University of Tennessee, Knoxville

TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Doctoral Dissertations

Graduate School

5-2017

An Exploration of US NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding Morality in Sport

Terilyn Chiemi Shigeno
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, tshigeno@vols.utk.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_graddiss

Part of the Sports Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

Shigeno, Terilyn Chiemi, "An Exploration of US NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding Morality in Sport. " PhD diss., University of Tennessee, 2017.
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_graddiss/4423

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Terilyn Chiemi Shigeno entitled "An Exploration of US NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players’ Perceptions Regarding Morality in Sport." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Kinesiology and Sport Studies.

Leslee A. Fisher, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Lauren Moret, Rebecca A. Zakrajsek, Lars Dzikus

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

An Exploration of US NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding Morality in Sport

A Dissertation Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Terilyn Chiemi Shigeno

May 2017

Copyright © 2017 by Terilyn Chiemi Shigeno

All rights reserved

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my Grandma Shigeno. She is the strongest woman I have ever known and has continued to inspire me to take pride in and master my craft. I will never forget her reaction to me entering a doctoral program: “Wow, you’re going to be a doctor!” Her excitement and my opportunity to make her proud have never left the back of my mind.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my committee members: Dr. Leslee A. Fisher, Dr. Rebecca A. Zakrajsek, Dr. Lauren Moret, and Dr. Lars Dzikus. I am so grateful for each of you and all your support and guidance you have provided me over the past few years.

Thank you to Dr. Fisher for being so patient with me over the last three years. You have helped me grow as a scholar and as a person and for that, I am incredibly grateful. Thank you for always challenging me to think more critically and to not willingly accept the status quo. Finally, thank you for helping me find and claim more of my identity.

Thank you to Dr. Zakrajsek for always having an open door and ear for me when I had questions, especially regarding consulting. More importantly, thank you for always looking out for my best interests and challenging me to be a better scholar, practitioner, and human. Your optimism and attitude are infectious and I am grateful to have you as a mentor and future colleague.

Thank you to Dr. Moret for being a constant in my life for the first two and a half years of my program. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to take many of your courses, but I am even more thankful for the opportunity to interact with you outside of the classroom. It is through these experiences that I am truly grateful for your insight and advice as I grew and developed as a scholar.

Thank you to Dr. Lars Dzikus for challenging me to think in a way that was outside of my comfort zone. I am appreciative of your input and questions throughout this entire process. And, I am even more grateful for your constant support and positive attitude.

Thank you to Earlynn Lauer for being my constant over the past three years. You have been a superb colleague and an even better friend. Thank you for always challenging me as a

writer, researcher, and consultant; and thank you for letting me always play devil's advocate with you. I am excited for what we get to collaborate on and accomplish next.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you to my family. Your love and support have been the only reason I have gotten through the past three years. Thank you for giving me every opportunity I could have ever wanted, and supporting me through the ups and downs. I would not be the person I am, nor would I have been able to accomplish anything without all of you. Thank you to my sister, Jamie, for all your advice and for always having an open ear whenever I needed it. Thank you to my mom for always supporting me, loving me, and encouraging me to take risks. Lastly, thank you to my dad for always keeping me humble and challenging me to always keep perspective.

Abstract

To date, little research exists with regard to how athletes think about morality within sport (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986; Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, 1987), and even less exists which explores the concepts of *bracketed morality* or *game reasoning* within sport contexts (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986; Kavussanu, Boardley, Sager, & Ring, 2013. The same is true for research related to sport moral identity (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986; Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Kavussanu, Willoughby, & Ring, 2012; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussuanu, & Duda, 2006; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, 1987) and none, to date, has explored character strengths within sport. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to use interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 1996) to explore U.S. NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding morality in sport. The results are presented in two separate manuscripts; one focuses on moral identity in DI female soccer players and the other focuses on moral dilemmas faced by DI female soccer players. For the first study, results included female soccer players' perceptions of (a) their moral and athlete selves, (b) the saliency of each and (c) any conflicts related to these two self-identity components. For the second study, results were developed from two major themes: (a) On-field dilemmas and (b) Off-field dilemmas. Implications for sport psychology consultants (SPCs) are twofold. First, SPCs need to be more aware of what elite-level female soccer players value in their sport, as well as help them build on their moral strengths. Secondly, SPCs should work toward understanding the dilemmas female soccer players face in their sport as well as ways to help them handle such dilemmas.

Keywords: bracketed morality, game reasoning, character strengths, women, collegiate sport

Table of Contents

Introduction ... 1
Chapter 1: An Exploration of U.S. NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding Sport Moral Strengths (Manuscript #1) ... 2
Abstract ... 3
Introduction ... 4
Moving from Moral Thought to Moral Action: The Context of Sport ... 4
Positive Psychology and Character Strengths ... 7
Method ... 9
Procedures ... 12
Data Analysis ... 15
Results and Discussion ... 17
Theme #1: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of the Components of Their Moral Selves ... 18
Theme #2: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of the Components of Their Athlete Selves ... 21
Theme #3: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of the Importance of Their Moral and Athlete Selves to Overall Self-Identity ... 22
Theme #4: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' of Perceptions of Conflicts Between Athlete and Moral Selves ... 26
Conclusions ... 27
Recommendations for Sport Psychology Practitioners (SPPs) ... 28
Limitations and Future Directions ... 29
References ... 31
Chapter 2: The White Line Theory: Moral Dilemmas Faced by U.S. NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players (Manuscript #2) ... 38
Abstract ... 39
Introduction ... 40
Method ... 42
Results and Discussion ... 43
Theme #1: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of Experiences with On-Field Moral Dilemmas ... 43
Theme #2: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of Experiences with Off-Field Moral Dilemmas ... 46
Conclusions ... 49
Recommendations for Sport Psychology Practitioners (SPPs) ... 50
Limitations and Future Directions ... 50
References ... 52
Chapter 3: Extended Review of the Literature ... 57
Moral Identity Research in Psychology ... 57
Sport Activism and its Relation to Moral Identity ... 62
The Coach-Athlete Relationship and its Potential Effect on Moral Identity ... 64
Summary ... 65
Chapter 4: Extended Methodology ... 67
Positionality ... 71
Where Are You From? ... 71

