

THE DUAL ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR/  
ATHLETIC COACH

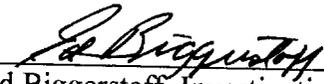
By

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ABSTRACT

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THE DUAL ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR/ATHLETIC COACH (Title)			
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The purpose of this study was to obtain information about current trends as well as thoughts and feelings about the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach. This information provides guidance counselors and school districts information regarding the positive and negative effects of this dual role. The research also provides demographic information regarding school districts in the state of Wisconsin during the 1999-2000 school year.

There are advantages and disadvantages to guidance counselors serving the dual role of counselor/athletic coach. This study had a two-fold purpose. First, to describe what percentage of middle school and high school guidance counselors have athletic coaching responsibilities, to show which counselors are likely to be involved in this dual role, and if coaching responsibilities affect

counselor performance as measured by a self-developed questionnaire. Second, to offer recommendations for guidance counselors in the school setting concerning this dual role.

The study focused on ten basic objectives which are listed in Chapter I and the results are explained and displayed in Chapter IV and the tables provided. The study began with the alteration of a survey developed by Tomski (1985) which polled counselors on these issues. The author requested a random sample of 100 middle school and high school guidance counselors from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The questionnaire was mailed to these participants, and they were requested to mail their results back utilizing the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. The University of Wisconsin-Stout research assistance department then tabulated the results. The author then summarized these findings utilizing the Microsoft Works spreadsheet and graphs program. The results provide guidance counselors input and recommendations regarding the affects of the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

The role of a guidance counselor is one of the most important roles in a school today. This role and function is ever changing just as school systems change. Demands from this position seem to become greater as the student populations rise and teaching positions become more specialized. Lack of clarification of the guidance counselor's role has led to a rise in concern among professionals in the field. Studies have shown that a person's perception of the guidance counselor's role varies considerably. The counselor may view their role very differently than administration, teachers, students, parents, or the general public. Organizations such as the ASCA (American School Counselors Association) have made an effort to clarify the ambiguity of the guidance-counseling role.

In spite of these guidelines and standards put forth by the ASCA, many schools expect their guidance counselor to also perform roles as administrators, coaches, clerks, secretaries, substitute teachers, activity club supervisors, etc... (Cole, 1983; Crabbs, 1977; Eddy, 1982; Kremer, 1979; Osborne, 1978). Many areas of concern arise when focusing on the combination or dual role of a guidance counselor and athletic coach. Some include counselor availability, time constraints, unclear contractual guidelines governing job function, counselor's student bias, and approachability. Research has been conducted to examine these

dual roles and the effect they have on that professional's job performance. Some areas researched include reasons for counseling dual roles, time availability, the counselor-student relationship, and possible conflicts (Day, 1980; Goldman 1978; Ibrahim, 1983; Purkey, 1982).

The dual role of teacher/coach, administrator/coach, or counselor/coach is performed across this entire country. Coaching, for the vast majority, is the secondary responsibility of these people. The inherent challenge in these dual roles is maintaining a commitment to quality performance in both roles. Time constraints due to heavy workloads seem to challenge this performance. The school employee's relationship with students is very important, and often very different in after-school activities.

The dual role of a guidance counselor/coach has been reported in the past to be more predominant among men and in smaller schools (Tomski, 1985). The school system has changed a great deal in the past fifteen years. More sports are being offered to females, as well as males. Today more women are in the guidance-counseling role. As the student population in schools increases, sports and coaching is becoming more specialized. Many schools now have individuals hired to be just coaches.

A master's thesis was completed in 1985 by Robin Tomski at the University of Wisconsin-Stout titled The Dual Role Guidance Counselor/Athletic Coach. Tomski mailed out a self-developed questionnaire to 100 randomly

selected secondary guidance counselors in the state of Wisconsin. This questionnaire obtained general information from these counselors on personal facts, their opinions about the dual role, and their experience with counseling and coaching.

This study replicated Tomski's study. The school systems, counseling, and coaching have all changed drastically in fifteen years. To achieve this goal, the original questionnaire was slightly altered. This questionnaire (Appendix A, pages 33-35) was also mailed to middle school counselors along with the high school counselors. Today, sports and coaching are very prominent at the middle school level.

Today's school populations have increased dramatically since 1985 as the general population has grown. The need for more teachers, counselors, and coaches has increased each year. A study was conducted in 1998 by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) which was titled Supply and Demand of Educational Personnel for Wisconsin Public Schools. This study found many interesting characteristics about the attrition trends and employment numbers in the state. Approximately 48 percent of newly hired educators had no previous teaching experience in 1998. These roles have all become more specialized, limiting the auxiliary duties each person could be involved with. The total number of school counselors in public schools totaled 1900 in the 1997-98 school year. Of them, 926 were between the ages of 41 to 50. These numbers

support that fact that a large majority of school counselors in this state are approaching retirement age. There were 70 new school counselors hired in the state in the 1997-98 school year. The average age of educators is steadily rising. The number of teachers and related staff members to retire during the 1999-2000 school year is projected to be 1548 employees. These projected retirement figures steadily rise by approximately 200 people per year and propose that 2618 employees will retire in the 2005-2006 school year. These attrition numbers show strong evidence that a great number of new teachers will be hired in the immediate future. Recent tragedies in schools involving great violence have opened the eyes of the public and shown that children are very delicate and need special attention from family as well as school employees. These new trends are creating a need for new styles of teaching and counseling, and the role of dual role counselor/coach needed to be explored to determine if this dynamic is beneficial or detrimental to a person's professional performance.

Sports that were offered in 1985 are different than sports offered today. Gender equality has led to more women's athletics being offered and increased funds for them. Guidelines set by the Department of Public Instruction have become more stringent in regards to the number of students a guidance counselor may work with. These requirements have caused schools to hire more counselors.

### Statement of Problem

There may be advantages and disadvantages to guidance counselors serving the dual role of counselor/athletic coach. There is a need to update the information regarding this issue, and to provide it to interested school districts.

### Purpose of the Study

This study had a two-fold purpose. First, to describe what percentage of middle school and high school guidance counselors have athletic coaching responsibilities, to show which counselors are likely to be involved in this dual role, and if coaching responsibilities affect counselor performance as measured by a self-developed questionnaire. Second, to offer recommendations for guidance counselors and coaches in the school setting concerning this dual role.

### Objectives

This study focused on the following objectives:

1. To determine the number of years the counselor has been in the counseling profession.
2. To determine the number of years the counselor has been coaching.
3. To determine the number of years the counselor has been at their current school.
4. To determine the gender of each counselor.
5. To determine the size of the student population at the school.

6. To identify any rules or policies regarding the guidance counselor/athletic coach dual role.
7. To identify if the counselor is currently performing the dual role, has ever in the past, or does not and never has.
8. To identify which sport or sports the counselor is coaching.
9. To identify positive or negative effects of performing the dual role.
10. To identify other recommendations or suggestions from the counselors about the guidance counselor/athletic coach dual role.

#### Definition of Terms

Dual role refers to the combination of two distinctly different occupational roles, which are defined by two different job descriptions, but performed by the same individual.

Counselor performance refers to how well a person performs his/her counseling role as measured by the standards set forth by his/her school system.

#### Limitations

A limitation of this study is that the questionnaire was mailed out to a random selection of the middle and high school counselors in the State of Wisconsin limiting the number of possible responses.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Literature

A review of literature concerning the guidance counselor/athletic coach dual role is critical in understanding the dynamics in this study. Several researchers have studied dual role relationships related to this area such as teacher/coach and administrator/coach (Helms, 1983; Jones, 1978, Pietrowiak, 1990). Each of these studies examined possible negative outcomes related to conflicts and positive outcomes related to job performance. These different dual roles are strongly related to the guidance counselor/athletic coach dual role because of the dynamics of job stress, role strain, time management and approachability. There is a limited amount of research available for the counselor/coach dual role.

The majority of research that has been completed has been done on dual roles other than the counselor/coach. The dual role teacher/coach has been found to be “extremely compatible... finding in both models provisions of companionship, giving technical support, analysis of application, adaptation to the students, and personal facilitation” (Joyce and Showers, 1982). Possible benefits of being a teacher/coach cited were improved relations with other faculty, job security, improved relations with students and even establishing informal ties with students. Coaching and teaching compliment each other, as does coaching coupled with other roles in the school system. Sisley, Capel, Desertrain (1987) suggest that some reasons why teacher/coaches do not experience burnout is

because that coaching allows opportunities to combat stress. The satisfaction from coaching may be enough to outweigh many of the stressful effects experienced in the teaching side of the job.

Studies conducted in the past offer evidence that the dual roles can be both harmful and beneficial for the professional and others whom he or she has contact with. Secondary school physical education teachers/coaches “face role strain as they attempt to perform the role expectations of teachers and coach. The result of this is often poor physical education teaching” (Aicinena, 1999). It is difficult for the teacher/coach to fulfill the time demands required performing this dual role. “Because of the time demands of teaching and coaching and the differences in the teaching and coaching environment, many teacher/coaches experience role strain” (Sage, 1987).

School guidance counselor’s interaction with students is very important for personal and social development. Multi-dimensional relationships between students and counselors are often common. A counselor helps a student with their class schedules, scholarship applications, college entrance exams, career decisions, personal issues, and general student dilemmas. Too many counselors are “being consumed by certain administrative duties such as administrative assistant, record keeper, or even schedule changer, which prevent them from performing the duties of the professional counselor” (Myrick, 1984).

“Sports madness that has swept the nation” (Lapchick, 1987-1988) has generated considerable debate over the direct influence these activities have over

students. Heyman (1987) stated that the impact of athletic participation on the psychosocial development of adolescent athletes presents the most serious, yet often neglected, challenge to those who work with high school students. The dual role athletic coach is positioned in a very important and influential place.

