



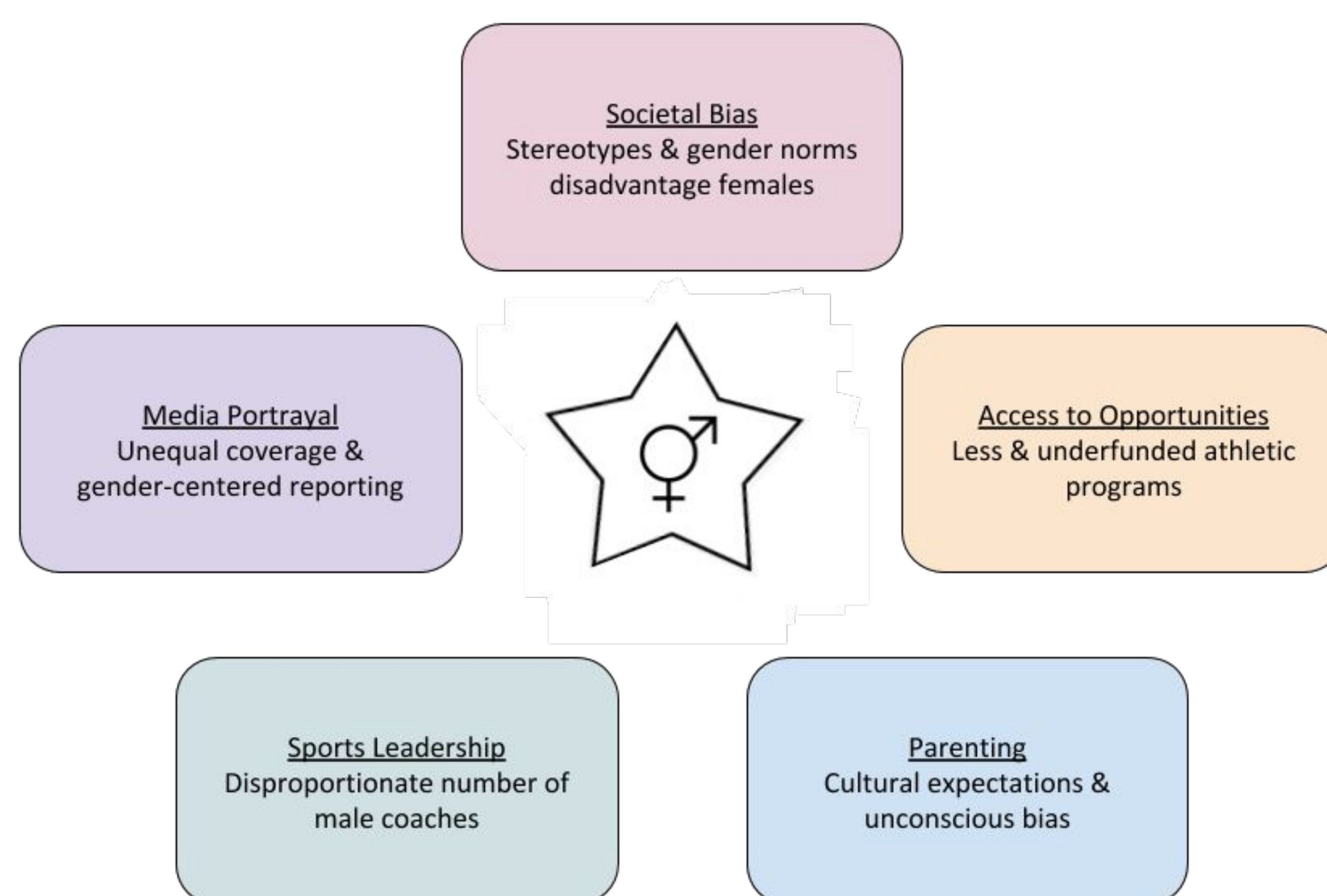
Youth Participation in Athletics

Neive Wellington | Palo Alto High School

Introduction

Even since the passing of Title IX, females still have significantly lower athletic participation rates than that of males. In general, girls start sports later, stop sports earlier, and play sports less overall (Zarrett, N., Cooky, C., & Veliz, P., 2019). Furthermore, despite the fact that there should be an equal balance of males and females in coaching roles, women coach less than 23% of all NCAA sports teams (Sabo, D., Veliz, P., & Staurowsky, E. J., 2016). This disparity has negatively affected girls because female coaches serve as leaders and role models for participation in athletics. In addition to the disproportionate number of male coaches, there are several other factors that contribute to the gender participation gap in athletics, as shown in the following graphic:

Causes of the Gender Gap in Athletics



★ Research Question:

Research Methodologies

This research employs a hybrid of correlational research and case study research. The population being studied is current and former athletes in Palo Alto, and the sample is current students at Palo Alto High School ages 15-18. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected from this sample through a survey to determine the main reasons girls stop playing sports, if these reasons differ by gender, and if having a female coach is correlated to higher athletic participation rates for girls.

Data & Results

	Boys (n = 32)	Girls (n = 67)
Total Number of Seasons	12.79	11.48
Still Participating	81.25%	67.16%
2+ Sports	62.50%	59.70%
3+ Sports	31.25%	23.88%
4+ Sports	9.38%	8.96%
Starting Age	7	7.94
Stopping Age	15	15.55
Reasons for Starting	• Have fun (18.73%)	• Have fun (18.39%)
	• Get exercise (15.90%)	• Get exercise (16.32%)
	• Learn new athletic skills (12.72%)	• Learn new athletic skills (14.07%)