Identity Development Through Sport 75
Coaches 75
Conclusions 76
Finding My Research Home 76
Perspective is Everything 78
Sport Psychology 78
Theoretical Framework 79
Eight Ages of Man 79
Self-Model of Moral Functioning 80
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) 81
Ontological, Epistemological, and Methodological Orientation 83
Participants 87
Procedures 88
Interview Guide Development 88
Bracketing 89
Pilot Study Interview 90
Main Study Interviews 90
Member Checking 91
Data Analysis 91
References 94
Conclusion 98
Appendices 100
Appendix A: Table 1 102
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Guide 104
Appendix C: Example of Reflexivity Journal Entry 106
Appendix D: Recruitment Email 107
Appendix E: Informed Consent Statement 108
Appendix F: IRB Letter of Approval 110
Vita 111

Introduction

Moral dilemmas are often found within the sport setting. For example, in a soccer game, if the ball goes out of bounds on Team A and the referee calls it against Team B, does Team A correct her/him? The sport example may vary, but the underlying moral issue centering this dilemma remains the same: will Team A be honest or not. Regardless of the decision athletes choose to make, they must live with it. Sport, however, creates an environment where athletes do not often have time to weigh options nor are they given the opportunity to make many moral decisions. They are faced with dilemmas in the heat of competition, and must make a decision in a split second. Related to these moments, my research interest lies in what components contribute to athletes' moral identities, which may allow them to make the most moral choices. Given that not all athletes choose to engage in moral behaviors when faced with moral dilemmas, the purpose of the current study was to explore US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of morality within their sport.

Chapter 1: An Exploration of U.S. NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding Sport Moral Strengths (Manuscript #1)

Abstract

To date, relatively little research exists with regard to sport morality in general, and even less on moral identity within sport (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986b; Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Kavussanu, Willoughby, & Ring, 2012; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, 1987). Although Fisher (1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000) explored the components that contributed to professional female bodybuilders' moral, athlete, and gendered self-identities, collegiate athletes' self-components have not yet been examined. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to use interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 1996) to delve into U.S. NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding their athlete and moral self-identities. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 24 years (M = 20.1 years) and had been competing in soccer for an average of 14.9 years. This was part of a larger study also investigating the moral dilemmas identified by U.S. NCAA DI female soccer players. Results of the current study focused on female soccer players': (a) their moral and athlete selves, (b) the saliency of each and (c) any conflicts related to these two self-identity components.

Introduction

Moving from Moral Thought to Moral Action: The Context of Sport

Early moral development theorists focused on moral and cognitive development and their link to moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1976; Piaget, 1932). Theorists like Piaget and Kohlberg suggested that different stages of moral thinking would predict moral behavior; however, other researchers have focused on additional constructs to explain this link (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Haan, Smith, & Block, 1968; Turiel & Rothman, 1972). For example, Blasi's (1980, 1984) self-model of moral functioning has been utilized to explore the gap between moral thought and moral action. Blasi (1984) believed that moral thought and moral action were not the same, and that the relationship between the two could be attributed to the unity of the self in general and the salience of moral identity in the person in particular. Further, Blasi (1980, 1984) developed a self-model of moral functioning whereby the extent to which a person acts morally is related to how much s/he has integrated moral identity into her/his overall identity. In other words, Blasi believed that integrated moral identity leads to moral action. Responsibility and integrity are also important to moral self-identity according to Blasi and relate to the need to act in accordance with one's judgment. Therefore, following Erikson (1968), Blasi (1984) posited that moral action was an extension of moral identity, an "extension of the essential self into the domain of the possible, of what is not but needs to be, if the agent has to remain true to himself or herself" (p. 132).

While Blasi's model is important, very little research exists which explores moral identity related to the sport experience (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002; Kavussanu, Willoughby, & Ring, 2012; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006). For example, for the purposes of their study, Sage et al. (2006) utilized Blasi's framework of the self-model of moral

functioning. As a result, they defined moral identity as "a commitment of one's sense of self to lines of action that promote or protect the welfare of others" (Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998, p. 515). Sage et al. (2006) found that moral identity did not predict prosocial functioning in male football players who completed measures related to goal orientation, moral identity, and prosocial and antisocial functioning. However, moral identity defined in this way explained the greatest variance in antisocial variables and negatively predicted both antisocial judgment and behavior. Sage and Kavussanu (2010) found that moral identity was a significant positive predictor of eudaimonia in male and female youth footballers (i.e., a highly positive affective condition experienced when an individual moves toward self-realization, or hedonic enjoyment; see p. 461); in other words, when an individual's moral self was central to her/his identity, s/he was more apt to feel complete, fulfilled, and deeply involved while competing in football. Finally, Kavussanu et al. (2012) found that individuals with a strong moral identity responded to unpleasant pictures with larger blinks than those individuals with a weaker moral identity. However, these researchers have not explored the specific components that contribute to sport moral identity.

Aquino and Reed (2002) used both Erikson and Blasi as a framework to quantitatively measure the self-importance of one's moral identity and its relationship to moral cognition and behavior. They posited that in addition to understanding moral identity with regard to traits, moral identity might also be influenced by one's social identity. Aquino and Reed (2002) defined moral identity as "a self-conception organized around a set of moral traits" (p. 1424). So, in making the connection between moral identity and moral traits, they set out to determine how essential an individual's view of moral identity was to her/his self-concept. They created the *Self-Importance of Moral Identity Inventory* (Aquino & Reed, 2002), a 10-item measure with

two subscales: internalization and symbolization. The internalization dimension focused on the self-importance of the moral characteristics, while the symbolization dimension centered on a general sense of one's moral self as a social entity who can display those moral characteristics. The Cronbach's alphas of the 347 respondents were .73 and .82 for the internalization and symbolization subscales, respectively (Aquino & Reed, 2002).

