

COMPARATIVE NAIA ATHLETIC DIRECTOR OPINIONS REGARDING CERTIFICATION IN THE COLLEGIATE STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING SETTING FROM 2019 TO 2024.

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Introduction

To determine the education and qualifications of those fulfilling the role of strength and conditioning coach within the NAIA and to determine what support exists among NAIA Athletic Directors for requiring a certification for those performing said strength and conditioning duties as compared to similar data collected in 2019.

Methodology

Survey questions were distributed to all NAIA Athletic Directors (n = 248) inquiring as to the following: 1) At your institution, who designs the strength and conditioning programs? 2) What is the highest degree obtained by the head strength and conditioning coach? 3) What certification does your head strength and conditioning coach have? 4) The NCAA has adopted legislation requiring that coaches responsible for the design and implementation of strength and conditioning programs obtain some type of certification. Would you be supportive of similar legislation being adopted by the NAIA? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Results

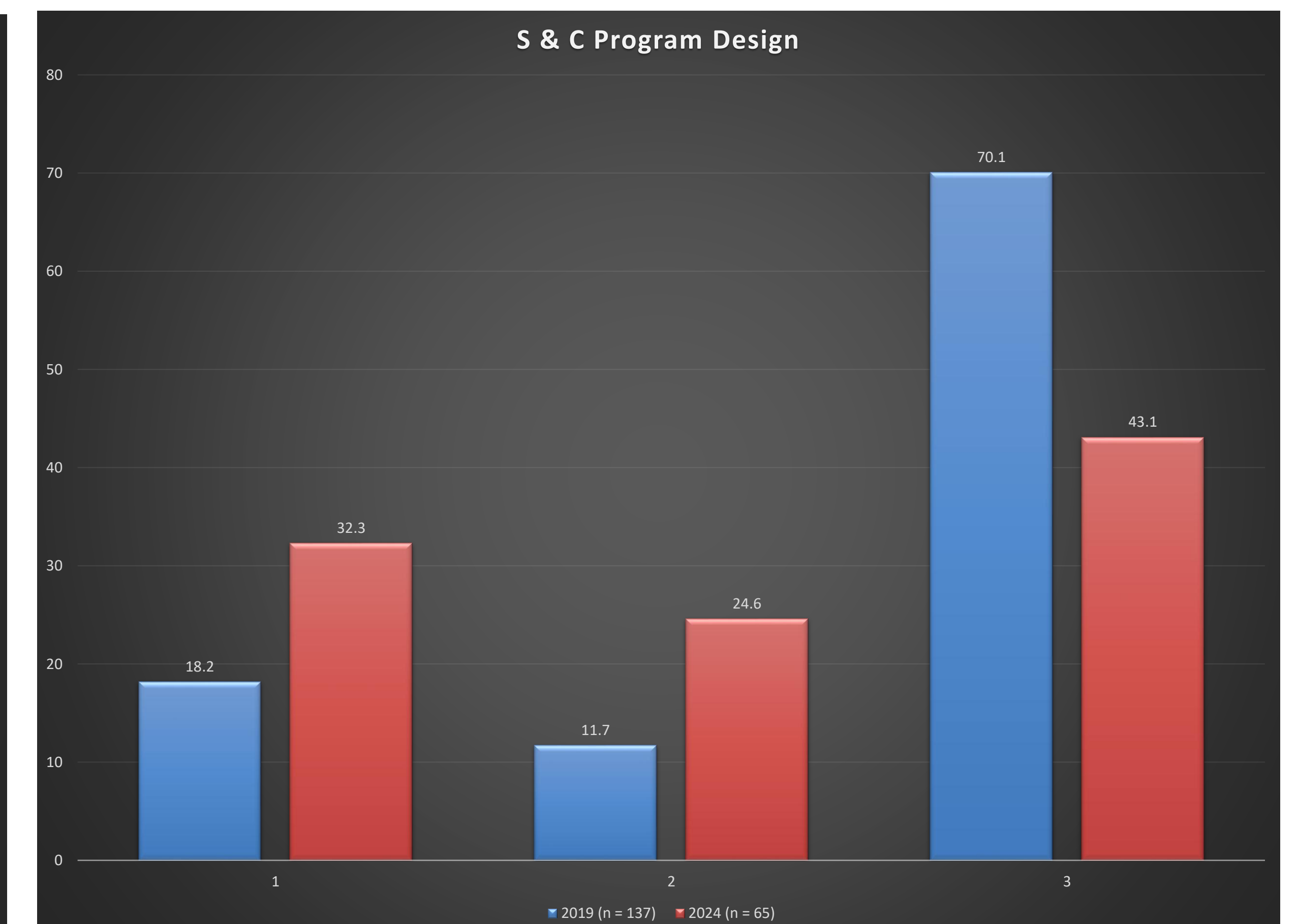
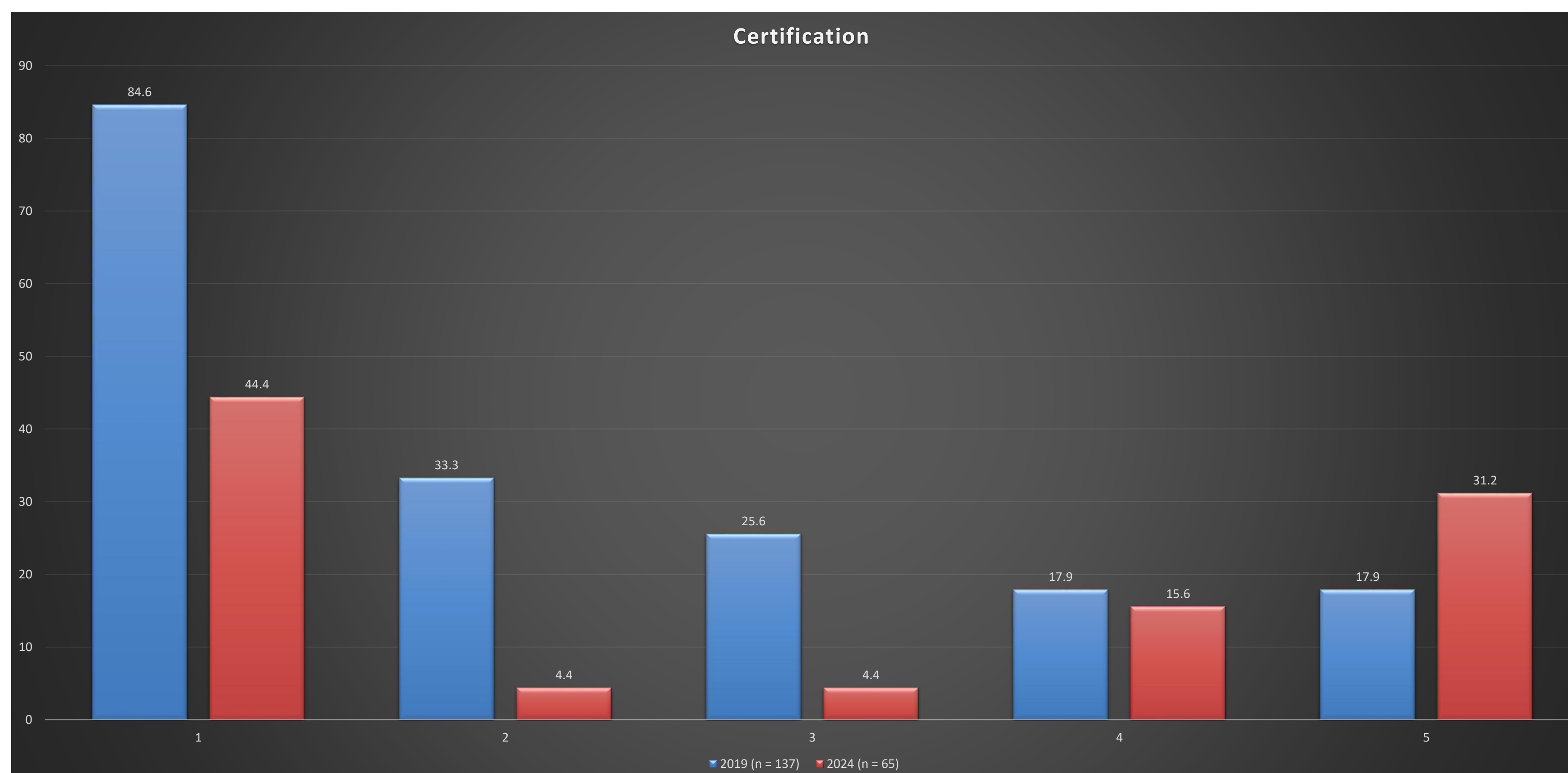
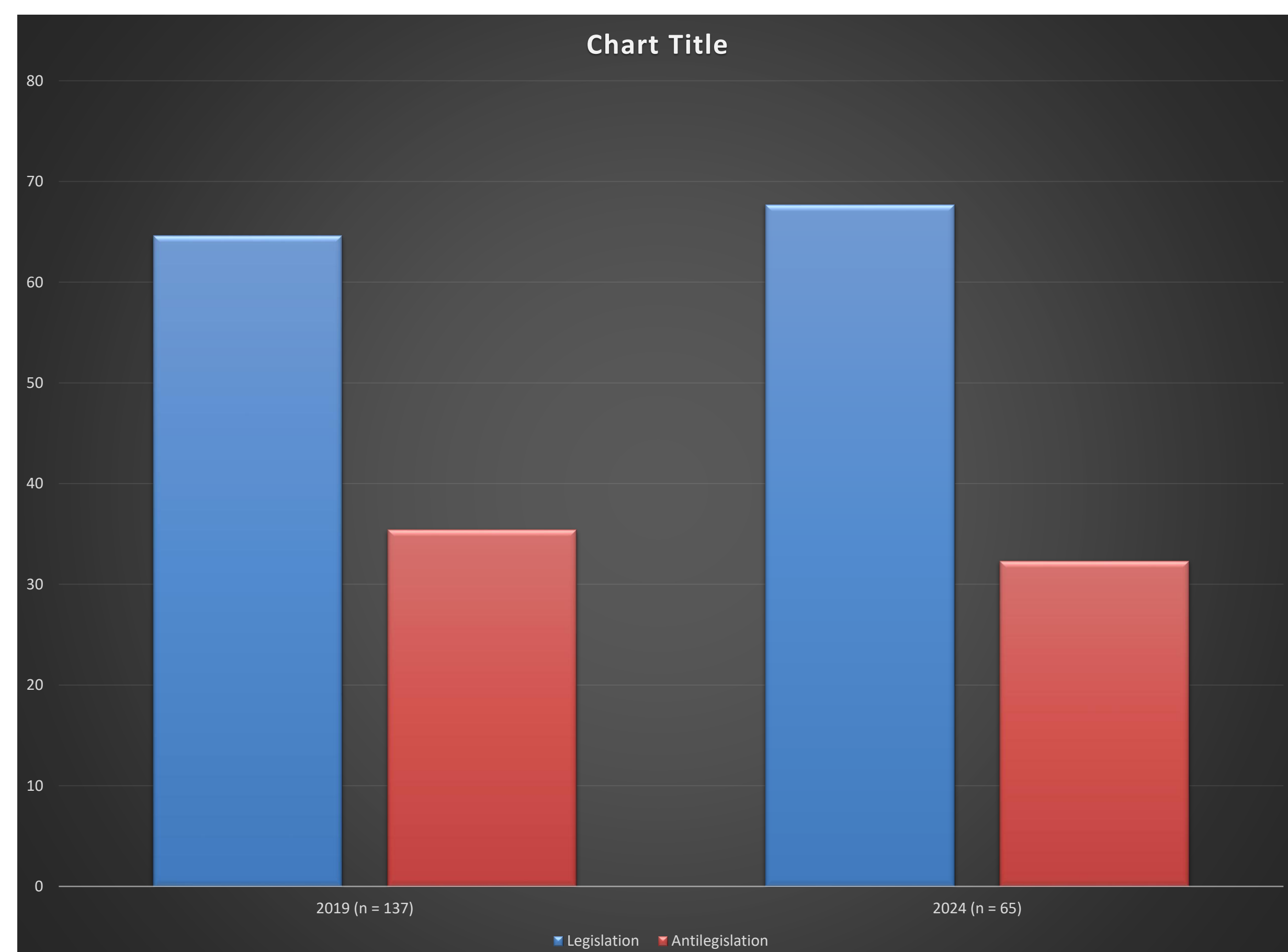
