

Employment Characteristics, Educational Histories, and Pedagogical Training of Educators in CAATE-Accredited Athletic Training Education Programs

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Context: With the rapid expansion of ATEPs in the last decade, the demand for doctoral-trained athletic training educators has increased exponentially. As more athletic training educators enter higher education, it is important to fully understand how well prepared these educators are for life in academe.

Objective: To describe employment characteristics, educational histories, and pedagogical training of athletic training educators.

Design: Descriptive study.

Setting: Entry-level undergraduate and graduate ATEPs

Patients or Other Participants: The Demographic and Educational History Questionnaire (DEHQ) was distributed to 338 program directors (PDs) of CAATE accredited ATEPs. Twenty-four potential respondents were eliminated from the study due to incomplete responses. Thirty percent of PDs (n=102) completed the survey in its entirety. PDs were also asked to forward the DEHQ to other educators in their respective ATEPs, which resulted in the inclusion of 72 additional individuals, for a total of 174 participants.

Main Outcome Measures: Questionnaire items were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results: Participants included 92 men (53%) and 82 women (47%). Sixty-seven percent held the rank of assistant professor or instructor, and forty-six percent held a doctorate. A total of 22 different undergraduate majors, 18 minors, 16 graduate content areas, and 24 postgraduate areas of study were reported. On average, athletic training educators completed 8 collegiate courses and attended 8 professional workshops based on improving pedagogical practices throughout their career.

Conclusions: Contemporary athletic training education is now fully integrated into higher education, with junior faculty members leading the way. Athletic training educators in this study predominantly held the assistant professor rank, possessed degrees across a variety of disciplines, and had completed some form of pedagogical training.

Key Words: pedagogy, higher education, graduate athletic training education

With the number of athletic training education programs (ATEPs) growing from 82 in 1999¹ to 359 in 2008,² the demand for additional athletic training educators in full-time academic settings has increased dramatically. Historically, the terminal degree for athletic training program directors had been at the master's level. However, the rigorous accreditation process for ATEPs, the need for higher education policy reform in athletic training education, and the emphasis on research in athletic training have also led to an increased need for doctoral-educated certified athletic trainers.³ Therefore, it is not surprising to see newly minted terminal-degree athletic trainers entering the academic ranks, not only as junior faculty, but also as program administrators.^{4,5} However, questions have been raised as to whether junior faculty members possess the necessary skills and experience to successfully direct an ATEP while balancing the demands of academe, including teaching, service, and scholarship.^{4,8}

Although the market for athletic training educators is growing, some are employed without adequate professional preparation.⁹ It is not uncommon to find educators in their respective positions because they are deemed to be content experts. Recent discussion in the athletic training and other health care professions questions whether being a content expert is sufficient,¹⁰⁻¹⁴ with Hertel et al³ identifying the need to "train the next generation of athletic training educators."^{9(p55)} Data from this study suggests that doctoral-educated athletic trainers should have sufficient practice and training in pedagogy.

Few studies describe the educational histories of athletic training educators. Hertel et al³ studied the educational history and employment characteristics of athletic trainers, but included only those educated at the doctoral level. The Commission on the Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) recently reported that only 47% of athletic training education program directors hold terminal degrees.¹⁵ Therefore, the Hertel et al study³ does not provide a complete picture of all athletic training educators. A more inclusive sample would provide a better understanding of contemporary athletic training education. Leone, Judd and Colandreo⁹ recently described qualities of ATEP program directors and discussed their professional preparation; however, they did not

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specifically describe the educational histories (areas of study, exposure to pedagogy) of the program directors. Therefore, the purpose of this study was three-fold: to describe the employment characteristics of athletic training educators, to descriptively depict the educational histories of athletic training educators, and to describe the pedagogical training of athletic training educators.

Methods

Survey Population and Responses

Entry-level accredited undergraduate and graduate athletic training programs were identified through the Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)¹⁶ and National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Education Council website.¹⁷ At the time of this study (March 2006), ATEPs were still accredited by CAAHEP, which was subsequently replaced by CAATE, and is reflected as such in this manuscript.

