaction with players and/or parents. The coach has the added pressure of producing a winning team and handling defeat. Regardless of the quality of players, there is the expectation that one must produce, which means it is expected that the coach will

win. In addition, the coach also is in the public eye and must contend with the media, even at the high school level. The coach has a dual role. The coach is often told that they are a teacher first and a coach second. However, this is not usually the case from a realistic standpoint.

Problem

When stress becomes intense or chronic, burnout may occur. Burnout occurs in a person who has been overcome by fatigue and frustration, which is usually brought about when a job, a cause, a way of life, or relationship fails to produce the expected reward. Burnout occurs with individuals who work with other people and who give much more than they get in return.

Relationship of the Problem

An examination of burnout allows a school or school system to examine specific methods in which they can decrease burnout in their coaches. These methods are applicable in other coaching communities as well.

Research Questions

The following question(s) were addressed in this study:

1. What are the leading factors that cause burnout in coaches?
2. What is the stress level of coaches in three rural high schools?

Hypotheses

1. On the basis of the research findings, it was hypothesized that selected high school coaches will be moving toward burnout using as a standard the Maslach Burnout Inventory scale.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions are provided for a better understanding of terms used in the proposed study:

1. **Stress** – the tension you feel when faced with a new, unpleasant, or threatening situation.
2. **Burnout** – refers to a state of emotional exhaustion caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands made on people working with other people.
3. **Emotional Exhaustion** – feeling of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work.
4. **Depersonalization** – an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's service, care, treatment, and instruction.
5. **Personal Accomplishment** – feelings of competence and successful achievement in working with other people.
6. **Maslach Burnout Inventory** – research questionnaire/survey used to measure burnout in three areas: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made about the proposed study:

1. The Maslach Burnout Inventory is the standard to use for the study.
2. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was modified to elicit coaching responses to stress and burnout.

3. The process and procedures of providing the surveys to coaches were distributed in a fair and consistent manner.
4. From coaches' responses on the survey, generalizations were made applicable to all coaches.

Limitations

This study was limited to 55 teacher-coaches in three rural high schools. The study was limited in that only 14 (25%) of the coaches were female. From this study, a comparison of the relative stress levels based on gender were made. Since there are few female coaches compared to male coaches, generalizations and recommendations may not be gender specific.

Delimitations

The Maslach Burnout Inventory was provided to 55 coaches from three rural high schools. Student populations of the schools average 1200 students. Of the 55 coaches surveyed, 41 were male, and 14 were female.

Preview

To understand that burnout is a high factor in coaches today, one must review the data and statistics that are available. To attain this goal, a review of past practices and statistics, as well as questionnaires and interviews with current coaches was conducted to examine their relative level of stress.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

In today's fast paced society, stress is readily observable in many occupations. The negative effects of stress include confusion, inability to make decisions, avoidance of people, as well as, physical and psychological problems. There are many levels of stress. When stress becomes intense or chronic, burnout can occur. As education has become more complex, researchers have begun an intensive investigation into the subject. According to Vealey, Udry, Zimmerman, and Soliday (1992), burnout occurs in a person who is overcome by fatigue and frustration that is usually brought about when a job, a cause, a way of life, or relationship fails to produce the expected reward. Burnout may occur with individuals who work with other people and who give much more than they get in return. Burnout may also refer to a state of emotional exhaustion caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands made on people working with other people. It occurs when the demands of the activity exceed individuals' abilities to cope. In the process, they become overwhelmed by the stress of the activity. According to McMahon, McMahon and Romano (1995), symptoms may include lack of enthusiasm for work, a sense of helplessness, and frustration. Some occupations, of course, have different levels of stress that leads to burnout. An occupation that has varying levels of stress is the high school coach.

Greenleaf (1998) provides an excellent definition of burnout. First, burnout involves feelings of exhaustion that take multiple forms such as physical, mental, and emotional. This exhaustion is often seen in individuals involved in tasks that demand a great deal of interpersonal interaction. Second, this exhaustion leads to a negative change in an individual's response to others such as cynicism, depersonalization, a lack of

engagement, and a lack of empathy. Third, burnout is characterized by a lack of perceived accomplishment in terms of what one has accomplished. This perceived lack of personal accomplishment may decrease performance level that creates low self-esteem and a desire to withdraw from the activity. Fourth, burnout is a chronic response to ongoing prolonged stress as opposed to occasional reaction to acute stress.

Research of Burnout

Since the implementation of Title IX, the number of female athletes has increased; however, the number of female coaches has declined. Pastore (1991) devised and conducted a survey to determine the reasons why women were leaving the coaching profession. Two research questions were asked: What influenced coaches of women's athletic teams to enter the profession? What influenced coaches of women's athletic teams to leave the profession? The second question demands exploration. The study consisted of 155 (148 men, 107 women) coaches. This survey is important because it may be compared to the data received from local coaches. Pastore and Kuga (1993) conducted a similar survey in their evaluation of burnout levels of high school coaches.

