

# Strategies to Retain High School Athletic Coaches

## A Synthesis of the Research Literature

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By Kevon London-Hill

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Read and Approved by:

*Cathy Houston-Wilson*

Instructor

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Date

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*Cathy Houston-Wilson*

Chairperson, Department of Kinesiology,  
Sport Studies, and Physical Education

5/29/19

Date

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### **Abstract**

This is a review of literature aims to find what factors impact retention for high school sport coaches and what strategies can help increase retention. Coaches at the high school level are leaving the profession for a variety of reason that include job satisfaction, relationships with students and staff along with lacking support from administrators. The selection of literature utilized for this review was found using keywords: retention, coaches, and high school. Other articles were found through viewing selected studies references that are relatable to coaching and retention. Gathering data from the studies allowed findings that are relevant to impacting change. Results were able to identify that factors hurting retention for high school coaches are job satisfaction, lack of support, and personal commitment. Support strategies have been mentioned and data shows that it has opportunities to be effective with proper programming and support from other coaches and staff. It is hoped that this review of literature shines light on strategies that can improve retention in coaches for high school sports. In addition, providing this knowledge and recommendation athletic directors, coaches and aspiring coaches.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

There is a large challenge with the retention rates of high school coaches that follows a similar trend with teachers at the high school level. When examining the turnover and attrition rates for other professions it was revealed that attrition can range from 8% and 50% (Queensland College of Teachers, 2013). Thus, it is clear that depending on the chosen field, turnover can be relatively low to very high. With regard to coaches, there are several reasons why coaches may choose to leave the profession. For example, feelings of being overwhelmed or lack of support by administrators as well as personal factors can all contribute to the high attrition rate of coaches (Ovenden-Hope, Blandford, Cain & Maxwell, 2018)

Factors that have proven to be effective in retaining coaches come from strategies such as support from athletic director/program, professional development opportunities, and available resources (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018). As this is an expectation of every coach it is not always provided in every situation and likely could impact the decisions to move forward in coaching. In cases where effective strategies are not present, there are factors that push coaches to relocate, change professions, or prioritize life situations both financially as well as within their family structure (Wicker, Orłowski & Breuer, 2018). There are both “pull factors” those things that make a person want to coach as well as “push factors”, those things that push a person to the decision to leave the profession. It is therefore important to determine what factors will facilitate a coach to remain in the profession and eliminate or minimize the pull factors (Wicker, Orłowski & Breuer, 2018).

Coaches are extremely important to the development of student-athletes as they help athletes develop a variety of skills on and off the court (Brubaker, 2007; Trottier & Robitaille 2014). What is most interesting about this is that coaches at this level often have a major impact on the adolescents that they coach. However, studies show that student participation in athletics has dropped over time possibly due to the inexperience of their coach and lack of developing relationships with athletes (Lee, Hwang & Choi, 2017; Temple & Crane, 2016). This is evident by the fact that Rodriguez (2018) notes that many coaches who are hired have limited content knowledge and philosophies of the athletic program. This presents as a two-way sword because without student participation the sports do not exist but without a knowledgeable and well-equipped coach students will choose other sports or activities. Furthermore, when coaches have a philosophy set that builds character, sport specific skills, and more; students are more likely to participate. (Rodriguez, 2018). This information is valuable as future and current coaches can understand what role they are stepping into and evaluate if they are satisfied with the program and or position. Methods for retaining coaches and increasing job satisfaction lie with the ability to support coaches in player development, budgeting, relationship building and game planning (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018).

### **Statement of the Problem**

There appears to be a gap in the literature that needs to be studied related to how coaches feel about their position plus how much they are valued, and then utilize this data as a representation of why coaches continue to coach (Rocchi & Camire, 2017). What can be determined is that coaches who have a good rapport with their athletes, coaching staff, parents and the ability to build their program are less likely to migrate from their position (Rocchi & Camire, 2017). Of the many factors that are connected to retaining coaches and lowering attrition, this review of literature aims to seek strategies that have proven to be effective.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this synthesis project is to review the literature on strategies to retain high school athletic coaches.

### **Research Question(s)**

1. What are factors that cause coaches to step down or cease coaching sports?
2. What are the strategies that can be used to retain high school coaches?
3. What effect does coaching longevity have on student-athletes and the development of sport programs?

### **Operational Definitions**

1. **Retention-** the various policies and practices which promote employees to stick to an organization for a longer period of time (Management Study Guide Content Team, 2018).
2. **Attrition-** Is a calculation of the number of individuals or items that vacate or move out of a larger, collective group over a specified time frame (Galleto, 2015).
3. **Organizational Support-** The contribution to one's organization and its recognition by the organization (Hellman et al. 2006).
4. **Professional Development-** used in reference to a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and coaches improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness. (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2013).