The survey was distributed to 338 program directors of CAATE accredited undergraduate and graduate ATEPs via an e-mail message that contained the link to an internet-based version of the Demographic and Educational History Questionnaire (DEHQ) questionnaire. A total of three invitations were sent to participants to enhance response rates.¹⁸ At the same time, a message was posted on the athletic training educator's listserv to recruit additional participants. Of 338 program directors nationwide, 24 provided incomplete responses and were excluded from the study, and 102 completed the survey in its entirety (30%). An additional 72 individuals completed the questionnaire for a total of 174 participants.

Instrument and Procedures

The study underwent Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and was approved. Participants completed the DEHQ which was developed by the researcher to outline educational experiences and current employment, and used internet-based survey collection software (Appendix A). Information collected on this form was similar to that collected in the Hertel et al³ study which examined educational histories of doctoral-educated athletic trainers. Educational history was measured by collecting information on the following variables: Major/Minor in undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate degree, number of years of teaching experience, number of courses taken in education/pedagogy, and number of professional workshops or educational sessions attended that focused on pedagogical practices, improving teaching practices, or other pedagogical issues. Participants were also asked to report information on age, sex, race, current job title, academic rank, number of years certified as an athletic trainer, number of years of teaching experience, department or college and type of institution of which they are currently employed. Once the DEHQ was developed, a panel of 11 Certified Athletic Trainers reviewed the questionnaire to establish face and content validity,¹⁹ and to provide feedback regarding readability, clarity, and completion time. Once the feedback was analyzed, minor adjustments were made, and the DEHQ was prepared for full distribution.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics on age, sex, race, current job title, academic rank, number of years certified as an athletic trainer, number of years teaching experience, department, college, and type of institution of which the educators are employed were obtained from the DEHQ and analyzed using SAS, 9.1, a statistical software package.²⁰ Mean, standard deviation, skewness (sk), and kurtosis (ku) were reported for continuous variables, whereas frequencies and percentages were used to summarize discrete data.

Results

Demographic Data

Age and Sex

The 174 participants ranged in age from 25 to 56 years old (mean = 37.2 ± 7.6), with normal distribution (sk = 0.51, ku = -0.54) and no outliers. Approximately 47% of the respondents were female (n=82) and 53% were male (n=92).

Race/Ethnicity

One hundred seventy of the respondents identified themselves as White (98%), two as Hispanic (1%), one as Asian (0.5%), one as "Other" (0.5%), and none as Black.

Current Job Title

Participants were also asked to identify their current job title. In order to provide clarity, a classification system from which participants selected their current position was used. Responses were placed into categories based on the job titles used for the NATA News Salary Survey.²¹ While the majority of participants were program directors (59%), other job titles included: department chair and program director, program director and head athletic trainer, clinical coordinator, and/or assistant athletic trainer (Table 1). It is important to note that only

Table 1. Job Titles Reported by Athletic Training Educators

Job Title	n (%) [*]
Department Chair	10 (6)
Program Director/Coordinator	102 (59)
Clinical Coordinator/Director/Specialist	5 (14)
Head Athletic Trainer	8 (4)
Assistant/Associate Athletic Trainer	21 (12)
AT Faculty (Assistant/Associate Professor)	10 (6)
AT Faculty (Full Professor)	2 (1)
Director/Coordinator-Sports Medicine	1 (0.5)
Physical Therapist/Athletic Trainer	1 (0.5)
Instructor	2 (1)
Graduate Research/Laboratory Assistant	2 (1)
Athletic Trainer	3 (2)

^{*}Percentages do not sum to 100% because respondents may fit into more than one category

three program directors held dual job titles, and in those cases where participants reported more than one job title (7%), they were included in both categories for statistical purposes.

