

Spring 2017

## The Gender Pay Gap in College Basketball: Is Discrimination the Driving Factor?

Melissa Ament  
*University of Northern Iowa*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/mtie>



Part of the [Economics Commons](#)

*Let us know how access to this document benefits you*

Copyright ©2017 by Major Themes in Economics

---

### Recommended Citation

Ament, Melissa (2017) "The Gender Pay Gap in College Basketball: Is Discrimination the Driving Factor?," *Major Themes in Economics*, 19, 57-75.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/mtie/vol19/iss1/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the CBA Journals at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Major Themes in Economics by an authorized editor of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uni.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uni.edu).

**Offensive Materials Statement:** Materials located in UNI ScholarWorks come from a broad range of sources and time periods. Some of these materials may contain offensive stereotypes, ideas, visuals, or language.

# The Gender Pay Gap in College Basketball: Is Discrimination the Driving Factor?

Melissa Ament

**ABSTRACT.** A survey of the current literature reveals two main schools of thought regarding the pay gap between coaches in men's versus women's NCAA Division I college basketball. The academic literature argues gender discrimination is not the source of the pay gap, while the popular press argues the pay gap is due in part to gender discrimination. A review and analysis of the existing literature finds discrimination is not the source of the pay gap between men's and women's college basketball coaches.

## I. Introduction

One school, one sport, two teams, two head coaches. Coach I has 32 years of head coaching experience, 11 national championships, and the best winning percentage among basketball coaches at 0.877. Coach II has 4 years of head coaching experience, one national championship and a 0.688 career win percentage (UConn Athletics 2017a; UConn Athletics 2018b). Who has the higher salary?

Answer: Coach II.

The gender pay gap in NCAA Division I basketball is apparent across the board but nowhere more clearly than the University of Connecticut, where women's basketball head coach Geno Auriemma (Coach I) made \$1.95 million in 2014-2015 while men's basketball head coach Kevin Ollie (Coach II) made \$2.8 million (Mussatto 2015). The gender pay is not only an issue in athletics; the gap exists throughout the market place and has persisted for many decades. Identifying the source of the pay gap is the first step in eliminating unjustifiable differences in any occupation.

Is the gender pay gap for head coaches of NCAA Division I men's and women's basketball programs due to gender discrimination? Perhaps it is due in part to discrimination, but it may also be the result of a host of other factors. A review and analysis of the existing literature finds discrimination is not the source of the pay gap between men's and women's college basketball coaches.

## **II. Terms and Definitions**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) defines itself as “a membership-driven organization dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of student-athletes and equipping them with the skills to succeed on the playing field, in the classroom and throughout life.” (NCAA 2015c). All NCAA member institutions must abide by the rules and policies adopted by the NCAA in regard to athletics and student-athletes. The NCAA is made up of three divisions. Division I is the highest level of intercollegiate athletics. In general, Division I institutions are those who have the largest student bodies, largest athletics budgets, and largest scholarships (both dollar amount and number). Division II institutions have smaller student bodies than Division I institutions and offer only partial scholarships for athletic participation. Division III is the largest division, in both athletic participants and number of institutions. In Division III academics are said to be the primary focus as sports seasons are shorter and there are regional, rather than national, competitions (NCAA 2015a). This paper discusses head basketball coaches’ salaries at Division I institutions.

In this paper, all references to coaches will imply head coaches unless otherwise specified. Another necessary clarification is that of men’s or women’s coach versus male or female coach. Men’s coach refers to the head coach of a men’s basketball team, regardless of gender. Women’s coach refers to the head coach of a women’s basketball team, regardless of gender. As of the 2016-2017 season there has never been a female head coach of a Division I men’s basketball team, so all references to men’s coaches imply male coaches. There are, however, both male and female head coaches of women’s basketball teams at the Division I level.

The gender pay gap refers to the difference in earnings between men and women (Hegewisch and DuMonthier 2016; US Congress 2016). In the context of college basketball, the gender pay gap exists in two settings; one between male and female coaches and the other between coaches of female athletes and coaches of male athletes. This paper examines the gender pay gap in both settings in an effort to determine if the gender pay gap in college basketball coaching is a result of gender discrimination.

Discrimination can occur in a variety of degrees. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines discrimination as “the treatment of a person or particular group of people differently, in a way that is worse than the way people are usually treated” (*Cambridge English Dictionary*, 4th ed., s.v. “discrimination”). Merriam-Webster defines discrimination as “the act of

making or perceiving a difference” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “discrimination”). This paper uses discrimination as a pejorative in its examination of head basketball coaches’ salaries. Any quantifiable difference between men’s and women’s coaches’ salaries that is determined to result from gender differences is considered discrimination.