### **Delimitations**

1. All articles focus on coaches and high school athletes.
2. All articles represent research published between 2000 to present.
3. All articles were peer reviewed.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methods**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the methods used to study the retention of high school athletic coaches. The studies collected for this synthesis were located using the EBSCO database from The College at Brockport's Drake Library. Within the EBSCO database the following databases were searched: SPORTDiscus and Academic Search Complete. Within these databases a total number of 13 studies met the criteria for inclusion as part of the critical mass within this literature review. In order for an article to meet the criteria for selection in this synthesis it must have been published between 2000-present, this will provide the synthesis with the most up to date and current information available. Other criteria for selection included scholarly and peer reviewed articles that were full-text. Having scholarly and peer reviewed articles provides more validity within the articles and better overall quality. Other articles or sources selected as part of this literature review provided context about the topic, background information and supplemental information to complete the review. All articles and sources are appropriately cited in the reference section of this paper.

In order to gather valuable articles for this synthesis certain keywords and phrases were used when searching the data-base. The first keyword searched was "retention" that resulted in 170,281 number of hits then the results lowered by adding "coaches" into the search providing 180 hits. These two topics were the most ideal in obtaining research for this study as retaining coaches is the base of the problem. However, in looking through the 180 articles, very few were pertinent to the research topic, therefore, adding "high school" to the search provided 7 results narrowing the research to more relevant

information. An additional search using the words “support strategies” provided 104,789 hits that trickled down to 349 hits by adding coaching to the search. Lastly, the final phrase added to the search to focus the results was by including “high school” and from that an addition 41 articles were found.

Articles that were selected for use in this synthesis were scholarly and peer reviewed articles that were full-text. Also, when selecting articles for use in this synthesis it was important that each article selected had valuable information related to retention strategies, job satisfaction and impact of student-athletes participation at the high school level. All of the articles selected were specific yet based on strategies to retain coaches and what key factors were considered in coaches’ decisions to remain in the profession or being dismissed from the profession. Participants in the studies reviewed were primarily coaches, teachers that coach and athletic administrators at the high school athletic levels. Other studies focused on high school student-athlete responses about experiences with high school athletic coaches. All participants’ information was valuable in synthesizing this data as they provided depth and reasoning towards the problem at hand.

For this synthesis a total of 13 articles were used to compile data on the topic of retention and support strategies of high school athletic coaches. Two pairs of articles stem from the same research journal one pair from “Coach and Athletic Director” and the other from “The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.” The other eight articles were published by separate journals. Articles that came from the variety of journals included; The Sport Psychologist, Scientific Journal Publishers, European Sport Management Quarterly, Soccer and Society Journal, Teachers and Teaching: Theory and

Practice, Change: Transformation in Education, Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, Educational Psychology and Journal of Education for Teaching.

The critical mass for this synthesis is comprised of 121,281 subjects which included parents, athletes, coaches, and administrators. Specifically, within the 13 articles used for the literature review there was a total of 8,216 teachers/coaches and of that number, there was no distinctive number of men or women, but both were represented in multiple studies. Data collected from coaches and teachers that coach provided a collective of data for job satisfaction, relationship to students and staff, pressure and other factors revolved around retention. Furthermore, a large part of the total participants comes from student data and administrator's data which represents both student and administrative insight on coaching experiences and relationships with coach.

Data were analyzed using the following methodologies for the studies under review. Primarily when gathering information, many of the studies used both surveys and questionnaires. For many, this was an effective way to gather data for teachers across a larger regions and for students within their perspective school district over a lengthy timespan. Other data collection for reviewing literature utilized statistical descriptive and hierarchical regression analysis to compare the results and findings from other sources to draw conclusions. Lastly, methods such as Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale were effective in influencing qualitative data to relate or prove the teachers/coaches' impact.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Review of Literature**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on retaining high school athletic coaches. Specifically, the following topics will be presented based on articles included in this synthesis about demographics and duties of coaches, and the factors effecting retention.

