



### **Experiences and Perceptions of Women Strength and Conditioning Coaches: A Scoping Review**

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|                  |                                                                               |

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1 **Experiences and perceptions of Women Strength and Conditioning Coaches: A Scoping**  
2 **Review**

3 **Abstract**

4 Women continue to be under-represented and underserved in the field of **Strength and**  
5 **Conditioning (S&C)**, yet scholarly work examining the experiences and perceptions of **women**  
6 **S&C coaches (SCCs)** is limited. Thus, the purpose of this study was to conduct a scoping review  
7 of the existing literature on women **SCCs** to identify current trends as well as knowledge gaps.  
8 Four electronic databases (SportDISCUS, PsycINFO, MEDLINE and Academic Search Complete)  
9 were searched up to 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. The initial search yielded 164 unique English-language  
10 papers, reviews, and book chapters. All in all, 7 peer-reviewed articles were included, and  
11 data from these studies were charted. Generally, studies recommend SCCs to participate in  
12 coach education programmes and more women to be involved in the hiring of S&C staff.  
13 While such findings are relevant, they have not fully explored the complexity of gender  
14 dynamics **in** S&C. Moreover, these recommendations will have limited long-term, sector-wide  
15 impact unless necessary policies are also implemented to help eradicate **structure-level**  
16 **gender bias within the culture of S&C.**

17 **Keywords:** **Women coaches**, gender performance, marginalisation, hegemony, male  
18 domination.

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## Introduction

Strength and Conditioning (S&C) is viewed as the cornerstone of athletic preparation to improve physical ability and help prevent injuries. Regardless of gender, gaining a job in S&C is highly competitive (Vernau et al., 2021). However, the consensus is that S&C has long been, and continues to be, a male dominated occupation. For example, in the United Kingdom (UK), women constitute only 7% of S&C coaches (SCCs) (Medlin-Silver et al., 2017). Within Division I of the United States' (US) National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which represent the highest level of intercollegiate athletics in the US, only 15.7% of all SCCs employed are women (Lapchick et al., 2021). Of 2,325 SCCs from North America taking part in the National Strength and Conditioning Association's 2018 coaches survey, only 372 (16%) identified as women (Employers Council, 2018). Similarly, in a 2021 survey to map the demographics of SCCs working in professional football in the UK, out of 138 respondents only four (3%) were women (Pacey Performance, 2021). Therefore, based on the above statistics, women appear to be under-represented in S&C.

Not only in S&C but, generally, in coaching, women commonly report experiencing marginalisation and minoritisation (Norman, 2021). The lack of women coaches needs to be understood as a symptom of a deeper issue, instead of the problem per se (Norman et al. 2018). The constraints women face to pursue a career in coaching is broad and spans across numerous levels. From a macro-level, gender hierarchies within sport have been recognised as the root of inequalities (Murray et al., 2022). Sport not only contributes to a traditional gender order, but it also reproduces a conservative and stabilizing form of masculinity (Mullin & Bergan 2018). Specifically, the prevalence of hegemonic masculinity has had implications for both women and men, which privileges idealised forms of masculinity such as muscularity, aggression, and confidence (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). As sport was created for men

47 by men (Anderson, 2009), the constructed gender order has been resistant to change and  
48 permeates across all levels of sport, including S&C (Lord & Kavaliauskas, 2022). S&C,  
49 therefore, exist as a microcosm of society's values, stereotypes and prejudices around gender  
50 and related attributes to be successful as coaches, such as physicality, assertiveness,  
51 aggressiveness and dominance (Schull & Kihl, 2017). Consequently, men tend to be privileged  
52 when decisions are made to fulfil coaching roles (Norman et al., 2018).

53

54 The relatively low representation of women across coaching positions is often rooted in  
55 organizational culture, whereby male directors and board members in positions of power  
56 appoint male coaches (Knoppers et al., 2022). Women coaches are commonly relegated to  
57 positions which hold relatively little power. On the other hand, able bodied, white men often  
58 serve as 'power holders' (Fasting et al., 2019, p. 456). Gender-informed organizational  
59 practices have been identified as a barrier to women entering S&C as well as gaining career  
60 advancement (Thomas et al., 2021). Due to S&C being a male dominated profession, it has a  
61 gendered organizational culture that emphasizes values, ideas and practices associated with  
62 the dominant form of masculinity and related identity.

63 In a recent interview, SCC, Dr Torres-Ronda, discussed the gendered practices, norms, and  
64 values entrenched within S&C (McLaren, 2021, p.25). When asked about the challenges  
65 women face as SCCs, Dr Torres-Ronda stated:

66 I don't know if it's perceived as more "normal" to see a female doctor, physiotherapist,  
67 massage therapist or in any role with a clinical background, and less "normal" to see  
68 a female S&C coach. If you are a strength coach you have to have big muscles and yell  
69 during the sessions! Of course, you don't, but what I'm saying is, this is the expected

70 norm. We have idealistic profiles for these kinds of staff members and that's why  
71 being a female S&C coach is tough, because you might not fit the stereotype.

72 The quote encapsulates the gendered nature of the S&C industry, which is continuously  
73 reinforced by dominant, masculine standards. Gender stereotyping is often cited as a barrier  
74 for women in the industry, as women SCCs have felt they are often viewed as being too soft  
75 to be in a leadership position (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016). Dr Torres-Ronda further stated:

76 You can be seen as, "She knows what she's talking about" on a piece of paper, but  
77 the moment you have to go to a weight room it's like, "Erm really? Is she gonna know  
78 what to do with the weights?" (McLaren, 2021, p. 24)

79 Gender stereotypes, such as the one noted above, are constantly reproduced in everyday  
80 language and can be communicated in indirect ways, which, in turn, influence the behaviour  
81 and role expectations of people (Schlesinger et al. 2021). As a result of this gender association  
82 with the job role, the SCCs interviewed in Thomas et al. (2021) felt they had to behave in a  
83 masculine manner to garner respect and fit-into the organisational culture. An individual who  
84 is viewed as physically fit in S&C therefore displays these behaviours and shares the cultural  
85 norms (Norman, 2020). To achieve an organizational fit many women sports coaches and SCCs  
86 feel they must work harder and have more to prove than their male-counterparts. In fact,  
87 women's disadvantaged position in essence is recognised by UK's Strength and Conditioning  
88 Association's (UKSCA). For instance, an article published in their journal explains that a  
89 women SCC needs to "be prepared to evidence ...[their] competence more than would be  
90 expected of a male coach" (Marsh, 2014, p.11). In essence, women's ability to accumulate  
91 cultural capital is hindered by their marginalised and isolated positions in the world of sport  
92 (de Haan & Norman, 2020). Despite continuously expanding research on women's  
93 experiences in various segments of the sports world, women SCCs have received limited social

94 science attention so far. Thus, there is a need for further insight to existing gender issues  
95 around sport leadership, as it relates to this traditionally and presently male dominated field  
96 of S&C.

