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Women and sport in Africa : An ethnographic study in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

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WOMEN AND SPORT IN AFRICA:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program

Through the Office of Graduate Studies and Research

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

Amy J. Freitag

August 2005

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN AND SPORT IN AFRICA:

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

By Amy J. Freitag

The purpose of this project was to conduct an ethnographic study of women's sports experiences in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, based on life history interviews with five women who described their personal experiences with sport and physical activity. The study examined current community opportunities for sport and included a demographic survey that was distributed to discover women's attitudes towards sports and to help locate possible women for interviews. Cultural, social, and economic factors stood out as the primary themes for challenges to full participation in sport by women.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

When Zimbabwe is discussed, the focus is usually on issues of colonization; it is often in current news, as well, but for political and economic reasons. Rarely is sport the topic in either situation, and almost never is the position of women in Zimbabwean society discussed or even mentioned. This study presents five Zimbabwean women's life stories through their experiences with sport. As will be described in the review of literature, there is a large void in existing literature and a need for scholarly documentation of the current experiences of women with sports in Africa. The topic is beginning to gain recognition in international scholarship, but conference presentations and scholarly articles are challenging to obtain in the United States. These advances are necessary to lead to "increased understanding and dialogue" (Creswell 1998, p. 94) about non-western cultures and the issue of gender socialization and equity. As suggested by Barritt (1986), the importance is in:

the heightening of awareness for experience which has been forgotten and overlooked. By heightening awareness and creating dialogue, it is hoped research can lead to better understanding of the way things appear to someone else and through that insight lead to improvements in practice. (p. 20)

Women's participation in sport can often reflect their position, responsibilities, rights, and privileges in a certain culture or society. This can be revealed in the extent to which they play sport and in which sports they are able to participate. These revelations often reflect prevailing cultural and societal norms. Societal factors can influence educational accessibility and economic participation, while cultural factors affect identity and self empowerment. Social, cultural, economic, and political infrastructures have

historically limited the opportunities for women to participate in sport in Africa. An analysis of sport participation through life histories of women living in Victoria Falls can give insight into these factors in this specific African community.

Sport and physical activity have been shown to benefit communities through an improvement of physical and mental health, as well as the creation of favorable conditions for an increase of group morale and public cohesiveness. Sport can also be used as a tool to attend to inequalities based on class, gender, and race. The frequency of the desire of women to play sport compared to the frequency of women's participation in sport can be investigated to understand the interaction of institutions in a given society (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). In this study, the processes that affect the construction of meaning of sport in everyday life are examined through qualitative methods, and the resulting factors are presented through a humanistic positivist approach. The intention is to add to the discourse and scholarly literature about the status of sport for women in Africa.

Physical activity and sport is a critical aspect of human cultures across the world. The connection between a healthy mind and body has been discussed throughout history by philosophers, such as Aristotle and Rousseau, and has been shown to be important to a healthy society. Physical activity and sport contribute to a higher quality of life and extend life expectancy (U.S. Surgeon General, 1996) and have been used in colonization efforts as a tool to "civilize" indigenous populations (Kildea & Leach, 1979). Physical activity has been shown to reduce anxiety and mental depression (White & Scoretz, 2002; U.S. Surgeon General, 1996), maintain healthy bodily functions, and help with

prevention and alleviation of diseases (U.S. Surgeon General, 1996). Organized sports, as a form of physical activity, can also be used as a way to educate society on prevention of diseases and other social issues.

Zimbabwe was chosen as the site of this study in order to learn about sport and culture in a developing nation. I had existing contacts in the community and wanted to include Zimbabwe in the discourse of women and sport in Africa. Zimbabwe is a developing nation on the African continent and sport has been an integral part of goals in the area before, during, and after colonization (Hardman, 1988). The specific examination of women and sport in a developing nation can document non-western culture for historical significance, increase the knowledge of women's reality in these cultures, and give insight in how communities work towards healthy and stable societies.

Zimbabwe is a land-locked country located in south-central Africa. It is bordered by South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique. It had substantial importance in pre-modern history, with records of pre-historical civilizations and culture dating from 6,000 BC. Some of the earliest evidence of humans and empires can be found at ruins called the Great Zimbabwe and in the rock paintings in the Motopo National Park. The region was segmented into the nations we know today during the "scramble for Africa," when European capitalistic powers carved up the African continent for economic profits at the Berlin Conference in 1884. Zimbabwe, formally known as Rhodesia, has gone through many political changes since it was occupied by Cecil Rhodes and other British citizens in 1890. Official British rule came with colonization in 1923, which further influenced many aspects in the country culturally, socially, and economically. Western

government and structures introduced the indigenous people to new organizational goals that shifted power structures out of their control, yet also reinforced and perpetuated traditional cultural values. These changes were further emphasized when local white British citizens made a United Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain in 1965, because they did not agree when the British government wanted to give more equality to the black population. The UDI regime restricted the black majority by enacting laws that further limited rights for black citizens. These laws helped instigate a civil war during which guerilla warfare assisted the black majority to achieve independence in 1979. Robert Mugabe became the first black prime minister (and eventually president) in the first democratic elections in 1980 and has ruled to the present day. Initial goals of the new Zimbabwean government included the rights of black Africans to vote, the consolidation of three separate guerilla armies into one national defense force, and land reform (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 1979).

Zimbabwe's social situation has deteriorated significantly in recent years. The unemployment rate was 70% in 2002 (CIA, 2003) and more recently has been reported as close to 90%, according to unconfirmed reports by local residents. Families are struggling to survive and local residents have reported an increasing number of burglaries. I wanted to discover why or if sport was important for populations that need to worry about feeding their families and protecting their possessions. A citizen of Botswana once commented, "Our problem is not one of water for swimming pool, but of water to drink," (MacDonald, 1988, p. 87).

This exploration into women and sport in Africa is framed by existing literature. The literature on sport in Africa has become an area of interest in the last half of the 20th century. According to Hardman (1988), “African studies were largely neglected by developed ‘western’ countries” and only with African nations gaining independence has there been “a widespread response for knowledge of the ‘Dark Continent’” (p. 1). Most of the beginning discourse focused on colonization and how these nations can move forward in cultural, political, economic, and social development. Hardman (1988) believed that sport can be a tool used by those promoting development through education, even though few scholarly literature has focused on the subject. Corlett and Mokgwathi (1989) concur and stress that there is a severe lack of information on sport in African culture. They emphasize that “this lack of knowledge is not necessarily the result of the activities being absent...but is, at least in part, a result of the disinterest in the topic among those scholars and travelers who have written about Africa” (p. 216). Most current literature focuses on the use of sport by colonial powers for civilizing indigenous peoples (Clayton, 1987; Fair, 1997; Kirk-Greene, 1987; Mangan, 1987), for independent African nations’ international recognition (Baker, 1987), for national identity building (Anyanwu, 1988), and for resistance against white hegemony (Jarvie & Monnington, 1988). A majority of these accounts is written by western scholars using western perspectives. Most of the literature that does exist focuses on South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. However, there are some grassroots attempts to discover, recapture, document and legitimize the existence of sport in traditional culture and pre-modern history (Blacking, 1989; Paul, 1989; Reefe, 1989).

The literature on women and sport in Africa is even more limited. When researching scholarly literature, I could not find a specific book on the subject. I was able to locate two articles through my university library database and eventually a few articles from my advisor's personal library of international sports journals. I was also able to find two books on African sports, but there was only one chapter that focused on gender issues. The rest of my research necessitated searching through books on feminist research and African women, hoping to find references to sport or physical activity. I was able to acquire a few books on Shona and Ndebele (indigenous African tribes in the area) traditions and Zimbabwean material culture while on vacation in Africa in 2003 and 2004. Only one scholarly article was found specifically about women and sport in Zimbabwe (Maodzwa & Costa, 2002). Again, in a majority of these documents the perspectives were seen through western values and analysis focused on white hegemony, patriarchal social formations, and national identity building.

The most influential literature for this study came from Ogu's (1999) study in Nigeria, Burnett's (2002) research in South Africa, and from Maodzwa and Toohey Costa's (2002) article about Zimbabwe. Ogu framed the study around the social situations that may hinder the principles of sport for all. The study used a questionnaire for data collection. Research questions focused on amount of free time, child care resources, available sports programs related to women's interests, and the impact of family expectations. Ogu found substantial social, economic, and cultural barriers facing women's ability to participate in sport and that all of these factors inhibited mostly poorer

women. Ogu suggests that these “socio-cultural elements that stand against the doctrine of sport for all should be exterminated,” (1999, p.64).

Burnett’s (2002) research drew on feminist perspectives to highlight gender inequity in South African women's sport participation. She utilized interviews and focus groups to assess national programs for sports development. Her research goals focused on the roles and involvement of women in these organizations. Burnett (2002) concluded that “powerful ideological, political, educational and religious practices, women’s inferior position and domesticity were promoted and perpetuated,” (p.14) in these sport programs. She proposes that:

meaningful change is possible by addressing women’s needs and providing adequate support for them to become involved and assert themselves in different sporting roles, whilst also addressing the more complex ideological and structural barriers in the wider socio-political context.” (Burnett, 2002, p. 15)

Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) explored sporting experience in Zimbabwe from pre-modern times, through colonialism and then, after national independence. They analyzed the marginality of women’s opportunities for sporting participation along historical, cultural, and institutional factors. They also included a case study of Maodzwa’s experiences with sport throughout her life as a Zimbabwean citizen. Maodzwa and Toohey Costa concluded that much research has yet to be done in Zimbabwe and that it should begin with documenting sport history in the region. They proposed that much help could come with national education reform.

It was imperative for me, as the researcher, to go into the field limiting my assumptions and preconceived analysis of women’s social inequities and patriarchal domination, in order to describe the situation of women’s experiences with sport through

their own voices. The intention was to reveal the perspectives towards sports from local women living in the community through their analysis and not through a western lens. This study is grounded in Burnett's (2002) method of interviews on the local level and with Maodzwa and Toohey Costa's (2002) method of a life history. I extend Maodzwa and Toohey Costa's study by adding more voices to the exploration. I also utilized Burnett's (2002) and Ogu's (1999) emphasis on the complex interaction of gender, class, ethnicity, social, and cultural traditions. Through use of these qualitative methods, I hope this study will contribute to the discourse on women and sport in Africa.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to create and develop a cultural portrait of five women living in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, as seen through their experiences with sport and physical activity. The role of women in Victoria Falls was generally defined within cultural understanding, social roles, and economic responsibilities.

Abbreviated life histories were documented of women who represented a variety of ethnicities, ages, and class. Participants included those who represented the "ordinary person," who provides an example of a large population; the "great person," who impacts the age in which he or she lives; and the "marginal person," who lives in conflicting cultures (Creswell, 1998).

The overarching research question, determined by the researcher, for the study was how the experiences of Zimbabwean women with sport can be described and interpreted. The sub-questions follow the paradigm for describing and interpreting a

cultural portrait of women in the community of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe through the status of their sport participation and why women do or do not play sport. Those questions sought to explore (a) how women were introduced to sport, (b) the role of sport in women's lives in childhood and through adulthood, (c) the importance women place on the purpose of sport, and (d) the factors that influence the participation of sport by women. The specific research goals of the studies were:

1. To document the sport facilities available for men, women, and children in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
2. To observe and document sports participation of women in the Victoria Falls community.
3. To survey general thoughts towards sports from a sample of women in the community.
4. To engage in semi-structured interviews with women about their experiences with sport and cultural factors that may or may not influence their participation.
5. To present the interviews according to factors that influence participation in physical activity and sport.

This study is based in the detailed personal stories of women who currently live in Victoria Falls. No documentation of sports in Victoria Falls was available, so I began by investigating current sport facilities and opportunities for sport in Victoria Falls for men, women, and children. A general survey was also conducted to show the broad feelings of

women in this community towards sports, as well as to locate potential interview subjects.

The intention was to allow the Zimbabwean women to tell their stories, however, I nevertheless expected that opportunities for women to participate in sport would be unequal and inferior to the prospects for men. I also anticipated finding cultural, social and institutional factors that create barriers to equal participation for women in sport in the Victoria Falls community. It was probable that the formidable influences would be along gender, class, and ethnicity lines.

Significance of the Study

Where it has occurred, the rise of women's participation in sport has paralleled increased equality for women (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). It is unclear which came first - equality for women or increased sporting opportunities for women. There is limited literature on gender and sport in Africa and the researcher found only one piece of literature directly addressing women and sport in Zimbabwe. It is imperative, from an anthropological and sociological view, to record community situations so they may be understood for their significance in their historical, cultural, and social contexts.

Assumptions of the Study

Several assumptions underlie this study, the most important of which is that intensive interview analysis would allow the researcher to accurately understand the motivations and cultural factors that influence sport participation by women in Victoria Falls.

Limitations

The limitations of the study were:

1. The participants might not be willing to answer the questions honestly and completely.
2. The participants in the study might have fear or preconceived notions of working with a foreign researcher.
3. The participants might have a fear of the research being shared with political entities that may impact their personal lives.
4. Since the research is being conducted in a culture different from the researcher's, language and comprehension of the survey and interview may be an issue.
5. The participants' ability to speak, read, and understand English.
6. The rural population was not surveyed or interviewed due to the possible unreliability of transportation and due to a national shortage of fuel. This might have limited the inclusiveness of all women's sport experience in the Victoria Falls community.
7. The participants surveyed and interviewed might not be a complete representation of the population of Victoria Falls women's sport experience.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to:

1. Women over 18-year-old because of the legal definition of adults in the United States and to satisfy any restrictions that may apply with a Human Subjects

Institutional Review Board. There was no maximum age restriction in order to increase, as much as possible, the opportunity to reach all women in the society.

2. Women living in low-density and high-density housing communities in the city of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Definition of Terms

The terms used in this study were defined and described as follows:

1. Sport: The “institutionalized competitive activities that involve vigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of personal enjoyment and external rewards,” (Coakley, 1998, p.19).
2. Cultural factors: The researcher defined these as the collective knowledge and behaviors transmitted from one generation to another within a community, which includes ideologies about morals and values. In this study, the emphasis was on economic status, ethnic background, gender ideology and other social and institutional influences.
3. Race: Any group of people who share similar phenotypical characteristics, e.g., skin color, hair texture, facial features, and height (Olks, 1998).
4. Coloured: A category of race used in Africa and is identified where there are mixed ethnicities.
5. Ethnicity: The physical and cultural characteristics that, “either itself identifies or is seen by others as identifying with an exclusive culture” (Singh, 1981, p.1).

6. Educational levels: According to one of the participants, the Zimbabwe's educational levels are; Grade One through Grade Seven, Form One through Four (Ordinary Level or "O" Level), Form Five and Form Six (Advanced Level or "A" Level).

Autobiographical Statement

The following account of sport and women is an attempt to inform the reader about the realities of women living in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. In relating the stories of women in that society, the need for self-disclosure as a white, American woman can help reveal the lens through which I experienced that community. It is impossible to believe that my lived experiences and education prior to this study did not influence the way I presented reality as I saw it.

To begin, I was primarily raised in suburban communities with little or no ethnic diversity. My parents and grandparents were raised in rural areas in a Midwestern state. We spent many long weekends at our cabin with no plumbing, my grandparents' cabin on a lake, and in small rural towns where my grandparents lived. These communities were made up of German and Polish immigrants, where the biggest diversity issues existed between Lutherans and Catholics. For a few years, my family moved to Alaska. We still lived in a predominately white suburban community, but we had some diversity in our school. We eventually moved back to the Midwest, where I attended high school in a small rural town with a population of approximately 4,000 people. During these years, we lived in the country and had a small farm with cows, chickens, and large acres of vegetables and hay.

I have always been taught by my parents that I could do whatever I wanted and that everything was achievable through hard work and effort. I did not feel as if I had any restrictions because I was a female. My mother was a teacher and my father worked for the federal government. Even though my mother chose to stay home with her children before we were school-age, she began teaching again when my two brothers and I went to elementary school. When I was a little girl I dreamed of being a teacher, professional race car driver, or professional baseball player.

My favorite memories from childhood are of playing games and sports with the other children in the neighborhood. I always wanted to play football with the boys at home and at school. I was the only girl who played with them and I usually worried about being the last one picked for a team because I was the only girl. One of my interests was to win a local Punt, Pass, and Kick (American Football skills) competition. I practiced often, but never entered the competition. Another favorite memory was when I won a competition at 12 years old for being able to throw a softball the farthest of all the boys and girls. I began playing softball when I was nine years old and continued to play competitive softball until I was 24 years old.

My family moved twice when I was in school and joining school sports teams always eased the transition into my new schools and helped me make friends quickly. I was heavily involved in weight lifting, cross-country running, soccer, cheerleading, basketball, volleyball, and softball throughout my youth. I achieved honors in soccer, volleyball, cheerleading, and softball from age 13 to 18. Through a turbulent family life

that included moving to new states, sports also made me feel empowered, competent, and in control of my environment - it was my private world where I could feel happy.

When I was in elementary school, the only time I was aware of people who were not White or without a European heritage was when I would visit a large city for school or church field trips. I distinctly recall riding the subway on our way to a professional baseball game and watching a black man walking on the streets below. He was walking down the middle of the street with a large radio on his shoulder and cars following behind him. In my Alaskan junior high school, there were two or three black families who had children in school. While living in Alaska, I remember jokes about "Eskimos" and their cultural traditions. In high school in Minnesota, I recall Hmongs working on the farms near our town and how people made fun of the food they ate. I did not know what country Hmongs came from and I was not interested in finding out.

I had little knowledge of cultures outside the United States, let alone Africa or Africans. I do not recall any education in school about Africa, except for the history of slavery in the United States. What I did know about Africa came from television and related stories of hunger, poverty, AIDS, and apartheid. My visions of Africa were of dusty deserts, mud huts, and sad oppressed black people. As a white person in America, I did not understand and was confused about slavery. I was embarrassed and outraged at how human beings could treat other human beings as property.

When I was in my 20s and started working in a large city, I was rarely comfortable with my interactions with black Americans. I often wondered if they had any animosity or bias towards me because I was White. I always felt that I did not hold

any prejudice towards people of different skin color or culture. I actually felt that I was an activist for equal treatment, even though I never participated in an activist activities. When race issues arose in my family, I felt the need to argue against stereotyping based on skin color. This especially developed when troubles arose because a family member married a woman who had a black father. This interracial marriage produced a child, which was of major concern to some members of my family. Most of the arguments against this relationship focused on how difficult it was for inter-racial couples and mixed-race children in society. I never understood the belief that people of different colored skin or culture should not marry nor have babies. A family member actually thought that, "if God wanted us to marry, he would have made us all the same color." I did not agree with these philosophies, but I eventually understood and respected that some people were taught and hold these beliefs. These examples in my own family reiterated for me the strength and power of culture and socialization, as well as the issue of race.

I currently live in California, which is very racially and culturally diverse. When I first moved here, my cousin warned me that it might be different from any other place I had lived. I did not know exactly what she meant by "different," but after I moved I realized that I might not be as prejudice-free as I thought. I felt as if I was the minority and was discriminated against because of my skin color. This was an interesting and challenging growth period for me and I was often angry about being treated differently for this reason. I began to believe that stereotypes might have some truth in generalizing

behaviors, while still believing that human beings should be treated as individuals without pre-judgment.

Through university studies, I have learned about my invisible privileges as a member of the White majority in the United States. I was told about issues where people are prejudged by the color of their skin and realized that I had never thought about experiencing these challenges myself – such as, being pulled over by police because I was “white” or having people cross the street because they think I was going to rob them. I still ponder how my cultural upbringing has instilled in me certain subconscious preconceived ideas of people based on skin color and national heritage, yet had rarely thought how other people perceive me. Now I try to notice my instinctive reactions and thoughts towards people with different backgrounds from me. I continue to struggle with the reality of stereotypes, racism, and prejudice versus the reality of the generalizing behavior displayed by ethnically and culturally diverse populations.

I like to travel, but my trips generally included only Canada, the United States, and Mexico. I had never been farther abroad than the North American continent even though I have always wanted to explore different countries. When I took a college course called “Marketing in Developing Nations,” I decided that I wanted to explore and learn about life in a third-world country. In 2003, one of my professors offered me an opportunity to take a trip to Africa. I was excited and wanted to look past the life in luxurious hotels and restaurants. I wanted to learn about the lives of the locals behind the tourist allure of going on a wild animal safari. I wanted most to discover and see how

people survive in a “developing” world. I felt that I could learn a tremendous amount about achieving satisfaction and happiness without material possessions.

I was told in one university class that people in other cultures can spot Americans just by the way they walked and the clothes that they wore. I did not know if I could blend into the local, African community because I am an American. I felt that I could not integrate into the dominant African society because I am "white". I worried that I might be identified with colonization and oppression, just by the color of my skin. I thought that all Blacks were oppressed and that Whites were usually the oppressors.

I felt that it would be difficult to truly see life through an African perspective and that a large number of personal biases could arise from my recent introduction to Critical Studies. I was hoping that I could view a third-world society in a non-judgmental manner and attempt to see it through the perspective of the local world-view. Critical studies focus on how social structures create, encourage, and sustain inequality and marginalization based on characteristics such as race, gender, or class. I currently find it difficult to look at any interaction between people or in the structure of social and political institutions without wondering whether there is intent to discriminate or a resulting inequality. This could influence my hypothesis, in which I might view all realities of women's opportunities as being inferior to men because of dominant hegemonic values and structures. I made it a priority not to move into the research location wanting to prove this hypothesis. I intended to honestly convey the situation and thoughts of the people in the community through their perceptions, not mine.

I went to Africa for the first time in June 2003 and arrived in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. I had an *attachment* (internship) with a five-star hotel in town. I lived there in a hotel room that looked over a waterhole, where wild elephants came to drink water, and I ate meals in the fancy restaurants.

I labored side by side with local employees, as we worked double shifts, served food and beverages, and cleaned up after the guests. One employee told me that he had never seen an American work. These employees started working at 7:00 a.m. to prepare and lay out the restaurant. Then they would leave at 1:00 p.m. and come back at 5:00 p.m. to wait on the diners. They would clean up and leave for home around 10:00 p.m., just to sleep until the next work shift started.

Those hotel employees worked shifts six days a week and sometimes even seven days a week, if they were saving their days off for a visit to their rural homes. It is common to work three weeks in a row, to have one week off, for there is no national law that governs a 40- hour work week or overtime. Very few people have cars and even if they did, there was no petrol at the petrol stations. People must rely on buses and wait long hours along the highway to hitch rides. All of this is necessary for some to make it to their homesteads in the rural areas, so they can see their families and children. Many employees in town choose to leave their children in the rural areas to be tended after by other family members. To visit their children, it often takes more than one or two days away from work. I worked eight days in a row before I had a day off work. I was very tired and did not understand how the local workers handled such a work schedule.

The opportunity to work with locals gave me the chance to become acquainted with them and to see more of daily life in the area. I had many conversations with co-workers, some of whom became friends. We talked about the many differences and similarities between America and Zimbabwe, as well as between Americans and Zimbabweans. Our conversations covered almost every aspect of life: family, dating, religion, politics, economics, and cultural aspects. The Zimbabweans appeared very friendly, open, honest, and forthright with me. I felt there was honesty because we talked about controversial and often uncomfortable situations where the Zimbabweans felt they were demeaned by and inferior to White people. In some circumstances, the open conversations came instantaneously; in other situations the locals took a couple of days getting to know me before they trusted me enough to engage in longer conversations. This aspect of their personalities enlightened me about the different expectations and concerns of people. We were all inquisitive about life in another country, more so because many of my new acquaintances had never traveled outside of Zimbabwe. Conversations would go on for hours and we would be forced to part and go our separate ways because it was late in the evening.