	• Try something new (11.31%)	• Try something new (11.82%)
	• Compete in a structured environment (10.95%)	• Meet new people (11.26%)
	• Spend time with friends (9.89%)	• Spend time with friends (11.07%)
	• Parents signed me up (9.19%)	• Parents signed me up (8.44%)
	• Meet new people (8.83%)	• Compete in a structured environment (7.5%)
	• Don't remember (1.77%)	• Other (0.75%)
	• Other (0.71%)	• Don't remember (0.38%)
• Prefer not to say (0%)	• Prefer not to say (0%)	
Reasons for Stopping	• Didn't enjoy it (29.27%)	• Not enough time (28.19%)
	• Too competitive (17.07%)	• Didn't enjoy it (18.79%)
	• Other (17.07%)	• Too competitive (12.08%)
	• Didn't like coach (12.2%)	• Too many injuries (12.2%)
	• Too many injuries (12.2%)	• Didn't like coach (9.4%)
	• Didn't like teammates (7.32%)	• Didn't like teammates (8.72%)
	• Couldn't find a team (4.88%)	• Other (5.37%)
	• Too expensive (0%)	• Too expensive (4.70%)
	• Parents made me stop (0%)	• Too many injuries (4.70%)
	• Don't remember (0%)	• Couldn't find a team (2.68%)
• Prefer not to say (0%)	• Don't remember (2.68%)	
	• Parents made me stop (2.01%)	
	• Prefer not to say (0.67%)	

Total Male Coaches	87.72%	59.92%
Total Female Coaches	12.28%	41.50%
Prefer Male Coach	15.63%	4.48%
Prefer Female Coach	0%	11.94%
Strongly Prefer Male Coach	6.25%	0%
Strongly Prefer Female Coach	0%	2.99%
No Preference	78.13%	80.60%

Conclusions & Analysis

Implications & Next Steps

Sources Cited

Sabo, D., Veliz, P., & Staurowsky, E. J. (2016). Beyond X's and O's: Gender bias and coaches of women's college sports. [PDF] Retrieved from: <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/beyond-xs-osfinal-for-web.pdf>

Zarrett, N., Cooky, C., & Veliz, P. (2019). Coaching through a gender lens: Maximizing girls' play and potential. [PDF] Retrieved from: <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/coaching-through-a-gender-lens-report-web.pdf>