97

98 Consequently, the aim of this article is to offer a review-based synopsis of the emerging  
99 research around **women** SCCs with the view to highlighting trends as well as limitations to aid  
100 future work in this area. Specifically, by recognising the cultural complexity of women sports  
101 coaches **and SCCs**, the article begins by discussing and introducing the latest ecological model  
102 with intersectionality at its core (**see next section**). Subsequently, the aims of the scoping  
103 review are rationalised and the review method is presented, followed by an exploration of  
104 the key findings. To help organise the interpretation of existing **women** S&C research, The  
105 Ecological-Intersectional Model is deployed as a guiding framework. Finally, both the research  
106 and practical implications of existing S&C research is discussed and recommendations for  
107 addressing gender concerns in S&C are offered. **As this review is informed by gender, which  
108 is viewed as a social construct, and refers to the cultural roles, norms and expectations  
109 attributed to men and women (Cislaghi and Heise, 2020); the term 'women' is adopted  
110 throughout. This is consistent with the recent work of LaVoi et al. (2019) and Lord and  
111 Kavaliauskas (2022).**

112

### 113 **Intersectionality**

114 Intersectionality, **originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989)**, refers to the overlapping  
115 nature of multiple, socially constructed identities and experiences that individuals hold and  
116 the resultant privilege and/or oppression derived from those traversing identities and  
117 experiences (McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). Intersectionality is not just a concept that solely

118 applies to marginalized groups but is an integral aspect of social constructs that shape  
119 everyone. It is particularly well articulated in socialist feminism, which perceives different  
120 interest groups as “overlapping parts of a system of privilege and disadvantage” (Lorber,  
121 2010, p. 71). It is, therefore, important to recognise that groups may be simultaneously  
122 advantaged and/or disadvantaged by structures of oppression or privilege in certain  
123 situations, i.e., they may experience complex inequality or complex privilege or a combination  
124 (Weldon, 2008). In recognising the equal importance of gender, class and “race”, McCall  
125 (2001) developed the theory of complex inequality. McCall (2001) noted that while the  
126 consideration of all social groups is pertinent, a gender analysis can explain the consequences  
127 of those groups (their privileges and disadvantages) in relation to women and men in a given  
128 society. More specifically:

129         the presence of configurations of inequality, empirically, mean that the politics of any  
130         single dimension of inequality must be informed by the broader context of inequality  
131         (McCall, 2001, p. 192)

132 Intersectionality as a concept became popular and widely used across multiple disciplines in  
133 the 1990s. Consequently, warnings have been voiced around the potential deflation of  
134 intersectionality as a concept when applying it outside critical race theory (Carastathis, 2013).  
135 In fact, Adams and Gruen (2014) cautioned that the term has become a “buzz word” amongst  
136 feminist scholars which has the potential to dull the combative power of the concept. Perhaps  
137 due to such observations, the field of sport research has had a relatively moderate  
138 engagement with intersectionality. Despite the measured uptake, there are now multiple  
139 examples of active and effective use of the concept (e.g., Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2017;  
140 Engh et al., 2017). Whilst recognising the potential danger of overuse, we argue and explain

141 below, that intersectionality is an effective way to unfold the multitude and complex  
142 experiences of women SCCs.

143 As men tend to be privileged when decisions are made to fulfil coaching roles (Norman et al.,  
144 2018), there have been calls within the sports coaching and S&C literature for deploying  
145 frameworks that centralise women’s intersectional identities and their coaching career  
146 trajectories (Lord & Kavaliauskas, 2022; La Voi et al., 2019). One such framework is the  
147 Ecological-Intersectional Model (EIM) which is discussed below.

148

### 149 **Ecological-Intersectional Model (EIM)**

150 Building on the concept of intersectionality and complex inequality, we now turn our  
151 attention to a coaching-oriented model that has intersectionality at its core. Integral to the  
152 Ecological-Intersectional Model (EIM) is the acknowledgment of overlapping identities and  
153 positions such as gender, age, “race”, and sexual orientation. The inclusion of  
154 intersectionality, via the EIM, therefore, provides researchers with a blueprint to further delve  
155 into “the experiences of women coaches along differential identity axes, and how women  
156 may experience – in similar and different ways – ageism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, and  
157 sexism among other forms of oppression, over the trajectories of their coaching career and  
158 life course” (LaVoi, 2016, p.16). The EIM, revised by LaVoi (2016) from their earlier work  
159 (LaVoi & Dutove, 2012), provides a useful framework to understand the multi-layered social  
160 processes women SCCs experience (e.g., with head coaches, other SCCs, and athletes). The  
161 EIM consists of four levels, moving from a micro perspective of the individual and  
162 intrapersonal issues to macro level issues which include organizational and sociocultural  
163 contexts. The EIM assists in understanding the complex relationship between SCCs and the  
164 environment they operate in and how the two interact to influence the behaviour of women



165 **SCCs**. Furthermore, positioning intersectionality at the heart of the EIM demonstrates the  
166 importance of investigating the experiences of women SCCs beyond a single identity axis  
167 (gender) by recognising in what ways women SCCs with multiple marginalized identities  
168 experience societal and organizational forms of oppression in their workplace. The four levels  
169 of the EIM are used as a guiding framework to structure our scoping review's findings.  
170 Specifically, we examine **women**-focused S&C research in relation to each level and highlight  
171 the general circumstances experienced by **women SCCs**

172

173

### Methodology

174 Scoping reviews have gained popularity in response to a growing demand for summaries of  
175 the breadth and depth of research around a particular topic (Goertzen et al., 2015). Mullin  
176 and Bergan (2018, p.19) state that "expanded efforts need to be directed at both conducting  
177 and publishing quality sociological research in journals for the S&C professional". Such  
178 sociologically-informed, critical work may be supported by systematic-type reviews of existing  
179 research. While scoping reviews have been and can be used for summarising areas that are  
180 wide and broad (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005), they are particularly useful when there is  
181 emergent academic literature on a topic that is in its infancy (Munn et al., 2018). Scoping  
182 reviews enable researchers to examine central issues surrounding a research area and  
183 discover the key sources and types of evidence available (Tricco et al., 2018) without being  
184 restricted by a potentially narrow range of quality-defined studies and by different  
185 methodological approaches used. Therefore, adopting a scoping review approach can help  
186 clarify key concepts and research approaches that can go beyond quality-defined studies and  
187 identify gaps within a broad scope of the existing literature. **This is particularly relevant to**  
188 **S&C research where there have been calls for identifying why gender inequalities and**

189 discrimination still exist, as well as improving women's experiences and opportunities to  
190 combat representational issues within the industry (O'Malley & Greenwood, 2018).