Academic Rank

While most respondents held the rank of assistant professor (39%), 49 were instructors (28%), 34 associate professors (20%), 8 full professors (4%), five (3%) adjunct instructors, and ten (6%) “others” (ie, visiting professor, lecturer). Of those respondents holding the rank of associate or full professor, 48% held a doctoral degree.

Number of Years as a Certified Athletic Trainer

On average, participants were certified for 13.8±7 years, ranging from 2.5 to 31 years with a normal distribution ($sk=0.63$, $ku=-0.46$) and no outliers present.

Academic Department

Participants were asked to identify the department in which they were currently employed (Figure 1). To aid analysis, the researcher grouped departments that shared common descriptors into a single category. If the department title used more than one descriptor, the author placed it in the category using the first descriptor as described by Burns et al.²² (ie, Department of Exercise Science and Kinesiology was put in the Exercise Science category). As a result, a total of seven categories were used: 1) Athletic training/Sports medicine; 2) Exercise/Sport/Movement science; 3) Kinesiology; 4) Health, physical education, recreation, dance; 5) Health/Rehabilitation sciences, Health and human performance; 6) Allied health (physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.); and 7) Other (education, math, science, nutrition, and educational leadership). The most common departmental designation was Health, physical education, recreation, and dance ($n=43$, 25%).

Academic College

Participants were asked to identify the academic college within the employing institution at which they were currently employed. The researcher categorized responses that were closely related into: 1) Education; 2) Arts and Sciences; 3) Allied health, Health professions, or Health and human services; 4) Other (Business administration, fine arts, applied life studies); and 5) Not applicable (based on the type of institution in which he/she was employed) (Figure 2). The most common of which was the College of Education ($n=62$, 35%), which was closely followed by allied health and health professions ($n=47$, 27%).

Type of Institution

Using the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching²³ classification system, a majority of the respondents were employed at a Baccalaureate College-Liberal Arts institution ($n=53$, 31%), 32 (19%) at a Master's College and University-Type I institution, 25 (14%) at a Doctoral/Research University-Intensive institution, 23 (13%) at a Master's College and University-Type II institution, and 21 (12%) at a Doctoral/Research University-Extensive institution. Eighteen (10%) out of 174 participants were employed at a Baccalaureate College- General

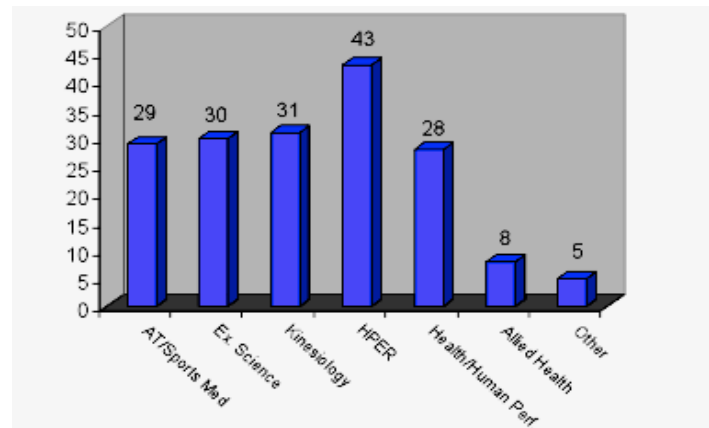


Figure 1. Academic departments in which athletic training educators are employed

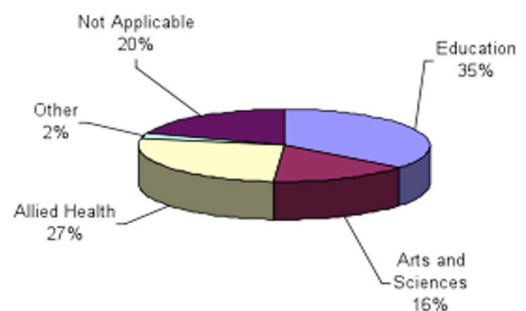


Figure 2. Academic colleges in which athletic training educators are employed

and 2 (1%) participants were employed at a Baccalaureate/Associate's College.

