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Full Length Research Paper

Mentoring in Salary Negotiations for Female Sport Management Students

Heidi Grappendorf, Cindy Veraldo, A.J. Grube, and Annemarie Farrell

Heidi Grappendorf, Professor Sport Management, Western Carolina University, hgrappendorf@wcu.edu

Cindy Veraldo, Professor Sport Management, Mount St. Joseph University, Cynthia.Veraldo@msj.edu

A.J. Grube, Dean, College of Business, Western Carolina University, agrube@wcu.edu

Annmarie Farrell, Professor Sport Management, Ithaca College, afarrell@Ithaca.edu

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Female professors continue to make less than their male counterparts. In traditionally male dominated fields, such as sport management, the pay gap can be even greater. To gain further insight into the salary negotiation process, the specific role of mentoring was examined utilizing qualitative research, and specifically semi-structured interviews conducted with female sport management professors. Open-ended coding was employed to analyze the data. Female participants reported they had limited mentoring for the salary negotiation process and felt there were barriers that influenced if mentoring took place. Participants did indicate informal mentoring occurred, and some reported the development of meaningful relationships specifically with major advisors who intentionally provided advice and mentoring related to the salary negotiation process. Being cognizant of gender roles and utilizing mentoring strategies is critical to addressing salary and the continued gap in salary amongst female and male professors in sport management.

Keywords: salary negotiation, mentoring, gender role theory

Full-time faculty salaries for women were 81.9 percent of those for men in 2021-22 (American Association for University Professors, 2022). At the instructor and assistant levels, where new doctoral students are most likely to be hired, the starting salaries for women are \$61,452 and \$81,181. For men, the starting salaries at the instructor and assistant levels are \$64,852 and \$89,533, respectively. By the time faculty members reach the highest rank at full-professor, the salary difference is even greater, with women making on average \$131,028 while men make \$150,596 (American Association for University Professors, 2022). It is clear that starting salaries can have long lasting effects on one's earnings over time as the financial gap is only compounded (Marks & Harold, 2011). In fact, when considering salary increases and retirement contributions, Babcock and Laschever (2003) reiterated the importance of initial salaries, as it could cost women more than \$500,000 over the course of their careers.

Salary negotiation involves processes where individuals try to attain the greatest compensation they can (Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999). The process is a foundational element of the job offer and acceptance process (Wade, 2001). Wade (2001) found that women experienced more constraints in the salary negotiation process because of stereotypes and gender roles. Further, Rudman (1998) and Rudman and Glick (1999) found that women who did make a case for themselves during salary negotiation ran a greater risk of backlash, because self-promotion is stereotypically male/agentive behavior that violates the stereotypical female communal role. Thus, gender roles and expectations are a critical component to understand the discrepancy salaries of men and women. As negotiation is vital

piece of this process, it is important to understand any gender dynamics impacting the process.

When looking at sport management faculty, the number of female professors lags behind the number of males in the same position (Jones et al., 2008). In fact, Jones et al. (2008) reported that 29% of sport management programs did not have any female faculty, and in 66% of programs, female professors were less than 40% of faculty members. Particularly for women in traditionally male dominated fields such as sport, mentoring may provide a means for women to deal with many of the inequities, including lower salary offers they may receive. Mentors are vitally important to the growth and advancement of women in their careers (Bower, 2009). "While the mentoring relationship is important in career development for both genders, it is particularly critical for women, especially those in male dominated professions such as the sport industry" (Bower, 2009, p. 3). Although there has been a call for more research related to mentoring women in sport management (Bower, 2009; Grappendorf, et al., 2022, Shaw, 2006) there has been limited research related to mentoring experiences of female sport management professors' salary negotiation processes. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the role and importance of mentoring in the experiences of female sport management faculty in the salary negotiation process.

Mentoring

Mentoring has been defined as the relationship between a mentor with more experience and a mentee with less

experience that consists of support, guidance, and counseling that can contribute to a person's individual and professional development (Kram, 1985; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). Mentoring provides career support and can enhance career development (Kram, 1983). Mentors assist mentees in navigating such things as uncertain environments and role conflict (Carmel & Paul, 2015). Thus, mentors can provide both career and psychosocial support (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial support aspects include providing encouragement, helping mentees develop identities, or cultivating self-esteem and confidence (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). The mentee also receives reassurance and encouragement from an empathetic mentor, helping the mentee create a positive self-image (Grima et al., 2014). This type of support is associated with growth outcomes (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999) as well as increased self-awareness, self-respect, competence, confidence, and assertiveness (Bruce, 1995). Career support consists of career advice, assistance in developing networks and human capital, and advice related to career advancement. These advancement outcomes are associated with promotion, salary, and status (Ragins, 1997; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999).