191 Consequently, the purpose of the current study was to conduct a scoping review of the limited  
192 but growing S&C literature to offer a comprehensive account of existing empirical research  
193 and information about women coaches' experience in the field. In addition to providing a  
194 summary of existing knowledge, this review sought to identify current scientific lacunae in  
195 gender focused S&C research.

196 As we have focused on contextualizing a broad range of knowledge in terms of identifying the  
197 current state of understanding, this scoping review followed the framework outlined by  
198 Arksey and O'Malley (2005). The framework is comprised of five stages: (1) identifying the  
199 research question(s), (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting data and  
200 (5) collating, summarising, and reporting the results (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

201

### 202 **Identifying the research question**

203 In accordance with scoping review recommendations (Peters et al., 2015), we used broad  
204 research questions combined with clear definitions of the concepts relevant to the study's  
205 scope:

206 (a) What empirical research has been conducted that has examined the perception and  
207 experiences of women SCCs?

208 (b) What are the main methodological and theoretical approaches in women-focused S&C  
209 research?

210 (c) What are the gaps and potential future trends in research centred on women SCCs?

211 Through the guiding research questions, we identified overarching themes in the literature  
212 concerning **women** SCCs. In line with other sport coaching scholars (e.g., Norman *et al.*, 2018),  
213 we made the perceptions and experiences of women SCCs visible to expose the impact of the  
214 gender challenges they face. Since the Arksey and O'Malley (2005) methodological framework  
215 requires the identification of all the relevant literature regardless of the study design, we did  
216 not limit this review to any specific theoretical or methodological approach.

217

### 218 **Identifying relevant studies**

219 After identifying the research questions and clarifying the key terms, we searched for relevant  
220 studies in four different electronic databases. One sport specific (SPORTDiscus - the leading  
221 sports and sport medicine research database) and one interdisciplinary social science focused  
222 (PsycINFO - the largest resource of peer-reviewed behavioural and social science research)  
223 **databases** were chosen, along with MEDLINE (a bibliographic database of life sciences and  
224 biomedical information) and Academic Search Complete (a multi-disciplinary scholarly  
225 database) to ensure wide coverage. In addition, a Google search was carried out using the  
226 same search string. Since the results of this were extensive, screening of the results was  
227 limited to the first thirty links retrieved (see Molnár & Whigham, 2021). None of them proved  
228 to meet our criteria (outlined below) and none were included in the final review.

229 To ensure a comprehensive approach, the search term syntax used in the selected databases  
230 included: "woman **or** women **or** female **or** females AND strength and conditioning coach **or**  
231 SCC **or** S&C". **It is pertinent to note at this juncture that while we exclusively use**  
232 **'woman/women' throughout this work, in the broader literature 'woman' and 'female' are**  
233 **often used interchangeably. The search term syntax was designed in light of this recognition**  
234 **to achieve a broad scope of results.** Since the experiences of **women** S&C coaches or athletes'

235 perceptions of **women** S&C coaches across the profession is under-researched, the search  
236 was restricted to English academic journals, with no date limiters applied. **The literature**  
237 **search cut off point was 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.** This yielded results from 1988 to 2021 in SportDISCUS,  
238 2012 to 2021 in PsycINFO, 2001 to 2021 in MEDLINE, and 2007 to 2021 in Academic Search  
239 Complete. With regard to categorising a source as appropriately S&C focused, coaches had to  
240 be directly referred **to** as S&C or athletes had to be studied in relation to S&C by the authors  
241 of the original publications.

242

### 243 **Study selection**

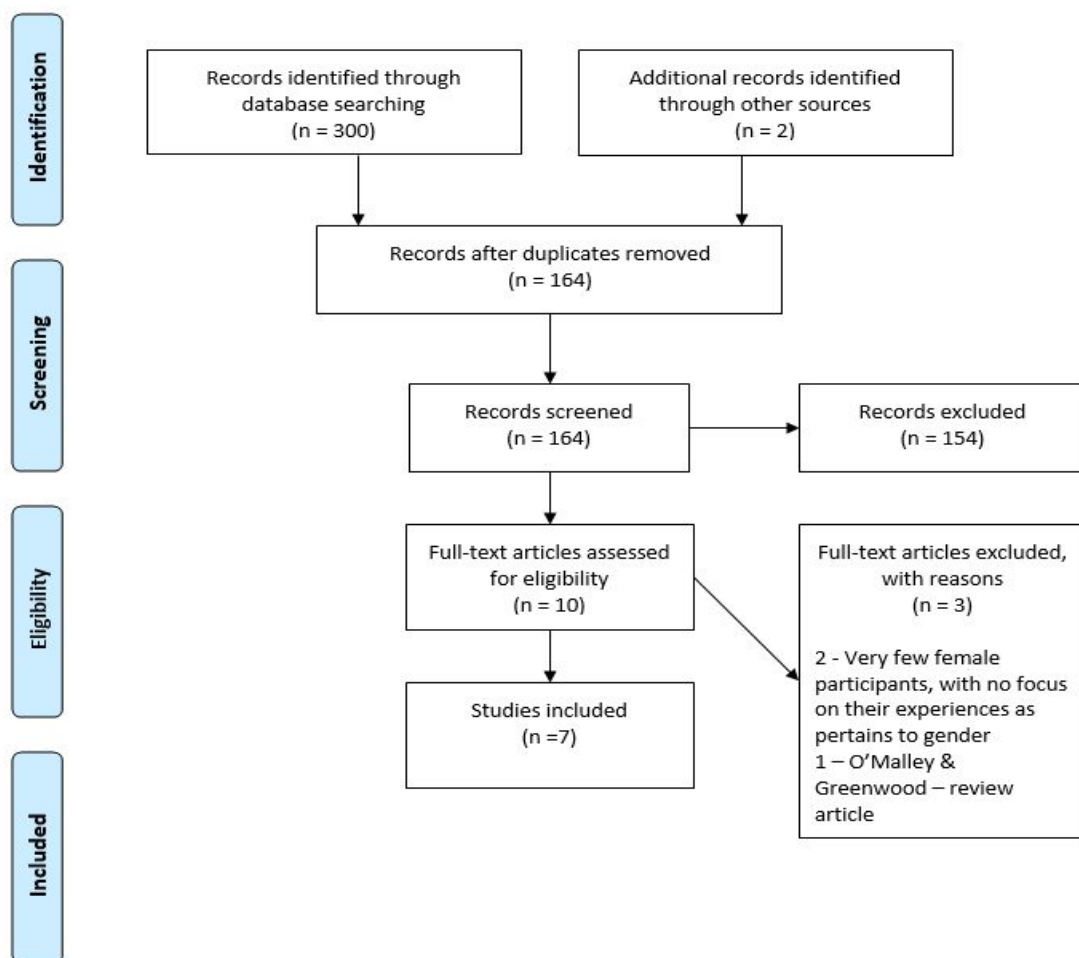
244 The selection process is shown in Figure 1 using a PRISMA flowchart. Across the four  
245 databases 300 results were returned, of which 138 were duplicate records. Additionally to  
246 the database search, two records (Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2021). **When the**  
247 **literature search was conducted, Thomas et al. (2021) was only published in an online first**  
248 **format and was not picked up by the database search but was known to the authors. The**  
249 **literature search also involved an examination of relevant grey literature that was included in**  
250 **the reference list material within the identified studies (Tjørndall & Wågan 2021). This was**  
251 **to include other studies published in English that may not have been identified through the**  
252 **database searches. Based on this search strategy Medlin-Silver et al. (2017) was included as**  
253 **being relevant to this study's aims.**

