

The Effects of Social Identity on  
Career Progression: A Study of NCAA Basketball Coaches

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## **ABSTRACT**

In this study I investigated the effects of social identity on career progression. I theorized that job seekers with recognized social identities are hired for positions at more prestigious employers than job seekers without recognized social identities. I also theorized that additional career benefits are accrued by individuals who claim their ascribed identity. I tested the validity of these hypotheses by investigating the subsequent employer prestige of head coaches in NCAA Division I Men's basketball (a setting with several recognized social identities), who changed jobs ( $n = 282$ ) between 2001 and 2007. Controlling for prior performance, network connectivity, and status affiliations, coaches with recognized social identities obtained positions with more prestigious employers than coaches without such recognized social identities. Furthermore, coaches who claimed their identity obtained positions with more prestigious employers, than coaches who did not claim their identity.

## INTRODUCTION

*When a stranger comes into our presence, then, first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, and his social identity (Goffman, 1963, p. 25).*

Social identities have been the focus of scholarly study for half century, as researchers have studied the many ways in which people are perceived and categorized. In this article I use “social identity” in both a sociological sense (i.e., a social (public) typology which audiences appropriate to understand and label entities (e.g., Glynn 2000, Glynn & Abzug, 1998; Zuckerman, 1999, etc.)) and a psychological sense (i.e., an attribute of membership that is claimed by an individual to define “who I am” (e.g., Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brewer & Gardener, 1998, etc.)). In the field of organization studies, scholars have been especially interested in social identities, and how such identities influence organizational socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Limited research, however, has focused on the influence of social identities on career progression. In this article I study the beneficial impact on career progression of positive social identities derived from prior work experiences and network ties.

This form of social identity has been evident in many industries. For example, in the early days of the semiconductor industry, many employees of Fairchild Semiconductor left the organization to start their own companies. Even though they were working at new organizations, these former employees were categorized and labeled by media experts, as “Fairchildren” (Higgins, 2005) signaling the existence of a social identity. A similar phenomenon can be seen among former Bain consultants who are referred to as “Bainies for life” (Hanna, 2005) after leaving Bain, and former employees of GE who are referred to as “Graduates of Welch U” after leaving GE.

Considerable evidence supports the notion that individuals with social identities such as the Fairchildren, Bainies, and graduates of Welch U have successful careers. For example in 2008, 26 CEOs of the 1,187 publicly traded companies with market values of \$2 billion had previously worked at General Electric and were recognized as “Graduates of Welch U” (Jones, 2007). This success can be understood by using a human capital perspective which suggests that these individuals benefit from their prior experiences (e.g., training, education, on the job performance, etc.) and attributes (e.g., general intelligence) (e.g., Dreher & Bretz, 1991; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Judge & Hurst, 2007; Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999); and a social capital perspective which suggests that these individuals benefit from their relationships established at these companies (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001). However, I argue that social identity also explains the career progression of these individuals.

Drawing on identity theories (e.g., Ashforth & Mael 1989, Goffman, 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) and categorization theories (e.g., Cantor & Mischel, 1979; Rosch, 1978) I argue that social identity is an important construct to study in investigations of career moves. Because individuals act on their identity, an individual’s social identity can be used by external audiences to predict how he or she will behave in the future. I further theorize that a job seeker will be at an advantage in the hiring process if he or she publicly claims the ascribed social identity. I investigate these arguments through an empirical analysis of the career moves of NCAA men’s basketball coaches between October, 2001 and October, 2007.

## **THEORY**

Empirical research on career progression has identified multiple determinants of salary, promotion rates, hierarchical position, and occupational prestige. Variables predictive of career progression can be grouped into variables that capture an individual’s traits and

accomplishments, and variables that capture an individual's relationships with others. Scholars have used the term *human capital* to characterize the importance of an individual's education, work experience, and intelligence (e.g., Dreher, & Bretz, 1991; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Judge & Hurst, 2007; Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999), and the term *social capital* to capture the importance of an individual's resources derived from relationships with others such as family, coworkers, and friends (e.g., Coleman, 1988; Lin, et al., 1981; Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001).

A large body of research links human capital variables to career progression. For example, Turner's (1960) seminal research on career trajectories identified the contest mobility perspective suggesting that career progression is largely a function of how hard individuals work, and the ability, education, and training that they possess (Rosenbaum, 1984). Human capital variables such as intelligence, motivation, education, training experiences, and work experiences have been shown to result in increased compensation, promotions, and status attainment in many settings (e.g., Dreher, & Bretz, 1991; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Judge & Hurst, 2007; Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999).

In addition, research has long linked social capital variables to career progression. For example, Turner's seminal work (1960) identified the sponsored mobility perspective, suggesting that an individual's career progression is largely a function of having relationships with prominent individuals who can help the individual. More recently, Seibert and colleagues (2001), in an analysis of 448 employees in a range of industries and occupations, found that an employee's relationships increased career success through access to information, access to resources, and career sponsorship (consistent with the findings of Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1974; Lin, 1982; Montgomery, 1992; Wegener, 1991, etc.). Seibert suggests that information and

resources are fundamental bases of social power (French & Raven, 1968), which increase the individual's organizational reputation (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Tsui, 1984) and therefore make the individual better able to secure valuable organizational rewards independent of his or her actual level of performance (Ferris & Judge, 1991; Luthans, et al., 1988).

Scholars have also investigated the benefits of affiliations with high-status actors (Benjamin & Podolny, 1999; Gulati & Higgins, 2003; Jensen, 2003; Podolny, 1994; Podolny & Stuart, 1995; Washington & Zajac, 2005). Podolny (2001) indicated that a market relationship between actor A and actor B is relevant as a conduit of resources between A and B, **and** is relevant because the market relationship affects a third actor's perceptions of the relative quality of the product services that A and B offer in the market. If actor A has a visible exchange relationship with a high-status actor, A accrues perceptual benefits from the relationship due to reduced uncertainty in the eyes of audiences. Kilduff and Krackhardt (1994) further identified how an individual who is perceived as having ties to high-status actors is credited with the ability to influence higher-status persons and therefore gains important advantages in the market for power and influence. However, while scholars have indicated that human capital variables, social capital variables, and status affiliations influence career progression, these constructs do not provide information about the values of an individual suggesting that there are additional factors that influence career progression including social identity.

### **Social Identity**

Social identity has been defined in various ways. As discussed by Tajfel (1973) social identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p 63). As discussed by Goffman (1963), social identity is

ascribed to an individual by others based on the assumptions of the individual's membership in various social groups. In other words, social identity resides in what others anticipate a person to be from membership in one or more socially established categories (e.g., gender, social standing, religion, etc.). In this article I combine both the psychological and sociological perspective of social identity to investigate the impact of this form of identity on career progression. I am limiting my discussion to positive social identities.

As discussed, social identity is an insufficiently studied construct in the literature on career progression. Podolny and Baron (1997) proposed that social ties can serve as signals of an individual's social identity; such signals influence his or her career mobility. An individual's network ties convey a sense of belonging within a collectivity and also convey the normative expectations associated with one's role. Podolny and Baron suggest that a clear social identity is facilitated by smaller networks that display high closure and cohesiveness, and that an individual with a coherent and well-defined organizational identity has an advantage when competing for career opportunities. Zuckerman and colleagues (2003) proposed that an individual's prior work experiences are signals of an individual's identity which influence subsequent work opportunities. In their analysis of typecasting in the film industry, Zuckerman and colleagues found that an actor's fit with established categories (i.e., film genres) is beneficial because it facilitates audience valuation. In this article I extend these perspectives of social identity and career progression by proposing that prior work affiliations can serve as an individual's social identity which provides audiences with valuable information about his or her character, values, and other facets that are not apparent from looking only at the individual's network connectivity, and prior performance.

As discussed, individuals tend to classify themselves and others into various social categories such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort (Ashforth & Mael 1989, Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The process of social categorization serves to help order the environment into cognitive segments that provide an individual with a systematic means of defining others and making sense of their behaviors in a cognitively efficient manner (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997). For example, in the words of Goffman (1963) “social settings establish the categories of persons likely to be encountered there. The routines of social intercourse in established settings allows us to deal with anticipated others without special attention or thought” (p 25).