Burnout has drawn increasing interest from researchers in a number of disciplines. There is specific research that indicates that burnout is an important issue related to coaching longevity and productivity (Kelley & Gill, 1993; B. Kelley, 1994; Milam, 1995; Vealey, Udry, Zimmerman & Soliday, 1992). Kelley and Gill (1993) state that the early years of coaching are the most stressful and are more synonymous with burnout. Other researchers (Raedeke, Granzyk, & Warren, 2000) state that coaches must care about their sport before they experience burnout, regardless of age and experience.

In coaching, burnout has a number of repercussions that negatively impact not only the coach but the athletes serving under that coach. Raedeke, Granzyk, and Warren (2000) state that there is a link between burnout and feelings of entrapment. Entrapment occurs when coaches become less attracted to coaching but feel they have to maintain their involvement because they perceive a lack of attractive alternatives to coaching. They believe they have too much invested to quit, or they think others expect them to continue coaching. In their studies, coaches with characteristics of entrapment reported significantly higher exhaustion and depression than other coaches without those characteristics. The negative effects of coaching burnout merits study in hopes of developing prevention strategies so that coaches can remain in their chosen profession. There is research data available that provides coaches with specific ways to reduce those tendencies that produce burnout (Milam, 1995; Steinberg, Singer, & Murphey, 1999).

Coaching, Responsibilities, and Demands

Athletics has become an important part of every school's curriculum. Stress and burnout are critical issues for teachers and coaches who work at the high school level. Coaches are called upon to be colleagues, peers, teachers, and coaches. Consequently, their duties and responsibilities are usually very complex and demanding. As a result of the demands of the job, coaches experience varying degrees of stress. Job related stress and the increasing incidence of burnout among coaches is a concern. Increased job demands, excessive workloads, conflicting roles, pressure to win, high expectations, and striving to satisfy both professional and personal needs often cause burnout in the high school coach (Kelley, 1994). The high level of burnout in coaches is also supported by Taylor (1992), Judith and Frank McMahon, and Tony Romano (1995). For example,

Taylor (1992) states that coaches do not stay in the coaching profession as long as they once did. He also states that young coaches believe that they want to coach, but the realities of the position very quickly change their mind. Quigley, Slack, and Smith's (1987) data supports this conclusion. Additionally, Kelley, Eklund, and Ritter-Taylor (1999) conducted studies in which they found that women had a higher tendency than men in finding coaching issues stressful. Women coaches reported that they did not have sufficient time to devote to their coaching responsibilities as a result of their perceived personal family responsibilities. Consequently, they felt more stress and were more prone to experience burnout and ultimately leave the coaching profession. Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) also examined gender differences in perceived burnout of coaches. In their study, they assessed the level of perceived burnout in athletic coaches and tried to determine whether male coaches differed from female coaches in levels of burnout. Female coaches reported significantly higher levels of emotional exhaustion and significantly lower levels of personal accomplishment than male coaches.

Coaches are expected to win. This applies not only to collegiate and professional coaches but to coaches at the high school level. High school coaches are highly scrutinized by the school administration and the community if favorable results are not achieved. Often, if those results are not achieved, the coaches are replaced. However, Steinberg, Singer, and Murphey (1999) believe that coaches have only a limited amount of control in producing a winning season. A coach can design excellent practices, develop sound strategies, and call the appropriate plays during a game. In order to be successful, however, the athletes must execute the skills effectively. According to their

research, having a limited amount of control over winning and losing can result in serious physical and emotional health problems for the coach and lead to burnout.

Burnout and the Mental Role

It is evident that burnout is related more to a coach's mental attitude rather than the coach's behavior. Kelley's (1994) research confirms this observation. Kelly states that coaches put so much pressure on themselves to succeed and be successful that their stress level increases dramatically. Coaches feel a great deal of pressure to win, and they believe their job is in jeopardy if they do not win. This placed a tremendous level of stress on the coach and was a significant reason for burnout. Taylor's (1992) research supports this conclusion. Steinberg, Singer, and Murphey (1999) support this conclusion.

A number of researchers have alluded to the idea that chronic stress is not sufficient to cause burnout. Rather, they emphasize that only highly committed people will experience burnout. For example, Raedeke, Granzyk, and Warren (2000) state that, while everyone can experience stress, people who entered their careers with high goals, expectations, and motivation can only experience burnout. These people expected to derive a sense of accomplishment for their work. Consequently, burnout seems to occur when individuals who are highly committed to coaching become disillusioned with their coaching involvement or coaching careers. In other words, coaches, who do not care if they experience success, do not readily suffer burnout.