Mentoring is an essential function, particularly for young career academics, (St. Clair et al., 2017)), women (Levesque et al., 2005), African Americans and other people of color (Dreher & Chargois, 1998). As mentoring can provide the necessary information, as well as skill development and greater career outcomes, it is important that mentoring is utilized for those traditionally minoritized groups (Carmel & Paul, 2015). Although Kram (1985) noted that mentoring has traditionally been viewed as an informal process where the mentor and mentee form a relationship with the purpose of assisting the mentee in becoming knowledgeable and developing skills specific to one's career, women and traditionally minoritized groups may be more likely to be excluded from informal mentoring relationships (Burke & McKeen, 1990). Further, they may experience more barriers to obtaining a mentor and be less likely to have one or obtain quality mentoring (Ragins, 1999). Women may be reluctant to initiating a mentoring relationship, they may fear misinterpretation of seeking out a mentor or the unwillingness of mentors, or simply, they do not have access to mentors (Weaver & Chelladurai, 2002). Women may find it more difficult in attaining and developing mentoring relationships in male dominated occupations where most mentors would be men, making it more complex in developing male-female mentorships (Johnson & Scandura, 1994). As sport management academia is still predominantly men, these issues certainly may impact the mentoring relationship.

Mentoring, Women, and Salary Negotiation

An effective mentoring practice is to help mentees understand the benefits of career development mentoring, as the outcome has been positively associated with higher salaries and promotions. Mentoring can introduce mentees to social networks as well as help them gather information to assist them in negotiating salary (Kolb & McGinn, 2008). Individuals that have been mentored receive higher salaries (Allen et al., 2004; Laband & Lentz, 1993) and having knowledge and preparation for how to negotiate can have a tremendous impact, whether the candidate is successful or not (Allen, et al., 2004).

According to Williams-Nickelson (2009), learning to be comfortable and talk openly about money and how to ask and negotiate for salaries is particularly critical for women. However, for women, the influence of gender roles related to negotiation is multi-layered, extensive, and complicated (Olekals & Kennedy, 2020). In addition, "women have to negotiate over issues that men can take as givens – opportunities for promotion and training, mentoring, client assignments, partnership arrangements, resources, and office space, among others" (Kolb & McGinn, 2008, p. 1).

The variables that have received attention from researchers are wide-ranging and still evolving as we learn more about the influence of gender roles in salary negotiations. Numerous investigations into women and negotiation focused on what women did not do or did not do well. For example, Babcock et al., (2006) found even before negotiation begins, women were less likely to see negotiation as a possibility, and if they did, they had lower salary expectations. The lack of self-confidence of women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989), the fear of contentious relationships, (Babcock et al., 2006) and elevated levels of anxiety (Babcock & Laschever, 2004) have all affected their negotiation efforts.

Categorizing the aforementioned as "fix-the-women" issues is problematic. "Women do not appear to be broken and encouraging them to negotiate more and differently often backfires" (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2022, p. 455). Recalde and Vesterlund (2022) go on to suggest that we should be looking at fixing the institution narratives and examining the overall context in which negotiation happens; it would be more meaningful and useful in reducing the gender differences in outcomes. Kolb and McGinn (2008) advocated that research stop focusing on the individual variables and change the narrative to consider societal factors that impact organizational practices. There have been other concerted efforts to not merely just blame women for their inequities in the salary negotiation process, or to view them as less effective negotiators (Kennedy & Kray, 2015; Schneider, 2017). Instead, they suggested focusing on gender role expectations utilizing social role theory and role congruity theory as a foundation.

Social Role and Role Congruity Theory

Wade (2001), and Amanatullah and Morris (2010) noted that women are just as capable and have the skills to negotiate, but they are often penalized when they do. Social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2020) posits that women are viewed as being more communal (e.g., being more cooperative, caring, nurturing) while men are believed to be more agentic (e.g., more competitive, assertive). Thus, women and men are prescribed ways in which they should behave. There can be a negative reaction or backlash to women and men who deviate from their gender roles (Rudman, 1998; Wade, 2001). As such, people typically behave in ways consistent with their gender roles to avoid backlash (Amanatullah & Morris 2010; Rudman, 1998).

Specific to salary negotiation, women would experience more backlash because agentic behaviors are viewed as

necessary (Stuhlmacher & Linnabery, 2013). Therefore, as women are viewed as having communal characteristics and expectations are different for their behavior, there is an incongruity between their social role and what is viewed as necessary for salary negotiation (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Stuhlmacher & Linnabery, 2013). Women may end up facing discrimination based on the gender role stereotyping that takes place when gender roles are prescribed and then violated by acting outside of them (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Wade, 2001). The backlash and discrimination that women may face is amplified when working in a male-dominated profession (Heilman et al., 2004). Women in the salary negotiation process are caught in a tricky situation because if they behave communally, they may be disadvantaged at negotiation, but if they do negotiate, they may receive backlash as they have violated their gender role (Wade, 2001). It is a *damned if you do; damned if you don't* situation.

Methods

This study was part of a larger scale qualitative study that was conducted utilizing semi-structured interviews to explore the salary negotiation experiences of women in sport management academia. In the larger scale study, results indicated that female sport management professors identified the main barrier in salary negotiation was the societal expectation that they adhere to traditional gender roles. However, during the semi-structured interviews, and in the open-ended coding utilized to organize the data and look for patterns, a major strategy and theme related to the importance of or lack of mentoring in their salary negotiation experiences was revealed. The specific use of semi-structured interviews allowed the researchers to probe further and gain understanding from participants' lived experiences of the information they viewed as important (i.e., mentoring) (Kvale, 1996) and more deeply explore the words and stories of the participants (Patton, 2015). The semi-structured interviewing format provided for flexibility, and allowed the researchers to find out what was most important to participants, and to explore topics that may not have even been in the guide (Patton, 2015).