Categories play an important part in market behavior during an audience’s evaluation process. In consumer marketing research, Moreau and colleagues (Moreau, Page, Markman, & Lehmann, 2005) propose that when a novel item is classified as a member of an existing category, information in that category is transferred to the novel item and used to structure the new representation (Gregan-Paxton 1999; Waldmann, Holyoak & Fratianne, 1995). This also applies to social situations. Read (1983) found that subjects learning about members of a foreign culture rely on the similarity of newly encountered members to members previously encountered when making predictions about their behavior; as environmental complexities increase, subjects are increasingly likely to use a similar prior instance with a member to predict future behavior. Cantor and Mischel (1979) effectively capture this process by stating that “applying our categories about other people often allows us to feel an almost instant general understanding of someone we hardly know.” For example, audiences attribute the prototypical characteristics of a social category to a recognized member in the absence of other information. In career settings,



being recognized as a “Graduate of Welch U” likely connotes a certain management style and social identity that is understood by audiences and attributed to category members.

Scholars have also indicated that audiences find it easier to isolate a particular phenomenon from the rest of the social world when they have access to a label (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997; Hsu & Hannan, 2005). Goodwin (1994) discusses the process of professional vision in which actors use various coding schemes and well-established labels to organize the perception of a phenomenon within the discourse of a profession. He uses the example of the Munsel color chart, a tool used by archaeologists for color descriptions, which has influenced the perception of archaeologists through the creation of labels for different categories of soil.

Labels also increase the availability of the category to audience members by indicating that the category is meaningful. For instance, calling certain objects "chairs" suggests that chairs are a useful and relevant category (Lupyan, Rakison, & McClelland, 2007), and the use of the Munsel color chart suggests that soil color is useful and relevant in a certain context (Goodwin, 1994). Glynn and Abzug (2002) suggest that the organizational act of naming introduces meaning in an effort to make an organization understandable, interpretable, and desirable to target audiences. For example, the recognized label “Fairchildren” signaled the existence and importance of a grouping category, much like the recognized label “chair” signals a useful and relevant category (Lupyan, Rakison, & McClelland, 2007).

Consider how a job seeker’s social identity influences his or her career opportunities. Audiences attribute the meaning of the social category to individual members making them more easily understood than individuals without such membership. Audiences also apply the category label to individual members making them more easily comparable to others. As discussed by Zuckerman in his analysis of the labor market for Hollywood actors, audiences compare and

evaluate job seekers in terms of legitimate categories. Individuals who defy prevailing socio-cognitive frames risk sowing confusion among audiences and produce social penalties such as a lack of attention or outright rejection. For example, job seekers who do not exhibit certain common characteristics may not be readily compared to others by audiences, and therefore stand outside the field of comparison, just as oranges in a competition among apples (Zuckerman, 1999; Zuckerman, Kim, Ukanwa, & von Rittman, 2003). From the perspective of the audience, rather than scrutinizing the full menu of alternatives, the audience limits its attention to a discrete consideration set of like individuals (Shocker, 1991; Urban, Weinberg & Hauser, 1996; Zuckerman & Phillips, 2001). Therefore, job seekers who fit within a category are better understood and therefore more valuable.

In summary, controlling for prior performance, network connectivity, and status affiliations, job seekers with a social identity will have access to jobs at more prestigious organizations because: (1) the identity of the category is applied to the individual, making him or her better understood by external audiences than is the case of a job seeker without membership; and (2) the label of the category is applied to the individual, making him or her more easily classifiable during the valuation process. Thus,

***Hypothesis 1: A job seeker with a positive social identity will receive a position with an employer with greater prestige than will be the case for a job seeker without a positive social identity.***

***Claimed Identity.*** Recognized membership in a social category is beneficial in itself, but it is especially important when a job seeker claims such categorization as part of his or her individual identity. Although most work categorization discusses the audience's placement of an actor in a category rather than the actor's announcement of membership (Stone, 1962; Zuckerman, 2003), the claiming process is especially important because it signals to external

audiences that the individual's identity is congruent with the recognized characteristics and identity of the social category. An individual who interprets himself or herself in terms of the social category will likely hold a set of cognitive beliefs associated with the category, such as stereotypical traits thought to be shared by category members or ideological positions that define the category's goals (Ashmore, Deaux, & Mclaughlin-Volpe, 2004).

When an actor's projected identity is symmetrical and congruent with an audience's understanding of the individual's identity, predictability-based trust among stakeholders is engendered (Barney & Hansen, 1994; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). In other words, the individual signals that he or she acknowledges the social identity, and is also likely to act on it; this helps external audiences better understand the individual and better predict his or her future behavior.

In career settings, the mutual agreement of the job seeker's externally recognized social identity and his or her claimed social identity will positively influence how the job seeker is perceived by external audiences. As discussed, a social identity signals information about the identity and future behavior of a job seeker. A job seeker who claims his or her ascribed social identity is more valuable than a job seeker who does not claim such an identity, because he or she is more likely to act on the identity and is therefore better understood by external audiences. Thus,

***Hypothesis 2: A job seeker with an ascribed positive social identity who also claims such identity will receive a position with an employer with greater prestige than will be the case for a job seeker with an ascribed positive social identity who does not claim such identity.***

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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## **EMPIRICAL SETTING**

Coaches of men's teams in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball provide an appropriate empirical setting to investigate how social identity affects an individual's

career issues such as subsequent employer prestige of new position obtained. The setting is also similar to mediated markets in that organizations (i.e., universities) are looking to hire coaches (job seekers) who appease media experts, the ones who recognize and validate different social identities. Coaches of athletic teams are also similar to managers, in that a coach's leadership and strategic management style are crucial determinants of team success (Fizel & D'Itri, 1999; Pfeffer & Davis-Blake, 1986). Using sport as an empirical setting also has a long history in management research as addressed by Wolfe and colleagues (Wolfe, Weick, Usher, Terborg, Poppo, Murrell, Dukerich, Core, Dickson, & Simmons Jourdan, 2005).

### **Hiring Decisions**

*Like it or not, a school's identity is often shaped by its athletic program, and a bad coaching hire, a scandal or an underachieving program can limit the number of talented applicants a school receives (Fish, 2003)*

There are currently 341 colleges and universities within the NCAA which have Division I men's basketball teams. Division I is the highest level of intercollegiate athletics. Each team is coached by one head coach and up to four assistant coaches who work closely throughout the season. Teams play between 20 and 40 competitive games each season (November to April) with the goal of winning as many games as possible, as the success of the basketball program has important effects for the team and the school. For example, after a winning season in 2007, the University of North Carolina Basketball team coached by Roy Williams posted a 16.9 million dollar profit and was valued<sup>1</sup> at 26 million dollars (Schwartz, 2008). In addition, universities with basketball programs that make the "Sweet 16" (the third round of the NCAA post-season

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<sup>1</sup> The value is based on the money generated by basketball that goes to the institution for academic purposes, including scholarship payments for basketball players; the net profit generated by the basketball program retained by the department; the distribution of NCAA tournament revenue; and the incremental spending by visitors to the county during the regular season which is attributable to the program.

tournament) experience a 3% increase in applications the following year; schools that win the championship experience a 7 - 8% increase (Pope and Pope, 2008), highlighting the importance of successful athletic programs. As a result, there is tremendous pressure for an institution's athletic department to find and employ a basketball coach capable of recruiting and coaching winning basketball teams. Leading sports commentator Dick Vitale equated NCAA coaches with corporate executives by stating, "Today, if you're a leading coach at a major institution, you're a CEO. You're worth millions to that university" (McCollough, 2008).

