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Minority report: Experiences of female high-school head coaches

in a large, South-eastern school district

Problem

underrepresentation of women
at all levels of coaching

(LaVoi & Dutove, 2012)

lack of research (high-school)

Purpose

explore the experiences of female
high school head coaches

Framework

ecological model of barriers and
supports for female coaches

(LaVoi & Dutove, 2012)

Methods

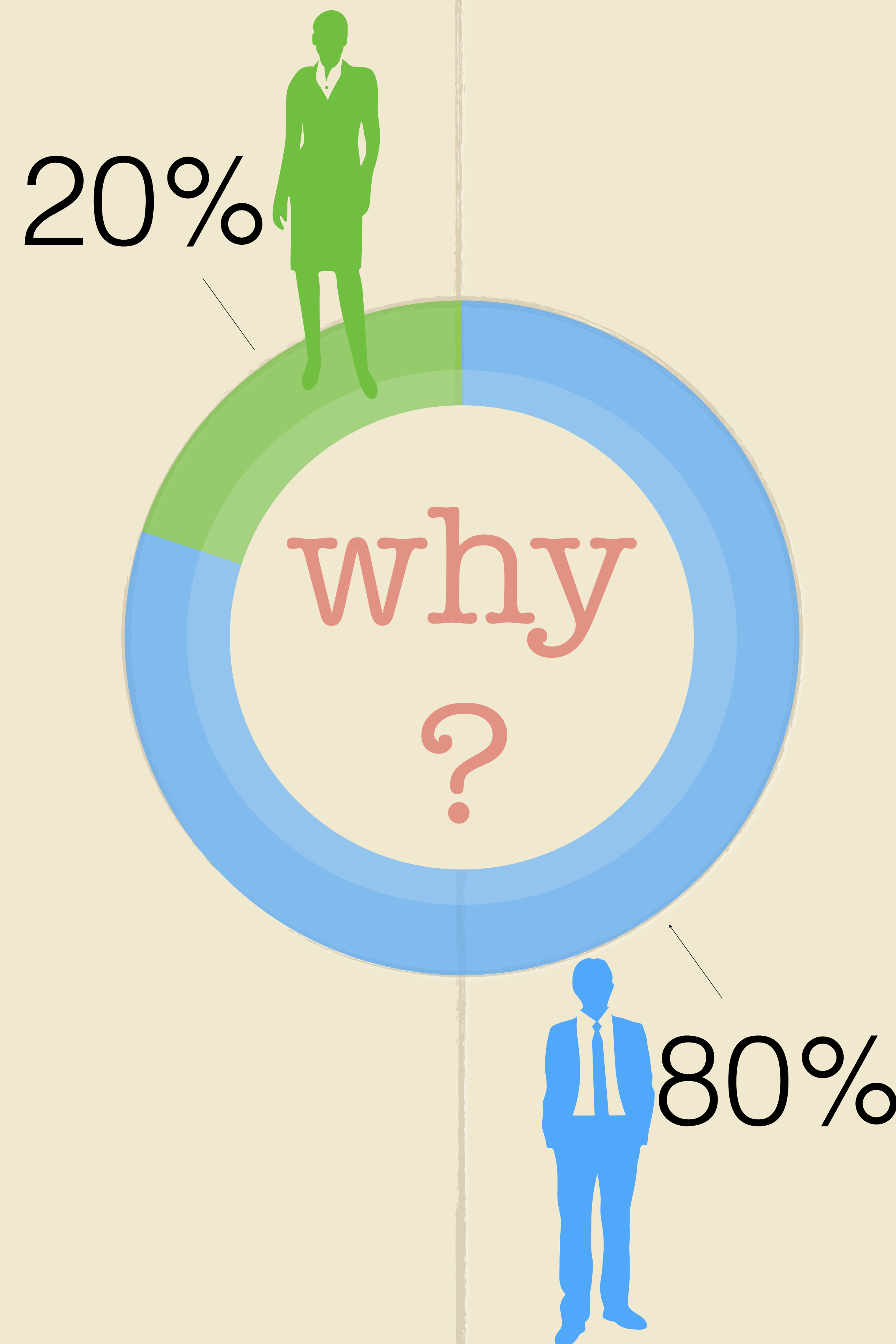
three in-depth, semi-structured
interviews (60-75 min.)

audio-recorded, transcribed

analyzed for common themes
and outliers

Participants

2 teachers, 1 pastor;
all married (one with child);
10+ years coaching experience



Having to prove yourself

“[parents challenged] my authority over the team, questioning every tiny incident that happened, ... it was because I was who I am.... I was a girl and they didn’t think I was handling it right.”

(Victoria)

Feeling isolated

“there is a tight-knit of male coaches ... as a female coach I will never be part of that. And because you’re not part of that you lose some respect, you lose power, ... no matter what I do, it doesn’t matter how good a coaching job I do, how many wins I have, I will never be part of the group.”

(Amy)

Fighting gender norms

“if you go by traditional gender roles, and mom is expected to take care of the kids, it’s a big commitment to try and coach a team and take care of your own kids, especially if they’re young.”

(Lucy)

Conclusions

confirms LaVoi and Dutove’s
(2012) findings for coaches at
other levels (e.g., gender
norms, isolation, lack of
support)

Recommendations (from participants)

Don’t be intimidated
Stand your ground; don’t back down
Establish support networks with
female coaches
Build supportive relationships