Participants

Nineteen current female sport management professors in the United States were included in this study. All the female sport management professors held doctoral degrees, but their academic rank varied. Seven participants were at the assistant professor's level, eight were associate professors, and four were full professors. As part of purposive sampling, diversity in participants was a focus. Although fifteen of the participants were Caucasian, there were two African Americans, and two who reported being mixed race.

Six participants were currently residing in the Midwestern United States, while six reported being in the Northeast. Three participants resided in the South, while two resided in the Mid-East (Atlantic) region, one in the West, and another reported living in another part of the United States. Ages ranged from 30 years old to over 60 with four reporting they were ages 30-35, seven who were 36-41, three who were 42-47 years of age, three who were 48-53 years of age, one who was 54-59, and one participant was over 60 years of age. Regarding relationship status, two participants reported being single, four reported being married to someone of a different sex and eight were

married to a person of the same sex. One participant indicated they were in a relationship with someone of a different sex, but not married, while four indicated they were in a same sex relationship. See Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographics

Demographic	Category	N	%
Age	30 - 35	4	21.05
	36 - 41	7	36.84
	42 - 47	3	15.79
	48 - 53	3	15.79
	54 - 59	1	5.26
	> 60	1	5.26
Race	Black or African American	2	10.53
	White	15	78.95
	Other / Mixed Race	2	10.53
Rank	Assistant Professor	7	36.84
	Associate Professor	8	42.11
	Professor	4	21.05
Region of Residence	Northeast	6	31.58
	Mid-East (Atlantic)	2	10.53
	South	3	15.79
Residence	Midwest	6	31.58
	West	1	5.26
	Other	1	5.26
Relationship Status	Single	2	10.53
	Married, Opposite Sex	4	21.05
	Married, Single Sex	8	42.11
Status	In Relationship (not married), Opposite Sex	1	5.26
	In Relationship (not married), Same Sex	4	21.05

Information regarding participants' starting salaries as well as their current salary was requested. Five participants reported under \$45,000 for a starting salary while fourteen reported over \$45,000 for a starting salary. Five participants reported current salaries over \$115,000, while two reported earning between \$105,001-\$115,000. Three were earning in the \$95,001-\$105,000 range, two made \$85,001-\$95,000, one between \$75,001-\$85,000, three reported earning \$65,001-\$75,000 and three earned \$55,001- \$65,000. Six of the nineteen respondents reported having additional titles and tasks for which they are compensated. As these amounts varied from year to year or were not permanent, they were not included in current salary information. See Table 2.

Table 2*Starting and Current Annual Salaries*

Salary Range	Starting Salary		Current Salary	
	N	%	N	%
< \$25,000	2	10.53	0	0
\$25,001 - 35,000	2	10.53	0	0
\$35,001 - 45,000	1	5.26	0	0
\$45,001 - 55,000	4	21.05	0	0
\$55,001 - 65,000	4	21.05	3	15.79
\$65,001 - 75,000	1	5.26	3	15.79
\$75,001 - 85,000	2	10.53	1	5.26
\$85,001 - 95,000	3	15.79	2	10.53
\$95,001 -105,000	0	0	3	15.79
\$105,001-115,000	0	0	2	10.53
> \$115,000	0	0	5	26.32
Total	19	100	19	100

Procedure

Subjective criteria like knowledge and experience of the topic are more of a priority than randomization when it comes to whom to include in the sample (Etikan, et al., 2016). “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of vital importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations” (Patton, 2002, p. 230).

Purposive sampling was utilized as it requires that participants meet certain criteria (Etikan et. al, 2006). Inclusion criteria, which are specific conditions the person or population must possess to be included in the study were utilized (Lopez & Whitehead, 2013). The researchers intentionally sought out women who met specific criteria such as being female, working in sport management academia, and those who had experience negotiating salary as a professor. Even though the specific inclusion criteria were being female sport management professors who had negotiated at least one job, researchers were also cognizant of getting a range of participants that represented various demographics. In addition to purposefully seeking out those that met the inclusion criteria, convenience sampling was employed. Convenience sampling occurs when individuals not only meet the criteria but are available and willing to participate at a given time or are geographically close (Etikan et. al, 2006; Patton, 2002). Further, convenience sampling was utilized as the

researchers were aware of women within their field and networks whom they could easily contact and whom the researchers were confident would participate (Lopez & Whitehead, 2013). To create a list of participants, the researchers sought out (e.g., purposeful sampling) those that met the criteria, as well as used connections and collegial relationships to other female professors in sport management whom the researchers were confident would participate (e.g., convenience sampling).

After the list was compiled, emails were sent explaining the study and inquiring if the professors would be interested in doing an interview in person, on the phone or via video conference. Overall, twenty-five female professors were contacted, and nineteen female professors were interviewed. Seventeen interviews were conducted with phone, with two taking place in person. Reminder emails were sent two weeks after the initial email. Those willing to participate in the study were sent a link to a demographic survey that included questions related to age, race, rank, region of residence, relationship status, and their initial starting salary and their current salary. The researchers were not certain what would be the total number of interviews needed, as the suggested number of interviews recommended varies greatly. The richness of the data and getting to data saturation is the goal, the actual number of participants is not the central focus (Patton, 2002).

