2006

Perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent soccer players

Corinne R. Houston
San Jose State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses

Recommended Citation

Houston, Corinne R., "Perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent soccer players" (2006). *Master's Theses*. 2887.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.9bfb-mznd>
https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/2887

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.

PERCEIVED STRESSORS
AND COPING STRATEGIES
OF FEMALE ADOLESCENT SOCCER PLAYERS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Kinesiology

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

by

Corinne R. Houston

May 2006

UMI Number: 1436913

Copyright 2006 by
Houston, Corinne R.

All rights reserved.

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 1436913

Copyright 2007 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

© 2006

Corinne R. Houston

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF KINESIOLOGY

Dr. Ted M. Butryn, Ph.D., Committee Chairperson

Dr. David M. Furst, Ph.D.

Dr. Emily H. Wughalter, Ed.D.

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

04/18/06

ABSTRACT

PERCEIVED STRESSORS AND COPING STRATEGIES OF FEMALE ADOLESCENT SOCCER PLAYERS

by Corinne R. Houston

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent soccer players during competition. Nine females, 15 to 17 years, participated in in-depth, semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 1 to 2 hours. All participants played in the Northern California Youth Soccer Association at the elite level. Interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher, and read several times for familiarity. Data were then subjected to inductive analysis, which yielded four central themes: 1) coach feedback, 2) social evaluation by teammates and parents, 3) fairness during competition, and 4) commitment / time demands. Three minor themes emerged: 1) being scouted by college coaches, 2) letting the team down, and 3) soccer as stress reliever. These themes were discussed in terms of their relevance to sport psychology consulting and coaching in facilitating enhanced performance and a positive experience for participants. Recommendations for future research are discussed.

Acknowledgements

I was fortunate to have an abundance of resources in the people around me as I went through the process of completing this thesis. I would like to thank all my committee members for their collective wisdom, guidance, and support from beginning to end, and also acknowledge their individual contributions that inspired me. Dr. David Furst for his expertise in Sport Psychology and helping me to keep my focus, Dr. Emily Wughalter for her knowledge of girls and women in sport and integrating key aspects of this area into my paper, and especially my advisor, Dr. Ted Butryn, for showing me the way in qualitative research and encouraging me to do far more than I believed I was capable of doing. In addition, I could not have made it without my running buddies, Tom Sourisseau, Jr. and Mary Schindler, who listened for two years. Thank you to my parents, Jim and Jeanne Houston, whose everlasting support empowered me to go out into the world and seek my dreams, and to my sister Gabby Houston-Neville and my brother Josh Houston who forged the path in graduate studies and gave me a light to follow. But most importantly, thank you to my amazing husband, Jeff Traugott, who now knows more about adolescent sport psychology than he ever dreamed. Thanks to you all, I could not have done it without you.

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Purpose	5
Limitations	5
Delimitations	5
Definition/Description of Terms	6
Autobiographical Statement	7
Summary	9
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	10
Benefits of Sports Participation	10
Competence Motivation Theory	16
Coping	19
Measurement	26
Qualitative Inquiry	30
3. METHODOLOGY	35
Participants	35
Interview Strategy and Procedure	38
Data Analysis	39
Establishing Academic Rigor	40
Summary	41

4.	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	43
	Participant Profiles	44
	Coach Feedback	46
	Social Evaluation	51
	Fairness During Competition	55
	Commitment and Time Demands	60
	Being Scouted by College Coaches	63
	Letting the Team Down	65
	Soccer as Stress Reliever	67
	Summary	69
5.	CONCLUSION	71
	Recommendations for Further Study	79
	Areas for Future Research	79
	References	81
	Appendix A - Human Subjects IRB Approval	87
	Appendix B - Prospective Parent/Guardian and Participant Letter	88
	Appendix C - Consent Form	89
	Appendix D - Assent Form	91
	Appendix E - Demographic Questionnaire	93
	Appendix F - Interview Guide	94

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Sport psychology is an established field of study in which the principles of psychology are applied in a sport or physical activity setting (Cox, 2002). It is an exciting field that is of great interest to athletes, coaches, parents, educators, and health care professionals. A better understanding of an individual's psychological and emotional experiences in sport or physical activity helps to address issues related to performance enhancement, while a rewarding sports experience can also result in enhanced intrinsic motivation and contribute to an individual's psychological and emotional health in a positive way (Cox, 2002; Harter, 1978, 1982; Lazarus, 2000). The nature of competitive sport often places the athlete in potentially stressful situations, and thus numerous research studies have investigated how athletes cope in various stress-inducing circumstances (Anshel, 2001; Anshel, Porter, & Quek, 1998; Crocker, Kowalski, & Graham, 1998; Stone, Greenberg, Kennedy-Moore, & Newman, 1991).

An individual athlete's ability to cope can be shaped by the dynamic interaction of many cognitive, emotional, social, and environmental factors. The perception of what is stressful and the process used to cope with the stressor is unique to each individual (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The cognitive appraisal of the situation determines the level of stress they may experience. According to Folkman and Lazarus (1985), cognitive appraisal has two components - primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. In primary appraisal, an individual assesses whether he or she has a personal stake in the outcome of the situation. If he or she determines that a personal

stake in the outcome exists, then the secondary appraisal concerns identifying whether or not they believe they have the coping resources to manage the situation. If they perceive the needs of the situation to tax or exceed their coping resources, the stress response can occur (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Understanding this dynamic interaction is especially important during adolescence, as physical activity and sport participation rates tend to decline during the teenage years (Rowland, 1999). Addressing issues related to perceived stressors and coping strategies may be one way to keep adolescents involved in sport and physical activities.

Participation in competitive sports can create situations that are perceived as stressful by adolescent athletes (Anshel, 1996; Crocker & Isaak, 1997; Goyen & Anshel, 1998). There are numerous potential stressors that may arise in practice or competition including performance or mental errors, coach reprimands, parent criticism, injury, social pressures, conflict with officials and perceptions of opponents (Anshel, Jamieson, & Raviv, 2001; Anshel, et al., 1998; Goyen & Anshel, 1998). To manage a stressful situation, an individual can use the cognitive and behavioral process of coping, where the individual makes a cognitive appraisal of the situation and then makes an assessment of the coping resources they feel they have available to them (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). If they do not believe they possess the resources to manage the situation, the stress response can occur. Although research has been done on adolescent stress and coping in general psychology (Chapman & Mullis, 1999; Griffith, Dubow, & Ippolito, 2000; Herman-Stahl, Stemmler, & Petersen, 1995), there is a need for research focused in the sport setting.

In a chapter on future directions for youth sport research, Gould (1996) identified the importance of providing psychological information to those involved in youth sports to help them provide a positive and productive experience for the participants. Many youth sport coaches have little formal coaching education. Therefore, they tend to rely upon personal experience, or use college or professional coaches who work with vastly different populations as models (Gould, 1996; Smoll, 2001).

Further, an over-emphasis on winning can lead to potentially stressful and anxiety-producing situations (Smoll, 2001). It has been documented that one of the main reasons youth identify for participating in sports is to have fun, and experiencing stress and anxiety are generally not considered fun (Cox, 2002; Weiss, 2000; Weiss & Petlichkoff, 1989). More information on how adolescents cope with stress in a sport setting, the coping strategies they use and the function the strategies serve, can help the development of behavioral guidelines for adults in facilitating enhanced performance and a positive experience for the participants (Gould, 1996). As Goyen and Anshel (1998) noted, "Understanding of the coping process from a developmental perspective has strong implications for encouraging greater involvement and adherence in competitive sport programs, particularly given the proliferation of sport drop-out among child and adolescent-aged athletes, often due to stress-related reasons" (p. 485). In addition, research on gender differences in youth sport and adolescent coping has shown that males and females process information, perceive stressors and utilize coping strategies in different ways (Black & Weiss, 1992; Chapman & Mullis, 1999; Frydenberg & Lewis, 1991; Weiss, 2000). Females tend to experience the most intense stress during

competition in categories related to social evaluation. These include pressure from the coach, criticism from parents, and harassment by spectators (Anshel et al., 2001; Anshel et al., 1998, Crocker & Graham, 1995; Goyen & Anshel, 1998). These findings indicate the importance of addressing the unique needs of adolescent females.

Psychologists Hill and Lynch (1983) proposed the gender intensification hypothesis and posited that adolescence is probably the most important time developmentally for gender socialization, and it is especially influential for girls. "It has been argued that there is an acceleration of gender-differential socialization during adolescence, perhaps at the onset of puberty or shortly after, and perhaps especially for girls" (p. 201). Some characteristics associated with being a competitive athlete can be seen as challenging prescribed gender roles for adolescent females, and create sources of conflict and stress for an adolescent female athlete (Ackerman, 2002). Since categories related to social evaluation have already been identified as some of the competitive stressors for adolescent female athletes, further investigation is warranted to determine why these are perceived stressors and how the athletes cope with them.

Research has shown that there are physical, mental, and social benefits for adolescent girls who participate in sports (Sabo, Miller, Melnick, & Heywood, 2004). These include building greater peak bone mass which reduces risk for osteoporosis in adulthood (Ford, Bass, Turner, & Mauromaoustakos, 2004), decision-making about sexual activity that is more likely to prevent unwanted teen pregnancy (Sabo, Miller, Farrell, Barnes, & Melnick, 1998), enhanced self-esteem by offering adolescent girls positive feelings about body image and physical competence (Richman & Shaffer, 2000),

and a greater likelihood to go on to college than their non-athletic counterparts (President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Report, 1997). Again, the process of dropping out of sports participation by adolescent athletes can be due to stress-related reasons (Goyen & Anshel, 1998). Therefore, a better understanding of the perceived stressors and coping strategies of adolescent female athletes can help to identify successful coping strategies and maladaptive coping behavior, and provide a more nuanced understanding of their competitive sport experiences. This information can be helpful to athletes, coaches, parents, educators, and health care professionals to help retain the participation of adolescent females in sports.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to qualitatively examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent soccer players.

Limitations

1. It is not possible to guarantee that participants answered interview questions with complete honesty.
2. The adolescent participants were interviewed by an adult, so there could have been hesitancy to disclose their true feelings about perceived stressors and coping strategies related to their coaches and/or parents.

Delimitations

1. The participants were delimited to nine soccer players registered on teams in the California Youth Soccer Association - North at the Class I level.
2. The age range of the participants was 15 to 17 years old.

3. All the participants were female. According to Rowland (1999), levels of physical activity decline during adolescence, especially for females, indicating the importance of investigating this specific group.

Definition/Description of Terms

Adolescence: "A period of the life course between the time puberty begins and the time adult status is approached, when young people are in the process of preparing to take on the roles and responsibilities of adulthood in their culture" (Arnett, 2001, p. 441). In the United States, this is approximately 10-18 years, with the period from 10 to 14 years often referred to as early adolescence, and 15 to about 18 years as late adolescence (Arnett, 2001).

Approach and Avoidance Coping: Anshel et al. (1997) identified two coping styles in the sport setting: 1) an approach style of coping, and 2) an avoidance style of coping. Cox (2002) discussed the study by Anshel et al. (1997) and defined an approach style as coping "in which their coping preference is to address the stressful situation directly" (p. 232). Cox described avoidance style as coping "in which their preferred coping style is to solve the problem by avoiding the problem" (p. 232). "Coping style reflects a person's tendency to respond in a predictable manner when confronted with a specific type of situation" (Anshel, 1996, p. 312).

Coping: For the purposes of this study, coping is defined as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141).

Coping Strategy: The way an individual alleviates "the debilitating effects of the stress response" (Cox, 2002, p. 238). Based on the work of Lazarus and Folkman (1984), two categories are generally recognized in sport psychology: 1) problem focused and 2) emotion-focused (Anshel, Williams, & Hodge, 1997; Crocker & Graham, 1995).

Emotion-focused Coping: Emotion-focused coping is "used to regulate emotional arousal and distress" (Crocker & Graham, 1995, p. 326). This can include behavior withdrawal, wishful thinking, denial, venting emotions, positive self-talk, relaxation, and discounting (Anshel et al., 1997; Crocker & Graham, 1995).

Problem-focused Coping: This category of coping "refers to cognitive and behavioral efforts used to change the problem causing the distress" (Crocker & Graham, 1995, p. 326). This can include problem solving, planning, increasing effort, seeking social support, and avoiding the stressor (Anshel et al., 1997; Crocker & Graham, 1995).

Stress: For the purposes of this study, stress is defined as "a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as relevant to his or her well-being and in which the person's resources are taxed or exceeded" (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 152).

Autobiographical Statement

My experiences as a soccer player and coach over the last 30 years have been greatly affected by my gender. I began my soccer career as a teenager, in 1977, before women's soccer enjoyed the nation-wide popularity it currently has in the United States. Girls soccer teams did not exist in my high school league, so I tried out for and played on the boys team - two years on the Junior Varsity and two years on Varsity team. When I

was ready to attend college, I chose one of the few schools that offered women's soccer in California at that time, and played on the club team there. One of the major differences for me in college was having female teammates and enjoying the camaraderie of playing soccer together and becoming friends. My perception of stress during high school and college was primarily worrying about whether or not a team would even exist that I could play on. I do not have clear or vivid memories of the particular coaching styles of the coaches I had; the over-riding goal for me was just the opportunity to play. I can recall the beginning of my second season in college and my physical exam was postponed for one day, therefore I could not participate in practice until the next day. I burst into tears, the thought of not playing at all and missing the first day of practice was devastating to me. In my personal sports experience in the late 1970's and early 1980's, the tangible benefits of gender equity were not present. The resulting vacuum of support encouraged me to be intrinsically motivated to set goals for myself and work towards achieving them.

For the past 20 years I coached girls soccer teams at the high school level, college level, and in the Northern California Youth Soccer Association - North at the Class I level and watched the sport of soccer grow and flourish. I have noticed a trend towards more pressure from the parents, focus on extrinsic motivation such as college soccer scholarships, more emphasis placed on winning, and less emphasis on the development and well-being of the individual athlete. The result is that the job description of a youth soccer coach has become more labor intensive off the field, less enjoyable and more stressful. In 2002 I found myself struggling to stay motivated to coach; I had reached a point of burn-out and took some time off for rejuvenation and re-evaluation of my

priorities, goals and values. This study is part of that process and my interest is to give voice to the female athlete population that I work with and hear what their perceptions of stress and coping are in the current competitive sport climate.