Coaches and counselors must be alert to “situations in which athletes are unable to discriminate appropriate on-field behaviors from those acceptable outside the athletic arena” (Goldberg and Chandler, 1995).

The dual role counselor/coach is a position that carries a heavy responsibility of influencing many students. “Counselors need to establish a positive working alliance with the athletic triangle of athlete, parent, and coach” (Goldberg and Chandler, 1995). Attitudes and expectations of parents, teachers, administrators, and coaches are a major source of developmental stress for students. The relationship between counselor and coach is especially important because coaches play a major role in the personal and social development of high school athletes. Coaches are significant role models for student athletes. The coaches’ management of their emotion and the way they communicate with the student can have a direct influence on the social and psychological process of the student. The training and skills a counselor has acquired from their schooling can be very beneficial for the student athlete/coach relationship. A counselor performing in a coaching role can bring to student athlete’s insight and experience that other adults may not possess. These statements seem to highlight the counselor/coaches’ influence on student athletes rather than non-athletes, but

healthy development for all adolescents represents “an interaction among the individual and his or her psychological dynamics, and the larger social world in which the individual is living” (Kiunick, 1985). Skills from coaching can also be utilized in the counseling role offering assistance to more students.

Counseling and teaching have been defined as assisting performance through the zone of proximal development (Gallimore 1988). Effective classroom teaching and effective counseling require the same basis of personal learning as coaching sports. Each student is at his or her own personal level of advancement psychologically, just as each athlete is at his or her own personal level of advancement athletically. Personal coaching strategies can be readily applied within the organizational dynamics of schools, and can “help create and sustain an educational environment where educators experience a high level of creativity, efficacy, and satisfaction in their work” (Nash, 1998).

Counselors in rural schools often perform different duties than do counselors in urban schools. “School counselors working in rural areas faced issues that their urban counterparts never had to consider” (Cahill and Martland, 1993). Smaller student populations demand a less numerous staff at a school, so the dual role counselor/coach or teacher/coach may be more common. Morrisette (1996) conducted a phenomenological study and interviewed five co-researchers. From this study, several themes arose and included privacy and anonymity, sense of isolation, performing a dual role, and continuity of relationships.

This study concerns how counselors view coaching as affecting counselor performance. Terminology used in past studies describing this dual role includes role conflict, conflicting loyalties, role ambiguity, and dual professions. Role conflict stems from one person's necessity to occupy several different roles that demand incompatible behaviors (Locke, 1978). Role conflict may stem from various sources, including counselor/student and coach/student advice offering and consultation or even decision-making. A counselor's non-judgmental, open-minded practice may differ greatly from quick, one answer, and practical decision of a coach.

The role conflict theme is presented repeatedly throughout the literature located on the counselor/coach dual role topic. Because of a counselor's heavy workload, the additional responsibilities may hamper their effectiveness. One researcher described a need of a counselor to be "substantial hat racks for their multitude of hats" (Cole 1983). By this the researcher was referring to the multitude of different roles and responsibilities included in their daily activities as school counselor.

The present study attempts to gain more insight on the current situation involving the school counselor/athletic coach dual role. The literature reviewed offers possible advantages and disadvantages of holding dual roles, but is very limited in the area of counselor/coach. More research needs to be done to present and clarify the dynamics of this dual role. Therefore, additional research in this area will offer a current explanation of the dual role counselor coach at this time,

and offer suggestions to help alleviate any possible role conflict within the guidance counselor/athletic coaching professions.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

#### Subjects

The sample subjects in this investigation consisted of 100 middle and secondary school guidance counselors taken from a population of approximately 1400 middle and high school counselors employed in the state of Wisconsin during the 1999-2000 school year. This random sample was obtained by using a table of random numbers in conjunction with the School Counselor List: Wisconsin Public Schools.

#### Instrumentation

Due to the distance involved, time schedules of counselors, and costs involved in conducting personal interviews, a questionnaire developed by Tomski (1985) was modified and mailed to the participants. This was determined to be the most practical and applicable tool for the study.

The questionnaire (Appendix A, pages 33-36) was organized so that it would be easy to complete in a brief amount of time, and asked for only that information which was considered essential to the study. It was also organized so that the information obtained would be easy to compile and analyze. Several questions were deleted from the original study and several questions were added to update the questionnaire for this study due to the changes in the school system from 1985 to the present.

The purpose of the questionnaire used in this study was to obtain data and establish the involvement counselors in the state of Wisconsin have with athletic coaching. It also sought information on common characteristics of these counselors, such as years in the profession, age, length of time in school system, length of time coaching, and sports coached. Finally, the questionnaire attempted to obtain information about the perceptions of these counselors towards how involvement in athletics could affect their performance as a counselor.

Survey items were mostly objective with each item having multiple choice responses. All but one question was closed-ended. This made the questionnaire simpler to answer and compile results. The last question was open-ended, and asked the counselor/coach to give a person recommendation or opinion about this dual role.

Guidance counselors had a different role in 1985 as compared to today. Often, counselors could also be teachers and have many other responsibilities not related to counseling. The demand for a more specialized counseling role is much greater today. The workload of a counselor today is more demanding with less time available for other tasks. These changes were incorporated into the questionnaire.

Input as to the content of the questions came from graduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, a current middle school counselor, a current secondary counselor, and faculty and staff at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The questionnaire developed by Tomski was slightly modified. The researcher

and the advisor to the project developed other questions. These questions were to reflect the changes in politically correct thinking and to attempt to provide a more accurate picture of our current school systems.

### Procedures

The questionnaire (Appendix A, pages 33-36) was mailed to the selected counselors around the state. Each guidance counselor received an introductory letter (Appendix B, page 37-38), the questionnaire (Appendix A, pages 33-36), and a self-addressed stamped envelope to be returned to the researcher. The introductory letter (Appendix B, page 37-38) was personalized by including the respondent's name in the salutation of the cover letter. All cover letters were hand signed by the researcher. The counselors were asked to return the filled out questionnaire by mailing them to the researcher.

### Data Analysis

The responses marked on the questionnaire are composed into each objective area and the description of thoughts and trends on the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach are presented. A comparison was done between the responses obtained from this research and the responses obtained in 1985 by Tomski. This information and insight will relate to the current roles of guidance counselor and athletic coach.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results and Discussion

The purpose of this descriptive study was to survey middle and high school counselors to determine current trends in the field along with current opinions on the dual role of guidance counselor athletic coach. The focus was on demographic facts related to the sample utilized in order to show positive or negative thoughts related to the dual role.

The findings of this study are presented in a two-fold manner. First, descriptive statistics will be utilized in showing demographic information, including the gender of each counselor, years of experience counseling, school descriptions, and information regarding the percentages of guidance counselors who have had athletic coaching responsibilities. Some common themes will be explained as to how the counselors felt about the dual role divided by positive and negative feelings.

The survey results will be presented descriptively in this chapter, followed by spreadsheets (Tables A-L, pages 39-50) containing the specific statistics from the seventy respondents of the one hundred recipients of the survey.

#### **Counselor's personal information** (Tables A, B, and C, pages 39-41)

The guidance counselors responding to the survey included 36 males (51%) and 34 females (49 %). The age of the respondents reported was fairly evenly distributed between the six categories presented, although 50 percent of the respondents were at least 46 years old. Tomski (1985) reported that 46

percent of males in the study were in the 46-55-age category. The number of years as a guidance counselor was fairly evenly distributed, with the largest population of males being in the 16+ years category (36%) and a tie for the females with the 1-3 years and the 10-12 years groups (21%). Also, the number of years the counselor was at that specific school district was fairly evenly distributed between the six categories presented.

#### **School size (Table D, page 42)**

The size of the school in which the counselors worked was divided into three different student population categories. The respondents reported that 13 percent worked in a school district, which had 399 students or less. Forty percent reported working in a district with 400 to 800 students, and 47 percent reported working in a school district of 801 or more students. Again, the trends reported in 1985 by Tomski are similar, in that 47 percent of the counselors were in schools with 801 or more students, 29 percent in the middle sized schools, and 24 percent in the smaller schools.

#### **District policy**

When asked if the counselor was aware if the school district had a policy preventing them from coaching, 97 percent responded no, while the other two respondents answered “not applicable” and “don’t know”. Tomski reported that 93 percent of those counselors reported that their district did not have a rule or policy preventing them from performing this dual role, and 7 percent reported they did indeed have a policy preventing them from this practice.

**Dual role participation/response rate** (Tables E and F, pages 43 and 44)

When asked in the survey if the counselors had ever performed the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach in the past, if they are performing the dual role now, or if they have never coached, 60 percent reported never having performed the dual role. Just over 21 percent are currently performing the dual role, while 19 percent had performed the dual role in the past but were not at this time. These statistics can be compared to Tomski's study done in 1985, where 59 percent had never performed the dual role, 22 percent had performed the dual role in the past, and 20 percent are currently performing the dual role. More men (28%) than women (15%) are currently performing the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach. These figures show that both men and women currently counseling are more likely to be performing this dual role and coaching, than compared to 1985 where Tomski reported 24 percent of men and 5 percent of women performing the dual role. Also, the response rate differed between genders. Questionnaires were mailed out to 55 female participants and 45 male participants, with 34 females responding compared to 36 males. The response rate percentages are 80 percent for the men and 62 percent for the women.