Educational History

Major/Minor in Undergraduate Degree

A majority of the participants obtained a Bachelor of Science degree ($n=35$, 78%), whereas only 35 (20%) participants earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. Four additional participants (2%) reported completing degrees in other fields, such as a Bachelor of Behavioral Sciences or a Bachelor of Education. A total of 189 majors were (0.5) reported for the 174 respondents (Table 2). Most majors were in Physical Education ($n=63$, 33%) or Athletic Training ($n=59$, 31%), with a total of 12 participants reporting a double major, and one quadruple major. A total of 98 minors were also reported, with approximately 47% ($n=81$) of the respondents reporting not having a minor degree. In addition, five participants reported a double minor.

Area of Study Graduate Degree

Master's degree. Participants obtained Master's degrees in content areas similar to their undergraduate content areas (Table 3). Sixty-three percent ($n=111$) of the participants earned a Master's of Science degree, 16.5% a Master's of Arts ($n=29$), and 16.5% a Master's of Education

Table 2. Athletic Training Educator's Areas of Study Completed in Undergraduate Education

Area of Study	Major n (%)	Minor n (%)	Area of Study	Major n (%)	Minor n (%)
Physical Education	63 (33)	5 (3)	Political Science	1 (0.5)	- -
Athletic Training/Sports Medicine	59 (31)	25 (14)	Elementary Education	1 (0.5)	- -
Exercise Science	17 (9)	3 (2)	Sociology	1 (0.5)	- -
Natural Sciences	14 (7)	15 (8)	Journalism	1 (0.5)	- -
Health/Wellness	11 (6)	17 (10)	Recreation	1 (0.5)	-
Kinesiology	5 (3)	- -	Exercise Physiology	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)
Education	3 (1.5)	-	Rehabilitation Science	1 (0.5)	- -
Math	2 (1)	- -	Technical Theater	1 (0.5)	- -
Secondary Education	2 (1)	- -	Biblical Studies	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)
Psychology	1 (0.5)	10 (6)	Special Education	- -	1 (0.5)
English	1 (0.5)	5 (3)	Broadcasting	- -	1 (0.5)
History	- -	4 (2)	Vocal Performance	- -	1 (0.5)
Pre-Physical Therapy/Medicine	1 (0.5)	3 (2)	Child and Youth Care	- -	1 (0.5)
Coaching	1 (0.5)	2 (1)	Spanish	- -	1 (0.5)
Nutrition	- -	2 (1)	No degree	- -	81 (45)

* Percentages do not sum up to 100% because respondents may fit into more than one category

(n=29). Seven participants reported other Master's degrees, including: Master's of Science in Education, Master's of Human Relations, Master's of Public Health, Master's of Business Administration, and Master's of Physical Therapy. One participant was currently in the process of completing a Master's of Science degree and two participants reported having two Master's degrees.

Doctoral degree. At the time of this study, 37% (n=64) of the respondents had not worked on a doctoral degree and 46% (n=81) had completed it. Of those that had completed doctoral work, 27% (n=47) completed a Doctorate of Philosophy, 15% (n=26) a Doctorate in Education, and a further 5% held degrees in other areas (ie, Doctorate of Arts, Doctorate of Health Science, Doctorate of Science, and Doctorate of Health and Safety). Twenty-nine respondents (17%) also reported that they were in the process of completing their doctoral degrees. Of the 102 program directors in this study, 56 (55%) held a terminal degree (PhD, EdD, or DHS), whereas 46 (45%) did not. Table 4 illustrates the areas of study in doctoral work.

Number of Years of Teaching Experience

The number of years of full-time teaching for athletic training educators ranged from 0 to 30 years (mean = 8.16 ± 6.85), with a slightly positively skewed distribution (sk=1.15; ku=0.69) and a few outliers reporting more than 26 years of full-time teaching. Of those who held the rank of full or associate professor, 16 (38%) had been teaching full-time for less than 10 years. For athletic training educators who had taught part-time, the number of years teaching ranged from 0 to 18 years (mean = 2.58 ± 3.3), with a positive skew (sk=1.89) and leptokurtic distribution (ku=4.06). Outliers were also present in this distribution, and represented individuals who had taught part-time for more than 10 years.