Summary

There is a need for research examining adolescent coping in a sport setting. Information on the psychological processes used by youth can be helpful in increasing adherence to participation in sport, which provides an opportunity for the individual to receive physiological, psychological and sociological benefits that are possible through participation in sport. It is important to acknowledge gender differences and recognize that adolescent female athletes are a group with unique needs that should be identified and addressed. A better understanding of perceived stressors and coping strategies of adolescent female athletes can help with the recognition and acknowledgement of those differences. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes. During the teenage years, sport participation rates tend to decline and addressing stress and coping issues may be one way to keep adolescent girls involved in sports. This review of literature has five sub-sections: 1) benefits of sport participation, 2) competence motivation theory, 3) coping, 4) measurement, and 5) qualitative inquiry.

Benefits of Sport Participation

A study by Pate, Trost, Levin and Dowda (2000) found that participants on high school sport teams reported more positive health behaviors than non-sport participants. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey, an 88-item self-report inventory, was completed by 14,221 students in public and private high schools in the 50 states and District of Columbia. Sport participation was defined as participation in one or more sports in a school or non-school setting during the previous 12 months, and 62.4% of the students indicated sport participation. This proportion corresponds to more than 10 million youth in the United States (Pate et al., 2000). Results from this study indicated that high school students who participated in sport were more likely to report participation in regular vigorous activity at least three times per week, more likely to report eating fruits and vegetables on the previous day, and less likely to report cigarette smoking and use of marijuana or cocaine than non-sport participants. The conclusion was drawn that sport participation is associated with multiple positive health behaviors, and the large number

of high school students participating in sports points to the potential for sports programs to affect health behavior of high school-aged students in a positive way (Pate et al., 2000).

According to Weiss (2000), three major factors motivate children and adolescents to participate in physical activity and sports. First, to develop and demonstrate areas of physical competence, such as athletic skills, physical fitness, and physical appearance. Second, to gain social acceptance and support, including friendships, peer group acceptance, and approval and encouragement from significant adults (parents, teachers, coaches). Third, to have fun. Weiss suggested that an individual's perception of competence and self-esteem have an influence on enjoyment of the sport or physical activity. In turn, these positive emotional experiences sustain commitment to, and interest in continued participation. Weiss also posited that the type of sports and physical activities must be fun and more appealing than other tempting unhealthy alternatives such as gangs and at-risk behavior. Four strategies for motivating kids to participate in physical activities and sports are discussed: 1) provide optimal challenges that match the level of difficulty in the activity to the child's capabilities, 2) create a mastery motivational climate, 3) make physical activity fun, and 4) enhance perceptions of competence by teaching self-monitoring skills such as goal-setting and the use of training logs and diaries. Weiss (2000) concluded, "There is no question that physical activity affords participants a number of physiological and psychological benefits. People know that they should exercise, but staying motivated to be physically active at levels to accrue these benefits is another story" (p. 6).

In his report on adolescence and physical inactivity, Rowland (1999) discussed the importance of encouraging physical activity and sport participation during the adolescent years. He identifies adolescence as a key period for promoting the development of lifetime physical activity habits. His discussion centers around the fact that two key components are colliding during adolescence: there is a natural decline in the biological drive for physical activity and a rise in social and psychological influences that negatively affect physical activity. Influences discussed include the growing need for independence, rejection of adult-oriented health goals, access to automobiles and fast food, increased exposure to cigarettes and drugs, and societal pressures to be "cool" and conform to what is considered gender appropriate behavior. It is a time in their life when they are more influenced by peers than parents, and motivation to participate in physical activity and sports depends more on social factors than family (Rowland, 1999).

An overview of youth sports in the United States by Seefeldt and Ewing (1997) includes a discussion of the benefits of youth sport participation. Benefits of regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence include: improved strength and endurance, the enhanced development of healthy bones and muscles, control of body weight, reduced anxiety and stress, increased self-esteem, and the potential to improve blood pressure and cholesterol. According to the authors, sports are an activity that a large number of youth can be involved in, and it can be considered a viable method of promoting good health. Seefeldt and Ewing state:

Sports can provide excellent educational opportunities for social development because many of the social and moral requirements for participation in sports are

parallel to how individuals must function in a law-abiding society. Because sports are so highly valued in the American culture, many parents believe that children should be exposed to organized sports at an early age. Participation in sports alone does not result in the development of positive social and emotional characteristics. The positive development of youth in organized sports can only be derived through sports experiences that foster positive experiences and minimize negative experiences (p.10).

It is clear that participation in sports has the potential to benefit all young athlete in many ways. In addition, there are benefits unique to the needs of adolescent females. One is the potential for sports participation to help prevent osteoporosis later in life.

Osteoporosis is a degenerative disease involving the excessive loss of bone mass that generally shows its greatest effects in old age. Women are more likely to suffer from osteoporosis than men (Gallo, 1996), and one of the factors contributing to osteoporosis is low bone mineral density (Gallo, 1996). Weight-bearing exercise, good nutrition, and aerobic activity can promote the growth of bone and encourage high bone mineral density, which in turn helps to prevent osteoporosis later life (President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Report, 1997; Sabo et al., 2004). Ford et al. (2004) conducted a study to assess the effect of physical activity on bone mineral density in college-aged women. They administered a survey to assess past and recent physical activity levels and found that women in the study who did not participate in high school sports were seven times more likely to have low bone mineral density than the women who participated in high school sports. The results of this study indicate that

participation in sports has physiological benefits for adolescent girls, but there are psychological and sociological benefits, as well.

Richman and Shaffer (2000) investigated how sport participation influences the self-esteem of adolescent females. Although they cited previous literature that found sport participation can have a positive effect on self-esteem, Richman and Shaffer pointed out that those studies had been done primarily on male or mixed-gender samples, rather than female. "One would reasonably suspect, in that case, that the literature addressing males' experiences in athletics may not be generalizable to females" (Richman & Shaffer, 2000, p. 190). Richman and Shaffer surveyed a sample of 220 female college undergraduates between ages 18 and 24. The participants provided retrospective reports and assessments in the following categories: sport participation prior to college, social acceptance in high school and college, academic competence in high school and college, physical competence, body image, gender role, and self-esteem. Their findings were consistent with previous research on male and mixed-gender samples, and higher self-esteem was predicted by greater sport participation before entering college. However, Richman and Shaffer also analyzed the data considering academic competence, body image, physical competence and gender role as intervening variables, and found that they mediated the relationship between precollege participation in sports and college self-esteem. Path analysis showed the correlation between precollege sport participation and college self-esteem went from a positive to negative relationship when the intervening variables were included. "This suggested that precollege sport participation may not do much to promote females' later self-esteem unless it promotes their physical competence,

body image, academic competence and masculinity" (Richman & Shaffer, 2000, p. 197).

This would point to the important role that coaches, parents, and other adults play in influencing the environment that is created for a sporting experience. In summary, the psychosocial benefits that girls can receive through sports participation include a positive perception of their physical competency, favorable body image, and gender flexibility. However, they are not necessarily a direct result of merely participating in sports, but must be recognized, acknowledged, and developed.

In 1998, Sabo, Miller, Farrell, Barnes, and Melnick published a Women's Sports Foundation Report on Sport and Teen Pregnancy that "uncovered a pattern of evidence that participation in sports helps many girls to make decisions about sexual activity that can prevent teen pregnancy" (p. 11). They found that girls who play sports report lower pregnancy rates, become sexually active later, have fewer partners and engage in sexual intercourse less frequently than girls not involved in sports. They do not profess that sport should be seen as the solution to preventing unwanted teen pregnancies, but rather part of the bigger picture when addressing the complex interactions of culture, social behavior and biological processes. Sport-specific policy recommendations were given to help further public health and educational goals in the areas of teen sexual behavior and pregnancy risk. These included 1) increase athletic opportunities for girls, 2) get the word out and publicize these research findings, 3) promote gender equity in athletics, and 4) encourage future research to better understand how participation in sports interacts with social, psychological, and physiological mechanisms to influence decision-making related to sexual behavior. More specifically, in directions for future research, the

authors suggest examinations of how participation in sports can influence the development of gender identity and sexual identity, and how these might affect pregnancy risk.

In summary, research has shown that there are health benefits for youth when they participate in sport and physical activities, adolescence is a pivotal time when youth are at risk for reduced physical activity, youth and high school sports programs are potential vehicles for promoting healthy behaviors, and youth are more likely to be motivated to participate in physical activity and sports when it is a positive experience and they have a high level of perceived competence, self-worth and self-esteem. In addition, benefits specific to the adolescent female population include high bone mineral density which helps prevent osteoporosis later in life, increased self-esteem related to physical competency, body image, and gender roles, and a greater likelihood of making decisions related to sexual activity that reduce pregnancy risk.

Competence Motivation Theory

The relationship between an athlete's perceived competence and motives for participation can be examined in the context of Harter's Competence Motivation Theory (Harter, 1978). Susan Harter (1978) proposed a theory of achievement motivation based on the idea that attempts at the mastery of a task result in either a positive or negative outcome. When an individual experiences a positive outcome and perceived success, feelings of perceived competence are enhanced. This in turn motivates the individual to make further mastery attempts. To conceptualize this theory, Harter developed a multidimensional model of competence motivation with six components: 1) the mastery

attempt, 2) the performance, 3) social response to the outcome, 4) appraisal of personal competence, 5) perception of personal competence, and 6) affective result.

The mastery attempt is an attempt by the individual to perform a specific task in either a cognitive, social or physical domain. The performance is either the success or failure of performing the desired task. The social response to the mastery attempt can be positive or negative. Social response or influence that would result in a positive outcome include positive reinforcement or approval for independent mastery attempts, modeling of approval, and lack of reinforcement for dependence on others. Social response or influence that would result in a negative outcome include lack of reinforcement and/or disapproval for independent mastery attempts, modeling of disapproval and reinforcement for dependency on others. The individual's appraisal and perception of competence is influenced by these positive or negative outcomes. A positive outcome results in the internalization of a self-reward system, an increase in perceived competence and internal perception of control, and motivation to engage in more mastery attempts. A negative outcome results in dependence on external sources of approval, a decrease in perceived competence, an increase in external perception of control, increase in anxiety, and a loss of motivation to engage in additional mastery attempts (Harter, 1978).

To measure perceived competence, Harter (1982) developed a self-report instrument called The Perceived Competence Scale for Children which addresses the hypothesis that children do not feel the same level of competence in every skill domain. Based on previous research and interviews with children, subscales were developed for

three domains: 1) cognitive competence, 2) social competence, and 3) physical competence (Harter, 1982).

Support for Harter's Competence Motivation Theory has been provided by studies done in a sport setting. Smith (1999) found that in a sample of 418 boys and girls ages 12 to 15 years, perceptions of physical activity-related friendships and peer acceptance positively predict perceptions of physical self-worth and continued participation in physical activities. Black and Weiss (1992) conducted a study on the relationship between perceived coaching behaviors, perceptions of ability, and motivation in competitive swimmers ages 10 to 18 years old. They analyzed the data by age and gender and found that "female swimmers who perceived higher frequencies of contingent information, praise, encouragement, and encouragement plus information reported higher levels of perceived success, enjoyment, perceived competence, effort, and preference for challenging activities" (p. 317). They also found that "15 to 18-year-old swimmers who perceived higher frequencies of information, praise, and encouragement plus information, and lower frequencies of criticism, had higher levels of self-perceptions of ability, enjoyment, effort, and challenge motivation" (p. 319). These results show that there is a significant relationship between the athlete's self-perception and coaching behaviors, and specifically in reference to females. Black and Weiss (1992) stated:

Findings in this study may be due to actual coaching-behavior differences and/or gender differences in the self-assessment process. If females perceive less praise, or actually receive more noncontingent or inappropriate praise, then it follows that

their perception of competence may be more negatively affected than males' perceptions of competence by coaching behaviors.

Weiss and Horn (1990) investigated the relationship between the perceived levels of competence and achievement characteristics in boys and girls ages 8-13 in physical activity. A series of questionnaires were administered, including Harter's Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982). Based on the results of the questionnaires, children were classified as underestimators, accurate raters, or overestimators. Conclusions indicated that children who underestimate their physical competency may be candidates for dropping out of sport participation.

Competence motivation theory posits that humans are innately motivated to be competent in anything they strive to do. Positive reinforcement and a perceived level of competence result in a desire to continue participating in the activity. Research that supports this theory is applicable in the sport or physical activity setting, and contributes to an understanding of what motivates youth to stay involved in sport and physical activity. Positive feedback and encouragement following a mastery attempt encourages the athlete or participant to develop an internal feeling of control and intrinsic motivation which results in the desire to engage in further mastery attempts.

Coping

A recurring theme in the introduction and discussion sections of recent sport-related coping research is the relative infancy of the field and the need for definitions, conceptual models, measurement tools and methods, and more research (Anshel, 2001; Crocker & Isaak, 1997; Goyen & Anshel, 1998; Green & Weinberg, 2001; Kowalski &

Crocker, 2001). In a study proposing his conceptual model for coping in sport, Anshel (2001) surmises that "while coping has been studied extensively in the general psychology literature, there is a surprising dearth of coping research in sport psychology" (p. 1). Goyen et al. (1998) stated, "The manner in which the coping process changes from adolescence to adulthood in sport has been unstudied" (p. 486). In discussing the value of their study, Crocker and Isaak (1997) stated, "The basic data will be informative since little is known about the coping strategies used by youth athletes" (p. 357).

Sport researchers have generally adopted the Lazarus and Folkman definition of coping as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (p. 141). This definition implies that coping is process-oriented rather than trait-oriented and refers to conditions of psychological stress. It also emphasizes the concept of the efforts put forth, regardless of how well they actually work or whether they are adaptive or maladaptive behaviors. It focuses on the management of the situation, not the mastery of it. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) there are three main features of the process approach to coping. First, when observing or assessing an individual, the focus is on what they actually think, say or do. In contrast, a trait approach to coping would consider what the individual usually does, would do, or should do. Secondly, since coping thoughts and actions are in response to specific conditions, what the individual actually says or does is assessed in a specific context. The third feature of the process approach to coping is the concept of change in coping thoughts and

actions as the stressful situation unfolds (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The definition of coping is related to the process, not the outcome.