**Years of experience** (Table G, page 45)

The number of years the counselors are or were involved in coaching varied from one to more than sixteen years. The vast majority of the dual role performers (71%) had been involved in coaching from one to nine years. The number of counselors who have coached sixteen or more years was reported at 21

percent. Forty percent of female respondents have been involved in coaching from 1 to 3 years, which shows an influx in the female population performing the dual role. Also, another 30 percent of females have been involved with coaching for 4 to 6 years. Again, these numbers are very similar to the 1985 study, which reported 39 percent of counselors had been in the profession for 15 or more years.

#### **Sport options** (Table H, page 46)

A variety of sports were listed as options for the counselors to be involved with in their dual roles. The most two most prominent sports coached today by male counselors are basketball and football. Tied for third were wrestling, track, and baseball. Female respondents reported that basketball and “other” which included pom pom and cheerleading were their most often coached sports. The three most frequently coached sports reported in Tomski’s study in order were basketball, football, and baseball. Tomski did not report his findings by gender, so a comparison is not able to be made. There was no real difference between the sports coached by counselors now as compared to 1985.

#### **Coaching capacities** (Table I, page 47)

When asked what role the counselors were involved in coaching, 26 percent responded head coaching, 37 percent responded assistant coaching, and 37 percent reported both head and assistant coaching. These percentages are again very comparable to the ones reported in 1985. Tomski stated that 38 percent of the counselors had performed head-coaching duties, 24 percent

assistant duties, and 39 percent performed in both head and assistant coaching roles.

**Positive influences of coaching** (Table J, page 48)

There were many responses to the positive and negative ways the dual role can affect a counselor's job performance. The two most popular positive responses were "establish rapport" (89%) and "establish trust" (89%). The other most popular responses included "public relations" (78%) and "student contact time" (74%). Tomski also reported that establishing rapport was the most common (84%) listed positive influence, along with public relations (66%), and student contact time (61%).

**Negative influences of coaching** (Table K, page 49)

The two most popular negative responses were "time availability" (56%) and "free time tied up" (56%). The other most popular response to the negative influences of coaching for a school counselor was "increase of stress" (30%). Tomski reported that 79 percent of counselors stated that time availability was a negative aspect, and 55 percent stated their free time was tied up. The idea of stress was less prominent in 1985 with 18 percent reporting that as a negative influence.

**Counselor opinion on dual role recommendation** (Table L, page 50)

The respondents were asked if they would recommend the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach to other counselors. Three of the seventy responding counselors left this question blank, while 48 percent reported they

*would* recommend the dual role, while 37 percent reported they *would not* recommend the dual role. Eight percent responded they had no opinion or were neutral, while another 8 percent reported maybe, or it depends. These figures are very different than the ones reported in 1985. That study concluded that 79 percent of counselors *would* recommend the dual role, 11 percent *would not* recommend the dual role, and 10 percent had no response. When comparing the differences between genders, significant findings arose. Nearly 65 percent of males *would* recommend the dual role as opposed to just 30 percent of females. Also, 32 percent of males *would not* recommend the dual role as compared to 42 percent of females not recommending the dual role. Three percent of men answered “maybe/it depends” and no men selected “no opinion/neutral”. These numbers are also very different from the females which 12 percent selected “maybe/it depends” and 15 percent selected “no opinion/neutral”.

## Chapter V

### Introduction and Summary

The purpose of this descriptive study was to administer a survey of middle and high school guidance counselors to determine what percentage of these counselors have or have not had athletic coaching responsibilities; to show which counselors are likely to be involved in this dual role; and, to give insight as to if these dual role responsibilities affect the counselors job performance. This information will provide the current field of school counselors and other interested parties with current trends, thoughts and feelings on the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach.

To meet the objectives of this study, the survey sought to provide the following information about the school guidance counselors in this sample:

1. Years as a school guidance counselor;
2. Gender;
3. Age;
4. Is there a rule or policy in your district prohibiting this dual role;
5. Length of time at current school;
6. Size of school where employed;
7. If the counselor is coaching a sport now, had in the past, or has no experience coaching;
8. Years involved in coaching;
9. Sports coached;

10. Were they a head coach, assistant coach, or both;
11. Positive effects of coaching while counseling;
12. Negative effects of coaching while counseling;
13. Would the counselor recommend the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach or not? An explanation may be provided.

After the thirteen item questionnaire was updated from Tomski's (1985) version, it was mailed to a random sample of 100 public middle and high school guidance counselors employed in the state of Wisconsin during the 1999-2000 school year, which was randomly selected by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. A 70 percent response rate was received after the initial mailing. The results were tabulated by the UW-Stout research assistance department and summarized by the researcher. These results were displayed in spreadsheets and graphs for a more organized presentation of the data. Counselors, educators, school districts, or any other person interested may utilize these findings for insight to draw conclusions regarding the present and future effects on the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach.

The prominent and most useful information provided from this study as related to the statement of problem are:

1. Forty percent of school counselors are between the ages of 46 and 55 years old.
2. Twenty seven percent of school counselors have been a guidance counselor for sixteen or more years.

3. Only 13 percent of the counselors work in a school with less than 400 students.
4. Sixty percent of the counselors had never worked in this dual role.
5. Almost 48 percent of the counselors would recommend performing the dual role, while approximately 37 percent would not recommend it.
6. Forty percent of female respondents who coach had between one and three years of coaching experience.
7. Sixty seven percent of men would recommend the dual role.
8. Thirty percent of women would recommend the dual role.
9. Thirty two percent of men would not recommend the dual role.
10. Forty two percent of women would not recommend the dual role.
11. No schools were reported to have a policy against the dual role.
12. Counselors checked 154 total responses for positive interactions as compared to only 104 responses for negative interactions.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The information obtained in this study compares very closely to Tomski's study completed in 1985. Several areas displayed a slight change in the perceptions and thoughts regarding the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach. The guidance counselor is becoming more and more important in schools today. The role of a guidance counselor has transformed in the past fifteen years as society and its members have. Children, families, and their home lives have changed, and the need for positive role models and strong influences in the school

setting has grown immensely. The guidance counselor may be the most important member of a school district's staff when student issues and problems arise. The "other hats" that the counselor wears during the day creates a very busy atmosphere. The need for a very focused counselor has never been greater. The question as to whether a person can be an effective counselor while taking on the role as athletic coach is a very interesting one. This study provided great insight as to how current counselors feel about this dual role.

The most significant finding in this study is that 46 percent of the respondents would recommend performing this dual role, as opposed to 36 percent not recommending the dual role. When comparing the differences between men and women, it is interesting to see that 65 percent of men recommended the dual role, compared to just 30 percent of women. The data also shows that more men than women performed this dual role, which would possibly have an affect on these results.

Another significant finding is that 21 percent of the counselors are now performing the dual role. This number has significantly decrease from the 42 percent that Tomski reported in 1985. These facts again support the idea that counselor's roles are changing, and the demands on a counselor are increasing. When looking at the number of years involved with coaching, 70% of the female subjects have been involved with coaching for 1 to 6 years. This percentage compares with just 33 percent of the men having been involved with coaching for one to six years. Tomski stated a conclusion that the opportunities and/or

demands for women to become involved in the dual role will increase dramatically in the coming years due to the current surge of women's athletics in our school systems. This trend has definitely taken place to a certain degree, but the number of women coaching does not match the number of men coaching.

Another finding shows that 44 percent of men and 35 percent of women are between the ages of 46 and 55 years old. Also, 78 percent of men and 65 percent of women are over the age of 40 years. An influx in new counselors will be a very popular trend in school systems in the next ten years. Many counselors are now nearing or reaching retirement age. These departing counselors will lead the way for a new group of counselors, possibly drawing an increase in opportunity or need for the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach.

The most popular sports being coached by male counselors were basketball (56%) and football (50%). Female counselors most often coached either basketball (70%) or other sports not listed, such as cheerleading (40%). The author feels that this is because of the popularity of these sports. Basketball and football tend to be looked at as the most important sports in communities today, although this trend may be shifting to other sports such as hockey. Cheerleading is often thought of as a very popular sport for female students. Basketball is a sport with one of the longest seasons, thus demanding the most time from its coach. As found in this study, "time availability" and "free time tied up" were the two most often checked answers when asked about negative influences tied with the dual role. Again, the demand for counselors is rising, and

the job requirements are becoming more demanding. The figures regarding a time strain should be influential for counselors contemplating coaching a sport. Findings of this study support the idea that the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach has many positive aspects. Although there are some concerns surrounding this issue, the majority of the respondents feel that overall, the dual role is a positive position. The positive aspects and themes seem to outweigh the negative ones. When comparing Tomski's study from 1985 to this study, the general theme of recommending the dual role is still there, although it is not as convincing now. There seems to be a shift in the attitude of today's counselors. The trend is shifting to the counselors recommending the dual role at a lesser rate. These ideas can again be related to the demands of the counseling position and the increasing needs of the students.

In conclusion, there are a large number of counselors in the state of Wisconsin who are performing the dual role, and a large number of counselors who would recommend this combination. The most common consensus is that counselors feel the positive aspects outweigh the negative aspects. There does seem to be a slight difference in the perceptions of the dual role between men and women. Men counselors seem to be more involved with athletic coaching, as do they recommend the coaching role at a higher rate. It will be interesting to see if the new influx of younger counselors brought on by the retirement of today's counselors has an affect on the dual role participation

Finally, counselors today recommend the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach to their colleagues.

The dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach is a very complicated issue, containing many positive and negative attributes. Counselors and school districts need to take into consideration many aspects of this dual role when considering using it. The following recommendations are made on the dual role based on the research findings:

1. Counselors should work with their school district and discuss the positive and negative aspects revolving around their position as counselor and coaching a sport. The implications involving their own school district, its students, and the counselors job performance need to be discussed. The administrators, teachers, counselor, parents, students, etc. should be involved in open communication about this dual role.
2. Guidance counseling departments should develop a job description explaining the various tasks they will be required to perform so that the counselor can weigh his or her options and reflect on time availability for performing their counseling role. All schools differ in the size of their student population and the requirements asked of their counselors. It may be very difficult for some counselors to perform this dual role who have a very heavy work load and need extra time before or after school for job requirements.
3. The demands of this dual role will differ greatly between school districts, and more importantly counselors. Each and every counselor will have personal

attributes and qualities that may help benefit or may hinder their job performance in relation to the dual role of guidance counselor/athletic coach. Each counselor needs to work with their supervisors in evaluating their potential and possible performance with this unique situation.

4. Finally, it is recommended that counselors work with other counselors in their field on determining if this dual role is a positive step for them.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

## Appendix A

## Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about the current trends and feelings of the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach. I am writing my graduate research paper on the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach to determine the percentage of counselors in the state of Wisconsin who have had an experience with this dual role, and to clarify counselor's attitudes toward this dual role. It is hoped that the results of this study may provide a clearer understanding of the role of school counselor and perhaps bring about improvements in our profession. Thank you for your cooperation and completion of this questionnaire.

Directions: Please circle the letter which best represents your choice.

1. How many years have you been a school guidance counselor?
  - A. 1-3
  - B. 4-6
  - C. 7-9
  - D. 10-12
  - E. 13-15
  - F. More than 15 years
  
2. Sex
  - A. Male
  - B. Female
  
3. Age
  - A. 20-27
  - B. 28-35
  - C. 36-40
  - D. 41-45
  - E. 46-55
  - F. over 55
  
4. Is there a rule or policy at the school in which you work which prevents you from becoming involved in athletic coaching?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No

5. How long have you been at your current school system?
- A. 1-5 years
  - B. 6-10 years
  - C. 11-15 years
  - D. 16-20 years
  - E. over 20 years
6. What is the size of the school at which you work?
- A. 800 or more students
  - B. 400-800 students
  - C. less than 400 students
7. Choose one of the following:
- A. During this school year, I have or am currently working in the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach.
  - B. During this school year, I have not worked in the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach, but have in the past.
  - C. I am not currently working in the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach, and have never done so.
- \*If you circled C for item 7, please skip to question #13.  
\*If you circled A or B for item 7; please continue with #8.
8. How many years have you been involved in coaching?
- A. 1-3
  - B. 4-6
  - C. 7-9
  - D. 10-12
  - E. 13-15
  - F. more than 15 years
9. Which of the following sports do (did) you coach while counseling?
- A. Football
  - B. Basketball
  - C. Hockey
  - D. Wrestling
  - E. Track and Field
  - F. Tennis
  - G. Golf
  - H. Swimming
  - I. Gymnastics
  - J. Volleyball
  - K. Baseball
  - L. Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. In what capacity do (did) you coach while counseling?
- A. Head coach
  - B. Assistant coach
  - C. Both A and B
11. In which of the following areas do (did) you coaching responsibilities affect your counseling performance in a positive way?
- |                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A. Public Relations              | B. Gives insight               |
| C. Makes work fun                | D. Reduce stress               |
| E. Establish rapport w/ students | F. Establish trust w/ students |
| G. Student contact time          | H. Establish respect           |
| I. Other _____                   |                                |
- 
12. In which of the following areas do (did) your coaching responsibilities affect your counseling performance in a negative way?
- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Role conflict         | B. Loss of trust      |
| C. Time availability     | D. Increase of stress |
| E. Become less effective | F. Free time tied up  |
| G. Inconsistencies       | H. Distraction        |
| I. Other _____           |                       |
- 
13. Based on your experience as a guidance counselor, would you recommend the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach to other counselors?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
- \*Please provide a brief explanation to this answer.

Appendix B

Introductory Letter/  
Consent Form

## Appendix B

Michael J. Wilson  
1919 160<sup>th</sup> St.  
Centuria, WI 54824

Dear

Thank you for taking time from your already busy spring schedule and providing your input on the enclosed counseling research questionnaire. As a graduate student at UW-Stout in the Guidance and Counseling PreK-12 program, I am working on my research paper which focuses on the dual role guidance counselor/athletic coach. Your response is needed whether you are currently coaching, have coached in the past, or have never coached.

The information I receive from you and the other guidance counselors will be used to gain a better understanding of the current trends concerning this dual role. The information will be available to all counselors and counseling departments for evaluation and comparisons to gain insight on bettering our profession. Also, the information will be used to help me fulfill the requirements of a School Guidance Counseling PreK-12 degree.

I look forward to receiving your response by April 20, 2000. I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Again, thank you for your cooperation and participation.

Sincerely,

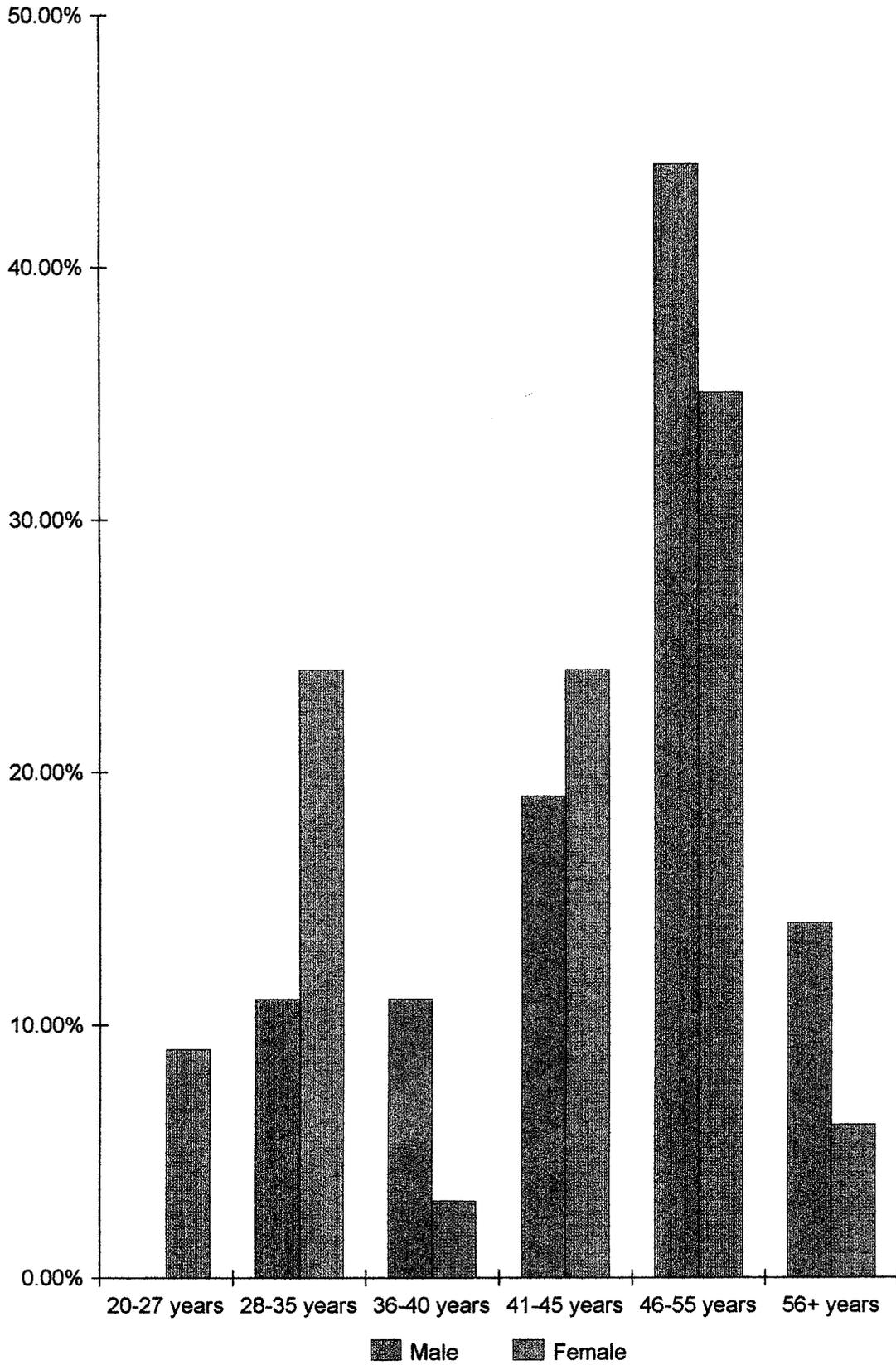
Michael J. Wilson, Graduate Student  
University of Wisconsin-Stout