There has been numerous studies of burnout among high school coaches and coaches in four-year colleges. Pastore and Judd (1993) examined the issues in two-year colleges. Their primary purpose was to determine if significant gender differences existed in the perceived burnout levels of women's teams in two-year colleges. A

secondary purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between the coaches' levels of burnout with age and years of coaching experience. The data from this survey allows comparison with high school coaches and four-year college coaches.

Factors and Characteristics of Burnout

Various demographic characteristics are related to burnout. Demographic characteristics include gender, age, experience, and personal status. Personal status includes such areas as single versus married and children versus no children. Research (Kelley, 1994; Zhang & Jambor, 1997; Vealey, Udry, Zimmerman, & Soliday, 1992) supports the concept that female coaches are higher in emotional exhaustion and lower in feelings of personal accomplishment than male coaches at the high school level. The same research also supports the concept that male coaches are higher in depersonalization than female coaches. Single coaches have been found to be higher in emotional exhaustion than married coaches. Married coaches have been found to be higher in personal accomplishment than single coaches.

There has been a number of studies on burnout. Maslach conducted research in a number of areas within social and health psychology. She is best known as one of the pioneering researchers on job burnout. She authored the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). In her investigations of burnout, Maslach (1997) identified three factors that contributed to the development of burnout. These factors were identified as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. A significant contribution of Maslach's work was the development of an instrument that measures an individual's burnout level. The formulation of the MBI was a major step in the study of burnout in workers. The MBI may be specifically applied to coaches at the

high school level as well as at the college level (Lemke, 2000). Maslach is an internationally known expert on job burnout, and her work has been translated into many languages. Her work is viewed as the standard used when assessing burnout.

Coaches burnout because they are expected to win, perform administrative tasks, supervise their players, and work with parents. Their leadership roles demand that they take care of everyone but themselves. Research studies support these findings (Kelley, Eklund, & Ritter-Taylor, 1999; Kelley & Gill, 1993; Vealey, Udry, Zimmerman, & Soliday, 1992). Steps need to be taken to help these coaches. Burnout can affect their physical and psychological well-being. It can also have a negative influence as to how effective or ineffective they are. One must also realize that if a coach is ineffective in coaching, he will usually be ineffective in the classroom. Many coaches realize that they cannot maintain the fast paced, highly stressful lifestyle. Many coaches devote a predetermined number of years to coaching and quit when they first experience burnout. According to Milam (1995), if positive steps are not taken to help these coaches to reduce their level of stress, bunout may occur and they may eventually leave, the coaching profession. Pastore (1994) lists specific strategies for retaining female high school coaches. This study is of significant benefit for administrators and coaches. Inglis, Danylchuk, and Pastore (1996) examined factors for retaining coaches. The purpose was to reverse the decline of the number of individuals, in particular, women, who were leaving the coaching profession.

Chapter III

Methodology

Participants

In an effort to measure stress and predict the possible burnout in coaches, coaches from three high schools were selected to take part in a survey to measure their relative stress levels. The schools were located in large rural settings. Enrollment in School A was 1361. Enrollment in School B was 1393, and enrollment in School C was 838. The student population was very mobile, with student athletes frequently transferring in and out of school during the playing seasons. Participants were coaches who were also responsible for teaching, study hall, or supervision for five class periods each day. Each coach also had a planning period each day. School A had seventeen coaches, with eight male head coaches and four female head coaches. There were four male assistant coaches and two female assistant coaches. School B had seventeen coaches, with seven male head coaches and five female head coaches. School B had five male assistant coaches and no female assistant coaches. School C had twenty-one coaches, with thirteen male head coaches, three female head coaches, and five male assistant coaches. There were no female assistant coaches at School C. The age range of the coaches was 24-61. Specific age breakdown was determined from a questionnaire given to each coach. Coaching experience was also determined from the questionnaire.

Materials

In an effort to identify the factors that caused or contributed to high stress levels in coaches, a variety of sources were utilized. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was the primary information-gathering tool. The questionnaire was distributed to each coach. The coaches were asked to respond to a series of questions that assessed their relative stress levels. The Maslach Burnout Inventory was viewed as the standard in which other similar surveys are judged.