#### **Demographics and Duties of High School Coaches**

Brubaker (2007) investigates coaches and how coaches are teaching athletes as well as the impact a coach's behavior has on the development of an athlete. The purpose of this study was to determine coaching behaviors in connection with student-athlete response or relationship with coaches. In addition, focusing on coach's capability to teach students how to be an athlete. In order to determine this, the study examined two phenomena, what coaches tend to do versus what coaches should do. There was a small sample of coaches observed to gather collective data. Through the use of a descriptive analysis, the methods coaches use in comparison to the suggested methods provided insight on coaching behaviors. As a result of the observations of each phenomenon it was found that coaches behaviors effect the relationship with students (Brubaker, 2007). Thus, creating a barrier for learning how to be an athlete as athletes are not responding well to coaching behaviors. It was stated that connecting with athletes is a two-way street where coaches cannot be solely dictators but, must allow athletes to take ownership in order for coaches to be most effective. (Brubaker, 2007). High school coaches are also

perceived as a teacher of not only physical skills but life skills that will impact athletes throughout life beyond the years working and learning from a coach (Brubaker, 2007).

Similarly, Trottier and Robitaille (2014) explored the how involved the role of a coach plays in teaching both the strategies of a sport and life skills that last beyond sports. This study's purpose was to determine if coaches who teach life skills and utilize motivation help improve relationships and the experience of their athletes (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). To gather such data cross-case analysis and deductive analysis were used after interviewing 24 high school and community coaches (travel teams at the high school level). Interviews were held both individually and in group format. By the end of the analysis it was found that coaches impact the self-confidence, stress, respect and emotional management for athletes as well as coaches (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). For both studies there was an examination of what a high school coach duties are including more strategic planning amongst other aspects not involved on the field/court that effect both coach and athlete (Brubaker, 2007; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). It's frequently stated that coaches are a leaders of young adults with the expectation yet, responsibility of helping develop student-athletes without thinking of the time component put forth in having a successful team on the field, court, pool and more (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). This is where building relationships are essential in the effectiveness of coaching athletes.

In reference of relationships between coaches and athletes, Lee, Hwang, & Choi analyzed the why coaches interactions, leadership, and social responsibilities are impactful for coaches to abide by when taking on the position. The purpose of this study aimed to find the importance in the role coaches play in the development of student athletes. 204 participants were directed to use a Likert scale to answer questions in regard

to leadership, coach interactions and overall view of coach. Responses went through multiple analysis such as descriptive, hierarchical regression, and SPSS 21.0 in order to determine results. It was found that a coach's role, behavior and interactions with athletes determined the level of participation and responsibility of athletes (Lee, Hwang & Choi, 2017). In analyzing the data and its effects on retention, athletes in high school that had coaches who project healthy developmental outcomes amongst athletes and the goal was to find if such behavior led to more students participating in sports (Lee, Hwang & Choi, 2017). Within the same context, relationships that athletes have with coaches also feeds back into a coach seeing how impact the behaviors and interactions have on athletes (Lee, Hwang & Choi, 2017). This transfers into seeing effectiveness that can create a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, and relationships are viable reasons to retain coaches.

In relation to the coaches having a sense of belonging and seeing the effectiveness as coaches there are challenges. Miller-Glenn, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, & Miller, (2006) raises awareness on the what the background are for coaches in high school and what sports are coaches involved with most. The purpose of this study was to determine what the demographic makeup is for high school coaching professionals, and what factors relate to the nonrenewal of coaching contracts (Miller-Glenn, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, & Miller, 2006). In order to determine this, web-based surveys were sent through email one for AD and one for coaches. Coach's surveys focused on demographic information while athletic director's questionnaires focused on factors regarding nonrenewal in coaching. Furthermore, high school coaching positions typically lack diversity, offer low stipends, long hours of service, and high expectations from year to year which places high amounts of pressure on coaches (Miller-Glenn et al, 2006). All

these factors have placed an impact on retention rates with coaches, specifically high school.

### **Factors that Effect Retention**

#### **Retention**

There are various definitions for the term retention. According to the business dictionary its defined as efforts by a business/institution to maintain a working environment which supports current staff to remain with the company and sometimes profession (Business Dictionary, 2019). In regard to the studies included within this review, all follow this definition specifically examining what effects high school's ability to retain coaches. Retention in the field of coaching is low amongst all levels of sport but this study primarily focuses on high school athletics as it had high impact on the profession, student-athletes, and the athletic programs development.