### Consent for Participation

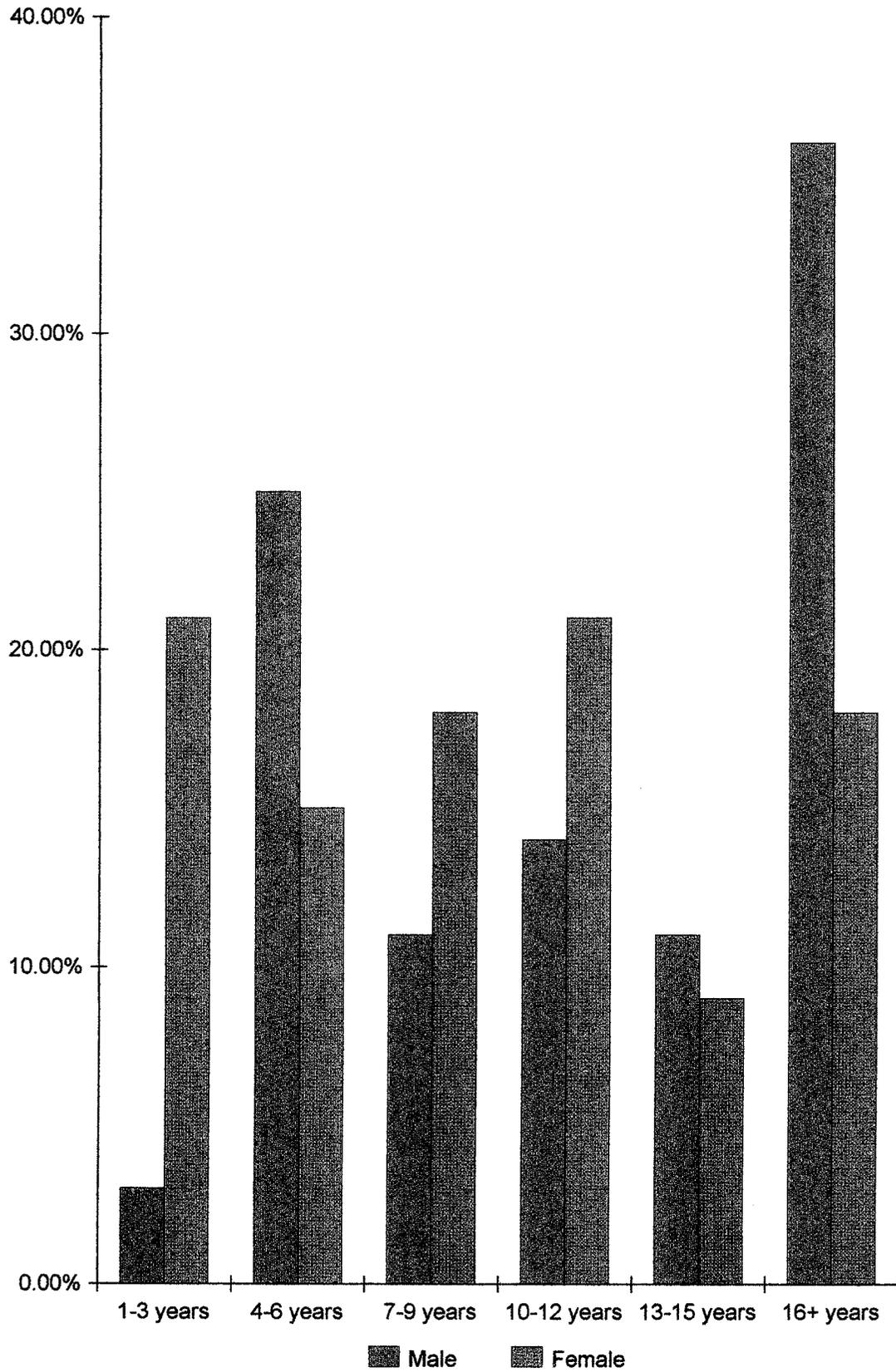
I understand that by returning this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I understand the basic nature of the study and agree that any potential risks are exceedingly small. I also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. I am aware that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor Dr. Ed Biggerstaff at 715-232-2410 and second to Dr. Ted Knaus, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI, 54751, phone (715) 232-1126.

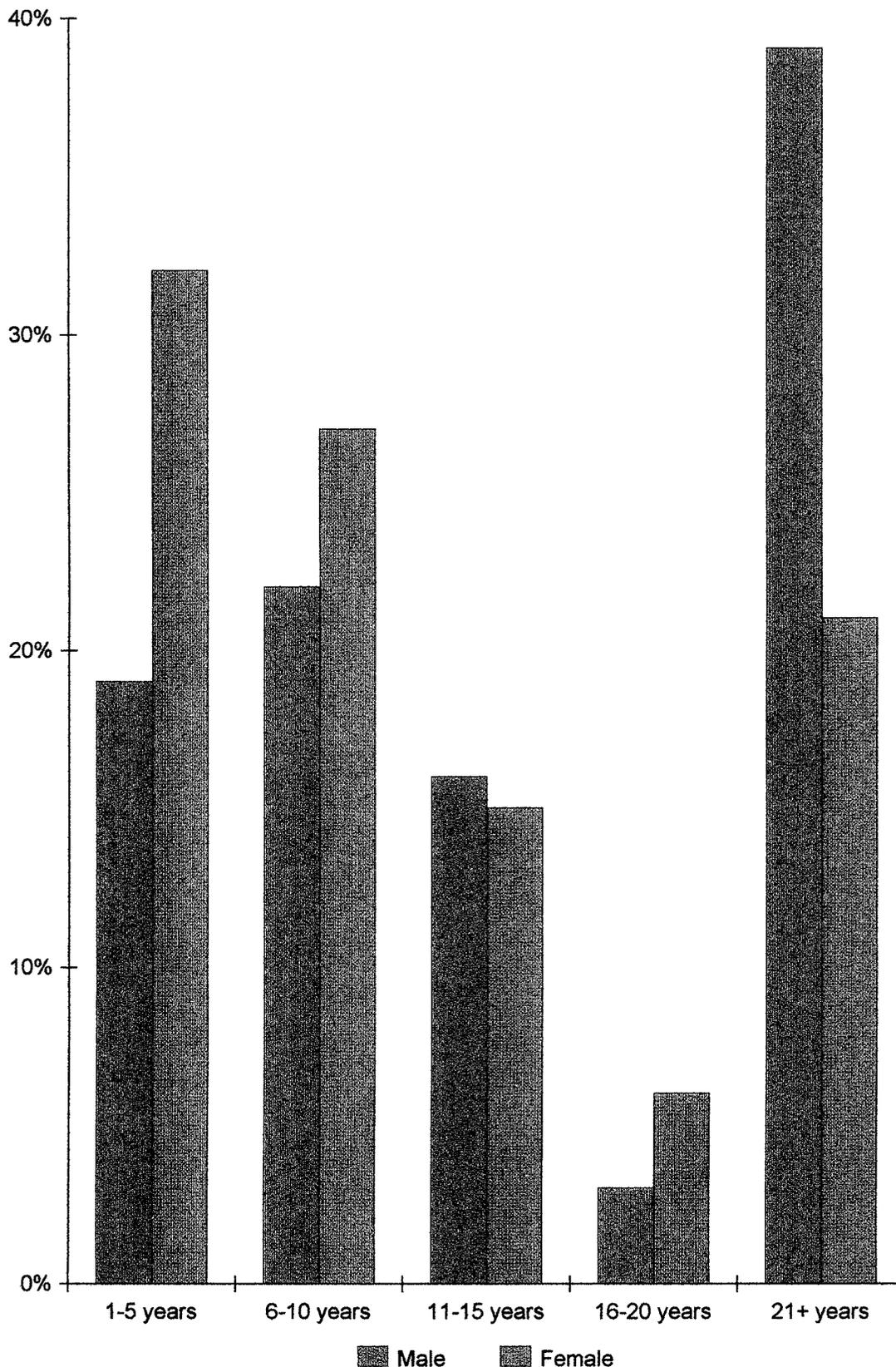
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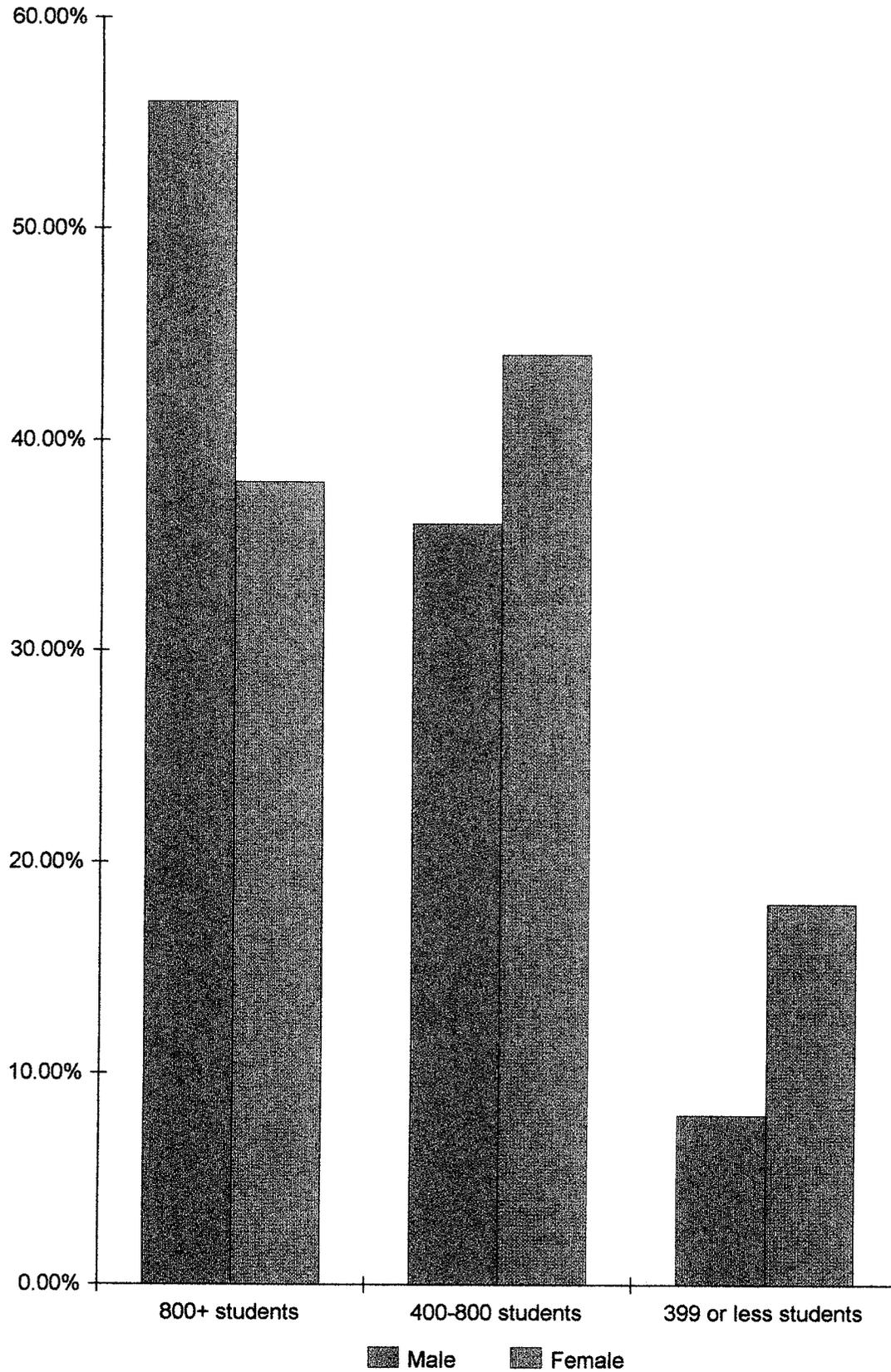
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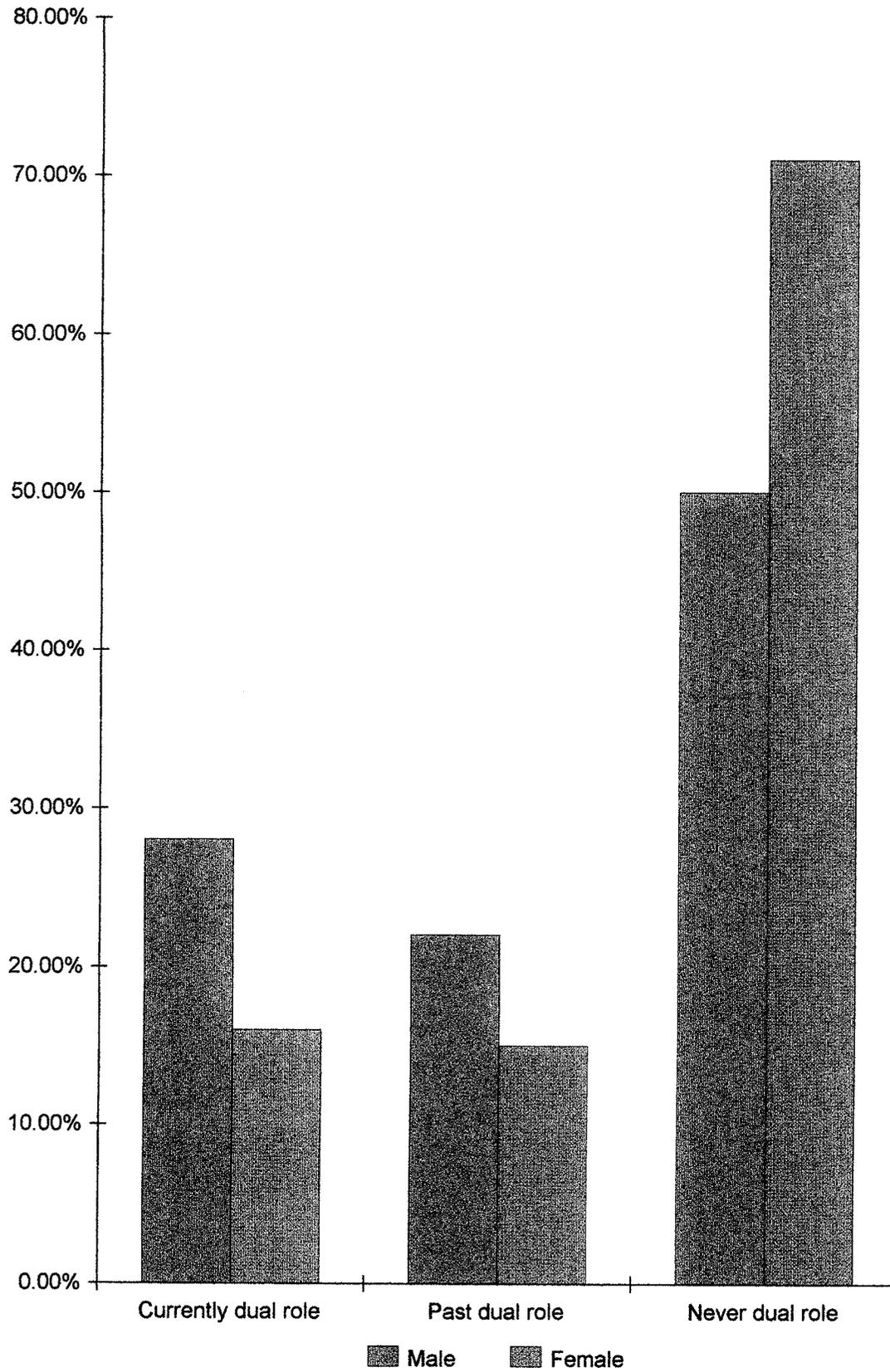
### YEARS AT SCHOOL DISTRICT BY GENDER



