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IS IT EQUITABLE ONLINE? THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE 2007 NCAA DIVISION I BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT ON FOXSPORTS.COM

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INTRODUCTION

Although women's participation in sport has reached unprecedented highs (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008), research shows that media coverage of female athletes still lags behind that of men's (Duncan, Messner, & Williams, 1991; Fink, 1998; Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Tuggle & Owen, 1999). Additionally, research has indicated the quality, or ways in which men's and women's sport is covered is inequitable (Messner, Duncan, & Cooky, 2003). Since the passage of Title IX in 1972, male and female athletes in collegiate sports were expected to have equal access to equipment and practice facilities, media representation, coaches of the same quality, and scholarship money proportional to participation (Huffman et al., 2004).

Equitable coverage can be defined in several ways. First, researchers have argued that equity is not reached by solely providing an equal number of articles and photographs, but also, as stated by Fink and Kensicki (2002), by not discrediting females by using them as overt sex symbols in the media while men are portrayed as powerful and talented athletes. Second, equitable sports coverage should also provide equal coverage to all *types* of sports; females participating in sports deemed by society as masculine (i.e., rugby, basketball, soccer) should be covered at the same rates as sports considered to be feminine (i.e., golf, tennis, swimming) (Kane, 1996). Thirdly, since coverage of sports can create excitement and drama surrounding a sporting event (Messner, Duncan, & Wachs, 1996) it is important to examine the quality or type of coverage being provided. When considering what constitutes "equitable sports coverage" – the *type of coverage* in terms of whether or not the information is merely *factual* (i.e., basic statistics regarding the competition) or *personal* in nature (i.e., writing with a "human interest" lens) is also important. The latter provides a unique frame for the story, which helps build fan base and draw support for teams by providing a personal connection for readers and fans. By writing from such a perspective, an advantage is afforded to the athletes in the personalized stories because the personal information provides a cue by which each team or coach or individual player is more easily recalled and therefore more likely to be followed in the media (Messner et al., 2003, Messner et al., 1996). Further, Messner et al. (1996) contended that the media impacts the preferences of fans by not only the amount; but the type of coverage provided. Therefore, sexism occurs when differential treatment of men's and women's sports occurs by the media as women are viewed as "outsiders" or "others (Eastman & Billings, 2000).

To date, there has been limited analysis of the men's and women's NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament's online coverage, particularly of women in sport on Internet sports websites (Real, 2006). Considering online sports sites are very popular during the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournaments, it is important to conduct studies in this area (Real). Additionally, Cunningham, Sagas, Satore, Amsden, & Schellhas (2004) suggested with the high number of sport consumers utilizing the Internet for information that more research was needed on the topic. Researchers have also noted the continuing need for the analysis of not just the amount or quantity of coverage given to women's sports, but also to the *quality* of coverage (Messner et al., 2003; Messner et al., 1996). The present study focuses on this type of analysis in order to identify any under-representation, paying particular attention to the type of coverage provided.

Therefore, to determine if equity in coverage existed, the purposes of this study were to (1) Determine whether equal coverage was displayed through coverage of foxsports.com online sports during the 2007 men's and women's 1st and 2nd rounds of the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournaments, and (2) Determine if the articles and photos attributed to males and females are similar in quality with regard to the type of coverage (factual vs. personal) provided both in text and photographs.

AMOUNT OF COVERAGE

Previous research (Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Lee & Choi, 2003; Messner, Duncan, & Jensen, 1993; Tuggle, Huffman, & Rosengard, 2002) has indicated under-representation of women's sports coverage in the media. The majority of the research conducted on sports coverage has been done on print and television media (Duncan & Messner, 2000; Billings & Eastman, 2002; Billings, Halone, & Denham, 2002; Higgs & Weiller, 1994; Tuggle & Owen, 1999). Studies on print and television have revealed inequalities when comparing the coverage of women's athletic events to men's athletic events (Billings & Eastman, 2003; Kane, 1996; Tuggle et al. 2002). However, during major athletic events which receive worldwide coverage, such as the Olympic Games, coverage of both sexes is more equitable. An analysis of the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics conducted by Higgs and Weiller (1994) found 56% of all coverage was devoted to men's sports, with the remaining 44% devoted to women's athletics (Eastman & Billings, 2001). During the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics, Tuggle and Owen (1999) found the gap to be decreasing with findings of men's coverage at 53% and women's at 47%.