All interviews lasted between 35 and 75 minutes with an average of 57 minutes. Four researchers divided and conducted the interviews, while two researchers coded each interview. Three researchers conducted 5 interviews, while the other conducted 4. All interviews were recorded with multiple devices (e.g., computer, phone, iPad) to ensure recording took place. The semi-structured interview guide that was used, reflected questions specific to gender and negotiation experiences. The semi-structured interview guide was created by the researchers to cover the main topic of the study (Taylor, 2005), provide some structure but not to be followed exactly (Patton, 2015), and based upon previous literature (Babcock, et al., 2006; Kolb & McGinn, 2008.). Utilizing a semi-structured interview method, questions were primarily open-ended to ensure participants could genuinely reflect and share their thoughts in their own words (Warren & Karner, 2005).

The interview guide contained four sections. The first section inquired about participants jobs and the subsequent negotiating experiences. The second section included questions related to inquiring if they negotiated or not, how they felt during the process, and if they felt prepared. The third section had questions related to what they learned when negotiating and what they would incorporate in future negotiations. The last section of questions sought participants perspectives on potential gender differences and strategies that women could employ and to assist them with negotiating, as well as for those doing the negotiating. Probing questions (Patton, 2015) were also utilized to gain further insight into participants perspectives. For example, questions such as “Could you tell me a little bit more about that,” or “How did that make

you feel” were also asked. Further, utilizing semi-structured interviews allowed the researchers to include, diverge, and explore an issue or response that came up during the interview (Patton, 2015).

Other benefits to semi-structured guides are that the interviewer can adjust, and re-order questions based on how the interview progresses, and that the interviewer could ask questions not listed in the interview guide if the participants noted something of interest (Patton, 2015). Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility with the opportunity to pursue and probe certain responses, seek clarification, or ask follow-up questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lopez & Whitehead, 2013). Based on this qualitative methodology, the researchers were afforded the opportunity to inquire further when participants noted their levels of comfort with salary negotiation, as they had mentioned they would have been more comfortable if they had a mentor who had talked to or helped them with salary negotiation.

Before the interviews began, to safeguard participants’ identities and address the issues of privacy and anonymity, pseudonyms for first names were designated for each participant. Not only can pseudonyms help protect identities, but they can also make participants more relatable and human (Miles, et al., 2014). To begin the interviews, Jacob and Ferguson (2012) suggested to build rapport with participants in order to garner the depth needed in qualitative research. Thus, before the interview officially started, the researchers engaged in small talk and then began by asking participants about their stories and experiences in becoming sport management professors. Next, the researchers inquired about the details related to being offered their first jobs and their initial salary offers. The second part of the interview consisted of questions specifically related to their initial salary offer in academia, the process, and their reflections on that experience. The third part of the interview assessed participants’ comfort levels and feelings during the process and any potential insights, knowledge, observations, or skills learned. Last, the interview included questions related to challenges and/or barriers for participants as women in the salary negotiation process, and participants were given the opportunity to add any open-ended statements they felt were important to the topic. Researchers took notes during the interviews, noting any observations or thoughts regarding the interview. As notes can be a useful tool for accuracy of interpretation, recall and memory. Further, notes can be helpful if there was an issue with transcription (Muswazi & Nhamo, 2013).

Interviews with participants were conducted until the criteria for data saturation were met. Data saturation happens when no added information is being attained and sufficient information has been acquired (Patton, 2015). Data saturation occurs at the point in the coding process when no added information is found by simply conducting more, or where redundancy in the themes and patterns are discovered within the interviews (Guest et al., 2006). Interviews with participants were conducted until the researchers came to consensus that they were seeing similarities in responses and the same themes in the data within the interviews (i.e., redundancy). Thus, the researchers decided they had meaningful and rich data and had met the criteria of data saturation.

Data Analysis

The researchers- all female sport management professors knew they needed to discuss their own potential bias and thus, had a discussion as a group to discuss their own negotiation experiences with each other. Discussing their biases and their experiences as they focused on remaining objective in coding the data, contributed to the trustworthiness of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2002). Creswell and Poth (2018) and Jootun et al., (2009) indicated this as a crucial step in data analysis to ensure trustworthiness, credibility, and rigor. Jootun et al., (2009) noted “Reflecting on the process of one’s research and trying to understand how one’s own values and views may influence findings adds credibility to the research and should be part of any method of qualitative enquiry” (p. 43). Additionally, the researchers made a conscious effort to be objective and not give opinions while conducting the interviews (Jootun et al., 2009).

Debriefing occurred after each of the interviews took place to discuss and gain initial insight to the data as well as to increase the trustworthiness of the data (Patton, 2002). After the interviews were completed and transcribed, they were uploaded to Google Drive where all four of the researchers had access to them. For organizational purposes, an Excel sheet was created, assigning the person doing the interview as one coder for that transcript along with another researcher. Every transcript had two researchers assigned for coding. Open coding was utilized where the researchers read, re-read and thoroughly examined the transcripts (Williams & Mosher, 2019). Next axial coding, where the researchers looked for emerging patterns and themes took place (Williams & Mosher, 2019). In coding, patterns and similar statements are given a label (i.e., theme) to organize and make sense of it (Creswell, 2015).