A number of researchers have utilized the *Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale* (e.g., Clair, Ladge, & Cotton, 2016; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2016; Tasimi & Young, 2016); however, only a few have utilized the scale in the sporting context (Kavussanu, Stanger, & Ring, 2015; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Shields, Funk, & Bredemeier, 2015) and the findings have been somewhat varied. Kavussanu et al. (2015) found moral identity to be negatively associated with antisocial behavior to both teammates and opponents; however, Sage et al. (2006) and Shields et al. (2015) did not find moral identity to be a predictor of prosocial judgment, behavior, or sportspersonship. It appears that more research is needed in determining how moral identity influences athletes' behaviors within sport.

While a number of researchers have examined the construct of moral identity within sport (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002; Fisher, 1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000; Kavussanu, Willoughby, & Ring, 2012; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006), Fisher (1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000) is the only researcher to have explored how the construct of moral identity relates to the overall athlete self as well as to taking action in sport. In Fisher's work (1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000), she interviewed professional female bodybuilders to determine how they saw the moral component of their identity operating (or not) while deciding about taking performance-enhancing drugs. In addition, she asked bodybuilders to reason about how their gendered, moral, and athlete selves played a role in their overall

identities. She found that while many professional female bodybuilders espoused moral principles, 90% reported taking performance-enhancing drugs in order to win (e.g., still engaged in cheating); in addition, many had a hard time conceptualizing themselves as “female” without modifying their self-identities to “female bodybuilder” instead. While exploring how moral identity related to the overall athlete self, Fisher only interviewed professional female athletes.

Positive Psychology and Character Strengths

In addition, Peterson and Seligman (2005) claimed that sport is a potential institution of human excellence. However, the field of psychology has generally focused on what Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) have called “pathology, weakness, and damage” (p. 7). Thus, the positive psychology movement aims to shift the focus from repairing one’s deficits to cultivating and building one’s positive qualities. More specifically, positive psychology is the study of positive emotions, positive character traits, and those institutions which enable positive experiences (Peterson & Park, 2003; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

With the introduction of positive psychology, a number of books and articles have surfaced related to the topic. For example, Peterson and Seligman (2004) created *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (CSV) in an attempt to classify and describe virtues and strengths which allow humans to thrive (Seligman et al., 2005). The CSV was intended for practitioners to use to classify psychological strengths much like the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM; APA, 2013) is utilized for the classification of psychological disorders.

The CSV identifies six classes of human virtues including wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Each virtue is made up of 24 character strengths which meet the following 12 criteria: (1) ubiquity (widely recognized across cultures), (2) fulfilling

(contributes to individual fulfillment, satisfaction, and happiness), (3), morally valued (valued in its own right and not as a means to an end), (4) does not diminish others (elevates others who witness it, producing admiration, not jealousy), (5) nonfelicitous opposite (has obvious antonyms that are "negative"), (6) traitlike (an individual difference with demonstrable generality and stability), (7) measurable (has been successfully measured by researchers as an individual difference, (8) distinctiveness (not redundant – conceptually or empirically – with other character strengths), (9) paragons (strikingly embodied in some individuals), (10) prodigies (precociously shown by some children or youth), (11) selective absence (missing altogether in some individuals), and (12) institutions (the deliberate target of societal practices and rituals that try to cultivate it; see Seligman et al., 2005, p. 411).

A number of researchers within the positive psychology movement have examined these strengths (e.g., Eades & Gray, 2017; Lottman, Zawaly, & Niemiec, 2017; Quinlan, 2017). However, to date, no researchers have explored these character strengths in athletes. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to explore US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding the components of their sport moral identity, including the saliency of their moral and athlete selves to their overall identities and also whether conflicts had arisen between self-components (Fisher, 1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000). The following research questions were explored:

RQ1: What are US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of the components of the moral and the athlete self?

RQ2: How important are each of these self-components to US NCAA DI female soccer players' overall self-identities?

RQ3: How do US NCAA DI female soccer players conceptualize conflicts between their

moral and athlete self-identities?

Method

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used in the current study. IPA is rooted in phenomenology and hermeneutics; its purpose is to gain a detailed understanding of an individual's lived experience and how individuals make sense of that experience (Eatough & Smith, 2008). IPA draws from a range of phenomenological perspectives including Husserl (1913/1931), Heidegger (1962), and Gadamer (1975) as well as Giorgi (1985). For example, Husserl has informed IPA through an emphasis on reflection such as bracketing (which is discussed below). Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1975) also informed IPA through an emphasis on the hermeneutic circle; the belief of a hermeneutic circle involves everything as interpretation and in addition, interpretation itself is "indeterminate, contextual, and circular" (Bohman, 1991, p. 130). Taylor (1971) described the hermeneutic circle as part-whole:

> We are trying to establish a reading for the whole text, and for this we appeal to readings of its partial expressions; and yet because we are dealing with meaning, with making sense, where expressions only make sense or not in relation to others, the readings of partial expressions depend on those of others, and ultimately of the whole. (p. 18)

Similar to Giorgi, IPA researchers examine the lived experience of individuals using systematic procedures. IPA researchers differ from Giorgi, however, in that they are "as interested in the diversity and variability of human experience" and are "therefore, in practice, concerned with the micro analysis of convergence and divergence within a small set of accounts" (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p. 182).

In addition to phenomenology and hermeneutics, the other major influence informing IPA is idiography. Idiography is focused on the particular (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

This aspect of IPA strays from most psychological research, which is typically nomothetic. IPA's commitment to the particular occurs in two ways. First is the promise made to the particular; as Smith et al. (2009) wrote, that idiography is focused on detail, and, therefore, "the depth of analysis. As a consequence, analysis must be thorough and systematic" (p. 29). Secondly, IPA researchers work to understand the perspective of particular people in a particular context. As a result, IPA researchers may utilize small, purposefully selected samples.