### **III. Background**

#### **A. GENDER PAY GAP**

The gender pay gap exists throughout the labor market. In 2015 the unadjusted gender pay gap, the difference in earnings between men and women, was 20.4 percent for full-time, year-round workers (Hegewisch and DuMonthier 2016; US Congress 2016). That is, women earned 79.6 cents for every dollar earned by men. Once adjusted for factors such as education, experience, and occupation, the difference in male-to-female earnings is five to nine percent. The gap has existed since women began entering the labor force in large numbers during the 1960s and 1970s (US Congress 2016) and continues today. Strides have been made towards narrowing the gender pay gap and from 1960 to 2015 the unadjusted female-to-male earnings ratio decreased by 15.7 percent (Hegewisch and DuMonthier 2016). Although the change has been positive, there is still a long way to go to achieve equality in earnings.

#### **B. LEGISLATION**

There is an abundance of literature concerning the factors causing the pay gap and how, or if, it can be eradicated. Discrimination is one factor that may contribute to the gender pay gap. The U.S. Government has taken steps to eliminate pay discrimination on the basis of sex through legislation. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 mandates that sex-based pay discrimination is prohibited in a workplace in which men and women perform jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility under similar working conditions:

No employer ... shall discriminate... between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such establishment at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of

the opposite sex in such establishment for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions (29 U.S.C. § 206(d)(1)).

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 also sought to eliminate sex-based pay discrimination. Title VII is broader than the Equal Pay Act and prohibits employers from engaging in employment practices that “deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin” (42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1)).

Despite the legislative efforts in 1963 and 1964 to eliminate sex-based pay discrimination, over 50 years later there is still evidence of its existence. Collins and Feder (2013) found that even after accounting for differences in observable factors (i.e. education, occupation, experience, etc.), five to nine percent of the pay gap of average earnings by males and females is unaccounted for. Gender discrimination is a possible cause. In some cases, up to 40 percent of the gender pay gap may be a result of discrimination (US Congress 2016).

The gender pay gap is also present in non-traditional occupations, such as those in education and sports. Legislative efforts to combat discrimination have carried over to the educational realm, and by extension, intercollegiate athletics. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)).

Title IX requires equal opportunity in education. Initially, Title IX did not bind intercollegiate athletic programs, but the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, which enforces Title IX, issued an Intercollegiate Athletic Policy Interpretation in December of 1979 clarifying the compliance guidelines for athletic programs (Federal Register, Vol.44, No. 239).

Best known for its impact on female participation in athletics, Title IX also applies to employees of educational institutions, e.g. athletic coaches

(Judge, O'Brien, and O'Brien 1996). One factor in athletic programs' compliance with Title IX is the compensation of coaches (34 CFR 106.41(c); Wolverson 2016). The compensation of coaches must provide male and female athletes with coaches of equal "quality, nature or ability." (Federal Register, Vol.44, No. 239). This could be interpreted to mandate equal compensation for coaches of men's and women's teams. However, in its Policy Interpretation, the Office of Civil Rights made clear that nondiscriminatory factors affecting the compensation of coaches do not violate Title IX (e.g. exceptional coaching record, national championships, etc.) (Federal Register, Vol.44, No. 239; Judge et al. 1996).

A significant limitation to Title IX as it applies to the compensation of coaches is it does not protect men who coach women's teams from gender-based pay discrimination. After Title IX's enactment in 1972 this was not much of an issue. Only 20.6 percent of NCAA women's basketball coaches were male in 1978 (Gentry and Meyer 2012). This has, however, become more of an issue as the proportion of male head coaches of NCAA women's basketball teams has increased. During the 1996-1997 season, 37.7 percent of NCAA Division I women's basketball teams had male head coaches. The number was 36.5 percent during 2007-2008 (Barrett 2016), 43 percent in 2010 (Gentry and Meyer 2012), and 41.4 percent during 2014-2015 (Barrett 2016). As the coach of a women's team, male head coaches face similar discriminatory factors yet have fewer legal protections. This is not to say that male coaches cannot be successful in the women's game: Geno Auriemma of Connecticut has won more national championships than any other coach in college basketball history (men or women) and was the highest paid women's coach last year, receiving \$2.06 million from his university contract alone (CNN Money 2015). In a broader view, if there is discrimination against the sport of women's basketball, male coaches of women's basketball may suffer disproportionately by not being protected under Title IX.