Once all the researchers had coded the data and organized themes, they met as a group via Zoom to discuss the themes and do a qualitative comparison (Elliott, 2018). Conducting a qualitative comparison (Elliott, 2018) affords the opportunity for researchers to discuss which codes and themes were agreed upon or not. If there were discrepancies between two researchers during the coding phase, the researchers were instructed to discuss. There were no disagreements, so this step was not needed. Not only were the researchers able to discuss the data, clarify any interpretations, and edit any theme categorization names, they were able to discuss their own personal assumptions and biases again to ensure trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Jootun, et al., 2009).

Results

This study was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the role and importance of mentoring in the experiences of female sport management faculty in the salary negotiation process. The main themes that emerged from participant data were the lack of mentoring, barriers to mentoring, informal mentoring, and meaningful mentoring relationships. This section concludes with suggestions on the negotiation process from the participants.

Lack of Mentoring

The interview data revealed many of the participants received little to no formal preparation or mentoring relating to the salary negotiation process. Olivia indicated “I had none... so negotiating for my job at (university) was my first ever experience with job negotiation or salary negotiation.” Zoey also noted “Nothing structured- nothing formal came in any kind of conversations with my advisor when I was on the job market.” Kristin noted her lack of mentoring in not negotiating indicating, “I think I just took what they offered me. Because I didn't know any better, I didn't know there was anything you could negotiate.” Sophia also did not receive any mentoring for salary negotiation stating, “I didn't have any formal training, no formal help.” Hannah also noted she was not prepared to negotiate. Hannah, an associate professor at a large master's university in the Northeast, stated “I don't think I was prepared to negotiate at all. I don't think my doctoral program actually provided any way of, you know, what to ask or how to negotiate. I was not prepared for that at all.” Hazel, a professor in the Midwest at a large master's university, who also has administrative responsibilities, expressed frustration, and similarly remarked:

I was embarrassed to tell people that I didn't know how to do it. I went in thinking people had their best foot forward, of course years later I realize they don't always. I worked with a woman who was offering me, I figured she gets it and so no, I didn't have a mentor, I didn't have any education, I didn't have any advice.

Payton, an assistant professor at a research institution (R1) in the Midwest discussed a potential benefit of encouragement and confidence building if she would have had a mentor when she noted, “I would have liked some positive reinforcement. I guess maybe someone around telling me that ‘You clearly are good at this and have potential and you have to see that in yourself.’” Paula and Vivian also mentioned the need for a confidence boost when going into the negotiation process, noting it would help them feel less overwhelmed and more empowered. Paula stated: “... we're in a male dominated field and I think sometimes we're trying to, you know, prove to ourselves and to our colleagues we do belong here and I think that creates self-doubt.” Vivian, experienced a lack of confidence when negotiating because she “was never taught how to do it.”

These participants did not receive the guidance, support, encouragement, or confidence cultivation that mentoring can provide. They went into the negotiation process naïve and unaware of how to respond to a job offer and interact with the future employer. Mentors could have certainly alleviated some of this unpreparedness, which ultimately may have significant consequences on the future earnings of these women.

Barriers to Mentoring

Gender role congruence (Eagly & Karau, 2002) has been defined as behaving in ways that are traditionally prescribed for women (e.g., cooperative and nurturing), was clearly a barrier experienced by participants. Paula, an associate professor that has experience at both a teaching university as well as a research institution (R1) stated,

I think I got scared that me asking for 95 would make them say, ‘no we can't do that and we're moving on.’ I was three years into my career at that point. I had never sat on a search, didn't have administrative experience, I didn't know how these things worked in terms of people asking for money all the time. I didn't know that this is what we can offer and you can take it or leave it, but we're not going to be so offended by that, that we then don't want you. I was thinking I really want this job. I really wanted the job and I wanted to negotiate for a little bit more money, but I also didn't want to make them think less of me or think I was not serious about the position.

Paula did not have a lot of experience. She was concerned about what the employer would think and she was scared to ask for what she wanted. Zoey “didn't want to push too hard,” Hannah wanted to “avoid conflict,” Mia described negotiating as “aggressive type behavior” and Melanie, Kristin, and Avery thought the salary was fair and didn't try to negotiate. Melanie stated “I was so excited I got a job that I wanted, in the town I lived in, at a school that I wanted to work at, that I was just like, yeah sounds great. It wasn't until my peers started negotiating that it occurred to me that I should have.” Participants stuck to being more cooperative and less agentic. Participants appeared happy to get an offer even though they really may have wanted to be more assertive, but wanting to make sure the employer liked them, and they did not want to rock the boat.

Payton also felt less agentic and discussed feeling intimidated by those involved in the negotiation when she said, “I mean, for me coming out of a Ph.D. program, deans and people who are in administration are intimidating, and to go from never speaking to them, now to having to negotiate my future, it's intimidating.” A mentoring relationship likely would have given Payton more confidence in negotiating with administration at her future institution.