I had the chance to make connections with local people from all aspects of society: wealthy, middle class, and poor; black, white, and coloured; professionals and rural farmers; and men, women, and children. I was also invited into the homes of people from all these diverse backgrounds. I felt fortunate to see examples of the multiple living conditions in the area and experienced how the majority of the population lived.

One afternoon, I walked with one of the restaurant managers to his home. He lived in the *high-density area* (suburb) of town, called Chinotimba. We walked down the paved town roads, through sandy paths that cut through forested areas, and along gravel roads of the township. We passed single concrete homes. Sometimes on these *stands* (properties) other constructions of random wood, plastic sheeting, or cardboard had been made where people lived as well. Unlike the concrete homes, however, those constructions did not have electricity or running water. The smell of smoke and burning wood was thick in the air when these families would be cooking meals or heating water. I saw the insides of these homes and how one family would live in one bedroom. I saw how they cooked on two-burner hot plates. I felt that they were happy, regardless of the minimal material possessions. This could have been an assumption on my part because they were smiling and laughing. Outside of material possessions – such as no washing machine - I felt that the environment was not much different than what I experienced in my own home. People worked to pay their bills and to provide for their families as best as they could. Women were the ones seen doing laundry and caring for the children. Men were seen carving wood for trade and sale. Young girls were seen taking care of even younger children and young boys were seen playing soccer in the streets.

I was able to watch one soccer game during my visit to Victoria Falls. The game was held in a stadium in the middle of the high-density housing area, where the middle and lower classes mostly lived. The teams, spectators, and referees were all black-skinned. There were men and women in the audience, but the soccer players were all male. I had a chance to talk to one of the officials and he said that there were two female

soccer referees in the area and they were the first of their gender, but I did not see them at that particular soccer game. A male friend and I were the only White people in the stadium. This situation caused a little uneasiness for us. We made sure we were aware of our surroundings so we could notice any dangerous situations that might have arisen. This sense of uneasiness came from not only being the only white people in the stadium, but also from media news about riots at soccer games. A riot did break out in the crowd near where we were seated. Instead of leaving the stadium, though, we moved to another area of the stadium where we felt we could be safer and had quick access to an exit.

As a white U.S. citizen and female researcher, I was aware that I might feel uncomfortable in unfamiliar surroundings where there was a possibility of cultural miscommunications and potential areas of bias. I was also cognizant that there might be biases towards me that I may or may not be aware of. During the many conversations I had with co-workers and new friends, we discussed these issues. Most of the conversations were frank in these areas, yet respectful from each side. The most uncomfortable situations were when I was trying to learn some of the local tribal languages, when I was visiting town alone, and the situation at the soccer game when I thought a riot might put me in danger. There were times when I was speaking a foreign language that I was self conscious about sounding funny or saying something incorrectly. When I was by myself, I feared as a woman for my safety from both robbery and sexual or physical assault. At the soccer game, I felt afraid of the possibility of a violent mob scene.

That trip to Africa was the first time I had traveled overseas. I had received some diversity training through my university studies that taught me principles of intercultural communication and respect. I kept these aspects in mind and tried to be mindful of cultural differences. I asked direct questions of what could be expected and also watched for clues about correct behavior in different situations. There were no times during my visit that I was made aware of any cultural faux pas, but this does not mean that I did not make any.

As a woman, I was unsure of the accepted male and female roles in Victoria Falls. I read a tourist guide to learn about possible cultural gender differences, values, and expected behavior. There did not seem to be any substantial differences mentioned in the tourist guides. When I spoke with my new friends in the area, the only difference in roles seemed to be in the word choice according to gender in the local tribal language and a manner of clapping when greeting another person. As a woman, I expected to be marginalized and put into an inferior position to men or at least to learn that the women in the local area would be. I did not experience this, at least that I am aware of. The only experience of separation of women and men I saw was at a funeral that I attended. I was expected to wear a sarong skirt, as opposed to pants. The men and women separated into different seating areas at the funeral and they formed separate lines when walking past the deceased for viewing.

During some of my conversations with local citizens, we talked about my interest to see sporting events in the area. This elicited immediate comments about how some of the men loved to play football (soccer). The topic of sports initiated stories from men

about soccer games in the past and injuries that kept them from currently playing with their friends. One man talked about how he had injured his ankle so he could not play at the moment, but was looking forward to playing again soon. I asked some of the people how physical activity was important since the main mode of transportation was walking. The locals talked about how they loved to play sports and that it was exercise. The men felt that walking was not exercise. The women talked about how they wished that they walked more in the mornings, as a form of exercise. Since walking was the main form of transportation, I queried about the need for more. I was informed that walking in the morning was for exercise and it was “just different.”

One man and I were discussing whether girls played soccer. He laughed and said that girls were not “strong enough to play soccer.” This one comment triggered my desire to explore sports and gender issues in Zimbabwe, which led to this study. I felt impelled to return to Victoria Falls in the future to learn more about these issues. I was interested in discovering the world perspectives of this Zimbabwean culture and how they affected women’s ability to play sports. I did not want to assume that the opinion of one man reflected the pervasive opinion of the community. This is why I choose to research sports in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and specifically to focus on women.

CHAPTER 2

Sport as Culture

The definition of culture has been widely discussed and rarely agreed upon. This study defined culture as the activities that show the collective knowledge and behaviors transmitted from one generation to another within a community, which includes ideologies about morals and values. In this study, the emphasis was on economic status, gender ideology, cultural traditions, social expectations, and other institutional influences.

Sport as an aspect of culture has been documented in many anthropological works but mostly as a peripheral subject. Only on rare occasions was sport used as the main tool to analyze specific cultures. One of the earliest examples was in 1896 when Culin studied the game sport activities of 225 Native American tribes and showed the significance of sports in societies as a representation of culture (Sands, 2002). The most recognizable document of sport as an aspect of culture is Geertz's, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" (1973). Geertz argues that it was important to analyze community sporting activities to understand the Balinese institutional organizations and family structures. More recently, Fair (1997) explored the role and history of sport as a civilizing agent in Africa. She highlights the case in Zanzibar, where sport was utilized as a socializing agent by colonial powers. Fair (1997) made a point that even though certain sports were introduced by the colonial powers, these same sports currently represent a large aspect and important hub of social events of the indigenous population.

This study also supports that sport is an element of culture. One of the objectives in the anthropology of sport is to specifically describe sport and its importance, personally and socially, in various cultures. The hope was to document the sport phenomenon in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in cultural, social and economic context for historical significance.

One of the characteristics of culture is in its universality, which according to Blanchard (1995) is because, “despite the variability of cultural behavior that persists in specific societies, there still is a general tendency for members of a particular group to share broad sets of behavior patterns” (p. 32). The existence and importance of sport crosses class, gender and ethnic boundaries.

Another characteristic of culture that exemplifies sport is that culture is an integrated system. When there is a change in one aspect, it affects the whole. If cultural traditions have restriction on dress for women then this may limit running in hot weather, which then may have influence on health conditions of women in that society. Sport is an aspect of culture and cultural factors can influence sport.

Anthropology of sport questions what factors make sport a phenomenon so pervasive through history. Anthropology scholars in the past have limited the amount that sports were addressed specifically as the topic of analysis, but sports that have been included as peripheral content benefits a cross-cultural comparison of world cultures. In this study, the emphasis will be on describing the existence of sport as a cultural area in Zimbabwe and to assess how economic status, ethnic background, gender ideology, and other institutional influences work together in the lives of the participants.

Sport participation and physical education can be seen as a microcosm of the larger society in which a community exists. Analyzing the rules and norms of sport in a specific community can directly relate to the rules and norms of the local culture and social organization. The common view of sport is that it is done only for fun and leisure, with no hidden agendas. Upon closer examination, sport can signify how the population comes together (or does not come together) in public space to create meaning.

Comparative studies of sport help the international community understand the vast and diverse ideologies and situations that occur, for example, for women and sport. Western nations have generally led the world in equity for women across all aspects of life and one way this can be measured is in increased participation of women in sport.

Developing nations are beginning to see an increase in women's participation in sport, but developing nations have cultural, social, economic, and political structures that create barriers for women (Eitzen & Sage, 1997).

CHAPTER 3

Zimbabwe

An ethnography's purpose is to describe a particular culture. Wolcott (1994) suggests data representation by beginning with a description of the culture-sharing group and environment:

Description is the foundation upon which qualitative research is built....Here you become the storyteller, inviting the reader to see through your eyes what you have seen....Start by presenting a straightforward description of the setting and events. No footnotes, no intrusive analysis---just the facts, carefully presented and interestingly related at an appropriate level of detail. (p. 28)

This chapter will begin with an overview of the nation of Zimbabwe and then give a first person account of the field site, the community of Victoria Falls. The culture and sport background of Zimbabwe will then be delineated.

Zimbabwe is a nation with a turbulent history, an unstable present and an uncertain future, yet most of the Zimbabweans I met were optimistic, extroverted, and friendly. The positive personalities of the locals drew me in and made me feel welcomed. The population is approximately 12 and a half million in an area the size of Montana, U.S.A. The climate is subtropical and the terrain is mostly desert and savanna. The ethnic groups are majority Shona (82%) and Ndebele (14%) heritage. There are a small percentage of other tribal affiliations (2%), European (1%), and Asian and Coloured (1%) (CIA, 2005). Since British influence began in 1888, English has been the official language, which made my extended-stay easier. I was able to communicate much more easily with the local people and negotiated living in the community without much assistance.

A Zimbabwean history book (Sibanda & Moyana, 1999) described early archeological evidence of organized city-states between the 13th and 15th century A.D. The first recorded European influence came in the 15th century when Portuguese traders came to the eastern area closer to the Indian Ocean. More Europeans came about 300 years later when explorers, ivory traders, and missionaries made their way into the area. This was also a time of tribes migrating to the area from Southern Africa. The Ndebele tribe came with this migration. The most significant European influence came when Cecil Rhodes was granted mining rights in the area. The area was called Rhodesia after him and was officially a “British Sphere of Influence” until becoming an official self-governing British colony in 1923. In 1965, these local British residents did not like Britain governing them, so they declared independence. Native reserves were set up in Rhodesia and the indigenous populations were forced to move to remote and unfertile lands. After a civil war waged against the UDI by the Shona and Ndebele, the black majority won the right to self-government and complete independence from external European influence. Independence was negotiated with mediation in Britain, and resulted in the Lancaster Agreement in 1979 (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 1979).

Zimbabwe was once called the “Jewel of Africa,” but according to the U.S. Department of State (2003) the 2000 estimated per capital GDP of Zimbabwe was \$520 U.S. dollars (USD). Zimbabwe was once one of the major exporters of tobacco throughout the world. Agriculture represents 20% of the GDP which includes tobacco, corn, cotton, wheat, coffee, sugarcane, peanuts, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. Another

major industry is manufacturing, which is 25% of GDP. Zimbabwe has abundant natural resources, i.e. gold, silver, platinum, copper, and asbestos; the mining of which represents 8% of the GDP. Tourism is a growing sector and is currently 6% of GDP. Prior to current political sanctions, Zimbabwe exported \$53 million USD to the United States and received \$112 million USD in imports. Their largest trade partner, at 22%, is still South Africa (U.S. Department of State, 2003).

The economic decline has been particularly drastic in recent years. A severe drought and political land reforms have hindered the agriculture sector. President Mugabe's government has confiscated white-owned farms to redistribute to black citizens and war veterans. This has resulted in lower farm production. Inflation has risen from 32% in 1998, to 383% in 2003, and was expected to reach 700% in 2004 (CIA, 2005). According to local citizens, the average monthly wage in Victoria Falls in 2003 was approximately 43.75 U.S. dollars a month. In 2004, an average price for a loaf of bread was 3,000 Zimbabwean dollars (ZWD). Although the official rate of exchange in 2004 was approximately 5,500 ZWD to 1 USD, the "black" or parallel market in this tourist area allows locals to offer exchange rates from 7,000 – 8,000 ZWD to 1 USD. The parallel market helps the locals because foreign dollars give them a stable cash asset. BBC News website (2003) reported the Zimbabwe crisis includes "eight million [people, who] need food aid, shortages of petrol, bread, sugar...." (§ 9).

These issues add to other challenges the country has been facing for years, such as a high prevalence of diabetes and one of the highest rates of AIDS in the world. Zimbabwe has the third highest rate of HIV/AIDS in Africa at 34% (USAID, 2002).

They have over 600,000 people estimated to be living with diabetes, with approximately 400,000 who may not have been diagnosed (Mudzongo, 2003). These health issues contribute to the social and economic concerns of the country by creating a large orphan population and stretching the medical sector (Mudzongo, 2003). This may be an important factor as “excess mortality may be due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected” (CIA, 2003, ¶ 19). Life expectancy in Zimbabwe is 39.01 years. The infant mortality rate is 66.47 deaths/1,000 live births. The population growth rate is 0.83%. The median age is 18.9 years, (CIA, 2003). There used to be an increasing migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa, according to conversations with Zimbabwean citizens in 2003; however, the Zimbabwean government has curtailed the availability of visas and passports to residents under the age of 30.

Victoria Falls

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, was the field site for this study. It is important to first give some insight into the Victoria Falls community as a unique and individual representation of a Zimbabwean community. This society reflects common characteristics of Zimbabwe in a majority of ways, but also is distinctive as one of the major tourist attractions of the world. The influence of tourism to Victoria Falls is epitomized in the town council’s official mission statement, which is focused only on tourism. This was seen by me on a printed document in the town council offices. This economic strategy creates a distinct cultural environment within Zimbabwe.

Victoria Falls is one of the main tourist attractions in Zimbabwe. As a foreign tourist first arrives on the airplane, all he or she can see are wide horizons of flat, non-descript land. A tourist imagines wild animals among the thorny trees, anticipates rides in open-air trucks, and hopes to see lions with a fresh kill, as well as zebras and giraffes galloping in the open fields. Anticipation builds. Suddenly there is a glimpse of what appears as a burst of smoke out of nowhere. It is one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Victoria Falls. There is a vast gorge where the Zambezi River cuts through the ground and the largest water falls in the world brings people from all countries to view it. The tourist brochures and internet websites invite those who are adventurous. Victoria Falls claims to be one of the top places in the world for sports for adrenaline-seekers.

Once the foreign tourist departs the airport, there is a long, slow line through immigration and customs. The first view of this community is exemplified by the semi-circle of male safari company representatives, holding signs that say "Mr. Smith x 2." They appear to descend rapidly on the unsure arriving passengers, who are in need of direction and structure. There is a crowd of men dressed in khaki and beige. One views a uniformity of neutral-colored cotton short-sleeved shirts, with coordinating green or blue patches on the shoulders, and beige pants. The tourist is surrounded by a sea of the darkest black faces, with just one or two pale-skinned men. These pale-skinned men seem to have a uniform of the shortest shorts a man can wear. One can envision the Rhodesian cultural elites from Zimbabwe's history. All the locals can see is the face of dollar signs on the arriving guests and the money that these tourists will leave behind. There is hope that some additional money will be left directly into their individual hands.

There are two views that most tourists have on their short stay in the area (an average stay is two to three nights). The safari company drivers take these clients directly to their luxurious accommodations, where they pass families of baboons crossing the road and are eventually greeted with smiling and friendly African hosts. All that they see is clean reception areas, filled with exotically colorful and crude artistic examples of tribal artifacts. There are modern restaurants and beautiful rooms with beds covered with the necessary addition of flowing, filmy, white mosquito nets to ward off the chances of contracting malaria. The wilderness atmosphere is supported by warnings not to walk in the bush alone. The community of Victoria Falls lies in the middle of the Zambezi National Park. There are warnings to keep one's patio doors locked when one is away, or inquisitive Vervet monkeys will steal all sweets and candy in the room. All of this is a prime example of the truly adventurous and wild African experience that the tourist has come for. Reception informs the guests of the shuttles to town that will take them to the *curios* (souvenir) markets, where they can gather their desired, inexpensive remembrances of Africa to take home.

The second view comes when the exploring guests jump in one of the shuttles to town. One is ready to see how the local people live and get another look at the culture of the area. Victoria Falls is a small town, yet bustling with people everywhere. There are not many tourists, and one believes he or she is the luckiest person to have this exotic destination to one self. The bustling comes from citizens talking and visiting on the street. As one drives down through what appears to be the only two roads in town, locals are everywhere. There are shop workers sitting on the steps outside of their stores. There

are men and women sitting and chatting. One sees women in fancy dresses, balancing their groceries carefully on their heads. There are men selling newspapers on the side of the road, with crowds surrounding them. Everyone is smiling and laughing.

When the adventurous tourists jump off the shuttle near the market area, there are street boys waiting to show special deals on a wooden elephant or a *nyami nyami* (Zambezi River God) necklace. The street boys are persistent to sell their goods and follow a person until he or she walks away. There are blind adults being led around by small children who are raising their hands asking for *laloo* (Shona for “help”). The small children look as if their clothes and faces have not been washed for weeks. One can not escape. A person often feels claustrophobic because of the crowds of locals that surround them. Two or three young men rush towards tourists while they walk off the shuttle bus, and they direct towards their stands at the local market. They are all telling of the good prices they can give at their shops. When one enters the market, one sees endless rows of tall, elegant wooden giraffes; small patches of ground filled with wooden bowls and grass baskets; lines of women holding up large fabrics with colorful pictures of wild animals; and men coming out from small stands filled with tiny wonders that invite browsing. Every curio vendor is reaching out with his hands to direct towards his special world of goods and calling, “sistah,” “madame,” “see my shop,” “good deals today,” and “come look.”

A closer look at locals reveals holes in their shoes or maybe no shoes at all. There are rips in the locals’ pants and the clothes outfits are often mismatches of design and color. The men wear western clothes; t-shirts and hats that advertise American sports

teams or towns. The women are all draped in long fabric pieces as skirts and a variety of t-shirts or blouses. Their heads are intricately wrapped in fabric with exotic designs. The men and women are physically separated in this market. The women vendors are all together standing on the left and the men's stores are all on the right. The only gender mix are the buyers, who have come from outside of Zimbabwe. The attention of most tourists is focused on the beautifully carved pieces of wood that have been fashioned into elephants, hippos, lions, wooden bowls, and masks. As one walks around, there is concern about stepping on another person's feet and one tries to create some personal space in the confined area. Prices must be requested on the unique objects that catch one's interest. The vendors all ask what currency will be used before they decide what price to quote. Tourists are encouraged by the vendors to negotiate, so the dialogue begins. It can be difficult to know what bottom price you could have negotiated.

As one eventually leaves, one is tired. The anticipation of owning a piece of this native African land makes one excited. The mind is churning on whether the price was good and whether you have cheated the vendors, especially when they are telling you they have no food today. All of this is forgotten as one boards the shuttle to return to the luxurious life behind the hotel walls. The shuttle bus drives pass the golden grass in the bush. There is hope that a wild elephant will be seen walking along the road. It is time to have a drink on the patio and watch the buffalo drink at a waterhole. Reservations are made for dinner and it is time to think about the four-course meal one is about to consume.

This is the common experiences of foreign tourists who come to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. They come for the wild animals. They come for a view of the mysterious bush and all that is unknown about the “Dark Continent” of Africa, as colonialist labeled it. If they stayed for an extended time and lived outside of the hotels and fancy restaurants, what would they see? They could watch the curios vendors and fancy shop employees as they walk the five to seven plus kilometers to where they *stay* (live). The tourists would notice that the locals work six to seven days a week. They would notice that there are men playing soccer in the streets and that the women are hanging hand-washed clothes on a line to dry. They would notice *queues* (lines) at the grocery store for bread. If the tourists visited a local home and talked with the residents, they would hear who has died recently and how difficult it is for them to feed their families.

Victoria Falls, the town, has a normal population of 17,000 Chinula and Talbot (2002). Local citizens debate this number and say it is closer to 30,000, due to a high transient population. I attempted to gain official demographic information from the town council, but after multiple appointments over two and a half months, I was still unable to attain these documents or information. Victoria Falls’ population consists of families who have lived there for generations, as well as transient workers who have moved there to find employment in the tourism industry. The Victoria Falls’ housing areas, known as low-density and high-density housing, were the location of the study. The townships have three high-density living areas, Chinotimba, Mkhosana, and New Chinotimba. High-density housing consists of accommodations where multiple families live in single homes that have small, unfenced yards. Low-density housing consists of single-family

homes with large yards, which are fenced. There was no official name of the low-density area, it was only referred to as “town”. Economic and class status were defined by the main residence of each participant. The rural areas were not included in the census in this research because there was a gas shortage in Zimbabwe and transportation could be difficult to arrange. Other housing accommodation located in town consists of rudimentary structures with no running water or electricity, called “bagdads” or “shantys.” The town has one hospital, a number of banks, one major supermarket, and various small, privately owned food vending kiosks.

Culture in Zimbabwe

Culture in Zimbabwe is reflected by the majority Shona and Ndebele ethnic population. They have individual traditions but have some similar characteristics. The Shona were subsistence agriculturists and the Ndebele were farmers as well, but were more involved in trade and cattle (Beech, 1977; Folbre, 1988). According to Folbre (1988), “virtually all analyses of Shona and Ndebele society concur: the household was the basic unit of production” (p. 63). Most research on the culture of these two tribes talks of the roles of men, women and children in these societies. Boys and girls are taught good manners from the same-sex parent (Gelfand, 1973). Boys are responsible for caring for the cattle and girls must stay near the home to help their mothers as necessary. During the Ndebele ritual into puberty, boys are beaten with sticks to make them stronger (Bozongwana, 1983). During the ritual for girls in some communities, “she may be attacked with switches while naked. This is said to harden her so that when her husband beat her, she won’t feel much pain,” (Bozongwana, 1983, p. 21). A majority of the roles

of men and women are talked about in regards to duties and expectations in marriage; as mothers, fathers, husbands and wives. According to Gelfand (1973) in “The genuine Shona,” men are the head of the household and women are responsible for taking care of the home. These roles are taken seriously for the success of the community. Gelfand (1973) says that “every person in a village knows his proper place....This appreciation of the status of every member of the group leads to a well disciplined unit...in this way village affairs can be expected to run smoothly” (p.29). These perspectives that specific gender roles assist in community cohesion are also held by the Ndebele. According to Bozongwana (1983), the men’s responsibility is to protect their families and it is the women’s responsibility to cook and perform childcare. While I was staying with friends in Victoria Falls, I experienced this philosophy first hand. The solo male of the house told me specifically that it was his job to protect the women and the women’s job to attend to all his needs. Bozongwana (1983) insists that “subordination on the part of the wife does not in any way imply servitude but merely sustains and enhances the marriage bond” (p.8). He also goes on to say that this “good rapport in the home...brings about the necessary pleasant atmosphere...to readily bestow blessings upon the members of the family” (Bozongwana, 1983, p.8).