Number of Courses Taken in Education/Pedagogy

The average number of courses taken in education ranged from 0 to 70 (mean = 8.13 ± 11.06), with a positively skewed (sk=3.13) and leptokurtic (ku=12.37) distribution. Outliers were present in this distribution, with 11 individuals reporting taking 20 or more courses.

Number of Workshops or Educational Sessions Attended

On average, athletic training educators reported attending 0 to 35 workshops that pertain to educational practices or focused on pedagogy (mean = 8 ± 7.86), with a normal distribution (sk=1.18, ku=0.73). Five outliers also reported attending 30 or more educational conferences.

Discussion

The rapid development of ATEPs over the past several decades has created a growing market for athletic training educators with a variety of degrees in a multitude of content areas. This need to rapidly fill positions calls their professional preparedness into question. What follows is a discussion of employment characteristics, educational history, and pedagogical training of athletic training educators.

Employment Characteristics

Typically, administrative responsibilities or leadership positions are reserved for more senior faculty members,^{5,24} with concerns raised when junior faculty members step into those roles. While accepting an academic position is an exciting time for a young faculty member, it can also be overwhelming trying to prepare for new classes, launch a research agenda, and fulfill service requirements of the institution.^{6,8,25,26} However, for most athletic training educators, that is only one part of their job, as they most likely have administrative responsibilities directing or supporting the ATEP.²⁵ Over half of the participants in this study were directors of athletic training education programs, yet only 24% of the

Table 3. Athletic Training Educator's Areas of Study Completed - Master's Program

Area of Study	n (%)
Athletic Training/Sports Medicine	42 (23)
Physical Education	27 (15)
Exercise Science	23 (12)
Kinesiology	22 (12)
Education	22 (12)
Exercise Physiology	10 (5)
Sports Administration	10 (5)
Biomechanics	6 (3)
Health and Human Performance	6 (3)
Health Care	6 (3)
Psychology	4 (2)
Physical Therapy	3 (2)
Guidance Counseling/Student Development	2 (1)
Nutrition	1 (0.5)
Biology	1 (0.5)
Motor Behavior	1 (0.5)

* Percentages do not sum up to 100% because respondents may fit into more than one category

participants held the rank of associate or full professor, which compares to another study in which only 23% of ATEP faculty held associate or full professor rank.²⁵ These numbers, however, are in contradiction to the Hertel et al study which reported that 58% of respondents were senior faculty.³ The athletic training educators in this study predominantly held lower levels of academic rank (assistant professor, instructor, or adjunct). This is not a surprising finding considering the average full-time teaching experience of all the participants in this study was less than 10 years, the mean age of the participants was 37, and only 46% of the respondents held a terminal degree. Our relatively more inclusive and younger sample may explain the differences in academic rank between this current study and Hertel et al.

The lack of athletic training faculty in higher ranks of academe is a multi-faceted problem facing contemporary athletic training educators. While junior faculty members are capable of balancing the demands of educating future athletic trainers, program administration, and active scholarship, we must ask at what cost? A previous study indicated that individuals who have significant administrative roles may not be able to devote enough time to their research agendas, which may ultimately hinder promotion and tenure.²⁷ This is of particular concern for educators employed at institutions that require scholarship or research for promotion and tenure. According to Perrin, "the appointment of junior faculty to these roles seems a recipe for failure."^{28(p121)} Less than a decade ago, just over 40% of program directors surveyed had received tenure.⁶ As athletic training educators are fully integrated into academe, factors that influence their success and failure in the promotion and tenure process should be explored in more detail. Although these factors may be considerably different based on the type of institution at which the educator is employed, there is a need for the profession to influence policy