O'Connor and Bennie (2006), brought attention to the fact that coaching has not been the most known profession for job security and longevity. Furthermore, focusing on outside circumstances that impact a coach's decision to remain in the profession. The purpose of O'Connor and Bennie's review of research was to determine reasons why coaches in youth sport (high school) continue or discontinue with coaching. As this was a collective of other researchers' data many of the procedures were similar(2006). Specifically, the use of questionnaires and surveys that asked about wages, excessive workload, stress, social pressure, lack of support amongst many others. As a part of O'Connor & Bennie study, it was found that there was a 35% drop in coaches during 2004 within a specific sport (O'Connor & Bennie, 2006). In addition, it was significant to

mention that coaches are more commonly disassociated from high school sports for dissatisfaction with role and even more so for family commitments that carried priority over being a coach. This created a question of what the numbers could be for all sports and even more so what are the current numbers regarding coaches to this day.

From a different perspective, Raedeke (2004) investigated coaches from a sense of commitment, and attraction of being a coach. Seeking to prove how much of an influence it has on burnout in relation to retention of coaches. The purpose of this study was primarily to determine and assess if commitment to coaching and feelings of burnout played a factor in retaining coaches (Raedeke, 2004). The researcher gathered data through the use of questionnaires to be administered twice (1 year apart) measured by a Likert Scale on demographics, cost, and coaching benefits. Findings stated situations where coaches are committed to the job, retention issues remain due to lack of organizational support, professional development and life happenings. Focusing more so on high school athletics, programs were also facing issues with coaches consistently having high rates of turnover which hurt program development (Raedeke, 2004). A snapshot of this research analyzes area of retention that are common with multiple studies used for this synthesis.

Scantling & Lackey (2005) conducted similar research that has identified four decades of data on attrition for high school coaches. The consistency with rates of attrition reported for the study has shaped future research based on the trend of coaching dismissals. The purpose was to examine the pressures on high school coaches, the magnitude and sources of these pressures, and the consequences of these pressures. The researcher used questionnaires to collect data on what sports coaches were dismissed

from and the reasons why coaches were dismissed. The same questionnaires were sent out to administrators and each year the amount of returns increased for data collection rising from 72% to consistently rising above 90%. Thus, allowing validity for data collection, which was used to determine number of dismissals each decade. It was found that in the 1970s, there were 104 coaching dismissals and increased every decade until 2000 where coaching dismissals had doubled to 246 dismissals (Scantling & Lackey, 2005). Furthermore, based on surveys through a 30 year timespan taken with data taken each decade found that time demands of being a coach as well as low levels of success had pushed coaches out of the profession. In addition, it also has left a gap for those incoming coaches who approach the opportunity as something temporary or for a means to gain a higher role in another field or level of sport (Scantling & Lackey, 2005).

Looking at retention rates and noticing that there are obstacle to be faced to increase retention, Ovenden-Hope, Blandford, Cain & Maxwell (2018) aimed to counteract the problem experimenting on what a development program's impact can be on retention. This study's purpose was to find the effectiveness of support strategies and how to implement them for early career teachers/coaches (Ovenden-Hope, Blandford, Cain & Maxwell, 2018). Seeing that early career coaches and teachers were subjects, pre and post surveys were completed along with self-ratings of knowledge and skills based on Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. This brought data explaining how coaches felt about personal abilities, furthermore, responses to questions before going through the RETAIN 4 C's. The RETAIN 4 C's consist of classroom workshops, coaching (application to practice), Collaboration (professional learning communities), and Child (quality teaching) (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018). After a statistical analysis was done based on all surveys

completed, it provided insight on the impact of such a program. According to the findings early career coaches who were in their first, second and third year all saw improvement in coaching efficacy. Also with the provided program, it was proved to be an effective method for teachers/coaches to bond with one another and have a sense of support from administrators and colleagues (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018). Other positive influences rely on mentorship that comes from other varsity coaches within the district and county. By demanding this from the school district and holding more training or workshops; coaches were able to learn high impact practices to utilize for their own programs and positively impacted retention. It was also stated that locating issues and finding out solutions is key, then informing and implementing them to athletic administration to improve job satisfaction and support strategies are challenging but an active way to improve retention (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018).

**Job Satisfaction:**

Job satisfaction is the measure of how much an employee or individual is content with their position in the workplace. Rocchi & Camire (2018) shed light on this topic in reference to teachers who coach high school sports and extracurricular activities. Much of the research provided data relevant coaches building relationship, coaching efficacy and more importantly job satisfaction. The purpose of the study explore job satisfaction amongst teachers who coach high school sports. In order to order to determine this, 2961 participants completed online questionnaires about colleague relationships, opportunities afforded through coaching, coach vs. athlete relationship, coaching efficacy, job satisfaction workload stress and athlete stress (Rocchi & Camire, 2018). Methods of