254 Following Kavoura and Kokkonen (2020), we used a two-step screening process. First, each  
255 abstract, title, and authors' names of all articles identified were reviewed. During this phase  
256 we independently read 164 abstracts and met **weekly** to discuss and refine our decisions  
257 regarding the inclusion criteria. Studies were eligible for inclusion if they were published in  
258 English and had a clear design focused on the experiences of **women** SCCs or athletes'

259 perceptions of **women** SCCs across the profession. Of the 164 records that were screened by  
260 title and abstract 154 were excluded. The exclusions were due to a high number of the studies  
261 screened focusing on the gender of the athlete as opposed to the SCC or on training or  
262 nutritional practices in which a coach might be involved. The second level of the screening  
263 consisted of obtaining and reviewing the full texts of the articles to confirm that they met the  
264 full inclusion criteria. Ten full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. Three were excluded  
265 at this point. One focused on internships within S&C (**113 men and six women**) (Read et al.,  
266 2017) and another focused on the career experiences of Australian SCCs (**five men and one**  
267 **woman**) (Dawson et al., 2013); in both cases there were very few **women** participants, and  
268 gender was not directly considered. The third article excluded did not include any primary  
269 data as it was a review article (O'Malley & Greenwood, 2018).

270 Figure 1. PRISMA flow chart outlining records collected and final records eligible after  
271 screening process.

272



273

## 274 Charting data

275 According to PRISMA's extension for Scoping Reviews Checklist, scoping reviews should

276 utilize a data extraction process, which is commonly referred to as data charting process

277 (Peters et al., 2015; Tricco et al., 2018). All sources identified as relevant for inclusion were

278 listed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. These articles were then read in full, and data were

279 charted on the Excel spreadsheet with the following categories: author(s), year of

280 publication, study design, purpose, data collection, participants, key findings and theoretical

281 framework (Table 1). In the results section, we outline the number of studies identified,

282 screened and assessed for eligibility, then we present an overview of the participants'  
283 characteristics, study design and theoretical perspectives used in the studies included.

284

## 285 **Results**

286 Seven published studies that satisfied our inclusion criteria are analysed in the results section.

287 The final number of studies included is small, but this is neither unprecedented (see Harlow  
288 et al., 2020), nor unexpected **in scoping reviews**, given the under-researched nature of this  
289 area.

290

### 291 **Participants' Characteristics and Study Design**

292 Two studies examined NCAA Division I athletes' gender preference towards their SCC.  
293 Magnusen & Rhea (2009), from a quantitative perspective, used a modified version of the  
294 Attitudes of Athletes toward Male Versus Female Coaches Questionnaire which was  
295 completed by 476 (male = 275, female = 201) student athletes. Whereas, Shuman & Appleby  
296 (2016), from a qualitative perspective, conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with ten  
297 student athletes (Men = 3, Women = 7). The focus of the interviews was to help explain and  
298 understand the preferences and attitudes toward the gender of their SCC

299 Five studies focused on the experiences of **women** working as SCCs. Three studies employed  
300 a qualitative approach; two used semi-structured interviews (Medlin-Silver et al., 2017;  
301 Thomas et al., 2021) while one implemented a qualitative e-mail-based survey design  
302 (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016). The remaining two studies adopted a mixed methods approach  
303 using a combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews (Massey & Vincent  
304 2013; Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Massey and Vincent (2013) used a self-developed

305 questionnaire to determine participants' demographic characteristics, feelings, perceptions,  
306 and likes and dislikes of working as an SCC. While Sartore-Baldwin (2013) asked SCC to  
307 complete a range of questionnaires [Perceptions of organizational support (Eisenberger et al.,  
308 1986), Job satisfaction (Cammann et al., 1983), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985)  
309 and Organization Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday et al., 1979)]. **With a sub-sample of**  
310 **the participants (n=8) semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted to ask questions**  
311 **pertaining to their work duties and gender related experiences within S&C.** Sample sizes for  
312 the studies that focused on the experiences of **women SCCs** ranged from 6 to 43. A detailed  
313 breakdown of the sample demographics and study design can be found in Table 1.

#### 314 **Theoretical Perspectives**

315 The studies examining athletes' gender preference towards their SCC did not specify a  
316 theoretical framework (Magnusen & Rhea, 2009; Shuman & Appleby, 2016). Neither did  
317 Laskowski and Ebben (2016), however, other studies examining the experiences of **women**  
318 **SCCs** adopted varied theoretical lenses. Experiences of **women SCCs** were explored in relation  
319 to Connell's (1987) account of hegemonic masculinity (Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Thomas et  
320 al., 2021); Goffman's (1959) concept of impression management (Thomas et al., 2021); Social  
321 Exchange Theory, Organizational Support and Social identity (Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Lastly,  
322 Massey & Vincent (2013) cited **organisational theory from the individual perspective as their**  
323 **conceptual framework.**

324

#### 325 **Discussion**

326 This scoping review was undertaken to investigate: (a) What empirical research has been  
327 conducted that has examined the perception and experiences of **women SCCs**? (b) What are  
328 the main methodological and theoretical approaches in women-focused S&C research? (c)



329 What are the gaps and potential future trends in research centred on **women** SCCs? Seven  
330 articles were identified and evaluated. The findings from the studies are discussed in relation  
331 to the four levels of the **EIM – Individual, interpersonal, organisational and societal**,  
332 specifically focusing on **women** SCCs experiences and related power dynamics present at each  
333 level.