### **Coaches as Job Seekers**

*Not even European monarchs can trace their lineage any better than college basketball coaches* (The Topeka Journal, March 27, 2002)

The career trajectories of coaches are similar to that of the boundaryless career (Arthur, & Rousseau, 1996) in that coaches often switch organizations for promotions. College coaches are seen as individuals making upward moves, with the ultimate goal of a top position within a prestigious organization. With rare exceptions, the majority of current NCAA head basketball coaches began their careers as NCAA assistant coaches. The typical trajectory of a coach begins with experience playing basketball or being a student team manager at the undergraduate level, followed by entry into the coaching profession as an assistant. The assistant coach gains experience at various schools where he has studied under different head coaches. An assistant coach of a successful team gains national recognition and is eventually offered a head coaching job. If he is successful in the head coaching position, the coach draws the attention of other institutions and, if offered a better position, might leave his current institution for a head coaching job at a more prestigious institution.

## Social Identities in NCAA Basketball

*“We are part of the same family so it’s not a co-worker relationship. It’s in our blood.”* Duke Assistant Coach (and member of the Coach K Family) Steve Wojciechowski (Beard, 2008)

In the profession of basketball coaching, the media have recognized and validated 16 coaching groups that were active at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>2</sup>. These coaching groups serve as social identities that order the field of NCAA basketball coaches. All 16 of these coaching groups have been referred to by media experts as “coaching trees” reflecting a lineage dating back to a legendary coach. Examples of coaching trees include the affiliations of coaches with network ties to legendary coaches Bobby Knight, Lute Olson, and Gary Williams. Journalist Greg Doyel (2004) asks, “Who’s the most fertile” coach? Doyel and other journalists compare coaching groups in terms of the coaching success of tree members (Doyel, 2004; Katz, 2000; Weis, 2007). Among the group of 16 trees, six trees have also been characterized by media experts as “coaching families,” reflecting an even closer affiliation, likened to the relationships among blood relatives<sup>3</sup>. Examples of coaching families include the groupings of coaches with ties to legendary coaches Dean Smith (the Tar Heel Family), Tom Izzo (the Spartan Family), Rick Pitino (the Pitino Family), and Pete Carill (the Princeton Family). Journalist Joe Perry (2004) refers to the Tar Heel Family as “a living breathing entity linking the past to the present.” These social identities are enduring, and coaches are often recognized by the media as members throughout their careers. For example, recognized members of the Tar Heel Family include the current head coaches at Auburn, Southern Methodist, the University of North Carolina, and the former head coach of Tennessee, as noted by journalist Jason Perry (2004). Another long-lived coaching group is the Coach Pitino Coaching Family which includes the current head coaches at

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<sup>2</sup> Based on a search of articles in the Dow Jones Factiva Database in years 2001-2007.

<sup>3</sup> These characterizations were made in at least two different sources.

Arkansas, Florida, New Mexico State, Minnesota, and Oklahoma State, as noted by journalist Dick Weis (2006). Although there are several remarkable coaching legacies, and all coaches have some of affiliation to other coaches, it should be noted that the majority of coaches are not recognized as members of one of the 16 coaching groups. A statistical analysis (in Appendix A) indicated that former colleagues and coaches who are structurally equivalent in the coworker network (e.g., two coaches who worked for the same third coach) are more likely to be recognized as members of the same coaching group than are randomly selected dyads.

### *Social Identities and Playing Style*

In my analysis of media experts' characterizations of the coaching groups, I discovered that members of coaching groups were often recognized for employing distinctive styles of basketball. For example, Rick Pitino is known by media experts for instructing his teams to attempt many three-point shots. In fact, Pitino's first team at the University of Kentucky was nick-named "Pitino's Bombinos" for their propensity to shoot numerous long-distance shots (which in basketball slang are referred to as "bombs") (Crawford, 2001). Pitino has acknowledged this strategy, and members of his coaching family are recognized for and have also made claims about their confidence in this strategy. For example, Pitino Family members Travis Ford, when hired at Oklahoma State, Marvin Menzies, when hired at New Mexico State, and John Pelfrey, when hired at Arkansas were introduced as coaches who would "use a Pitino-like style of play" (Skwara, 2007; <http://www.okstate.com>, accessed September 23, 2008; <http://www.hogwired.com>, accessed September 23, 2008).

Most of the founders of the 16 coaching groups are recognized by media experts for implementing specialized styles of play. For example, Hank Iba, formerly of Oklahoma State, was recognized for inventing the motion offense (Fraschilla, 2003); Bob Knight was recognized

for leading teams that stressed motion offense and tough man-to-man defense (Fraschilla, 2003); Tom Izzo of Michigan State is known for leading teams that have a physically tough style of play which stresses defense and rebounding (Grinczel, 2007); Mike Krzyzewski of Duke is known for leading teams that emphasize team defense and has even written a book on the subject (Krzyzewski, 1987); and Pete Carrill was known for developing the “Princeton Offense” that stressed ball control and team defense (Berkow, 1999). These special styles are often attributed to members of each of the coaching groups, thus suggesting that membership in a coaching group indicates an allegiance to certain behaviors such as game strategies (Skwara, 2007).

### ***Social Identities and Off-the-Court Values***

In addition to styles of play, coaching groups often provide information about a coach’s leadership style and values which are not evident when looking at playing statistics. For example, membership in a particular coaching group can signal not only athletic style, but also other characteristics such as academic quality. When Stanford University hired Johnny Dawkins and when Harvard University hired Tommy Amaker, both members of the Mike Krzyzewski Coaching Family, university administrators made comments at the introductory press conferences in which they associated the new coach with the identity of Coach Krzyzewski (Harvard Athletic Communications, 2007; McCauley, 2008) which signals leadership skills, athletic style, and academic integrity. Other coaching groups such as the Tar Heel family are also known for academic achievement. In fact, the University of North Carolina has named a faculty teaching award after Tar Heel member Dean Smith (Moeser, 2001).

### ***Social Identities and Ethical Values***

Coaching groups can also signal information about a coach’s ethical values. For example, members of the Tar Heel family have been recognized for their integrity,



involvement in the community, and commitment to social justice. Coach Dean Smith of the Tar Heel family has been described as one of the most successful and ethical basketball coaches in NCAA basketball (Boxill, 2003). This identity has also been ascribed to and enacted by fellow members of this coaching group. For example, member Roy Williams has taken a leadership role on the National Association of Basketball Coaches Ethics Committee (<http://nabc.cstv.com>, accessed December 20, 2008), member Buzz Peterson was recognized as part of the Tennessee Community Service Team of the Year (Perry, 2004), and member Jeff Lebo has been active in charity work for the Children's Hospital of Alabama (<http://auburntigers.cstv.com> , accessed December 20, 2008).

In summary, coaching groups are positive social identities that provide clear information about members that is above and beyond performance quality. For example, the selected illustrations suggest that group membership provides concise information such as the espoused playing style of the coach and the coach's values in off-the-court behavior (e.g., academic standards, ethical values, community involvement). Surprisingly, although unique playing styles are attributed to members of coaching groups, analysis of team statistics (e.g., per-game points, assists, 3-point shots, rebounds, etc. See Appendix A) indicates that members do not always employ the specialized playing strategy associated with their group. For example, despite averaging more points per game than other coaches, there is no statistical evidence indicating that members of the Pitino Family attempt and convert more three-point shots than non-members. In fact, Pitino's 2007 team was 45<sup>th</sup> in three-point attempts and 205<sup>nd</sup> in shooting percentage for three-point shots. In addition, for eight coaching groups, no statistically significant differences existed in styles used by group members and styles used coaches who were not members of groups. However, despite statistical evidence suggesting that coaches

affiliated with groups do not always perform in a manner consistent with the ascribed playing identity, media experts continue to perceive a coach's membership in a coaching group as a signal of his identity and these groups are used by external audiences to order the field of NCAA coaches. For example, when coaches are discussed by the media, they are often discussed in terms of their membership in a coaching tree or coaching family. These groups are also claimed by members, indicating that they serve as sources of meaning and identity for coaches. For more information on the 16 social identities in NCAA basketball see Table 1 and Appendices A, B & C.

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## **METHODS**

### **Sample and Data Collection**

The sample used in this study included all NCAA Men's Division I basketball coaches active between the 2001 season (October 31, 2001) and the beginning of the 2007 season (October 31, 2007). This time frame is ideal due to the large number of head coaching changes ( $n = 282$ ), the large number of firings ( $n = 155$ ), the large amount of media attention, and the concurrent existence of multiple coaching groups ( $n = 16$ ) with varying characteristics. To access data about each coach's career moves, I obtained information from the NCAA ([ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org)) and from the athletic website of each university in the sample.