analysis were mainly descriptive of the collected questionnaires but, a Seven Factor Measurement model using Mplus Version 6 to account for coaches responses to the seven aforementioned factors. Seeing that over 52,000 teachers in the area of study (Canada) are involved in coaching extracurricular activities the small sample of 2961 was a snapshot of what the data describes. As a result of this investigation of these factors impacting job satisfaction, it was found that positive relationships amongst colleagues and less stress resulted in positive experience with athletes. In addition, affordable experiences through coaching also allowed an increase in coaching efficacy, which in return, increased job satisfaction. Similarly, it was expressed in research outside of the critical by Smucker and Whisenant, whose research on the satisfaction of interscholastic coaches, pointed out that many coaches often have different values and perspectives on what is included in being a satisfied coach (2005). Therefore, job satisfaction had become challenging to identify and dignified on a person to person basis (Smucker & Whisenant, 2005). However, job satisfaction was increased for teachers with opportunities for professional development and good connections with athletes as well as staff.

From multiple articles job satisfaction was determined by a variety of factors including salary/wages, time commitment, student response, and support of both program and environment (Rocchi & Camire, 2018; Smucker & Whisenant, 2005).

When transitioning to the money aspect, Wicker, Orlowski, & Breuer (2018) focused on determining the migration of coaches across Europe. In doing so, the researchers investigated areas of job satisfaction that brought coaches in as well as caused turnover or retirement. The purpose of this study was to determine the push and pull factors that coincide with coaches migrating from their positions into new positions

(Wicker, Orlowski & Breuer, 2018). Not directly related to job satisfaction but data had meaningful support for teachers' feelings toward coaching environment. To determine the data the researcher surveyed coaches online about job history. From that point a panel of coaches was created to analyze migration using "probit models" that determine where coaches were drawn and why coaches preferred working in that environment. Empirical analysis was also used based on survey data from job history, income, workload, age and coach's success (Wicker, Orlowski & Breuer, 2018). Specifically, looking at the wages, it was one of the larger reasons for the lack of retention as many coaches were underpaid for the number of hours put forth to prepare game strategies. To prevent turnover, athletic administrators often sought after coaches within the district that were willing to take on coaching duties (Wicker, Orlowski & Breuer, 2018). Similarly to Temple & Crane study who focused on adolescent teens and engagement in sport where coaches had negative impacts on students causing them to dropout of athletics. The purpose was to find out why students were leaving the sport of soccer (Temple & Crane, 2016). This is relevant as is provided data supporting Wicker, Orlowski, & Breuer; as it was found that a trend in retention was effected by coaches lacking relationships with athletes, find higher paying opportunities since there was no contracted commitment to the school districts (Temple & Crane, 2016).

Overall, in reviewing multiple studies, when coaches job satisfaction it can have large impacts on the programs as coaches are not able to develop programs or coaching efficacy to become better at both teaching and learning skills (Ovenden et al., 2018). Recommendations had frequently mentioned development of strategies to support coaches.

Multiple studies within this review of literature state that a large percentage of coaches in their entry levels are unequipped with large proficiency levels in coaching high school student-athletes, especially those hired from outside of the district as they have the least engagement with the high school student population (Rodriguez, 2018; Brubaker, 2007). This also leads to a lack of retention as coaches are left out of conversations regarding their athletes' academic status or behaviors. Thus, statements were given about decisions being made without coaches providing a disconnectedness and unsupportive relationship between coaches and staff (Brubaker, 2007). The climatic downfall from situations like these are the lack of trust coaches have with staff which in a variety of cases has led to leaving an athletic program or the profession itself after continued behavior (Scantling & Lackey, 2005)

In relation to both job satisfaction, commitment and attrition, Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk (2017) set out to identify why early teachers in specific leave the profession. Furthermore, low levels of teacher's competencies as well as unmeasurable amounts of professional development factor into attrition for teachers. The purpose of this study aims to provide information and data on teachers leaving the profession and why (Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk, 2017). This study is a review of multiple literatures that used surveys, teacher databases, descriptive and cross-sectional analysis to determine the correlations for attrition of early career teachers (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> years in profession) (Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk, 2017). It was found that 22% of early career teachers leave the profession for reasons similar to other studies such as lack of support, teaching competencies, workloads and stress. There were also exterior factors that played a role in the statistics around job satisfaction and it was stated that many early professionals find

issues with location and family life effecting decisions on teaching or coaching high school athletics. These factors both relate to time commitment as aforementioned but are highly impactful for coaches who are beginning a family whether its marriage or parenthood (Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk, 2017). Therefore, it is imperative that athletic programs become more active in utilizing support strategies that increase retention instead of attrition and turnover.