Another barrier experienced by some of the participants was inconsistency in advising. Hazel and Vivian confirmed this inconsistency in advisor mentoring of doctoral students while mentioning they wish they had received more in their doctoral programs. Vivian indicated:

I think for every doctoral student, there should be a one-day seminar or at least one credit hour or something that teaches you, once you get the offer. I mean we teach people how to do research, how to do their presentation, but nothing that I came across was like, ‘Great, you been given the offer, now what?’ How do you know how to pick your benefit package or how do you know how to negotiate the higher salary or what's appropriate? They're going to offer you x, you should ask for 5% more than that because its generally going to work for you, or don't ask for more than this, that's never going to work. I think that would help, just something that we share with people, or even just a conference presentation. I think every doctoral

student would have attended that presentation in terms of like, what the heck do you do once you're done, because your advisor can't help you, they can give you advice, but it's not like you're going to call them up and be like, 'Hi, I am going to have my advisor actually negotiate. I'll get back to you later.'"

Addison, an associate professor at a research institution (R2) in the South stated,

It (doctoral program) was fantastic as far as helping me with my research, but there was no nuts and bolts and nothing related to negotiation. I could have gotten a lot more, which is one of the hard parts about realizing that I didn't get that experience and then it really was up to my advisor deciding if she wanted to give me advice.

Advisors can play a key role in mentoring their students. Often there is so much focus on research or teaching or the job talk, that advisors either forget to help students with salary negotiation or it may not be on their radar, or they may talk about it with some students and not others. It was clear from the participants that some doctoral students get some mentoring about salary negotiation and others do not. This inconsistency is a barrier to some and can cause significant salary disparity in the field overall.

Informal Mentoring

Participants discussed the role of informal mentors as they spoke about the negotiation process. These individuals were family members, other faculty members not in their area, and people outside of academia. Kristin, an associate professor at a teaching college in the Northeast who is in her second academic appointment stated, "I talked to my advisor and my mother-in-law. That's all I did. I just got some tips from them on what I should ask for. If they say no on salary, what are some other things I should ask for?" Lily, an assistant professor in her second academic appointment in the Midwest at a research institution (R1) said, "I would go to family members most the time if I think about it. I would go to my brother's best friend who works in HR, and he does this for a living and so he would give me little hints." Amy mentioned getting advice from her dad and Hannah mentioned getting advice from her friends. Avery suggested "...seeing how people outside of academia do it, I think is very helpful."

Samantha, an associate professor at a research institution (R1) in the South chose an informal mentor in the field who could help her with specifics. She stated "At first, at the start of this process I didn't even know about the startup fund. So, it was my informal mentor at (university), another female faculty member, who helped me with some of those things." Addison, Ellie, and Sophia also mentioned getting informal advice from advisors and other colleagues at their universities. Ellie specifically noted that "It was mostly informal..." and Sophia stated "I think it was more through informal conversation with colleagues..."

Family and friends and informal advisors can be good mentors in some facets of life, and they can help build confidence and offer support, but they likely do not know the sport management field. They likely do not have the advice needed for women negotiating salary in a male dominated field. It is also unlikely

that family members and friends know salary ranges or start-up packages at distinct types of institutions. Informal mentorships with faculty are a good place for doctoral students to begin learning about salary negotiation, but something more structured or intentional can go much further in developing the skills needed to be successful in the process.

Meaningful Mentoring Relationships

A few of the participants had good experiences with mentors that resulted in meaningful guidance for the salary negotiation process. Melanie, an associate professor in her first appointment at a teaching college in the Midwest noted, "My advisor was a really great mentor, especially in the job search, like, where should I apply? How should I demonstrate my focus?... 'You need to do your homework on salaries, so that when they offer you...'" Melanie felt prepared when she was offered a job and she understood what she needed to do in the negotiation process. Olivia, an assistant professor in her first appointment at a mid-Atlantic research institution (R1), received meaningful support through a class devoted to the job search, interview, and negotiation process in her doctoral seminar, as well as a close mentoring relationship with her advisor. When she got offered her first job she said,

I went in to see my advisor and said 'I don't even know what to ask for because everything looks so good.' My advisor said, 'they expect you to negotiate, so you have to ask for more.' He said 'even if you think the salary is competitive, you have to ask for more because they would expect a man to do that, so you have to do it.'

The advice her mentor/advisor gave her was strong encouragement to break down one of the barriers related to gender. He encouraged her to be agentic and assertive. He continued to work with her throughout the negotiation of her first job. Olivia said,

My advisor and I sat down, and he helped me decide how much more I am going to ask for in terms of salary and for travel funds. I asked for additional funds to travel to conferences. To help teaching, they gave me the opportunity to ask for electronics, so my advisor and I sat down and made a list of everything that he had ever used as a teacher or a researcher and I asked for all of that. So, his approach was really broad in terms of ask for anything and everything and the worst that they can say is 'no.' That was kind of the approach I took when negotiating for my job here at (University).

Olivia's advisor took the time to lead her through the negotiation. She did go to him and ask for advice, but because she had a doctoral seminar class that highlighted negotiation, she knew to ask for help when the job offer was presented to her. Only Melanie, Olivia, and Samantha mentioned having good advisors who discussed negotiation with them.