Anshel (2001) proposed a model of the coping process in sport. The model was developed through qualitative methods with interviews conducted with 28 adult rugby players following highly stressful events in competition. Data were analyzed using deductive content analysis (DCA) where the athlete's comments were sorted into predetermined categories, dimensions, and interrelationships with a theoretical or conceptual basis. Anshel (2001) describes the model as:

(1) perceiving a stimulus or experiencing an event, (2) appraising that event as stressful, (3) using either approach or avoidance coping strategies, each consisting of either cognitive (thoughts) or behavioral strategies (actions), and finally, (4) enacting post-coping activity that consists of either remaining on task, reappraising the stressful situation, examining the effectiveness of the coping strategy, or disengaging from further sport participation (p. 1).

A model for coping with acute stress in sport can provide a framework that is unique for studying coping with acute stress, as opposed to chronic stress, in a sport setting and emphasizes the coping process following the stressful situation, as opposed to antecedents to the stressful situation (Anshel, 2001).

Anshel et al. (2001) investigated cognitive appraisal and coping strategies following acute stress in competitive athletes. The participants were male and female ages 16-38, with an average age of 23.7 years. The study was conducted with pen and paper inventories. First, eight specific sources of stress were described: 1) making a

physical or mental error, 2) being criticized or reprimanded by the coach, 3) observing an opponent cheating, 4) sustaining pain or injury, 5) receiving a bad call from an official, 6) observing an opponent perform well, 7) performing poorly due to bad weather or substandard playing conditions, and 8) being distracted by the crowd. For each specific source of stress, the athlete then responded to 28 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = very untrue to 5 = very true. The 28 items were the same for each source of stress. Twelve items are related to their appraisal of the stressful situation: four items represent threat (harm or loss that has not happened yet, but is anticipated), five items represent harm/loss (damage that has already occurred such as pain or injury), and three items represent challenge (the anticipation of mastery or a beneficial outcome). The other 16 items for each acute stressor indicate use of the coping strategies, they were divided into 8 approach coping items and 8 avoidance coping items. "The results showed that the type of appraisal varied as a function of the stressful event" (Anshel et al., 2001, p.7). For instance, being criticized or reprimanded by the coach resulted in a high level of perceived threat, medium level of harm/loss, and low level of challenge. In contrast, observing an opponent cheat resulted in a high challenge appraisal, medium harm/loss and low threat. In both cases, athletes were found more likely to use an approach coping strategy than an avoidance coping strategy. In addition, results showed that females reported relatively more threat appraisals, and less harm or challenge appraisals than males. Anshel et al. (2001) concluded that an athlete's choice of coping strategies partly reflects the individual athlete's appraisal of the specific stressor.

Crocker and Isaak (1997) conducted a study with 25 male and female competitive swimmers who were 10-16 years old. The purpose of the study was to investigate the consistency of coping style and use of coping strategies during training and competition. Data were gathered using modified versions of scales from Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub's (1989) COPE instrument . Results were obtained from three swimming meets and the training sessions during the 1 week following each meet. Results showed consistency of coping style during the competitions, and consistency of coping style during training, but the same coping style was not always used for competition and training. These findings suggest that coping should be assessed separately for training and competition, or possibly to develop training sessions that contain components of the competitive situation and allow the athlete to practice their coping strategies.

Chapman and Mullis (1999) investigated the relationship between self-esteem and coping strategies in adolescent males and females ages 12 to 19 years old. This study was not done in a sport setting. Based on results gathered from the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) and the Adolescent Coping Orientation for Problem Experiences (A-COPE), the authors found that adolescents who had lower self-esteem used more avoidance coping strategies than those who had higher self-esteem. Also, significant gender differences were identified. Females were found to be more likely to use social support as a coping strategy than males. Males were more likely to avoid problems, or the people that cause the problems, or tell themselves that the problems were not important. These findings were also consistent with Frydenberg and Lewis (1991) in the non-athlete adolescent population.

A study by Gould, Eklund, and Jackson (1993) applied qualitative methodology to members of the 1988 United States Olympic Wrestling Team. Twenty adult members of the team were interviewed individually between 6 and 12 months following the Olympics. The interviews were by telephone and lasted 90 to 120 minutes. Coping strategies identified were thought control strategies, task focused strategies, behavioral based strategies, and emotion control strategies. Thought control strategies (blocking distractions, perspective taking, positive thinking, coping thoughts, prayer) were found to be used by the highest percentage of wrestlers (80%). They also found that medal-winning wrestlers showed a higher degree of automaticity when facing adversity, their coping strategies were more well-learned and internalized. This finding supports the concept of learning and internalizing adaptive coping strategies through long-term development and implementation. It was also concluded that coping is a dynamic, complex process where the athlete can be striving to simultaneously manage the environment and regulate emotions. It was not possible to unequivocally classify each coping strategy independent of the athlete and the stressor.

Another study by Gould, Finch and Jackson (1993) investigated sources of stress and strategies for stress management in 17 adult national champion figure skaters who participated in singles and pairs skating. Qualitative research methodology was used and each skater was interviewed by telephone for approximately 90 to 180 minutes. The interview transcripts were then content analyzed to identify raw data themes. The raw data themes were then organized into meaningful categories with inductive and deductive procedures. Thirteen general dimensions of coping strategies were identified: 1) rational

thinking and self-talk, 2) positive focus and orientation, 3) social support, 4) time management and prioritization, 5) precompetitive mental preparation and anxiety management, 6) training hard and smart, 7) isolation and deflection, 8) ignoring, 9) uncategorized strategies, 10) reactive behaviors, 11) no coping strategy, 12) striving for a positive working relationship with partner, and 13) changing to healthy eating attitudes and behaviors. Sources of stress included physical demands, psychological demands, environmental demands, expectations and pressure to perform. In the discussion section, Gould, Finch et al. (1993) indicated that although they identified the use of both problem-focused and emotion focused coping responses, it was not possible to simply classify individual coping strategies as problem-focused or emotion-focused. Coping was found to be a complex process that was unique to each athlete. For instance, a coping strategy such as social support was used by one athlete in an emotion-focused capacity (seek out people to talk to who make you feel better) and by another athlete in a problem-focused capacity (seek advice from knowledgeable others). Skaters also used adaptive coping strategies such as pre-competitive mental preparation and anxiety management, social support, rational thinking and self-talk, as well as maladaptive coping strategies such as reactive behavior, excessive alcohol consumption, walking out of the ice rink, ignoring, and bulimic behavior (Gould, Finch et al., 1993). This is consistent with the Lazarus and Folkman (1984) definition of coping which focuses on the efforts to cope with a situation, regardless of how well they work, or if they are adaptive or maladaptive behaviors.

In summary, coping is a dynamic and complex process. The coping styles and coping strategies used by an individual depend on many factors including the environment, the stressor and the perception and appraisal of the situation. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been used to conduct studies in sport-related coping research. Most research has focused on adult populations in sport, and there is a need for more research on sport-related coping in youth and adolescent populations.

Measurement

Research of coping in sport or physical activity settings is limited by measurement problems. The development of coping measurement tools designed specifically for a sport or physical activity setting is the subject of recent and current research. Many of the measurement tools currently utilized are modified versions of coping measurement inventories that were not originally designed for use in a sport setting. This section will describe five coping measurement tools, one which measures coping function, and four which measure coping strategies.

A study by Kowalski and Crocker (2001) reported the development and validation of a Coping Function Questionnaire for Adolescents in Sport (CFQ). The CFQ is an 18-item self-report inventory that assesses three functional dimensions of coping with stress: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance. Responses for each coping function item are scored on a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "very much". The CFQ was found to have acceptable means, variances, and distributions of scale scores, the scales were found to have adequate internal consistency, and

confirmatory factor analysis showed it was acceptable for both genders. This questionnaire is unique in coping research measurement tools in that it was developed specifically for adolescents in a sport setting.

While the CFQ measures coping function, the following four measurement tools assess the use of coping strategy. As explained in Crocker et al. (1998), two of the measurement tools are sport modifications of the Ways of Coping Checklist (WCC) (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). The WCC is a 66-item self-report measure developed for use by adults in a non-sport setting. Eight scales require responses on a 4-point Likert scale to indicate the use of a broad range of cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage stressful demands. There is one problem-focused scale, six emotion-focused scales, and one mixed problem- and emotion-focused scale. The two sport modifications of the WCC are the Ways of Coping with Sport (WOCS) (Madden, Summers, & Brown, 1990) and the modified Ways of Coping Checklist (Crocker, 1992). Support for the validity of the WOCS has been limited and it appears to be assumed that it is applicable for both adolescents and adults. Madden et al. (1990) administered the WOCS to 133 basketball players 15-44 years old, results were discussed in terms of frequency of use of coping strategies, but not in terms of age difference. The modified WCC was adapted to sport through a multi-step process collecting written responses from 52 competitive athletes and interviewing eight high performance athletes about managing stress in their sport. The resulting checklist contains 68 items scored on a 4-point Likert scale (Crocker, 1992). Concerns with the modified WCC included factor instability, and that some of the

items on the checklist may not be appropriate for some sporting situations (Crocker et al., 1998).

A third coping strategy measurement tool in sport-related research is the modified COPE (Crocker & Graham, 1995). It is a sport-modified version of the original COPE (Carver et al., 1989). Carver et al. (1989) developed the COPE in response to weaknesses in the WCC. "They felt the two-dimensional structure (problem- and emotion-focused coping) on the WCC was too simplistic and noted that research with the WCC usually resulted in more than just two factors" (Crocker et al., 1998, p. 154). The COPE contains 13 scales measuring distinct aspects of problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping and alternative scales based on avoidance and disengagement. The modified COPE was developed to research situational-based coping in a sport or physical activity setting. The new instrument contains 12 scales, nine original COPE scales and three additional sport relevant scales. In addition, some items on the original COPE scales were changed to provide greater sport relevance, such as replacing the word problem with the word performance where appropriate. Crocker and Isaak (1997) used the modified COPE to examine if youth swimmers used a consistent coping style throughout training sessions and competitions. Crocker and Graham (1995) used the modified COPE to evaluate adolescent and adult competitive athletes and their coping patterns in relationship to performance stress. Other studies have been done using the modified COPE, however, "despite the abundance of information on reliability of the modified COPE scales, relatively little work has been done to directly test the validity of the instrument" (Crocker et al., 1998, p. 155).

The fourth coping strategy measurement tool is the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory-28 (ACSI-28) (Smith, Schutz, Smoll & Ptacek, 1995). The ACSI-28 was designed specifically for sport-related research and assesses psychological coping skills in a sport setting. It contains seven sport-specific subscales: coping with adversity, peaking under pressure, goal-setting and mental preparation, concentration, freedom from worry, confidence and achievement motivation, and coachability. The results of this inventory provide a Personal Resources Coping score that is calculated by summing the scores of the seven scales (Smith et al., 1995). Although the ACSI-28 raised two conceptual issues - the importance of distinguishing between choice of coping strategy and effectiveness of coping strategy, and whether psychological skills as measured by the ACSI-28 are equivalent to coping skills - it represents a good measure of specific coping strategies an athlete can call upon when appraising a stressful situation (Crocker et al., 1998).

Kowalski and Crocker (2001) discuss the construct validity of coping instruments that are versions of instruments originally developed for non-sport contexts and settings. "Tinkering with the wording of items may improve the face validity of items, but it does not follow that the items are valid for sport" (p. 137). In addition, the original WCC and COPE instruments were developed for adults. Kowalski and Crocker (2001) point out that "researchers cannot assume that instruments are valid for both adults and adolescents" (p. 137). In their extensive discussion of measurement of coping strategies in sport, Crocker et al. (1998) conclude "our knowledge of coping in sport and physical

activity is clearly in the genesis stage. There is a need to resolve conceptual and measurement issues before any significant growth can transpire" (p.160).

New directions in sport psychology research are also reflecting a trend toward an interdisciplinary approach to sport studies, and the lack of research embracing qualitative methodology could be an obstacle to this growth.

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative research represents an epistemological shift in the way we gather information about the world around us. The study of sport psychology combines the domains of psychology and human performance, which are both traditionally positivistic in their research methodologies. As a relatively new field of study, sport psychology is in the process of establishing its own identity. When researchers employ qualitative methodology, they are not only questioning how we come to know what we know, but can also be perceived as challenging the "parent" disciplines. Sparkes (2002) describes the state of affairs:

Issues of representation, legitimation, reflexivity, and voice, to name but a few, now confront qualitative researchers in sport and physical activity throughout their projects. It is impossible to remain untouched by them, and there are no simple answers to any of the dilemmas posed by these issues.

The research tool often used in qualitative research is the interview. The long interview (McCracken, 1988) "is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory" (p. 9). The face-to-face in depth interview provides a vehicle that allows the

participant to describe their perception of the world in their own words, and helps the researcher “to see and experience the world as they do themselves” (p. 9).

Culver, Gilbert, and Trudel (2003) reviewed the methodology used in articles published in three major North American sport psychology journals from 1990 to 1999. Their findings indicate that out of 485 data-based articles, 84 used some form of qualitative inquiry. The most frequent method was the interview, used in 67 studies, followed by the open-ended questionnaire, used in 23 studies. Although the data indicate that qualitative research is being conducted, the authors discuss the strong positivistic influence that still permeates sport psychology research. Many of the studies employing interviews used the one-interview method. "This tendency illustrates an epistemological paradox in sport psychology research. On the one hand, we are striving to incorporate alternative methodologies, yet on the other hand, we are reluctant to let go of traditional epistemological beliefs" (Culver et al., 2003, p. 7). An example of qualitative research using one interview can be seen in a study conducted by James and Collins (1997).

James and Collins (1997) conducted a qualitative study in the sport setting investigating self-presentational sources of competitive stress during performance. The sample was 20 male and female athletes ages 17 to 31 from a wide variety of different sports. Each athlete participated in one interview lasting 35 to 55 minutes. Inductive content analysis revealed eight general stress dimensions: 1) significant other stressors, 2) social evaluation and self-presentational concerns, 3) competitive anxiety and doubts, 4) perceived readiness issues, 5) nature of competition, 6) environmental demands, 7) not performing to required standard, and 8) miscellaneous factors. James and Collins

interpreted the results to suggest that "a) these athletes were sensitive about the impressions people form of them during competition, and b) stress responses maybe triggered by factors that primarily influence the self-presentational implications of performance" (p. 17). A more recently published article provides an example of sport psychology using a more alternative methodology.