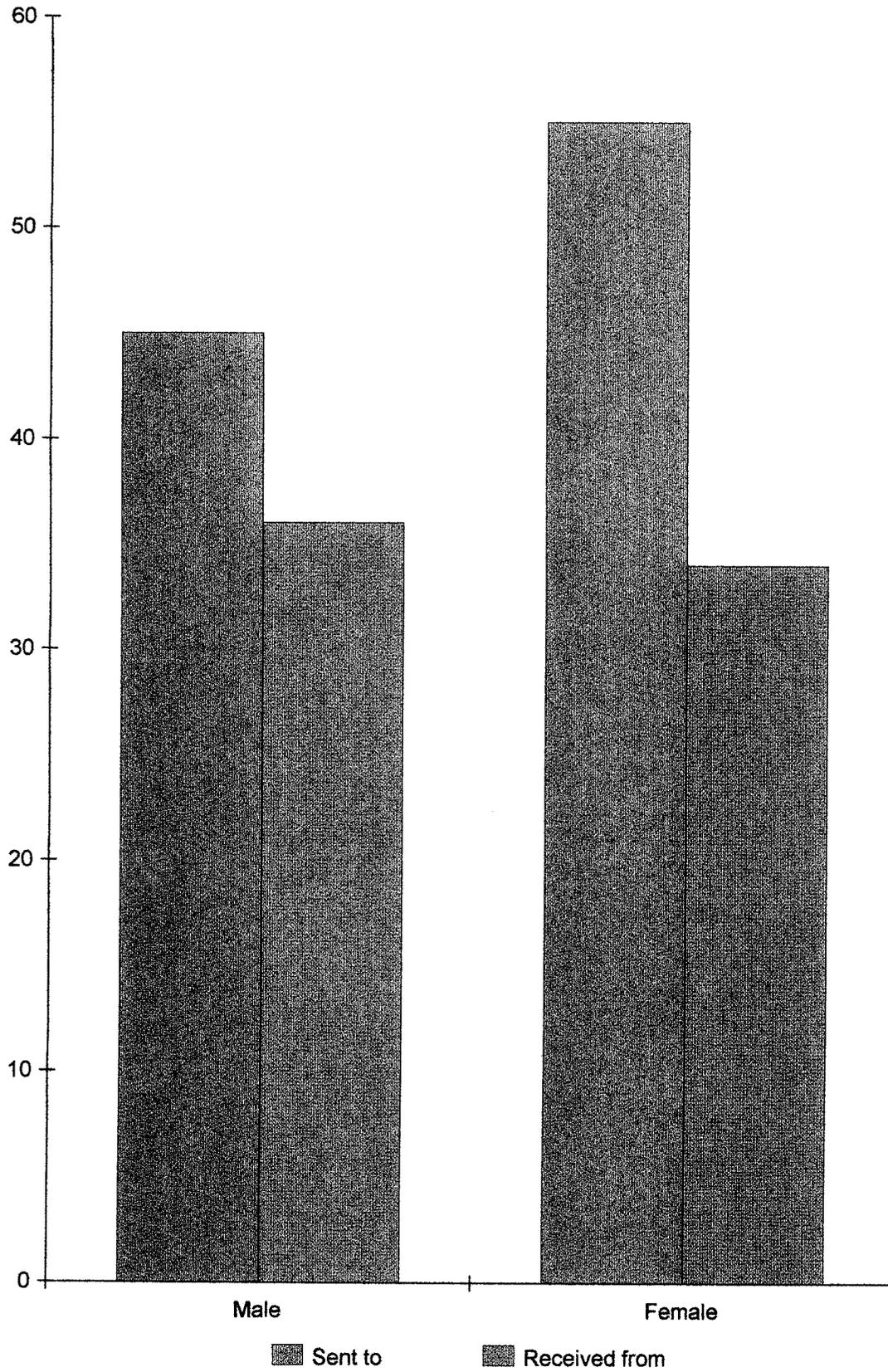
### NUMBER OF STUDENTS AT SCHOOL DISTRICT