Eastman and Billings (1999) reported the coverage findings during the 1998 Nagano Olympics showing the gap to have widened to 60% for men's coverage and 40% for women's. Additionally, at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, there was a 2.6% drop in the proportion of television time devoted to the coverage of female athletes and competition from 1996 to 2000 (Tuggle et al. 2002).

Within print media, Cunningham et al. (2004) found an equitable amount of coverage from the *NCAA News's* overall coverage of athletics. According to this study, reporters used consistent language when describing the athletic accomplishments of males and females, and there was also equal space (i.e., stories, photographs) given to each sex throughout the magazine. Their photo and text analysis was conducted based on a previous study by Shifflett and Revelle (1994), which had previously reported an unequal coverage rate of men's and women's sports photographic and text print media coverage. Shifflett and Revelle (1994) reported women's articles attributed to only 26.5% of the print media, and the photo coverage was reported at 34%. A decade later, Cunningham et al. (2004) reported that the articles attributed to women's athletics had increased by 15.9% and photo coverage had also increased by 5.7%.

According to Real (2006), the research on sport coverage on the Internet is still in the beginning stages. Though the research on Internet coverage has been limited, the results indicate that the quantity and quality of coverage is still discriminatory between men and women. Cunningham (2003) examined university sponsored websites, finding more coverage of gender appropriate sports (women's tennis) at the same schools. Sagas, Cunningham, Wigley, and Ashley (2000) looked at university softball and baseball websites and found more coverage of men's baseball than women's softball. Jones (2004) did a content analysis of ABC News Online during the 2000 Olympic Games, where she found an improvement in the extent and range of sports covered (though it was found that female athletes were more likely to be characterized as emotional). In addition, Lee and Choi (2003) examined Olympic photographs online during the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics and the 2002 Pusan Asian Games. After collecting the photos from the online websites, the two coders analyzed the photos based on how many photos were posted, how impressively the athletes were described in the photos, how importantly the photos were presented, and which sport categories were more prominently covered according to gender

(Lee & Choi, 2003). One of the limitations noted by the researchers was the difficulty in capturing every picture. This was due in part to the nature of online websites, which allowed for constant updates and frequent changing of text and pictures. In terms of overall coverage during the Salt Lake Games, their results indicated that men were covered more than females with men and women receiving 61.8% and 24.4% of coverage, respectively. Similarly, men and women were unequally represented in the Pusan Asian Games. Of the coverage time allotted, males received 65.5% compared to females' 27.8% of coverage.

GENDER AND THE QUALITY OF MEDIA COVERAGE

Just as imperative as the *quantity* of coverage is the *quality* of the type of coverage being provided to women's sports. Researchers have long suggested that the quality of the coverage could have a significant effect on how viewers experience the event and how the public perception is affected regarding the value or importance of women's sports (Billings, Halone, & Denham, 2002). Messner, Duncan, and Wachs (2001) noted that the type of coverage given to the Men's Final Four was billed as a "must see" event while the Women's Final Four was constructed as a nonevent or just some other game on television. Messner et al. (1993) contended this type of coverage depicted female athletes as "others" and not as important as male athletes. Messner et al. (2001) noted that as a result of the lack of coverage, the ability to emotionally connect and develop interest in the game is lost. In fact, the authors noted that viewers could even view the women's game as lackluster and dull. They go on to suggest that "...not only has television failed, thus far, to build audiences for women's basketball, it has actively undermined the possibility of the development of such an audience" (p. 331). However, if equitable and respectful coverage is provided, it is possible to build a larger and more diverse audience for women's sports (Messner et al., 2003).

