

# **Gender Equality in Private College Athletics: Is Title IX Having an Impact?**

John Frazier, Southern Wesleyan University, 907 Wesleyan Drive, Central, SC 29630

Royce Caines, Southern Wesleyan University, 907 Wesleyan Drive, Central, SC 29630

## **ABSTRACT**

In 1972, the United States Congress passed Title IX of the Omnibus Education Act requiring in essence that institutions provide equality in opportunities for both male and female students at higher education institutions if the institution received any federal funding. Subsequently, the Office of Civil Rights and various court cases have tried to interpret the meaning of the law and have tried to give guidance as to how institutions should work to implement Title IX legislation.

The focus of this study is to evaluate whether differences exist in expenditures on male and female athletics in a sample of institutions that report data to the U.S. Department of Education. For total expenditure per athlete, the null hypothesis of no difference in average expenditure between male and female athletes is supported. Football information was removed from the data due to the typically unusual efforts made to promote the sport as a revenue generating entity within many of the institutions. Also there is no equivalent women's sport.

Results indicate there are no significant differences when football is excluded from the data so at least for this group of institutions, it can be inferred there is relatively equal expenditures for both male and female athletes.

Further analysis was done to compare expenditures for basketball by gender. A paired t-test showed an average expenditure difference of \$ 4, 428.29 per athlete; however, the difference was not significantly different from zero, thus the null hypothesis of no difference was supported. At least for the schools in the data set (private baccalaureate schools that field both men and women basketball teams), there is no significant difference in expenditure per athlete.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Data for this study came from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act. This particular data set was limited to 578 private four year schools. However, further analysis of the data cut the usable data set to 300 schools. This study is a spin-off from a larger study on the cost of athletics which focused on economies of scale in athletic departments [3]. As a result of that study, the authors wished to also investigate any issues related to inequality of expenditures by gender.

Title IX was signed into law in 1972 so colleges have been operating under the provisions for thirty-five years. Progress has been made in women's sports since that time as colleges have tried to meet the provisions and avoid court cases that are costly and embarrassing. While many articles and books have been written on the topic, few researchers have attempted to quantitatively measure the current status of the issue.

## **REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE**

There have been many articles and books written about gender equity in collegiate athletics since Title IX was passed in 1972. Many of these articles have focused on why Title IX was important and several have focused on case studies or legal issues related to the implementation of Title IX. For example, Rhode and Walker [5] recently did a thorough review of legal issues and also explored the impact that Title IX has had in securing equal opportunities for women coaches. Mumford [4] provided guidance to two-year schools on strategies that two-year schools could use to guide their efforts to achieve gender equity.

A major problem for schools that are seriously trying to implement Title IX involves football. If a school has a football team, that sport takes a large budget to operate and typically awards a large number of scholarships for males. Thus schools that have football teams typically have a more difficult time in showing more equity. For example, a 2002 report from the National Women's Law Center [2] showed that Women's sports in NCAA Division I institutions receive only 34 percent of the overall athletics budget at those schools. However, football receives 32 percent of the total athletics budget so if football is omitted, then the male and female expenditures are equal. While few would argue that football can be ignored as an issue, it does affect those schools who field teams for a variety of reasons.

Reports and studies that focus on total numbers fail to consider (perhaps rightfully) the impact of football. For example a 1998 report by the Women's Sports Foundation [1] focused on a Gender Equity Compliance Quotient formula that found that NCAA member institutions typically had compliance scores that ranged from .6173 for Division I schools to .7653 for Division III schools.

## **DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The data for this study is limited to reports from 578 private baccalaureate institutions that report data to the U.S. Department of Education under the Postsecondary Education Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act. A review of the data cut the usable data set to 300 institutions. Two hypothesis tests were completed. The first focused on total expenditures per athlete by gender. The second focused on comparisons between men's and women's basketball. The data set included institutions who are members of both the NAIA and NCAA governing bodies for collegiate sports and no effort was made to distinguish between the two different groups.

Football expenditures were deleted from the expenditure data and this could be a major point of disagreement with the study. Not all of the institutions included in the study fielded football teams and for reasons beyond this study, the researchers decided that football is in many ways a separate issue that need to be addressed by athletic governing bodies.

Paired t-tests were completed for each of the null hypotheses. In each instance, the data for expenditures for males was used to compare to (pair) the expenditures for females.

## **RESULTS**

The results of the statistical analysis failed to provide sufficient differenced to reject the null hypotheses. In each case, the results were statistically insignificant at generally accepted levels of significance. For average total operating expenditure per athlete, there was a mean difference of \$ 37.86; however, that number was statistically insignificant, Table 1.

**TABLE 1. PAIRED T-TEST FOR AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER ATHLETE BY GENDER.**

	Mean	Df	t-value	p-value
Paired Difference	37.86	299	.324	.746

Similarly, for average expenditure by gender for basketball teams, the results failed to support a significant difference. The average difference in expenditures was over \$ 4,000 (\$4, 428.29); however, that number was again statistically insignificant, Table 2.

**TABLE 2. PAIRED T-TEST FOR AVERAGE EXPENDITURE FOR AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER ATHLETE FOR BASKETBALL OPERATIONS BY GENDER.**

	Mean	Df	t-value	p-value
Paired Difference	4428.29	298	1.364	.487

Thus for both measures of gender equality, this data set did not yield support for significant differences in expenditures between male and female athletics. However, it should be noted again that football has been excluded from the data set and that would likely change the results if included for those schools that field football teams.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

The focus of this study was to examine whether expenditures are significantly different for male and female athletic programs at a selected set of private baccalaureate institutions. This study is different as it addresses only private schools. Since all the schools do not field football teams and since football is unique in its cost structure and other issues, the football expenditures were excluded from the study which could be a source of disagreement with methodology.

No evidence was found to indicate that the schools were failing to provide similar opportunity for males and females as measured by expenditures on the programs. Please note that this does not mean individual schools are all providing equal expenditures. Rather there is no indication that the group of schools as a whole show preferential treatment of male athletic programs over female athletic programs.

## **REFERENCES**

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