Table 4. Athletic Training Educator's Areas of Study Completed- Doctoral Program

Area of Study	n (%)
Curriculum and Instruction	15 (9)
Higher Education	13 (8)
Higher Education Administration	10 (6)
Higher Education Leadership	10 (6)
Exercise Physiology	9 (5)
Athletic Training/Sports Medicine	6 (3)
Health Education	6 (3)
Exercise Science/Biomechanics	6 (3)
Health and Human Performance	5 (3)
Physical Education	5 (3)
Sport/Exercise Psychology	3 (2)
Adult Education/Learning	3 (2)
Health Care/Sports Administration	3 (2)
Physical Therapy	2 (1)
Statistics and Measurement	2 (1)
Interdisciplinary Studies	2 (1)
Kinesiology	2 (1)
Human Development	2 (1)
Health Sciences Leadership	1 (0.5)
Biomechanics	1 (0.5)
Manual Therapy Cervical Spine	1 (0.5)
Rehab Sciences	1 (0.5)
Motor Behavior	1 (0.5)
Library and Information Science	1 (0.5)
None	64 (37)

* Percentages do not sum up to 100% because respondents may fit into more than one category

reform, advance scholarship, and train future athletic training educators.³

In order to enhance athletic training educators' success up the academe ladder, faculty members can ask for release time, find a mentor, and look for collaborative opportunities to conduct research.^{4,5,26} Increasing the number of doctoral-educated athletic training faculty is also essential, because most institutions still consider the doctorate the terminal degree.³ While 63% of athletic training educators in this study either possessed a doctorate or were in the process of obtaining that degree, it has also been suggested that athletic training educators employed full-time in academe might consider non-tenure track positions.^{29,30} Accepting non-tenure track positions, particularly at research extensive universities, allows the athletic training faculty member time to focus on administrative or programmatic responsibilities without substantial pressure to publish research or obtain grant funding.²⁹ This could be especially advantageous for a new program director by allowing time to focus on program development, teaching, and service. Disadvantages of a non-tenure track model may include limited participation in collective bargaining units, restricted voting rights on faculty issues, and the negative perception that non-tenure track faculty are not equitable colleagues at the institution.

Another suggestion includes revisiting promotion and tenure guidelines to find an alternative model of evaluation that may be more appropriate than the traditional academic model.³ However, little research exploring alternative evaluation models and the type of institution as they pertain to athletic training faculty has been conducted, which may be significant factors that warrant further investigation.

Educational Background

Another concern relating to educator professional preparedness is the lack of experience with administrative duties. Most doctoral program graduates are well prepared to teach and conduct research⁹, but may have little exposure to the inner workings of an ATEP. Depending on the graduate curriculum, administrative and higher education policy may not have been included. The results of this study indicate that the graduate content areas studied by athletic training educators varied significantly, and included 16 masters areas of study and 24 different doctoral content areas (Table 4). For comparison, Hertel et al.³ reported that 24% of their participants completed a doctoral degree in the area of education and administration, while this study found of the three main doctoral content areas reported (exercise science, health and physical education, and education and administration), 52% were education and administration. As such, the participants in this study appear to have more educational background in administration, which may better prepare them for the administrative responsibility of leading an ATEP.

The wide variety of undergraduate content areas (22 different majors, 13 different minors) is also reflective of the athletic training educational structure that was in place prior to the 2004 educational reform that brought about mandatory accreditation and eliminated students sitting for the national certification exam after completing the internship route.³¹

Because most colleges and universities did not have approved curriculums, a large number of students studied other content areas and learned how to be an athletic trainer through the apprenticeship model.¹ Similarly, there are just nine doctoral programs that have a curricular focus in athletic training.³² Therefore, it is not surprising to see such variety in postgraduate studies, and a majority of athletic training educators learn administrative responsibilities on the job.^{4,5,7,26} Just as the CAATE accreditation standards seek to create a more uniform undergraduate educational system to advance the profession, perhaps the same should be done for athletic training education⁹ doctoral programs to create tracks that prepare educators to assume leadership roles.