The degree to which the sport media covers women shapes society's view of female athletes (Tuggle et al., 2002). Not only does the type of language used in print, broadcast, and online media have an immediate and future impact on society's view of female athletes, but also, it can alter viewers' and readers' perceptions of women's coverage. The media can have tremendous power by choosing not only what to cover, but in how they cover an event (Martin, 2004). Therefore, the way sports are covered and reported plays a huge role in how female athletes and female sports are viewed by society.

FRAMING THEORY

Goffman's (1974) framing theory proposes that media coverage provides social cues that help viewers interpret events. The framing process involves reporters and editors selecting and highlighting particular aspects of reality while obscuring or omitting other elements (Goffman, 1974). As a result, the mass media have the ability to actively set the frames of reference that readers or viewers use to interpret events (Tuchman, 1978). Rowe (1999) wrote, "If culture is the 'stuff' of everyday life-the frame through which we experience, interpret, mold and represent everything that surrounds us-then sport occupies...an uncommonly prominent position within it" (p. 23). In other words, framing can increase or decrease the importance of an event. In essence, the media frame a story, whether it is a photograph or the text of an article, by selecting certain aspects of the story to promote a desired reality.

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem, definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Photos have been identified as an important reference by which readers judge a news story (Mathews & Ruess, 1985). Therefore, the types of photographs used to portray female athletes should not send the readers a false sense of reality that women are not as athletic as their male

counterparts. Based on framing theory, Billings and Eastman (2003), argued that portrayals of gender, ethnicity, and nationality are altered through a media controlled shaping function in which images are manipulated to appeal to the desired audience. Bissell and Holt (2006) also used this framing theory to analyze the gender bias coverage of the 2004 Olympic Games via the Internet. One of their hypotheses suggested that males would be seen in more active shots in the dominant photographs, whereas women would be seen in more passive shots in the dominant photograph (Bissell & Holt, 2006). Their study found that, of 45 total photographs of men, 64% of shots were active and 36% of shots were passive. From the 19 total photographs of women, only 47% were active and 32% were passive (the remaining 21% was coded as "other"). The use of more passive shots for women suggest sexual difference in the way male and female athletes are portrayed in visuals on the web (Bissell & Holt, 2006). The photograph angles reinforced the differences in the portrayal of male and female athletes. Males were more typically framed in an upward angle shot (59% of the time), and females were photographed either straight-on or using a downward camera angles (63% of the time). The researchers concluded that photographing men in this way emphasized strength, masculinity, and superiority and the angles used to photograph females emphasized femininity and weakness.

Based on this body of literature, we would expect the media coverage to be different for men and women not only quantitatively (amount of coverage), but also in terms of the quality and type of coverage provided. The literature presented here suggests that: (1) male athletes receive more coverage than female athletes, and (2) the quality of coverage differs for males and females. Examining the type of coverage in terms of factual (i.e., baseline statistical information) versus personal information (i.e., human interest or non sport or sport performance related information) can contribute to the limited amount of information on this topic on sports Internet websites. It is important to examine the framing of the coverage to determine if inequitable coverage is being provided.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted to analyze the equality of gender coverage through the online coverage of college sports. From foxsports.com, two hyperlinks navigated the researchers to both the men's and women's college basketball home pages.

Foxsports.com averages over 14 million visitors a month and is ranked third of the 10 most popular U.S. Sport Internet Sites (ComScore Network, 2005). It was ranked only behind ESPN.com and MLB.com. Foxsports.com's coverage of NCAA basketball consisted of two pages; one dedicated for men's coverage and one for women's coverage. The two research questions addressed were: (1) Does foxsports.com produce equitable coverage, in terms of quantity and quality of paragraphs for men's and women's basketball and (2) Does foxsports.com produce equitable coverage, in terms of quantity and quality of photographs for men's and women's basketball?