334

### 335 **Individual level**

336 Gender-related negative perceptions contribute to low self-confidence and are a barrier  
337 often identified by **women** sports coaches (Norman, 2014). The **women SCCs** sampled in the  
338 studies reviewed acknowledged that, similar to men, **women SCCs** must provide an  
339 impression of confidence to meet role expectations (Massey & Vincent, 2013; Thomas et al.,  
340 2021). In fact, elite athletes, alongside trust, relatedness and respect, perceive self-confidence  
341 as a key characteristic required to be an effective SCC regardless of gender (Szedlak et al.,  
342 2015). To help establish respect and credibility, demonstrating skills and knowledge were  
343 found to support **women SCCs** achieve athlete buy-in. While proving technical proficiency and  
344 subject-specific knowledge is not exclusive to women in professional setting, they also have  
345 to combat the prevalence of **hegemonic masculinity** within S&C. Out of the 5 studies reviewed  
346 that investigated the experiences of women in S&C in relation to connecting with other  
347 coaches and athletes, 4 studies acknowledged that women had more to prove and had to  
348 work harder for acceptance in comparison to male SCCs (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016; Massey  
349 & Vincent, 2013; Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2021).

350

351 Generally, **women** SCCs expressed they must compensate for being **women** and the need to  
352 showcase their expertise to a greater extent than their male colleagues (Medlin-Silver et al.,

2017). This was not only to prove their competency as an SCC, but also to ‘fit-in’ with the extensively male saturated working environment (Thomas et al., 2021). Such experiences of undergoing greater scrutiny to prove credibility as SCCs are also symptomatic of a lack of trust towards women in the field (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016). Consequently, women SCCs often portray a masculine front, feel forced to prove their worth, must work harder to garner the same level of respect as a male SCC (Thomas et al., 2021) and go the ‘extra mile’ to prove competency (Massey & Vincent, 2013). In a recent interview (McLaren, 2021), SCC Dr Lorena Torres-Ronda discussed the social and cultural challenges she faced during her journey to making it to the ‘top’ of the profession. Similar to the reviewed research, Torres-Ronda noted that she often overcompensated to establish credibility and felt she had more to prove than her male counterparts and the need to demonstrate that her gender was not an issue. Theberge (1993), however, cautions women that working harder to outperform male colleagues or to prove themselves can ultimately become counterproductive. This is because it places the problem on the individual women, which does not change the male dominant, heteronormative socio-cultural milieu of coaching, and fails to challenge or erode the belief in the ‘natural’ superiority and abilities of men. Lorde (2003, p. 27) highlighted the limitation of women adopting and using masculine traits (confidence, assertiveness, muscularity, aggression, and rationality) to fit in and prove themselves: “Master’s tools—they may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they never enable us to bring about genuine change.” Given that women are often associated with being socially competent, fragile and empathic, they may feel the need to adopt masculine behaviour traits – masters’ tools – to fit into a traditionally men-centred work environment. Even if:

Such stigmatisation is often not meant to be explicitly degrading, but is usually phrased in a hidden, positive way: female coaches are assigned a high degree of team

377 or social skills and characterised as supportive, cooperative, and striving for harmony  
378 (Schlesinger et al., 2021, p.38).

379 To combat such gender stereotypes, women may adopt masculine behaviours as a strategy  
380 which can, initially, be advantageous to secure a job in S&C, however this tactic has its  
381 limitations as S&C remains a predominantly male profession, preventing women's career  
382 progression (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016).

383

#### 384 **Interpersonal level**

385 The interpersonal level involves the relationships and interactions the S&C coach has with  
386 others such as other SCCs, sport coaches and athletes. To determine if athletes had a gender  
387 preference for SCCs, Magnusen and Rhea (2009) had athletes (275 male and 201 female) read  
388 a scenario of two SCCs, one male and one female, with matching qualities (i.e., education, job  
389 experience, coaching style, behaviours) before completing a modified Attitudes of Athletes  
390 toward Male Versus Female Coaches Questionnaire (AAMFC-Q). Statistical analysis of the  
391 Likert scale results revealed that the male athletes were less comfortable with a women SCC  
392 and preferred to have a male SCC, whereas women athletes did not have a gender preference,  
393 but a neutral attitude to an SCCs gender. It is worth noting that all the male athletes were  
394 American football players, and it was not clear if the participants sampled in the study had  
395 had previous exposure to both women and male SCCs, which could have resulted in an  
396 unconscious bias regarding gender preference. To overcome this limitation, Shuman and  
397 Appley (2016) interviewed 10 athletes (three men and seven women) who had been coached  
398 by both men and women SCCs. Inductively analysing data revealed athletes did not have a

399 gender specific preference for their SCC. Instead, SCC leadership style characterised by ability,  
400 professionalism, trust and respect, support and dependability were of great importance.

401 Two of the studies reviewed acknowledge the “old boys’ club” as a barrier to women **SCCs**  
402 progression in the industry (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016; Thomas et al., 2021). As a result of  
403 male-dominated-networks and male dominance in the industry, some women **SCCs** reported  
404 bullying and harassment from male coaches in the form of sexism in the studies reviewed.  
405 This typically involved sexist banter, innuendos, or jokes related to a **woman’s** physical  
406 appearance (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016; Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2021). **One**  
407 **of the SCCs, from Thomas et al. (2021), recalled being regularly dragged into the showers**  
408 **when initially working with male rugby players. This type of inappropriate behaviour was**  
409 **rationalised and accepted as part of the culture.**

410 Interestingly, none of the 6 coaches interviewed by Massey & Vincent (2013) had revealed  
411 any experience of disrespectful, condescending, or sexist behaviour from any of the male SCCs  
412 they had worked with. **However, the majority of existing research** (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016;  
413 Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; McLaren, 2021; Thomas et al., 2021) **in S&C observe different**  
414 **experiences of women coaches to those** Massey & Vincent’s (2013) participants expressed.  
415 This inconsistency in the existing literature prompts further research to further and more  
416 extensively prove the gendered cultural aspects of S&C.