Holt and Hogg (2002) used a case study approach to interview 10 members of a women's national soccer team as they prepared for a major competition. The researcher observed players during all practice sessions of a 6-week training camp, and an interviewer came to the camp at the mid-point and conducted semi-structured interviews with the players. Sources of stress were categorized into four main themes of 1) coaches, 2) demands of international soccer, 3) competitive stressors, and 4) distractions. Coping themes were identified as 1) reappraisal, 2) use of social resources, 3) performance behaviors, and 4) blocking. Although many of the stressors and coping strategies within these themes support findings from previous research on elite athletes in individual sports, the complexities of a team sport and the interaction of the individual and their environment could be interpreted further through the interview transcripts and triangulation of observations. This study addressed the psychological needs of adult females in the sports setting, but it is also important to conduct qualitative studies specifically for adolescent females in the sport setting.

Ackerman (2002), in an unpublished dissertation, identified five themes related to benefits of sports participation for adolescent girls (enjoyment, self-enhancement, life skills development, relationships, and femininity) by conducting six in-depth interviews

with female athletes ages 12-24. The interviews were audio-taped, and then transcribed verbatim. The author read the transcripts several times and coded the data to develop themes through four steps: 1) initial impressions, 2) initial reading of the transcripts, 3) development of categories, and 4) conclusions. "The decision was made against using a formal qualitative data analysis software program to code and analyze the transcripts from interviews. Due to the small number of interviews that were conducted, the data were manageable without a software program" (Ackerman, 2002, p. 73).

Hurtes (2002) used ethnographic focus groups and participant observation to conduct a 3-week study with 32 15-year-old girls. The purpose of the study was to identify key elements of adolescent girls' culture and the impact it might have on behavior in an outdoor education setting. Data were analyzed in four phases: 1) domain analysis, where terms used by the participants were put into umbrella categories, 2) taxonomic analysis, where subsets were then created in each domain, 3) componential analysis, where contrast questions used to identify similarities and differences, and 4) central concepts were identified. Six domains were found to illustrate key elements of the culture of adolescent girls: 1) friends, 2) clothes and appearance, 3) boyfriends, 4) activities, 5) parents, and 6) leaders. Social acceptance and achieving a sense of relatedness within the group were found to be the most important psychological components needed to promote intrinsically motivated behavior by the girls. "In fact, until relatedness is achieved, it is unlikely that competence and self-determination, often the goals of adventure and other recreation programs, will be addressed" (p. 118). Although this research is not in a competitive sport setting, it provides an example of

qualitative methods with female adolescent participants and information on the unique psychological needs of the adolescent female population.

This review of literature has discussed the benefits of sport participation, competence motivation theory, coping, measurement, and qualitative inquiry. Qualitative research on stress and coping in the sport setting has been conducted with adult athletes (Gould, Eklund et al., 1993; Gould, Finch et al., 1993; James & Collins, 1997) and adult female soccer players (Holt & Hogg, 2002). Benefits of sports participation for adolescent females has been examined (Ackerman, 2002), as well as adolescent female culture in an adventure education setting (Hurtes, 2002). There is a need for a study utilizing qualitative methods to examine stress and coping in the competitive sport setting for adolescent female soccer players.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of adolescent female athletes. The review of literature has provided background information on the benefits of participation in sports, competence motivation theory, the process of coping, the measurement of coping, and qualitative inquiry. This chapter focuses on the methodology used to conduct the study. Information on the participants, interview strategy and procedures, data analysis, and establishment of academic rigor is presented.

Participants

The participants in this study were nine female soccer players in late adolescence, aged 15 to 17 years (Arnett, 2001). At the time of their interview, four participants were 15 years old, one was 16 years old, and four were 17 years old. Five participants were Caucasian, two were Hispanic-American, and two were Asian-American. For this study, all participants were registered on teams in the California Youth Soccer Association - North at the Class I level. This is the elite level of youth club soccer in Northern California and demands a high level of skill and performance. Athletes are selected for teams through participation in open try-outs, and the frequency of training sessions, number of league games, and amount of travel require a substantial commitment from players and their families. Soccer was selected as the sport to be examined for two reasons. First, the game of soccer at the elite level is played in two 45-minute halves, with no time-outs called by the coaches. This creates a unique situation where players are

potentially on the field for extended periods of time and must adapt as the game progresses. Second, as a girls and women's soccer coach in the region for many years, the researcher has relevant knowledge and experience to draw upon when interpreting the data.

Participants and either a parent or a guardian completed and signed a consent form (Appendix C and Appendix D) that explained the general purpose of the study and informed them that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or any hardship to their future participation in their sports club program. San Jose State University Institutional Review Board approved all procedures prior to selection of participants and implementation of the study (Appendix A).

The researcher took three steps to identify potential participants. First, the researcher telephoned the parents of four athletes that the researcher personally coached in the past, gave a brief introduction to the study and its purpose, and asked if the parent was interested in having his or her daughter participate in the study. Second, the researcher telephoned or e-mailed five colleagues (one coach of a girls under-16 team, one coach of girls under-17 team, two coaches of girls under-18 teams, and one club coaching director), gave a brief introduction to the study and its purpose, and asked for recommendations of parents and players to contact who may be interested in participating. Third, the researcher telephoned or e-mailed five additional acquaintances in the soccer community (three board members from soccer clubs and two parents of soccer players the researcher did not coach), gave a brief introduction to the study and its

purpose and asked for recommendations of parents and players who may be interested in participating.

All four of the parents and players the researcher had previously coached agreed to participate after the initial phone call. Three of the five colleagues responded, which resulted in references to two players. The researcher followed up with a phone call, and they both agreed to participate. Four of the five acquaintances responded, resulting in three references. The researcher followed up with a phone call and they agreed to participate.

Upon verbal agreement of both the parent and his or her daughter to participate in the study, the prospective parent or guardian and participant letter, the parent consent form, and the participant assent form were either mailed to them ahead of time or brought to the interview meeting place for their signature. This was based on their wishes and what was most convenient for the parents. In general, all the parents were supportive of the study, but for some it was more of an inconvenience to receive the consent form in the mail and bring it with them to the interview. In these cases, the researcher emphasized that the goal was to make sure they did not feel pressured to participate and wanted them to have the opportunity to read the consent form ahead of time, if they desired to do so. The researcher also emphasized that the athlete participant could withdraw from the study at any time for any reason with no questions asked. Participants and parents were given the opportunity to ask questions about the study to ensure they fully understood all aspects of the procedures.

Interview Strategy and Procedure

Prior to beginning the participant interviews for the study, the researcher participated in a bracketing interview. The interviewer was a sport psychology and sociology researcher who had extensive experience with qualitative interviewing methods. The interviewer asked the researcher the questions from the interview guide used in the study. This allowed the researcher to better understand the process of being interviewed, identify potential biases, and review and evaluate the interview questions for possible editing (Dale, 2000).

Semi-structured interviews (McCracken, 1988) with the participants took place in a location agreed upon by the researcher, the participant and the parents. Every effort was made to make it as convenient as possible, comfortable and safe for participants and their parents. The researcher went to the home of some of the participants, met some of them at different coffee shops, and met some at the researcher's home. At the interview, a demographic questionnaire was given to the participant first. This provided basic information on participant's age, location of residence, ethnicity, and current soccer team. After this was completed, the interview began.

An interview guide (Appendix F) was used by the researcher to ask each participant a series of questions and follow up probes related to athletic experience, identity, competitive stress, coping, and relationships with coaches, teammates and parents. Interviews were audio-taped and participants were assigned identification numbers for use in data analysis. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher thanked the participant for her participation in the study and escorted the participant to

the previously agreed upon departure point or meeting place with the parent or guardian. The researcher reminded the participant that all information gathered remains confidential.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher with Microsoft Word software. A separate document was created for each interview and assigned an identification number. As done in previous qualitative studies, the researcher read each transcript several times to become familiar with the stories, feelings and experiences of each athlete, and then used inductive content analysis to establish a hierarchy of themes moving from specific to general (Gould, Eklund et al., 1993; Gould, Finch et al., 1993; Holt & Hogg, 2002; James & Collins, 1997; Scanlan, Stein, & Ravizza, 1991).

Specifically, the researcher followed the guidelines of Cote, Salmela, Baria, and Russell (1993) for organizing and interpreting unstructured qualitative data. As these authors stated, "For interpretational analysis, elements, categories, patterns, and relations between properties emerge from the analysis of the data and are not predetermined" (p. 129). Meaningful units of text in the transcripts were identified by their repetition. Words or phrases that appeared repeatedly were considered meaningful and tagged by highlighting them in different colored fonts on the computer. These units were then classified into categories. A separate Microsoft Word document was created for each category. Using the editing features in the software, text segments containing the highlighted meaningful units were copied from the interview transcripts and pasted into the category documents. Some units of text could be interpreted or analyzed in more than

one category, and were copied and pasted into more than one category file. As the more central themes emerged, Microsoft Word files were created for each theme, and category documents were placed in those files.

Establishing Academic Rigor

As the current paradigm shift towards qualitative social science transitions the field of applied sport psychology away from the traditional quantitative approach, researchers find themselves on a continuum extending from rigid established guidelines to new and unknown territory (Culver et al., 2003, Sparkes, 1998). A topic of discussion is establishing agreement on definitions of criteria and validity. Sparkes (1998) stated:

The emergence of a multitude of criteria for judging the qualitative research process and product clearly signals that there can be no canonical approach to this form of inquiry, no recipes or rigid formulas, as different validation procedures or sets of criteria may be better suited to certain situations, forms of representation, and desires for legitimization (p. 380).

Along with a bracketing interview, this study used a peer review, thick description, and inductive thematic analysis to establish rigor in the presentation of these findings.

A peer review was conducted by a sport psychology and sociology professional who has extensive experience in peer reviewing qualitative research. This person read the proposal, reviewed samples of the transcripts, reviewed the methodology of the study, and examined the results and their credibility (Sparkes, 1998). In the results and discussion section, thick description is used to interpret the findings with the concept of reflexivity in mind. In addition, the researcher considered the suggestions of Richardson

(1994), and approached writing as a "way of 'knowing' - a method of discovery and analysis" (p. 516). In the postmodernist view, the researcher is encouraged to "understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular positions at special times" (Richardson, 1994, p. 518). In this case, the researcher is a female sport psychology graduate student, coach, and athlete.

As an adolescent, the researcher participated on competitive soccer teams, and has continued to play and coach girls and women in the sport for over 20 years. Extensive interaction with female adolescent athletes over a span of 2 decades has made this specific domain both familiar and accessible. Through experience, the researcher has learned to pay attention to the words and actions of athletes as a way to better understand their motivations and behaviors. Continuing to participate in the game also allowed the researcher to evolve and mature as a player, and reflect on coaching techniques over time. Thus, the voice of the researcher has been positioned in this paper as a veteran observer and mentor. The writing and interpretations come from an experienced point of view within the sub-culture of soccer. To facilitate this process, the researcher kept observation notes and personal notes (Richardson, 1994). In addition, the developmental aspect of interviewing adolescents was taken into consideration, and the level of their ability to reflect upon and articulate their thoughts and feelings (Sparkes, 2002).

Summary

The methodology in this chapter provides qualitative data related to the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes. Delimiting the study to late adolescents supports a developmental approach to this line of research. The interview

method gives voice to female adolescent athletes, a population that has been given little attention in youth sport psychology research. Soccer has been selected for its unique characteristics concerning the conditions of competition, and the extensive knowledge and experience of the researcher related to this sport. The interview strategy and procedures, establishment of academic rigor, and inductive content analysis follow established and valid guidelines (Butryn, 2003; Gould, Eklund et al., 1993; Gould, Finch et al., 1993; Scanlan et al., 1991; Sparkes, 1998; Sparkes, 2002).

A better understanding of the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes can be helpful in identifying the factors that may cause girls to withdraw from sports participation. This information can be useful in retaining female adolescent athletes in sports, where they have the opportunity to experience the psychological, physiological, and sociological benefits of participation.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively examine the perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent soccer players. A better understanding of the perceived stressors and coping strategies of this population can be helpful in identifying the factors that may cause girls to withdraw from sports participation. This information can be useful in retaining female adolescent athletes in sports, where they have the opportunity to experience the psychological, physiological, and sociological benefits of participation.

Nine female adolescent soccer players participated in in-depth, semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 1 to 2 hours. Through these interviews, a story emerged of young athletes who are passionate about their sport, and identify strongly with the culture surrounding it. They see their sport as a vehicle of self-expression as they journey from adolescence to young adulthood. In general, the interviews all followed a similar pattern, where the participants were reserved in the beginning, answering questions in a simple, straightforward manner. As the interviews proceeded, the participants became more comfortable and began giving longer answers, often speaking at length while recounting experiences in extensive detail. Recall ability seemed to be very fast and very specific when the topic was related to talking about someone else, or recounting a traumatic and negative experience. If the researcher probed further to encourage a participant to explore their own personal feelings on the subject or to talk about

themselves in a positive light, there tended to be more pauses in the speech patterns, and they took more time to think about what they wanted to say.

To maintain the confidentiality of the participants, they have been assigned fictitious names, and the names of teammates, coaches, opponents and schools have been omitted from any verbatim quotes. The following profiles provide general portraits of each participant.

Participant Profiles

Meghan

Meghan was 15 years, a sophomore in high school, and played on an under-16 team. She played since she was little and has a sibling who also played soccer. She participated in other sports, but considered soccer her primary sport and it was a very big part of her life.

Melinda

Melinda was 17 years, a senior in high school, and played on an under-18 club team. She had participated on soccer teams since she was 7 years old and felt soccer played an important role in her life. She has hopes to play in college.

Christie

Christie was 17 years, a senior in high school, and played on an under-19 club team. She has played since she was 6 years old, has a sibling who also played soccer, and has hopes to play in college.

Tiffany

Tiffany was 17 years, a junior in high school, and played on an under-19 club team. She participated in several sports over the years, and considered being an athlete a big part of her identity. She was planning to focus on soccer and has hopes to play in college.

Diane

Diane was 15 years, a sophomore in high school, and played on an under-17 club team. She was not sure if she wanted to play in college or not, but enjoyed the role soccer played in her life and valued the life skills of commitment, discipline and hard work that she was learning through sport.