### C. LEGAL CASES PROVIDING CLARIFICATION OF THE LEGISLATION

The Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 serve as the basis for most claims of sex-based pay discrimination in athletics. A majority of these cases stem from challenges to the pay differences between head coaches of men's and women's sports with basketball offering the simplest comparison of men's

and women's programs (Judge et al. 1996). Women's basketball coaches argue that they have the same responsibilities and perform the same work under the same conditions as men's basketball coaches and should receive equal pay.

The Courts have demonstrated intolerance of discrimination of opportunity in the area of athletics and their decisions have helped to clarify under what circumstances claims of sex-based pay discrimination in athletics will be legally remedied. In *Stanley v. University of Southern California* (1999) the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals established that the market value of the skills of different coaches can serve to make men's and women's head coaching positions dissimilar and, therefore, not substantially equal positions under which sex-based pay discrimination can be claimed. Another important distinction was made by the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota in *Deli v. University of Minnesota* (1998). The Court established that differences in pay based on the gender of the athletes, rather than the gender of the coach, are not applicable under the Equal Pay Act. These are just two cases demonstrating the courts' clarification of circumstances under which gender-based pay discrimination in collegiate athletics can be legally remedied. The courts have upheld non-discrimination statutes but will not be swayed by circumstantial evidence of discrimination in the pay of collegiate men's and women's athletic coaches.

#### **IV. Literature Review**

A search of head basketball coaches' salaries will swiftly turn up articles about the fast-rising men's coaches' salaries and incentives packages. Salary information for women's coaches is more difficult to find and focuses on the highest-earning coaches. Thirty-one of the 68 teams in the men's 2011 NCAA tournament had coaches making over one million dollars from university-based salaries (USA Today 2011a). The women's 2011 NCAA tournament had only four out of 64 coaches with university-based salaries over one million. For the same year, no women's coach, male or female, had a university-based salary over two million while 10 men's coaches made two million or more (USA Today 2011b). There is clearly a gap in the salaries of men's and women's basketball coaches, but what is the source of this gap? Is discrimination a leading contributor to the significant difference between men's and women's head basketball coaches' salaries? The academic literature consistently reports the salary

gap is not due to discrimination. Yet the perception by the public and the popular press is that gender discrimination is the source of the gap.

#### A. ACADEMIC LITERATURE ARGUES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

##### 1. Comparing Men's and Women's Basketball Coaches

Gender-based discrimination in basketball coaches' salaries has been studied using a variety of methods. Surveys have been the method most commonly used to gather salary information. In 1994 the Women's Basketball Coaches Association survey found NCAA Division I head women's basketball coaches base salaries averaged 59% of head men's basketball coaches' base salaries (Blum 1994). Surveys have been conducted on a variety of actors in the NCAA. In a survey of 311 NCAA Division I athletic directors, base salaries of men's head basketball coaches for the 1995-1996 season were found to be 125 percent of that of head women's basketball coaches (Sweet 1997). Despite the significant salary difference, men's and women's coaches were perceived by athletic directors as performing similar duties and to possess similar coaching responsibility (Sweet 1997). It was also found that men's coaches have significantly greater opportunity for endorsement and publicity which translates into earnings beyond the coaches' base salary (Sweet 1997).

Humphreys (2000) is recognized as the first to empirically study the differences between men's and women's head basketball coaches' salaries at NCAA Division I institutions (Brook and Foster 2010; Kahn 2009). In a study of the 1990-1991 season, Humphreys examined base salary differences between men's and women's head basketball coaches (Humphreys 2000). Humphreys found women's head basketball coaches earn about half of what men's head coaches earn, controlling for experience, performance, and program revenues. The finding that women's coaches earn considerably less than men's coaches was unsurprising; more surprising was Humphreys's finding of occupation as the source of salary difference rather than gender (Humphreys 2000). Humphreys points to occupational differences between men's and women's head coaches in terms of prestige, tastes for discrimination by various actors, and ability of men's head coaches to better monopolize on player rents as the source of the salary gap (2010).



Building on Humphreys's work, Brook and Foster (2010) used data from the 2004-2005 basketball season to test the impact of variables relating to revenues and coaching performance on the salaries for NCAA Division I head basketball coaches. Using an OLS regression model, Brook and Foster concluded that male and female coaches are compensated differently for similar jobs, but these similar jobs are performed in separate labor markets (Brook and Foster 2010). Revenue is the basis for the claim of separate labor markets for men's and women's basketball. Differing labor markets imply that compensation differences are not due to gender-based discrimination. Brook and Foster (2010) show that coaches are compensated according to their productivity and the revenue their program generates. The average total revenue of a men's program in 2004-2005 was \$3,080,673 but only \$526,103 for women's programs (Brook and Foster 2010); the differences in coaches' compensation reflect the differences in revenue.

