

ABSTRACT

THESIS: ATHLETES' PERCEPTION OF THEIR COACHES' BEHAVIOR AT CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR INSTITUTIONS

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The coach-athlete relationship has been identified as one of the key components of an athletes' sport experience. In the competitive collegiate sport setting, this relationship has shown to be even more influential due to the duration of the relationship of coach-athlete relationship and the challenging time of identity transition for these college athletes. Because of coach behaviors known influence on such an important relationship, research has explored the potential antecedents for why coaches engage in certain types of behaviors, specifically autonomy supportive and controlling coaching behaviors. One unresearched area of coach behavior influences is religious beliefs. Participants included NCAA DIII, NAIA and NCCAA individual sport athletes ($n=114$) and coaches ($n=77$) from both religious and secular institutions. The Athletes were surveyed using the Autonomy Supportive Behavior Scale, Controlling Coach Behavior Scale, and open-ended questions and the coaches surveyed through open-ended questions. Following the one-way MANOVA, results indicated a significant difference between athletes perceived autonomy coaching behavior in religious ($M=33.66$, $SD = 6.16$) and secular ($M=27.20$, $SD=8.99$) institutions. Additionally, results concluded there to be no significant difference between controlling coaching behavior or the controlling coaching subscales between

groups, but qualitative results show support towards a potential difference in negative conditional regard. Athletes' perception of the frequency of their coaches overall controlling coaching behavior was very low compared to prior research regarding the prevalence of controlling coaching behavior in the collegiate setting.