Of all respondents (n = 65 compared to an n of 137), 43.1% (compared to 70.07% in 2019) of athletic directors claimed that they have no strength and conditioning coach and rely upon individual teams and coaches to design their own strength and conditioning programs. Of the athletic directors who said they have a strength and conditioning coach responsible for designing and implementing programs (32.3% compared to 18.2% in 2019), some stated that some sport teams are responsible for the design and implementation of their own strength and conditioning programs (24.6% compared to 11.68% in 2019). Of those that responded to the question pertaining to the highest degree obtained (n = 45), 64.4% stated their coach had a Master's degree (compared to 66.67% in 2019) and 15.6% responded their coach had a Bachelor's degree (compared to 23.08% in 2019). Of those responding to the question inquiring as to what certification was held by their strength coach (n = 45), 44.4% responded with National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) (compared to 84.62% in 2019), 4.4% responded NSCA Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) (compared to 33.33%), 4.4% responded USA Weightlifting (compared to 25.64%), and 15.6% responded with Strength and Conditioning Coach Certified (SCCC)/Master Strength and Conditioning Coach (MSCC) -Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association (CSCCa) (compared to 17.95%). Lastly, when asked if they were supporting of legislation requiring a certification, 67.7% of 65 respondents said yes with the safety of the collegiate student-athlete being the primary reason why (compared to 64.66% of 133). Of those responding no, cost was the primary factor.

Conclusion

While many athletic departments still function with no certified strength coach, the number has dropped substantially. Similarly, the majority of NAIA Athletic Directors still favor adopting legislation requiring a certification among those designing and implementing a strength and conditioning program for student-athletes, citing safety as the primary reason. Of those responding no, cost was the deciding factor.

Practical Application

The NSCA has the potential for an increase in the number of certified practitioners within the NAIA if able to reduce the cost of certification as well as demonstrate to NAIA athletic directors that it is advantageous when examining a cost/benefit analysis.



In favor of legislation (64.6%, 67.7%)
 Opposed to legislation (35.4%, 32.3%)

- 1) CSCS
- 2) CPT
- 3) USAW
- 4) SCCC/MSCC
- 5) Other

- 1) We have a strength and conditioning coach and staff
- 2) We have a strength and conditioning coach and staff, but some sports teams are responsible
- 3) We have no strength and conditioning coach and rely upon individual teams and coaches