History of the Test Instrument

Christina Maslach was a Professor of Psychology at the University of California. (1997) She received her A.B. in Social Relations from Harvard-Radcliffe College in 1967. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology from Stanford University in 1971. She has conducted research in a number of areas within social and health psychology. However, she is best known as one of the pioneering researchers on job burnout. She authored the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the most widely used research measure in the burnout field. In addition to numerous articles, her books on this topic include Burnout: the Cost of Caring, Professional Burnout: Recent Developments in Theory and Research with Wilmar Schaufeli, The Truth About Burnout with Michael Leiter, and Preventing Burnout and Building Engagement: A Complete Program for Organizational Renewal with Michael Leiter. The Maslach Burnout Inventory measures burnout in three areas: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Maslach is an internationally known expert on job

burnout, and her work has been translated into many languages. Her work is viewed as the standard used when assessing burnout.

Design and Procedures

Permission to administer a survey of this nature necessitated approval from several sources. After approval from Austin Peay State University was obtained, the district central office for the schools was contacted for approval to conduct the survey for the coaches. The principals of each school were also contacted for their approval. Assurances were given at each level that the schools and the participants were not to be identified. For example, all written information that was given to coaches contained specific statements that they were not identified. Assurances were also given when meetings occurred with the coaches. After all permissions had been received, contact was made with each coach by letter. Principals of each school were asked for their permission to distribute all information to the coaches through the school mail service. The cover letter explained the purpose and requirement of the study and asked for their participation. Approximately two weeks after the cover letter was sent, the Maslach Burnout Inventory was sent to the individual coaches. Each coach was asked to complete a demographics page. The demographics page asked the coaches to state their age in specific ranges, total years experience as a coach, years of experiences as a head coach, and gender. Each coach was instructed to respond to a series of questions. The coaches were asked to respond on a number scale, one being the lowest and ten being the highest in terms of how much stress they perceived when dealing with their sport. In addition, the female coaches'

responses were stratified to determine if responses were different between males and females. The responses were then scored according to Maslach's scale. The coaches were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire and return it in a self-addressed envelope. Realizing that coaches were extremely busy during the school year and reluctant to complete the questionnaire, a follow-up was made with the coaches in an effort to get an 80% rate of return on the surveys. Each school had a staff development day in which permission was obtained from each principal to personally meet with the coaches to get the survey completed. The schools were located in close proximity; therefore, time and distance for the meetings was not a problem. This insured a high rate of return on the survey and insured more accuracy and validity for the projected study.

Evaluation

After the questionnaire was returned, coaches' responses to the questions were tabulated to determine their individual stress level. The data were used to measure the relative stress between head coaches and assistant coaches as well as gender, experience, and age. The questionnaire allowed a score to be assigned to each coach assessing his/her stress level. Then, according to the Maslach scale, the coaches were placed in one of four categories of stress levels. After the data were collected, tabulated, and scored, a copy of the results was sent to the participating coaches.

Chapter IV

Analysis of the Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the degree of burnout among selected high school coaches and to identify factors that may contribute to burnout. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which burnout was experienced by a sample of coaches and to compare these findings to Maslach's Burnout Inventory.

The subjects for this study were secondary school teacher-coaches from three high schools. In an effort to measure stress and predict the possible burnout in coaches, 56 coaches were contacted to complete questionnaires. Each coach was asked to respond to a series of 20 questions from Maslach's Burnout Inventory. Questionnaires were returned by 37 (66%) of the coaches, of which 28 (76%) were male and nine (24%) were female. Participants were head coaches and assistant coaches who were responsible for teaching, study hall, or supervision for five class periods in addition to their coaching responsibilities. All coaches had a planning period. Each coach completed a demographic data sheet that contained information as to their sex, age, marital status, and experiences as a teacher and coach (see Table 1), Coaches' Marital Status.

Table 1

Coaches' Marital Status

Gender	Number	Married	Single	Divorced	Children
Female	9	5	3	1	3
Male	28	21	2	5	18
Total	37	26	5	6	21

The 37 coaches' average age was 41, women at 40 and men at 42 years of age. The youngest was 24, and the oldest was 56. Age distributions are listed in Table 2, Coaches' Age Distribution.

Table 2
Coaches' Age Distribution

Age Distribution	Average Age	Oldest	Youngest
Male	42	56	26
Female	40	56	24
All Coaches	41	56	24

The male coaches had an average of 12 years of coaching experience. The female coaches had an average of six years of experience. Collectively, they averaged 10 years of coaching experience (Table 3), Coaches' Experience Record.

Table 3
Coaches' Experience Record

Coaching Experience	Average Years
Male	12
Female	6
All Coaches	10

Each coach responded to a series of 20 questions from Maslach's Burnout Inventory (MBI). To make the MBI more relevant to coaches, items were slightly modified by substituting "coaching" for "work" and "athletes" for "people." The MBI is divided into three categories, which independently measures levels of burnout. The three categories are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and

personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion assessed feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. Depersonalization measured an unfeeling and impersonal response to one's care, treatment, or instruction. Personal accomplishment assessed feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people. The MBI measured levels of burnout as high, moderate, or low. The Maslach Burnout Inventory Scale (see Appendix p. 45) indicated the various levels of perceived burnout according to the MBI.