Pedagogical Training. Another area of professional preparation that warrants discussion is the pedagogical training of athletic training educators. While some athletic training educators may have a background in pedagogy, others do not. Many believe that, in general, graduate programs prepare faculty to teach and conduct research;⁹ however, Kreber¹⁰ argues that, over the past several decades, graduate programs have emphasized content knowledge rather than pedagogical training. Across all fields in higher education, not all faculty members are trained to teach,^{11,33,34} reinforcing the argument for finding balance between possessing adequate pedagogical skills and subject matter expertise.^{11,33-36} While many medical and allied health care professionals will either teach in a formal or clinical setting,¹²⁻¹⁴ more often than not, they are not given

the opportunity to undergo formal or informal instruction on pedagogical practices,¹²⁻¹⁴ and are instead expected to learn teaching and pedagogy on the job.

When 116 doctoral-educated athletic trainers were asked what competencies would be most important for newly minted educators, acquiring skills to teach athletic training courses was rated the highest.³ This may indeed be happening, as the results of this study indicate that, on average, the large majority of athletic training educators have completed 8 courses in pedagogy and attended 8 professional workshops based on improving pedagogical practices. These statistics should not be taken for granted, as the profession should ensure that future generations of athletic training educators receive adequate training in both classroom and clinical pedagogical practices to improve students' classroom achievement.^{11,12}

The natural way to ensure that athletic training educators are receiving adequate pedagogical training is through graduate education. As master's and doctoral graduate programs for athletic trainers continue to evolve, Kreber¹⁰ recommends integrating at least two courses in pedagogy into the curriculum to allow students to explore educational issues prevalent within the athletic training discipline, that students be allowed to focus dissertation projects on pedagogy, and that they have the opportunity to teach and receive feedback on their teaching.¹⁰ Students should also be provided with opportunities to attend seminars and workshops that focus on educational theory and research, and professors who are affluent in the scholarship of teaching should act as mentors for graduate students. However, further research is necessary to determine if implementation of these strategies improves the pedagogical practices of athletic training educators and ultimately student learning.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that an exact response rate for all participants is unknown because program directors were asked to forward the survey to other educators in their respective programs, and some program directors may or may not have forwarded the survey link. The survey link was also posted on the athletic training listserv to maximize participation, so it was difficult to determine how many respondents were reached. A second limitation is that the program director response rate of 30% could be improved based on the fact that the average response rate for an internet-based survey is 38%.³⁷ Although the intention of this study was not to generalize the results, increasing the sample size may have provided more insight and enhanced the discussion of some key issues facing contemporary athletic training education.

A third limitation of the study is the manner in which the participants were asked to report pedagogical training. These two questions were open-ended and some participants used qualitative descriptors rather than providing a hard number. Therefore, those participants' responses were considered incomplete responses and not used for analysis in this study. In addition, workshops and educational sessions were not defined for the participant, leading to statistical outliers in the data.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on our results, several areas for future research come to mind, including determining factors that contribute to the success or failure

of athletic training educators to achieve promotion and tenure at their institution and exploring how young educators balance the demands of academe with ATEP administration and handle demanding and sometimes conflicting roles and responsibilities. A third area for future research would be to investigate alternative models by which athletic training educators could be evaluated to determine if traditional or non-tenure track positions may be better suited for athletic training. Lastly, a wide variety of educational majors and areas of studies were reported in this study. Further investigation over the next 5 or 10 years may reveal less variety in content areas studied due to curricular changes within athletic training education programs.

Conclusions

Contemporary athletic training education is fully integrating into traditional higher education, with junior faculty members leading the way. Athletic training educators in this study predominantly held lower ranks in academe, possessed degrees across a variety of disciplines, and a majority had completed some form of pedagogical training. These educators are vital representatives for our profession as they can influence policy reform at the institutional level, produce new knowledge to advance the athletic training profession, and are responsible for training the next generation of educators.

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