To answer research questions one and two, the researchers independently coded each paragraph and photograph. Equitable media coverage was defined as providing equal amounts of photos and paragraphs (quantity) while also providing the same quality (personal versus factual information). Personal information included information about a player, team, or coaches that did not specifically relate to their on the court performance (i.e., family information, appearance, attire, relationships, etc.). Factual information included all statistical, game information, game explanations, or anything specifically related to the contest.

The unit of analysis for the written material was examining paragraphs on the website for men's and women's basketball. The other units of analysis were the photographs displayed on the websites. The criteria for a paragraph included one or more complete sentences on the website. Due to the nature of online writing during the NCAA Basketball Tournament,

paragraphs often are short and may only consist of 1-3 sentences. Thus, due to the often brief paragraphs, it was uncommon for "mixed" paragraphs containing both personal and factual information to appear. Since there were such a limited number of paragraphs (4) that included mixed information (both personal and factual information), these were coded according to what the first sentence was (personal or factual). Therefore, two were coded as personal, and two were coded as factual based upon the first sentence. Game stories, previews, summaries, and any news stories or features on the men's and women's pages were included in the analysis. Photograph captions were not included. Chat board discussions, blogs, or comments left by readers on the website were also not included. For the coding process of paragraph content, Cunningham et al.'s (2004) procedures were partially followed. Since this study did not examine paragraph or photo location, this part of the methodology from their study was not utilized. The following was examined: (a) factual information related to athletics, (b) factual information not related to athletics, (c) personal information related to athletics, (d) personal information not related to athletics, and (e) other. For photographs, the coding categories included (a) competing athlete, (b) athlete in competitive context but not competing, (c) head shot of the athlete(s) or coach(es), (d) head shot of a person other than an athlete or coach (i.e., administrator or mascot), (e) a group photograph of persons other than players or coaches (e.g., committee members or fans), and (f) other (Cunningham et al., 2004).

SPSS version 14.0 was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics (f; %) were calculated through cross tabulations to show the percent differences between the independent variables, gender, and dependent variables, category type, for both the articles and photographs. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to statistically evaluate the frequency of each paragraph type by gender. In addition, a Pearson's chi-square (X^2) test was run for research question 1 to test any significant difference between paragraph types among the sexes. Chi-square is an approximate test of the probability of getting the frequencies that have actually been observed when the sample size has a substantial number of observations (Chernoff & Lehmann, 1954). Research question 2, relating to photographs had a small sample size; therefore, the criteria for conducting a Chi-Square test was not met, so frequency distributions were the only analysis used to show differentiations.

PROCEDURES

Two researchers independently coded all paragraphs and photographs during the given time frame for the study. By having two researchers, intercoder reliability was strengthened, which eliminated the potential of interpretation by just one researcher (Krippendorff, 2004). In order to establish content validity, a pilot test was utilized using foxsports.com to clarify definitions as well as provide consistency for the current study (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). After the pilot study was conducted and the researcher's codes were compared, any inconsistencies were discussed to ensure both researchers were in agreement on category types for paragraphs and photographs. For the actual study, the reliability (Cohen's kappa) was high, $K = .912$, $p < .001$. Cohen's kappa was utilized as it also accounts for chance agreement (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, Bracken, 2002). According to Landis and Koch (1977), it is suggested that *a K* between 0.60 and 0.79 is substantial, but *a K* of 0.80 or better is outstanding. Riffe, Lacy, and Fico (1998) indicate that coefficients of .90 would be acceptable to all, while .80 would be acceptable in most situations, and .70 is more acceptable in exploratory research. Thus, the Cohen's kappa in this study suggested a strong correlation of consistency.