### **Support Strategies:**

As stated in the section regarding retention and job satisfaction, there need to be more efforts put toward supporting coaches. Rodriguez examined the impact of providing support to early and ongoing coaches to help develop urban sports within school districts. The purpose of this study was to provides a system to recruit new coaches while supporting and training current coaches. I order to determine this; coaches were proposed with a three-year plan working with coaches in high needs schools providing training to increase efficacy. Assessments were taken yearly with provided support from workshops and trainings. Based on the study supports with training positively impacted coaches, athletes and the overall profession (Rodriguez, 2018). Rodriguez has supportive data stating that coaches in charge of high school sporting teams had been known for lack of experience in recent years but through use of the three-year plan efficacy had increased. Being a widely expressed view towards increasing supports for coaches, it was deemed necessary that coaches are backed by their program and provided support to increase their abilities. Similarly, Ovenden et al., RETAIN program provided findings that support the thought process of Rodriguez's plan on improving the quality of coaches (2018).

Having relevant data information regarding supportive strategies to retain coaches, emphasized professional development, implementing programs to mentor entry level coaches, and supporting through the use of inclusion within the process of running sport program (Rodriguez, 2018; Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk, 2017) . Realizing that retention is a problem with coaches in high school sports, a support system to maintain instead of increasing attrition is important. Both Rodriguez and the authors associated with the Brok (2017) study gained qualitative data providing practice for possible solutions hailing from engagement in professional development (2018). Coaches who were provided with new tools on how to coach their perspective sports was key, but helping coaches improve on how to work with students was extremely more valuable to sustaining a coaching role (Lee, Hwang & Choi, 2017). Other ways to avoid large rates of turnover and low retention was to communicate with coaches as well as provide mentorship. In addition, it was found that mentor programs that paired teacher/coaches with a tenured professional to observe and or shadow increased the level of satisfaction (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018). As a result, more coaches who were mentored had better experiences and remained in the profession. For those who were not guided by a tenured or veteran coach found that it was challenging without much guidance. Other important aspects of a mentoring program that were mentioned involved meetings with multiple coaches to discuss methods that are useful in working with the high school population of athletes (Ovenden-Hope et al., 2018).

## Chapter 4

### Discussion/Future Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter is to present results of the synthesis review of literature on the retention of high school coaches and the support strategies that are effective for lower attrition levels. Furthermore, to discuss the findings in relation to future recommendations for the profession.

#### **Discussion:**

The research determined that there are a variety of factors that have an impact of the retention of high school coaches. For coaches who lacked or have never experienced organizational support or opportunities for development were likely to leave the profession or continue in another program or level of sport. High school sporting coaches also provided information that describes job satisfaction and wages as a part of issues that decrease retention in the profession. Being paid such low stipends for the amount of time put forth was apparent in multiple studies and led to coaches taking on higher paid positions away from coaching as coaching was not their primary career. In addition, it was found that large amount of teachers are moving away from coaching for the same reason as the time component is far greater now and cannot afford the time as teachers are still inclined to perform educational duties.

Research also found strategies to improve rates of retention in high school coaches. Coaches or teachers who participated in a program that was geared toward mentoring, sharing coaching/teaching methods and professional development found more success in their coaching ability. This is important as being provided such opportunity

creates a sense of belonging and support. Furthermore, increasing coaches' self-efficacy helped develop student athletes' physical and life skills based on survey responses that provided data for coaches involved with career development or mentor programs.

Some problems faced in conducting this literature review was finding articles relevant or specific to coaches in high school athletics. More of the information found was geared toward teachers who are coaches and limited to coaches who are not teachers. However, the methods to increase retention are relevant for both and also findings from the available research can be transferrable to the retention problem in the coaching profession. Overall, the results and findings from all articles represented methods to increase retention and provided similar findings that help support ideas on why retention is struggling amongst high school coaches.

### **Future Recommendations:**

This literature review and research unveiled several strategies that can be recommended for future studies as well as methods to be implemented by high school administrators. Research in the future related to retaining coaches and supportive strategies on increasing retention are necessary for the improvement of the profession. One of the most replicable recommendations would be to incorporate some form of program for coaches that provide them mentorship, workshops and networking opportunities that will help them advocate struggles they face in addition to stress before they become overwhelming. This is impactful to build leaders to transfer skills into their athletes which also allows room for relatability and relationship building with athletes.

Overall increasing the sense of belonging and job satisfaction to continue as a coach year after year.