### **Operationalization of Variables**

***Social Identity.*** Through text analysis of industry articles, I identified 16 coaching groups (social identities) that were recognized and validated by media experts; all coaching groups were characterized as trees, but some were additionally characterized as families. I first

used the Factiva<sup>4</sup> database to identify all members of coaching groups by searching for articles containing “NCAA basketball” AND “coaching tree” OR “coaching family.” I then viewed the web pages of all coaches recognized by media experts as members of coaching trees or coaching families to determine whether the coach also publicly acknowledged affiliations with fellow coaching group members<sup>5</sup>. I created a variable to characterize each coach’s *Social Identity*. Coaches who were recognized by media experts as members of a coaching group were assigned a value of 1, and all other coaches were assigned a value of 0. Of the coaches involved in the 282 position changes, 80 were recognized as members of coaching groups by media experts.

***Claimed Identity.*** To capture whether individuals with ascribed social identities also claimed their identity, I viewed the web pages of all coaches recognized by media experts as members of coaching trees or coaching families to determine whether the coach also publicly acknowledged affiliations with fellow group members. Coaches who were recognized by media experts as group members and who publicly claimed this identity were assigned a value of 1; coaches who were recognized by media experts as group members but did not claim this identity were assigned a value of 0. Of the 80 coaches recognized as members of coaching groups, 66 publicly claimed such identity.

### ***Control Variables***

***Prior Performance.*** I included: (1) the *cumulative winning percentage* of each coach, either as a head coach or an assistant (a mean of 60.1%, SD = 8.89); (2) the *cumulative number of post-season NCAA tournament appearances* of each coach, either as a head coach or an assistant (a mean of 4.28, SD = 4.37); and (3) whether the coach was either a head coach or an

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<sup>4</sup> The Dow Jones Factiva database includes more than 14,000 leading news and business sources (available at [www.factiva.com](http://www.factiva.com), accessed November 26, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Only 1 of the recognized category members, Tim O’Toole, did not have a webpage. I searched all articles about this individual and could not find any claim of category membership.

assistant coach of a team that went to the *NCAA tournament in the year prior* to switching positions (112 of the 282). To capture winning percentage and NCAA tournament appearances, I utilized the NCAA Statistics Archive (available at <http://www.ncaa.org>).

***Social Capital Variables.*** *Connectivity* is the number of coaches with whom an identified coach has worked. To calculate this measure I compiled the career histories of each coach to assess where, when, and with whom he worked. For example, Matt Doherty and Neil Dougherty were both assistant coaches at the University of Kansas in 1998, and therefore have had an affiliation tie from 1998 onward.<sup>6</sup> To calculate each coach's connectivity with other coaches at the time of interest, I utilized degree centrality. This measure captures the number of coaches in the entire network with whom each coach has worked. For example, in 2007, when Billy Gillispie was hired by the University of Kentucky, he had worked with six other active head coaches from his prior work experience at Baylor, Tulsa, Illinois, UTEP, and Texas A&M. This variable captures one perspective of social capital, which indicates that personal connections provide an individual with resources beneficial when looking for a job (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001). The mean connectivity measure for coaches who accepted new positions was 5.44 (SD = 3.06).

*Status Affiliations* reflects the maximum win record of all head coaches with whom each coach has worked. I identified the number of wins achieved by the "winningest" active coach with whom he had ever worked. For example, in 2005 when Rodney Tention was hired as head coach at Loyola Marymount University, his former colleague Lute Olson had amassed an impressive 753 career wins. Tention's experience working with legendary Coach Olson was highlighted in the Loyola Marymount announcement of his hiring (available at

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<sup>6</sup> Of the 341 active head coaches at the start of 2006 season, 273 had overlapped at the same institution with at least one other active coach at some point in their careers, indicating the high frequency of historical overlaps.

<http://lmillions.cstv.com/>, accessed August 1, 2008). This variable captures a relational aspect of social capital; namely, individuals affiliated with high-status individuals are more likely to accrue career benefits due to access to resources and perceived quality (e.g., Lin et al., 1981). The mean *status affiliations* measure for coaches who accepted new positions was 329.57 wins (SD = 204.95).

***Prestige of Prior Employer.*** To determine the prestige of the prior employer of each coach, I used prestige rankings constructed by industry experts at ESPN.com, widely regarded as the leading media source for sports news<sup>7</sup>. This numerical ranking lists the most prestigious Division I men's college basketball programs since the 1984-85 season, considered the modern era of college basketball (available at <http://sports.espn.go.com/ncb/news/story?id=3501739>, accessed September 1, 2008). The rankings were determined based on various historical performance and visibility measures including team performance, team appearances in high profile tournaments, historical team success in developing players for the NBA, and team success in developing players who have been awarded as All-Americans. The rankings range from 1 (most prestigious) to 299 (least prestigious). All schools not ranked (e.g., schools that only recently became Division I programs) were assigned a prestige score of 300. (For more information on the justification of the ranking metrics, see Shelton, Loucks & Fallica, 2008).

***Tenure.*** To capture the career experience of coaches who changed jobs during the study period, I calculated the total number of games coached by each coach in the sample prior to changing positions (*tenure*). For example, in 2003 when Coach Kelvin Sampson accepted the head coaching position at Indiana, he was already well recognized from his 827 games coached

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<sup>7</sup> ESPN.com is a three-time Webby Award winner, six-time People's Voice Award winner, two-time Online Journalism Award winner, two-time Editor and Publisher Award winner for online sports service, and averages 20.2 million unique users per month, more than any other sports Web site, according to Nielsen ratings (information available at [http://www.espnmediazone.com/corp\\_info/](http://www.espnmediazone.com/corp_info/)).

over 22 years of experience as a head and assistant coach at Oklahoma, Washington State, and Montana Tech. In contrast, in 2006 when Sidney Lowe was offered and accepted the head coaching position at NC State, he had no prior coaching experience and was therefore relatively unknown as a coach. The mean tenure for coaches who accepted new positions was 493.74 games (SD = 214.37). I controlled *year* of position change to account for variance explained due to time difference, and I controlled for *year of birth* (a mean birth year of 1960.27, SD = 7.89) to account for career stage.

### ***Dependent Variable***

***Subsequent Employer Prestige.*** To determine the prestige of the new employer of each coach who changed jobs during the study period, I used the prestige rankings constructed by industry experts at ESPN.com. The mean subsequent employer prestige for coaches who obtained new positions was 162.26 (SD = 91.1).

### **Model Specifications**

Because *subsequent employer prestige* is a count variable with non-negative integers, and the variance exceeds the mean, I used a negative binomial regression model. In all analyses I used Stata 10.1 to calculate regression models, and UCINET VI (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002) to calculate network statistics. For more information on all study variables, see Table 2.

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Insert Table 2 about here

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## **RESULTS**

### **Social Identity and Careers**

Individuals who were recognized as members of one of the 16 coaching groups obtained head coaching positions with employers of greater prestige. Furthermore, coaches who claimed their identity obtained positions with more prestigious employers, than coaches who did not

claim their identity. The potential for multicollinearity was examined in all models, and no potential problems were found.<sup>8</sup> I will now describe specific findings from each hypothesis tested.

### **Predicting Subsequent Employer Prestige**

Between the start of the 2001 season (October 31, 2001) and the start of the 2007 season (October 31, 2007) there were 282 head coaching changes involving 155 coaches and 225 schools. Some coaches changed head coaching positions more than one time (e.g., Billy Gillispie accepted the head coaching job at UTEP in 2002, took over as head coach at Texas A&M in 2004, and then took over as head coach at Kentucky in 2007), and some schools were forced to hire more than one coach during the study period (e.g., the University of New Orleans made head coaching changes in 2001, 2006, and 2007). The open positions ranged in prestige from the 2001 New Jersey Institute of Technology position (ranked 299<sup>th</sup>, the lowest possible prestige ranking) to the 2003 Kansas position (the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest possible prestige ranking). Results of Regression Model 1 in Table 3 indicate the influence of the control variables. Findings indicate that a coach's prior performance predicts the prestige of the subsequent employer. In other words, coaches who lead teams to NCAA tournaments obtain positions with more prestigious employers than is the case for coaches who do not have such success. It should be noted that the dependent variable of subsequent employer prestige is rank ordered so that smaller values of the dependent variable correspond to greater subsequent employer prestige. Thus, variables with negative coefficients predict employment by more prestigious employers.