Collectively, the data was troubling. The 37 respondents had an average score of 5.8 on the MBI. Male coaches had an average score of 5.9, and female coaches averaged 5.6. These scores were on the upper end of the subheading monitor your situation on the MBI scale. When the scores were rounded off, as does the MBI scale, the group averaged a six and fell in the yellow light category. This category, of course, refers to the group as moving toward burnout. When one breaks the data down into depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion, the data became even more significant.

Personal accomplishment assessed feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people. The group scored 6.2 on this subscale. Males scored a 6.7, and females scored a 5.2. Thus, there was a difference between males and females. A significant number of male coaches believed they were not successful in their careers. Perhaps, the number was affected by the fact that there were more male head coaches than female head coaches. As a result of

this score on the MBI, males fell into the yellow light category, meaning that they are moving toward burnout. Females fell into the monitoring category.

Depersonalization measured an unfeeling and impersonal response to one's care, treatment, or instruction. The group scored a 5.4 on this subscale, which was a good score according to the MBI. Male coaches scored a 6.7, and female coaches scored a 5.0. If one looked at question five (giving more than you get in return), the group scored a 7.9. Males scored an 8.1, and females scored a 7.8. If one looked at question 11 (not having time to attend to my family or personal needs), the group scored at 6.6. Male coaches scored a 6.8, and female coaches scored a 6.3. Thus, the overall score of 5.4 was misleading. Therefore, there were concerns within this subscale.

Emotional exhaustion assessed feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. In many respects, emotional exhaustion was the most important category for predicting burnout among high school coaches. All coaches scored 6.7 on the emotional exhaustion subscale of the MBI. Males scored a 6.9, and females scored a 6.2. These were the highest score of all categories. These scores placed the coaches in the yellow light category on the MBI. Because the scores were higher, several statements on the coaches' questionnaire were explored. When considering question one (work characterized by intense pressure), the coaches scored a 7.1, with male coaches scoring a 7.3 and females a 6.9. When examining question two (work not getting easier), coaches scored a 7.5, with males scoring a 7.6 and females a 7.3. On question four (going up against a brick wall), coaches scored a 7.2, with males

scoring a 7.6 and females a 6.8. On question eight (conflicting demands), coaches scored an 8.2, with males scoring an 8.0 and females scoring an 8.3.

The results of this study demonstrated that the coaches were suffering from moderate to high levels of burnout. The coaches were often overwhelmed by the demands of being both a teacher and a coach. The study demonstrated the coaches suffered from emotional exhaustion. The coaches often placed distance between themselves and the athletes, although, apparently, not excessively. It is apparent that coaches feel a great deal of pressure in their jobs. Collectively, then, the data suggests that these coaches are suffering from moderate to high levels of burnout, thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This study indicated that coaching was more stressful for male coaches than female coaches. With the exception of the category conflicting demands, male coaches' stress levels were consistently higher than female coaches. Perhaps, this was because sports were more of a central focus and priority among high school boys than they were for high school girls in the selected schools. Generally, the recognition and profile of male athletics is much higher than female athletics. Perhaps, the support, both in the community and with administrators, which accompanies this recognition, influenced female coaches' sense of personal accomplishment. The data suggested that the high score on emotional exhaustion reflects a work overload situation experienced by the teacher-coaches rather than the cumulative product of feelings of depersonalization and a lower sense of personal accomplishment. The work overload experienced by the coaches appeared to be a significant contributor to burnout. This was consistent with the review of literature on the subject. Female coaches scored higher in emotional exhaustion as demonstrated in the review of literature. This was not the case in this study. Perhaps, the low number of female coaches in this study compared to male coaches, combined with the fact that only five female coaches were married and three had children, influenced the stress level. Female coaches reported lower scores on the personal accomplishment subscale than male coaches. Since female coaches in this study primarily coached

experience burnout. Recommendations were made to better understand this problem.

1. Future research is needed to examine the progression and relationships between coach burnout, coach behavior, athlete perceptions, and athlete burnout.
2. Future studies are needed to determine whether socialization adversely affects women in their decision to enter or leave the coaching profession.
3. This study suggests steps be taken to raise the consciousness of coaches to the stresses inherent in coaching and, more importantly, to identify ways of dealing with these stresses so as to minimize burnout.
4. There should be further research on coaching and burnout to identify the factors that may cause both male and female coaches to leave the profession.
5. Demographic variables such as marital status should be studied to determine how these variables affect male and female coaches' burnout levels.
6. Former coaches should be surveyed, for these are the ones who may truly be burned out.
7. Future research needs to focus on identifying strategies that can help reduce the level of burnout experienced by coaches.