The schedule of the 1st and 2nd rounds of the 2007 NCAA Basketball Championship games was obtained from ncaasports.com. Data was collected during the 1st and 2nd rounds of the NCAA Division I Basketball Championship Games. Each website for men and women was viewed and analyzed three times each day at 8 a.m. EST, 1 p.m. EST, and 7 p.m. EST. These times were chosen based upon previous research which found that, unlike printed media, website articles and pictures can be changed throughout the day. The times were chosen to capture all the

articles that were reported on each day. The 8 a.m. time slot would capture all the media reports from the games the night before. The 1 p.m. time captured articles and pictures that recapped and projected what may occur on that given day, and the 7 p.m. slot would capture media on what had occurred during the day.

The researchers independently coded each paragraph and picture at the specified time. This was done according to a previously agreed upon method using a coding sheet produced by the primary researcher based upon the work of Cunningham et al. (2004). Each paragraph and picture was coded as the researchers independently navigated through the website at the specified times. After the collection period was over, the primary researcher entered data into an Excel document.

RESULTS

Foxsports.com produced 796 total paragraphs during the 1st and 2nd rounds the NCAA Division I 2007 Basketball Tournament and 36 photographs (see Tables 1 and 2). Results from the chi-square analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in the amount of coverage between males and females, $X^2 = 78.7$, $p < .01$. The men's site contained 53.8 % (n = 428) of the total paragraphs and 88.9 % (n = 32) of the total photographs while the women's site had the remaining 46.2 % (n = 368) of the paragraphs and 11.1 % (n = 4) of the total photographs.

When the paragraphs were coded for text content, they were coded as (a) factual information related to athletics, (b) factual information not related to athletics, (c) personal information related to athletics, (d) personal information not related to athletics, and (e) other. Within all paragraphs (N = 796), 44.7 % (n = 356) of the information included was coded as (a) factual information related to athletics (see Table 1). Individually, within that same category, the men received an overall percentage 29.2 % (n = 125), while the women received 62.8 % (n = 231) overall of the total paragraphs of that type. Within the category (b) factual information not related to athletics the overall percentage of the total paragraphs (N = 796), was 1.1 % (n = 9). The men individually received an overall percentage of 1.4 % (n = 6) paragraphs coded in that category, and the women received an overall percentage of 0.8 % (n = 3). Of the total paragraphs (N = 796), 51.0 % (n = 406) were coded as (c) personal information related to athletics. In that category, the men's individual percentage overall was 66.8 % (n = 286) total paragraphs. The women received an overall percentage of 32.6 % (n = 120) total paragraphs that included factual information. In the next category (d) personal information not related to athletics, 2.1 % (n = 9) of the paragraphs were attributed to men's overall percentage with 2.7 % (n = 10) being attributed to the women's overall percentage. This category received a combined percentage of 2.4 % (n = 19) overall. Finally, within the category of (e) other, of the total paragraphs (N = 796) there was an overall percentage of 0.8 % (n = 6). The men had an individual percentage of 0.5 % (n = 2) overall, and the women received 1.1 % (n = 4) paragraphs in that category overall.

The coding categories for photographs included (a) competing athlete, (b) athlete in competitive context but not competing, (c) head shot of the athlete(s) or coach(es), (d) head shot of a person other than an athlete or coach (i.e. administrator or mascot), (e) a group photograph of persons other than players or coaches (e.g., committee members or fans), and (f) other. Within all photographs (N = 36), the men individually received 25 % (n = 8) of their photographs coded in the category of (a) competing athlete while the women received 0 %, leading to an overall combined category percentage of 22.2 % (n = 8). Of the total photographs (N = 36), in the category of (b) athlete in competitive context but not competing, the combined total percentage for this category was 47.2 % (n = 17).