Ellen

Ellen was 15 years, a sophomore in high school, and played on an under-16 club team. She started playing soccer when she was 6 years old and never stopped. She had a strong commitment to soccer and her family was very supportive.

Kathy

Kathy was 16 years, a junior in high school, and played on an under-17 club team. She started playing soccer when she was 8 years old and it has been a big part of her life ever since. She considered herself a team player and valued making a commitment to the team and working hard. She has hopes to play in college.

Joanne

Joanne was 17 years, a senior in high school, and played on an under-18 club team. She started playing soccer when she was 5 years old, and although she participated

in other sports, she got the most satisfaction from soccer. She felt it was a big part of her life and has hopes to play in college.

Terry

Terry was 15 years, a sophomore in high school, and played on an under-15 club team. She has played since she was 5 years old and considered herself very competitive.

Four major themes were identified from the interview data: 1) coach feedback, 2) social evaluation by teammates and parents, 3) fairness during competition, and 4) commitment/time demands. Three minor themes also emerged: 1) being scouted by college coaches, 2) letting the team down, and 3) soccer as a stress reliever. These themes are discussed in terms of the perceived stressors and coping strategies identified by the participants, previous research in stress and coping in sport, and within the larger context of female adolescence and youth sport in the United States.

Coach Feedback

One of the major themes that emerged from the data was coach feedback. All of the participants talked at length about times in their playing career when their coaches feedback and behaviors were stressful, and negatively affected their motivation, performance or perceived competence. Coaches who were perceived as positive and encouraging were not described as sources of stress, while other coaches exhibited three types of behavior that were mentioned as stressors or sources of frustration during competition and had an adverse effect on the players: 1) yelling critical comments at the player during competition, 2) an emphasis on negative feedback, and 3) lack of acknowledgement of what had been done right. It often took several probes and

reassuring statements by the researcher to get the players to talk openly about their coaches and they often were apologetic for what they perceived as negative comments about an individual coach. This could partially be attributed to the fact that the researcher is also a soccer coach and some of the participants may have had concerns that either the information would get back to the other coach, or that the researcher would judge them based on their statements. However, once rapport had been established within the interview setting and the participants became more comfortable telling their story, they gave specific examples of negative experiences they had with coaches.

Joanne talked about an incident where her coach reprimanded her following a mistake during a game, and stated “I almost broke down in tears at a game once, not because he’s a bad coach, but just the way he approached the situation”. After describing what the mistake was in the game, she elaborated:

And he freaked out, (and said) ‘don’t you ever play that back again’, you know, pointing the finger and screaming. And I was like, ‘I’m sorry, I’m sorry’ . . . it stresses me out, makes me feel like I’m a horrible player, and I’m playing horrible during that game.

Joanne was very animated when recounting this story, raising her voice and physically acting out the part of the coach, jabbing her finger in the air. Although the incident had occurred in a game earlier in the season, it still seemed to be a vivid and detailed memory for her.

Terry also talked about her reactions when she felt her coach was directing negative comments towards her, but she described it in more general terms. As she

stated, “I don’t like when coaches are always negative, and like ‘oh, that was such a bad kick’ . . . if someone yells at me negatively about something, then obviously I feel worse, and then I just don’t play good”.

Although Ellen was not necessarily a direct recipient of negative feedback from her coach, she talked about how it affected the team as a whole, and the difficulty she had in watching her teammates reactions,

Some people I think he comes down on really hard, and I think it’s really discouraging for them to have someone always yelling at them, and never gives them like, encouraging comments, always like, (tells them) what they’re doing wrong, not how to improve on it . . . it makes me angry at him and sometimes I feel bad for the girls . . . they get discouraged easily, like in a game, and sometimes they’ll drop their head if they make a mistake and just give up. But if he was more encouraging, they wouldn’t drop their head as much, they would keep going, because they’d have a little bit more confidence.

I probed further about this subject, and as we revisited it later in the interview, Ellen's body language seemed to reflect her feelings. As one of the better players on the team, she did not get reprimanded by the coach as much. However, she seemed to internalize her anger at witnessing her friends being criticized, and having no place to direct her frustration with the resulting low morale on the team. She talked with her shoulders hunched over, hands crossed on her lap, spoke quietly and slowly, as if bringing up a painful memory. Over the season, the negative atmosphere and feelings of powerlessness seemed to have a cumulative effect on Ellen. Towards the end of the interview she said:

I don't know, lately I've just kind of burnt out with the whole thing. Not with soccer, but with club teams. I'm a little sick of being around the same people every day . . . and some people kind of have bad attitudes, that kind of wears on you a little bit, and um . . . I don't know, I just feel like a break from it.

Ellen's experience is consistent with the findings of Allen and Howe (1998). In a study on the relationship between athlete ability and coach feedback among adolescent female field hockey players, they found that "higher ability, frequent praise and information after a good performance, and frequent encouragement and corrective information after an error were associated with greater satisfaction with the coach and team involvement" (p. 280).

Another aspect of the theme of coach feedback involved the need for positive feedback. Kathy, for example, talked about needing her coach to acknowledge the things she had done correctly during the game. She talked about a specific game and explained the field positioning the coach wanted from the team, and how she felt she had been executing that during the first half. Then she said:

But I didn't get credit for it at half-time. He said, 'Defenders, you need to start opening up wide and receiving those passes and taking it up wide'. Um, and he was looking straight at me, maybe because I was in the center of the semi-circle, maybe it was cause I was the most available, but I don't know why, but I told him, 'I did it a couple of times', and he said, 'yes, but you need to do it more', and he ignored the fact that I had made a good play and so I was kind of frustrated that he didn't recognize the good things that I did.

I asked Kathy what her feelings were when that happened, and she said, "Rejection . . . that he hadn't . . . that his goal was more winning than, um, like, congratulating the players for they did. Like, he had more negative criticism than positive, or than a balance, like positive and negative". Her perception was that her coach did not acknowledge what she had done correctly in a game, and that his verbal communication contained more negative comments than positive ones. When I asked her what she did to cope with that, Kathy said:

I think I was kind of pouting. I don't know. On the field, I still tried to open up wide more and do what he said, but I was kind of like, whatever, he's not right, because I have been doing that, so I kind of like, I didn't ignore him, but I ignored his negativeness.

These findings are supportive of Harter's Competence Motivation Theory (Harter, 1978). These coaches engaged in behaviors that have been shown to result in negative outcomes for the athlete following their attempt at mastery of a task, such as negative criticism, disapproval of the mastery attempt, and lack of positive reinforcement (Harter, 1978; Black & Weiss, 1992). As a result, the athlete experiences decreased perceived competence and possibly lack of motivation to continue.

The players had various reactions to the negative, or lack of positive, coach feedback. Joanne seemed to take a more problem-focused approach, as she said:

I think probably the only way that I, like, snap out of it, is if I do something good. Like, if I make a good pass, or play a good ball, or I score, or have an assist or I make a good cross, I like have to do something better in order to change it.

This could be interpreted as a problem-focused coping strategy using increased effort to cope with the coaches negative feedback. Terry and Ellen, on the other hand, seemed to use different versions of avoidance coping styles. When asked how she dealt with stressful situations in games, Terry said, "I don't know. I don't really deal with it. I like, I just, I get angry. That's my way of dealing with it. But I don't really do anything to deal with it, I don't know". This was a common theme that came up for Terry throughout the interview, reacting with anger to anything that upset her, which consequently kept teammates and coaches at a distance. In Ellen's case, the feelings of burnout and desire to not play any more could also be interpreted as an avoidance coping style.

This is different than findings in research on adult females in the sport setting (Holt & Hogg, 2002). Holt and Hogg found that in response to negative comments and criticism from the coach, some athletes coped by seeking out social support from teammates, family and significant others. During adolescence, emotional maturity levels may prohibit the athletes from turning to each other or significant others for support, and the desire for growing independence could keep them from confiding in their parents (Arnett, 2001). All these factors point to the need for coaches to be aware of their behaviors and how they affect the players.

Social Evaluation by Teammates and Parents

A second major theme that emerged from the data was social evaluation by teammates and parents. Most of the players expressed concern about what other people thought of them, especially teammates and parents. Although they discussed the importance of performing well for coaches, the root cause of the stress was not

necessarily that the coach would be upset, but more that they were concerned they would receive negative social evaluation from others. For some players it was stressful if they made an individual mistake during a game that contributed to a goal by the other team, and their action was perceived to be the cause of the goal. They did not want it to be seen as their fault. Terry talked about getting mad after a goal was scored against her team and why it made her so angry:

I worry what other people think a lot, I like, worry too much about what other people think about me . . . just worrying that people are going to think it's my fault . . . now that I think about it, it was totally not my fault, but just at that time I was so mad that I was just thinking that it was my fault.

When asked what she believed would happen if people perceived it as her fault, Terry responded, "Basically, I just get worried that people are going to talk about me after the game."

Kathy was also concerning about how she was perceived by her teammates. She described her personality, and how she dealt with conflicts that came up on the team.

Kathy stated:

I think I'm kind of a passive person, sort of, maybe . . . I'm a kind of person that likes to be liked by people, sort of. I don't want to be (pause), I don't want people (pause), I don't like having enemies, I guess. And so, I just want things to work out, so I don't want to cause conflict or anything. That's why I guess I just step back sometimes.

This is consistent with findings in adolescent coping in the non-sports setting where adolescents with lower self-esteem were more likely to utilize avoidance coping strategies than those with higher self-esteem (Chapman & Mullis, 1999).

Tiffany described a play in a recent game where she made a bad pass to a teammate, creating a situation where the teammate had to scramble to get the ball out of trouble before an oncoming opponent could intercept the ball and possibly score a goal. She explained, "I was like, 'oh my god', that was such a bad ball and I hope (name of teammate) gets it out of there, and if she doesn't, it's going to be my fault". Tiffany was relieved when her teammate worked hard and was able to get to the ball first and pass it up the field. She answered the follow-up probe by saying:

Well, I think it's stressful for me because I know I put her in that position and it's not her fault, and she's not like expected really to get it out, you know, so . . . and I feel really bad about that cause I know if I was in her position, I'd be like, 'god, why didn't you pass better balls, so I could get it out, and they scored cuz you gave me a bad ball', so that's kinda like, stressful.

After Tiffany described this event and her feelings about it, the researcher asked, "When that happens and you're feeling stressed, what do you do about it?" She responded, "I usually just sit back and just hope they'll get it". This could be interpreted as using the emotion-focused coping strategy of wishful thinking. Although Holt and Hogg (2002) found adult female soccer players to use emotion-focused coping strategies, they did not identify wishful thinking as one of them. However, this is consistent with adolescent

coping in the general population, where females tend to use more strategies related to wishful thinking and hoping for the best (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1991).

For another player, there was also the perception that her performance affected her own parents' status among the other team parents. As Meghan explained, "I do worry about what the parents think about me because I've had trouble with them before . . . when I'm on the field I try as hard as I can because my dad . . . His social life is soccer, so like, if I play good it helps him out . . . it makes me feel good when all the parents think I'm a good player and stuff". Joanne, on the other hand, wanted to distance herself as much as possible from her parents during the games. She explained why it bothered her when they watched her play:

My dad, sometimes he does this where he wants to say hi to me during the game. It's the worst thing you can do. It's like, 'Dad, why are you (here)?', and he'll do like the little wave . . . and then he'll get upset at me after, 'you didn't say hi to me'. Dad, I'm in the middle of a sports game here, it's not like I can run up and give you a bear hug.

The difference in how these players view their social status in relation to their parents could be due to age difference. Meghan is 15 years old and just entering the period of late adolescence. She is a sophomore in high school, still relies on her parents for transportation to practice and games, and perhaps is still developing her own identity. Joanne is 17 years old and a senior in high school. She is old enough to drive, independent, and wants to separate from her parents. Perhaps she also views soccer as her domain, a way of expressing her own identity, and considers running up to her dad

and giving him a hug at the game an embarrassing endeavor. These two stories can be interpreted as a reflection of the changes that adolescents go through as they mature. They are also examples of the ways adolescent girls think about social evaluation in relation to their parents in the sport setting.

In general, the concerns expressed by the participants concerning social evaluation are consistent with other research. Smith (1999) investigated the perceptions of peer relationships and physical activity participation for boys and girls in early adolescence. Smith (1999) found that participants who perceived a higher level of peer acceptance also tended to have a greater sense of physical self-worth. James and Collins (1997) found self-presentational sources of stress for adult athletes to include social evaluation, and suggested that "these athletes were sensitive about the impressions people form of them during competition" (p. 17). Also, the need for relatedness and social acceptance was found to be a prominent theme in adolescent girls' culture (Hurtes, 2002). Based on the results from a study in an outdoor adventure camp setting, Hurtes concluded, "Until relatedness is achieved, it is unlikely that the competence and self-determination, often the goals of recreation and other programs, will be addressed" (p. 117). The responses from participants in this study would clearly indicate that relatedness is also an important factor for female adolescent soccer players.

Fairness During Competition

The first major theme discussed was coach feedback, the second major theme was social evaluation by teammates and parents. The third major theme that emerged was fairness during competition. Participants talked about behavior by coaches, players and

referees during competition and how they perceived those behaviors based on their sense of fairness. Late adolescence is characterized by a growing sense of independence and desire to separate from the parents (Arnett, 2001; Rowland, 1999). Teenagers can be keenly aware of the authority of adults in their life, and their perceptions of coaches and referees may be influenced by this developmental aspect of adolescence. For instance, the players often expressed frustration over having no control when a referee would make a bad call during the game. Tiffany stated, "Referees are always like a big problem in the games". Her opinion was that the referees did not know enough about soccer and sometimes exhibited favoritism towards one team. Tiffany explained:

It's really subjective, so if they like favor another team, then it's like, it's not good for your team, you know. So that can be kind of stressful, because you can be doing things that you normally do, but they'll call you on it, and you're just like, 'what are you thinking?'. But you kind of just have to deal with it, cause they're in charge of the game, and if you yell at them, or like, try to retaliate, then they can throw you out if they want to.