Productivity affects coaches' compensation in terms of strength of schedule. Strength of schedule is a measure of the ease or difficulty of competition; facing a strong opponent will increase strength of schedule while facing a weak opponent will decrease the measure. Programs with a greater strength of schedule compensate their coaches, men's or women's, at a higher level than programs with a lower strength of schedule (Brook and Foster 2010).

## 2. Comparing Male and Female Coaches of Women's Basketball

Studies of male and female coaches' salaries within women's basketball have findings distinct from those concerning the pay gap between men's and women's coaches. In her survey of Division I athletic directors, Sweet (1997) found male coaches of women's basketball teams have higher base salaries, receive more publicity opportunities, and earn a higher dollar amount than female coaches from these opportunities. Sweet's (1997) findings contradict the empirical findings of Humphreys. Humphreys (2000) found female coaches of women's basketball have higher base salaries than male coaches while Sweet (1997) found male coaches of women's basketball have higher base salaries than female women's basketball coaches.

Humphreys (2000) also studied earnings differences between male and female coaches within women's basketball. He found a median ratio of female-to-male base salary equal to 1.09; female coaches of women's

basketball teams have a 9 percent higher base salary than male coaches of women's basketball teams. Female head coaches of women's teams had a median salary equal to 57 percent of the median men's head basketball coaches' salary, while male women's head coaches' median salary was 52 percent (Humphreys 2000). Females earning more in an occupational group is unusual, particularly for 1990 when the female-to-male earnings ratio reached above 70 percent for the first time at 71.6 (Ntl. Cmte. on Pay Equity 2016). Humphreys offered two possible explanations of his findings: 1) Potential female coaches possess market power due to the smaller pool of potential female head coaches with intercollegiate athletic experience. This allows female head coaches to demand higher salaries. 2) There is gender segregation by establishment as larger women's athletic programs have more female head coaches compared to smaller women's athletic programs, giving female head coaches at larger programs more bargaining power and, therefore, female head coaches receive higher salaries (Humphreys 2000).

Along with their finding that men's and women's basketball operate in two different labor markets, Brook and Foster (2010) found different determinates for male and female women's basketball coaches' compensation. Sports camp revenue, ticket revenue, lagged coaching experience, coaching in a Football Bowl Championship Series conference, and strength of schedule were statistically significant in determining female coaches' salaries. Coaching in a Bowl Championship Series conference, strength of schedule, and lagged career winning percentage were statistically significant in determining male coaches' salaries (Brook and Foster 2010).

## B. THE POPULAR PRESS ARGUES FOR DISCRIMINATION IN PART

“It is a well-known assertion that coaches of women's teams generally earn a lower salary than coaches of men's teams” (Chan 2012).

The above is a statement of fact, but it serves as the basis for the popular view that salary differences for head coaches in men's and women's college basketball are due to gender discrimination. The view of the general public on the gender pay gap in college basketball can be gauged by looking at popular press articles and reports. These articles and

reports are consistent in their assertion or implication that at least a part of the pay gap in college basketball is due to gender discrimination.

Articles concerning coaches' compensation are quick to point out that at the Division I level no women's basketball coach receives a higher salary than the same school's men's basketball coach (Mussatto 2015). Even coaches of the most successful women's teams make less than their male counterparts despite better records, more national championships, and a host of other accomplishments. Coaches' compensation is one area of college basketball where women are still "lagging behind" men (Gentry and Meyer 2012).

A 2010 *New York Times* article reported drastic differences in median salaries and salary growth between men's and women's head coaches from 2003 to 2010 (April 2). Men's basketball coaches had a median salary of \$329,300 and women \$171,600. It also reported that from 2007 to 2010 median salary for men's coaches increased by 40 percent while the increase was only 28 percent for women's coaches (Gentry and Meyer 2012). The authors did not blame discrimination for the entire discrepancy, but did discuss how discrimination was a plausible factor. Other factors discussed included the structure of coaches' contracts to ensure Title IX compliance, third-party money, camp revenues and other bonuses, and academic performance.

The structure of men's and women's coaches' contracts is a major source of discrepancy. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 mandates that men's and women's coaches' salaries should be roughly equal (29 U.S.C. § 206). This comparability applies to all components of a coach's contract such as cars, lodging, country club memberships, etc.; but that is not where the discrepancy is located. The discrepancy comes from third party money used to compensate coaches for items such as "supplements, talent fees, or appearance fees" (Gentry and Meyer 2012; Chan 2012). Third party money is not subject to regulation under the Equal Pay Act (Gentry and Meyer 2012) and this allows universities to get around the rules and regulations and compensate men's coaches at a higher level (Chan 2012).