417 Regardless of gender, the profession of S&C requires extensive commitment, including long  
418 hours, weekend practices, or competition attendances and out of town travel during the  
419 season. However, traditional gender ideology perceives woman as domestic caretakers for  
420 whom working roles are secondary to childrearing (Dixon & Bruening, 2007). Due to the  
421 demanding nature of being an SCC, a barrier often identified for a lack of **women** coaches, is  
422 the work-family conflict that can arise (Kilty, 2006), especially in **heteronormative**

423 relationships. Preliminary research also indicates the time challenges women face in trying to  
424 juggle home life and professional commitments, which was viewed as a barrier to progressing  
425 towards higher leadership positions or securing S&C employment (Thomas et al., 2021).  
426 However, out of the studies reviewed, Laskowski & Ebben (2016, p. 3487) specifically  
427 identified that the long days required as an S&C “makes it very hard to start a family and  
428 maintain family life” and that having to take time off to start a family might negatively affect  
429 women SCC’s job role. One of the SCCs interviewed by Massey & Vincent (2013) had recently  
430 been divorced and noted that:

431       Being a single parent with sole responsibility for the home makes the long hours I work  
432       problematic at times. Not working a normal 8–5 schedule and having to be at work  
433       early to conduct training makes me have to be flexible as it relates to my children. (p.  
434       2004)

435 *It is important to acknowledge that family responsibilities can also affect men’s careers.*  
436 *However, in heteronormative relationships it is women who often shoulder most of the*  
437 *domestic roles due to the traditional gender ideology, which attributes woman most of the*  
438 *responsibility for parenting, leading to difficulties managing their roles of working and*  
439 *motherhood, and an extensive sense of guilt when away from home (Bruening et al., 2016).*  
440 Consequently, Sartore-Baldwin (2013) recommends that future studies concerning women in  
441 *SCCs* should explore the concept of work-family conflict further.

442

443 **Organisation level**

444 Three studies included in our review support the notion that those responsible for hiring SCCs  
445 (mostly men) are likely to select their own gender in the process known as  
446 homologous reproduction (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016; Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Thomas et  
447 al., 2021). The presence of homologous reproduction within sports coaching ensures that  
448 those in power maintain their influence by allowing only those who have similar social and  
449 physical characteristics to gain access to positions of power (Darvin & Lubke, 2021). Driven by  
450 homologous reproduction, women SCCs reported the following reasons for not being selected  
451 for S&C jobs: 1) the club was afraid women would be a “distraction in a male environment”  
452 and 2) the club was concerned about the risk of women having relationships with the other  
453 male staff and players (Thomas et al., 2021: p.6). Many of the women SCCs also highlighted  
454 the oppressive impact that these discriminatory practices had upon the organisational culture  
455 and climate of their club. For example, SCCs in Laskowski and Ebben’s (2016, p. 3488) study  
456 noted: “the head football coach largely determines the head strength and conditioning coach,  
457 so the chance of it being a woman is unlikely”. Another participant stated that there was  
458 “limited opportunity to progress beyond an assistant position” (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016, p.  
459 3488).

460 Within academic literature this has been referred to as the ‘glass ceiling’ which represents an  
461 invisible barrier that often prevents women from progressing through the ranks within an  
462 organisation, often based on sexism or racism (Babic & Hansez, 2021). All six women SCCs in  
463 Massey and Vincent’s (2013) study reported the existence of such glass ceiling preventing  
464 them from reaching upper echelon jobs within the industry.

465 Despite the presence of homologous reproduction and the glass ceiling, one SCC from  
466 Massey and Vincent (2013, pp. 2009-2010) acknowledged the benefits of being a woman: “it

467 was easier for a woman to get into the profession and stay in the profession than it was for a  
468 man” and was “particularly difficult for white males to break into the profession as many  
469 colleges and universities are looking for more blacks (sic) and minorities to work with their  
470 athletes”. While this observation may be construed as a sign of an emerging trend, it is worth  
471 noting again that women hold fewer than 16% of all the S&C positions in NCAA Division 1 with  
472 the majority being held by white males (64.7%) (Lapchick et al., 2021). Furthermore, we argue  
473 that the view expressed by that participant regarding the advantage of being a (white) woman  
474 does not appear to reflect the complexity of working in, or trying to attain, SCCs positions for  
475 most women. It should be recognised that the women from Massey & Vincent’s (2013) study  
476 expressed a white woman's vantage point which has the tendency to neglect the intersecting  
477 struggles people experience from other ethnic and/or 'racial' backgrounds. As such, this view  
478 may lead us to a somewhat misleading conclusion “that the furniture merely needs a polish  
479 rather than the whole house being a perilous place” (Phipps & McDonnell, 2021, p.8).

480 The studies reviewed attributed increased job opportunity for women to fulfilling quotas to  
481 help achieve more diversity within S&C staff to better reflect the athletic populations they  
482 serve. Women SCCs from Laskowski & Ebben’s (2016, p. 3488) study highlighted increased  
483 job opportunities due to growing gender equity. A participant expressed: “I fill department  
484 quotas, so that provides some job security” with another commenting that “gender can hold  
485 you back from promotions, [but] it can get your foot in the door”. Despite being one of the  
486 most common solutions to increasing gender diversity, these remarks demonstrate the  
487 double-edged nature of quotas, whereby quotas help to increase the presence of women in  
488 sport, but potentially undermine the principle of obtaining the position based on merit  
489 (Adriaanse & Schofield, 2014). As women SCCs are a minority group, these quotations reflect

490 the omnipresence of tokenism. Participants were aware of this at the organizational level and  
491 realised that being a women can initially help them to enter the industry however career  
492 progression will likely stall (Laskowski & Ebben, 2016; Massey & Vincent 2013) as “a female  
493 can only go so high” in SCC (Sartore-Baldwin, 2013, p. 836). Contrary to such findings,  
494 participants in Thomas et al. (2021) storied their personal, gender-related challenges to  
495 secure jobs and how they managed that in a male dominant environment. One of their  
496 participants noted that shortening her name on job applications so the name appeared  
497 gender-neutral was a successful strategy resulting in more responses and job interviews from  
498 different organisations. The inconsistency in findings from the studies reviewed supports the  
499 need for further research.

500

### 501 **Societal level**

502 As indicated by the statistics presented at the outset of this article, women continue to occupy  
503 considerably less S&C positions than men. The few that do hold these positions are reminded  
504 that they are guests in the white, male-dominated, **able-bodied, heteronormative** world of  
505 S&C. This is because the prevailing ideology still defines many sports as a heteronormative  
506 male domain where practices associated with heterosexual masculinities, traditions and  
507 ideals are celebrated. Therefore, masculine models of SCC leadership triumph and set the  
508 standards by which women SCC's are measured. That is, to be viewed as a successful SCC  
509 means that, to a certain extent, women must understand the **gendered cultural landscape**  
510 surrounding them and their precarious positions within. Therefore, how women SCCs (are  
511 expected to) act and behave is a result of dominant norms of gender, sexuality, and, arguably,  
512 “race”. To thrive or merely survive in such social settings, women coaches must embrace  
513 values that are often not in line with their own. Furthermore, **women SCCs** often find



514 themselves in a double bind because of the conflict between societal gender assumptions and  
515 the qualities expected in leaders. In this regard, Eagly (2007, p. 7) notes:

516         They [women] often experience disapproval for their more masculine behaviors, such  
517         as asserting clear-cut authority over others, as well as for their more feminine  
518         behaviors, such as being especially supportive of others.