Some strategies that may be utilized by coaches, schools, and administrators to reduce burnout are:

1. Additional mentoring by more experienced coaches may help to alleviate some of the difficulties encountered by new coaches.

2. Accepting the limitations of control within the coaching profession is an important step in developing a healthy and appropriate attitude.
3. After accepting the limitations of the job, the next step is to focus on what can be controlled.
4. The coach may also want to distribute some of the team control to qualified colleagues.
5. The coach should de-emphasize what cannot be controlled.
6. Coaches should learn to say no. They should learn how to turn down extra responsibilities, and they should not coach the year round.
7. Coaches should deal with only the most pressing problems – the things that affect their health, family, and job. Trivial things should be saved when there is little to do.
8. There should be a clear-cut understanding of the word "success." Coaches should not measure success just by victories but by the lives they influence for the good and change for the better.
9. Schools must foster an atmosphere of openness and support for coaches.

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APPENDICES

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Read Message

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From:"Vick, Evelyn (Montgomery Central High School)" <evelyn.vick@cmcss.net>
Date: Tue, 22 Apr 2003 15:20:13 -0500
To:"Johnson, Shannon (Kenwood High School)" <shannon.johnson@cmcss.net>
Subject: Re: Ed.S degree and Field Study

Reply Reply All Forward Delete

on 4/22/03 4:22 AM, Johnson, Shannon (Kenwood High School) at shannon.johnson@cmcss.net wrote:

> Mrs. Vick and Mrs. Castleberry,
>
> I wanted to thank you in letting me contact your
> coaching staffs for my Ed.S requirements. However, I
> have to have a confirmation from you that you allowed it.
> It is a requirement to put in my field study appendix. If
> you could email me back stating you allowed me to
> contact them, I would appreciate. Sorry for the
> inconveince and thank you for your time.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Shannon Johnson
>

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to confirm that I gave Shannon Johnson permission to contact my coaching staff at Montgomery Central High School for her field study. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Evelyn S. Vick
Principal
Montgomery Central High School

Search Messages Previous Next **Back to: INBOX**

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Austin Peay State University
Institutional Review Board

April 17, 2003

Shannon Johnson
c/o Monlqueka Gold
Education
APSU Box 4545

RE: Your application dated March 6, 2003 regarding study number 03-031: Burnout in Coaching Athletics (Austin Peay State University)

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Thank you for your response to requests from a prior review of your application for the new study listed above.

Congratulations! This is to confirm that your application is now fully approved. The protocol is approved through one calendar year. You must obtain signed written consent from all subjects. . . . . This approval is subject to APSU Policies and Procedures governing human subjects research. You may want to review this policy which can be viewed on the APSU website at: www@.apsu.edu/www/computer/policy/2002.htm

You are granted permission to conduct your study as most recently described effective immediately. The study is subject to continuing review on or before March 17, 2004, unless closed before that date. Enclosed please find the forms for reporting a closed study and for requesting approval of continuance.

Please note that any changes to the study as approved must be promptly reported and approved. Some changes may be approved by expedited review; others require full board review. If you have any questions at all do not hesitate to contact Lou Beasley (221-7414; fax 221-7641; email: beasleyl@apsu.edu) or any member of the APIRB.

Again, thank you for your cooperation with the APIRB and the human research review process. Best wishes for a successful study!

Sincerely,

Lou M. Beasley

Dr. Lou M. Beasley
Chair, Austin Peay Institutional Review Board

REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH

1315 Chucker Drive
Clarksville, TN 37042
(931) 906-7449

Mrs. Sallie Keith,
Montgomery County Central Office
631 Gracey Avenue
Clarksville, Tennessee 37040

Dear Ms. Keith,

I am currently enrolled in Austin Peay State University as a graduate student working towards my Ed.S. degree. I am requesting permission to conduct my field study and collect data in your school system.

The targeted subjects will be the head and assistant coaching staffs of Montgomery Central High School, Kenwood High School, and Clarksville High School. The focus of my study is on coaching stress and burnout. After permission is granted I will make contact with each school principal to receive permission. After permission is granted, the coaches will be given an Educators Demographics Data Sheet and the Maslach Burnout Inventory through the school's courier service. The purpose of the survey is to discover how the coaches view their job and the people with whom they work with. The survey will be asked to be returned no later than Monday, March 17th via the courier service.

There are minimal risks involved to the participants of the study. The risk of self realization is the greatest and will be reduced by having participants place their completed surveys in an unmarked envelope and then in an unmarked box. Because there are no names, all subjects will remain anonymous when the results are tabulated and published.

