

A Personal Narrative: An Autoethnographic Study of the Coach's Voice on Student-Athlete Identities and Behaviors Towards Civic Engagement and Social Activism

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Abstract

“This study supports a reflexive autoethnographic and critical discourse analysis-based inquiry into how the coach’s voice can create a culture that influences identities and behaviors related to civic engagement or social activism. I present myself as a researcher and participant intending to study the effect of my voice through the experiences of my athletes. I use the theoretical framework of identity theory as an interpretive lens and plan to use student-athlete experiences to uncover how my coaching voice assists in constructing a world of knowledge that student-athletes can use to engage civically. The proposed data collection method will be a triangulation of personal reflections, field journaling, and convenience sampling in which a target group of student-athletes will participate in semi-structured individual interviews to solicit personal subjective experiences, followed by a round of focus groups to locate collective narratives. This study provides implications for student-athlete activism and civic engagement and how athletics can serve as a pedagogical space for acquiring and transferring critical social behaviors catalyzed by identity development. It can also provide insight into how coaches can create communicative awareness and impact when building athlete relationships with democratic undertones. Finally, the reception of this study is intended to garner reciprocity from the audience in the form of continued conversations regarding the relationship between reflexive coaching communication and student-athlete development.

Keywords: coach-athlete relationship, civic engagement, social activism, coach’s voice, student-athlete activism, identity.”