This is consistent with previous research on coping in the sport setting, where receiving a bad call from the referee was identified as an acute stressor during competition for male and female athletes ages 15 to 38 years (Anshel et al., 2001) and 421 adolescent males ages 14 to 18 years (Anshel, 1996). Tiffany went on to describe how she deals with it when she observes the referee making a bad call and says to herself, "oh whatever, that was the stupidest call I ever heard!" She explained, "I just want to play, and I don't want to fight. And I don't want to risk getting thrown out of the game or something". First she

seems to manage her emotions by discounting the referee's decision, and then also appears to employ some avoidance coping. Use of an avoidance coping style, where the problem is solved by avoiding the problem, could be directly related to feelings of powerlessness. This could be exacerbated by the adolescent condition of desiring independence and freedom of choice, while still under the control of parents. Anshel et al. (2001) found that the two stressors most likely to be appraised by the athlete as "I felt that the situation was hopeless" were 1) receiving a wrong call from an official and 2) observing an opponent cheating.

Joanne had a different approach to coping with stress that resulted from observing unfair calls by a referee and unfair play by her opponent. She described a situation during one game when they had "a really bad ref" and she felt her opponent hit her off the ball several times. She was getting frustrated and felt the referee should be calling a foul. Ultimately, Joanne retaliated and hit her opponent off the ball, and the referee called a foul on her. She got very angry and physically lashed out at her opponent. As Joanne put it:

If something happens that I feel is really unfair, I should never do this, but I do anyway, its just the way that I do, I get really mad and I like cuss at people sometimes, and I'll stoop to their level and I'll start hitting them off the ball or . . . I'll put my heel down on her toe and I'll grind it as I'm turning and oh, that makes me feel so much better.

Joanne's perceived stressor was related to the referee making a bad call. She coped with it by doing something that made her feel better about it, which can be interpreted as a

more emotion-focused approach (Cox, 2002; Frydenberg & Lewis, 1991; Kowalski & Crocker, 2001). She was seeking to manage her frustration with the referee by physically abusing her opponent when the referee was not looking. Either way, the athletes have developed a way to manage a situation in a challenging environment. The rules of soccer state that no player is allowed to speak with the referee except the team captain, so approaching the referee to talk about a call is a risky endeavor. Coaches and parents should be aware that receiving a wrong call from an official and observing an opponent cheating are sources of stress for adolescent athletes, and work to help them develop coping strategies with positive results.

With adult female soccer players, a bad call by the referee was not identified as a source of stress for the athletes (Holt & Hogg, 2002). This could be explained by the fact that Holt and Hogg used a case study approach during a 6-week training camp prior to the 1999 World Cup Championship, so the focus for the athletes during that time was preparing for competitive games, rather than participating in them. However, it could also reflect a developmental difference in the sport. At the youth level, it is a distinct possibility that the referees are not as experienced or knowledgeable about the game, and do make more mistakes. While at the international level, although they are not perfect, referees have much more experience and training, and have worked their way up through the ranks. It is also possible that adult athletes have learned to cope better with the perceived stressor of bad calls from an official. Gould, Eklund et al. (1993) found that elite adult wrestlers showed a higher degree of automaticity when facing adversity, which

supports the concept of learning and internalizing adaptive coping strategies through long-term development and implementation.

Meghan told one story where a perceived stressor was created by seeing teammates being treated unfairly by the coach. One player who missed practice on a regular basis was getting lots of playing time, while two other players who attended every practice were sitting on the bench. Meghan said:

We have girls who come to every practice and don't play at all, and I don't think it's fair ... Even to play five minutes would be OK, I mean, they've done all this work, and they don't even to get to show what they've accomplished in practice in the game. They just practice and practice.

She went on to talk about how she did not know what to say to the players on the sideline and did not want to talk to them when she came off the field. She was worried that she would make them feel bad about not playing. Meghan explained:

I try not to sit next to them cause I don't want to be like 'I just played, blah, blah, blah,' ... I just kind of avoid talking directly to the girls that don't play.

Using an avoidance coping style diverges from findings in the adult population, where athletes tend to turn to each other for support when behavior by the coach is a perceived stressor (Holt & Hogg, 2002). However, Meghan's experience also revisits the theme of social evaluation. Ultimately, Meghan does not want to talk to the players on the bench because she is afraid she might say the wrong thing, and make them feel bad about not playing. Concerns related to social acceptance over-ride any problem or emotion-focused

coping strategies that Meghan might have engaged in, and she would rather avoid talking to them than say the wrong thing (Hurtes, 2002).

Commitment and Time Demands

The fourth major theme to be discussed is commitment and time demands.

Players often mentioned the challenge of meeting the time demands of playing competitive soccer. Each year, Northern California soccer clubs put together their Class I teams in each age group by holding try-outs and selecting players. It is a highly competitive process and some players are not selected for new teams, while others may be cut from the team they played on the previous year. However, once a player is selected for a team, there is an expectation that they will be committed to the program and attend all practices, games and team functions. As young elite athletes developing their own sets of values and ethics in sport, several of the participants discussed the concept of making a commitment to their team, and how they experienced stress when attempting to honor that commitment while still giving time to academics, friends, family and other sports. Diane said, “You have to be very committed to your team, and you can’t miss practice, or games, or go to parties or social events or anything, cause you end up getting kicked off. And it’s stressful cause you have to miss a lot, I have missed so much over these years because of playing soccer.”

Academics was the primary topic that came up as a demand on their time that created stress. It was not only the additional time needed to complete homework, but also the pressure to get good grades to get into college. Sometimes this created conflicting goals, as the players considered soccer a higher priority than their parents,

who placed academics at the top of the list. On the other hand, players also knew they needed to get good grades to get into college, where they could continue to play soccer. Christie talked about trying to do homework during the season when there was practice during the week and games on the week-end, and stated, "I was totally exhausted, I would rest for awhile and get to a point where I was so tired, and I couldn't do my work, but the more I would rest, the more stressed out I would be because I realized that Monday was getting closer and closer, and I would definitely stress out about that." For Tiffany, it seemed overwhelming to have a game scheduled on the weekend at the end of the grading period when final exams were approaching and term papers were due. The result was that she felt very tired during the game and wasn't happy with her performance. She noted that "In the first half I was kind of like, I don't know, I think I was kind of tired from school and stuff . . . I was all stressed out cause I had to study for finals and do my homework for Monday, and then re-write this whole paper, and then do another essay, and I was just like 'oh my god' ". This perceived stressor was not found with adult female soccer players (Holt & Hogg, 2002) who have already graduated from high school and are no longer worrying about their grades to get into college. In addition, it was not included in previous research on adolescent coping in the sport setting (Anshel, 1996; Anshel et al., 2001; Anshel et al., 1998; Goyen & Anshel, 1998). One reason for this could be the fact that these studies were not conducted in the United States. The sample populations were in Singapore, Israel, and New Zealand. Different social and educational systems have different ways of integrating sports into the lives of youth and young adults. In the United States, there is a trend towards using a professional sports

model when organizing youth sports (Smoll, 2001), and perhaps this is creating additional stress for the athletes. As Smoll stated, "Most of the negative consequences of youth sports occur when adults erroneously impose a professional model of what should be a recreational and educational experience for youngsters" (p. 151).

There was also a perceived stressor that when they missed soccer practice to do another sport, this resulted in feeling unprepared for a soccer game. Meghan explained, "What's really stressful is I have to skip one practice a week because I'm playing (another sport) and on that (day) we do a lot of conditioning and that's something I want to be working on . . . and so on the field I get tired . . . I try to keep going, but you can tell my game goes down a lot, and that's something that really stresses me out".

In general, Joanne reflected on the growing pressure on young athletes to do more to stay viable as a high-level athlete, "You never get a break with soccer, and I'm sure it's like that with every other sport, but it's just . . . How much further are they gonna push practice? . . . Is it going to be games now, after school? Are they going to add morning practices, before you go to school? I mean, are they going to start you weight lifting at age twelve now? . . . it's just going to get more and more competitive". This is a very important aspect in the development of young athletes. Although coaches certainly feel the pressure to win and perhaps don't want to assume a parenting role with their players, they might consider serving in some sort of mentor role for their athletes who are learning how to manage their time and balance their lives. In the end, it would seem that this type of approach will result in athletes who master good time management skills that can allow them to continue to participate and become effective adult elite athletes.

The four major themes of coach feedback, social evaluation by teammates and parents, fairness during competition, and commitment/time demands have been discussed. The three minor themes of being scouted by college coaches, letting the team down, and soccer as a stress reliever will now be discussed.

Being Scouted By College Coaches

The first minor theme is being scouted by college coaches. This theme came up primarily with players who were juniors or seniors in high school, all of whom had aspirations of playing soccer in college. There is a tremendous amount of emphasis put on college recruiting at the Class I level, and it is a source of much discussion among parents, coaches, players and youth soccer organizers. The participants discussed the different colleges they were applying to, stories they had heard about different college coaches, and the anxious feelings they experienced when college coaches observed their games. A big difference in having a college coach watching a game, as opposed to parents, fans or other coaches, was that the players were suddenly being evaluated personally. Their individual performance would be judged regardless of the outcome of the game. Although players have been technically and physiologically trained for these situations, perhaps not enough attention has been paid to preparing them for the psychological demands. Christie talked about a game where she did not find out that college coaches had been at the game until practice the following week. When asked if it makes a difference whether she knows they are there or not, she stated:

I think I'd rather not know. Because there isn't a time where I would say, 'oh, no one is watching, yeah, I'm just gonna play bad'. But if someone were to say 'so

and so is here, you better play good', I'd be thinking about it, and I wouldn't be thinking about the game.

Melinda described a game where college coaches were watching and it was a day where her team was not playing well, despite their high ranking in the league and good reputation in the district. She talked about how it affected her ability to concentrate in the game. Melinda stated:

If I was one of those coaches and I watched that game, I'd be like 'Ok, what are they doing? That wasn't very impressive' . . . it's just hard to have that in the back of your mind, cause I know that's what they're thinking . . . and then it kinda just ruins your game, you know, just thinking that stuff, knowing that those coaches were watching . . . and then you start screwing up even more, it's just hard, and you get all these wild thoughts in your head and then you're really unfocused.

Tiffany did not have as many experiences with college coaches watching her games yet, but talked about feeling the pressure of competing for a spot on a college team. Tiffany stated:

You just know you're competing with people that are better players than you and have better, like, academic stuff than you. So you're always trying to make yourself look good, and you always have to like, do more, to show them that like, you really want to play for them and like, that you're a good player and a good student.

Similar to the findings discussed in the previous section on commitment and time demands, these findings are unique to athletes who are in high school, and the concerns about getting into college become more prominent in the junior and senior years.

Letting the Team Down

The second minor theme is letting the team down. Soccer is a team sport and some players talked about feeling as if they had let the team down, or let their coach down, when their performance was not as good as they felt it should be. Issues related to letting the team down included: 1) playing with an injury, 2) lack of fitness, and 3) the team performing well as a unit.

Diane explained how she felt during one game when she was playing with an injury and her passes were not going where she wanted them to. She said, “I feel kind of bad or guilty that I made a bad pass or something, but it was like, I’ll just try to do this and do the best I can, I would try to make simple passes . . . I just didn’t want to let the team down”.

For Meghan, the issue was her fitness level. She described how she missed some of the team practices and conditioning sessions. This also relates back to her experiences described in the section on commitment and time demands, where she explained how she misses soccer practice once a week so she can attend practice for another sport. She felt strongly that she wanted to contribute to the team and described how it was important to her to be able to work hard on the field. Megan stated:

I do feel like I have a negative side to me because I can’t run as fast or as long . . .

I feel like it’s a minus to the team . . . when we’re on the field and we’re all

running and we're going for a ball or something and I'm really tired, I might not push as hard as I would've if I had all my energy and I just feel like I let the team down.

The issue of lack of fitness can be discussed in relation to the theme of letting the team down, but it also relates back to the theme of commitment and time demands. Part of Meghan's stress is created by missing soccer practice and not being able to work on her conditioning with the team. However, the reason she is missing soccer practice is to participate in another sport.

Melinda talked about how she felt after losing a game, and she perceived that her coaches were disappointed in the over-all performance of the team. Melinda stated:

I know that they were upset and disappointed, cause we could've beaten this team because we had beaten them before, I mean, they're definitely a beatable team.

And you know, they said that our game wasn't on, and that, you know, there were a lot of things we could've done better. But they didn't yell, so it's kinda hard, I mean, I know they were disappointed.

Melinda seemed to agree with the coaches and their analysis of the game. She said, "Maybe if I had done those things, the outcome would have been different, and, you know, our coaches might have been a little more happier . . . they have so much confidence in us, and then it's kind of like you feel bad, like you let them down".

As expected, issues related to playing with an injury, lack of fitness, and team performance are not discussed in previous literature on adolescent coping in the non-sport setting (Chapman & Mullis, 1999; Griffith et al., 2000; Herman-Stahl et al., 1995). In the

sport setting, the theme of letting the team down can be discussed in relation to how the athlete perceived her coach and experience on the team. All of the participants talked about times in their playing career when coach feedback was stressful, and negatively affected their motivation, performance or perceived competence. However, there seemed to be a stronger tendency for participants to be concerned about letting the team down when it was in relation to a coach they perceived as more positive and supportive.

Soccer As Stress Reliever

The third minor theme was soccer as a stress reliever. The purpose of this study was to examine stress and coping in female adolescent athletes in the competitive soccer environment. The interview guide was aimed at uncovering sources of stress related to their performance on the field, how the players might react to different situations and what effect it might have on their motivation and perceived competence. However, there was also an over-all feeling that playing soccer itself served as a relief from other stressors in life. Some players talked about it directly, acknowledging that going out to play soccer, be with friends, and get some exercise served as a stress reliever from other pressures in life. Other players described it more indirectly, where soccer seemed to allow an emotional outlet with behavior that was acceptable on the soccer field, but maybe didn't feel socially acceptable at home or at school. Tiffany talked about feeling overwhelmed with other personal relationships in her life and not wanting to attend practice at times:

But then I'll go to practice and I'll like work with the team or (my coach) or whatever, and then, it really makes me feel better and then, I just realize, 'you

know, I really shouldn't be so upset about this situation, it's not that big a deal, and there's going to be a way I can solve this' . . . so I always feel better after practice.

In another part of the interview, she talked about how soccer helped her release anger. "It helps me, I don't know, kind of like calm down and you know, think about things . . . all those endorphins, I guess". She laughed a little bit after saying that and then continued, "It also helps me like get out some aggression, if I'm like angry about something I can just go out there and like, kick a ball, and, you know, beat up a few people". Tiffany was joking when she said this, and laughed again, but the impression I got was that it was not only stress relieving but almost invigorating or liberating, to have this opportunity to express herself in a different way.