The application for project approval has been submitted to the Austin Peay State University Institutional Review Board, and is currently under consideration. Enclosed you will find a copy of the application and the project proposal. Please contact me if you have any questions, or you may contact Dr. Moniqueka Gold, Faculty Supervisor at APSU, at 221-7518. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Shannon L. Johnson
Ed.S Candidate – APSU

Cc: Dr. Moniqueka Gold, Field Study Director
Austin Peay Sate University
Enclosures

1315 Chucker Drive
Clarksville, TN 37042
(931) 906-7449

Mr. Jerry Taylor, Principal
Kenwood High School
251 E. Pine Mountain Road
Clarksville, Tennessee 37042

Dear Mr. Taylor,

I am currently enrolled in Austin Peay State University as a graduate student working towards my Ed.S. degree. I am requesting permission to conduct my field study and collect data in your school.

The targeted subjects will be the head and assistant coaching staffs of Montgomery Central High School, Kenwood High School, and Clarksville High School. The focus of my study is on coaching stress and burnout. After permission is granted I will make contact with each school principal to receive permission. After permission is granted, the coaches will be given an Educators Demographics Data Sheet and the Maslach Burnout Inventory through the school's courier service. The purpose of the survey is to discover how the coaches view their job and the people with whom they work with. The survey will be asked to be returned no later than Monday, March 17th via the courier service.

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Sincerely,

Shannon L. Johnson
Ed.S Candidate – APSU

Cc: Dr. Moniqueka Gold, Field Study Director
Austin Peay Sate University
Enclosures

1315 Chucker Drive
Clarksville, TN 37042
(931) 906-7449

Mrs. Judith Castleberry, Principal
Clarksville High School
151 Richview Road
Clarksville, Tennessee 37043

Dear Mrs. Castleberry,

I am currently enrolled in Austin Peay State University as a graduate student working towards my Ed.S. degree. I am requesting permission to conduct my field study and collect data in your school.

The targeted subjects will be the head and assistant coaching staffs of Montgomery Central High School, Kenwood High School, and Clarksville High School. The focus of my study is on coaching stress and burnout. After permission is granted I will make contact with each school principal to receive permission. After permission is granted, the coaches will be given an Educators Demographics Data Sheet and the Maslach Burnout Inventory through the school's courier service. The purpose of the survey is to discover how the coaches view their job and the people with whom they work with. The survey will be asked to be returned no later than Monday, March 17th via the courier service.

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Sincerely,

Shannon L. Johnson
Ed.S Candidate – APSU

Cc: Dr. Moniqueka Gold, Field Study Director
Austin Peay Sate University
Enclosures

1315 Chucker Drive
Clarksville, TN 37042
(931) 906-7449

Mrs. Evelyn Vick, Principal
Montgomery Central High School
3955 Highway 48
Cunningham, Tennessee 37052

Dear Mrs. Vick,

I am currently enrolled in Austin Peay State University as a graduate student working towards my Ed.S. degree. I am requesting permission to conduct my field study and collect data in your school.

The targeted subjects will be the head and assistant coaching staffs of Montgomery Central High School, Kenwood High School, and Clarksville High School. The focus of my study is on coaching stress and burnout. After permission is granted I will make contact with each school principal to receive permission. After permission is granted, the coaches will be given an Educators Demographics Data Sheet and the Maslach Burnout Inventory through the school's courier service. The purpose of the survey is to discover how the coaches view their job and the people with whom they work with. The survey will be asked to be returned no later than Monday, March 17th via the courier service.

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Sincerely,

Shannon L. Johnson
Ed.S Candidate – APSU

Cc: Dr. Moniqueka Gold, Field Study Director
Austin Peay Sate University
Enclosures

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form is intended to provide you with information about this study. You may ask the researchers listed below about this study or you may call the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, Box 4517, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN 37044, (931) 221-7881 with questions about the rights of research participants.

1. Title of Research Study: Burnout in Coaching Athletics

2. Principal Investigator: Shannon Johnson, Graduate Student

3. Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Moniqueka Gold, (931) 221-7518

4. The Purpose of the Research:

I am completing the field study research on Burnout in Coaching Athletics in order to obtain my Ed.S from Austin Peay State University. Because coaches have a difficult and demanding job, many choose to leave the coaching profession. The purpose of this field study is to examine the stress level of selected coaches and, in the process, discuss methods to relieve stress

5. Potential risks or benefits to you

The potential risk involves the possibility of the participants' identity not remaining anonymous. The risk is greatly reduced due to the fact that the surveys will be conducted in total anonymity; at no time will your name appear on any forms or in any documentation. You may complete the demographics page and the Maslach Buronout Inventory in private to better insure your privacy. The information can be completed in an environment of your choosing to further insure anonymity.