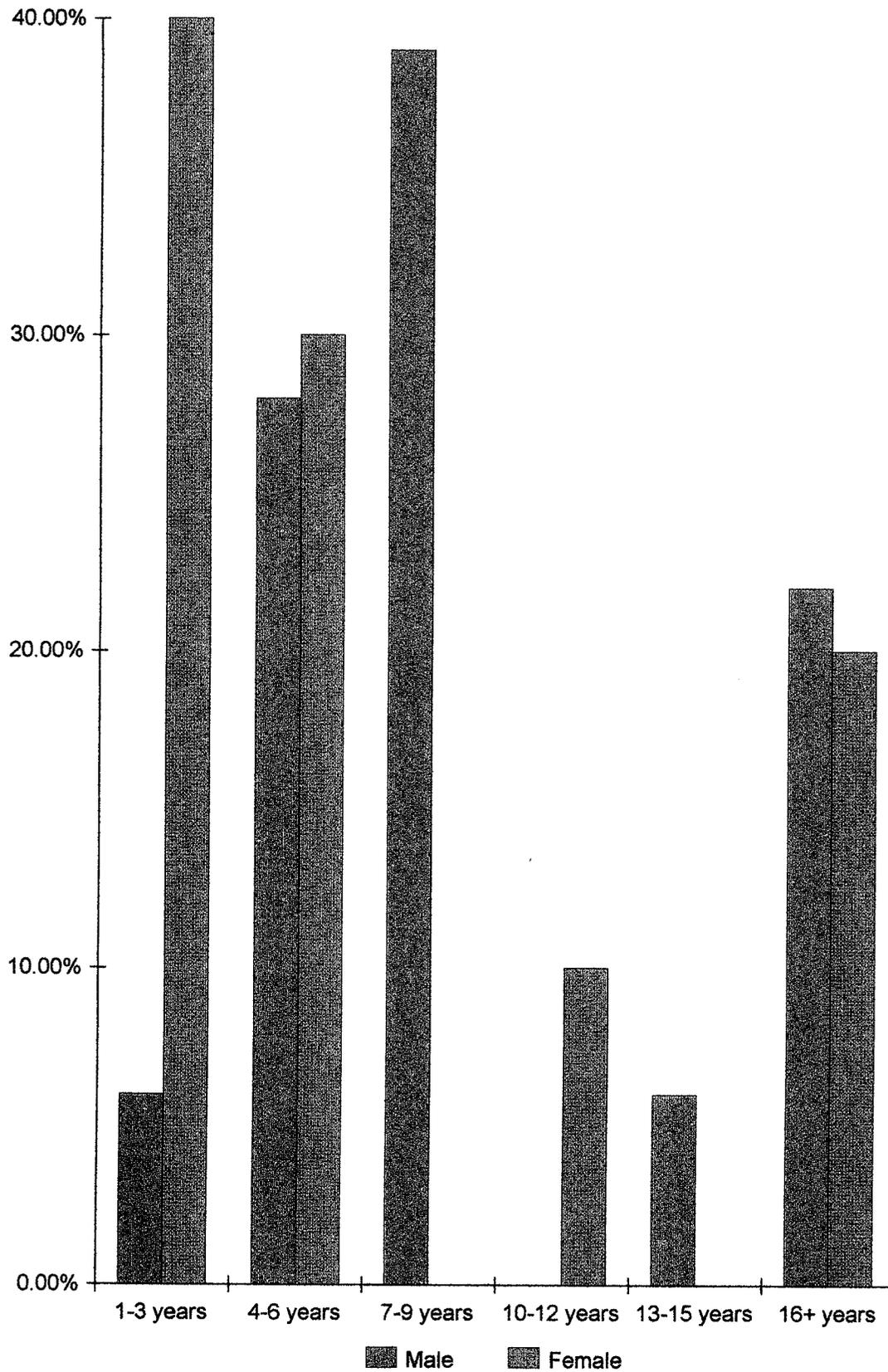
### DUAL ROLE EXPERIENCE BY GENDER



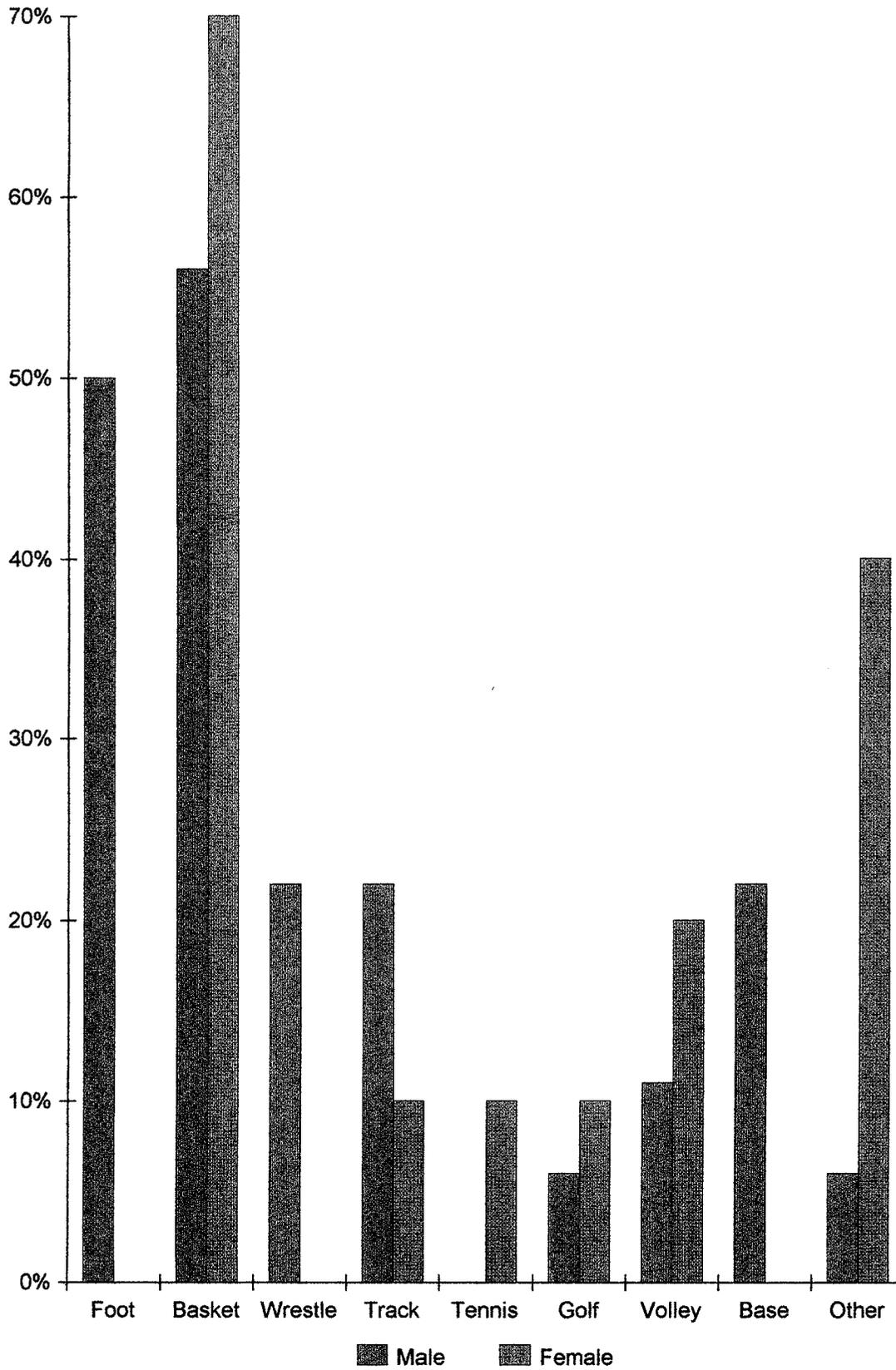
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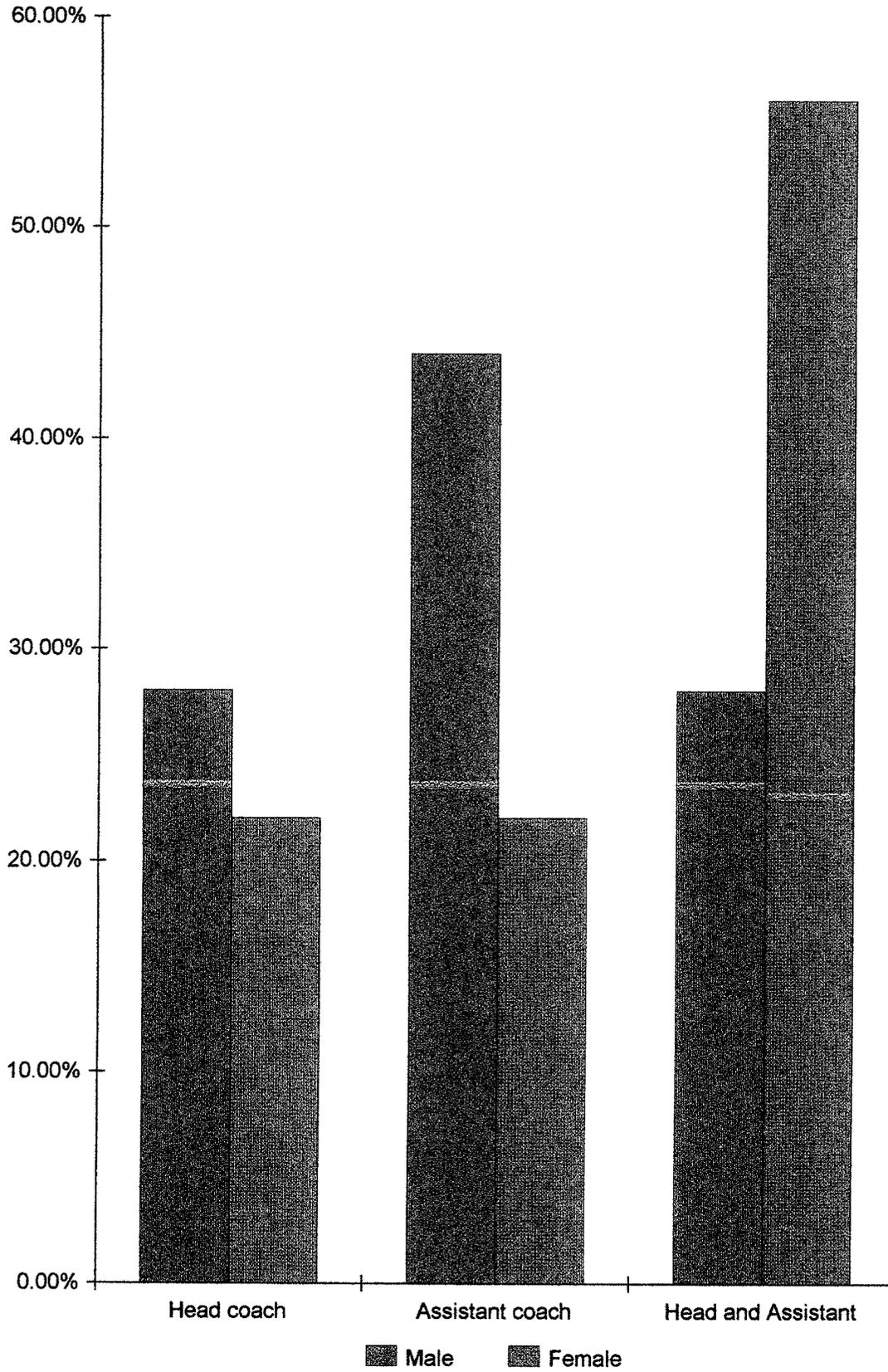
### COACHING EXPERIENCE IN YEARS BY GENDER