Individually, 50 % (n = 16) of the men's photographs were coded in this category, and the women received 25 % (n = 1) of their photographs coded in the same category. The percentage

of the overall photographs (N = 36) in the category (c) head shot of athlete (s) or coach(es), was 22.2 % (n = 8). For this category, the men individually received an overall percentage of 15.6 % (n = 5), and the women, for their individual percentage received 75 % (n = 3) of photographs with this code. Within the remaining three categories, (d) head shot of person other than athlete or coach, (e) group photograph of persons other than players or coaches, and (f) other; the women received no photographs attributed to any of those categories. However, the men did see an individual percentage of 3.1 % (n = 1) in each of those categories, leading to an overall combined percentage of 2.8 % (n = 1) for those categories. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that online articles about men were more likely to focus on personal information related to athletics (M=0.67), whereas the online articles about women were more likely to focus on factual information related to athletics only (M=0.63), $F(4, 793)=27.83$, p<.001.

DISCUSSION

The study found that of the total paragraphs (N = 796) produced by foxsports.com during the 1st and 2nd rounds of the 2007 NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament, males accounted for 53.8% (n = 428) while females accounted for 46.2% (n = 368) of the paragraphs Therefore, the numbers indicated inequitable coverage in the number of paragraphs. The Internet is a popular source of information, and one would hope that the Internet not follow in the footsteps of television and print media by providing inequitable coverage in terms of quantity. Women's sports needs to be in the forefront, and must have equitable coverage if it hopes to have a chance to expand. It is difficult to generate any interest whatsoever in women's sports if it simply is not being covered by the media.

There was also inequitable coverage in terms of quality. This study found that men received the majority of their paragraphs, 44.7 % (n = 356), coded as (c) personal information related to athletics, and women received the highest number of codes 62.8% (n = 231) in category "a" factual information related to athletics. Though the women's articles did report more of their athletic accomplishments, there was less focus on their personal information as demonstrated by a large percentage of the articles containing factual information. It appears foxsports.com has gone from one end of the continuum to another by only providing personal information or descriptions about females' bodies or personal lives to omitting personal information. Therefore, an opportunity to generate fan interest, or the ability to capture the reader is lost. Potentially, the more personal information you have about athletes the easier it is for the fan to connect. The human interest piece can be a powerful tool that draws fans to women's' athletics. This "cut and dry" reporting could potentially minimize the intrigue, excitement and overall entertaining factors of women's basketball. However, it is advisable that the personal stories that are included not include marginalization, objectification, or the sexualizing of female athletes as previous research has found (Eastman & Billings, 2000; Messner et al., 1996). It is time for women the media to figure out equitable coverage that is a positive portrayal of the women's game.

The quantity and quality differences create a double quandary for women with regards to sports coverage. Ultimately, this approach can have detrimental results for females in sports. In other words, by omitting the emotions or descriptions of female athletes while reporting, the reader is left with a void that does not allow them to connect with the female athlete or team in the ways that it does for men's athletics. Thus, the ability to promote or sell the women's game is severely limited. Ultimately, for women's sports to continue to grow, a larger, broader fan base would be beneficial. Furthermore, a new generation of Internet users could be influenced in a more positive fashion regarding female athletes. Women's sports could be covered in a way that would create more interest, and excitement, and in the end garner more fans for women's sports.

Photographs provide visual interest and cues to capture an audience. It is important for women to be represented because photos entice the reader to read the article. Consistent with previous research (Bissell & Holt, 2006; Lee & Choi, 2003; Shifflett & Revelle, 1994), foxsports.com displayed fewer photographs of women compared to men. The lack of photographs reinforces previous suggestions that the media does not assist with the selling or marketing of women's sports by eliminating the visual appeal through photographs of female athletes. Maintaining existing societal views regarding gender ideology, the disproportionate number of photographs between men and women reinforces the notion that women are under represented and not shown photographically in action type sports.

Women's participation in sports has made huge strides through the years, especially since the passage of Title IX. However, the amount of coverage, along with the type of coverage females receive is far from equitable in comparison to men's coverage. Without equitable coverage, female adolescents may not have the opportunity to have a positive female athlete to view as a role model. Also, female athletes are not provided the same opportunity to develop fan interest and support based upon the media coverage.

