Title IX And Its Impact On Women's Participation In Sports

A diversity report released by TIDES (the Institute for Diversity and Ethics and Sport) reveals that males coach the most collegiate sports teams. Prior to Title IX being passed in 1972, women were responsible for most of the coaching in universities and colleges. Title IX is a federal civil rights law in the United States of America that was passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972. There have been several increases in women's participation in sports, but at the expense of women's coaching. There was a shift in power after Title IX was put in place and it has displayed how gender bias can have an impact on the hiring of women in all position of powers. There has been a consistent decline in the number of women in leadership and coaching positions since the passing of this piece of legislation. For example, prior to the passing of the legislation, in 1972, 90% of all head coaches in women's collegiate sports were women and the number has dropped to 43% since. With Title IX forcing universities to cut non-revenue men's athletic programs, it has created more funds in women sports, which results in an increase of opportunities for male coaches. Women's sports gradually developed and became professional, which allowed more male head coaches to enter the field. According to the most recent data, women now account for less than half of the head coaching jobs for women's athletic teams. There are several examples of the impact that Title IX has had on the coaching occupation for women in women sports. 8.6% of the head coach positions of men's Division I teams are held by women, 10.6% of the positions in Division II, and 12.2% in Division III. For women's teams, women hold only 40.8% of all head coaching jobs and 49% of all assistant coaching jobs. Women only held 49% of all assistant coaching jobs in women's sports. Women made up only 10.5% of Division I athletics directors. This number is down from 11.2 percent in 2016-2017, and is particularly depressing when you consider that Division 1 athletes are 43.9% female. Prior to Title IX, 295,000 females took part in primary and secondary school athletics, in comparison to 3.67 million males. As of 2011, per a report from the NWLC (National Women's Law Center), that number stayed at around 3.2 million, compared to 4.5 million males. A similar influx of growth took place in intercollegiate athletics. Close to 200,000 young women took part in college-level athletic programs as of 2011, a large increase from the 32,000 prior to Title IX. This extensive growth came despite consistent underinvestment by athletic departments and universities in their athletic programs for females.

Pay and power that were associated with these jobs increased after Title IX and men became interested. Women's movements and global events such as World War II started to slowly increase the rights and roles for women in politics. There was a perception that women could not handle the physical rigor or present mental toughness in the war. That was challenged when women presented their worth and held many jobs on an unprecedented scale. As times changed and technology started play a role, the argument of many jobs requiring brute strength was a thing of the past. In the same instance, women sought out to prove that even where strength was required women could demonstrate their capability to compete with men. For example, the first women recruits at the male military academics were encouraged to build muscle as they trained and it turned out that although their upper body strength could not compare to that of a man, their lower body and stamina proved to beat some their male counterparts (Eisenstein, 2009, p. 66). The perception that men are physically more capable than women may ring true, but the skills associated with being a great coach, which are leadership, communication skills, motivation skills, understanding, the ability to get to know each

player are all traits that have nothing to do with physical stature.

Women in sports have had major impacts on how they are perceived to the public, but they would not be in this position if it wasn't for movements and policies made in the 20th Century. Globalization had its largest gender impact in the homes of the American's that were utilizing it. As women were being employed with more jobs and larger incomes, the balance of power within the household shifted. This movement of export industries had raised the cost of making women stay at home and care for the children or other family members. The concept of having your mother or sister make a decent wage to contribute to the family made their work significantly valuable to each family member. More jobs and higher income levels throughout the economy helped both men and women in our country. The creation of a Low-Wage economy was created in the 1970's and was drawn heavily on female labor. There was a study in 1999 that found: "The electoral system structure, left party government, the timing of women's suffrage, the share of women in professional occupations, and cultural attitudes toward the role of women in politics each play a role in accounting for variation in the degree of gender inequality in political representation around the world" (Kenworthy, L., & Malami, M. (1999). Even today, there are many factors that play a pivotal role in female participation in government. Females have shown their physical and mental capacity time and time again, but there is still a sense of "perceived liability" to a political party to have a female candidate run for office. No country in the world has fifty percent or higher female participation in a national legislature, and seventy-three percent of countries have less than twenty percent female participation. In the United States, women are statistically more likely to vote than men. That speaks volumes about the impact of the all female vote.

These events have empowered women in todays society and have allowed women to see themselves in positions of power from an early age. This year, 28 players on the United States women's soccer team filed a gender discrimination lawsuit against the United States Soccer Federation, an escalation in their increasingly public battle for equality. As the World Cup approached, there was speculation that US Soccer might settle out of court to avoid bad press in the days leading up to the tournament. Instead, the Federation filed affirmative defenses to the lawsuit in May, indicating a willingness to fight. US Soccer are arguing that the players' suit relies on a fundamental misunderstanding of both the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They say that the women's and men's national teams "... receive fundamentally different pay structures for performing different work under their separate collective bargaining agreements that require different obligations and responsibilities." They believe that women are not entitled to equal pay because they are not accomplishing equal work. The US Women's National Team has three World Cup Titles, four Olympic gold medals and a long competitive history and are considered the most successful team in the history of US National soccer. Take away the their athletic achievements and these women have become symbols for female liberation. As a fan, I believe the women on the national team they are also representing their gender and wins for the USWNT can be seen as symbolic wins for all American women, who continue to struggle for respect, self-determination, and even basic legal rights. With that being said, the disagreement between the US Women's National Team and the Federation shows that there is still a lot to fight for in regards to gender discrimination.