In regards to gaps in research, there is a need for more studies specific to high school coaches and what are the internal and external factors that lead to poor retention within the profession. Furthermore, a look into environment and how it plays a role in coaches choice to continue in the district or working with its staff and students. In the future it will also be imperative that information about this matter be publicized and reach athletic administrators and school districts to find more professional opportunities for their staff.

**Summary:**

The coaching profession is currently losing many of its employees for various factors that are affiliated with areas such a lack of support, time commitment, burnout, and low utilization of professional development. The result of such is effecting the outlook for future professionals interested in the field of coaching at the high school level. Effective solutions that will increase the retention of high school coaches is the development of programs that mentor coaches to help develop efficacy and strategies to be successful working with students. Furthermore, holding the work environment accountable by increasing support provided for coaches such as professional development and organizational support. If coaches are involved or encounter either it is more likely that coaches are more inclined to remain coaching for a longer time frame.

**Appendix A:**  
**Article Grid**

Author	Title	Source	Purpose	Methods & Procedures	Analysis	Findings	Discussion/ Recommendations Research Notes –  Commonalities/ Differences
Lee, Hwang & Choi (2017)	Relationships between Coaching Leadership Social Responsibilities	Scientific Journal Publishers	Importance in the role coaches play in the development of student athletes	204 participants using a Leadership scale for sports (Likert scale 1-5)	SPSS 21.0, Descriptive analysis and hierarchical regression analysis testing association between coaching behavior to social responsibility	Coach's role, behavior and interactions with athletes determine level of participation and responsibility.	Democratic behavior positively linked to social responsibility amongst high school teens (Need for positive relationship building coaches)
Temple & Crane (2016)	A systematic review organizer soccer... adolescents	Soccer & Society	Understanding the reasons for discontinuing a sport or being less likely to drop out of specific sport	14 articles used to synthesize characteristics of adolescents who drop out of sport. Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory (PPCT)	Descriptive analysis of data based on age, interest and location.	Adolescents who intend to drop out of sports felt that outcomes were outweighed by their obligations outside of sports.	Students experience with coaches and time constraints caused them to drop sports

Brubaker (2007)	Coaching & Teaching Our Athletes	Coach & Athletic Director	Coaching behaviors and connection with student. Coaches being supported by Athletic Director and level of communication.	Observations of small group of local coaches	Descriptive Analysis of coaches behaviors and athletes response to behaviors	Connecting with athletes is a two-way street where coaches have to give up some ownership. Coaches also feel more supported when athletes and AD actively communicate on positives and negatives to improve both athletes as well as coaches.	Coaches face different difficulties at different level of sport and with high school level athletics there is a relationship barrier, communication and support issue that needs solving in order to retain coaches along with athletes.
Rodriguez (2018)	A New Framework for Hiring and Supporting Coaches in Urban Sports	The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance	Provides a system to recruit new coaches while supporting and training coaches	Coaches went through a 3 year plan of development in high needs high schools	Yearly assessments by survey data on improvement in efficacy, athletic dev, coaching dev., and support from staff	By putting a collective of resources that teach, develop and support coaches, there can be a large improvement in abilities.	Hiring untrained coaches has been problematic and by providing support and professional development, new or “walk on” coaches who are unqualified can become qualified assets to sporting programs.

Brok, Wubbels, & Tartwijk (2017)	Exploring Beginning Teachers Attrition in the Netherlands	Teachers and Teaching: Theory & Practice	To provide information and data on coaches/teachers leaving the profession and why	Review of Multiple Literatures with teacher attrition and its determining factors	Discriptive Analysis of data from multiple research studies	Low levels of competency amongst teacher/coach can lead to a motivation to improve abilities or increases stress about low levels of efficacy in performing duties	<p>Poor retention and increased attrition due to low level of competencies, professional development and preparation.</p> <p>Emerging teachers/coaches who are low level can be positively impacted when provided trainings, support from administration and other support strategies</p>
Trottier & Robitaille (2014)	Fostering Life Skill Development in High School and Community Sport: A Comparative Analysis of the Coach's role	The Sport Psychologist	Coaches using life skills and motivation to improve relationships and the experience of their athletes	(24) high school and community coaches in Semi structured interviews for 1-2 hours	Cross case Analysis, Deductive Analysis	Found that coaches impact the self-confidence, stress, respect and emotional management in athletes as well as themselves	Coaches seeing measurable impact from their role as life skill and motivators on increasing relationships and confidence.