Women were reported as a necessary component of a cohesive and successful community. Their role in a family was so important that marriage and ultimately the loss of the daughter required a *roora* or *lobola* (bride payment). Their roles in reproduction were important to sustain the village by childbearing and childrearing which sustained the labor force. In Gelfand’s account of Shona society, he tells extensively of the good

behavior that is expected of children and women. The only reference to men on this issue is that they teach good manners to the boys. Gelfand (1973) outlines the virtues of a good woman, some of which include: (a) she shows respect to all older or senior people, (b) she maintains good relations with neighbors, and does not quarrel with them, (c) she obeys her husband and if he happens to be wrong does not argue with him and (d) she prepares her husband's meals and provides him with his needs and comforts a man expects (p.25).

Many of these expectations were heard in conversations with my acquaintances in Victoria Falls in 2004. Many women told of their main responsibilities for being available for their men, to wash their hands (a traditional ritual), cook, clean and take care of children.

When Cecil Rhodes and missionaries came into this region and began to rule, their initial policies inhibited some of the local practices. The government of Rhodesia outlawed marriages without the woman's or girl's consent, and the promise of girls to potential husbands at young ages. This was helpful initially to the missionaries because they found many converts from young women avoiding "forced marriages" (Folbre, 1988). The tribal elders were unhappy with this arrangement and pressured the Rhodesians to change this policy. According to Folbre (1988):

the authorities proceeded to do so [allow family arranged marriages], partly as a concession, and partly because they worried that the "emancipation of women" had truly gotten out of hand. The philosophy towards women and their position in society was very similar to women in England at the time. British indirect rule brought their views of the proper place of women to their spheres of influence and perpetuated the role of women's place in the home....In 1917 the Missionary Women's Conference acknowledged that they had preached too much liberty to

women and decided to recommend the preaching of Paul's injunction, "Let the wives be subject to their husbands". (p.68)

There was dissent on this issue between different Christian denominations and some still encouraged female independence.

Colonization has tremendously impacted cultural factors in Zimbabwe. The white, British minority held the majority of the economic power since they confiscated the best farming land in the country. This made them not only have the political power, but the economic means to control society. The indigenous farmers were relocated to less arable land, which strangled their subsistence living. This forced a large portion of the African population to move to the urban areas to find work, or for men to leave their families to work for long extended times on white-owned farms. The relocation to urban areas and the loss of men in the community led to the reorganization of the traditional societal structures and values. When families moved away from the agricultural environment both parents needed to work in order to afford basic needs. When men left the community, the women had to take over the traditional male responsibilities, which left them less time for their normal responsibilities. This contributed to less available time for leisure activities for men and women, as well as fewer opportunities for physical activities (Folbre, 1988).

The colonizers utilized education to reshape the existing indigenous culture into a pseudo-British culture. Education was seen as necessary by the British to make the African "savages" into productive, responsible, and "civilized" humans. Formal education required that the indigenous population learn the English language. In order to work towards better economic opportunities, the new British-Zimbabwean culture

required formal training and education. Education gave the Africans knowledge of the outside world and other ways of doing things. They could see that western ways were connected to survival in a wage earning economy.

Sport in Zimbabwe

Historically, British colonizers and missionaries used sport to organize the indigenous people of Rhodesia into what they perceived as a copy-cat British and thereby, more stable society. Schooling structures introduced Africans to British sports. Instead of dancing and play fighting for boys, schools introduced cricket, soccer (football), and rugby for men. Instead of dancing for women, schools introduced netball and field hockey. For women, physical education was important in school but became less important when family and society pressured them to marry. To have a family became priority over sports when education was completed (Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002).

Religion was also used to influence the metamorphosis from traditional culture, which was seen as “un-civilized,” to a western culture that was seen as more controlled and respectful. The biggest influence was on gender socialization. According to Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002), “Mission authorities believed that physical education and sport prepared young women for both vocation and marriage by reinforcing conservative ideas of discipline, high moral standards, and lady-like behavior” (p. 28) and these values were similar to gender roles that were common in indigenous culture. There were certain physical activities that were appropriate for men

and not for women. Sport was seen as possibly compromising a woman's ability to be attractive to men and reducing her potential for marriage (Mazuri, 1987).

Zimbabwe, after independence, has taken sport as a tool to propagate nationalism and other issues that are important to the new nation. After Zimbabwean independence in 1980, the new government created an interim sports council to utilize sport for their own goals. The new Zimbabwean government passed the Zimbabwe Youth, Sport, and Recreation Council Act Number 10 in 1983, which resulted in the formation of the Zimbabwe Sport and Recreation Council. Their goal was for the "coordination, control, and fostering of sport in Zimbabwe; the expansion of sporting opportunities and facilities; and the provision of human resources for sport" (Sport and Recreation Commission, 2003a, ¶ 1). A Presidential Advisory Committee on the organization of sport in Zimbabwe in 1989 resulted in the Parliamentary Act Number 15 in 1991. This created the Sport and Recreation Commission in 1991. The mission of the Sport and Recreation Commission (Sport and Recreation Commission, 2003a) is "to facilitate access to sporting opportunities at all levels for the citizens of Zimbabwe by creating a conducive environment through partnerships for the growth and development of and through sport" (¶ 2). Currently, Zimbabwe utilizes sport to help address social and economic concerns. Two of the stated objectives are HIV/AIDS education and equal opportunities for women (Sport and Recreation Commission, 2003a).

Zimbabwe formally acknowledged their support for equality for women in sports when Zimbabwe's major sports organizing commissions, Sport and Recreation Committee, Zimbabwe Olympic Committee, and Women in Sport Foundation

Zimbabwe, adopted or endorsed the Brighton Declaration (UK Sports Council, 1998). The Brighton Declaration was a result of the first Conference on Women and Sport in 1994, which was “the beginning of a strategic and coordinated international effort,” (White & Scoretz, 2002a, ¶2) for the promotion of equality for women through sport. According to The Women and Sport Progress Report 1998-2002 (White & Scoretz, 2002b), the Brighton Declaration provides a comprehensive set of principles for the development of opportunities for women and sport. Its overriding aim is “to develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of Sport” (¶ 6).

Zimbabwe is a member of the African Women and Sport Association (AWISA), which partners with the Supreme Council of Sport in Africa (SCSA). One of AWISA’s accomplishments was a Task Force on Women in Sport. AWISA hopes to partner with African governments and non-government organizations in order to gain recognition across Africa for the inclusion of women and women’s issues in sport (White & Scoretz, 2002c).

Zimbabwe has a broad initiative, Women in Sport (WiS), whose main component is to promote “research study focusing on the barriers to participation of Zimbabwean women in sport and physical activity,” (White & Scoretz, 2002d, ¶ 7). A major accomplishment of WiS was the creation of a network of women interested in sport. One of the success stories reported in The Windhoek Call For Action (White & Scoretz, 2002d) was Zimbabwe’s Sport and Recreation Commission’s Aerobics For Pregnant Women that was begun in 1994. The program not only promotes sport for pregnant

women, but has been so popular that aerobics has also been adopted by non-pregnant women. The program uses aerobics as an avenue to educate women on women's rights, health, family planning, HIV/AIDS awareness, and gender issues in sport and physical activity (White & Scoretz, 2002d). More than 2,000 women participate per week (White & Scoretz, 2002d).

Another program created by Zimbabwe's Sport and Recreation Commission is the Youth Education Through Sport (YES) Program. The aim is to bring youth together, "to address life skills and educate them about HIV/AIDS related issues," (Sport and Recreation Commission, 2003b, ¶ 3). YES's main components are education, community projects, and a football (soccer) league (White & Scoretz, 2002d). The program was reported as being successful and now has more than 6,000 female and male youths active in football teams and league activity, which includes 164 girls' teams and 211 boys' teams (White & Scoretz, 2002d).

CHAPTER 4

Review of Literature

The review of literature is organized in four sections. The first section highlights the place of sport in classic anthropology. The second section focuses on the issue of sport in Africa. The third section looks at the experiences of women in Africa. The fourth section examines the interplay of women and sport in Africa.

Sport Anthropology

At the end of the 1800's, sport and culture became more significant in anthropological studies. According to Sands (2002), prior to this time researchers did not place importance on sports and games because they were more interested in "looking at human behavior through economic systems, social structures, religious and political systems, marriage, and kinship than through such insignificant elements as sport and games" (p. 3). Archetti (2005) theorizes that sports were missing because academics saw sports only as a characteristic of "highly competitive industrial societies," and "central features of modernity" (§ 1). Sands (2002) refers to this philosophy as a "mental colonialism, sport being too primitive to produce the right kind of cultural data" (p.4). Regardless of the absence of more detailed accounts of sports during this time, any documentation provides evidence that sport was an aspect of indigenous societies.

One of the first extensive studies of sport as an aspect of culture was done by Culin in 1907. He studied the game and sport activities of 225 Native American tribes and showed the significance of sports in societies; as well as, a representation of culture (Sands, 2002). Firth's research on darts matches in the Polynesian society of Tikopia in

1931 explored further the connection between sports and institutional structures in a community. The research focused on the interconnection between dart throwing, social organization, and belief systems (Sands, 2002). Firth felt that the analysis of sport was underrepresented and that the “relation of primitive sport to other aspects of the social life, its unique cultural value on the one hand, and its inter-reaction with economic, aesthetic, and religious affairs on the other, presents a field of research which merits even more attention” (as cited in Harris & Park, 1983, p. 257).

The legitimacy of sport as a focused study in anthropology still struggled in the academic world. According to Sands (2002), the biggest advancement came when new generations of anthropologists were “pushing the boundaries of acceptable research” (p. 4). Advancements were made when White addressed the American Anthropology Association and supported a dialogue on theory and method on sports and culture (Sands, 2002).

The most recognizable example of sport anthropology is Geertz's, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” which was written in 1973. Geertz argued that sport is as important in understanding the Balinese as institutional organizations and family structures. He related the importance of sport to America, “As much of America surfaces in a ball park, on a golf links, at a race track or around a poker table, much of Bali surfaces in a cock ring. For it is only apparently cocks that are fighting there. Actually, it is men,” (as cited in Harris & Park, 1983, p.43) The significance to academia was not only the evidence of sport as an aspect of culture, but the advancement of legitimacy in theory and method (Sands, 2002).

In 1979, the now classic film “Trobriand Cricket” enlightened the world on the role that sport played in colonization. Kildea and Leach (1979) not only documented the use of sport in the colonization processes, but related the philosophy of the missionaries regarding sports. The intention was to indoctrinate the indigenous population into what the colonizers perceived as a stable civilization. The interesting twist of the documentary was that even though the locals accepted cricket as a sport, they incorporated the sport into their own existing traditions and created a cricket experience completely different from the English version.

Sport in Africa

Africa has been generally believed to have been occupied by human beings longer than anywhere else in the world. There are many different tribes that cover the expanse of the continent and each has specific cultural traditions. Africa has also had a long history of colonization where the continent was divided among western nations looking to extract natural resources. The Berlin Conference in 1884 divided the continent for political and economic gains, and various European countries drew borders that cut across boundaries of existing tribal areas (Sibanda & Moyana, 1999). These colonial experiences have had influence over societal structures, values, and expectations of each area’s indigenous and foreign inhabitants.

With the increased interest in the legitimacy of sport as an important aspect of culture and society, Africanist scholars felt it was important to recapture aspects of these traditional cultures, including sporting activities. Limited literature was located by the researcher that documents organized indigenous sport in African communities prior to

colonization. The majority of what is written about African sport is regarding dance and its importance in tribal ceremonies and traditions. There is also evidence of pugilism, hunting, wrestling, archery, athletics, and swimming (Baker & Mangan, 1987; Wagner, 1989).

Early anthropological fieldwork and literature has documented sports in many cultures and how sports were introduced by colonizers but incorporated into traditional lifestyles. According to Fair (1997), “In Africa...members of the colonial service, missionaries, and company managers advocated the spread of European sports...as one means of inculcating respect for the values of time, discipline, and authority within the minds and spirits of the colonized” (p.1). Fair explored the role and history of sport in Zanzibar. She begins by examining the context in which organized team sports were introduced in Zanzibar. The new structures organized by the colonizers emphasized how sport could be used to create citizens and workers in the image of themselves. According to Fair (1997) “Defining the boundaries of ‘appropriate’ and ‘inappropriate’ forms of recreation became a major preoccupation,” of the new social institutions. This history shows that the dominant sports in most African countries are reflective of European sports e.g. cricket, football (soccer), rugby. Fair (1997) did make a point that even though sport may have been a consequence of colonial political motives that in Zanzibar, “playing and watching football were often central social experiences” (p.2).

African nations “found sport to be an invaluable common denominator for the pulling together of numerous tribes with diverse customs and languages into single nations,” (Baker, 1987, p. 279). Africa united their various countries through sport

organizations, such as the Confederation Africaine de Football in 1957. This union not only connected populations in individual countries but Africa as a continent. Pan-Africanism goals were assisted by regional sporting events, which “coincided significantly with the joining of black African forces across regional and language barriers” (Baker, 1987, p. 274). The creation of powerful sports organization gave black Africans power in fighting issues that were important to them, such as “national identity and unity, for international visibility and prestige,” (Baker, 1987, p. 274) and most notably for international recognition of oppressive regimes. The creation of the Supreme Council for Sports in Africa (SCSA) in 1963 banded African nations together to put pressure on apartheid South Africa and white-supremacist Rhodesia (Baker, 1987). Their power, together with support of nations outside of Africa, was able to exert pressure to either get South Africa and Rhodesia boycotted from international sporting events, or in cases where these two countries were allowed to participate, other African nations did not attend in protest. This pressure resulted in South Africa’s first expulsion from Olympic games in 1964 and Rhodesia’s expulsion in 1975. (Baker, 1987).

According to Baker (1987), “independent Africans looked on the colonial era as an aberration, not the genesis, of their heritage” (p. 273). Interesting and somewhat hypocritically, they still adopted western symbols of nationalism, governmental structures and the philosophy of sport as a tool for discipline and international recognition. National flags were created and flown in public institutions. Presidential elections were held and parliaments were established. According to Baker (1987), “for purposes of health and discipline, they [African governments] also promoted western

athletic games and programs of physical education in their schools” (p. 277). Athletes who won international acclaim were worshipped as heroes and were seen as tools to gain recognition for their home countries. In Baker’s, “Political games: The meaning of international sport for independent Africa,” (1987), he quotes Liquori that “No one heard of Kenya until Kip Keino won in Mexico City” (p. 273). This may appear an exaggeration, but it is representative of the power that international sports have on world-wide recognition of African countries and how the African nations themselves understand this and use it to their advantage.

Sports in African nations are continually used for nationalist pride and to stake their places in the international community. Unfortunately, political and economic instabilities in African countries have limited the growth of sports. Internal political struggles prioritize political party issues above sports initiatives. Declining economic situations limit the resources for physical education and national sports programs (Hardman, 1988).

Women in Africa

Since Africa is the second largest continent, has more countries than any other, has approximately 800 languages (Knight-Cohee, 2002) and many diverse cultures, one must be wary of accepting generalizations as the truth about all African women’s experiences. It is best to remember that people and nations have individual experiences and that a person should consider the context in which situations occur. This can be difficult when much of the existing literature and perspectives generalize about African culture and issues.

Prior to colonization, Africa had mobile tribes that were not neatly confined by the national borders that exist today. Each tribe had culture, language and traditions that were distinctly their own. The question of inequality and discrimination issues did not arise in the manner that we know today until western academic disciplines imposed their theories of social analysis. Each culture had their individual set of social organizations that they felt were essential to survival and efficient living. In many societies this included the women tending the home and children, performing agricultural duties and cooking. The men were the protectors against violence and the strength for hunting and war activities. When the African continent and its inhabitants were marginalized and divided for the welfare of western nations through colonization, these cultures struggled for existence. It is in these times that their social structures were analyzed, critiqued, manipulated and suppressed. It is unknown whether women's equality and discrimination were issues in the pre-colonial societies of Africa. It is possible that only through western academics that these concerns were born (Sibanda & Moyana, 2002).

According to Chadya (2003), "almost without exception, the struggle for women's rights in Africa rose alongside nationalist movements in the form of anti-colonial resistance" (p.1). The women were often encouraged to make the national movement a priority over women's issues. This experience led women from a traditional cultural and social situation that was predominately patriarchal, into national liberation movements that continued to be patriarchal.

During colonization, black populations were manipulated by regulations that controlled their every movement. According to Scarnecchia (1996), "The repercussions

of enforced pass and residency laws,” (p.4) and “the law’s impact influenced existing class and gender struggles making mobilization...more difficult” (p.4). Scarnecchia focused on the interaction of class and gender in the struggle for survival in colonial Southern Rhodesia during the 1950’s. He focused on the laws and situations that perpetuated the inferior positions of women. Certain housing in Salisbury was only available to men and their government-legal wives. The illegal occupations by long-term partners or girlfriends were an issue in the housing area. Police raided to eliminate this practice. The colonizers, legally-married wives and elite Africans united to lobby against the occupation of single women and supported the “State assumptions that women would live in the urban areas primarily as housewives in order to stabilize the male labor force” (Scarnecchia, 1996, p.13). This perpetuated the patriarchal philosophy that women’s position was to serve men. This was duplicated when married women believed that single, unattached women could distract married men and a higher ratio of bachelor men to women could destroy the stability of the housing areas. Scarnecchia (1996) emphasizes how “male-dominated nationalist leadership deceived women, creating political ideologies that only tacitly acknowledged women’s demands in return for their support in the struggle” (p. 2).

Chadya (2003) highlighted women’s participation in liberation struggles in multiple countries, Tanzania, Nigeria, and South Africa, and they all differed slightly in regards to the connection of women’s organizations to national organizations and the number of women in leadership positions after liberation. It was noted that “there seems to be a significant difference between nations that underwent an armed struggle with

women as combatants and those which did not in terms of their postcolonial politics” (Chadya, 2003, p.3). The countries where it is documented that women were in combat had increased participation by women in the new independent governments. South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe did have women combatants. The article noted that South Africa is progressive with women’s issues and that Mozambique and Zimbabwe “have more women with more senior government posts than many other African governments” (Chadya, 2003, p.3). Increased presence and participation of women in political structures can help women’s issues to be addressed.

Sport and Women in Africa

Since it was noted that women’s struggles were often placed secondary to national movements in African nations, it could be seen that differences in opportunities for women compared to men in sports would be expected. Burnett (2002) used interviews to explore the experience of women in sport in South Africa. She found that, “against the reality of the majority of women living in conditions of chronic poverty, exposed to patriarchy, being ideologically stereotyped and structurally marginalized, they were, to a large extent absent, and their efforts unrecognized in the institutionalized domain of sport” (p.1). It was important to discover that many women felt that their responsibilities as mothers and to bring in income to the family made limited time for sport in their daily lives.

Burnett (2002) discussed gender ideologies that highlighted the struggle between men and women in power issues. According to Henderson and Bialeschki (as cited in Burnett, 2002) “within different societies, gender refers to a set of personal, social and

economic relationships that enable men to have power over women and the services they provide being constituted in all spheres of life” (p. 2). The characteristics commonly attributed to women: being physically and mentally weak, passive, cooperative, and supportive, sustain this idea. Burnett offers that the women in her study “choose the strategy of exit because the cost of involvement and change often outweighed the benefits” (p.3).

The researcher found only one article specifically addressing women and sport in Zimbabwe. It was written by Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) and gives an exploratory account of sport, a historical account of the pre-modern sport in Zimbabwe, the influence of colonialism on sport in Zimbabwe, and covers issues of the women and sport dilemma. Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) focus on how sport has been part of Zimbabwean history, but that it has always been, “embedded in gender-based traditions of patriarchal domination” (p. 28). They argue that there was not necessarily a pattern of male hegemony but that women have resisted such structures and that they have manipulated the male-dominated sporting systems to exert a power of their own. Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) also agree with Burnett (2002) that the challenges for women in sport cannot be extricated from the interconnection with race and class issues. The authors confirm that the opportunities for women in Zimbabwe are inhibited and see a cause in the colonial missionary’s support of traditional roles for women, which kept them insubordinate to men. Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) conclude that physical education and expected roles of women should be examined more closely and that the biggest initiative needs to be in more sport history research in Zimbabwe. Their

suggestion is for educational policy changes that support women's full participation in sport.

The authors do address cultural factors that influence the acceptance of women playing sports. This is one of the areas where the colonists and indigenous population show similarities in philosophy. The English colonists of Zimbabwe, formally Rhodesia, had issues with sport for women because it did not coincide with socially accepted ideals of femininity and beauty. Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002) acknowledge that these are issues in traditional Zimbabwean culture as well. Zimbabwean women are considered more beautiful, physically fit and sexually attractive if they are fat (Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002) "Being overweight is referred to as being "big" or "strong," unfortunately the 'bigness' and strength does not come from exercise but from food...when a thin girl marries she will gain weight...as a sign of her happiness and contentment with the marriage" (Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002, p.29). This may cause hypocrisy when women's responsibilities in the home require strength and endurance, yet this does not necessarily lead to acceptance for leisure activities, such as sport.

Summary

In this review of literature, sport as a legitimate representation of culture in society is shown. This was shown in the inclusion of sports in the 19th century as the prime focus of anthropological research (Culin, 1896; Firth, 1931; Geertz, 1973; Kildea & Leach, 1979). The historical evidence of sport in Africa was reviewed and discussed. This emphasized the recognition of sport as a tool in colonial strategy, social cohesion,

and pan-African movements (Fair, 1997; Baker, 1987). Next, studies that focused on the role of women in African history were investigated. Women's importance was shown in political movements, social organizations, and how that affected public infrastructures (Chadya, 2003; Scarnecchia, 1996). Finally, the interaction between class, race and gender was seen as significant factors for the participation of women in sport in Africa (Burnett, 2002; Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002). It can be concluded that further discourse on the situation of women and sport in African is needed in scholarly literature and it is important to qualitatively document the voices of women in Africa through their own perspectives.

CHAPTER 5

Methodology

This chapter describes the qualitative methods and protocols that were used in the research. The first section will describe the research design and justify the methodology of ethnography. The next sections describe how the researcher utilized participant observation, a community census of sports and sport facilities, demographic surveys and interviews. The final section will detail the academic rigor employed and the process employed in data transformation.

Research Design

A humanistic positivist ethnography was utilized as a way to capture aspects of the lives of women in Zimbabwe. An ethnography is a tool to document experiences through “description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system. For some, ethnography could be informal story telling or for others, attempts at empirical documentation of material possession and lineage. The researcher examines the group’s observable and learned patterns of behavior, customs, and ways of life,” (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). The attempt to capture the reality is challenging because the expected truth is a mixture between the different lived experiences of the individuals of the culture being studied and of the researcher. A humanistic positivist paradigm mixes a positivist view of how reality should be characterized and the interpretive and postmodern view of how reflexivity should be included in ethnography (Sands, 2002). According to Sands (2002), “the goal of a positivist ethnography is to describe and re-create a representation of cultural reality that is close to what that culture perceives” (pp. 88-89) with minimal

confessions of the researcher's role in the text. In opposition to this view, the interpretist's use of "I" in the story is to acknowledge the ethnographer's influence and perspective of "cultural representation and the means by which the ethnographer knows it" (p. 88). The humanistic positivist paradigm was chosen because as Sands (2002) explains, the goal was to study "other, not in hopes of becoming other, but to understand other and then be able to communicate this other to members of the ethnographer's culture" (p. 88). This choice was made not only to discover the ways non-western societies perceive their world, but to help me to see my world through a different lens.