For the current study, that particular context is NCAA Division I women's soccer. Much of the research that has been conducted around morality in sport has been in the United Kingdom (UK), and has utilized footballers (i.e., soccer players) as their population (e.g., Kavussanu et al., 2012; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage et al., 2006). Because of the popularity in the UK, little research with regard to morality has examined college-aged students (e.g., Funk, Shields, & Bredemeier, 2016; Stephens, 2004), and none, to date, has examined NCAA Division I athletes. Furthermore, researchers have found that women reason at a higher moral level than their male counterparts; therefore, moral identity may be more salient within female soccer players.

IPA was selected for the current study because its key feature is to "focus on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for people who share a particular experience" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 45). Furthermore, IPA focuses on individuals' experiences of a particular phenomenon (e.g., sport moral identity) and emphasizes an inductive approach to explore that experience. Sample sizes for IPA studies vary; however, Smith et al. (2009) suggested between three and six participants should be sufficient to develop both convergence and divergence in the data, but not so many that the researcher is overwhelmed by the data (see p. 51). In another review, Smith (2004) proposed that five to 10 participants are sufficient. In other words, like most qualitative research, IPA offers a method for researchers to use to explore very thick,

comprehensive, and exhaustive accounts of peoples' experiences. In addition, semi-structured one-on-one interviews are the ideal method for IPA because the goal is to uncover "detailed stories, thoughts and feelings from the participant" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 57). Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to ask pertinent follow-up questions that are related to the construct(s) of interest.

Participants

The participants in the current study included 10 current and former NCAA DI female soccer players who ranged in age from 18 to 24 years (M = 20.1 years; see Table 1, Appendix A) and who had played soccer for an average of 14.9 years. The participants were diverse with regard to year in school: there were two first-year student-athletes, one redshirt (i.e., a year in which a student-athlete does not compete against outside competition; NCAA, 2017a) first-year student-athlete, one redshirt second-year student-athlete, two third-year student-athletes, one redshirt fourth-year student-athlete, and two who had just completed their final collegiate season; in addition, one participant who had completed her collegiate career was currently competing at the national/international level. All 10 self-identified as female and were on athletic scholarship. With regard to race, eight self-identified as White or Caucasian, one as multiracial, and one as African American. Seven of the 10 participants self-identified as Christian (e.g., two as Catholic, one as Episcopalian, one as LDS) and three did not claim any religious affiliation. Half the sample reported being in a significant relationship while the other half reported being single. In addition, all 10 participants reported having intact, heterosexual families (e.g., mother and father) and all but one had siblings.

In addition, four of the 10 participants reported significant knee injuries (e.g., three ACL tears, one meniscus tear), which kept them out for at least one competitive season at the

collegiate level. Additional injuries included those to the ankle, a broken nose, patellar tendinitis, a minor concussion, and a sprained toe ligament. Two participants reported not having any injuries throughout their collegiate careers.

Procedures

Semi-structured interview guide. A semi-structured interview guide based on both Fisher (1993, 1997; see also Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000) as well as Aquino and Reed's (2002) work was developed for the purpose of this study (see Appendix B). Fisher (1993) created two interview guides for her study: one that focused on personal moral identity and another that focused on social moral identity. The personal interview guide was created to generate responses with regard to three different aspects of professional female bodybuilders' identities (e.g., self-as-bodybuilder, self-as-female, and self-as-a-moral-person) while the social interview guide was created to elicit answers regarding in- and out-group identities within the bodybuilding culture. Both of Fisher's (1993) interview guides were adapted for the current study. In addition, *The Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale* (Aquino & Reed, 2002) was adapted for the current study. This scale lists characteristics and then asks individuals to rate on a Likert scale items such as, "It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics."

Therefore, the final interview guide developed for the current study began with questions related to general background information (e.g., age, number of years playing soccer), the definition of morality in sport, personal moral identity, and social moral identity. Further, questions from Aquino and Reed's (2002) *The Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale* such as "How much do these characteristics reflect you as an athlete" and "How does participating in your sport help identify you as having these characteristics, if it does?" were also included.

Bracketing interview. Prior to Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and data

collection, the first author participated in an audiotaped bracketing interview to identify ways that her identities and experiences may influence the interviews with participants (Patton, 2015. The second author interviewed the first author using the same semi-structured interview guide as described earlier. Upon completion of the interview, they identified any potential biases based on the audiorecording and thematizing of the bracketing interview. This process was important, especially as it relates to the hermeneutic circle. The researcher's analysis of the data would be influenced by her interpretation of the phenomenon and thus was important to explore from the beginning of the study. Four biases of the author were revealed: she had also been a collegiate soccer player (Division III); she defined morality in sport as "doing the right thing, even in the heat of competition"; she perceived identity to be layered; and she perceived that morality was foundational to her self-identity compared to being an athlete; she also perceived that sport participation at the Division III level has more of a community feel than Division I; and her perceptions of her own sport moral failure and sport moral successes were directly related to her relationships with her coaches.

Memos and reflexivity journal. In addition to the bracketing interview, memos, and a reflexivity journal were utilized (see Appendix C). Memos (Tufford & Newman, 2010) focused on interviewer biases, perceptions, theoretical ties, and potential themes and were written throughout the entire research process. A reflexivity journal (Ahern, 1999) was also used throughout the entire duration of the study so that the first author could discuss her own positionality as it related to the study. For example, the first author believed (prior to the start of the study) that most people would identify as being "moral" people; thus, her assumptions about morality had the potential to influence the follow-up questions she chose to ask and the way in which she interpreted the data. Therefore, she focused on validating what each participant said

and worked to create a safe space where participants felt comfortable to speak openly about their experiences, regardless if they dovetailed with her own.

Pilot interview. Once the first and second authors discussed the first author's biases, she conducted a pilot interview with a former US NCAA Division I female soccer player. The pilot interview was utilized to help the first author feel more comfortable with the interview guide. In addition, the pilot interview was used to ensure that participants in the main study would be able to understand the questions and feel comfortable answering them. It also helped test the question sequencing and length of the interview (Kim, 2010). As a result, the pilot interview helped improve the rigor and trustworthiness of the current study (Kim, 2010).