Ovenden-Hope, Blandford, Cain & Maxwell (2018)	Retain Early Career Teacher Retention Program	Journal of Education for Teaching	To find the effectiveness of support strategies and how to implement them for early career teachers/coaches	Teachers completed survey pre and post program along with self-ratings of knowledge and skills based on Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale	Descriptive statistical analysis based on data surveys	Being involved in the development program for early career teachers significantly improved teachers abilities in all areas of the TSES	Being supported through coaching, sharing practices and talking to other teachers helped generate ideas and a sense of areas to improve.
Rocchi & Camire (2018)	The Contribution of Extracurricular Coaching on High School Teachers Job Satisfaction	Educational Psychology	Explore job satisfaction amongst teachers who coach high school sports	Participants completed online questionnaires about colleague relationships, opportunities afforded through coaching, athlete relationship, coaching efficacy, job satisfaction and stress.	Descriptive statistical analysis, Seven Factor Measurement model using Mplus Version 6, and MLR estimation method	Positive relationships amongst colleagues and less stress resulted in positive experience with athletes. Affordable experiences through coaching also allowed an increase in coaching efficacy which increased job satisfaction.	Coaching opportunities and relationship building are impactful factors that increase job satisfaction and coaching efficacy.

Wicker, Orłowski & Breuer (2018)	Coach Migration in German High Performance Sport	European Sport Management Quarterly	Push and pull factors that coincide with coaches migrating from their positions into new positions	Surveyed coaches online about job history. Created a panel of coaches to analyze migration using probit models	Empirical Analysis based on survey data from job history, income, workload, age and success Regression model to determine job migration, immigration and emigration	Seeing that the location where data came from varied it was found that variables such as higher income, athlete performance, having a degree and or successful jobs outside of coaching were determining retention and job migration.	Job immigration is a concern and dependent upon coach's job satisfaction. Increasing conditions may be a valuable solution in retaining coaches.
O'Connor & Bennie (2006)	The retention of youth sport coaches	Change: Transformation in Education	Why coaches in youth sport continue or discontinue with coaching	Review of literatures that utilized both questionnaires and surveys (behavior, stress level, interactions)	Descriptive analysis on youth coach experiences	Coaches strongly disassociate more for family commitments than dissatisfaction	Identify what coaches like most about their coaching roles to direct future coaches to prevent burnout.

Scantling & Lackey (2005)	Coaches under pressure: Four decades of studies; The odds against coaching longevity are increasing.... remain the same	The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance	Examines the pressures on high school coaches, the magnitude and sources of these pressures, and the consequences of these pressures.	Questionnaires were used to collect data on what sports coaches were dismissed from and the reasons	Descriptive analysis of retention data for coaches employed in various sports.	Coaches in general do not lack coaching skills but may lack human-interaction skills.	Coaching preparation curricula would serve the profession well by emphasizing these skills and by providing guidance for moral and ethical conduct during undergraduate preparation
Raedeke (2004)	Coach Commitment and Burnout: A One-Year Follow-Up	Journal of Applied Sport Psychology	Determine and assess if commitment to coaching and the effect of burnout on coaches	Questionnaires were administered two times (1 year a part) measured by a Likert Scale on demographics, cost, and coaching benefits	Cluster analysis to determine coach response change MANOVA used to compare emergent profiles of coaches exhaustion and commitment	Individuals who had growing attraction to coaching were more committed; Coaches who were more dissatisfied data were minimal by self-elimination during survey by the lack of response or full completion of survey.	Most coaches had a positive outlook on coaching and that burnout is not a critical issue for a majority of coaches.  A relevant amount of the sample did report moderate to high levels of exhaustion leading to suggestions or a need for interventions to prevent burnout and sustain coaching engagement.

<p>Miller-Glenn, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, &amp; Miller (2006)</p>	<p>A national study of nonrenewal in high school coaching</p>	<p>The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance</p>	<p>Determine what the demographic makeup of high school coaching professionals, and what factors relate to nonrenewal in coaching.</p>	<p>Web-based surveys sent through email one for AD and one for coaches.</p> <p>Coaches focused on demographic information</p> <p>AD questionnaires focused on factors regarding nonrenewal in coaching.</p>	<p>Descriptive Analysis of demographic and nonrenewal information for survey/questionnaire</p>	<p>The largest reason for nonrenewal of coaches across multiple sports was affiliated with “reason not listed,” which means that coaches were dismissed or left for personal reasons.</p> <p>However, misconduct, poor player discipline and poor relationship with administration were the standout percentages for nonrenewal of coaching positions.</p>	<p>High school coaching professionals should take university classes that address management, business, how to conduct themselves in a professional manner and develop an understanding of positive public relations with conflict resolution.</p>
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