The intention of this study was to describe the experiences of Zimbabwean women with sports. The goal was to paint a cultural portrait of the daily lives of women, their worldly perspectives, and see how this interacts with their views towards sports. Another aim was to recognize any cultural, social or economic factors that may influence them. Sport ethnography allows the researcher to intimately know the experiences of people by observing behavior first-hand and listening to the stories of people. This gives the researcher the opportunity to describe these experiences as relayed by their sport participation.

Participation Observation

In 2004, Victoria Falls had more beggars than I saw in 2003 and more street boys selling curios. People still work six to seven days a week. There was petrol at the petrol stations and the nation had increased the minimum wage for workers. One of the differences in 2004 was that I did not work double shifts at a restaurant. My entire days

were spent exploring sports as they exist in Victoria Falls and whether other people feel that “girls are not strong enough to play soccer.”

As I arrived in town, I stayed in a *flat* (apartment) downtown with friends whom I had met last year. I had an immediate social group and I was meeting new people every day. According to a couple of new friends, I moved from being a *FT* (foreign tourist to being a *LT* (local tourist). This was favorable for my studies because it could assist my entry into mainstream society. Almost every acquaintance I knew, and then new acquaintances, were asked where residents play sports in Victoria Falls. Every person was asked where women play sports. Once it was known that I would be studying sports, every one had something to say about sports. When the topic of women and sport was mentioned, most of the time it elicited laughter. Most comments had to do with “women don’t play sports.” Other residents were quick to give their knowledge of where they believed I could find women playing.

The first couple of weeks in the field were spent walking around town and visiting different sport venues. Victoria Falls has two main streets and the favorite pastimes of local residents is meeting on the street or congregating in front of Jay’s supermarket. I heard that women do play sports, but where and when?

I joined the ranks of walkers and visited with people. I quickly befriended the local Rasta man, who sold hand-made necklaces to the tourists. Every morning I would venture to the supermarket and see if I could find some bread to buy. Most often, I did not find any. I would be told to come back in an hour and even then, there was no bread. I was told that I could not stand in the queue with the black people because “that wasn’t

how it was done.” An informant told me that white people could just ask for bread at the bakery counter. Every morning I would walk around town familiarizing myself with the stores and letting myself become a familiar face to the locals. I would say good morning to the woman at the internet store, the woman at the take-away restaurant and then sit and visit with a man who made necklaces. This was the same every day of the week. All the familiar faces worked Sunday through Saturday. I wondered when they had a day off.

Once I sat with Rasta Man the entire day when President Mugabe came to town. It was exhausting sitting in one place all day and hoping that the minimal tourists in town would come and buy. It was not tiring when most friends would walk by and visit for a while. I sat with Joe and Bob chatting on the street. I went with them to the barber shop. I ate lunch of *sadza* (traditional corn meal dish) and stew with my right hand in the open market. I often stopped by one of the clothing stores and sat for lunch with the women. I would stop briefly with other female safari consultants and talk about our agendas for the day.

When local consultants would try to sell me safari packages, I would say, “I stay here.” When taxi drivers offered me their services, I would reply, “I stay here.” This means that I live in Victoria Falls and I was not a tourist. This was done in hopes that I could be treated as a local and not constantly approached to buy tourist souvenirs or activities. When the street vendors would try to sell me carved wooden elephants, I would talk about how I couldn’t even buy bread at Jay’s and had difficulty feeding myself, let alone buying souvenirs. All of this was done purposely to remove myself as a money-target and foreign tourist, as much as was possible.

As a white person, I always stood out as a potential money source, no matter how long I stayed. I always was subject to being charged a higher price than a local black person would get quoted. At first I thought this was because I was white, but then I found out that a coloured friend, who has lived in Victoria Falls for a long time, still gets charged higher prices also. Oddly enough, this made me feel better. It still outraged me and frustrated me, but it was the culture there.

I walked to the local township to watch weekend soccer games, visit the vegetable market and visit the second-hand clothes market. Some days I just went to make myself familiar and to take pictures of the local homes, churches, and the little boys kicking around homemade balls of plastic. On a small number of occasions (fewer than five), I saw young girls playing a game similar to dodge ball, but with only two participants and a little ball made of socks or plastic. I would run into new friends and be invited into their homes for a cup of tea and to visit. All the time, the little children would yell out repeatedly “*kiwa kiwa*,” (white person) and wave until I walked away. This never stopped and I never saw another white person while I was walking in the townships. Women would be seen heating water or cooking on fires, washing clothes in a tub, hanging the clothes out to dry or selling their goods at the market or their roadside *tuck shops* (small stands with goods for sale). Men would be seen sitting and talking or carving statues for sale at the *curios* (souvenir) market. The men would yell out and ask me when if I was going to watch soccer again. Women would just smile and sometimes have a look of wonder at why I was in their neighborhood.

I visited the two weight training venues. I saw the sport facilities available to locals at a local hotel and the private primary school. There were never many people at these places. I heard of a sports club and decided to make this the main area that I would spend time. On my first visit, I introduced myself and my interests to the local director and to the coaches of a basketball team that was practicing. I would sit for hours, take pictures, write notes, drink a beverage, eat my tomato sandwich from home and chat with whoever was interested. I was often asked to pay for a game of foosball or beers for those I was talking to. I then had to explain how I did not have much money, I was a student with no job, and I could not even afford to buy bread at Jay's. I went to this sports club every day for a week from approximately 1:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. and then I would pass through whenever I was in the neighborhood. Through this interaction I became familiar and found out about a newly developed Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee. Through word of mouth, the chairperson of this committee heard of me. One day I was walking in the township and she approached me and introduced herself. She said she had a vision of what I looked like and then saw me on the corner. I believed her to a certain extent, but it also could have been because I was the only blond-haired, white woman wandering around the all-black township. I walked around with my new friend and we talked about sports and life in Victoria Falls. She answered all my questions about cultural traditions. I was invited to her house for tea. I joined her as she did her errands and I attended Rotary meetings with her.

Census of Sport and Sport Facilities in the Community

The first month was spent conducting a comprehensive census of all formal and informal sport organizations and facilities in Victoria Falls. These included opportunities that are open to men, women and children. Sport organizations included those formally organized through a community or national level and those that were organized through informal social structures. Sport facilities included all areas that had playing fields, and equipment designated for physical activity and sport. An existing local network of contacts and new contacts made assisted me in completing a thorough location of all opportunities for sporting activities in the community of Victoria Falls. Direct observation and event analysis of these opportunities ensured that they fell within characteristics of sport as defined in this study.

While visiting the sport venues, it was rare to see women playing. Photographs were taken when a women, over 18 years old, was seen participating in actual physical activity or sport. In the 11 and a half weeks that I spent in the field in Victoria Falls, these are the only documentations of women in sports noted: one female weight training, one woman playing field hockey with a girl under 18 years old, two women golfing, two female referees working at a soccer game, three women speed walking or jogging, four women doing aerobics, and multiple women playing netball. Netball was the only sport that was seen more than once and where there was a consistent meeting time every week. The women met every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from approximately 2:30 p.m. to 4:20 pm. The number of women ranged from approximately 10 to 16 women each game period. There was an organized Victoria Falls Women's Sports Day, but this event

was initiated and planned me, and will not be included as a representation of normal sport participation for the women in Victoria Falls.

Demographic Surveys

After the venues were identified, located and physically visited, as well as general sports participation documented, I sought the view of local resident women towards sports and to assist in choosing interview subjects. Consent forms (see Appendix A), that were approved through an Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix B) and surveys (see Appendix C) were distributed to 82 women. At least 50 surveys were needed as a minimal threshold for stability of results and more reliable for correlation coefficients (Bethany Shifflett, personal communication, April 15, 2004). The participants were chosen to include women who could speak and read English, and a diverse population of age (over 18 years old), class (salary), domestic situation (married or not married, children or no children), educational level, ethnicity (Shona, Ndebele, English, or Indian), and race (Black, White, or Coloured). All of the participants lived within the high-density and low-density housing in the Victoria Falls community. Surveys were not distributed to any participants whose main residences were in rural areas. The internal differentiations that may appear, such as who wanted to participate and who did not want to participate, may be attributed to cultural differences along ethnic and associated tribal lines, personal and family health influences, hours of work inside and outside of the home, and personal philosophies of interactions with a white, American researcher. Contacts were made through current networking in the community, personal referrals and introductions and visiting local businesses.

The demographic survey, which was developed prior to leaving for the field, was distributed personally by me. I began with downtown businesses and started from one side of the two main streets in downtown. I went into every restaurant, retail store, and safari office on the main streets, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Other surveys were distributed at the Victoria Falls Sports Club to women who were playing netball and a group of women who were at a meeting to form a women's sports committee. The remainders of the surveys were given to personal acquaintances to complete.

I approached every woman in these situations and gave a brief introduction of myself and how I was staying in town visiting friends for 3 months and then I gave a brief explanation of her research purposes. The women were able to look at the survey and the consent form before they agreed to participate. A copy of the consent form was offered for the participants to keep if they agreed to complete the survey. There was no pressure put on the women by me to participate, and I told the women it was all right if they did not feel comfortable participating.

Most of the time, the surveys were filled out in my presence, but there were times that the survey was left and picked up at a later date. Once the surveys were filled out and given back to me researcher, each survey was quickly scanned to look for unique comments that might be useful for further study. If any of the women participants were overly talkative about their ideas of women and sport in Victoria Falls or they had written comments regarding women in sport, they were asked for their contact information for a possible further interview. This contact information was written on a post-it note and

placed on the survey they had completed. It was written on a post-it note in order to discard at a later date and keep the surveys anonymous.

The survey was developed and copies were printed while I was still in the United States, because it was not known whether the facilities or resources would be available to revise the survey and reprint 100 copies.

During one of the conversations about the surveys and the purpose of my research in Victoria Falls, some women began a very animated discussion on women and sport. There were three women who were quite keen on discussing their perspectives and experiences with sport. This led to a lengthy discussion on the difficulties of sustaining any sport activity. The lively discussion energized me and reminded me of why I had chosen to study women and sport in this developing area. The interest in sports was there and it was important to the women. The challenges included how difficult it was to keep a group of ladies interested enough to meet on a consistent, long term basis; the lack of facilities for women, that there were no organized competitions for women over 23 years old, the cultural perspectives for older women, expectations and responsibilities at home, and the lack of time due to working many hours. It was from this group of outspoken women that the first interview subject was chosen. She was the most vocal and agreed to participate in an interview. She was chosen because of her interest in the area of sport and women, her comments on challenges for older women to play sport, and she also represented one of the racial categories in the community.

Interviews

Interview participants were chosen by utilizing the responses to the demographic surveys, as well as personal connections. Subjects were chosen who had participated in sports significantly in their lives or those who wished that they had had the opportunity. Participants were chosen to represent the diversity in Victoria Falls according to ethnicity (Shone, Ndebele, and English); race (Black, White or Coloured); class (determined by economic situation and housing choices; low density and high density); family status (married or single, with or without children); and employment (employed outside of the home or work only in the home.)

The remaining month was spent interviewing specific women (n=5) whom the interviewer found to have significant experiences with sport. The main goal of the interviews was to gather narratives about each woman's experience with sport. The intent was to identify how individual characteristics, behavior, and experience interacted with the various cultural factors to influence sport participation. I conducted interviews separately in order to obtain individual opinions, without any group influence.

A semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions (see Appendix C) was used. The first section included questions regarding the subjects' demographic information. The intent was to identify what was important in the women's lives and how they described their identity. The second section focused on cultural aspects of the participants' social environment. The intent was to discover gender ideology as the participants have experienced it. The third section helped to discover the meaning of

sport to each of the subjects. The goal was to discuss their personal experiences with sport and any motivation for sport participation.

When entering the field, it was proposed to attempt a purposeful sampling strategy that represented the local women of Victoria Falls by using a criterion sampling strategy. According to Creswell (1998), the purpose was that “all cases that meet some criterion; useful for quality assurance” (p. 119). The hope was to find maximum variation to “document diverse variations and identify important common patterns” (p. 119). The criteria looked to represent the racial categories in Victoria Falls (black, white, colored, Asian), age, economic situation, married status, and different sport participation (no participation to full participation.) The interview participants represented these areas, except for the Asian racial category and the lack of a participant aged in her 20’s. Interview subjects were located according to these criteria, but the Indian woman, who had agreed at first, declined when it came time to set an appointment. The young lady in her 20’s agreed, but we were unable to make contact to set an interview. The intention was to find typical cases which would focus on the common resident with average experiences with sports.

I chose not to search out elite athletes who represented the extreme case of sports participation. The rationalization for choosing common residents was to truly represent the cultural scene and challenges for the general population of women in Victoria Falls. This choice of locating common women showed varied sports participation; they included one woman who does no sports, those who walked, a director in a sports development committee, and a woman who was one of six women Federation

Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) panel soccer referees in Zimbabwe. It is through these multiple interviews and life histories that I hoped to describe the experiences of sports for the common woman in Zimbabwe, living in Victoria Falls.

Out of the five interviews, three of the subjects were introduced through mutual friends. These mutual friends, the gatekeepers, were met through contacts the researcher made in 2003. Of these three intermediaries, two interview participants were told of the purpose of the fieldwork prior to meeting the researcher. The other intermediary was able to connect me with the potential subject through a personal crisis. This crisis resulted in the subject and me having an immediate bond. These situations assisted in building rapport and trust. The fourth participant was actually sought out because of her special position as one of two female soccer referees in Victoria Falls. The meeting took place after a newly formed contact introduced me to the subject's brother-in-law and I requested a meeting with the female soccer referee. The last participant actually sought out the researcher, after hearing about the research project. I had met a male contact who talked about a newly formed sports development committee for Victoria Falls. I was interested in attending one of these meetings and was told of the place and time. I attempted to find the meeting, but the time of the meeting was unknowingly changed. A member of that sports committee was informed of the researcher looking for the meeting and recognized me in the street on a random occasion. There was an immediate connection between she and I because of mutual interests. The new contact agreed to participate in an interview.

Access was assisted by mutual friends, mutual interests and persistence. Each potential participant was told of my motivation behind the interest in women's sports and purpose of the study. They were informed that their interviews would be tape recorded, but the process would be confidential and their identities would be kept anonymous. They all verbally agreed to participate and appointments were made to conduct the interviews, at a time and place chosen by the subjects.

Rapport was built through the mutual friends, but also through daily casual visits and saying "hi" while passing them in a public place. There was involvement in daily life routines i.e. sitting with them at work, having lunch with them, attending Rotary meetings, and watching soccer games. The constant and consistent association with the potential interviewees built an ease of interaction. The interaction also allowed the potential participants an opportunity to know me on a personal level and that was beneficial to the expectations of the subjects. They learned that I was a student with no income and was limited in financial means. The purpose of the research was also repeatedly reinforced, as being a requirement for university graduation. This was important because while conducting the surveys, the process was sometimes influenced by the participant's hopes that I would be a potential sponsor for their activities. This may have influenced the responses in a negative way because they focused mainly on financial restrictions to sports whereas other factors may have been left out.

There is an interesting cultural or racial perception by most of the community of Victoria Falls. There is a perception that all white people are rich, or at least have more discretionary finances than the blacks or coloreds. This was often frustrating, irritating,

and tiring to me, since I am “white.” It also caused internal confusion when experiencing this phenomenon. I felt that I obviously did have more financial resources than most of the population in Victoria Falls, but I also was stressed about money. I had no current income and I would be traveling for six months before I would be able to look for income again. There was also the continuous dissatisfaction and recognition that no matter how much money I gave away, it would never be enough for the people asking and it would not solve the economic struggle in the community. There are two main reasons that I could see that would cause this perception that “whites” and foreigners in general were wealthy. First, the population of “whites” in Victoria Falls is less than 1% yet they live in nicer houses in the low-density suburb, have the management jobs and on the average have more money and more material possessions than the rest of the population. Secondly, Victoria Falls is a tourist town and it is believed that since white people have the money to travel, they have the money to give out discretionally, i.e. to pay for everything when in a group of friends, to pay higher prices on retail products and to give out to any person asking for money.

There was some reciprocity when it came to associating with the interview participants. There was never any implication by me or the subject that the interview was dependent on compensation to the interviewee. Situations occurred where I was asked to lend money to pay for a meal, but then that money was reimbursed at the next meeting; a time when there was a shared meal and each person paid for an individual round of beverages; a time that I paid for drinks at a soccer game and shared some food that she had brought with me; and a time when I paid for a taxi ride because the

interviewee had sprained her ankle, which would have kept her from attending an important meeting. During the actual interviews, there was only one incident where I paid for anything and that was for coffee and tea. In one case, the interview subject was given a copy of the consent form prior to the interview and the consent form explicitly stated that there would be no compensation for the interview. The other four subjects were given the consent form immediately before the interview was conducted.

The interview appointments were set a minimum of a week in advance. In one instance, the subject was given a copy of the semi-structured interview guide in advance. In the other four interviews, the subjects were given a copy of the interview guide immediately prior to conducting the interview. They were all given the IRB approved consent form (see Appendix D). They were able to ask questions or object to any potential question that they did not want included. None of the participants objected to any questions and they did not have any questions of their own in regard to anything concerning the interview purpose or process. Each of the five interviewed women participated in a 45 to 90 minute in-depth, semi-structured interview. The interview included mostly open-ended questions. There was one question that elicited five things that described the participants. This was used as a tool to probe for self identify. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed personally by the researcher.

Establishing Academic Rigor

To gain credibility for these stories it is pertinent to offer standards of quality and verification of the research process. Creswell (2002) offers that “qualitative researchers strive for ‘understanding,’ that deep structure of knowledge that comes from visiting

personally with informants, spending extensive time in the field, and probing to obtain detailed meanings” (p. 193). He also offers certain procedures that can assist in achieving academic rigor in this study.

Clarifying Researcher Bias

The initial procedure for verification was to “clarify researcher bias from the outset of the study” (p. 202). This was achieved by the autobiographical statement in Chapter 1. I was adamant about moving into the Victoria Falls community without assumptions that women wanted to play sports and that they were oppressed and marginalized.

Prolonged Engagement and Persistent Observation

One of the goals I felt was necessary was to spend as much time in the field as possible and to get the knowledge from primary resources. I spent a total of 11 and a half weeks in the Victoria Falls community, which assisted in building relationships that enabled me to be more than a foreign Tourist (a Zimbabwean visa allows for a maximum of 12 weeks stay.) This was necessary to gain a deeper explanation of the women’s realities. A partner of extensive time in the field is persistent observation. Every moment was an occasion to learn about sport and women in Victoria Falls.

Reflexive Journal and Field Notes

True to anthropological methods, a daily personal journal was kept throughout the entire time spent in the field site. Field notes of contacts made and advice given by locals were documented. Notations of thoughts and perceptions towards methods being utilized in the study were written down to shed light on possible better practices. Personal

reflection on daily trials, tribulations and my emotional journey was important to purge sentiments that could lead to including cultural prejudices in the research process.

Triangulation

Another criterion for verification was a triangulation procedure in order to cross check the stories of the women with the opportunities for sports available in the community, as seen by the researcher, as well as a simple survey of the general public. I attempted to photograph all incidences when I saw women participating in sports or physical activity. It was important for me not to rely simply on what women felt was being played but find actual evidence. I felt it was essential to discover whether women were even interested in sports, as well as to record what facilities and teams were available to the women. I often found that I had information that the locals did not.

Rich, Thick Description

Lastly, Creswell (2002) offers “rich, thick description allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability because the writer describes in detail the participants or setting under study.” (p. 203). Under this prescription, I attempted to let the women’s stories have a priority in informing the reader, more so than any western analysis.

It may be interesting to note that I had intentions to transcribe the interviews while in the field, in order to have the participants review their interviews for accuracy and additional input. Unfortunately, technical difficulties arose. One of the challenges of doing research in another country, as well as a third-world nation, is the unavailability of resources and electrical voltage requirements. I forgot the voltage converter for my transcription machine and one was not available for purchase in this isolated community.

This is indicative of the challenges of doing ethnographic studies in remote cultures from the United States.

Data Transformation and Analysis

The five interviews were subject to data transformation and analysis as suggested by Wolcott (1994) and supported by Creswell (2002): description, analysis, and interpretation of the culture-sharing group. First, a portrait of the Victoria Falls community was described as seen through my eyes the first time I visited as a 'Foreign Tourist' and subsequently how that reality changed as I became friends with the locals through my total four months living as a 'Local Tourist.' This was included in the introduction in Chapter 1.

Secondly, transcribed interviews were read through completely at least five times. As recommended by Wolcott, there was a "search for patterned regularities in the data" (as cited in Creswell, 2002, p. 152). General themes mentioned by all participants were noted and compared to each other. The participants' suggestions and thoughts on the future of sports and women in Victoria Falls were highlighted. Next, interpretation by the participants of their situation was documented, as well as a description of my thoughts as I saw their reality. Themes occurred in the responses to specific questions posed in the interviews, i.e. describe a typical day, how where you introduced to sport, what role does sports play in your life and what factors help or hinder participation in sports. Areas where the participants got excited, emphasized areas of their lives that stood out, and areas of the participants' lives they did not talk about were documented. Interview results are then presented under subheadings for sketching ideas, as suggested

Wolcott by “highlight[ing] certain information in description” (Creswell, 2002, p. 141). I progressed it further, as Creswell suggested, by focusing on typical life for the local residents. Data were displayed in life history, as well as in “tables, charts, diagrams and figures; compare cases; compare with a standard” (Creswell, 2002, p.141).

Finally, the emerging themes in the study were associated to the literature reviewed. Finally, I also wrote thoughts on the interview process that could be improved upon in the future, as proposed by Creswell (2002) to “critique the research process and propose a redesign for the study” (p. 153). In choosing to utilize a qualitative method to relate the stories of people in a culture unknown to me, it was important to tell their stories in the most accurate manner possible and inform the reader of their realities. While I recognize that five women’s stories cannot speak for the entire population of women in Zimbabwe, the hope was to capture the essence of their realities.

CHAPTER 6

Results

This chapter presents the outcome of protocols of the research study. First, a grass roots effort to document the opportunities for sports in this town is shown. There was no available information to draw from and I felt that this was important to reveal for background purposes and historical significance. The next data are from a simple survey to ascertain whether sports were an aspect of concern for women in Victoria Falls. It was necessary for me to remove assumptions and discover whether sport was a reflection of culture of this particular community and to locate participants who had experiences they were willing to share. The significant contributions of sports are then revealed in the detailed life experiences of five women through the lens of sports participation. This is the basic component for analysis and contribution to inform of the voices of women in a developing nation.

Census

Table 1 shows sport participation that was directly observed by the research in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. These were activities by men, women and children. There is no significance to the order of sports in the table.

Table 1

Sport Participation in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe Observed By Gender and Age

Women	Men	Children
Weight Training	Weight Training	Basketball
Field Hockey	Cricket	Netball
Golf	Soccer	Soccer
Aerobics	Swimming	Dodge Ball
Netball	Running/Jogging	Swimming
Jogging/Walking	Volleyball	
Swimming		

Table 2 provides the actual venues available in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe that had facilities and grounds for playing sports. The specific grounds and sports played are shown. Fee requirements and specific fees are included. No venue was restricted according to gender.