Suggestions for Negotiations

Most of the participants provided tactics and strategies for negotiation, but related to the mentoring process, Vivian suggested faculty take time in a doctoral seminar to discuss and even practice the negotiation process. Hazel indicated “I really think a professional development class should be standard operating procedure for any doctoral program.” In addition to a doctoral seminar class, Hazel recommended the following,

I think that there should be a rule that every dissertation chair takes a couple hours and at least sits down and says, here's a list of things that you should consider when you're either weighing new positions or within an institution. This is how you can help prepare yourself, not only for today but say, 10-20 years from now... There are things you just don't know, but mentoring could be good, just taking someone aside and saying, consider this.

Similarly, Payton and Olivia suggested practicing interview questions with an advisor. Payton suggested “Practice. Practice out loud. Practice with someone who intimidates you. And get some feedback on the things that you're asking for,” while Olivia noted “Practice the “ask.” Role play.” Furthermore, Addison and Lily suggested that advisors and mentors could facilitate negotiation workshops and panels at conferences which would also be helpful. Professors and advisors are the key mentors for doctoral students, and they can play a key role in supporting, encouraging, and informing young scholars about the negotiation process.

In providing some advice for other women in the field, Melanie stated, “Know your worth, be confident, and I think as women we need to do a better job with actually talking about our salaries, and our money, and what we make, and what we negotiated for. I think there is both a cultural taboo about talking about money, but also among women.” Another suggestion by Ellie,

I think for anything, have your facts straight. I think as women we need to recognize our worth and not sell ourselves short. It's good to be a team player, it's good to give those other folks credit, but know what you're bringing to the table. Don't back down. I hate to say it because I feel like that fits such a stereotype, but you cannot back down.

Avery also noted the importance of strategies and implementing them stating, “The worst thing you can do is walk out of the room and say I wish I would have asked for more.”

Overall, the female participants in this study had little to no preparation or mentoring for the salary negotiation process. Some women sought informal mentors like family and friends, but the advice given in those relationships may not help when it comes to barriers women face in the male dominated field of sport management. Some of the participants did have meaningful relationships, particularly with advisors who were intentional in giving advice about how to navigate the negotiation process. Ultimately, participants recommended important strategies like conversations in doctoral seminars and more consistent, and even required, conversations between students and their

dissertation chairs to ensure all job candidates receive mentoring on salary negotiation as they search for their first academic position.

Discussion

As part of a larger study, we found the mention of mentoring (or not) for female sport management professors a central and critical part to salary negotiation. Therefore, we specifically explored mentoring in salary negotiation for female sport management professors utilizing the theoretical contexts of social role and role congruity theory. Thus, the purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the role and importance of mentoring in the experiences of female sport management faculty in the salary negotiation process. Overall, the substantial and meaningful role that mentoring in salary negotiations, mentors' roles, strategies utilized, and the impact it had for women in sport management academia was revealed.

The barriers faced by women in sport management academia are distinctive. For example, working in a male dominated area such as sport (Coakley, 2017; Lapchick, 2019) and sport management academia (Hancock & Hums, 2011; North American Society for Sport Management, 2017) are unique circumstances. Further, the constraints of prescribed gender roles (Heilman, 2001; Heilman et al., 2004) further complicate the situation for women in sport management academia. The academic field of sport management must consider mentoring and associated strategies that help students, particularly female students. The implications of not mentoring inevitably factor into the continued discrepancies in the salary differences between men and women in academia. Further, by mentoring and providing women the necessary information and tools to be effective, women could feel prepared, informed, and confident in their endeavors.

Our research parallels the benefits of mentoring in one's academic career which has been widely researched (Allen et al., 2004; Kram, 1983;1985; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999; Williams-Nickelson, 2009), and includes; providing support and encouragement, cultivating self-esteem and confidence (Bruce, 1995; Grima et al. 2014; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999), and providing career advice and assistance in developing networks (Ragins, 1997; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). This support can lead to positive outcomes such as higher salaries. Specifically for women and young academicians, mentoring is crucial (Levesque et. al, 2005). Certainly, women in sport management academia should be receiving the same benefits of mentoring as those in other fields.

The participants in this study indicated a lack of awareness of negotiating tools, and a lack of mentoring. Participants noted at times feeling intimidated, unprepared, and lacking confidence regarding salary negotiation. With such detrimental data indicating substantial loss of lifelong earnings (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Marks & Harold, 2011), it is evident that mentoring and information related to salary should be provided. Having knowledge and information, as well as feeling confident in salary

negotiations, can be immensely beneficial (Allen et al., 2004). Other fields that are traditionally male dominated, such as business and law, require some training in salary negotiation (ElShenawy, 2010). Sport management programs not only should provide mentoring specifically related to salary components but make it an essential requirement of their programs.

A barrier that was evident from the results of this study was the effect and impact of gender roles. Wade (2001) and Eagly and Karau (2002) reported that women have learned from a variety of situations that not conforming to one's prescribed gender role can lead to potential backlash. Further, Wade (2001) noted women, in comparison to men, experienced more constraints in the salary negotiation process because of stereotypes and gender roles. The participants in this study were aware of the impact of gender roles but did not seem aware or confident as to how to address the situation. Although the process may not be comfortable for women due to their prescribed gender roles, (Eagly & Karau, 2002), they must be informed and made aware of how to navigate the salary negotiation process. Gendered processes that are institutionalized in salary negotiation need to be discussed with a focus on gendered practices that organizations and sport employ without examination (Coakley, 2017; Recalde & Vesterlund, 2022). Mentoring and discussions about gender roles can help normalize the practice of women having conversations about money and, in turn, make women feel more comfortable in the negotiation process (Williams-Nickelson (2009). Mentoring is a piece of the puzzle in addressing salary discrepancies, but information related to societal and prescribed gender roles is also needed as part of that mentoring.