There is also a discrepancy in how contracts for men's and women's coaches are written. Men's coaches' contracts may require additional duties to distinguish the men's coaching job from the women's coaching job. For example, a women's basketball coach may be required to make 10 appearances at university events while a men's coach is required to make 12. Since the men's coach makes more appearances, he is compensated at a higher level. The Equal Pay Act only requires equal pay for equal work,

so men's coaches can receive greater compensation by performing relatively minor additional duties (Gentry and Meyer 2012). Questions of discrimination occur when men's coaches receive substantial compensation for only minor additional duties.

Another source of discrepancy in the structure of coaches' contracts is academic performance. It is commonly assumed that women athletes are better students, so women's coaches either do not receive compensation, or receive substantially less than the men's coach at the same university, for their player's academic performance (Gentry and Meyer 2012; Chan 2012). This is a potential area of discrimination against women's coaches as they are not provided an opportunity to receive additional compensation in an area equal to men's coaches. Wolverson (2016) found almost 80 percent of Division I athletic departments offer more incentives to men's coaches for academic performance. Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex (42 U.S.C. § 2000e) and large disparities in academic incentives in coaches' contracts could qualify as discrimination. Academic achievement of players is a worthy incentive in any coaches' contract but differences between contracts of men's and women's teams could lead to discrimination claims (Gentry and Meyer 2012).

## **V. Analysis**

### **A. DO COACHES OF MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PERFORM DIFFERENT JOBS?**

#### **1. Analysis of arguments supporting discrimination**

Arguments that the gender pay gap in college basketball is due to discrimination assume that men's and women's coaches are performing the same job. In their 2010 study, Brooks and Foster found athletic directors determining compensation for men's and women's head basketball coaches consider each coach's productivity, program revenues, and level of opponent's competition. Their regression, however, also showed differences in other factors affecting coaches' compensation (Brook and Foster 2010). If men's and women's coaches are performing the same job, it would be expected the same factors are considered in determining their compensation. Women's coaches' compensation was found to be affected by sports camps and lagged coaching experience while men's coaches'

compensation was found to be affected by contributions (i.e. athletic donations) and lagged coaches winning percentage. The finding of different factors affecting compensation of men's and women's coaches are an indicator of possible gender based discrimination when assuming men's and women's coaches are performing the same job.

## 2. Analysis of arguments rejecting discrimination

Humphreys's (2000) finding of occupation as the source of salary differences implies head coaches of men's and women's basketball teams are performing different jobs. He offers three possible explanations as to why coaching men's and women's basketball could be considered different occupations: prestige of men's sports, taste for discrimination by consumers or athletic directors, and better ability of men's coaches to monopolize player rents (Humphreys 2000). Work of other researchers and additional data support Humphreys's three explanations of differing occupations.

*Prestige of men's sports:* The prestige of men's sports compared to women's sports is analogous to popularity and can be seen in multiple areas. Television viewership of national championship games are one indication of prestige of men's basketball over women's basketball. In 2016, the men's NCAA championship game averaged 17.8 million viewers (Tinsman 2016) while the women's NCAA championship game averaged 2.97 million (Sports TV Rating 2016). Not only did the men's championship game have over six times more viewers than the women's, the men's championship was the least watched men's championship game in 18 years (Tinsman 2016). More people tuned in for the men's game than the women's game and this is a recurring pattern (Swan 2015).

The same prestige of men's sports can be seen looking at sports news as a whole. Ninety-eight percent of sports news is devoted to men's sports. Even ESPN, the network with sole broadcasting rights to the women's NCAA basketball tournament, devotes less than two percent of its news and Sports Center programs to women's sports (Women's Sports Foundation 2010).

*Tastes for discrimination by consumers or athletic directors:* Consumer taste for discrimination in favor of men's basketball could explain why coaches of women's team receive lower salaries (Humphreys 2000). According to the economic model of taste discrimination, if consumers exhibit taste for discrimination against women's basketball,

consumers will act as if there is a non-pecuniary cost to women's basketball. This non-pecuniary cost is the idea that women's basketball is a lesser sport. In response, consumers may not purchase tickets to women's games or may not watch women's games on television. The loss of ticket sales and television contracts leads to lower revenue for women's programs and women's coaches' salaries may simply be a reflection of lower program revenues.