Table 2

Victoria Falls Sport Venues and Facilities; Sports Played and Fee Requirements

Venue	Facility	Sports Played	Fees
Victoria Falls Health Studio	Weights	Weight Training	Yes Annual - 10,000 ZWD Monthly - 10,000 ZWD
Victoria Falls Gym	Weights	Weight Training	Yes Annual - 10,000 ZWD Monthly - 10,000 ZWD
Victoria Falls Sports Club	Soccer Pitch Basketball Court Netball Court Swimming Pool	Soccer Basketball Netball * pool closed	No
Elephant Hills Hotel	Golf Course Tennis Courts (2) Lawn Bowls Green Squash Court Soccer Pitch	Golf Tennis Lawn Bowls Squash Soccer	Yes Annual – 150,000 ZWD Daily – 10,000 ZWD
Victoria Falls Stadium	Soccer Pitch	Soccer	No
Victoria Falls Primary	Tennis Court Soccer Pitches (2) Rugby Field Cricket Field Swimming Pool	Tennis Soccer Rugby Cricket * pool closed	No
Township Soccer Pitches	Soccer Pitches (unknown number)	Soccer	No
Victoria Falls Municipal Pool	Swimming Pool	* pool closed	

Surveys

A total of 82 surveys were distributed: 6 surveys were not returned, 4 surveys were not used because the females were under 18 years old, and 1 survey was filled out by a man. A total of 71 surveys, or 85% of surveys distributed, were included in getting the knowledge of women's perspectives towards sports in Victoria Falls.

Many inconsistencies were seen in how the survey was completed, but a general consensus by the women surveyed was that there was an interest and desire to play sports by women in Victoria Falls. When asked if they wanted to play sport, 64 out of 69 women, or 92%, who responded to this question as specifically "yes" or "no," said they did want to play sports. Of those who responded to whether they currently played sport, 46 out of 71, or 64% said they do play sports.

Interview Participants

Research participants were five women, with ages ranging from approximately 34 to 54, who were willing to share their experiences with sport throughout their lives. One woman was white, one woman was colored and three women were black. All of the women had children. Four of the women had children living at home, while one woman did not have her children living with her. Two women were married and lived with their husbands. Four of the five women worked outside of the home, the other woman worked but her office was located on the same property as her personal residence. Participants' educational levels ranged from "O" Levels to Teacher Training. Physical activity in sport ranged from no active participation to consistent vigorous walking for exercise and from

participating in soccer games as a referee to one woman who was heavily involved as a member of the Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee.

The following are abbreviated life histories of five women who currently lived in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. The stories are presented with limited voice by the researcher, in order to let the reader hear the participants' perspectives. Quotes are documented verbatim and in present tense, with limited grammar correction, in order to reflect realistic speech patterns of the women. Basic demographic information of the participant is given, then a short synopsis of their life and a view into her personal self-concept. This is done to engage the reader into the world as these women know it and to give some insight into the background of these women's lives. Then each participant discusses her experiences with sport, her thoughts on sport, her thoughts on women in Africa and her thoughts on sports and women in Victoria Falls. Pseudonyms were given for the participants in order to maintain their anonymity.

Vanessa

Vanessa is a Black woman in her early 40's. She works as a sales consultant for safari companies and for herself. She has two children living at home and is divorced. She currently does not do any physical activity, except for walking, which is her form of transportation. She recently became involved in a newly formed Victoria Falls Women's Sports Centre.

Vanessa was raised partly in Bulawayo (the second largest city in Zimbabwe) and then moved to Hwange (a small town in a national forest). She was the oldest of 10 children and they lived with her mother and step-father. She had another brother and

sister who lived in Bulawayo. Vanessa's primary memories were of a mother who did not show her love, but of a step-father who always encouraged her. She fondly recalls how he treated her well and never distinguished her as a step-daughter. As the oldest child living in the house, Vanessa had a lot of responsibilities in the home, "like waking up around 4 a.m. starting doing house chores... cooking, cleaning, like breakfast and go to school." She described her home life as difficult and that she often ran away. Vanessa said that she always came home because "Home is home. No matter how bad it can be but its home."

In primary school, Vanessa portrayed herself as an average student who worked and studied hard. Her step-father encouraged all of the children to work hard at school, but finances were sometimes difficult because there were so many children. When it came time for Vanessa to go to Form 3, her step-father told her that he could not pay for her school fees. He told her that she should go to her biological father. This memory was very painful for Vanessa because it was the first time that her step-father differentiated her from his biological children. Vanessa believes that education is very important, so much that she says, "I think if I had an opportunity that at my earlier age to pursue my education and put more effort and there was money in the family...I would be somebody...I would be doing something bigger or I would be someone very important..." Vanessa was introduced to sport during primary school. She said that you "get groomed [to do sports] from Grade Four," and that "you are forced to [do] everything until you come out with something which [is] good, which is the one sport which you can do better than the rest of the sports." Sports in Hwange were described as

“a very serious thing.” She played netball, swam and ran. Vanessa expressed that she was not very good at sports but that “it brought real happiness to her,” and that “it made me happy even if I would go home and sulk.”

Vanessa did continue on to secondary school and finished her “O” levels after Form 4. She would have liked to continue her education, but she got pregnant. She tried to go back to school after the child was born, but she found it difficult to focus on her studies. She remembers that “I couldn’t ‘cause I was thinking of this child at home...how is she? Who is it? She [her baby] nursed...you worry too much instead of concentrating on book.”

After quitting school, Vanessa married the father of her child. She described how she was discontented in this marriage because there was “Nothing for me because I wasn’t happy.” There were signs of regret that she had not pursued her education. Vanessa constantly refers to how she could be better off in life if she had furthered her education.

During this period Vanessa got involved with teaching children through sports. She was not working so she was able to volunteer for the girl guides and brownies. She taught girls netball and soccer. She enjoyed this experience because “I was so good with kids. Kids liked me and they wanted me to be with them.” She eventually quit that job due to personal reasons. That was in 1994 and it was the last time she was involved in sports.

Vanessa eventually divorced her husband 10 years later and explained how life did not get any easier for her. Her husband was not working, so all money that she was

able to make had to go towards her children's welfare. She said that she could not even afford a home of her own. Vanessa felt that "whatever I did I didn't benefit." She currently continues to struggle to make money. She professes that she is driven by earning money. She often works from 6:00 a.m. to past 7:00 p.m. It is not unusual if she works later, "sometimes I can work up to 9. Maybe I'm just thinking I can get a client, one or two...maybe I don't, I just sit and sit. I'll be always expecting to get something for myself. So, if I work..."

A typical day for Vanessa consists of "waking up around 4:00 a.m. and starting house chores, such as cleaning the house, cooking for breakfast for children. I come to work maybe seven. I go home. Maybe eight, I will be home. If there is something...sometimes I can work up to nine."

Vanessa's self concept. When asked to describe herself, Vanessa focused on how friendly she is and how she likes to interact and talk to people. She next mentioned how she likes sport. Vanessa says "I am ...I like to socialize...I love and socialize." Street kids and orphans are of interest to her and she likes to work for the community. She mentions how she loves her family, especially her sisters and her children. Of equal importance to her is "to do something of my own...not to be bossed around...not to be bossed around."

When asked for highlights or turning points in her life the first thought went to how she loved sports as a child. She said she was good in netball, javelin, and shot put. She mentioned how "it wasn't important because I was born in 1962...no one encouraged me to pursue that."

Her next thoughts went to how school fees needed to be paid for her Form 3. Her memories of how her step-father sent her to her biological father made Vanessa start to cry. It was painful that she was reminded that her step-father was not her biological father and how she was differentiated from her step-siblings. Vanessa consistently talks about how the encouragement was and was not there for her. She also mentions how the finances were not there because there were so many children. She describes how “the encouragement from home wasn’t enough for me to...get what I wanted to do because we were a big family,” and how her step-father “used to encourage us to go to school, take your time with your school books and everything, but because we were many...”

Vanessa's next memories were of when she had her first child and had to quit school. Vanessa actually said, “if I look back honestly it was...it’s very painful that...maybe if I had...not had a family...if I had...not had a family...I had...more time with my education I would be somebody...I didn’t achieve what I wanted to achieve.”

Vanessa’s experiences with sport. Vanessa was introduced to sport at age 8. She said that she played a lot of sports. It was mandatory to do some sports in primary school. There was an opportunity to try everything until a student found a sport he or she was good at. Vanessa does not recall being a very good swimmer, but she remembers going to competitions. Vanessa felt that she excelled at netball, javelin and shot put. There were A and B teams where students represent their schools against other schools in competition. Vanessa did not mention that she was on any of these teams. She mentioned that there were sports clubs in the townships that one could choose to join, but she also does not mention playing on any of these teams.

Vanessa described the place that sports had in her life as a child. She said that “it brought happiness because I would play with other girls.” It was an important aspect in her life possibly because of her challenges at home. She expressed how sports acted as a tool in life survival because “I would be very jovial...forget about my problems at home...but there I am playing like nothing is happening to me. It brought real happiness to me.” She also recognizes, now that she is an adult, that maybe it was important to her because of the social aspects and how she made more friends while she was participating sports.

The only involvement in sports after school was when Vanessa taught netball and soccer to girls in Girl Guides and Brownies. She enjoyed this experience and focused on how she enjoyed working with the children. Vanessa also helped during a recent Victoria Falls Women’s Sports Day. She was the main leader during the different sporting events. She led while women played netball, volleyball and soccer. Vanessa even played soccer for a short time that day. She felt that she was out of shape, so she did not play for long. Despite this, she was a very enthusiastic leader and was involved in all sports that day. She also participated in a discussion group following the event, which analyzed the success of the event and suggested future opportunities for women and sport.

Currently, Vanessa is one of 12 women who joined to initiate the organizing of a sports committee that hopes to plan women’s sports in Victoria Falls and encourage increased sports participation by women. She holds a position on the Executive Board.

Vanessa's thoughts on sport. Vanessa wants to show children and other women that sport is important to being healthy. She believes that it relieves stress and helps one loose fat. She professes that “if you are physically fit, mentally you are fit as well.” She supposes that a healthy and fit body helps the immune system become strong and one is less likely to become sick. She never recalls being sick until she no longer did sport and physical activity. She thinks lack of sports “makes the body weaker and this small ailments just attack you so easily.”

Vanessa has some very strong opinions about sports and she wants people, “to feel the importance of sport. To play it...to participate...to have time off...time off from everything and play sport. Just in a day. For your body. It's good for your body. It's good for your mind. It's good for you, for everyday life. I think you need some sport some time, because you can go to a gym but sport is good. You can do all the exercise once...but if you are playing...netball or football...you are using all your hands, your feet, your head and then you will be exercising.” She feels that it is important to involve all of the senses when exercising. It is only through total involvement of the body that “it's like lifting something up, your body up.”

Vanessa's thoughts on women in Africa. When asked to discuss the different aspects of being women and men in her society, the first thoughts went to patriarchal domination. Vanessa mentions how “women are looked upon down. Men look down on the women, that they can do nothing. Women have to follow men.” She does believe that attitudes and behaviors are changing. In her opinion, “Some women know that we can do better than men. We can do better, far much better...100% better than men...”

She refers to how she considers that women want to be good role models and exert a “better influence.” She does not distinguish on what or whom they would be a better influence. Vanessa considers that previously women “use to think your men can do better and women would like not involve themselves. They could also remain at home, if it means that there is soccer, women don’t go there.”

When pressed about the instigator of this change in attitude, Vanessa was quick to consider the new generation, “I think it’s the time that we are in. This...we’re in the 20th century...isn’t it...and everything is changing according to time.” Access to television and satellite cable was seen as a tool of change. It is a tool of change because “as they watch and see involvement of other women...so they think within themselves they say OK, if that woman can do that, if those women can do that, what about us?”

When asked if this change of attitude caused distress she was mixed in her belief. She said that it does not cause any issues in the majority of the families. She proclaimed that men do not mind if their wives go out of the house because “that if they are not home, the husband, the women can also go out and get involved.” It is also mentioned that men “would like their wives or women to go into sport because they are not there for them also...it would be an advantage to them.” It was not stated how the men would feel if they stayed at home or exactly how it would be of advantage for the women.

Vanessa does believe that in about 30% of some families “men they don’t want their wives going out for something.” She attributes this to older generations and “the older age, which still hold to say...woman is woman.”

Vanessa's thoughts on sports and women in Victoria Falls. In Vanessa's opinion, sport in Victoria Falls is "dead." It is dead in general and for both genders. She attributes this to issues of time, economics and attitudes. She explains that "people here don't, don't...I don't think they have time, to say let's sit down, let's form up this situation. They didn't have that time. They don't have the time. They think of other values like how can I make money. How can I make my life better? They don't see the value of sport."

Vanessa discusses how this attitude towards sports is exemplified through the small audiences at sporting events. In her opinion, the audience was small at the Victoria Falls Women's Sports Day and that situation was representative of the lack of interest in sports in Victoria Falls. She proclaimed "if people are interested you would see by numbers of them." She described how "they could hear there is [a] soccer [game], [yet] someone goes to work...and have a drink, instead of taking of their time and watch." She vehemently accepts as truth that "there is no one. Everybody interested in what they are doing themselves, for themselves, not for the community."

Toni

Toni is a White woman in her early 40's. She has two children living at home with her and her husband. She is a director of a community based project that promotes self employment by women and she owns a safari company with her husband. She currently walks briskly on a daily basis as a form of exercise.

Toni was raised in a remote farming area and then moved when her father bought some farms. Her father lost the farms after 10 weeks. She did not say why or how. Her

family then rented a house on a farm, where she lived with her two siblings, mother and father. Her father then became a successful semi-precious stone miner. Her mother was busy with raising her children and running a business. Toni remembers that they were “just trying to get money in.” Toni does not have many fond memories as a child. She confides that “her childhood wasn’t great” and that “a lot of my childhood is a blur. Some of I don’t want to remember.” She mentioned that there was an abusive situation existing in the family, caused by her father. She was pleased to live on a farm. She describes that “so we had the great farm life. So that was nice, being outdoors and just had a great time but....”

Toni was educated at a boarding school and she whispers that she did not like it at all. She does not want her children to hear that statement. She confesses that it was very traumatic for her. She said that it was “too much.” She was not much interested in studying or sports. Sports were compulsory at school. She was introduced to sports at age seven and learned ball skills and playing games. She started tennis lessons at age 10. She explains that sports were a priority on the school curriculum and that they had very good facilities. She repeats often that she had no choice but to play sports. It was mentioned that it was also “because of your peers, it’s quite important to be a bit sporty. Sport was very much...a bit of peer pressure.” She was taught tennis, swimming and field hockey. She excelled at tennis and field hockey but confessed that swimming was traumatic for her. She made the top teams at school but did not really enjoy it. She talks about how it would keep her from going home on the weekends and this she did not like. Toni barely passed some exams, then “I kind of grew up...and realized that life was

serious.” She eventually got better grades and completed her “A” levels and left secondary school.

After secondary school, Toni talks about how her parents could not afford university fees, so she went to secretary school. She despised being a secretary. She eventually moved to Germany to be with a boyfriend, but that did not work out either. She then moved to England where she exclaimed “that is where my life started in a way,” and “I had to get on with it.” She found a job, where she taught herself computer skills. She wanted to earn enough money to attend university, but she was only able to raise enough for six months. She decided to go home to Zimbabwe.

At this new stage in her life, Toni got a job at a safari company and met a co-worker who would be her future husband. They were married within six to eight months of meeting. They both quit that one safari company and joined another safari company. They had two children. They eventually quit that company and started their own safari company. Today, Toni assists with her husband with a safari company, but also works helping local women start their own businesses.

A typical day for Toni begins at 6:00 a.m. and then she “get[s] the kids ready for school. Take them to school. And then we do our walking. Come home. Shower and in the office at nine. Collect the kids from school at one. Feed them lunch. Homework for one hour and a half in the afternoon. Two hours...in the office and then it’s supper time and my kids are in bed half past six, half past seven.” Then after her children go to bed it is time to her, which explains “I have to have that.” She also plays bridge “so that...that is four hours with no kids, once a week.”

Toni's self concept. When Toni began to describe herself, she stated that the most important things to her are her husband, her children and her family. She underlined that by saying, "That to me is number one." It is important for her to put their needs before all others and be available when they need her. Next, Toni spoke about the significance she puts on her business. She looks forward to her business being successful. Thirdly, emphasis was placed on the friends in her life. They are a large part of her support system and she feels fortunate. She said, "I lost that a couple of years ago and I kind of got it back a little bit, so now I realize how much it means." Toni ended with how she exercises on a consistent basis. She walks in the morning with her friends. She talks about how much fun walking is and that it fits into her children's routine.

When ask about the significant events in her life, her first thoughts went to her childhood and "I think maybe me having survived it." She quickly moved on to how she disliked school. She managed to find a positive when she admitted that "I suppose making it into the first team tennis and first team hockey was probably a highlight." Then she briefly talked about how she moved from barely passing her school exams to getting good grades and completing secondary school.

Toni then moved on to how she started traveling. These travels had her progress through a relationship that did not work out towards a life in England where she felt that "my life started." She talked specifically of being on her own and working towards a goal that she had chosen.

She ended with how it was "major" when she and her new husband quit one company, and began another. She enjoyed the challenge of this new company and they

gained significant friends during these days. After some business issues, she and her husband started their own businesses.

She did mention that learning how to row and competing in regattas was a highlight in her life. She felt that it was an amazing experience in her life.

Toni's experiences with sports. Toni was introduced to sport early in primary school at the age of 7. She remembers beginning with ball skills and playing games. Her next memory was of taking tennis lessons. She often repeats that sports were mandatory and that she had no choice. She never once said that it was enjoyable, but did admit, reluctantly, that making first team tennis and first team hockey was a highlight in her life. She talks of excelling at tennis and field hockey, but how swimming was distressing.

There were conflicts within her in regards to playing sports. She admits that there was peer pressure to be good at sports, but then “if I [made] the first team and they played away, I couldn’t go home, which I didn’t like very much. It was a double edged [sword].”

After school, Toni used to run about 10 kilometers a day, but stopped because of injuries. She then turned to walking, which was easier on the knees. She also used to play tennis on occasions.

There was a time Toni trained for rowing on the Zambezi River. She recalls this time in her life as “divine.” She was recruited by some rowing enthusiasts who had moved to town. She rowed for approximately three years and only stopped because that couple had moved out of town. Toni was most animated when she talked about her experience with rowing. She trained hard and was in her first regatta in seven months. It

was a “whirlwind” that enveloped her and she believes “It’s a great sport.... Really it’s one of the best things we ever did. It was the highlight of my life. Oh yea. It was so exciting, so addicting, so much energy and you have to train real hard and a lot of frustration. It’s a very very fine sport. It’s a very exact sport.” This was most descriptive that Toni had been throughout the entire interview.

There was a distinct change with her perspective towards sports, since her secondary school years. In school she felt forced to participate and she never admitted pleasure in playing sports. After school, she had the choice and she chose to run, to play tennis, to row and to walk. Toni explained that she thought that it was “because it was an imbalance at home. I don’t know. I never felt really good anything. I made it but...” When asked how she felt towards sports now, she clarified that “now it’s more for the social. It’s a lot of fun. It’s not too competitive. It’s more for keeping fit and sports has always been a part of our lives. That kind of thing. It’s very social and a lot of fun. It’s more for that. I feel more freer I think.”

There was another contradiction when Toni made clear that she enjoyed when sports were not too competitive, but yet “the highlight of her life” was rowing, which was extremely competitive. Once again, she was very lively with her memories of rowing. When asked to clarify that she disliked the competition aspect of sports before rowing, she replied, “I *know* and rowing is highly competitive. I know it’s very strange. I just loved it. I kind of got a little addicted to it. I used to dread the regattas because they were competitive and then when I was in a race...it was like...I got into it.” She added that “Yea. Anticipation was horrible. I was so nervous because of competition, but once

I was there...I was actually fine.” She analyzed that it was “probably because I felt good at it. I felt comfortable...I felt I could do it.”

Even though rowing was a large part of her life, she felt that there were still some conflicts within her. She enjoyed it but “having my family...I carried a bit of guilt there.” She understood that it took time away from her husband and children. Now that she walks on a consistent basis and in the morning, there is not the guilt because it fits into her children’s routine. She walks either before they wake up or after she takes them to school.

Toni’s thoughts on sport. Toni focused often on how sport was compulsory in her boarding school experience. She actually remarked that possibly “too much emphasis is placed on [sports].” When questioned further on this comment, she felt that it can be excessive because it becomes “too time consuming, too much pressure for the children.”

When pressed whether she felt there were more negatives or positives, she distinctly stated that there were more positives. She remarked that “it’s good that they have to play sport. I think it is. It is good. It makes the kids active. I think it is very good. And if they aren’t given the choice [to play sport] they might [not] discover they are good at something. And if they don’t have natural sporting parents who don’t do sports, it’s an opportunity for them.”

Toni’s thoughts on women in Africa. Most of Toni’s opinions on women in Africa come through her interactions in her community-based business, as well as the problems she faces in her daily life. She experiences how it is difficult to survive and she has discussed how the financial and emotional challenges get bigger every year. These

challenges stem from increasing inflation, government policies, and the isolation of Victoria Falls. The prices of groceries and basic necessities go up, while income goes down. She personally deals with her frustration by focusing on having a happy, secure, and stable family life, as well as keeping busy and making a difference in the community through her business.

In her business, she employs local women from the townships and the rural area. She explains that they do not want to exclude men “but we got to start somewhere though.” The rationalization behind this is the position of women in their community. Toni enlightens me that “women in this society they bear the brunt of everything. They really do and a lot of them are on their own and they don’t get any child support. So it’s a good place to start. If their husbands do leave, they never ever get any support. Ever. But very few of our ladies are married and a few ladies ever want to get married.” She gives prime examples of the cause of the financial strain these women have and it includes that they have children to support. A main cause of this is because “A lot of them have adopted kids, like if their sisters have died. All of them have someone to support. [A] couple of them are divorced and their husbands have just left them.”

Toni’s thoughts on sports and women in Victoria Falls. Toni talks about her duties as a mother and the challenges of fitting sports into her responsibilities for her family. She mentions that “having my family and making sure you carve out time. It’s probably the most difficult thing.” She gave an example of feeling guilty. She has figured out a way to fit her exercise into her family routine. She does explain, though, that her friends walk early in the morning, not only because it is before the children wake

up but also because of the climate. She clarifies “sometimes we meet at the house at 5. It gets too hot. You can not exercise after seven.”

When Toni talked about playing tennis occasionally, she said that it was difficult because of the lack of facilities. She is adamant that “It is very difficult to get involved on a regular basis. There are no women’s tennis clubs. There is no club, sporting club.” She further describes “Yea. There are no facilities. No place where you go where there is a tennis court or squash court, cricket pitch.” She does admit that there are facilities for some sports, like golf, but she does not play golf.

I remind her that I know that facilities are available at a local hotel. Even with this information, she discusses the economic challenge that exists with the limited facilities that are available. She teaches me that “Yea. It’s a hotel and they have opened up...they were closed...but this year they have opened up to locals... [but only] if you buy a membership and it’s quite expensive.” She goes on further to say “but it’s not the same as a locals club.”

Amelia

Amelia is a Coloured woman in her middle 40’s. She works as a manager at local retail store. She has children living at home with her and her second husband. She currently walks vigorously consistently as exercise.