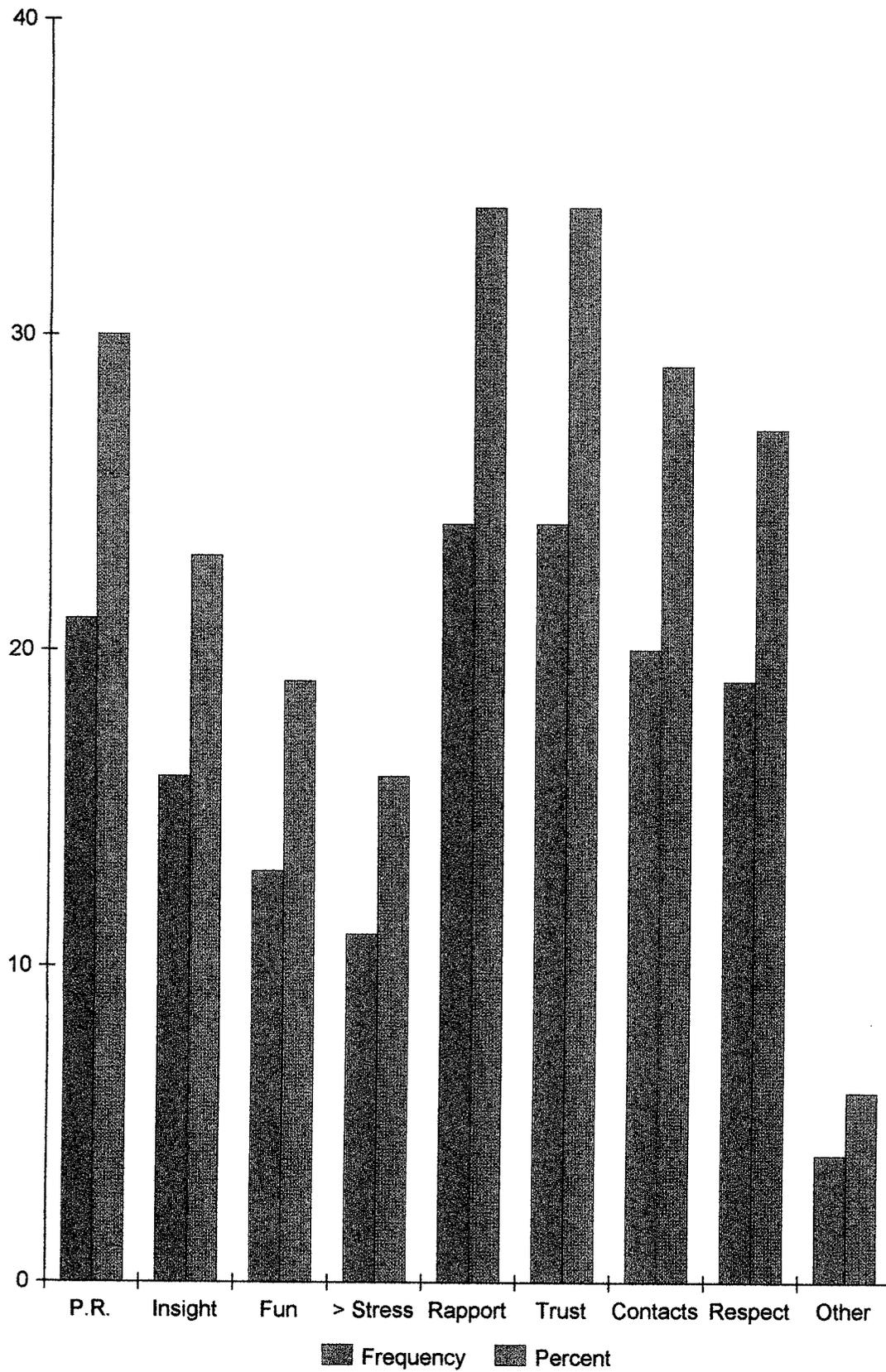
### SPORTS COACHED BY GENDER



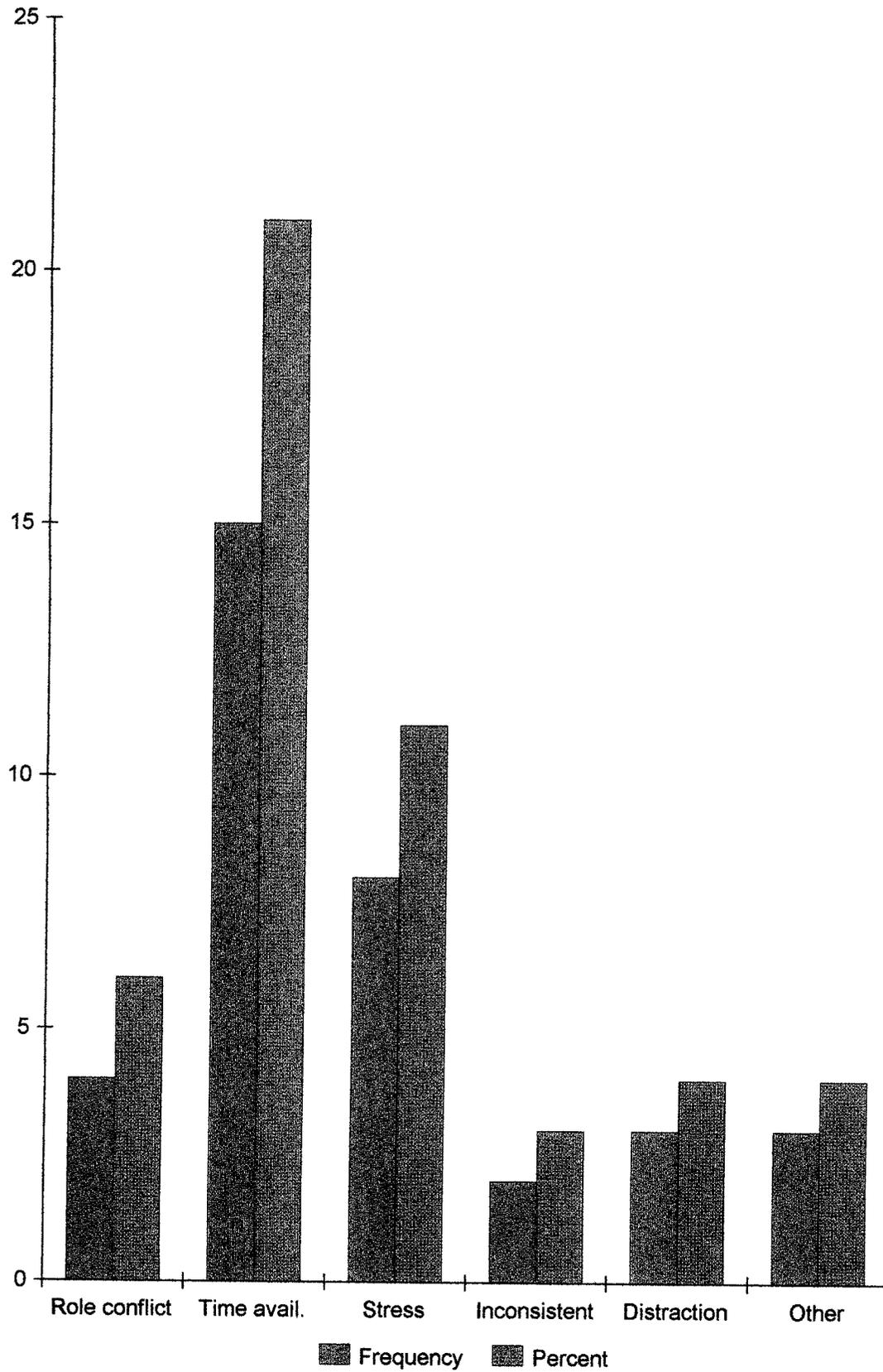
### COACHING CAPACITY BY GENDER



### POSITIVE INFLUENCES OF COACHING



### NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF COACHING



### RECOMMENDATIONS BY GENDER