LIMITATIONS

This study was an initial exploratory study into Internet website coverage on the NCAA basketball tournament. This study was limited to the 1st and 2nd rounds of the 2007 NCAA Basketball Tournament on foxsports.com. Further rounds or consecutive years of the 1st and 2nd rounds could be included in future research. Additionally, a more comprehensive analysis including more of the most popular websites that cover the NCAA tournament could be completed.

Another potential limitation could have been the coding of paragraphs where there was both factual and personal information included in the paragraph. Since no previous studies examining the online coverage of the men's and women's NCAA Basketball Tournament could be found, this study coded the combined paragraphs by if the first sentence was personal or factual. Though the number was only four, future studies that expand the time frame may want to include this as "other." This appears to be an area where discrepancies exist in previous research in the print media when looking at gender issues. Shifflett and Revelle (1994) counted male, female, combined, or neither, while Malec (1994) argued that these categories should be eliminated as the concern should only be with males and females. Though this study looked at the personal and factual information in the paragraphs, this may be something to take into consideration in the future.

The researchers were surprised at the limited number of photographs provided. Thus, another limitation was the limited number of photographs that were available to be coded. Again, potentially extending the time frame of research in the future could eliminate this problem.

CONCLUSIONS

While athletic accomplishments are being reported, a balance between accomplishments and personal athletic information must be reported to attract and connect readers with players and or teams. Potentially, owners, editors and reporters have the ability to change the coverage provided for women's sports. Whether as commentators or sports writers/editors, more women in the field could potentially decrease the inequitable coverage leading to more interest. More interest generated could in turn lead to more consumer demand, therefore having a significant following could mean higher consumer spending in the area of women's athletics.

Though this study did show that articles dedicated to women during the 2007 NCAA Division I Basketball tournament reported athletic accomplishments of women and did not trivialize or discredit their athletic ability, the interest factor of the articles was lost due to lack of personal

information related to the women or teams. It may seem a great stride has been made with the reporting of women's accomplishments on the court, but there are still more advancements to be made and many more steps to be taken before coverage can be considered equitable.

The quantity *and* quality of the media coverage of women's athletics should continue to be evaluated. Particular emphasis should be given to online resources, as the Internet continues to be a source of information for sports fans and consumers.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Additionally, more research on the Internet's sports media coverage seems warranted. It seems important to know if as the Internet continues to grow as a source of information for sports fans, if women's and men's sports coverage continues to differ. These studies could include various websites, different sports, and different levels (professional or college). Particularly, attention should be paid to those sports seemed sex-appropriate. Additionally, it would be interesting to include international teams, sports, and websites. It would be interesting to know if the same issues (hegemony, lack of coverage, etc.) are occurring on Internet websites as well.

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TABLE 1

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF TEXT

Paragraph Category Types	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Total paragraphs	428*	1.86	368	2.16
Factual information related to athletics	125	29.2	231	62.8
Factual information not related to athletics	6	1.4	3	0.8
Personal information related to athletics	286	66.8	120	32.6
Personal information not related to athletics	9	2.1	10	2.7
Other	2	0.5	4	1.1

* X^2 = 78.7, p < .01.

TABLE 2

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Paragraph Category Types	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Competing Athlete	8	25.0	0	0
Athlete in competitive context but not competing	16	50.0	1	25.0
Head shot of athlete(s) or coach(es)	5	15.6	3	75
Head shot of persons other than athletes or coaches	1	3.1	0	0
Group shot of persons other than athletes or coaches	1	3.1	0	0
Other	1	3.1	0	0

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)

Source of Variance	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-statistic	P value
Type of newspaper article	4	24.41	6.10	27.83	0.001
Residual	793	173.89	0.22		
Total	797	198.30			