Amelia grew up along the railroads in a family of nine children with her mother and father. She fondly recalls that she was always in the bush and by the rivers. Her father worked for the railways and they moved from town to town, always following the tracks. Her father was Namibian, raised in Zambia. Her mother was Dutch. She taught

me that it is usually the father's culture that is prevalent at home, so she was immersed in the African side of her heritage. She recalls attending school in a little hut, which was used for church on Sundays, but then the local pastor would teach the children there during the week. This was her first exposure to education. She points out that she was the only colored amongst the locals. She informs that "this area is Ndebele. We grew up learning Ndebele, the syllabus, whatever their cultures, whatever. We grew up speaking the language, learning their games that sort of thing."

She was the third born in her family. She recalls that life was hectic, very busy and that there was always fighting and squabbling, but "it was enjoyable." On the account that there were many children, there were always many friends and family coming through the house. This increased when her brothers went into the army. She recalls fondly the big pots of food that her mother would cook, offering tea and cake to all who entered as visitors, and "it was always lunch." She mentions that if there was no one home, it was too quiet for her and she missed the bustling activities. She describes home fondly as they "always lived like an average family. We never had too much or too little, we always had something."

Education was very important to her parents and she eventually went to boarding school. When she began "proper school," her parents felt it was best for the children to live at the school. They only came home on holidays and at the end of the terms. Amelia said that school life was not that much different than her home life. The biggest difference was at school she was forced to be more independent. She recalled "we had to do all our own laundry, shining your own shoes, washing your own socks, and all that."

At home she informs that “you’ve got the *domestic* (housekeeper) to do it because we were under age that time. The domestic was there to do all that.”

The boarding school was run by Catholic nuns and Amelia distinctly remembers how it was very scheduled and very strict. She explains that “there is a time table for everything. Everything had to be time tabled.” She fondly looks back on all the sports that she had the opportunity to learn and participate in. She did clearly state that it was mandatory and she had no choice. She described it in a positive light and explained that “whether you were good at it or not, you had to do something. They would always find something for you to do, that you were good at, whether you liked swimming or running ...basketball or whatever games that were there or even just playing like snakes and ladders or...Scottish dance...They would always find something for you that you thoroughly enjoyed whether it was music, whether it was sport but we had to do activities.”

Amelia left school at the age of 18 or 19. Her first job was as a nurse and she did that job for about five years. She recalls how she always wanted to be a nurse. After that, Amelia worked as a *panel beater* (car body shop) and an *auto nutrition* (mechanic). She explains that she worked in a garage, fixing cars and selling spare parts. After that job, she started working for a large farm which was an exporter of vegetables. She was most intrigued with that job, even though she worked 18 plus hour days. Her days consisted of waking up at 4:00 am, catching transport to the farm, starting work at 5:00 a.m. and leaving for home at 11:30 p.m. She realizes that it was long hours standing on her feet, but that it was exceptionally enjoyable for her. She highlights how she felt it

was professional with highly organized procedures. They also had a routine of job rotations, so she was able to observe and learn about all aspects of the production. Amelia describes that it was interesting because she saw “the procedures of how we worked with the vegetables...taking you from the packing room and put you out in the field. You would collect the stuff straight from the soil...like the potatoes...whatever...carrots.” One of the reasons it was so fascinating to her was because it was something new to learn.

Amelia never talked about when she got married, or had children. When pressed, she did say that she has currently been married for about three or four years. She describes her current husband as “very tiresome sometimes, because musicians are not all there. Sometimes he will just play his guitar all night, he will just be composing a new song or something and he doesn’t want to be disturbed sort of things. He wants to be on his own, doing his own things.”

Amelia currently works in sales in a retail shop in downtown Victoria Falls that sells clothes and household items. She works six to seven days a week. She describes an average day in her life now, “normal working days starts at about 5:00 a.m. in the morning, you get up and you...I don’t have a domestic now so I’ve got to do all my own housework...so you’ve got to clean, sweep the yard, you wash the dishes, clean the house before you leave for work. 8 o’clock you get to work. Whatever you do at work. Get home at 5. It’s back to cooking. Then that’s it, we just sit around and watched TV.”

Amelia's self concept. When asked to describe herself, Amelia was short and succinct by saying, "well the main thing that I identify myself is a housewife, mom. A working mom, as well. That's it. Don't you think?"

The highlights that stick out as important initiated how it was interesting being a working mother. She exclaims that "All my life I have worked!" She talked extensively about the jobs that she has had.

Amelia then mentions that "I suppose marrying into a tribe that is not mixed" was an important aspect of her life. She goes into great detail about marrying first a Shona man, and then a Tongan man and how she "married outside of my culture sort of thing. I didn't get married to somebody who grew up more or less the way we grew up as mixed breeds of color... mixed marriages are a bit difficult, especially in Africa." She talked about how she had to ask a lot of questions on social etiquette and what was appropriate, especially in situations when meeting family. She illustrates that "they have different culture. Different ways of doing things. So that was also a major thing in my life to get used to it. And you had to ask a lot. You had to ask a lot of questions. What do you do when you meet you mother in law? Your father in law? With...the way we grew up it was like the father in law/mother in law, everybody is free...you just sit on the sofa. You talk to everybody...now, now there is a boundary now. You don't sit where your father-in-law sits or you can sit where your mother-in-law is sitting but you don't sit on the chair, you sit on the floor." She clarifies that she is still learning and there are many new cultural aspects that she does not know.

Amelia then moves on to what sticks out in her mind the most is how “as a little girl... I suppose, the thing that that I really and truly enjoyed growing up was playing...you know...games and sports. That kind of thing was...that was really...that’s what I really enjoyed...about my childhood...I thoroughly enjoyed sports. Whenever I had the opportunity, I used to play sports. It was always sports, sports” She then moved on to talk about boarding school and how the structure of that had a big impact on her and that they had to chose an activity of some sort to be involved in.

Amelia’s experiences with sport. While Amelia was young child, she used to do a lot of *athletics* (track and field), specifically running, triple jump, and high jump. Amelia was introduced to other sports when she started school at the age of nine. She was introduced to volleyball, netball, basketball, football, rounders, cricket and swimming. She still enjoyed athletics as her main sport. She also enjoyed and excelled at swimming, volleyball and netball. She sometimes felt that there were so many activities that she was interested in that she only had time to focus on a few.

When asked why she played, Amelia did not mention that it was mandatory. She made clear that she had fun, got pleasure from it, and there were social reasons because “it made us so close to each other. Playing sport as a team, it made us attached to each other...it drew us closer as a family.” She is proud to say that “even today there are some of my friends that I used to play sport with, that still phone.”

Back in her childhood, “Sports played a major part in my [life].... I always found...time to play sport. There is always time to play sport no matter what you were doing or what activities you were into.” She compares that to how sport is lacking in her

life, “now, it’s a bit difficult, as I feared. Being a working mom, a married mom, now the culture....in the African culture...there is so much responsibility...”

Amelia is still interested in participating in sports. She says, “Yes. I am, although I haven’t played sports in a very long time, I think since I left school, [but] I am still interested.” She places sports and exercise as a “top priority” in her life and that is why she walks vigorously every morning to work, as opposed to taking her time when walking home. She describes how “when I’m walking, I’m doing my breathing exercise. in-out-breath-breath-breath. Deep breaths.” This is how she feels she can become and stay healthy. She does add that “sometimes when I get home I will find the kids will be playing ball, we join in the game or they are skipping with a skipping rope and you just join.”

She underlines her feelings by saying that “even though I’m not into sports as much as I used to be or much as I would like to...I try wherever I can, just to do a bit here and there. It’s a bit difficult with all the activities and all the responsibilities I’ve got as a wife. It’s difficult to play sports now. It’s quite hard to get back to playing sport again.”

Amelia’s thoughts on sport. Amelia thinks that sport is beneficial and especially for children. She explains that “for one, it keeps you healthy, fit. Two, it keeps them out of mischief. It gives them something to look forward to. It kept us out of mischief, so I should think that it should also keep my kids out of mischief.”

When she thinks about the daily struggles in life, sports can be a positive tool to deal with those challenges because “with the environment that we live in today there is a

lot of stress around. I think sports takes the minds off home problems, everyday life problems.” When adults get together for sports it not only can help relieve stress but that socially “sports does bring people close together.” When people are brought together they can assist each other and it can help generate ideas. These ideas can help solve individual problems. Amelia gives examples such as, “someone will say “you know I’ve got to look for money, at home there is nothing. I’m here on the field playing sport and I’m thinking about what I need to eat tonight at home,” then “somebody will say you don’t need a lot of money to start up something, to make money...why don’t you try this or try that. Someone will say I’ve got a [sewing] machine at home I’m not using. I’m working, do you want to come home and use it.”

Amelia highlights how physical activity and sports should be more acceptable and available for the older population. She educated me on the cultural perspective towards older people and describes the factors that could make it a difficult accomplishment. Amelia feels that this category includes her. She is in her 40’s. She explains that “our age group...in the white community, it’s natural for people to do sport, to jog to keep fit. In the black community, it’s like taboo. Imagine my grandfather, my grandmother jogging up the road; everyone would say “Is she right in her head? What is she doing that for?” They just think when you get old you must just eat eat and just bloat and just [get] extra large and just sit there and demand ‘bring me this, bring me that’ That is what most of our old people folks do anyways. So, an elderly person jogging up the road, someone will think you’ve gone off your head or something is wrong with you.”

Amelia ended with saying what she wished to see. She exclaimed that “I would really like to see is more venues, not only for children and different age groups. More equipment for our age groups to play in. I would like to see...at least an activity...something to keep people motivated...it brings the community together, when you are playing sports....it does.”

Amelia's thoughts on women in Africa. Amelia has vivid descriptions of the position of women in Africa. She states that “in the African culture...there is so much responsibility put on the woman. The women have to see to so many things. It is the home. It's practically everything.” This is reinforced by notions that the “the woman's place is in the home. You're not supposed to do anything besides being a housewife...cooking and seeing to everything at home.”

Amelia describes a normal day for working women by saying that “you are rushing straight home because you're thinking my chores are waiting for me at home.” These constant thoughts of home are exemplified, according to Amelia, by how “you very seldom find a woman, even on a weekend, going out for entertainment or that sort of thing because if you are thinking of expenses, “Ahh, my money isn't sufficient. Where is the money coming from for my next meal?”

Amelia experienced this first hand, while married to her first husband. She described that “when he gets home, you've got to wait on him, you give him his dish of water to wash his hands, you serve his food, remove those dishes when you are finished serving them and you wash them and tidy up and then if you can have break, if you've

got time, then you can sit down and have a break but most of the time it's work work work."

These traditional expectations extend to visiting with in-laws. It does not matter if they are in your home or if you are in their home. First there are etiquette situations, where when Amelia remembers visits to her sister-in-law where "she sits and you serve her. You do everything in her home. She'll sit there and you do everything. She's just like...the meat is in the fridge, the pots are there, vegetables there, and she'll sit and you do everything."

Traditional responsibilities in the family structure also affect lives on a larger scale. Amelia talks about how women have to structure their work schedules on a yearly basis according to harvesting schedules. Even family members who are living and working outside of the rural homestead are still expected to go home. Amelia clearly portrays how "most woman got to go home to the rural areas...that is her responsibility to be there...to harvest, to plant everything, to harvest and to store it and see that everything is put in place...They stay [in town] until the rainy season is over. We just take it for granted that it's November now, I've got to go home, it's planting season. It's January, I think it's time for plowing. It's March now; it's more or less time for harvesting." She ends by saying it is, "a lot of responsibility put on a woman."

Amelia's thoughts on sports and women in Victoria Falls. Amelia talks extensively about the cultural factors that affect a woman's ability to participate in sports. She repeatedly speaks of a woman's responsibilities in the home. She states that because of the "responsibility put on a woman, at the end of the end of day there's not...much

room to play sport or that activity or something.” She exclaims that that “everything is just too much. Pressure, pressure, pressure on you all the time.”

Time and money are factors that affect a woman’s motivation to play sports in Victoria Falls. Amelia remarks that “even if you wanted to play, you start up something but at the end of the day you find somebody says, ‘I’m dropping out. I can’t play anymore. I’ve got this, that, that to do. You know I’ve got too many commitments and I’ve got to rush home and cook, do this and I’ve got to go to the rural home’.”

Available sporting facilities and venues are additional factors for women. According to Amelia, “even if you want to play sport there [are]...not many areas or places where you can actually play sport or clubs.” She does mention that there are facilities at Victoria Falls Primary School but that “It costs a lot of money. I don’t think they agree for individuals to coming to use their facilities.”

There is the Zambezi Sports Bar, also called the Victoria Sports Club, but there are issues there as well. Amelia points out that “you don’t have to pay to use the facilities...but you must have a ball to play or a net. If you don’t have a net or a ball you can’t really do anything.” Another aspect is that “most of the time when you get there you find all these men drinking and then you want to play...[the men say] it’s our turn. You supposed to be home. The women’s place is at home. You’re not supposed to be going out. You’re not supposed to be on the sports field...” These comments are exacerbated by the possibility of troubles at home. This could happen when “if [they] knew your husband or if they knew who your boyfriend was...they would approach [them]...What is your wife doing on the sports field? What time does she get home to do

her cooking? That's where the problem is. You get home and your husband [says] "I believe you are playing basketball or you are playing netball and what time are [you] going to get home to do the cooking and I [do not] want to eat late every evening..."

Amelia does believe that some men are starting to accept that women can play sports but it is mostly under certain conditions. Those conditions are that everything is done at home first. She admits that this is the case with her husband. If she wants to jog, "I suppose it's just a matter of adjusting." Her husband would be accepting of her playing sports, only "as long you've done everything to his satisfaction, as long as he [says] "I'm OK now. I've had my meal. I'm sitting and having my beer or whatever with my friends. Fine, you can do whatever you want to do. It wouldn't worry him as such, as long as everything was up to...on his side. As long as he was happy and he was satisfied."

Amelia says that there is hope for the future. She understands that "the cultural factor will still be there but... if you have to start up something new...either people will be against it or for it...but then after a while... they will lose interest and go onto something else...but if you stick to your sports eventually people will say 'oh, OK, it's a sports day for old ladies'." She believes strongly that "eventually people will get used to it and by people getting used to it, then I think it will break the boundary...that cultural thing...woman's place is in the home...I think it will break that barrier...definitely."

Judith

Judith is a Black woman in her middle 30's. She currently is an import/export businesswoman. She has one child, who lives at home. She is not married. It is not

known whether she currently does any physical activity, outside of her part-time job as a soccer referee.

Judith grew up in a rural areas around the Zambezi area. She was there through her primary school education. She remembers loving to watch soccer so much, that she was not even interested in netball. She moved to Victoria Falls for her secondary education. She still remembers loving to watch soccer, more so because her high school did not have a women's soccer team for her to play on. Judith says that "unfortunately at that time there was no ladies' soccer in Zimbabwe."

She mentions that after secondary school, she moved out of Victoria Falls. Judith eventually moved back to Victoria Falls to start her business of buying and selling goods from other countries. During that time, Judith fell in love and had her daughter. Her boyfriend, the father of her child, left her when she got pregnant.

In 1998, her brother-in-law saw a poster recruiting women referees. Judith was definitely interested and she wanted fellow women to join her. Judith encouraged her sister by saying "since we love soccer...let's ...refereeing...so yea...we are very much interested in soccer, can we join refereeing?" She and her sister started training and studying. She continued to move up in refereeing and became FIFA certified for Class One matches in 2003.

Judith tells that her day starts around 7:00 a.m. She describes her routine and says, "I sweep outside the yard. I clean the toilet. I clean the house. I wash and then I cook." She is working by 10:00 a.m. and is usually home by 5:00 p.m. In the evening

Judith does talk about her evenings as doing “Nothing, unless...I’m resting or watching TV.

Judith’s self concept. Judith does not talk much or get into great detail. She tends to speak in short sentences and does not elaborate her stories. When asked how she would describe herself, her thoughts are only of her religion and her love of soccer. She tells how she is “a devoted Christian. I love soccer. I am a soccer referee who is in FIFA panel now. My work is that. I’m only interested in watching soccer TV and live matches.”

When asked about major events in her life and which were most important, her first memories are when she had a “break out” with the father of her child. She goes on by saying that “We were in love, so then I thought that he would marry me and he dumped me when I was pregnant.”

Her next thoughts are immediately about soccer. She talks about her achievement in her soccer referee career. She lightens up and says that “Good things I can say, being promoted to FIFA panel. It was a great because I was the only one in Mata-north.” She clarifies that she was the only person, man or woman, who was qualified to referee in Class One. She is qualified to referee Division One and Premier League soccer matches.

Judith’s experiences with sport. Judith adored watching soccer as a child. She could not play herself because there were no women’s teams. She explains that “It was important to me because I [was] enjoying it.”

No other mention of sport participation was mentioned until she was recruited into soccer refereeing. She applied to become a soccer referee when she was about 30

years old. Her brother-in-law trained her. Her sister trained with her. She talks of soccer as a part of her soul. She animates this point by describing how she is “only interested the way they are playing it. I enjoy it so much, even at night I dream [of] playing soccer scoring goals.” Judith gets quite happy and laughing when talking about her enjoyment in soccer.

Her evenings are full with watching soccer on TV. Her weekends are full with either refereeing matches or watching them live. She talks of her enjoyment of the technical aspects, particularly strategy, of the game

She explains that it was not easy to become involved in soccer as a referee. She talks of how she decided to “to take up the challenge.” Her experiences include threats and intimidation while she is working. She tells stories of when “if you get to the stadium, they see a wom(an), a lady is blowing the whistle...they would start shouting, ‘she doesn’t know what she is doing.’ Some would like to physically beat you, threatening you.” She talks about how the crowd was just trying to intimidate her, but it did not make her nervous. She tells an example of one game when she was “not scared.” She goes on to explain that “one time, there was a game I wanted to give a red card. One of the players...he threatened to beat me up or shouting at me...Oh, it was tough. It was tough. People were shouting at us. ‘Some woman are cooking. You are busy running at the stadium. You don’t know what you are doing. You bitches.’ All this sort of insults and it was hard. It is hard.” When asked why they would yell, she explains that “just intimidating me.” When pressed whether this would happen to a man referee, she replied, “Ah no. They are scared of men.”

Judith is the only person in the Matabeleland North Province who is FIFA panel and Class One qualified. There are about 20 men who are FIFA qualified in Zimbabwe and only 6 women. She travels to referee national women's soccer matches and premiership league games.

Judith's thoughts on sport. Judith talked mostly of her enjoyment of sport, but did not go into any other elaboration on her thoughts on sports in general. She only mentioned that she agreed that men are stronger and are able to play soccer without shoes.

Judith's thoughts on women in Africa. When talking about the position of women in her culture, Judith immediately responds by saying that "Ladies, they are always down." She laughs and then continues to explain that "it is maybe, I can say it is our culture. We are always underrated that you are a lady...men. Men have always got the upper hand here, unlike women. Women, I told you before that we are looked down. So, even if you want to do what, they [men] say, 'Ah, women.' They always take you for granted." She continues on to enlighten that "the main issue that women are just underrated than men...We are looked down [on]."

Judith is positive about the future that the role of women "will change as time goes on." She does not see her role as a female referee assisting in that change though.

Judith is unsure of the position of women outside of her society. When talking about comparisons to the position of women in the United States, she queried "I don't know about America, how they are treated or what else. Is there any women's soccer there? They are also facing the same problem?"

Judith is adamant though, that she personally believes that men and women are the same. She goes on to say that “I can make a mistake and men can make also the same mistake which I did. So there is no difference.”

Judith’s thoughts on sport and women in Victoria Falls. There was no ladies’ soccer in Victoria Falls in 1983, when Judith first moved to town. There is evidence that there were two ladies’ soccer teams up until 2003. It is unclear when these teams were first started. Both teams disintegrated, according to Judith, because “they didn’t have any sponsorship to compete.”

When questioned whether women want to play sports in Victoria Falls, Judith honestly believes that “the ladies here they are coming up. They are involved in many [sports, like } soccer [and] netball. I think they are coming up.” When asked the last time she saw women playing sports, she tells about the women’s soccer team that ended in 2003 and also that she believes there is volleyball. When asked when she sees them play, she responds that “I’m not sure but I always see them practicing there at Falls Club. I don’t have any idea about volleyball but I always see them training there.”

Judith wants women to know that women can play sports if they want to. She wants to advise that “if they have chosen to take this soccer game, they must [take on] the challenge. Be brave enough. Even if they come across any critics, stand their ground. They don’t underrate themselves because they are women. They are just the same.”

Sophia

Sophia is a Black woman in her middle 50’s. She works as a teacher at a primary school. She has two children, who do not live at home. She is not married. She

currently does not do any physical activity, except for walking, which is her form of transportation. She is involved in the Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee. She has also supported, and is involved with, the newly formed Victoria Falls Women's Sports Centre.

Sophia was born in the rural area of Zimbabwe. When she was five years old, her father moved away. Her mother and she stayed with her mother's parents. She was the first born. Her mother worked as a nanny in town, and so she had the responsibility to take care of the home. She helped take care of four sisters, one brother and her grandparents. The duties included cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood. She attended primary school in the rural area and enjoyed watching sports, but she had duties to do and her grandparents expected her to be home. When she got home, she was not allowed to go back to school to play, but she "had interests". She also had the duty to work with her grandmother, who was a *nyanga* (spirit medium or witchdoctor). She said she was the favorite of the spirits, so when they came she would be called out of bed to talk with the spirits. She did not particularly like it, but she was a child. She did not feel that she could say no.

Towards the end of her primary school, at the age of 13, a significant event happened that was a catalyst for changes in her life to occur. The primary school she was attending was a mission school. She attended Catechism classes and decided to get baptized. After that, she was no longer called by her grandmother or the spirits for any *nyanga* ceremonies. Her mother and her grandparents had an argument, which led them

to move out. Sophia was now a member of the church, which would assist in further education.

She then lived with her mother, *elder mother* (mother's sister), and her young sisters. They were still based in the rural areas. Her mother and elder mother both still worked in town as nannies. As a result, she was still responsible for her younger siblings and doing all of the house chores, i.e. "Still then I was still the one to look after the children when they were away. I was still at home, so I had all the responsibility to cook and do everything. They could send food by bus, so I had to walk...I think it was about 5 to 7 kilometers to the bus stop to receive the food."

When she was finished with primary school, she decided that she wanted to attend secondary school at a boarding school. She did not tell her intentions to anyone. Since she was the "one doing all the work," she sneaked out of the home and walked to find a "place" at a school. It was the rainy season and so she crossed the flooded rivers. She showed good results from her Standard 6 and got accepted at the Lutheran Missionary School. It was easier to be accepted because she had become a member of the church, when she was baptized. When her mother came home at Christmas, she told her of her intention. School fees needed to be paid and her mother was not sure if they could afford it. Her mother sold their only cow to pay the fees.

At secondary school, she had her chance to participate in sports. She had the time necessary to play sports because she had no duties like at home and no one to tell her that she could not play. She learned netball, athletics (track and field), baseball, basketball and volleyball. She "played netball and did a bit of running, but not very much to be...to

take a number one or number two.” She never made the top teams that went to compete as a representative of the school.