6. If you choose to take part in this learning opportunity, please complete the demographic data sheet and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Once you have completed the information, please place the data sheet and the survey in the courier envelope provided and send to Kenwood High School, Attn. Shannon Johnson. Please return the consent form, demo sheet, and questionnaire by April 12th. You may choose to withdraw from the study during the time you are filling out the survey and demographics data sheet. Once the forms are completed and turned in, your data becomes indistinguishable from any other data and cannot be removed. Your participation is totally voluntary.

7. Informed Consent Statement

I have read the above and understand what the study is about, why it is being done, and any benefits or risks involved. I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of rights. I agree to participate in this study and understand that by agreeing to participate I have not given up any of my human rights. I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent and

stop participating up until the time my survey is returned. If I choose to withdraw, that choice will be respected and I will not be penalized or coerced to continue. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form.

If I have any questions about this study I may call Shannon Johnson (graduate student, Education Department) at 931-801-6760, or Dr. Moniqueka Gold (faculty supervisor, Education Department at 931-221-7518.

_____
Signature of Research Participant or legally authorized representative

_____
Signature of Researcher

_____
Date

COACHES DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

Coaches Demographic Data Sheet

Your Sex:

____ (1) male _____ (2) female

Your Age:

____ years

Marital Status:

____ (1) single

____ (2) married

____ (3) divorced

____ (4) widowed

____ (5) other (please specify _____)

If married, for how long have you been married to your current spouse?
____ years

If you have children, how many of them are now living with you?
____ children live with me

____ I have no children

Are you currently pursuing another degree? If so, specify _____.
(Example: Bachelors, Masters, Ed.S, etc.)

How many students are you directly responsible for?
____ students

How many years have you been in education?
____ years.

How long have you been a head coach?
____ years

If an assistant coach, how long have you been an assistant?
____ years

Please specify what sport you coach and your title? If you coach more than one sport please specify which sport and if an assistant or a head coach?

_____

_____

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY

The following questions/statements were asked of the coaches:

1. My work is characterized by intense pressure and deadlines on the job.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

2. No matter what I do, coaching does not seem to get any easier.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

3. Do you feel emotionally drained coaching?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

4. I often feel defeated – like I'm going up against a brick wall.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

5. Do you feel that you give more than you get in return?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

6. Do you feel a sense of isolation from your peers or coworkers?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

7. Do you have sufficient time or resources to do your job?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

8. Do you frequently experience conflicting demands?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

9. Efforts to make coaching progress are fruitless

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

10. Do you become tired of trying?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

11. I no longer have enough time to attend to my family or personal needs.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

12. Does your school limit options to express and share dissatisfaction on your job?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

13. Does your workload make it impossible to catch up?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

14. My job is such that I can effect little change in the situation.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

15. Do you distance yourself from your athletes?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

16. Do you feel that if you do not win you will lose your job

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

17. I have too much or too little contact with people.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

18. Do you worry about losing your job?

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

19. Recently, I have not been as healthy as usual

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

20. Temporarily removing myself from the job seems to resolve my feelings.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Agree

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY SCALE

0 – 2 Don't worry, you're happy. A low score is a good score – and you appear to be taking stress comfortably in your stride. Everyone has stress in his or her lives but you manage it well and balance your life nicely. You don't get rattled easily and you accept the speed bumps that you encounter on your road of life.

3 - 5 Monitor your situation – take action if things worsen. No need to be alarmed, but you could afford to take a moment of quiet reflection from time to time to consider whether the stressors in your life are becoming more or less difficult for you to handle. There are emerging signals that you need to monitor and control the level of stress you experience and your reaction to pressure, deadlines, disappointment and the general load in your life.

6 – 8 Yellow light – You are trending towards burn out. The pace of your life is becoming hotter than is comfortable for you. It is time to pause, establish priorities and remove some of the most painful stressors. Check your health, your life goals, the balance between work and play, your support system (family, friends and social network), the integrity of the work you do and the pace that you maintain in doing it.

9 – 10 Red light – Stop before life delivers a serious wake-up call to you. Seek professional advice to avoid losing control. You are showing signs that suggest you need to take a break and reassess your life and work. You are under extreme pressure. It is time for you to consult with your family and with your professional advisors to obtain their input.

VITA

Graduate School

Austin Peay State University

Name: Shannon Leigh Johnson
Home Address: 1315 Chucker Drive, Clarksville, Tennessee 37042

Education

I. Austin Peay State University
Bachelor of Science
Major: Health and Human Performance, Secondary Education

II. Austin Peay State University
Master of Arts in Education
Curriculum and Instruction, Leadership

Certification

Tennessee K-12 Health and Physical Education