The participants in this study indicated that although they may not have received mentoring from faculty in sport management, they did seek it out in informal ways with others outside of the field. This may impact the advice provided specific to the field as the knowledge and the quality of the informal mentoring may be less (Ragins, 1999). If a more formal mentoring process were in place in sport management programs, women would not have to seek out or only rely on those outside of the field. Formal mentoring and training related to salary negotiation can have a significant impact on outcomes (Movius, 2008). This begs the question as to why sport management programs are not implementing more formalized mentoring programs.

Faculty members and advisors in sport academia have the potential to form significant and meaningful relationships with their students. Participants in this study noted examples of when they did receive mentoring and how much it helped them. Having information, being prepared, discussing strategies, and gaining insights from their mentors were impactful and assisted the participants in feeling more confident. Meaningful mentoring relationships, where participants felt increased confidence and comfort and trusted their mentors, appeared to provide benefits for the participants (Bruce, 1995). Blake-Beard et al., (2011) found that meaningful relationships were those in which there was evidence of increased confidence and genuine feelings related to wanting what was best for mentees.

The barriers faced by women in sport management academia are distinctive. For example, working in a male dominated area such as sport (Coakley, 2017; Lapchick, 2019) as well as sport management academia (Hancock & Hums, 2011; North American Society for Sport Management, 2017) are unique circumstances. Further, the constraints of prescribed gender roles (Hentschel et al., 2019; Heilman, 2001; Heilman et al., 2004; Heilman et al., 2024; Toneva et al., 2020) further complicate the situation for women in sport management academia. However, the academic field of sport management appears to not be acknowledging the situation for female academicians, nor do they appear to be offering mentorship, programming, or assistance related to salary negotiation. The implications of not mentoring are wide reaching. Continued pay discrepancies between men and women in academia (American Association of University Professors, 2022), fewer female sport management professors (Jones et al., 2008) and less career and professional opportunities (Bower, 2009) could occur. Further, by mentoring and providing women the necessary information and tools to be effective, women could feel prepared, informed, and confident in their endeavors (Bower, 2009; Kram, 1985)

Despite the documented benefits of mentoring (Bruce, 1995; Kram, 1983, 1985; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999) and for salary negotiation (ElShenawy, 2010; Kolb & McGinn, 2008; Movius, 2008; Sambuco et al., 2013; Simone et al., 2020), sport management programs have not made the topic a required component of their programs. If women are not being mentored, they can be excluded from the potential advantages mentoring affords, including higher salaries (Allen et al., 2004; Laband & Lentz, 1993). Sport management programs have an obligation to assist with career success and positive salary outcomes for their female students. The discussions and dialogue specifically related to mentoring and salary negotiations for women are long overdue. Faculty and sport management programs must make a commitment to the topic of negotiation. Further, the ingrained and institutionalized way salary negotiation occurs within a gendered context needs to be addressed. Though there are many complexities to the pay gap for men and women, committing to adding a salary negotiation class, workshop, symposium, role playing, or mentoring programs specifically for salary negotiation would certainly be a step in the right direction.

Although some participants in the study suggested tangible strategies that professors and advisors could provide, they also noted that women themselves could do better. One should be leery to accept that advice to completely solve the problem and view it as one part of the gendered salary negotiation process. Kolb and McGinn (2008) proposed that research related to salary and negotiation stop focusing solely on characteristics of individuals or what they could do better; instead, working to change the narrative to consider societal factors that impact organizational practices (Olekalns & Kennedy, 2020). It may be important to also educate all (e.g., professors, mentors, those negotiating, advisors, administrators) about the negotiation processes and complexities. The narrative of *if women would only do*

this or that is a simplified, stereotypical response that is institutionalized (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2022) and should also be addressed.

Limitations and Future Research

This study represents an initial inquiry into the role of mentoring, specifically for women in sport management academia regarding salary negotiation. A limitation of the study was that it only included female sport management professors in the United States. Thus, the results are not generalizable and should be utilized explicitly to understand American female sport management professors mentoring experiences with salary negotiation. As cultural norms, values, and beliefs can impact the salary negotiation experience (Shan, et al., 2019) the experiences of more international female sport management professors should be explored.

Sport and sport management have traditionally been dominated by White men (Coakley, 2017; Jones 2008). It cannot be assumed that all women experience the same circumstances or situations (Henderson et al. 2010). Although efforts were made to include traditionally minoritized individuals in the study, researchers should focus solely on their experiences with mentoring for salary negotiation. It cannot be assumed that women in the field have the same experiences as a Black woman, Latina, those with a disability, etc. Thus, types of diversity and the intersection of one's identity should also be examined.

In future studies, researchers could also address the perspectives of faculty and mentors in sport management programs. It would be compelling to get an overall perspective of which programs include salary negotiation as a topic, or if faculty are specifically discussing or mentoring women. In addition to obtaining the viewpoints of the women doing the negotiating, further studies could examine the individual/administrator who is doing the negotiating.

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