Consumer's taste for discrimination against women's basketball is a plausible explanation for women and men's basketball being different occupations. Taste for discrimination by athletic directors is less compelling. If athletic directors have taste for discrimination against women's basketball, meaning they view women's basketball as a lesser sport, they will hire coaches with the belief that hiring a coach for a women's program has a nonpecuniary cost so the coach should receive a salary below their productivity. This practice becomes particularly problematic when discriminating in the hiring of female women's basketball coaches. Universities want to avoid costly legal battles and taste for discrimination by athletic directors against women's basketball coaches could lead to law suits under the Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, or Title IX. Taste for discrimination by athletic directors seems an unlikely explanation for the differences in base salary between men's and women's head basketball coaches.

*Ability to monopolize on player rents:* The NCAA mandates all athletes participating in NCAA athletics be amateurs. One of the qualifications of amateurism is not receiving payment for athletic performance (NCAA 2015b). Collegiate athletic programs generate revenue from the performance of amateur athletes through ticket sales, television contracts, merchandise, etc. Institutions and coaches are able to benefit from the monopoly rents they receive from players (Humphreys 2000). Humphreys (2000) proposes that men's head basketball coaches are simply better at capturing these monopoly rents than women's head basketball coaches and this results in the earnings gap between men's and women's basketball coaches. It may also be the case that men's players generate larger rents, leading to men's coaches capturing larger rents from their players than women's head coaches.

**B. JOB PERFORMANCE****1. Analysis of arguments supporting discrimination**

Arguments concerning job performance are closely related to arguments concerning whether men's and women's coaches perform the same jobs. If they are performing the same jobs, women's coaches' job performance should be compensated at the same rate as men's coaches. Using wins as a measure of job performance, if a women's coach gets five additional wins in a season and the same school's men's coaches gets five additional wins in the same season, both coaches should receive a proportionally equivalent increase in salary. Women's coaches argue they receive a lower proportional increase in salary for the same job performance as men's coaches. Direct measurement of this type of salary increase is difficult due to the use of incentive clauses and third party money to compensate coaches (Chan 2012; Gentry and Meyer 2012). The inability to measure such increases leads to a lack of evidence. Regardless, women's coaches argue they perform the same jobs and their performance should be rewarded at the same rate as men's coaches.

**2. Analysis of arguments rejecting discrimination.**

Humphreys (2000) explicitly claims the earnings gap between head coaches of men's and women's NCAA Division I basketball teams is not due to gender discrimination. He notes that college basketball provides a setting in which job performance can easily be quantified and measured using career winning percentage. In his empirical analysis, job performance, measured as career winning percentage, is statistically significant and positive. Holding all else equal, women's coaches who win more games over their career receive higher salaries (Humphreys 2000). This is in accord with human capital theory that better job performance should lead to an increase in salary.

Different occupations measure job performance differently and Humphreys (2000) conducts his analysis under the assumption that men's and women's basketball coaching are different occupations. Brook and Foster (2010) also find men's and women's basketball coaching jobs are performed in separate labor markets. The differences in occupation and labor market prevent a direct comparison of job performance and salary for men's and women's basketball coaches.

## C. REVENUE

### 1. Analysis of arguments supporting discrimination

The fact that men's basketball programs generate greater revenues than women's programs is accepted by both those who argue discrimination is a cause of the gender pay gap in college basketball coaching and those who reject discrimination as a cause. Proponents of discrimination as a cause of the wage gap argue women's basketball programs as a whole suffer from historical discrimination, preventing the women's programs from earning revenues equivalent to men's programs (Judge et al. 1996). They argue the comparison of men's and women's coaches' compensation based on revenue generation is unfair as women's basketball programs did not historically receive university funding and promotion at the same level as men's basketball programs. Men's programs have a long history of university support that continues to contribute to their ability to generate greater revenues, higher attendance, and greater media interest. It is argued that this historical difference in university support penalizes women's programs for social prejudices against women's sports (Judge et al. 1996). The historically greater support of men's programs by universities promotes the idea that men's basketball is more important than women's basketball and continues to contribute to men's programs ability to generate greater revenues.

### 2. Analysis of arguments rejecting discrimination

Brooks and Foster (2010) examine revenue generation by men's and women's coaches as it contributes to differences in compensation. They propose the pay gap in compensation for men's and women's basketball coaches stems in part from the differing ability of the programs to generate revenue, thereby placing the men's and women's coaches in different labor markets (Brook and Foster 2010). Men's coaches are better able to generate revenue and consistently generate higher revenues, putting them in a different labor market than women's coaches. Gender based discrimination is still possible among the male and female coaches in each labor market but it is unlikely in the comparison of men's versus women's basketball coaches (Brook and Foster 2010).

Revenue is one of the most common factors used to explain the differences in head coaches' salaries between women's and men's teams.