Criterion-specific purposeful sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2017) was used to recruit participants for the main study. For example, potential participants were sent an email (see Appendix D) with the first author's contact information asking if they would be interested and willing to be interviewed for a study about moral identity and their experience. Once a participant had responded via email to the first author and was willing to participate, she set up a time and place to meet in person that was most convenient to the participant. If an in-person interview was not possible, a Skype interview was scheduled (Iacono, Symonds, & Brown, 2016). Three of the ten interviews were conducted via Skype and the remaining seven interviews were conducted in-person. Participants were provided with an informed consent form (see Appendix D) to sign before the start of the interviews, either in person or via email.

All interviews were audio recorded. The interviews lasted between 28 and 58 minutes (M = 41 minutes). The shorter length of interviews may have been a result of the timing of the interview (e.g., at the end of the semester, right before break), as well as the sensitive nature of the topic (Haan, Aerts, & Cooper, 1985). Each participant also chose a pseudonym before the

start of the interview. After the interviews were conducted, the first author transcribed them verbatim.

Once all interviews were transcribed, the first author emailed the completed transcript to each participant to ensure the transcriptions were an accurate representation of what she said (Patton, 2015). Because transcription of the interviews is part of the interpretive process, it is important to confirm with the participant that her words represented her intended meaning (Mackey, 2005). None of the participants asked to make changes to their transcript.

Data Analysis

There is no single method for analyzing the data within IPA. However, analysis is typically informed by eight strategies: (a) line-by-line analysis of each participant; (b) identification of emergent themes, noting both similarities and differences; (c) dialogue between the researchers and their coded data to arrive at a interpretative account; (d) development of a structure that illustrates the relationships between themes; (e) organization of themes and comments to create a final structure of themes; (f) use of supervision, collaboration, or audit to develop the coherence of the interpretation; (g) development of a full narrative, including the interpretation, typically presented in a visual guide; and (h) reflection on one's own perceptions, conceptions, and processes (Smith et al., 2009, pp. 79-80). These strategies do not necessarily move in a linear pattern, similar to the hermeneutic circle described above; in addition, Smith et al. (2009) provided a set of six steps for the analytic process, especially for those researchers new to IPA.

The first step of an IPA analysis involves immersing oneself in the original data, usually the first written transcript (Smith et al., 2009). This step involves reading and re-reading the data. It is also helpful to listen to the audio recording at least once when first reading the transcript.

The second step of an IPA analysis is initial noting and is the most detailed and time-consuming (Smith et al., 2009). Researchers work to maintain an open mind, taking note of anything of interest. Much like the hermeneutic circle, it is important to continue to go back to the text. Steps one and two often merge, as researchers often start writing notes as they read the transcripts. This second step is aimed for the researchers to create a comprehensive and detailed set of notes and comments on the transcripts. There are three main types of exploratory comments the researchers may employ: (a) descriptive comments; (b) linguistic comments; and (c) conceptual comments (Smith et al., 2009). Descriptive comments focus on the content of the transcription, linguistic comments focus on the specific language use of the participant, and the conceptual comments focus on engaging with the transcript at a more conceptual level (Smith et al., 2009). These are not the only types of exploratory comments the researcher may make, but are offered as suggestions. The authors primarily utilized descriptive and conceptual comments while completing the second step.

The third step in an IPA analysis is developing emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). This process involves breaking up the narrative flow of the transcript to reduce the volume of detail. In addition, the researchers should be working primarily with the initial notes as opposed to the transcript itself. This step is one demonstration of the hermeneutic circle, as Smith (2004) wrote: “The original whole of the interview becomes a set of parts as you conduct your analysis, but these then come together in another new whole at the end of the analysis in the write-up” (p. 91). Themes are generally expressed as phrases that describe the psychological essence of what was said. These themes will not only be a representation of the participant’s original thoughts and words, but also the researchers’ interpretation. The fourth step in an IPA analysis is searching for connections across emergent themes. Researchers aim to create a map or chart of

how the themes fit together. During this step, some of the emergent themes may be discarded. The main premise of this step is in "drawing together the emergent themes and producing a structure which allows you to point to all of the most interesting and important aspects of your participant's account" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 96).

Step five in an IPA analysis is moving to the next transcript, repeating the first four steps (Smith, 2004). It is important during this step to try and bracket the ideas/themes from the first case. During this step, the researchers will inevitably be influenced by the themes of the first case; however, it is important to work to discover new themes with each case. The sixth and final step in an IPA analysis is looking for patterns across transcripts. This involves making comparisons across the map or table created in step four. Usually, the final result is presented in a table of themes for the entire group, "showing how themes are nested within super-ordinate themes and illustrating the theme for each participant" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 101).

Both the first and second authors independently completed the six-step process for each case. Then, the final step in the data analytic process was when the first and second authors met multiple times to discuss their findings. This allowed them to discuss preliminary findings, negotiate potential themes, and finalize how best to represent the data.

Results and Discussion

As previously stated, guiding research questions for the current study included: (a) RQ1: What are US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of the components of the moral and the athlete self? (b) RQ2: How important are each of these self-components to US NCAA DI female soccer players' overall self-identities? and (c) RQ3: How do US NCAA DI female soccer players conceptualize conflicts between their moral and athlete self-identities?

Utilizing the frame of moral identity as well as IPA to analyze the data, four

superordinate themes with regard to NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of their moral and athlete selves, the saliency of each, and any conflicts related to these two self-identity components were constructed. These results are part of a larger set of data related to NCAA DI female soccer players' experiences with moral dilemmas that are described in Manuscript II. Each theme presented next also contains subordinate themes and indicative quotes to support it.

