

DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE AFFECTING PERCEPTIONS OF ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

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experienced ADs did. ANOVA also revealed a significant ($p < .05$) mean difference on 'Consistency'. A follow-up Scheffe test revealed that the senior ADs ($M = 1.07$) rated 'Consistency' more essential than their intermediate colleagues ($M = 1.54$).

The study not only provided quantitative support to the initiative conceptual framework, but also explored level of experience served as a meaningful variable to differentiate perceptions of essential characteristics for interscholastic ADs. Considering discrepant perceptions of ADs would benefit the school administrators to better evaluate program heads and select future high quality job candidates.

Abstract

As importance of administrators of educational programs have grown so has the importance of the duties for athletic directors (ADs). This importance has led to more studies about experience and characteristics with respect to interscholastic athletic administrators (Stier, 1985). Previous studies (e.g., Stier & Schneider, 2000) have defined essential characteristics (e.g., honesty, leadership) for interscholastic athletic directors, however, research voids remain in what are the perception of ADs regarding the important characteristics compared to the view of their superiors.

Given the defined characteristics, which are more essential than others? Does the number of years served as ADs affect their perceptions of essential characteristics? The purpose of this study was to explore perceptual differences of essential characteristics among different experience groups of high school ADs.

A survey by electronic mail was conducted among high school ADs in the northwest region of the United States. A 21-item essential characteristics questionnaire (Stier & Schneider, 2000) with 5-point likert scale (1 = essential, 5 = irrelevant) was utilized to test differences. The randomly drawn participants ($N = 300$) were all current ADs in the high school athletic programs and voluntarily participated in the survey. Analyses of variance (ANOVAs) and post hoc Scheffe were applied to examine mean differences of rating importance among three experience groups (junior [1-5 years], intermediate [6-10 years], and senior [more than 10 years]) of ADs.

ANOVAs revealed significant ($p < .05$) mean differences on the characteristics of 'Dedication', 'Helpfulness', and 'Professional Image' among three groups. Post hoc Scheffe further explored significant mean differences of rating these characteristics between junior ($M_s = 1.12$; 1.40; and 1.28) and intermediate experience group ($M_s = 1.46$; 1.82; and 1.71). The junior ADs considered these characteristics as more important than the intermediate