After completion of her secondary school, she wanted to go on further with her education. Again, she did not tell anyone of her intentions. She was at home in the rural area and her mother was in town working. There were issues about money, so she decided to go to teacher training college. She boarded a bus, secured a position at a school, but did not know how she would pay the school fees. The money that she did have was enough to board a bus to town, to ask her mother to pay her fees. Her mother was angry this time and told her that she did not have money for fees. She said she would give her enough money to take a bus back to the school to collect her luggage and then go home to the rural area. She “cried all night.” When she got back to the teacher training college, she informed the headmistress of her inability to pay the fees. The headmistress asked her to think about anyone else who might be able to help pay the school fees. During the night she thought of an American missionary teacher from secondary school. She told the headmistress this, and so they called the American. The American said, “No problem, if it is that girl, I know her, I know that she will make it. I will pay for her.” The new benefactor was already paying the fees for two other students who were attending the teacher training school. The first year was paid for. The American had to return to her country and could not continue paying the school fees. A recommendation was made and she was able to secure a loan from the mission to pay the last two years of the teacher training.

After her graduation in 1972, a change in educational policy required parents to pay 5 % of their children's school fees in primary schools. As a result, there was a drop in attendance in primary schools. This resulted in no jobs where Sophia lived in Matabeleland South. There were jobs available in Matabeleland North, so that is where she moved. She received a job at a rural school, near Victoria Falls. She was working, paid off her loan and asked her mother to stop working. She then supported "everybody," her mother, her sisters and her mother's parents. She had a daughter herself, in 1973, and then eventually another daughter. She also had her own children to support.

Sophia remained teaching in the rural area until 1975. She decided at that time that the rural area was not safe. There were issues because of the war, "Most of the ...the war veterans...people were fighting...they were crossing from Zambia and it was their way through to into Zimbabwe. So they...could cross from Zambia here. And then go through our ...where we were teaching. Sometimes....trouble with the soldiers. And asking if we had seen them, they would also ask us to make...cook food for them...so there was a problem...I was scared something might happen." So she left and moved to Bulawayo.

When she was living in Bulawayo, she did not work. In 1978, she was called back to work as a teacher in Victoria Falls. Sophia refused to work in the rural areas again, so she was stationed at a primary school in town. This is the position in which she still works today. She is an *ordinary* (senior) teacher, who has duties to teach all subjects. She mostly works with Grades 6 and 7. She has asked the headmistress not to

teach Grade 7 because of other duties that she has. Sophia said that Grade 7 need extra attention because of exams they must write to continue on in their education.

Sophia has also taken on additional responsibilities as a physical education and culture teacher. Her duties have included training the school netball teams, drama and drum majorettes. This is an area outside of her responsibilities, but she enjoys it tremendously. Teachers “are assigned like sports...if they find that you are doing well, they give you responsibility to look after the school team.” Culture is another interest of hers, “anything to do with culture...drama, music, traditional dances. I’m interested...” There is no extra money paid for training the children in these areas, she works with them because, “I’m a teacher. I love to work with children.”

When she finished college, she was able to have the time to further her interest in sports. She “loved playing sports with kids...athletics, netball.” Sophia talks a lot about the winning aspect and how “every team that I got into...first training athletics, we never lost. If I was training netball, we never lost, even if we were doing it at ...at school in houses. Our house always came first because I loved training kids to do this sport.” Her motivation came from the “fact that I didn’t have time to do it myself, so when I had the time...Yea, because I wasn’t able to do it but this time...I have all the time to myself, nobody could tell don’t do it...stop. So, I trained wholeheartedly.” Other motivations came from the enjoyment of competition, keeping children out of trouble and traveling to other schools to compete.

Sophia has not taught sports for the last five years. The headmistress has asked her to help train the netball team again, but she wants to leave the coaching to the

younger teachers. She is currently focusing on 44 girls in drum majorettes, a primary school that she is trying to build in the rural area, and being a chairperson of the newly formed Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee. The drum majorettes perform at competitions. For the new primary school, she is working to find sponsorship. The one-year old school currently uses a military tent and benches under trees for classrooms. The school grounds already have a netball *pitch* (court). There are plans for a permanent school building, as well as a soccer *pitch* (field). The Sports Development Committee, which began in 2004, plans and organizes sports events in the community.

Sophia's self concept. When asked to describe herself, she laughed. She is a good mother, but strict. She likes her children to, “do well at school, work hard at home, be always at home, come home early even if they are teens.” She feels that she is very sensitive but intelligent. She describes herself as a hard worker, “I love working.” She talked about how she did not do many sport activities but that she loved to watch other people play. She said that it was because she was the first born and “I had to look after my sisters, my grandparents...do the cooking, fetch the water, firewood, so most of my time [was] occupied with work. But I loved watching sports.”

When asked to talk about some of the highlights, good or bad, in her life Sophia first thought about how proud she was to have had the responsibility placed on her as a child by her mother. She thinks most of the trust, for “as long as I was at home, while she was working, everything was going to go [well]...with my grandparents...with my sisters. That gave me a responsibility. Even now, I get responsible for some people.”

Her second thoughts were about working with her grandmother as a spirit medium. She talked about the whole transition from helping her grandmother, being baptized, and moving to a different home life with her mother and her aunt.

The next highlights were her time at school. Sophia feels good that she “excelled at school despite my being occupied.” She also points out that even now, she is the only member of her family who has finished education beyond Standard 6. That extends to any member of her maternal grandparents’ children and their families. When she looks back as an adult, she tries to understand what made her work so hard to push for further education. She believes that “something was inside me...some power beyond my....understanding...but I didn’t know what it was.”

She also mentions a time when a teacher encouraged her to work on her English scores in school. She had fine marks in Mathematics, but the English scores could possibly hinder her progress in life. Her teacher remarked, “If you fail English you won’t have a chance of doing anything in life...because wherever [you] go to look for work or at a college, they always want English.” She took that urging to heart and sneaked out of her dormitory at night to pray. She felt that praying to her God would help her achieve higher scores in English. She eventually received high scores in English. Sophia said that she would never forget that.

Sophia’s experiences with sport. When she was a young girl in primary school, Sophia enjoyed watched sports but did not participate because of home duties. When she was attending boarding school, and not living at home, she was able to participate in the organized sports at school. She enjoyed sports, but was not chosen to represent the

school in competition. When asked the last time she did sports, she said, “I did sports was when I was playing netball, in...during our fun day run...on 30 July (2004)...I didn’t run a long distance, I think it was about a kilometer.” When pressed for what she had done prior to that...she said, “Ah...not much. I’m not doing much but I walk a lot.” She walks because she believes that it is healthy and keeps her fit. She says that another reason walking is helpful is, “because sometimes when I don’t have money for a cab, it becomes easier for me to walk.”

Sports currently has a place in Sophia’s life because she, “feel love.” She goes on to say that, “I don’t think I would give myself time to train the children, but I still love and expect children to be active in sports...to see that they do sports....”

When she became a teacher she took on extra duties to train children in athletics and netball. Sophia thrived on spending time with the children, training them, and winning competitions. She also initiated a drum majorettes club, which continues today to compete with 44 girls.

Sophia has become involved in building a primary school and one of her priorities was to have a netball pitch. One of her next agendas for the school is to build a soccer pitch. She is currently searching for donations to help with the costs.

She has also become recently involved in the Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee (VFSDC). She was contacted through connections that she has made through teaching drama. She directed a play about AIDS with a man who was also involved with a wheelchair basketball club in Victoria Falls. He asked her to join the committee. She did not want to be the chairperson, but agreed because of pressure. She

said, “They all voted that I be the chairperson. I tried to resist because I have so much in my hands, plus I don’t want to do a lot. I want to rest and let the young ones now do the work but they said, ‘No, please do it for us now.’ Then I said, ‘Ok if you want me to do it, I will do it but only for a year, then somebody will take over. I will only do it for a year to let it get up. Then somebody can take over for there.’ She also said yes because she felt that she had the networking capabilities in Victoria Falls that was necessary to make the committee a success. She also felt that coaching should be left to the younger adults and she could focus on the organizational duties, such as “like helping source transport for them when they are to travel, food for them when they are to travel, uniforms for the teams.”

Sophia’s thoughts on sports. Sophia thinks that sports are important. Most emphasis was put on the positive aspects of sports for children, “it keeps the children busy and occupied, active, it’s healthy for the both...the mind and the soul.” She especially considers the sports can help with the AIDS/HIV epidemic, “since there [is] this AIDS...scare...if a group of youth are playing sports, are active in sports...say for about an hour...means by that time they’d be...free of an infection.” She does believe that sports are important for adults but all that she says is that, “it will keep them active.” The emphasis again though was how the adults’ behavior affects children, “they will also be ...a good example to children that sports is good. This is how it is done. This is what is good about sports...children like imitating adults.”

Sophia’s thoughts on women in Africa. Sophia talks often of how women are responsible for home maintenance. She describes how “they are expected to being doing

some work...while our men...for in our African culture, even boys...they don't do any work even if they are at home, they sit and wait for the girls to do the work. No...only girls and women do all the work at home for men."

When asked if she saw any differences in gender roles since she was child, Sophia replied "ah....not really. When I was a child I was in the rural area full time...I think it was the same issue that women were doing all the work while the men were free to run around...Now that I'm in town...I still feel there isn't much of a difference. Although, the only difference is that in town the work the women and girls are doing is a bit less because they don't have to fetch firewood from very far or fetch water...that's what makes the work a bit lighter for them."

The responsibilities of females begin at a young age. Sophia talks about how girls "can't play on the road...it's sort of our culture." To explain further, she says "they don't have the time, they would be sent to...to buy bread or come back home and...wash the plates. They do play but in their home yards."

There is another factor that Sophia elaborates on about the challenges for women in her culture. She explains that women are encouraged or often made to stay home so they "don't see what is happening. So that you don't hear it, don't...." When pressed what she meant by this, Sophia elaborates by saying that "it means they not be at home. They will be somewhere out...then the man is no longer free to do whatever he wants, anytime. He will say maybe my wife will see me...She might find him doing what is not right but if she's at home, he knows that at home...we'll never meet with me anyway." This situation is also extended when she has more friends. This is because "if women get

together...which means they are now friends...then those friends, if they meet the man doing something not right, they will tell the wife. If she has no friends...staying at home...she will never know.” Sophia completely believes that this is “the **main** thing” that encourages men to keep their wives in the home and not allow them to become involved in activities outside of the home.

This is often supported by the husband’s or boyfriend’s family and the woman’s family. When pressed what would happen if the women just disregarded the instructions to stay home, Sophia goes on to describe that “I don’t think there are some who can resist. Resisting will be breaking the marriage. If you resist, if the man goes and tells...the parents...They will say to her...do what your husband says.” Even if the husband and the woman’s parents support her, there could still be pressure from the in-laws. According to Sophia, “they believe a working wife is a bitch...is a bitching wife.” The pressure can include making the family move out of the parents’ home, if that is where they live.

When asked how common this situation is, Sophia says “I think it is three quarters of our families that have that issue.” She even gives an example of her own daughter, who wanted to work and was encouraged not to by her in-laws. Sophia’s daughter found a job and was told by her in-laws that “no, you don’t work. Sit home and serve us....[If] that’s what you want to do, you better leave our house.” Her daughter said “no I’m educated, what do I do with my education...just let it get rotten?” Sophia supported her daughter’s choice to work because she did not want her to waste her education. Sophia specifically said that she “educated my daughter. She needs to work.” Her daughter and

her son-in-law decided to let her daughter continue working, but they did have to move out of the in-law's house.

Sophia's thoughts on sports and women in Victoria Falls. Sophia believes that there is a definite lack of options for both men and women. For women, she says, "they have the interest but there are problems..." She emphasizes cultural gender issues and explains that "the girls are not relaxing like boys... it's not easier for a girl...[or to] find them playing a ball in the street." She also adds that they need "facilities where they can play." She mentions that the biggest factors to increase sports participation for women in Victoria Falls are cultural gender roles, facilities and "making time to do sports...they only have time to work...to get money...at home and outside of the home."

Sophia describes how "it becomes very difficult to get the women together to make a club because...of the fact that women are now working." She explains the restrictions and that "the biggest restrictions could be time, since they will be busy wanting to sell whatever they are selling and those who are working...they would be at work." Other logistical challenges would be "equipment to use and also space and ground where to practice."

Sophia outlines her priorities for the VFSDC. She says that "the way forward for women and sports in Victoria falls is...[by] planning to involve every church to have a team of women or ladies...[to] compete...[in] an annually or seasonally competitions and get prizes." Next, they would organize ladies who work together. She believes it would be easier to organize, for example, women who work together at the market since they

are together already. These competitions could happen either “once a year or three times a year depending on how we organize and manage to get prizes to give.”

When asked for her thoughts on motivations for women to participate in sports, regardless of the challenges, Sophia believes that “number one, it would be if they know there are going to have competitions and win prizes and also if they [have] the equipment and the *kits* (uniforms)...and also if they have a ground where they are going to play and practice.”

Sophia envisions great possibilities for increased sports for girls and women in Victoria Falls. She believes that if the VFSDC can organize community clubs “if at school they are not doing anything at secondary level, they could join...the local clubs...After secondary they could continue in the community.”

CHAPTER 7

Discussion

In analysis of the interviews, the researcher will examine and compare the experiences of the five women. The findings will be contextualized in the literature reviewed, then identified and classified on how sport participation may have been affected by economic status, ethnic background, cultural influences, gender ideology and other institutional influences.

Interviews

Introduction to sport

The participants recall being introduced to sports early in their lives at school. Two women attended boarding school their entire school career. Two other women attended school in the rural and town area. One woman attended primary school in the rural area, and then went to boarding school starting from Standard Six. Three of the women remember specifically that they were between seven and nine years old when they first started playing sports and games. The other two women recall watching sports, but did not play. These women attended primary school in the rural area. One woman said that she only enjoyed soccer, but girls did not play soccer. The other woman said that she could not play because of responsibilities at home. This woman later attended boarding school and then she was “able” to play sports. This was consistent with the multiple documentations that the female responsibilities, even as young girls, were in the home (Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002).

The women who attended boarding school talked about how sports were compulsory for everyone. They had no choice but to play. Two women specifically said that sports were a very serious aspect in the school curriculum. They recall that every student had to find something that “you were good at,” and “something that you enjoyed.” One woman felt she was “forced” to find a sport that she was good at. She recalls being “groomed” for teams and that one had to qualify for different levels of teams. It was mandatory to be on a school team. They could choose which sport they preferred. One woman stated that at times there were “too many activities.”

Three of the women who attended boarding school were introduced to a wide variety of sports. Two women mentioned specifically that they were at missionary schools. The women recalled being introduced to swimming, basketball, Scottish dancing, volleyball, netball, football (soccer), rounders, cricket, field hockey, tennis, baseball, and athletics. Similar to the classic film, “Trobrian Cricket,” colonial citizens and missionaries introduced British sports to the indigenous population. Three women attended a rural or town school. They played netball and athletics. Athletics included running, triple jump, high jump and javelin.

Role of Sport as a Child

Three of the women recalled that playing sports as a child was a very large part of their lives. Two of these women said that sports was major in their lives and was a positive experience. They mentioned that the social aspect was of utmost importance and that it “brought friendship,” made the girls “close to each other,” and “made us attached as a close family.” One woman said that it “brought happiness” and helped her to forget

her problems. The last of the three women said that playing sports in school was a “double edged sword.” She recalls that making first team tennis and field hockey was a highlight in her life, but yet it meant that she was unable to go home on the weekends. She explained that there was peer pressure “to be a bit sporty.” This same woman recalled she never felt very good at anything and that swimming was a trauma for her.

The two women who did not play school sports mentioned that they definitely had an interest in sports. One only enjoyed soccer and she could not play because they did not have women’s soccer. She watched soccer all the time and did not have any interest in playing sports that were available for girls. The other women “had interest” but was required to be at home to help the family.

Sport Participation as an Adult

None of the women were currently involved in playing on a sports team or had played on sports teams since school. Non-participation since leaving school is reflective of the challenges for females to participate in sports once they achieve the age to marry (Maodzwa & Toohey Costa, 2002). One woman did watch men’s soccer live every weekend. One woman was involved in rowing for about two years. This same woman also used to run, but stopped when her knees got sore. Three of the women acted as coaches for girls’ teams for netball and refereeing in male sports. One woman formally trained in order to qualify for certification in refereeing.

At the time of the interviews, one woman did no form of purposeful physical activity for exercise. Two of the women routinely walked in the mornings as a form of exercise. One women talked about how she walked briskly to work and did breathing

exercises as she walked. This was opposed to how she “takes her time” when she walked home from work. The other woman met with friends and walked seven to eight kilometers most mornings.

Five of the six women did not have cars and walked as their major form of transportation. They did not see this as a form of sports or exercise. They did sometimes use taxis as transport. One woman did not actively pursue walking as a form of exercise, but believed that walking built her strength for the times that she did not have the money for a taxi.

Role of Sport as an Adult

All the women interviewed, regardless of their current level of participation in sports, placed sports and exercise in high regard. They all had adamant opinions on the positives contributions that sport and physical activity had for themselves, their children and the community.

The woman who walked “briskly” to work every morning said that exercise was “top priority” for her. She talked about how walking was the “only way I keep fit,” and the “only way I can keep healthy.” She also talked about how she “try[s] wherever I can,” and “a bit here and there.” Besides walking every morning, she talked about playing sports with her children in the evening and swimming laps whenever she visited friends with a swimming pool.

The other woman who walked routinely with friends, talked about how she did it also “for keeping fit.” She mentioned that it was social and a lot of fun. She recalled fondly the time when she rowed competitively. She noted that it was “one of the best

things we ever did,” and it was “a highlight in her life.” Even though competition brought feelings of “dread” and nervousness and the “anticipation was horrible,” she felt “more freer” and that she was good at it. It was exciting, addicting and “divine.”

The two women who did not exercise themselves had fond memories of when they were coaches. One of the women wondered if “maybe I didn’t value it,” and that at the time of the interview, she was “just lazy.” The other woman remembered that she “felt love [from the children],” and coaching “gave me joy.” This was most important to her because she was unable to play sports as a young child and now she has “nobody to say ‘Don’t do it’ and ‘stop.’” However, she felt sports and exercise were better left for “the younger ones [to coach],” because she “wants to rest.” This participant had chosen a leadership position where she could influence increased sports development in the community. She did believe that walking as her main form of transportation kept her fit when she “does not have money for a cab.” She placed more priority on helping children being active in sports, than in physically participating in sports herself.

One woman said that she watched sports religiously and she “dreams [about] playing and scoring.” Although she had never been a player on a sports team, participating in the role of fan, coach or referee fulfilled her dedication to sports. Sports had a large role in all of the participants’ lives but they often wished that they could actually play more.

One woman’s first thoughts went to how playing sports was difficult because “being a working mom, a married mom...now the culture, in the African culture there is so much responsibility put on the woman.” She went on to mention that “even if you

wanted to play, you start up something but at the end of the day you find somebody says , No, I'm dropping out. I can't play anymore. I've got this, that that to do. You know I've got too many commitments and I've got to rush home and cook." These challenges epitomize the "strategy of exit" that Burnett (2002) found in her South African research, as well as, Ogu's (1999) determination that women often have limited time to maintain sport participation. There is definitely an interest to play and participate in sports, but the responsibilities of home, mixed in with economic stress is often overwhelming for women. Besides the duties of the home, she said that there were not many places, venues or clubs to play sports.

The next participant agreed that she often felt guilty that sport was so time consuming and that it took her away from her family, but sports "has always been a part of our lives." The guilt reflects Ogu's (1999) determination that women truly believe that their responsibility for family and home should be priority. The interview participant's commitment to rowing brought more of these emotions but her training schedule took more time than walking every morning. She also talked about how there were no facilities for women to play sports and this made participation "difficult on a regular basis." She did mention that a local hotel had recently opened up their facilities to locals to use, but this required a membership fee. At one point, she said that the membership was "expensive," but then went on to say that it was affordable.

Another woman talked extensively about how participating in sports was "tough." She often experienced insults and intimidation behaviors from men when she was refereeing. There had also been verbal threats to do her bodily harm. The men's

comments often referred to their expectations that women should be at home and attending to their household responsibilities. This did not deter her. She decided to take up the challenge because she “loves” soccer.

Thoughts on the Role of Sport for the Community

Regardless of the current level of participation in sports and the challenges for the women that were interviewed, four expanded on their thoughts about the significance of sports for the larger community.

The first emphasis for three of the women began with children. There was much importance placed on the future of children and how sports could be beneficial for them.

Initially, one of the participants suggested that there was possibly “too much emphasis” put on sports in boarding school curriculum. She felt that sports could sometimes be “too time consuming.” These were the only comments made by any participant that had negative overtones.

There was a consensus that sports as a requirement in school gave every child an opportunity to “find something they are good at,” or in general terms, “discover they are good at something.” One woman felt that this was especially important for children “without sporty parents.”

Three of the women spoke of how sports keeps children active, which contributes to being healthy. One participant specifically felt healthy meant in the “mind and soul.” Two of the women concurred that keeping children active in sports meant specifically that it kept children “out of mischief,” “involved in sports instead of other things,” and “might keep them out of trouble.” One woman talked about how they would be “tired

and never think of doing something else,” and to her this meant that they would be “free of an infection,” and help in the “AIDS scare.”

Discussing the role of sports for adults, one woman’s mind went first to children. She felt that if “adults stay active, they would be good example for children and that “children like imitating adults.”

Two participants began with how sports can help “take the mind off problems,” “relieves the mind,” and “reduces stress.” They talked about how sport keeps people healthy and that “physically fit equals mentally fit.” Physical activity was especially important to one participant because she recognized that an active, healthy body allows for the immune system to become strong. She personally believed that she was sick because she did not do any form of sport. It is interesting that their remarks and personal beliefs concur with the United States Surgeon General reports (1996), even though they may not have access to such reports or seen such research.

It was also mentioned by a participant that sports could be an active agent in bringing “people closer.” This interaction would lead to people helping each other, and that ideas could be generated that could lead to projects that could help them earn income. These economic challenges were especially important to the current issues in Zimbabwe.

Factors in Sport Participation for Women

Outside of the feelings towards the role of sports for themselves, there were additional comments on how they felt that sports could benefit women in the community of Victoria Falls. The participants had definite opinions on the status of sport

opportunities in Victoria Falls. This included sport opportunities in general and then for women specifically.

In April 2004, the Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee (VFSDC) had its first meeting. This committee was initiated by the Sports and Recreation Committee, a national ministry of the Zimbabwean government, supposedly because, according to one of the participants, there “wasn’t any sport in the community” in Victoria Falls area. Another contributor went as far to say that “Vic Falls is dead on sports.” The researcher attempted to attend a meeting of this committee but because of misinformation about meeting times and cancellation of meetings during her stay, she was unable to complete this task. She did succeed in talking to the chairperson of the committee and another committee member.

The VFSDC planned a community fun run to honor the Olympics in August 2004 and also organized youth to attend a national Youth Sports Competition. This was the first attendance of the youth of Victoria Falls community to this annual competition. The committee also supported a women’s sports day that was organized by me and women in the community.

One of the participants felt that the VFSDC was a way forward for increasing community support for sports in Victoria Falls. She felt that one of the goals was to capitalize on good relationships and create good “communication with business people...especially the whites” to get sponsorship for their projects. She felt that the key was to “coordinate black and whites to work together in sports.”

This same woman described that children were very active in sports while in primary school, but then the participation and opportunities declined once they moved onto secondary school. One of her hopes was that the VFSDC could create more community clubs so young adults could carry on in activities if they wished.