519 This finding was consistent with the other studies reviewed. Women SCCs in Laskowski and  
520 Ebben's (2016, p. 3488) study highlighted that: "If I use abrasive language..." and "if females  
521 are hard on people, they are considered bitchy instead of having high standards". This  
522 demonstrates the double bind women SCCs encounter, further supporting the notion that  
523 using the "masters' tools cannot dismantle the master's house" (Phipps & McDonnell, 2021,  
524 p.13).

525 One of the roles of an SCC is to enhance performance of their athletes through various  
526 combinations of strength, power, and speed training. A consequence of this type of training  
527 is the adaptation of the body to tolerate the demands associated with a specific sport. This  
528 has resulted in cultural biases towards certain corporeal archetypes in SCC. In other words, a  
529 muscular physique in S&C is often privileged as it is socially perceived to indicate training  
530 expertise (Lord and Kavaliauskas, 2022). SCCs in possession of such physique are likely to be  
531 hired based solely on their corporeal appearance (Edmonds, 2018). As muscles symbolize  
532 strength and power which are collectively associated with masculine traits (Roth and Knapp,  
533 2017), men's bodies that epitomize hegemonic masculinity and match the cultural ideal (i.e.,  
534 lean and muscular) have the physical capital highly valued in the field of S&C (Edmonds, 2018).

535

536 Using the language of theatre, Goffman (1959) explained individual social action as form of  
537 performance and viewed society as a 'stage on which individuals perform behaviours deemed  
538 suitable and appropriate by the expectations of the setting – 'front stage'. On the other hand,  
539 when individuals are alone in private areas – 'backstage' – they are preparing for their  
540 performances by engaging in 'face work' or 'impression management' – the conscious act of  
541 maintaining the credibility of one's role. According to gender stereotypes, women have  
542 traditionally been viewed as inferior to men in all aspects of sport (Norman, 2021), including  
543 SCC coaching (Thomas et al. 2021). As such women entering S&C transgress gender norms  
544 due to the masculine association with the profession (Lord and Kavaliauskas, 2022; Medlin-  
545 Silver et al., 2017). Consequently, the findings of the review reveal that participants were  
546 aware of the importance of presenting the "right (masculine) front" to athletes and coaches  
547 they worked with (Medlin-Silver et al., 2017; Sartore-Baldwin, 2013; Thomas et al. 2021). Such  
548 fronts include displaying authority, adopting, and using masculine traits and expressing  
549 themselves in a confident manner so that both coaches and athletes believe their skills and  
550 expertise. In relation to sports coaches, Jones et al. (2010) acknowledge such behaviour is not  
551 motivated by cynicism, but often from a fear that their audience would question not just their  
552 ability to perform but their right to perform. To explore the full utility of Goffman's work in  
553 relation to understanding and interpreting women SCCs behaviour is beyond the scope of this  
554 paper, but it is pertinent to note that future research exploring the subculture of women SCC  
555 would benefit from deploying Goffman's concept of impression management to help  
556 understand and explain social interactions involved in the profession (Lord and Kavaliauskas,  
557 2022).

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## Recommendations

This article has critically reviewed existing research pertaining to the perception and experiences of women SCCs. The conclusion that we have derived from the existing literature indicates that despite an increased demand for SCCs, women remain largely underrepresented in the field. The papers reviewed reveal the presence of an extensively gendered system which privileges men and functions to keep male domination firmly in place. It is, therefore, clear that career entry and trajectory for women in S&C has been curbed by historically entrenched gender order spanning across organizational practices. Academic work reviewed here demonstrated that male hegemony had been expressed through the excessive scrutinizing and limiting of women SCCs across the sector. Based on the findings, we propose two recommendations to advance research and S&C's gender dynamics.

### 1. Theoretical frameworks

Given the existing literature's treatment of women as a homogeneous social group, future research focused on women SCCs should explore intersecting socio-cultural identities to unfold the complexities of systemic marginalization and related experiences. Thus far, SCC research has not utilised intersectionality as an underpinning conceptual framework (Lord and Kavaliauskas, 2022), despite the growing recognition of complex issues around gender, "race", disability, and sexuality in sport, physical activity (Molnár and Bullingham, 2022) and sport coaching (LaVoi et al. 2019). Accordingly, the EIM, as outlined by LaVoi (2016), is an effective way to systematically "peel away" and explore the multiple experiences of women participating in S&C in various capacities. Adopting an EIM-informed approach will help move

582 away from viewing women (and men) as a monolithic social group with similar socio-cultural  
583 experiences.

584 By being sensitive to both micro and macro levels of social interactions, EIM offers a reality-  
585 congruent framework for studying women SCCs, which can be complemented by other social  
586 theories to help explain the cultural subtleties of SCC. One such conceptual addition can be  
587 Erving Goffman's (1959;1983) work on self- and social identity management. Specifically, the  
588 concept of dramaturgy might be particularly useful as it explains why and how individuals  
589 perform various social roles or identities. Goffman observed that, in their day-to-day  
590 interactions with others, individuals present themselves in ways what they perceive to be  
591 appropriate at the given time and place – like an actor acting out their role to an audience.  
592 The process of establishing and presenting of the self is based on culturally prescribed  
593 patterns (Goffman, 1959). Successful self-presentation requires competent performances by  
594 a competent performer to prove to an audience that they are 'acting out' their role in an  
595 authentic manner. This performance is also connected to the concept of impression  
596 management where individuals display an idealised version of themselves to manage public  
597 expectations. For example, SCCs often provide an impression of confidence and train their  
598 body to produce a mesomorphic facade based on what they think an SCC should look and  
599 behave, i.e., what they perceive the social expectations are associated with this role. While  
600 arguably an easily applicable and relatable conceptual framework, Goffman's theoretical  
601 insight is only one way to sociologically contextualise SCC. Lord and Kavaliauskas (2022) have  
602 proposed a range of social theories that might be relevant to interpreting people's  
603 experiences in S&C research.