### ***H1: Social Identity***

Results from Regression Model 2 in Table 3 provide support for Hypothesis 1, indicating that a job seeker with a positive social identity would receive a position with an employer with

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<sup>8</sup> Across all models, the largest mean VIF was 3.02, and all individual VIF statistics were less than 4.

greater prestige than would be the case for an individual without a positive social identity (Model 2:  $\beta = -3.64$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In other words, controlling for prior performance, connectivity, and status affiliations, coaches who are recognized as members of coaching groups obtain positions with more prestigious employers than is the case for coaches who are not recognized as members.

### ***H2: Claimed Category Membership***

Results from Regression Model 4 in Table 3 provide support for Hypothesis 2, indicating that a job seeker with an ascribed social identity who also claimed such identity would receive a position with an employer with greater prestige than would be the case for a job seeker with an ascribed social identity who did not claim such identity (Model 4:  $\beta = -2.08$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In other words, controlling for prior performance, connectivity, and status affiliations, coaches who are recognized as members of coaching groups and claim such membership obtain positions with more prestigious employers than is the case for coaches who are recognized as members of coaching groups who do not claim such membership.

### **Summary of Findings**

Social identity predicted subsequent employer prestige above and beyond prior performance and social capital. Namely, coaches who were members of coaching groups (i.e., coaching families or coaching trees) obtained positions with employers of greater prestige than was the case for coaches who were not members of coaching groups. This finding held when controlling for prior performance, connectivity, and status affiliations. Recognized members of coaching groups who claimed membership obtained employment with employers of greater prestige than was the case for recognized members who did not claim membership.



## Post Hoc Analyses

After establishing the importance of social identity as a predictor of subsequent employer prestige, I investigated various characterizations of recognized social identities. These characterizations included group visibility (the number of articles written by media experts about each coaching group; Model 5), the visibility of the recognized leader of each group (the number of articles written by media experts about the leader of each group; Model 6), the prestige of each group (the average employer prestige of the members of each coaching group; Model 7), and the size of each group (the number of recognized members; Model 8). Results indicate that these factors did not influence the subsequent employer prestige for recognized members who changed jobs during the study period. Findings in Table 4 also indicate that the beneficial impact of social identity decreased as a job seeker gained more experience and exposure in the coaching profession (Table 4, Model 9:  $\beta = 2.24$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

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Insert Tables 3 & 4 about here

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## DISCUSSION

In this article I studied the career moves of NCAA basketball coaches for the purpose of assessing the impact on career progression of their social identities while controlling for prior performance, network centrality, and status affiliations. Most prominent among the findings is the fact that coaches with positive social identities accrue considerable career benefits above and beyond the benefits attributable to prior performance and social capital.

In assessing the impact on subsequent employer prestige of social identity, I found that coaches who were recognized as having one of the sixteen validated social identities obtained positions with more prestigious employers, as compared with coaches who were not recognized.

Membership in a coaching group is a particular social identity that signals information about the coach such as his playing style, his academic standards, and his values which are not assessable from looking just at his prior performance and network ties. This signaled information makes the coach more easily understood and therefore more valuable. As discussed, individuals tend to classify themselves and others into various social categories such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort (Ashforth & Mael 1989, Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The process of social categorization serves to help order the environment into cognitive segments that provide an individual with a systematic means of defining others and making sense of their behaviors in a cognitively efficient manner (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997). For example, audiences can attribute to a recognized category member the prototypical characteristics of a social identity in the absence of other information. As stated by Cantor and Mischel (1979), “applying our categories about other people often allows us to feel an almost instant general understanding of someone we hardly know.” This finding suggests that in career settings, audiences can ascribe the identity of the social category to members, and therefore better understand the identity and values, and also more capably predict future behavior of such individuals.

In assessing the impact of a coach’s claimed identity, I found that coaches ascribed a social identity who also claimed such identity obtained positions with more prestigious employers than did coaches ascribed a social identity who did not claim such identity. In other words, with the public claim of the social identity, the job seeker is likely to be more easily understood and valued due to mutual agreement regarding the job seeker’s claimed and ascribed identity. When recognized members fail to claim their social identity, they receive positions with less prestigious employers. This suggests that failure to claim an ascribed social identity

might have the effect of leading external audiences to conclude that the job seeker does not fit with the ascribed identity, and is therefore no more easily understood than a job seeker without an ascribed social identity. Since the seminal work of Stone (1962), the majority of work in categorizations and markets has discussed the audience's placement of an actor in a category, rather than the actor's announcement of membership (e.g., Podolny, 1993; Zuckerman et al., 2003). The present study contributes to the literature on categorization and social identity by affirming that the valuation process of job seekers is also influenced by the identity claims of job seekers who are recognized for a particular social identity. This finding highlights the importance of the efforts that job seekers make in publicizing their social identity.

Post hoc analyses indicated that the career benefits of social identity were not influenced by the status, visibility, or size of the category. Had social identity been a signal of status or solely a proxy for social support, I would expect that the career benefits of such an identity would have been influenced by these variables. Additionally, findings indicated that having a particular social identity was most beneficial for job seekers earlier in their careers, than it was for job seekers later in their careers. This suggests that a group membership provides a job seeker with a social identity that is recognized by external audiences, especially when relatively little information is known about the job seeker who has not yet had the opportunity to establish a track record of accomplishments. External audiences with limited information about a job seeker might rely on intangibles such as the meaning of the social identity of the group to better understand the individual. In time, this individual will develop an individualized identity, and his or her social identity derived from group membership will gradually decrease in salience to external audiences as the individual becomes more recognizable and respected for his or her individual achievements.

## **Theoretical Contributions**

This article contributes to careers literature by indicating that social identity is an important factor that influences career progression. I proposed that valuable information about a job seeker's values, character, and identity which cannot easily be obtained from signals such as prior performance, network centrality and status affiliations, can be obtained from his or her social identity. Namely, the identity of the category is ascribed to the individual making him or her more easily understood and valuable. Furthermore, individuals who claim their ascribed identity accrue more benefits than those who do not.

The pattern of findings in this article also contributes to careers literature by proposing a mediated model of career progression for further analysis. Findings suggest that having a positive social identity makes a job seeker more easily understood by external audiences (e.g., hiring committees, industry analysts, media experts, organizational stakeholders, etc.), and therefore more valuable on the job market than is the case for a job seeker without such an identity. Future research should investigate this mediating variable (i.e., ease of understanding) by interviewing members from hiring committees to better understand their process of candidate evaluation. Interviews can be conducted to investigate whether a candidate's social identity makes him or her more valuable to employers.

## **Debatable Issues**

Several issues can be debated about the relationship between social identity and the subsequent career progression of individuals. For example, one might argue that a coaching group in NCAA basketball is a constituency of talented people who are drawn to each other, and it is because of their inherent talent that these individuals excel in obtaining employment. Although coaching group members presumably must have talent and quality to gain access to the

coaching profession and be recognized as a group member, the results of the present study suggest that membership provides benefits above and beyond talent. In the present study, a set of control variables helped address these concerns. By including performance variables, a possible alternative explanation that coaching group membership is solely a proxy for quality, was negated. Results indicate that control variables consistent with a human capital perspective influence career progression, and that social identity explains additional variance of subsequent employer prestige. Results indicate that when controlling for connectivity and status affiliations, social identity explains additional variance. Furthermore, post hoc analysis indicates that members of coaching groups of varying prestige did not have different career outcomes suggesting that status is not the lone driver linking social identity to subsequent employer prestige. One might also argue that the status of the affiliated “head coach” of a coaching group is primarily driving the success of connected others. Although coaching groups tend to be formed around a focal legendary coach, the results indicate that membership provides individuals with benefits that are above and beyond those accrued from merely being affiliated with a high-status individual. By controlling for the media visibility of each group’s central figure in post hoc analyses, a possible alternative explanation was negated; namely, that group membership is solely a proxy of being affiliated to a famous individual. In summary, this pattern of findings indicates that coaching groups are social identities that provide concise and valuable information about job seekers, and that individuals with such social identities accrue considerable career benefits.