The drastic decline in the economic situation in Zimbabwe was evident in all aspects of the Victoria Falls community. This was seen in the comments by all of the five women who were interviewed. The emphasis on sponsorship from businesses was seen as a challenge, but necessary for sports development. Money is necessary for transport to compete in other towns, food, accommodations, kits, and equipment (even just one ball to play with). Money is also necessary for the things that I take for granted in the United States: shoes, whistles, paper to keep score or communication, pitches (concrete or blacktop grounds), grounds keeping (to clear away vegetation or litter), netball hoops or volleyball nets. Facilities in general are a challenge in Victoria Falls. Even in the primary schools, where sport is a large part of the curriculum, grounds are limited because the residential area leaves no room for expansion. Historically, boys' sports have priority over girls' sports on sporting pitches. An example would be how there was not enough space or time for girls to start a soccer team.

Lack of facilities was mentioned by three of the five participants as a challenge to routine sport activity. The woman who walks consistently in the morning with friends, talked extensively about "no women's tennis clubs," and "no sports clubs," in general. She went on to say that the available hotel facilities were "not the same as a locals club."

Another woman also said that there was a lack of facilities and then acknowledged the existence of the local Victoria Falls Sports Club. Even though this venue had no technical barrier to women, she spoke about the challenges of dealing with men drinking and making comments about how women's social responsibilities should keep them at home instead of being out playing sports. This leads to social pressure where the men talk about the wives and girlfriends of other men. The men would talk about whether the women would be home late to cook dinner. This social pressure would lead to possible problems within the family home. The husbands would approach their wives and tell them that the husband's friends would ask him why his wife was out playing sports, when she should be home taking care of her responsibilities. These responsibilities include cooking, childcare, cleaning, laundry, money management, grocery shopping, and just being there to serve the husband. The men of the community would ask if the husband was getting his dinner cooked on time and if the household chores were being taken care of by the wife. Similar to Burnett (2002), patriarchal domination is evident in the women's remarks and scenarios. Even though there may not be technical barriers to sport participation for women, social factors definitely can make it difficult.

One participant spent a majority of her time watching men's soccer in the area. She vividly described crowds of men verbally threatening her and trying to intimidate her. She felt that the men's intentions were to insult her because she was a woman. The men actually told her that she "should be home cooking." She extensively talked about how women are "underrated" and "always put down." There were two women's soccer

teams in Victoria Falls until 2003, but they disbanded because of lack of sponsorship. Since there were no current women's soccer teams in Victoria Fall, in order to satisfy her passion for soccer, she became heavily involved in men's soccer. At the time of the interviews, there were 21 men's soccer teams in Victoria Falls. Regardless of the threats, insults and intimidation, this participant watched soccer games every weekend and had a role in the league operations.

Pressure to attend to the cultural expectations of women in Zimbabwe often comes not only from the patriarchal tradition, but also from the women themselves. One participant spoke of the "guilt" she felt being away from her family and that it was challenging to be "carving out time." Another participant began talking about being a "working mom, a married mom," and the challenge of the cultural expectations of being a woman. Many women spoke of the challenge of getting a group of ladies together, only to have people "dropping out." These women felt that sport was difficult when there were "other priorities like making money." According to one participant, there was "pressure pressure," and that women had "too many commitments." This woman also told how women who tried to play sports discussed how difficult it was to enjoy themselves when they were worrying about how they would pay their bills and how they would have enough money to buy food. This led to women not having the time or the energy to put towards participating in sports or exercise on a regular basis. The women felt the pressure of lack of money, being away from their children and assuring that their husbands were satisfied with the men's expectations of their wives at home.

Families must also attend to responsibilities at their family rural homesteads to help with agricultural duties. The women are expected to take time off work to return either during planting or harvesting season, or both. One lady said that this extra aspect of their lives just added to the “pressure” that they experienced.

Summary

Through a qualitative inspection of the perceptions and opportunities for sport for women in Victoria Falls, it was shown that limited sport facilities are available for women even though there is a general interest in the community to participate. The life histories of five women add to the discourse of the common African women and their joys and challenges throughout their lives. The interviews also highlighted how their interest, participation, and lack of participation in sport reflected their cultural, social, and economic realities. This was noted in how they were introduced to sport, their sport experiences, the role of sport as a child and in adulthood, their thoughts about the role of sport personally and for the community, as well as the factors that they determined were significant to women playing sport in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions

Victoria Falls is in a developing nation. Many of the factors facing women's opportunities to play sports are just generations removed from the same challenges that women all over the world have experienced.

Time was seen as one of the biggest factors, according to one interview, in the challenge to participate in sports for women in Victoria Falls. Time is everything in Victoria Falls. Time is important in the western world. Time is money. Time is lost or saved. There never is enough time. Time is connected to cultural and economic factors.

Time is used to take care of the household, i.e. take care of children, cook, and clean, which is even more important when certain chores could only be done when the sun is up, approximately from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Time was also needed to make money to pay for necessities to survive, i.e. shelter, food and clothing, which was important when the average monthly incomes are less than 100 USD.

Regarding time and the need of it for sports, overarching themes cover cultural, social, and economic responsibilities and obligations. A typical day for the women I talked to began early in the morning. They usually awoke between 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. Four of the five women's first agendas were to sweep the dirt yard with a bundled whisk of thatch, so short that they must bend down to touch the ground. Then the women would clean the house. Breakfast for their families was the next duty and then the women would do the dishes with no dishwasher; bathe and dress their children for school and then get ready for work them. The other woman had a *domestic* (housekeeper or

maid) to do these chores for her, except she got her children ready for school. Four of the five women worked outside of the home, did not have cars and thus had to have the time to walk to their jobs. The other woman has a car, so she drives her children to school and then works from a home office. For all the women, these chores were all done before 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Most of the women work outside of the home until 5:00 p.m. to 8 p.m. Then they walk home to begin the cooking, cleaning, and any other tasks that must be done. None of the households have washing machines, so if they do not have a domestic to do those chores, they must find time to wash the clothes in a tub and then hang them out to dry. In the homes where there were men living, the women never mentioned that the men helped with household chores on a regular basis, except for on a rare occasion.

In a typical day or week, there was some emphasis on physical activity by all the women interviewed. Three of the five women mentioned purposely either walking briskly to work or meeting other women to walk on a consistent basis. A fourth woman worked as a soccer referee and could be found either refereeing or watching soccer on Saturdays and Sundays. The other woman walked as a form of transportation but did not mention any other consistent physical activity or sports participation, outside of her involvement with organizing sporting events.

A constant factor was the cultural responsibility of the home. Home responsibilities were mentioned specifically as an aspect of being a woman in their society by four of the five women. Traditional views in the Shona and Ndebele culture historically believe that the man's duty was to be the protector of the home, to take care

of the animals and some agricultural duties. Women's duties included the maintenance of the home and childcare. According to Maodzwa and Toohey Costa (2002), "The relationship between husband and wife was viewed as a reciprocal one in that the women's dependent role as wife, house keeper and child bearer, confined her to the interior world of the family, while the man as husband, was left free to acquire needed external resources" (p. 28). Maodzwa & Toohey Costa (2002) go on to clarify that "in those days, as is the case today, a respectable traditional African family in Zimbabwe is centered on the men as the head of the household and its dominant authority figure" (p. 28). These values have been seen throughout history in most cultures, even western cultures. The difference is that western cultures have moved toward equal home responsibilities for men and women. This is not to say that remnants of these values are completely lost and do not exist in the consciousness of a majority of western men and women. An example would be in the researcher's family. It was the mother who took care of the house and the children, while the father's duty was to work, bring home money and make sure the family was "taken care of." In a western culture, the security and protection comes in the form of sufficient money and men often help women with the household duties.

These world views were repeatedly heard from all of the women, except for one. It was the white woman who did not specifically talk of the role of woman, except for those of the local black women who worked for her. She mentioned that many of them were caring for children but with no apparent help from men. She talked of her guilt when outside activities led to her being away from her family because her number one

priority was her family and home. She did not specifically say it was because of her expected role as a woman. One woman talks of how “in the African culture, there is so much responsibility put on the woman. The women have to see to so many things. It is the home. It’s practically everything.” This is reinforced by notions that the “the woman’s place is in the home. You’re not supposed to do anything besides being a housewife, cooking and seeing to everything at home.” One of the five women interviewed, who is over 50 years old, speaks about how the responsibilities of females have not changed much from her childhood

they [women] are expected to be doing some work...while our men...for in our African culture, even boys...they don’t do any work even if they are at home, they sit and wait for the girls to do the work. No...only girls and women do all the work at home for men... When I was a child I was in the rural area full time...I think it was the same issue that women were doing all the work while the men were free to run around...Now that I’m in town...I still feel there isn’t much of a difference. Although, the only difference is that in town the work the women and girls are doing is a bit less because they don’t have to fetch firewood from very far or fetch water...that’s what makes the work a bit lighter for them.

These responsibilities and values highlighted the specific cultural concepts regarding the status of women viewed by some in the Victoria Falls community. A few of the women interviewed specifically discussed the inferior position of women. Most of the women discussed how the woman’s position was seen as below men’s and that patriarchal domination existed in their society. Some believe that this is the situation in between 30% to 75% of the families that they knew. One lady explains that “women are looked upon down. Men look down on the women, that they can do nothing. Woman has to follow men....” Another woman is quite adamant that the “ladies, they are always down.” She laughs and then continues to explain that “it is maybe, I can say it is our

culture. We are always underrated that you are a lady...Men. Men have always got the upper hand here, unlike women. Women, I told you before that we are looked down. So, even if you want to do what, they [men] say, 'Ah, women.' They always take you for granted." She underlines her strong opinion by again saying that "the main issue that woman are just underrated than men...We are looked down." Many felt that these ideas were changing. One said that "previously women use to think your men can do better and women would like not involve themselves," but now "some woman know that we can do better than men. We can do better, far much better...100% better than men." Another one is quite positive about the future and the role of women "will change as time goes on." Another lady agrees that time will help change these opinions by saying that "it's the time that we are in. This...we're in the 20th century...isn't it...and everything is changing according to time." Access to television and satellite cable was seen as a tool of change. It is a tool of change because "as they watch and see involvement of other women...so they think within themselves they say OK, if that woman can do that if those women can do that what about us?"

These responsibilities and values have a large influence on the lives of many women. Some men dictate what a woman can or cannot do. In some instances a man will not allow his wife to work. In other circumstances, he may not allow a woman to join in activities outside of the home. In some situations, the woman just does not feel like she has the energy after cleaning the house and working her job or has the inclination to create disagreements. These circumstances directly relate to a woman's ability to play sport.

It is possible to participate in sports for the women in Victoria Falls, if the woman has the determination to do so. Regardless of the lack of facilities, time spent at work, social pressures, and the home responsibilities, all it takes is tenacity and an adaptation of their daily schedule of responsibilities. This situation is not that different from the factors and challenges that women all over the world experience.

Recommendations for Further Study

Survey

Further studies would require the following improvements in the protocol. The survey would clearly state to circle the answers of “yes” or “no” in the appropriate sections including these responses. When asking for race categories, options for the categories of “Black,” “White,” “Coloured,” “Indian,” or “other” would be designated and clear instructions to circle the appropriate category. These categories are the majority racial designations and descriptions used in the local community. Some respondents chose to put national identity, i.e. African, Zimbabwean, or European, for the racial class. It is unclear whether it could be acceptable for the researcher to assume that African would be black or that European would be white. There was minimal inclusion of “white” respondents, fewer than five, because the method of distributing the surveys did not lend itself to coming into contact with “white people.” The population of “Whites” in Victoria Falls could be less than 1%, according to a local resident, and they were not seen by the researcher in public very often. If they were seen, it was in an environment where it did not seem conducive to filling out surveys. This could lead to the researcher possibly categorizing the Europeans as “White” and the tribal Africans as

“Black.” One of the possible errors in this would be the inability to know who was of mixed race or Coloured.

The category of ethnicity was an issue. On the survey it was described as “family heritage” or “tribal affiliation”. A majority of the surveys were completed with tribal affiliation, but there were incidences where national identity was reported, i.e. African, Zimbabwean or European. This question could be removed in further studies because it did not show as a valid area of importance in the study. It is unclear how to attain consistent and valid responses in the racial and ethnic categories. The definition of race and ethnicity varies across individuals and academics. A possible solution is by questions and follow-up verbally after the survey.

The questions regarding “place of residence” and “other family members or friends living in the same residence” would be re-written. The “place of residence” should include an option of township, town or rural area. The respondents should be asked to clearly circle the appropriate area. This category could be removed, as it may not be relevant to the study at this point. The question regarding “other family members or friends living in the same residence” could either be re-phrased as “number of people living in same residence” or completely removed..

When asking if the respondents played sports, it would be clearer if it was re-worded as “do you play sports now,” or “have you played sports within the last six months.” In some circumstances, the respondents reported that they played sports, but not since they were in primary or secondary school.

The area that requested which sports they do play should have included the wording of “or would like to play.” There were incidences where respondents reported that they do not play sports, but then they wrote down sports they used to play or would like to play. These areas could be separated out under the response of “yes” or “no.”

Interviews

While transcribing the interview tapes, many opportunities for improvement were evident. I felt it was necessary to get a grass-root documentation of Zimbabwean women’s lives and an overall impression of the women’s sport experiences throughout their lives. This goal led to the use of broad questions to gather background information. The broad and large number of questions resulted in a large amount of data. The amount of data was difficult to manage and may have resulted in attaining more insightful details by the women. Further investigations could focus on two or three questions to gain a more focused research and more detailed responses.

Interviewing skills are difficult and it is pertinent to gain extensive experience and improve on best practices. There were a few situations where the questions could have been leading, and it would have been better to minimize and simplify the questions to draw out the first thoughts of the participants. Once again, the intention was to gain broad information in this exploratory study but the pressure of keeping the participants engaged in a timely fashion fought against the number of questions intended. One participant was difficult to schedule for an interview, so when we did have the interview the interviewer felt pressure to rush through the interview before the participant lost interest. There were also multiple instances where I interrupted participants, where it

would have been more beneficial to let them continue on in their thought processes.

Shorter, open ended questions could have given more in-depth responses that might have elicited even more cultural meanings behind thoughts and perspectives. In some of the interviews, outside interruptions should have been eliminated by choosing more isolated interview locations or making it more clear it was important to be uninterrupted. This was not done in these initial interviews because priority was placed on making the participant choose the location of the interview in a place that was comfortable for her.

Another challenge was interviewing participants because of cultural and technical circumstances. A handheld tape recorder was used, but a lapel microphone could have caught situations when voices dropped in volume, tones were lowered and outside interruptions made it difficult to hear the participant. The accent of some of the participants also made it difficult to capture enunciation and words. This is particularly difficult in cultural differences where unfamiliar words or languages are present.

Areas for Further Research

With the increasing international interest in developmental assistance to Africa, i.e. the UN Millennium Project, the case of women has taken the back seat to issues of poverty, HIV/AIDS, human rights, children and political issues. I suggest that scholars can highlight realistic needs, desires and plans for progress as proposed by women in these communities. This can be achieved by further qualitative examinations of African women's experiences, perspectives, and ideas. Focused documentation of influential women in these communities e.g. the woman involved in the Victoria Falls Sports Development Committee, can highlight concrete agendas that will assist in their goals.

African women intimately understand the challenges and reality of their world and have a much better insight on realistic changes that could make a better life for their children, community and future generations. Another suggestion is for examination of current governmental gender equity agendas and the programs that already exist. Next, assessment of these programs should be undertaken and how they may or may not be achieving their goals. Through this assessment of current agendas, mixed with suggestions by women in the community, a clearer picture of necessary adjustments can be seen and action taken.

Implications

As stated earlier, the results of this research cannot be a comprehensive truth for all women's sport experiences in Africa, or even in Zimbabwe, but they can continue the dialogue of the situation of women in Africa. The intention was to hear the realities of women from their perspectives and how they believe that sport can be used as a tool to benefit their lives. This knowledge can assist in developmental initiatives directed at these African communities so that strategies can focus on individual public needs.

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Appendix A - Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Approval

San José State
UNIVERSITY

**Office of the Academic
Vice President**
Academic Vice President
Graduate Studies and Research
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0025
Voice: 408-283-7500
Fax: 408-924-2477
E-mail: gradstudies@sjsu.edu
http://www.sjsu.edu

To: Amy Freitag
110 Crocker Dr., N211
San Jose, CA 95111

From: Pam Stacks, *Pam Stacks*
Interim AVP, Graduate Studies & Research

Date: May 12, 2004

The Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board has approved your request to use human subjects in the study entitled:

“Women and Sport: An Ethnographic Case Study in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.”

This approval is contingent upon the subjects participating in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. This includes the protection of the anonymity of the subjects' identity when they participate in your research project, and with regard to all data that may be collected from the subjects. The approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Pam Stacks, Ph.D. immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma, and release of potentially damaging personal information. This approval for the human subjects portion of your project is in effect for one year, and data collection beyond May 12, 2005 requires an extension request.

Please also be advised that all subjects need to be fully informed and aware that their participation in your research project is voluntary, and that he or she may withdraw from the project at any time. Further, a subject's participation, refusal to participate, or withdrawal will not affect any services that the subject is receiving or will receive at the institution in which the research is being conducted.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 924-2480.

cc: Dr. Shirley H.M. Reekie

The California State University:
Chancellor's Office
Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico,
Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton,
Hayward, Humboldt, Long Beach,
Los Angeles, Maritime Academy,
Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona,
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,
San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix B - Agreement to Participate in Research: Survey

San José State
UNIVERSITY

**College of Applied
Sciences and Arts
Department of Human
Performance**

One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0054
Voice: 408-924-3010
Fax: 408-924-3053

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator(s): Amy Freitag
Title of Protocol: Survey

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating the participation motivations for sport for women in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
2. You will be asked to answer questions where your name will be kept confidential. The questions are to collect basic population statistics of a sample of women in Victoria Falls and questions regarding sport. You will be given a survey on paper and a pencil or pen. You will be able to fill out the survey either in the presence of the researcher when given the survey or you may take the survey home and return it at your convenience before the deadline of July 13, 2004.
3. You may experience emotional discomfort in answering these questions which you perceive to be too personal. You may also feel uncomfortable and unsure of the goals of the foreign researcher. There may be some uncertainty whether this information will be shared for census statistics with local, national or international political institutions. The information will not be shared with any political institutions. The participants' name will be kept confidential and will not be used for any purpose. Your name and contact information will be collected for possible interviews, but the data will be destroyed after the interview participants have been chosen.
4. Benefits may include the identification of inequality in opportunities for women to participate in sport. The anonymous data may be used to help provide environments and facilities for sport for women.
5. If participants are uncomfortable with personally filling out the survey, alternative procedures are available. Participants may also choose to give verbal answers to the researcher or another person to complete the survey. Participants may choose not to include their name and contact information on the survey.
6. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included.
7. There is no compensation for participation.
8. Questions about this research may be addressed to Amy Freitag (local contact information will be given to participants upon request at the time of handing out the survey). Complaints about the research may be presented to Dr. V.G. Payne, Department Chair, Department of Human Performance, College of Applied Sciences and Arts, San Jose State University, vgpayne@hup.sjsu.edu, (408) 924-3028. Questions about research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.
9. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.

The California State University:
Chancellor's Office
Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico,
Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton,
Hayward, Humboldt, Long Beach,
Los Angeles, Maritime Academy,
Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona,
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,
San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix C - Demographic Survey

18 years and older _____ YES _____ NO

Race _____

Ethnicity (family heritage or tribal affiliation) _____

Place of Residence _____

Highest Educational Level (grade) completed _____

Occupation (Job) _____

Other family members or friends living in same residence _____

Do you want to play sports? _____ YES _____ NO

Do you play sports? _____ YES _____ NO

If so, which sports do you play?

How often do you play sport? _____

Are there any restrictions to you participating in sport? _____ YES _____ NO

If so, please explain (please write on the back of the survey if you need more space)

Appendix D - Interview Guide

1. Tell me about yourself and your life?
 - a. Tell me five things that describe you?
 - b. Tell me some of the major things that have happened to you in your life?
 - c. Describe your childhood for me.
 - d. Describe your family situation.
 - e. Tell me about the work that you do.
 - f. Tell me about your formal education experiences.
2. Tell me a little about your culture?
 - a. What are the most important aspects of being a woman in your society?
 - b. What are the most important aspects for being a man in your society?
3. Tell me about your current participation in sport?
 - a. How were you first introduced to sport and how old were you?
 - b. Why did you play sport in the beginning?
 - c. Describe the place of sports in your life then and now?
 - d. Why do you play sport now?
 - e. Are there any factors that help you play sport?
 - f. Are there any factors that make playing sport difficult for you?
4. Are there any questions you wish I had or I should have asked regarding your participation in sport, which you feel are important?

Appendix E - Agreement to Participate in Research: Interview

San José State
UNIVERSITY

**College of Applied
Sciences and Arts
Department of Human
Performance**

One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0054
Voice: 408-924-3010
Fax: 408-924-3053

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator(s): Amy Freitag
Title of Protocol: Interview

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating the participation motivations for sport for women in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
2. You have been chosen to participate because you have filled out a survey that shows that you participate in sport. You will be asked to answer questions where your name will be kept confidential. The intention of the questions asked will be collect basic life histories to give the researcher a sample view into the life of a woman in Victoria Falls. The interview will also inquire about your experience with sport and in playing sport to document a woman's experience of sport. These interviews will be tape recorded and parts of the conversation will be typed into a manuscript. The participant will not need any extra materials. The interviews will take place in person, not over a telephone or computer, in any environment that is agreeable to the participant. These environments may include public settings or personal home residences. The interviews will take place from July 13, 2004 to August 13, 2004.
3. You may experience emotional discomfort in answering these questions which you perceive to be too personal. You may also feel uncomfortable and unsure of the goals of the foreign researcher. There may be some uncertainty whether this information will be shared for census statistics with local, national or international political institutions. The information will not be shared with any political institutions. The participants' name will be kept confidential and will not be used for any purpose. Your name and contact information will be collected for possible interviews, but the data will be destroyed after the interview participants have been chosen.
4. Benefits may include the identification of inequality in opportunities for women to participate in sport. The anonymous data may be used to help improve environments and facilities for sport for women.
5. If participants are uncomfortable with personally filling out the survey, alternative procedures are available. Participants may also choose to give verbal answers to the researcher or another person to complete the survey. Participants may choose not to include their name and contact information on the survey.
6. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included.
7. There is no compensation for participation.
8. Questions about this research may be addressed to Amy Freitag (local contact information will be given to participants upon request at the time of handing out the survey). Complaints about the research may be presented to Dr. V.G. Payne, Department Chair, Department of Human Performance, College of Applied Sciences and Arts, San Jose State University, vgpayne@hup.sjsu.edu, (408) 924-3028. Questions about research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela

The California State University:
Chancellor's Office
Bakersfield, Chico, Chico, Chico
Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton,
Hayward, Humboldt, Long Beach,
Los Angeles, Maritime Academy,
Merced, Monterey, Monterey,
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,
San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

College of Applied Sciences and Arts, San Jose State University,
vgpayne@hup.sjsu.edu, (408) 924-3028. Questions about research
subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela
Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and
Research, at (408) 924-2480.

9. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or
jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.

10. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in
the entire study or in any part of the study. If you decide to participate in the
study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on
your relations with San Jose State University or with any other participating
institutions or agencies.

11. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for
your records, signed and dated by the investigator.

- **The signature of a subject on this document indicates agreement to participate in the study.**
- **The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attestation that the subject has been fully informed of his or her rights.**

Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date