Theme #1: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of the Components of Their Moral Selves

When the participants were asked about the values that were important to them in terms of their moral selves, seven of the 10 participants' responses aligned with the characteristics of being a moral person as defined by Aquino and Reed (2002), while four participant answers aligned with character strengths as defined by Peterson and Seligman (2004). For example, three participants (Lauren, Natalie, Sam) identified *being honest* as a value important to their moral selves. As Lauren said, "I guess honesty is a big part of being a moral person." Similarly, Natalie talked about "...honest communication...sometimes people don't want to...communicate about things and that's when lies...happen." Finally, Sam stated, "I think truthfulness would go in there too because...I feel like, while...respecting someone, you should be respecting yourself by being truthful to who you are."

Two participants (Carley, Sally) identified *being kind* as a value important to their moral selves. The characteristics of *being kind* also relates to Peterson and Seligman's (2004) character strengths of *love*, *kindness*, and *compassion*. For example, Carley stated:

> It's being kind and treat others the way you would like to be treated. I learned that from when I was 2 and it's still stuck with me through the rest of my life, and it will always be there. It just makes you feel better about yourself when you're kind to others and it could

> help their day, too.

According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), *kindness* can be equated with other traits like generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, and altruistic love but is defined as a "common orientation of the self toward the other" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 326). *Kindness* is grounded in the assumption that "others are worthy of attention and affirmation for no utilitarian reasons but for their own sake" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 326). Many participants in the current study described *kindness* as treating others with respect and doing things for others. Sally said that it was important to put someone else in front of herself, stating, "I'd say being a servant...servitude type of thing…giving back to people...doing this out of the kindness of your heart, not because you'll get something for doing it." Similarly, Lauren described her moral self in relation to another person stating, "I think *compassion* and trying to help other people...maybe being selfless as well." Both Sally and Lauren's, as well as Lisa's response (Lisa said, "...empathetic."), speak to the importance of taking care of and putting others before one's self.

In addition, four of the participants (Jess, Natalie, Sally, Lauren) claimed that *love*, *kindness*, and *compassion* were *the* most important to their moral selves. As Jess commented:

> All-giving love, not just love that can make you better but love for others that you may not even know and stuff and like strangers...it's easy to give love to somebody that you know, but to have love for those that you don't know and help them...I think that's good for a moral person to have.

As defined by Peterson and Seligman (2004), *love* involves "strong positive feelings, commitment, and even sacrifice" (p. 293). Furthermore, Peterson and Seligman (2004) posited love to take three forms. First, love is for those individuals who provide us with our primary sources of care, affection, and protection. These people are our main source of safety and we

experience large amounts of distress when we are separated from them for an extended period of time. We also rely on these people to take care of us and help us when we are in need. This type of love is often found within a child's love for her/his parent.

The second type of love is love for those individuals who rely on *us* for safety and to feel cared for. "We comfort and protect them, assist and support them, make sacrifices for their benefit, put their needs ahead of our own, feel happy when they are happy" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 304). This type of love is a parent's love for her/his child. Two of the participants' (Laura, Rachel) responses could be categorized as falling under this definition of love. For example, Laura stated that, "being supportive of others" was a moral value of hers while Rachel said that "being altruistic" was the first moral value that came to her mind.

The third form of love involves romantic love. It is this type of passionate love and desire for sexual, physical, and emotional closeness with an individual who we deem is special and makes us feel as such. Relationships may involve more than one form of love as mentioned previously. Jess's response encompasses strong positive feelings, even though she is speaking both about people she knows as well as those with whom she may have little interaction with. A combination of the first two forms of love can also be seen in Natalie's interview when she described *loving others* as being an important value with regard to her moral self: "The biggest thing for me is learning to love people [my teammates] no matter if their moral code is different than yours." This quote illustrated the love that teammates can have for each other; there is a mutual caring that happens when teammates rely on each other for support both on and off the field, even if their definitions of being moral people are different.

Finally, Grace stated that her "work ethic" was the important value to her moral self. This relates to Aquino and Reed's (2002) characteristic of *hardworking* as exemplified in their scale.

These components of the moral self would be what positive psychology researchers would term *strengths of humanity* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Strengths of humanity encompass positive traits and values experienced within caring, interpersonal relationships; in other words, strengths of humanity manifest most often in one-to-one relationships as compared to one-to-many relationships (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The strengths of humanity also include *social intelligence* defined as the ability for an individual to process “motives, feelings, and other psychological states” (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 299) with regard to one self as well as others. However, none of the participants in the current study included social intelligence as part of their moral self-definition.

Theme #2: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players’ Perceptions of the Components of Their Athlete Selves

When participants were asked to identify values that were important to their athlete selves, half of the participants (Lauren, Lisa, Natalie, Grace, Laura) identified the value of *hardworking*. Other important components included *integrity*. In fact, many of the athletes described *work ethic* and *putting forth effort* as essential to their athlete selves. As Lauren stated, “Honestly, the biggest focus for me is just putting in as much work as I possibly can.” Similarly, both Lisa and Natalie detailed that “hard work” and “work ethic” were the most important values to their athlete selves. *Integrity* was also a strength identified by the participants (Carley, Sam, Rachel) that contributed to their athlete selves. Carley explained that, “Through hard times and bad times, [I] just try and stay true to who I am and…I know who I am.” Sam and Rachel both also mentioned the value of integrity when describing their athlete selves. Sam said, “When I think of myself as an athlete, it’s my own integrity, my own dependability.” Similarly, Rachel stated, “I guess probably your integrity and willingness to own up to things.” Peterson and

Seligman (2004) defined integrity and authenticity in a similar way:

> It includes truthfulness but also taking responsibility for how one feels and what one does. It includes the genuine presentation of oneself to others (what we might term *authenticity* or *sincerity*), as well as the internal sense that one is a morally coherent being (what we might term *integrity or unity*). (p. 205)

Furthermore, Peterson and Seligman (2004) suggested that integrity is most important in those situations where the easy thing to do may not be the right thing to do. And, this process must be self-regulated and utilized especially when there is no one there to enforce such rules.

