

## **Challenges that Women in Athletic Training Face in NCAA Athletics**

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*Category: Masters*

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### **ABSTRACT**

Athletic training was once known to be a male dominated profession however in more recent years the number of females in the profession has been increasing. According to the National Athletic Trainer's Association 55% of its members identify as being a woman. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to seek the challenges that athletic trainers who identify as a woman have/or are currently facing while working in NCAA Athletics. There are many young women out there who aspire to be an athletic trainer one day but are hesitant about joining the profession because they want to have a family one day, or worry about having to face the challenge of their knowledge being questioned, and lastly the struggle of gaining respect from athletic directors, coaches and athletes, along with many other challenges.

**METHODS:** For this study a survey was created for those who met the criteria. In order to participate in the survey participants needed to identify as a woman, be a certified or licensed athletic trainer, and have experience working in the NCAA setting as a certified or licensed athletic trainer. The survey asked participants about how they managed work-life balance, hours worked, positions they held, locations/accessibility of the athletic training facility, and other related topics. The survey contained multiple choice, and short answer questions. The survey was sent out via social media and was open for about 3 weeks, with 96 responses. **RESULTS:** Out of the 96 participants, 68.75% have been a certified or licensed athletic trainer for 10 years or less. 28.42% reported having 1-3, while 21.05% were on the other end of the spectrum having 10+ full-time clinical staff athletic trainers. When asked if the participants felt supported by their administration or supervisors, the majority 68.61% said that they agreed that they felt supported. There was not a statistically significant difference regarding the level of support based on years of experience ( $p=.472$ ). Nor was there a significant difference reported when referencing if the supervisor was a man or woman and their level of support ( $p=.167$ ). When asked if their knowledge has ever been questioned by an athlete, parent or coach, 89.58% of participants agreed that their knowledge has been questioned. **CONCLUSION:** Women in athletic training positions on NCAA staffs face many barriers and challenges including low pay compared to hours worked and duties assigned, wanting to spend more time with family and having their knowledge questioned. Future studies comparing this information to that of the men in similar roles would be helpful in noting any disparity between these two groups.