### **Implications for Job Seekers**

Findings from the present study can be applied to the labor markets of managers and top executives. As discussed, coaches of men’s teams in NCAA basketball are similar to managers,

in that organizational performance is in many ways attributed to the leader. Social identities are also evident among affiliated executives in various fields. For example, as previously discussed, former employees of General Electric are referred to as “Graduates of Welch U.” Even though researchers (Groysberg, McLean, & Nohria, 2006) have concluded that the performance results of former GE executives after leaving GE have been uneven, these “Graduates of Welch U” continue to be offered top executive positions. For individuals, the career benefits of social identity exceed the benefits of prior performance, especially early in one’s career.

The benefits of social identity are especially applicable to industries that are complex due to high turnover. For example, media experts in the high-tech industry have begun to refer to former executives of Yahoo as “ex-Yahoos,” and former employees of Google as “Xooglers.” Tech blogger Michael Arrington tracks the career moves of ex-Yahoos who have left Yahoo to work at companies such as MySpace, Google, Nintendo, Martha Stewart Living, and others (available at <http://www.techcrunch.com/2008/06/21/updated-yahoo-exec-tracker-114-execs-left-since-january-2007/>, accessed December 1, 2008), and tech blogger Betsy Schiffman tracks the career moves of Xooglers who have left Google to start their own companies (available at <http://blog.wired.com/business/2008/03/can-google-stop.html>, accessed December 1, 2008). These social identities are used by audiences to categorize and order the field and are also claimed by members who have developed websites devoted to resource sharing among members (e.g., [xooglers.blogspot.com](http://xooglers.blogspot.com)). The results of the present study provide support for the wisdom used by ex-Yahoos and Xooglers for identifying themselves as members of these validated social categories, which have already caught the attention of media experts and hiring committees. Presumably, the career progression of these category members will be enhanced in the years ahead.

## **Limitations & Future Directions**

While this investigation revealed statistical trends in labor market activity for one profession, subsequent analyses would be strengthened with the addition of qualitative data such as interviews with coaches and university administrators who hire coaches. These data could be used to develop and test a path model linking social identity with career progression through an analysis of audience factors and individualized factors. Interviews with members of hiring committees would help identify whether group members are more easily understood and more positively evaluated during the hiring process. Furthermore, interviews with members of coaching groups would help identify the types of social support provided to fellow members, the strength of relationships between members (e.g., frequency of interactions, intensity of interactions, duration of relationships), and the level of identification with the group exhibited by members.

It would also be worthwhile to investigate the effects of social identities that are perceived by media experts in a negative light. It is possible that membership in a category comprised of individuals who act in ways that are not valued by audiences might have a detrimental effect on the career progression of members. An example in this setting includes the Bobby Knight Coaching tree. Coach Bob Knight received a tremendous amount of negative press following his many disciplinary problems at the University of Indiana (e.g., <http://espn.go.com/ncb/s/bobknightindex.html>, accessed November 5, 2008). As a result, it is possible that the negative attention may have limited the career progression of fellow members of the Knight coaching tree. A benefit of this setting is that the NCAA keeps records of violations and suspensions which would allow investigation of potential detrimental effects of affiliations with coaches who are known or perceived as problem-prone.

In conclusion, this study provides evidence supporting the conclusion that social identity has significant influence on the career progression of leaders in a field. Through an analysis of data from NCAA men's basketball coaching staffs, membership in a coaching group was found to influence the subsequent employer prestige of job seekers. I theorize that job seekers with positive social identities are hired for positions with more prestigious employers because the identities of these categories are ascribed to individual members, making them more easily understood by external audiences. Social identity provides information about an individual's values, character, and predicted behavior which is not evident from looking at prior performance or network connectivity.



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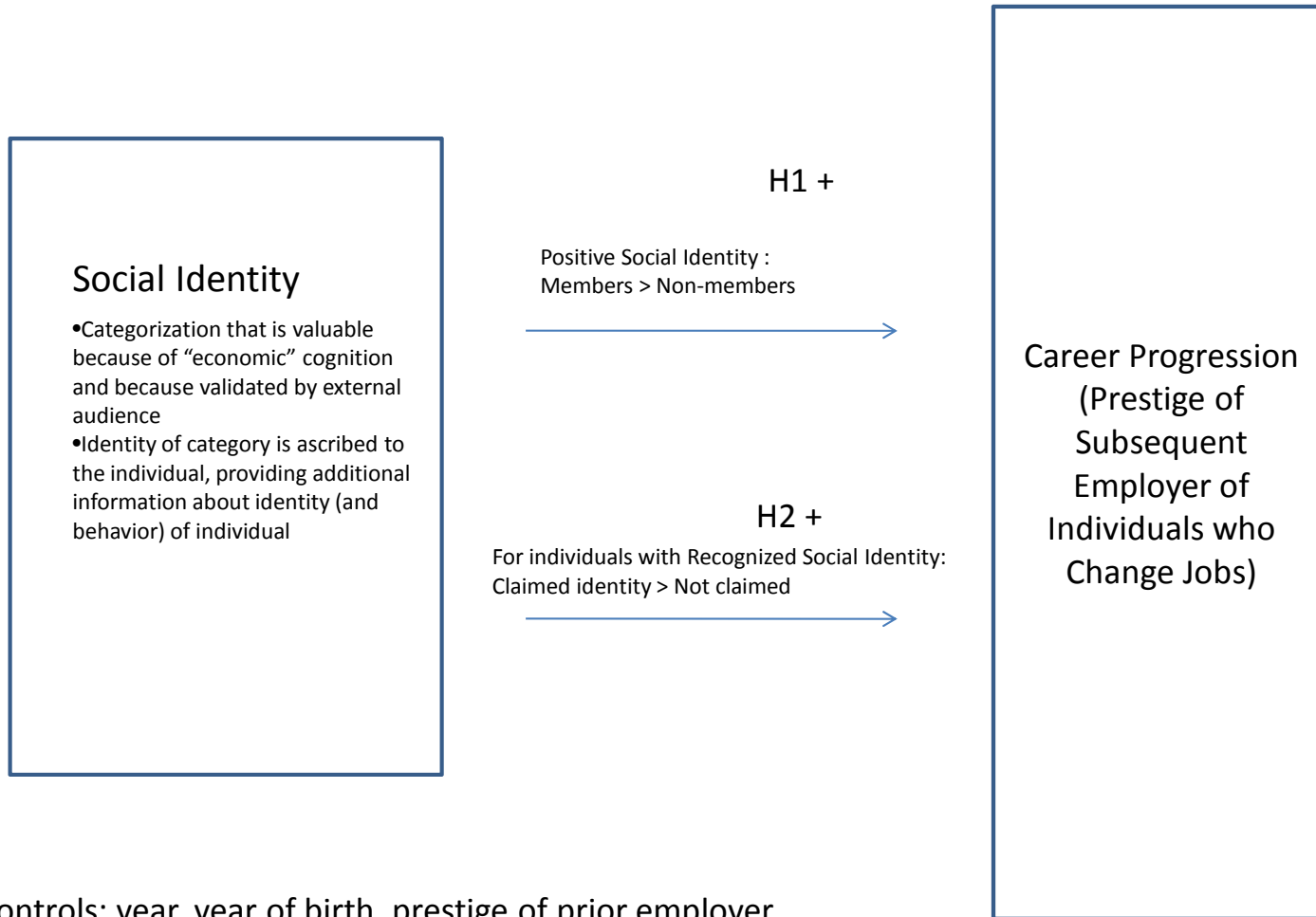
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**FIGURE 1:** Hypothesized Predictors of Career Progression