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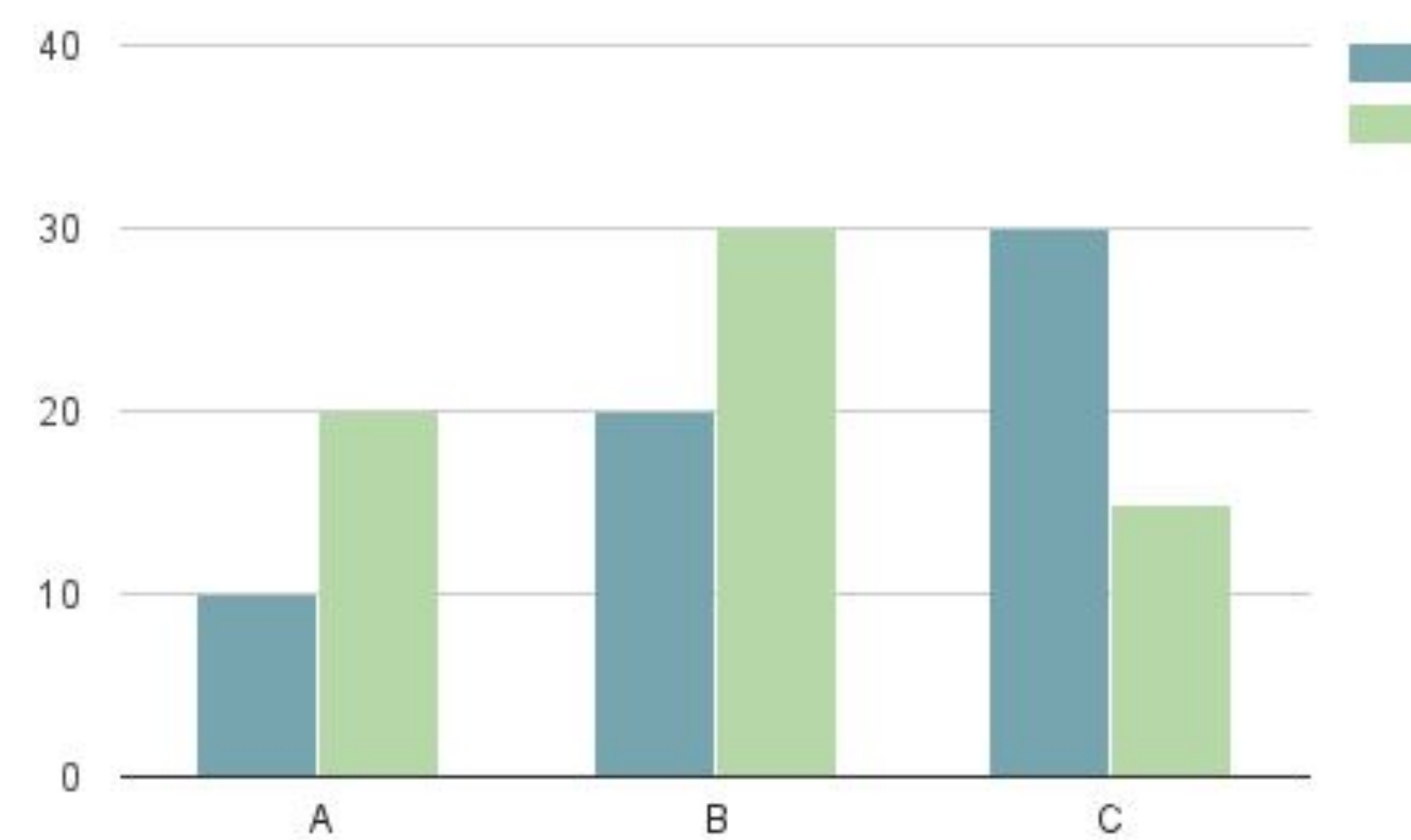
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