These characteristics of the athlete self could be categorized by positive psychology researchers as *strengths of courage* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Strengths of courage are defined as "the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, either external or internal" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 199). Strengths of courage include *bravery*, *persistence*, *integrity*, and *vitality.* According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), persistence includes perseverance and industriousness, or "finishing what one has started, keeping on despite obstacles, taking care of business, achieving closure, staying on task, getting if off one's desk and out the door" (p. 202).

Theme #3: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of the Importance of Their Moral and Athlete Selves to Overall Self-Identity

Saliency of moral self. Interviews with participants in the current study revealed that 90 percent thought that their moral self was very important to their overall self-identity. In fact, three (Lauren, Sally, Laura) described it as more important than their athlete self-identity. One participant described thinking about her moral self only half of the time in terms of her behavior.

For example, when asked how important being a moral person was to her identity, Carley

responded, “I would say it’s very important. It’s something that I do everyday and it’s a huge part of me and I don’t think I would change anytime soon.” Similarly, Grace stated, “I think it’s very important because I think [that] if it’s something you don’t think about on a daily basis, then it’s hard to identify with.”

In addition, three participants (Lauren, Sally, Laura) mentioned that being a moral person was *more* important to their overall self-identity than their athlete self. For example, Lauren stated:

> I think when you think about who you are and how you want to be, I think being a moral person is more important than being an athlete or being a soccer player. It should be a more central part of your identity.

Similarly, Sally said, “I feel like [being a moral person] makes you who you are rather than a thing or sport.”

The overwhelming consensus across participant interviews was that being a moral person contributed significantly to their overall identities. These responses align closely with Blasi’s (1980, 1984) notion of the essential self. Blasi believed that the more salient one’s moral self is, the more likely s/he will act in a moral way. This also makes sense for the results of the current study because many participants did not perceive there to be conflicts between their moral selves and their athlete selves (see theme #4).

One participant (Rachel) in the current study described being a moral person as contributing only half to her overall identity. For example, Rachel talked about decision-making, especially as it related to her off-field behavior. Rachel was a first-year student-athlete who had torn her ACL at the very beginning of the season. Therefore, she was not playing collegiate soccer at the time of the interview. As she stated:

> It’s more like half and half. I kind of have two sides. I can flip on and off. I would say half the time, I’m making the right choices, especially a lot more this year since I really haven’t even been focusing on my knee because I hurt it. And, if I go out or party or anything like [that], it really hurts my knee and really affects it. So, I’ve definitely been focusing more on my moral decision-making with that.

Rachel may be in a unique situation compared to the other participants because of her status as an injured athlete. The other nine participants in the study had all completed the entirety of their competitive season. So, Rachel’s athlete self-identity may have been on hold while she recovered from her injuries.

Saliency of athlete self. On the other hand, half of the sample believed that their athlete self was also important to their identity. In fact, four of the 10 participants (Carley, Laura, Lisa, Grace) stated that being an athlete was the number one thing in their life and was most important to their overall identity. As Carley stated, “It's who I am. It's a huge part of how I grew up and am the person I am now...and it's always been the number 1 thing in my life.” In addition, Laura described how being an athlete was her full identity:

> [Soccer] is everything right now. I chose to play DI college soccer...I can’t even imagine what I would do if I don’t play soccer. I love the sport, I love the competitive nature, I love improving myself. It’s definitely my full identity...when I stop playing soccer, I’m going to have to find myself when I’m 22/23 years old and I know what I’m going to do.

Finally, although Lisa had just recently completed her final collegiate season at the time of the interview, she was still competing nationally/internationally. So, it would make sense that her athlete self would contribute significantly to her overall self-identity:

> I was wondering what it would be like to not have soccer and I think long-term

> identity...I would feel like [I was] in a dysmorphic state because being an athlete is such a huge part of my identity. Soccer has always been the priority in my life with everything, with every choice I make. I think it's a larger part of who I am.

However, other participants (Sally, Natalie, Lauren, Sam) in the current study also stated that the athlete self did not represent their entire identity. For example, Sally said, "I am a soccer player but that doesn't make me. So, like making a mistake or not playing, obviously that impacts me personally, but that doesn't define who I am." Natalie, having completed the last competitive season of her career, was able to reflect back on her entire career when she said. "It's been a really big part of my life, but I wouldn't say it's my whole identity. I have a lot of other things going for me." Further, Natalie reflected:

> I feel like as an athlete, I'm super competitive [and] I'm really driven, but sometimes when you're playing soccer, emotions are high, things get heated...so being a soccer player was a big part of me but, I don't usually swear a lot but I'd start playing soccer, and, you know? It was a big part of me, but it's not who I am. I'm much nicer, much more pleasant...[but] when I'm put in competitive situations where playing time is on the line and stuff like that...

Natalie discussed how she acted in a much different way within the soccer environment. She engaged in swearing and described herself as "not as nice" as she usually would be toward others. Her quote also describes bracketed morality (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986b; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995), a temporary style of moral reasoning not used in everyday life and previously described as similar to an altered state where there occurs the temporary suspension of moral reasoning.

One participant (Sam) made a distinction between her athlete self and herself as a soccer

player. As Sam stated:

> I would say being an athlete is a very large part, but not necessarily the fact that I'm a soccer player. I think being part of a team and then doing things athletically, like paddle boarding, kayaking, rock climbing. I love challenging myself physically and so the athlete comes out across the board, but it's really more of my sense of adventure.

Sam is the only participant who made this distinction between her soccer self and her athlete self. Sam is pointing to the fact that even athletes' senses of their athletic selves may not be contained within one label (Sonstroem, 1997).

Theme #4: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' of Perceptions of Conflicts Between Athlete and Moral Selves

When participants in the current study were asked about conflicts between being a moral person and being an athlete, many (Rachel, Grace, Sally, Laura, Carley) suggested that there were no conflicts at all between these two self-components of identity. In fact, many answered "no" quickly. Rachel explained it as, "If you're doing it right and you're being encouraging...and you're out there for the team and not just for yourself, then I think they kind of go hand-in-hand."