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL OF ANALYSIS



Controls: year, year of birth, prestige of prior employer, connectivity, status affiliations recent prior performance, cumulative prior performance

**TABLE 1: Comparison of Different Social Identities in NCAA Basketball (2001-2007)**

Coaching Group	Number of recognized members <sup>9</sup>	Recognized & claimed members	Group Visibility <sup>10</sup>	Visibility of "Leader" <sup>11</sup>	Characteristics of the Social Identity (e.g., playing style, values, academics)
Barry Collier	3	3	11	4,535	Defense
Bobby Knight	9	5	18	23,798	Motion Offense, Man to Man Defense, Discipline
Dean Smith/Tar Heel	10	9	109	47,522	T Zone Offense, Four Corners Offense, Community Service, Brotherhood
Gary Williams	5	3	10	32,912	Flex Offense
Hank Iba	19	12	28	3,852	Motion Offense, Man to Man Defense
Jim Boeheim	3	3	11	18,966	Syracuse 2-3 Zone Defense
Jim Calhoun	6	6	15	21,486	3-out 2-in Motion Offense
Jim Larranaga	4	1	2	3,778	Scrambling Defense
John Calipari	6	4	19	27,424	Dribble Drive Motion Offense
Lute Olson	4	4	21	28,758	Motion Offense, Zone Defense
Mike Krzyzewski	10	9	63	50,729	Team Defense, Academics, Discipline, Team Work
Mike Montgomery	5	5	3	14,207	Motion Offense, Up-tempo
Pete Gillen	3	3	6	10,886	Defense
Pete Carill/Princeton	6	5	17	3,648	Princeton Offense, Team Work, Academics
Rick Pitino	12	12	54	53,568	Three Point Shot, Team Work
Tom Izzo / Spartan	10	10	93	19,045	Man to Man Defense, Rebounding, Discipline, Team Work

<sup>9</sup> The number of recognized and claimed members only considers coaches who were active between 2001 and 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Number of articles written about each group

<sup>11</sup> The number of articles written about the leader of each group

**TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Table of Variables Predicting Subsequent Employer Prestige (n = 282)**

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>1</b> Year	2004.22	2.11	2001	2007											
<b>2</b> Year of Birth	1960.27	7.89	1935	1979	0.18	1									
<b>3</b> Cumulative Winning Percentage	59.46	10.78	0	95.24	0.02	-0.05	1								
<b>4</b> NCAA Tournament in Prior Year	112 = y 170 = n	.	0	1	-0.04	0.14	0.18	1							
<b>5</b> Cumulative NCAA Tournaments	4.28	4.37	0	26	-0.17	-0.37	0.39	0.13	1						
<b>6</b> Status Affiliations	329.57	204.95	0	893	0.06	-0.01	0.18	0.03	0.25	1					
<b>7</b> Connectivity	5.44	3.06	0	15	0	-0.05	0.14	0.16	0.34	0.41	1				
<b>8</b> Prestige of Prior Employer	133.9	111.26	2	301	-0.01	-0.28	-0.2	-0.5	-0.18	-0.2	-0.27	1			
<b>9</b> Tenure	493.74	214.37	0	1229	0.01	-0.64	0.29	-0.07	0.54	0.16	0.29	0.1	1		
<b>10</b> Social Identity	80 = y 202 = n	.	0	1	0	0.05	0.23	0.12	0.25	0.41	0.34	-0.19	0.03	1	
<b>11</b> Claimed Identity	66 = y 14 = n	.	0	1	0.02	0.04	0.24	0.13	0.25	0.36	0.32	-0.18	0.06	0.97	1
<b>12</b> Subsequent Employer Prestige	162.26	91.1	2	300	0.03	-0.08	-0.14	-0.23	-0.22	-0.08	-0.13	0.17	0.01	-0.31	-0.31



**TABLE 3: Negative Binomial Regression Models of Employer Prestige (n=282)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
	Controls	Social Identity	Controls	Claimed Identity	Post Hoc	Post Hoc	Post Hoc	Post Hoc
<b>Social Identity Variables</b>								
Social Identity		-3.64** (0.10)						
Claimed Identity				-2.08* (0.26)				
Group Size								-0.67 (0.02)
Group Salience					-0.72 (0.00)			
Leader Salience						-0.52 (0.00)		
Group Prestige							0.35 (0.00)	
<b>Control Variables</b>								
NCAA Tournament in prior year	-2.30* (0.10)	-2.54* (0.01)	-2.06* (0.23)	-1.91t (0.22)	-2.15* (0.23)	-2.03* (0.23)	-2.07* (0.23)	-2.06* (0.22)
Winning Percentage	-0.60 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.19 (0.00)	0.69 (0.02)	-0.07 (0.02)	-0.17 (0.02)	-0.21 (0.02)	-0.28 (0.02)
Cumulative NCAA Tournaments	-2.92** (0.01)	-2.54* (0.09)	-1.72t (0.03)	-1.97* (0.03)	-1.82t (0.03)	-1.69t (0.03)	-1.57 (0.03)	-1.69t (0.03)
Connectivity	-0.56 (0.02)	0.31 (0.02)	0.71 (0.03)	0.38 (0.03)	0.71 (0.03)	0.73 (0.03)	0.65 (0.03)	0.71 (0.03)
Status Affiliations	-0.04 (0.00)	1.02 (0.00)	-0.08 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	-0.08 (0.00)	0.02 (0.00)	-0.02 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Year of Position Change	0.00 (0.02)	-0.13 (0.02)	-0.27 (0.02)	0.19 (0.05)	-0.09 (0.05)	-0.27 (0.05)	-0.23 (0.05)	-0.18 (0.05)
Year of Birth	-1.16 (0.01)	-1.07 (0.01)	-0.74 (0.01)	-0.76 (0.02)	-0.74 (0.02)	-0.60 (0.02)	-0.71 (0.02)	-0.73 (0.02)
Prestige of Prior Employer	-0.39 (0.00)	-0.22 (0.00)	-0.10 (0.00)	-0.16 (0.00)	-0.07 (0.00)	-0.07 (0.00)	-0.14 (0.00)	-0.18 (0.00)
Tenure (total games)	0.81 (0.00)	0.38 (0.00)	1.02 (0.00)	1.41 (0.00)	1.08 (0.00)	1.05 (0.00)	0.91 (0.00)	0.98 (0.00)
Constant	0.55 (39.840)	0.65 (39.09)	0.61 (95.00)	0.16 (94.06)	0.42 (97.57)	0.56 (95.02)	0.55 (95.95)	0.51 (96.87)
Observations	282	282	80	80	80	80	80	80
Log likelihood	-1669.77	-1663.52	-455.88	-453.63	-455.63	-455.75	-455.82	-455.66
Change in LL from baseline	.	12.50**		4.50*	0.50	0.27	0.13	0.44
Standard error in parentheses t p<.10; * p < .05; ** p < .01								

**TABLE 4: Post Hoc Analysis of Subsequent Employer Prestige: Negative Binomial Regression Model of Subsequent Employer Prestige and Tenure (n = 282)**

	<b>Model 9</b>
	<b>Post Hoc</b>
<b>Social Identity Variables</b>	
Social Identity	-3.70** (0.22)
Social Identity x Tenure	2.24* (0.00)
<b>Controls</b>	
<b>Prior Performance</b>	
NCAA Tournament in prior year	-2.66** (0.09)
Winning Percentage	0.16 (0.00)
Cumulative NCAA Tournaments	-3.14** (0.08)
<b>Social Capital</b>	
Connectivity	0.21 (0.02)
Status Affiliations	0.82 (0.00)
Year of Position Change	-0.20 (0.02)
Year of Birth	-1.20 (0.00)
Prestige of Prior Employer	-0.65 (0.00)
Tenure (total games)	-0.26 (0.00)
Constant	0.77 (38.97)
Observations	282
Log likelihood	-1661.04
Standard error in parentheses t p<.10; * p < .05; ** p< .01	

## APPENDIX A

### **Determining the Statistical Integrity Coaching Groups**

To investigate the statistical integrity of these groupings I conducted two additional analyses. The first analysis is a group level analysis of different social identities in NCAA basketball to investigate whether members of coaching groups utilize coaching strategies that are different from non-affiliation members (providing a form of integrity for groupings). The second analysis is a dyadic analysis to investigate whether two coaches who employ similar strategies are more likely to be members of the same coaching group (elucidating group membership criteria).