Humphreys (2000) found the larger the revenues generated by the women's program the higher the coach's salary, regardless of the coach's gender. Not only do women's coaches receive lower base salaries, they consistently earn less from outside sources including television and radio programs, shoe contracts, summer camps, endorsements, and deferred compensation packages from boosters.

These outside sources should be considered when evaluating compensation differences. Coaches receive significant compensation when they are able to capitalize on these outside sources (Humphreys 2000). Even when examining male and female head coaches within women's basketball, compensation beyond base salaries is important. Female head coaches earn higher salaries than male head coaches and Humphreys (2000) estimates the earnings gap would be reduced only if female coaches earn less from outside sources than male coaches.

#### D. ECONOMIC MODELS

Consumers cannot be forced to demand a good. A lack of demand for women's basketball in favor of men's basketball is not, in itself, discrimination against the women's sport or coaches of the women's sport. Humphreys (2000) discusses the prestige of men's basketball as a source for distinguishing the men's and women's coaching occupations. Prestige is analogous to popularity; men's basketball is more popular than women's basketball. Popular goods have higher demand and men's basketball is more popular than women's basketball.

Economic models determine compensation based on employee productivity and revenue from output produced. Brook and Foster (2010) argue productivity of men's and women's head basketball coaches are similar but revenues generated by the respective programs are different (Brook and Foster 2010). Their regression results suggest that universities pay coaches according to productivity and program revenues. Strength of schedule is found to have the greatest impact on coaches' compensation and the impact is seen equally in men's and women's basketball as coaches of top programs are compensated at a higher level (Brook and Foster 2010). A coach's productivity positively affects compensation for both men's and women's basketball coaches. With equal applicability to men's and women's coaches, it is unlikely coaches are discriminated against in their compensation based on productivity.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The goal of this paper was to determine if discrimination is the source of the gender pay gap for head coaches in NCAA Division I basketball and to identify what other factors are at play. A review and analysis of the existing literature on the pay gap in NCAA Division I basketball finds discrimination is not the source of the pay gap between men's and women's head coaches. The popular press view that women's basketball coaches suffer from gender discrimination is unsupported.

Multiple aspects distinguish men's basketball from women's basketball and serve to justify compensation differences. Job performance is awarded with higher compensation in both sports. Revenue is also correlated with higher salaries in both men's and women's basketball. Men's athletic programs, and specifically basketball programs, generate greater and more consistent revenues than women's programs. Economic models support men's coaches being compensated at a higher level based on greater average revenue generated from greater demand for the men's sport. All of these reasons and corresponding evidence support the conclusion that the pay gap in college basketball coaching is not due to gender discrimination.

The current literature focuses on the differences between coaches of men's and women's basketball regardless of gender. There is a dearth of research focusing specifically on women's basketball and differences in coaches' salary based on coach gender. Humphreys's (2010) finding that female coaches of women's basketball have higher base salaries than male coaches of women's basketball is an anomaly in the overall marketplace. Humphreys's (2010) finding, however, contradicts that of Sweet (1997) that male coaches have higher base salaries in women's basketball. Further research is needed to determine which gender of coaches have higher base salaries in women's basketball. It may be the case that female coaches have a salary advantage in the women's sport.

## **References**

**Athletics**, 34 CFR 106.41(c).

**Barrett, M.C.** 2016. "There are Fewer Women Coaches in College Basketball Now than there Were a Decade Ago." *Five Thirty Eight*, January 19. Accessed February 26, 2017. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/there-are-fewer-women-coaches-in-college-basketball-now-than-there-were-a-decade-ago/>.