604

## 605 **2. Policy Development**

606 How sport organizations ideologically frame the issue of underrepresentation of women in  
607 S&C, and what they then understand to be the core of the “problem” of a lack of  
608 representation remains pertinent to producing a more diverse profession (O’Malley &  
609 Greenwood 2018; Norman, 2020). Creating diverse organizational cultures is essential for the  
610 advancement of women in S&C. This will involve substantial changes to traditional  
611 organizational practices. While it is vital that more S&C focused research is carried out, it is  
612 equally important that the findings of academic research is heeded by policy makers and  
613 informs policy development to initiate a meaningful, long-term change to remedy gender  
614 inequalities. An initial step would be to have greater representation of women in policy  
615 making decisions to enrich the experiences for everyone (Bhatt, 2017). Furthermore, Krahn  
616 (2019) informs us that the lack of consistency between research and policy has contributed  
617 to a situation where the underrepresentation of women in sport coaching has been framed  
618 as a women’s issue rather than a systemic one. Marsh (2014) acknowledged that women most  
619 likely continue to struggle working as SCCs, particularly with male athletes in traditional male  
620 sports, until significant changes begin to take place at the structural level. Therefore, a  
621 meaningful way to initiate a systemic change across the sector is through actively connecting  
622 existing and future research and national governing bodies to making the industry more  
623 diverse and equitable (LaVoi et al. 2019).

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| Table 1 Overview of Reviewed Studies |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Author (year)                        | Study Design                                                                                                          | Purpose                                                                                                              | Data collection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Participants                                                                                                                                                 | Key findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Theoretical Framework                                               |
| Magnusen & Rhea (2009)               | A quantitative survey research design                                                                                 | To examine male and female Division I team sport athletes gender preference towards their S&C coach                  | A modified version of the Attitudes of Athletes toward Male versus Female Coaches Questionnaire (AAMFC-Q) was completed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 201 female and 275 male NCAA Division 1 athletes. made up the study sample.                                                                                  | Male athletes (all football players) were less comfortable with a female S&C coach in all regards and preferred to have a male S&C coach. Female athletes did not have a gender preference, nor did they have any negative attitudes toward a strength coach.                                                                                | None stated                                                         |
| Shuman & Appleby (2016)              | Qualitative approach                                                                                                  | To examine male and female Division I athletes gender preference towards their S&C coach                             | Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 NCAA DI junior or senior class student-athletes who had been exposed to and coached by both a male and a female SCC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 10 NCAA DI junior or senior class student-athletes who had been exposed to and coached by both a male and a female SCC                                       | None of the participants said that gender affected their relationship with their S&C Coach.<br><br>When asked if the gender of the S&C coach impacted their preference, 2 female participants said yes, one preferred a female the other a male. Personality rather than gender was seen as more influential on preference.                  | None stated                                                         |
| Sartore-Baldwin (2013)               | Consisted of 2 parts. Part 1: was a Quantitative online survey. Part 2 was Follow-up telephone interview<br><br>Mixed | To investigate the professional experiences and work-related outcomes of male and female NCAA Division I S&C coaches | Part 1 consisted of 4 sections:<br>a. Perceptions of organizational support (POS) (Eisenberger et al. 1986)<br>b. Job satisfaction (Cammann et al., 1983)<br>c. Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al. 1985)<br>d. Organization Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday et al., 1979)<br><br>Part 2 involved a semi-structured telephone interview with a sub sample of the participants (17 participants). The participants were asked a series of questions pertaining to their work duties and experiences, and asked to discuss gender within S&C. | Part 1:<br>125 NCAA Division 1 S&C coaches completed the survey (17% were female).<br><br>Part 2:<br>9 male and 8 female S&C coaches completed the interview | In relation to Gender 3 themes emerged from the qualitative analysis as follows: (1) increased presence of women within the field, (2) knowledge and ability, and (3) mentorship<br><br>Female S&C coaches expressed having no room to move up in the field. Despite this, mentorship was identified as a key success of female S&C coaches. | Social Exchange Theory and Organization Support<br><br>Social Ident |

|                          |                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                         |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Massey & Vincent (2013)  | Mixed                                             | To ascertain from females working as S&C coaches what it is like for them to work in the field of S&C focusing on what they think about themselves and their situations.                                                                                                                                                                               | Questionnaire followed up by a semi-structured interview. Each of the semi-structured interviews were recorded and lasted approximately 2–2½ hours. | 6 female S&C coaches from major college athletic programs within the NCAA competing within the Football Bowl Subdivision. | All participants reported high or very high job satisfaction, along with the existence of a “glass ceiling” impeding women in their progress to the top S&C jobs. 5 of the 6 coaches were happy with their relationships with fellow strength coaches, most of whom were males. Two participants felt that they had to prove themselves and work harder for acceptance because of working in a male dominated profession. Another stated that it was crucial a female not to behave in a “frivolous” and “provocative” fashion. The importance of proper dress and demeanour and of not sending out “the wrong signals to the athletes or coaches at your institution” was underlined by another participant (p.2006). | Viewing occupational life from the perspective the person the situation |
| Laskowski & Ebben (2016) | A qualitative e-mail-based survey research design | To examine the careers of women collegiate S&C coaches, including specifics of the universities and athletic departments they work for, responsibilities and demands of their jobs, compensation and benefits, preparation and qualifications, likes and dislikes about their work, and the role that gender plays in their experience as a S&C coach. | The survey was divided into 5 sections, including university profile, position profile, personal profile, job satisfaction, and comments.           | 43 NCAA affiliated Division I Female S&C coaches.                                                                         | Coaches identified a variety of advantages and disadvantages associated with S&C. Gender advantages, included; Increased job opportunities because of gender equity needs, Ability to connect with women athletes and department desires to handle specific issues. Gender disadvantages, included: Glass ceiling, Lack of respect, Not allowed to work with men’s teams, forced to prove oneself, pay inequity, Undervalued, and Subject to sexism.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | None stated                                                             |

|                             |                                  |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Medlin-Silver et al. (2017) | A qualitative research design    |                                                                                                                           | Semi-structured interviews. The interviews were subjected to content analysis in order to establish emerging themes.                                      | 8 White-British females, aged between 19-26. All participants had completed a UK university S&C degree course. The females were either engaged in academic study or working as an S&C coach as an intern or in a paid position. | 3 themes emerged from the qualitative analysis as follows: (1) Negotiation of Normalized Cultural Codes, (2) Banter and (3) Channels of Reproduction and Resistance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Hegemonic masculinity                           |
| Thomas et al. (2021)        | Constructivist research paradigm | Exploration into how female S&C coaches live through and negotiate the social dynamics of a male dominated sport setting. | Semi-structured interviews took place. Follow-up interviews with 4 participants, specifically focusing on the presence of humour in S&C were carried out. | Fifteen accredited female S&C coaches (Mean age = 30.9; SD = 6.0). All participant had a minimum of 2 years' experience of coaching men and women                                                                               | 3 themes emerged from the qualitative analysis as follows: (1) organisational politics, (2) impression management, and (3) humour. In summary Women S&C coaches are often in subservient positions and have to adopt some of the traditional, male-generated sub-cultural practices to fit in. Women S&C coaches carefully manage their coaching front stage to generate an impression that is expected and accepted in the given milieu. | Hegemonic masculinity and impression management |