The US Women's National Team played their first competitive tournament in the 1985 edition of the Mundialito. This is a four-team invitational that was a forerunner to the contemporary Algarve Cup. They finished in last place of all the participating teams. The following year they would finish runners-up behind Italy in the same tournament. What's note worthy is that many

players from those 1985 and 1986 squads were still in college. Michelle Akers the first female American soccer star of the modern era attended UCF. In the 1991 World Championship, the USWNT won their first major tournament, which was later dubbed the Women's World Cup. The team was composed of young women whose collegiate and professional careers were made possible because of the expanded opportunities of Title IX. Title IX has done a lot, but it has not created a truly level playing field. School and NCAA athletic programs for girls are still underfunded. These systemic inequalities have mirrored into the professional game, where the average salaries in MLS don't compare to those of the NWSL. And when it comes to paying elite professional players what they're worth, US Soccer has demonstrated an unwillingness to offer compensation for women's national team players on par with the men. This is unfortunate when taking into account the success of the Women's national team in comparison to the Men's.

In most years the men's game consistently brings in higher game revenue year after year, but in 2016 the women's team earned more money than the men. U.S. Soccer projects that it will do so again in the next fiscal year. In 2015, the womens team won the World Cup and then Embarked on a 10-city tour that brought an eight-figure bump to the US Soccer's bottom line. They brought in $23 Million in game revenue which was $16 million more than the federation had projected. After their expenses, the women had a profit of $6.6 million dollars, which was more than three times than the men did. Since 2008, U.S. Soccer has paid 12 players at least $1 million, and the women have kept pace in salary with their men's counterparts by earning negotiated Olympic and World Cup championship bonuses. But snapshots of the total list show that the pay for nonstar players differs widely.

The argument that women were not physically capable of completing the same tasks as men was a large stigma that affected the function of the Boston marathon. Even in 1967, women were not allowed to officially enter the marathon, so an individual named Katherine Switzer entered under the alias "K.V. Switzer" to hide her gender. Two miles into the race, an official attempted to eject her from the race, but she finished anyway. Therefore, she was the first woman to complete the race as an official entrant.

"We learned that women are not deficient in endurance and stamina, and that running requires no fancy facilities or equipment," Switzer wrote in The New York Times in 2007. Women were officially allowed to enter the race in 1972. Women's marathoning joined the Olympics in 1984. This event greatly challenged prior stigmas on women athletes.

Over the last ten years there have been significant improvements in developing a more equality driven sports system in Canada. One of their biggest challenges is the development of female leaders, coaches, and officials. The chart below from CAAWS (Canadian Association For The Advancement Of Women and Sport and Physical Activity), shows the change in female coaches over time. When looking at the chart, it is clear that the numbers are not consistently increasing. It is actually the opposite, the number of female coaches seem to be decreasing. In an era of feminist, and those considering equal opportunities for all, one must try to determine why female coaches are decreasing in sports, as we work to ensure that there is equality and a female voice in sports.

The Canadian Association For The Advancement Of Women and Sport and Physical Activity has created a large number of progressive programs to assist woman in the development of the skills that are necessary in order to compete and thrive in a sport and physical activity. The

Canadian Olympic Committee continues to be committed to encouraging programs and activities that promote gender equality. They were able to gather numerous board members to form the Women in Sport Committee. They were also able to develop a working paper, which set several goals to impact the Olympic movement at the Canadian level and the international level. This committee had a large impact on the elections for the COC Board of Directors and Executive Committee. The women's committee continued to lobby in order to have two influential women that were highly qualified and willing to run for executive positions. The COC now ensures that the images in their publication shine a bright light on women engaged at a high level. Furthermore, women are selected to prime committee's of the COC and recognized through awards such as the Carol Anne Letheren Award for International Sport Leadership.

When asking, "How are women's sports compared to men's sports?" the answer is clear that they are not equal, but we have come a long way from 1972. There are several steps that organizations must take in order to continue to push the envelope on gender equity. There must be a concise plan developed in order to increase the number of women in influential positions in international organizations. If gender equity is not established in policy and relies on individuals to drive that agenda, it leaves an opportunity for the organization to regress. We must never assume that gender equiality will be considered. There must not be an absent voice that is not prepared to raise the issue if it has been missed. Sport is understood as playing an impactful role to promote health, education, and the development of an individual, regardless of the individual's race, gender, religion, socioeconomic background, and sexual orientation. But, it was not until the 2012 Olympic games in London that every country's delegation included a female competitor. The gender gap in sport, although closing, remains an every day fight for equity.