After stating that "school is more stressful than soccer by far", Christie explained what it was about playing soccer that made it stress relieving for her. Christie stated:

I guess because I don't have to work, you go to soccer, and you play, and you're with your friends, and it's legitimate thing to be doing, you're not time wasting, I don't know, it feels good, it feels good to play, I like working out.

Melinda summed it up by saying, "When I go to soccer practice I'm just having a good time, and there's no worries, just have a good time and let out some stress, it's a really good stress reliever".

Towards the end of her interview, Diane was talking about why she played soccer and how she loved it when games were close and very intense. After Diane stated, "I am

going to keep playing soccer for the rest of my life”, the researcher asked her, “What is it about soccer?” Diane replied:

I don't know, tons. Like, I just like how good it makes you feel, and how you can be someone, like, completely different like, in your life, when you step on the soccer field you can be someone, whoever you want to be. You know, you can be all quiet on the outside, then you get on the soccer field and you can be the loudest person, and like, you know, the boldest person ever. And be someone totally different. And that's great.

These results are consistent with research supporting the physical and mental health benefits of vigorous physical activity (Ackerman, 2002; Sabo et al., 2004). However, they can also be discussed in the context of Hill and Lynch's (1983) gender intensification theory. There seems to be a perception that in the sport setting, there is a certain amount of freedom to express oneself in ways that might not be socially acceptable otherwise. The idea of being "quiet on the outside", but "loud" and "bold" on the soccer field, or getting out there to "beat a few people up", suggests that female athletes are aware of socially prescribed gender roles and where it is considered appropriate to exhibit certain behaviors. The sport environment could be perceived as a safe place for a female athlete to embrace some of the more traditionally masculine traits, without feeling like she is compromising her femininity off the field.

Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the results of this study. There were four central themes: 1) coach feedback, 2) social evaluation by teammates and parents, 3)

fairness during competition and 4) commitment/time demands, and three minor themes: 1) being scouted by college coaches, 2) letting the team down, and 3) soccer as a stress reliever. The themes and relationships among them were discussed in terms of the perceived stressors and coping strategies identified by the participants, previous research on stress and coping, and in the contexts of adolescence and youth sport in the United States.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Interviewing nine female soccer players to examine their perceived stressors and coping strategies in the competitive soccer environment has exposed the many rich and diverse experiences of female adolescent athletes. As expected, the players identified stressful events during sports competition. These included coach feedback, social evaluation, issues of fairness, time demands, being scouted by college coaches, and letting the team down. The players also described their responses to these stressful events, and this information gave insight into the coping strategies and coping styles they used. Problem-focused coping included increased effort, planning, and avoiding the stressor. Emotion-focused coping included wishful thinking, discounting, venting emotions and behavior withdrawal. They engaged in avoidance coping, often in situations where they felt like they did not know what to do. The variety of coping strategies used supports the notion that coping is a process and is unique to the individual. The most notable finding was the lack of using social support as a coping strategy. Based on results found in previous literature, there was an expectation that this would have emerged from the data.

Two factors for consideration when discussing the use of seeking social support as a coping strategy for female adolescent athletes in the soccer setting are: 1) the nature of the game of soccer, and 2) dynamics of competitive club soccer. First, the game of soccer at the elite level is played in two 45-minute halves with no time-outs called by the coaches or players. Perceived stressors during competition often must be managed

during the process of the game. Other team sports, such as volleyball, basketball, and softball, have inherent breaks and opportunities to reconnect with teammates. Soccer is more likely to create extended periods of time isolated on the field of play. This is not to say that social support cannot happen during the game, but it is a consideration that coaches should be aware of. Holt and Hogg (2002) found that the adult female soccer players were still able to be a source of social support for each other, and this leads to the second consideration, the dynamics of competitive club soccer.

There are three factors that can be discussed concerning the dynamics of competitive youth soccer at Class I club level: 1) players commuting a long distance, 2) age group divisions, and 3) player control of time management. First, it is not uncommon for athletes to commute long distances to play for a prestigious club or an influential coach. Consequently, players may not belong to the same social circles outside of soccer, such as friends who go to the same high school. If they are not close friends off the field, there is a possibility they do not feel safe seeking social support from teammates are not acquainted with. Secondly, the teams are generally formed according to age groups, resulting in all the players on one team being the same age. Holt and Hogg (2002) found the older, more experienced players gave encouragement and support to the younger players, especially in response to the perceived stressor of negative coach feedback. This dynamic of mentor and less experienced player is more difficult to foster in the team setting where all the players are relatively the same age. Thirdly, games and tournaments often require driving a long distance from home and many athletes are transported to and from the field by their parents. The arrival and departure times are not in the athlete's

control. Due to a busy schedule, a parent may sometimes need to leave immediately after a game is completed, which can affect the athlete's ability to talk to teammates after the game. Holt and Hogg (2002) conducted a study with an adult female soccer team during a 6-week residential training camp, which may have created a more intimate atmosphere. The dynamics of competitive youth soccer also points to the general state of youth sports in the United States.

Eitzen and Sage (2003) discussed the idea that there are two social contexts where youth sports develop. One form of play is in the context of the peer group, the other form of play is when it is organized by the adults. Differences between the two are discussed in terms of organization, process, impetus, and social implications. In general, peer play is more spontaneous. Games are initiated and controlled by the players. On the other hand, the impetus for organized youth sports comes solely from the adults. Eitzen and Sage summarized the social implications by saying:

In the peer context, play is not overly concerned with ends; the essence of the play is the play - its fun, decisions, ritual, and personal interactions. In contrast, in organized sports, play tends to be incidental. For the adults who organize sport programs, play is identified with ends . . . to develop certain attitudes and values towards social relationships and activities that in the long run tend to reproduce the requirements of occupational life by emphasizing punctuality, periodicity, and performance (p. 69).

The California Youth Soccer Association - North is an example of an adult-organized youth sport organization with a seven-member board of directors, constitution, by-laws

and central administrative office. There is a highly structured system of league games, tournament play and State Cup play-offs, with winning teams receiving accolades, promotion and exposure to college recruiters. This environment can socialize the athletes, coaches, and parents to perceive participation in organized youth sport as a site where "play is identified with ends" (Eitzen & Sage, 2003, p. 69), rather than an activity that has inherent enjoyment and satisfaction. In addition, soccer is not a highly structured sport, there are no time-outs and very few set plays. The primary characteristic of the game is a flowing, dynamic interchange between opponents. The coach has relatively little control during the actual games. They cannot stop play other than for a substitution, and the physical size of the field limits their ability to verbally communicate with all players and referees. Perhaps rather than attempting to instill more control over the athletes and the game, coaches could see it as an opportunity to provide a microcosm of peer play within an adult-organized youth sport setting. Encourage the athletes to be self-sufficient on the field, understand that they will make mistakes, and create a culture of learning, rather than a culture of fear.

Finally, the two major themes of coach feedback and social evaluation can be discussed in terms of Hill and Lynch's (1983) gender intensification hypothesis and adolescent girls' culture. Hill and Lynch (1983) posit the idea that adolescence is probably the most important time developmentally for gender socialization, and it is especially influential for girls. In a study investigating how sport participation influences the self-esteem of adolescent females, Richman and Shaffer (2000) found that the psychosocial benefits that girls can receive through sports participation include a positive

perception of their physical competency, favorable body image, and gender flexibility. However, they also emphasized the study was correlational, which indicates that these benefits are not necessarily a direct result of merely participating in sports, but must be recognized, acknowledged, and developed. For coaches and sports psychology consultants, this can be an area with many different interpretations. Although participation in sports may provide the opportunity for gender flexibility, it is still a topic of much discussion concerning social acceptance, benefits and consequences. Richman and Schaffer (2000) stated:

As a place where traditionally masculine ideologies such as competition, performance, strength, power, dominance, and winning are heralded, sport is not the 'automatic' option for girls and women that it is for boys and men in our culture. That is, the traditional, communally scripted path does not include athleticism as one of the gender-normative options (p. 189).

A strong desire for acceptance is not only a driving force during adolescence, but is an over-riding theme of adolescent girls' culture. In the non-sport setting, the practice of girls compromising their own feelings and aspirations to avoid the stigma of social persecution has been described as a hidden culture of aggression (Simmons, 2002). The fear of being abandoned by the social group is a motivating factor in decisions and behavior. In their summary, Richman and Schaffer (2000) reflected on the impact that concerns about social evaluation may have on adolescent girls, and suggested the positive for change that sport could provide. Richman and Schaffer stated:

Thus, despite its other benefits, the impact of sport participation on a female's self-worth could still be negligible (or even negative) were she concerned about the nontraditionality of her behavior or about others' negative reactions to it. Such ambivalence might be overcome, however, if sport participation promotes both an enhanced sense of physical competence and development of valued masculine attributes (p. 197).

The concept of gender role flexibility would seem to be an important topic for coaches and sport psychology consultants to reflect upon. Each individual may have a different perception of masculine and feminine traits, how they define gender, and how it relates to an athlete. Adult leaders in the youth sport setting need to be aware of their own opinions, beliefs, and interpretations in this area, and strive to behave in a way that has a positive effect on the youth around them.

In summary, the perception of coach feedback and the social environment are important to the female adolescent soccer player. Four suggestions are provided to help coaches and sport psychology consultants address these issues: 1) utilize a coaching behavior inventory, 2) help players with time management, 3) inter-generational activities, and 4) develop conflict resolution resources. First, to address issues related to coach feedback, a suggestion is to employ the Coaching Behavior Assessment System developed by Smith, Smoll, and Hunt (as cited in Smoll & Smith, 2001). With this system, a trained observer watches the coach as they work and records behaviors in reactive and spontaneous categories. This can provide objective feedback to the coach on his or her behavior during competition. Ideally, this would be done by a sport

psychology consultant who could educate the coach on the value of the system, and present the findings in a constructive and non-threatening manner.

Secondly, it could be productive for the coach to acknowledge that social support has been identified as a coping strategy that females tend to use, and relatedness has been established as an important component of adolescent female culture. If there are aspects of competitive youth soccer that may prohibit them from seeking social support or establishing relatedness, youth soccer coaches could take steps to help their athletes cope with competitive stress. One suggestion is to utilize the coach-parent meeting, as described by Smoll (2001). This meeting should be held at the beginning of the season and expectations clearly outlined. A suggestion to consider is to ask parents to provide time in their schedule to stay 30 minutes after every game. This provides an opportunity for players to warm down, debrief, and discuss events during the game that were stressful.

A third suggestion for coaches and sport psychology consultants is to create inter-generational activities. There is a possibility that age-group division of teams inhibits the development of relationships in which older players serve as support and mentors to younger players. One solution may be to create activities where players within the same club interact with team members from other age groups, such as practicing together, or social events off the field. Once again, this may be a useful role for the sport psychology consultant, as coaches can be possessive and territorial concerning their teams, and perceive this type of activity as a threat to their autonomy.

Finally, a fourth suggestion is addressed primarily to sport psychology consultants. Perhaps there is a need for the development of communication and conflict resolution techniques specific to adolescent females in the sport setting. Issues of relatedness have been found to be important in adolescent female culture, yet the tools necessary to achieve this relatedness are often lacking (Simmons, 2002). Emotion-focused and avoidance coping styles can serve the purpose of managing a stressful situation, but they could contribute to an unrealistic perception of how a relationship with another person is conducted. An improved ability to communicate with their teammates could help reduce perceived stress related to social evaluation.

In summary, these four suggestions, 1) to utilize a coaching behavior inventory, 2) to help players with time management, 3) to create inter-generational activities, and 4) to develop conflict resolution techniques, are rooted in the idea that it is important for coaches to acknowledge and address the needs of the athletes in this unique psychosocial environment. In the executive summary of their Women's Sports Foundation Report, Sabo et al. (2004) stated:

The knowledge that physical activity and sport can help to prevent illness and problem behaviors is only the first step in enhancing the health and well being of American girls. Knowledge must be transformed into policies and practice. Meeting the challenge of inactivity among girls will require a consistent, diverse and multifaceted commitment.

Recommendations for Further Study

Pilot interviews are recommended prior to beginning a qualitative research project. A helpful technique was discovered during the interview process and implemented in subsequent interviews, but it would have been useful throughout the entire study. The technique was to reassure the participant that there were no correct or incorrect answers to the questions they were asked. This helped them to understand that probe questions were not being asked because the participant did not give the "correct" answer, they were being asked in order to get more information about their unique and personal experience. In addition, the practice would have enabled the researcher to be a more effective interviewer and recognize the moments when a probe question was needed.

Interviews should be conducted in a quiet place. Although the interviews conducted at a coffee shop were neutral, convenient locations where the participant felt comfortable, there was also background noise. This did not have a great effect on the interview, but made it more time-consuming to transcribe the interview tapes. Another solution is to use a high-quality microphone that the participant can speak directly into.

Areas for Future Research

Future qualitative research would be warranted to examine cultural differences in stress and coping in female adolescent athletes. Although the participants in this study were Caucasian, Hispanic-American and Asian-American, the researcher did not consider the ethnicity or cultural heritage of the participant when analyzing data.

In addition, studies conducted in other sports could be beneficial. Soccer is played outdoors with emotional and geographic space to move through during each game. Other sports, such as basketball and volleyball, are indoors under more crowded conditions and the flow of a game is different with shot clocks, time-outs, and side-outs.

Finally, Tomlinson and Yorganci (1997) found that the power relations between male coaches and female athletes manifested in behaviors perceived as sexist and harassing. Since several of the themes identified in this study were related to the coach, further examination of perceived stressor and coping strategies in relation to the gender of the coach could provide useful information.