#### **Analysis 1: Group Level Analysis of Statistical Integrity**

##### ***Dependent Variable***

*Playing Style Statistics.* To determine playing style, I collected team playing statistics from the 2007-2008 season for all teams. The collected statistics include Points per Game, Field Goal Percentage per Game, Free Throws per Game, Three Pointers Attempted per Game, Three Pointers Made per game, Offensive Rebounds per Game, Defensive Rebounds per Game, Steals Per Game, Blocks Per Game, Assists per Game, and Turnovers per Game.

##### ***Independent Variable***

*Social Identity.* I identified members of coaching groups as previously described.

##### ***Model Specification***

I compared the mean playing style statistic of each coaching group with the mean playing style statistic of all non-group members. I utilized t-tests in Stata 11.0.

## **Analysis 2: Dyadic Analysis of Statistical Integrity**

### ***Dependent Variable***

*Group Co-Membership.* To determine group co-membership, I used qualitative data to identify all active coaches who were group members at the start of the 2007 season. I then created a coach-by-coach matrix entitled Group Co-Membership to identify coaches who were part of the same coaching group. In the Group Co-Membership matrix,  $x_{ij}$  equals 1 if the two coaches are members of the same coaching group, and 0 if they are not.

### ***Independent Variables***

*Adjacency Matrix.* To calculate this measure, I first collected the complete career histories of all active coaches. I then created a complete historical affiliation network so that  $x_{ij}$  equals 1 if Coach  $i$  and Coach  $j$  were at the same institution at the same point in time. For example, Coaches Tubby Smith and Billy Donovan were both assistant coaches at the University of Kentucky in 1989, and therefore have an affiliation tie in the adjacency matrix.

*Structural Equivalence Matrix.* To calculate this measure, I correlated the rows of the adjacency matrix. Two coaches who share the same pattern of work relationships would be highly correlated. For example, Coaches Jimmy Patsos and Mike Longeran are perfectly structurally equivalent because both have worked with Gary Williams and Dave Dickerson but with no other head coaches.

*Playing Style Similarity.* To determine playing style similarity, I first collected team playing statistics from the 2007-2008 season for all teams. The collected statistics include Points per Game, Field Goals per Game, Free Throws per Game, Three Pointers Attempted per Game, Three Pointers Made per game, Offensive Rebounds per Game, Defensive Rebounds per Game, Steals Per Game, Blocks Per Game, Assists per Game, and Turnovers per Game. Qualitative

data suggest that certain coaches utilize similar strategies that can be seen in their team's playing style. To assess similarity, I correlated playing style statistics to create a coach-by-coach matrix entitled Playing Style Similarity. In this matrix  $x_{ij}$  equals the correlation of two coaches based on the playing style of their teams.

*Performance Similarity.* To determine Performance Similarity, I first collected the win-loss record for every coach between October 31, 2007 and October 31, 2008. I converted these statistics into a winning percentage. I then created a coach-by-coach matrix in which  $x_{ij}$  is the absolute difference in winning percentage of Coach i and Coach j.

### ***Model Specification***

I used MRQAP to regress matrix Group Co-Membership on matrix Adjacency (the network adjacency matrix), matrix Performance Similarity (similarity in winning performance matrix), matrix Structural Equivalence (similarity in structural position matrix), and matrix Playing Style (similarity in coaching style matrix). I conducted this analysis using UCINET VI (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002).

## **RESULTS**

At the group level, results indicate that members of certain coaching groups utilize different strategies than those used by non-group members. For example, members of the Rick Pitino Family, Izzo Family, Calipari Family, Tar Heel Family, Princeton Family, Boeheim Tree, Iba Tree, and the Knight Tree use statistically different strategies than coaches who are not members of any coaching groups. Appendix B presents these differences. For certain groups, the playing style statistics correspond with the qualitative espoused affiliation playing style. For example, the Pitino Family is known for stressing an up-tempo offensive style, which is evident in their above average points per game and number of steals per game; the Izzo Family is known

for “hard work” and rebounding, which is evident in their above average defensive rebounds per game and blocks per game; the Princeton Family is known for the slow-down “Princeton offense,” which is evident in their below average points per game; and the Tar Heel Family is known for teamwork, which is evident in their above average assists per game. However, the statistical differences do not fully match with the espoused identity of each group. For example, despite averaging more points per game than other coaches, there is no statistical evidence indicating that members of the Pitino Family attempt and convert more three-point attempts than non-members. In fact, Pitino’s 2007 team was 45<sup>th</sup> in three-point attempts and 205<sup>nd</sup> in shooting percentage for three-point shots. In addition, for eight groups, no statistically significant differences were found in styles used by these groups when compared to other coaches.

Results from Multiple Regression Quadratic Assignment Procedure (a dyadic analysis) indicate that two coaches who employ similar strategies are only slightly more likely to be considered members of the same group than are two coaches who do not employ similar strategies (Model 1:  $B = 0.01$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Appendix C presents these results. Findings also indicate that two coaches who share similar performance records are no more likely to be recognized as members of the same group than are two coaches who do not share similar performance records. As expected, former colleagues and coaches who are structurally equivalent in the coworker network (e.g., two coaches who worked for the same third coach) are more likely to be recognized as members of the same group than are randomly selected dyads (Model 3:  $B = 0.10$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**APPENDIX B: Comparison of Coaching Strategy of Group Members with Non-Members in 2007-2008 (n=341)**

<b>Coaching Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Espoused Style</b>	<b>Significant Statistical Differences</b>	<b>Affiliation Mean</b>	<b>Non-Affiliation Mean</b>	<b>Statistical Significance</b>
Barry Collier	2	Defense				
Bobby Knight	9	Motion Offense, Man to Man Defense	Higher field goal percentage per game	0.55	-0.11	t = 4.49**
Dean Smith / Tar Heel	10	T Zone Offense, Four Corners Offense	More assists per game	0.79	-0.12	t = 2.08*
Gary Williams	2	Flex Offense				
Hank Iba	19	Motion Offense, Man to Man Defense	More steals per game Fewer turnovers per game	0.85 -0.30	-0.04 0.06	t = 3.77** t = -1.95*
Jim Boeheim	4	Syracuse 2-3 Zone Defense	More blocks per game	1.07	-0.09	t = 2.37*
Jim Calhoun	6	3-out 2-in Motion Offense				
Jim Larranaga	1	Scrambling Defense				
John Calipari	4	Dribble Drive Motion Offense	More steals per Game	0.97	-0.04	t = 2.92*
Lute Olson	3	Motion Offense, Zone Defense				
Mike Krzyzewski	6	Team Defense				
Mike Montgomery	5	Motion Offense, Up-tempo				
Pete Gillen	1	Defense				
Pete Carill / Princeton	5	Princeton Offense	Fewer points per game	-1.18	-0.07	t = -2.97*
Rick Pitino	8	Three point shot	More points per game More defensive rebounds per game More steals per game More blocks per game Higher field goal percentage per game	0.66 0.73 0.86 0.83 0.70	-0.07 -0.08 -0.12 -0.09 -0.11	t = 2.09* t = 2.35* t = 4.83** t = 1.97* t = 3.31**
Tom Izzo / Spartan	9	Man to Man Defense, Rebounding	More defensive rebounds per game More blocks per game	0.57 0.44	-0.08 -0.09	t = 1.80* t = 2.02*
Comparison: Non-Members	263	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

## APPENDIX C

### MRQAP Predicting Group Co-Membership

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
Similar Performance Style	0.00		0.00
Similar Playing Style		0.01**	0.00
Network Adjacency			0.25**
Structural Equivalence			0.10**
Constant	0.00	0.00	0.00
Observations	114582	114582	114582
R squared	0.00	0.00	0.084

t p < .10; \* p < .05; \*\* p < .01