- Blum, Debra.** 1994. "Pay Equity for Coaches." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 40, no. 31 (April): A53-54.
- Brook, Stacey L. and Sarah Foster.** 2010. "Does Gender Affect Compensation Among NCAA Basketball Coaches?" *International Journal of Sport Finance* 5, no. 2: 96-106.
- Chan, Kristina,** 2012. "Male and Female Coaches' Salaries." The She Network by the Women's Sports Foundation, June 19. Accessed March 1, 2017.  
<https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/education/male-and-female-coaches-salaries/>.
- Civil Rights Act of 1964,** 42 U.S.C. § 2000e.
- CNN Money.** 2015. "The best paid women's coach is a man – UConn's Geno Auriemma." CNN Money (New York), April 7. Accessed February 26, 2017.  
<http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/07/news/companies/best-paid-women-coach/>.
- Collins, Benjamin, and Jody Feder.** 2013. Pay Equity: Legislative and Legal Developments. November 22. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress.
- Del v. University of Minnesota.*** 578 N.W.2d 779 (1998).
- Equal Pay Act of 1963,** 29 U.S.C. § 206.
- Federal Register,** Vol.44, No. 239
- Gentry, James K., and Raquel Meyer Alexander.** 2012. "Pay for Women's Basketball Coaches Lags Far Behind That of Men's Coaches." *New York Times*, April 2. Accessed February 5, 2017.  
<https://mobile.nytimes.com/images/10000001467325/2012/04/03/sports/ncaabasketball/pay-for-womens-basketball-coaches-lags-far-behind-mens-coaches.html>.
- Hegewisch, Ariane and Asha DuMonthier.** 2016. *The Gender Wage Gap: 2015 Annual Earnings Differences by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity.* Report by Institute for Women's Policy Research. Accessed February 4, 2017.  
<https://iwpr.org/wpcontent/uploads/wpallimport/files/iwpr-export/publications/C446.pdf>.
- Humphreys, Brad R.** 2000. "Equal Pay on the Hardwood: The Earnings Gap Between Male and Female NCAA Division I Basketball Coaches." *Journal of Sports Economics* 1, no. 3 (August): 229-307.
- Judge, Janet, David O'Brien, and Timothy O'Brien.** 1996. "Pay Equity: A legal and practical approach to the compensation of college coaches." *Seton Hall Journal of Sport Law* 6, no. 2, (Summer): 549-580.
- Kahn, Lawrence M.** 2009. "The Economics of Discrimination: Evidence from Basketball." Institute for the Study of Labor Discussion Paper No. 3987, IZA, Bonn, Germany.
- Mussatto, Joe.** 2015. "College coaching: Where women still make pennies on the dollar." Scripps Howard Foundation Wire, March 27. Accessed February 20, 2017.  
<http://www.shfwire.com/college-coaching-women-still-make-pennies-dollar/>
- NCAA.** 2015a "About the NCAA." NCAA website. Accessed March 1, 2017.  
<http://www.ncaa.org/about>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015b "Amateurism." NCAA website. Accessed March 1, 2017.  
<http://www.ncaa.org/Amateurism>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015c. "What is the NCAA?" NCAA website. Accessed March 1, 2017.  
<http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/ncaa-101/what-ncaa>.

- Sports TV Ratings.** 2016. "Syracuse-Connecticut Women's NCAA Hoops Final leads cable sports TV ratings for Tuesday April 5, 2016." April 6. Accessed February 18, 2017. <https://sportstvratings.com/syracuse-connecticut-womens-ncaa-hoops-final-leads-cable-sports-tv-ratings-for-tuesday-april-5-2016/4775/>.
- Stanley v. University of Southern California.** 178F.3d 1069 (1999).
- Sweet, Lawana.** 1997. "Factors influencing salaries of intercollegiate athletic head mens and womens basketball coaches as perceived by ncaa athletic directors." PhD diss., Montana State University.
- Tinsman, Brian.** 2016. "Record Low NCAA Championship TV Ratings." CBS DC, April 5. Accessed February 18, 2017. <http://washington.cbslocal.com/2016/04/05record-low-ncaa-championship-tv-ratings/>.
- Title IX,** Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. A § 1681-1688.
- Uconn Athletics.** 2017a. "Men's Basketball - Kevin Ollie." Accessed February 18, 2017. [http://www.uconnhuskies.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/kevin\\_ollie\\_710489.html](http://www.uconnhuskies.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/kevin_ollie_710489.html).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017b. "Women's Basketball - Geno Auriemma." Accessed February 18, 2017. [http://www.uconnhuskies.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/auriemma\\_geno00.html](http://www.uconnhuskies.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/auriemma_geno00.html).
- US Congress.** Joint Economic Committee. *Gender Pay Inequality: Consequences for Women, Families and the Economy*, by the Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee, ranking Democrat Carolyn B. Maloney. April 2016.
- USA Today.** 2011a. "An analysis of salaries for college basketball coaches." USA Today – NSLI Coaches' Salary Database Salaries, March 30. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/college/mensbasketball/2011-coaches-salary-database.htm>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2011b. "An analysis of salaries for women's college basketball coaches." USA Today – NSLI Coaches' Salary Database, March 30. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/college/womensbasketball/2011-coaches-salary-database.htm>.
- Wolverton, Brad.** 2016. "Disparities in Coaches' Academic Incentives Raise Concerns Over Gender Equity." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 25. Accessed February 1, 2017. <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Disparities-in-Coaches/235733>.
- Women's Sports Foundation.** 2010 "Women Play Sports But Not on TV." States News Service, June 1. Accessed February 10, 2017. <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/research/article-and-report/media-issues/women-play-sports-not-tv/>.