References

- Ackerman, M. A. (2002). *Benefits of sports participation for adolescent girls*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, California School of Professional Psychology, Alameda, CA.
- Allen, J. B., & Howe, B. L. (1998). Player ability, coach feedback, and female adolescent athletes' perceived competence and satisfaction. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 20*, 280-299.
- Anshel, M. H. (1996). Coping styles among adolescent competitive athletes. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 136*, 311-323.
- Anshel, M. H. (2001). Qualitative validation of a model for coping with acute stress in sport. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 24*, 223-246.
- Anshel, M. H., Jamieson, J., & Raviv, S. (2001). Cognitive appraisals and coping strategies following acute stress among skilled competitive male and female athletes. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 24*, 128-143.
- Anshel, M. H., Porter, A., & Quek, J. (1998). Coping with acute stress in sport as a function of gender: An exploratory study. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 21*, 363-376.
- Anshel, M. H., Williams, L. R. T., & Hodge, K. (1997). Cross-cultural and gender differences on coping style in sport. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 28*, 141-156.
- Arnett, J. J. (2001). *Adolescence and emerging adulthood: A cultural approach*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Black, S. J., & Weiss, M. R. (1992). The relationship among perceived coaching behaviors, perceptions of ability, and motivation in competitive age-group swimmers. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 14*, 309-325.
- Butryn, T. M. (2003). Posthuman podiums: Cyborg narratives of elite track and field athletes. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 20*, 17-39.
- Carver, C. S., Scheier, M. F., & Weintraub, J. K. (1989). Assessing coping strategies: A theoretically based approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56*, 267-283.

- Chapman, P. L., & Mullis, R. L. (1999). Adolescent coping strategies and self-esteem. *Child Study Journal*, 29, 69-77. Retrieved November 29, 2002 from Expanded Academic Index database.
- Cote, J., Salmela, J. H., Baria, A., & Russell, S. J. (1993). Organizing and interpreting unstructured qualitative data. *The Sport Psychologist*, 7, 127-137.
- Cox, R. H. (2002). *Sport psychology: Concepts and application* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Crocker, P. R. E. (1992). Managing stress by competitive athletes: Ways of coping. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 23, 161-175.
- Crocker, P. R. E., & Graham, T. R. (1995). Coping by competitive athletes with performance stress: Gender differences and relationships with affect. *The Sport Psychologist*, 9, 325-338.
- Crocker, P. R. E., & Isaak, K. (1997). Coping during competitions and training sessions: Are youth swimmers consistent? *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 28, 355-369.
- Crocker, P. R. E., Kowalski, K. C., & Graham, T. R. (1998). Measurement of coping strategies in sport. In J. L. Duda (Ed.), *Advances in sport and exercise psychology measurement* (pp. 149-161). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.
- Culver, D. M., Gilbert, W. D., & Trudel, P. (2003). A decade of qualitative research in sport psychology journals: 1990-1999. *The Sport Psychologist*, 17, 1-15.
- Dale, G.A. (2000). Distractions and coping strategies of elite decathletes during their most memorable performances. *The Sport Psychologist*, 14, 17-41.
- Eitzen, D. S., & Sage, G. H. (2003). *Sociology of North American Sport* (7th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1985). If it changes it must be a process: Study of emotion and coping during three stages of a college examination. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48, 150-170.
- Ford, M. A., Bass, M. A., Turner, L. W., Mauromaoustakos, A., & Graves, S. (2004). Past and recent physical activity and bone mineral density in college-aged women. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, 18, 405-410.
- Frydenberg, E., & Lewis, R. (1991). Adolescent coping: The different ways in which boys and girls cope. *Journal of Adolescence*, 14, 119-133.

- Gallo, A. M. (1996). Building strong bones in childhood and adolescence: reducing the risk of fractures in later life. *Pediatric Nursing*, 22(5). Retrieved March 30, 2006 from Expanded Academic Index database.
- Gould, D. (1996). Sport psychology: Future directions in youth sport research. In F.L. Smoll & R. E. Smith, (Eds.), *Children and youth sport: A biopsychosocial perspective* (pp. 405-422). Madison, WI: Brown & Benchmark.
- Gould, D., Eklund, R. C., & Jackson, A. J. (1993). Coping strategies used by U.S. Olympic wrestlers. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 64, 83-93.
- Gould, D., Finch, L. M., & Jackson, S. A. (1993). Coping strategies used by national champion figure skaters. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 64, 453-468.
- Goyen, M. J., & Anshel, M. H. (1998). Sources of acute competitive stress and use of coping strategies as a function of age and gender. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 19, 469-486.
- Green, S. L., & Weinberg, R. S. (2001). Relationships among athletic identity, coping skills, social support, and the psychological impact of injury in recreational participants. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 13, 40-59.
- Griffith, M. A., Dubow, E. F., & Ippolito, M. F. (2000). Developmental and cross-situational differences in adolescents' coping strategies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 183-204.
- Harter, S. (1978). Effectance motivation reconsidered: Toward a developmental model. *Human Development*, 21, 34-64.
- Harter, S. (1982). The perceived competence scale for children. *Child Development*, 53, 87-97.
- Herman-Stahl, M. A., Stemmler, M., & Petersen, A. C. (1995). Approach and avoidant coping: Implications for adolescent mental health. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24, 649-665.
- Hill, J., & Lynch, M. (1983). The intensification of gender-related role expectations during early adolescence. In J. Brooks-Gunn & A. Peterson (Eds.), *Female puberty* (pp. 201-228). New York: Plenum.
- Holt, N. L., & Hogg, J. M. (2002). Perceptions of stress and coping during preparations for the 1999 Women's World Cup finals. *The Sport Psychologist*, 16, 251-271.

- Hurtes, K. P. (2002). Social dependency: The impact of adolescent female culture. *Leisure Sciences, 24*, 109-121.
- James, B., & Collins, D. (1997). Self-presentational sources of competitive stress during performance. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 19*, 17-35.
- Kowalski, K. C., & Crocker, P. R. E. (2001). Development and validation of the coping function questionnaire for adolescents in sport. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 23*, 136-155.
- Lazarus, R. S. (2000). How emotions influence performance in competitive sports. *The Sports Psychologist, 14*, 229-252.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York: Springer.
- Madden, C. C., Summers, J. J., & Brown, D. F. (1990). The influence of perceived stress on coping with competitive basketball. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 21*, 21-35.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Pate, R. R., Trost, S. G., Levin, S., & Dowda, M. (2000). Sports participation and health-related behaviors among US youth. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 154*, 904-911.
- President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Report (1997). *Physical activity & sports in the lives of girls: Physical & mental health dimensions from an interdisciplinary approach*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp.1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Richman, E. L., & Shaffer, D. R. (2000). If you let me play sports. How might sport participation influence the self-esteem of adolescent females? *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 24*, 189-199.
- Rowland, T. W. (1999). Adolescence: A "risk factor" for physical activity. *The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Research Digest*. Retrieved December 4, 2002, from http://www.fitness.gov/digest_jun1999.htm

- Sabo, D., Miller, K. E., Farrell, M., Barnes, G., & Melnick, M. (1998). *The women's sports foundation report: Sport and teen pregnancy*. East Meadow, NY: Women's Sports Foundation.
- Sabo, D., Miller, K. E., Melnick, M. J., & Heywood, L. (2004). *Her life depends on it: Sport, physical activity, and the health and well-being of American girls*. East Meadow, NY: Women's Sports Foundation. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from <http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/cgi-bin/iowa/issues/body/article.html?record=990>.
- Scanlan, T. K., Stein, G. L., & Ravizza, K. (1991). An in-depth study of former elite figure skaters: III. Sources of stress. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 13, 103-120.
- Seefeldt, V. D., & Ewing, M. E. (1997). Youth sports in America: An overview. *The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Research Digest*. Retrieved Nov. 28, 2002, from <http://fitness.gov/youthsports.pdf>.
- Simmons, R. (2002). *Odd girl out: The hidden culture of aggression in girls*. New York: Harcourt.
- Smith, A. L. (1999). Perceptions of peer relationships and physical activity participation in early adolescence. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 21, 329-350.
- Smith, R. E., Schutz, R. W., Smoll, F. L., & Ptacek, J. T. (1995). Development and validation of a multidimensional measure of sport-specific psychological skills: The Athletic Coping Skills Inventory-28. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 17, 379-415.
- Smoll, F. L., & Smith, R. E. (2001). Conducting sport psychology training programs for coaches: Cognitive-behavioral principles and techniques. In Williams, J. M. (Ed.), *Applied sport psychology: Personal growth to peak performance* (pp. 378-393). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.
- Smoll, F. L. (2001). Coach-parent relationships in youth sports: Increasing harmony and minimizing hassle. In Williams, J. M. (Ed.), *Applied sport psychology: Personal growth to peak performance* (pp. 150-161). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.
- Sparkes, A. C. (1998). Validity in qualitative inquiry and the problem of criteria: Implications for sport psychology. *The Sport Psychologist*, 12, 363-386.
- Sparkes, A. C. (2002). *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Stone, A. A., Greenberg, M. A., Kennedy-Moore, E., & Newman, M. G. (1991). Self-report, situation-specific coping questionnaires: What are they measuring? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61, 648-658.
- Tomlinson, A., & Yorganci, I. (1997). Male coach/female athlete relations: Gender and power relations in competitive sport. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 21, 134-155.
- Weiss, M. R. (2000). Motivating kids in physical activity. *The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Research Digest*. Retrieved April 17, 2005, from http://www.fitness.gov/digest_sept2000.htm
- Weiss, M. R., & Horn, T. S. (1990). The relation between children's accuracy estimates of their physical competence and achievement-related characteristics. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 61, 250-258.
- Weiss, M. R., & Petlichkoff, L. M. (1989). Children's motivation for participation in and withdrawal from sport: Identifying the missing links. *Pediatric Exercise Science*, 1, 195-211.

Appendix A: Human Subjects - IRB Approval

San José State
UNIVERSITY

**Office of the Academic
Vice President**

**Academic Vice President
Graduate Studies and Research**

One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0025

Voice: 408-283-7500

Fax: 408-924-2477

E-mail: gradstudies@sjsu.edu

http://www.sjsu.edu

To: Corinne R. Houston
148 Pacheco Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

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

Date: August 26, 2004

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

“Perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.”

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 August 4, 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: Ted Butryn, Ph.D.

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix B: Prospective Parent/Guardian and Participant Letter

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

Corinne R. Houston

148 Pacheco Avenue Santa Cruz, CA 95062
(831)457-2398 camper@got.net

Dear Prospective Parent/Guardian,

I am a graduate student at San Jose State University in San Jose, California. I am working on my master's degree in kinesiology with a sports psychology emphasis and as a requirement of the program I am completing a research project that is an examination of the perceived stressors and coping strategies of adolescent female athletes.

I have completed a literature review, and now to further my research, I would like to interview adolescent female athletes. This should take approximately 2 hours. All information in the questionnaire and interview will remain confidential.

Your daughter has indicated that she would be interested, so I will need your parental /guardian consent. I have enclosed a copy of the parental consent form and the participant assent form for signature.

After the consent forms have been signed and a copy given to you and your daughter, we will schedule a date to conduct the interview. The interview will take place in an agreed upon location. Every effort will be made to make it as convenient as possible for you. It is important that your daughter feels comfortable and safe.

First I will administer a demographic questionnaire to obtain basic background information and then I will begin the interview. The entire interview will be audiotaped. Your daughter has the right to stop participation in the study and/or the interview at any time for any reason. At the conclusion of the interview, I will thank your daughter for her participation in the study and I will remind her that all information gathered will be kept strictly confidential.

You may contact me at any time for further information, otherwise, I will be calling you to make sure you got these consent forms and see if you have any questions. Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Corinne R. Houston

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix C: Consent Form

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): Corinne R. Houston

Title of Protocol: Perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.

1. Your child or ward has been asked to participate in a research study investigating perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.

2. Your child or ward will be asked to respond to several interview questions during a semi-structured interview session. The interview will be audiotaped, and will take place at a time, date, and location agreed upon by you, your child or ward, and the principal investigator.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

4. While there are no expected benefits associated with participation in this study, your child or ward may gain a better understanding of what she perceives as stressful when playing soccer.

5. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify your child or ward, your family, or you will be included. Your child or ward will be referred to only by a code name of her choice.

6. There will be no compensation for participation in this study.

7. Questions about this research may be addressed to Corinne R. Houston, the principal investigator, at (831)457-2398, or Dr. Ted M. Butryn, faculty advisor at (408) 924-3068. Complaints about the research may be presented to Dr. Greg Payne, Chair of the Human Performance Department, at (408) 924-3028. Questions about research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President of Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.

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

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

Initial: _____

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

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

2

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 parent or legal guardian on this document indicates :

- a) approval for the child or ward to participate in the study
- b) that the child is freely willing to participate, and
- c) that the child is permitted to decline to participate, in all or part of the study, at any point.

• The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attestation that the subject's parent or guardian has been fully informed of the subject's rights.

Name of Child or Ward

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Relationship to Child or Ward

Full Mailing Address

Investigator's Signature

Date

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix D: Assent Form

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): Corinne R. Houston

Title of Protocol: Perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating perceived stressors and coping strategies of female adolescent athletes.
2. You will be asked to respond to several interview questions during a semi-structured interview session. The interview will be audiotaped, and will take place at a time, date, and location agreed upon by you and the principal investigator.
3. There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.
4. While there are no expected benefits associated with participation in this study, you may gain a better understanding of what you perceive as stressful when you play soccer.
5. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included. You will be referred to only by a code name of your choice.
6. There will be no compensation for participation in this study.
7. Questions about this research may be addressed to Corinne R. Houston, the principal investigator, at (831)457-2398, or Dr. Ted M. Butryn, faculty advisor at (408) 924-3068. Complaints about the research may be presented to Dr. Greg Payne, Chair of the Human Performance Department, at (408) 924-3028. Questions about research subjects' rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President of 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.

Initial: _____

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

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

2

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

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix E: Demographic Questionnaire

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

Demographic Questionnaire

Code Name: _____

Birthdate: _____

What city or town do you live in?

Ethnicity (check all that apply):

- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Native American
- ☐ Asian -American
- ☐ Polynesian/South Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other _____

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 José, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Appendix F: Interview Guide

Interview #_____

1. Tell me how you started playing soccer?
2. Can you tell me about the game you just played?
 - a. How long have you been on this team?
 - b. What is your skill level, and/or role on this team?
 - c. What does participating in soccer mean to you?
3. Can you tell me about any experiences that were stressful for you during the game?
 - d. How is your relationship with your coach?
 - e. How is your relationship with your parents?
 - f. How is it for you playing in front of other people?
 - g. Did you think the game was fair?
4. How did you deal with those stressful situations during the game?
 - h. What made you feel less stressed?
 - i. Did you talk to any of your teammates?
 - j. Did you just avoid the situation?
 - k. Is it still a source of stress for you right now?
5. Do you have anything else you would like to say about your experiences during the game?