However, a few participants (Natalie, Grace) suggested that there were definitely opportunities present within their NCAA DI soccer experience to "break the rules." As Natalie said:

> There could be...there's so many opportunities...like, you can get money from donors, you can get cars, tickets to professional games...you could be talking to agents and that's not allowed. You could be signing stuff and selling it, you could be coaching lessons and getting paid way too much money. Like, there's a lot of opportunity for stuff like that.

Similarly, Grace mentioned that sport may "…test your judgment, but I don't think you have to

pick one over the other." So, while many of the participants in the current study seemed to be aware that there were opportunities to stray from their moral selves, they reported *not* engaging in those behaviors. More is detailed about participants' experiences with moral dilemmas in NCAA DI soccer in Manuscript #2.

Conclusions

The purpose of the current study was to understand U.S. NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of their moral selves, athlete selves, the saliency of each, and whether there was conflict between these two self-identity components. As Blasi (1980, 1984) posited about moral identity, the more an individual has adopted her moral self into her overall self-identity, the more likely she is to act in a moral way, regardless of context. Interestingly, nine of the 10 participants in the current study noted that being a moral person was "very important" to their identities and three participants mentioned that being a moral person was even more important than being an athlete; in fact, most participants could not find contradictions between their athlete and moral selves. Related to why some athletes may act morally while others do not, Colby and Damon (1992) interviewed 23 individuals and then used criteria to classify them as "moral exemplars." Based on their interviews, a final set of five criteria was used to identify moral exemplars as having: (1) a sustained commitment to moral ideals or principles that include a generalized respect for humanity; or a sustained evidence of moral virtue; (2) a disposition to act in accord with one's moral ideals or principles, implying also a consistency between one's actions and intentions and between the means and ends of one's actions; (3) a willingness to risk one's self-interest for the sake of one's moral values; (4) a tendency to be inspiring to others and thereby to move them to moral action; and (5) a sense of realistic humility about one's own importance relative to the world at large, implying a relative lack of concern for one's own ego

(p. 29). Similar to participants in the current study, Colby and Damon (1992) found that exemplars, over time, developed the perception that morality and the self are intertwined, that moral identity becomes "…tightly integrated, almost fused, with self-identit[y]" (p. 304).

Participants' self-definitions and reflections in the current study can also be categorized utilizing Peterson and Seligman's (2005) classifications of character strengths, namely the *strengths of humanity* and the *strengths of courage*. However, even though they valued these strengths, they also hinted at times when these strengths could be tested in U.S. NCAA DI collegiate sport. This context is unique because Division I schools typically have the largest number of students, operate with the greatest athletic budgets, and provide a substantial number of athletic scholarships (NCAA, 2017b). Therefore, we believe that it is an interesting context within which to continue to explore moral identities, values, and strengths.

Further, Peterson and Seligman (2004) have argued that virtues such as humanity and courage are universal, "perhaps grounded in biology through an evolutionary process that selected for these aspects of excellence as means of solving the important tasks necessary for survival of the species" (p. 13). To date, no research has examined character strengths within the sport context. Thus, the findings of the current study are unique and it is hoped that they will add to the sport psychology literature. Moreover, there is room within the sport psychology literature to better understand these character traits and how they are developed, much like the development of mental toughness has been studied (e.g., Bull, Shambrook, James, & Brooks, 2005; Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2007; Thelwell, Weston, & Greenlees, 2005).

Recommendations for Sport Psychology Practitioners (SPPs)

It is also important for sport psychology practitioners (SPPs) to understand how DI female soccer players conceptualize and understand their moral and athlete selves as well as the

moral conflicts they may face. When SPPs have a better understand of these identities, they can help develop the strengths that athletes already have as well as those they do not possess as much of. Then, they may also be better able to help athletes grow more holistically. Furthermore, sport psychology, similar to positive psychology, builds on individual's strengths as opposed to her/his deficits.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although results from the current study can make a contribution to previous sport psychology literature, there are a few limitations. First, the sample was predominantly Caucasian and middle- to upper-middle-class women. Future research should include a more diverse group of athletes according to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender identity, etc. In addition, when asked whether there were any conflicts between one's athlete self and moral self, the majority of participants stated that there were none; however, a few stated that they had faced opportunities to stray from their moral selves in sport. Future researchers should explore the connection between the moral strengths and values that athletes espouse and the actual actions they take in the heat of the moment. While research exists within sport psychology focusing on how athletes reason about moral dilemmas (e.g., Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Stephens, 2001; Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996), of interest is whether—when athletes' moral identities are salient to their overall identities—they will be more likely to take moral action (Blasi, 1980, 1984). Thus, a need exists within the sport psychology literature for research, which examines moral identity saliency and moral action.

Furthermore, when interviewing individuals regarding morality, a sense of social desirability must be taken into account (Haan et al., 1985). In other words, individuals may want to be perceived as moral people, and, thus, may answer questions differently than they actually

feel or think. For example, Lauren stated, “I think people want to believe that they’re a little bit more moral than they actually are.” One could argue that being immoral or acting in an immoral way is frowned upon; thus, individuals may not want to admit, or say anything to reflect that persona around researchers, teammates, etc. (Haan et al., 1985). We believe, however, that it is positive that participants in the current study appeared to value the moral parts of themselves enough that they could define them as well as the potential dilemmas they faced in this context. In Manuscript #2, we explore these dilemmas in more detail.

References

Ahern, K. J. (1999). Pearls, pith and provocation. *Qualitative Health Research, 9*(3), 407-411.

American Psychiatric Association (APA). (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.

Aquino, K., & Reed, A. (2002). The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*, 1423-1440. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.83.6.1423

Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of moral thought and action. In W. M. Kurtines & J. L. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Handbook of moral behavior and development* (Vol. 1, pp. 45-103). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Blasi, A. (1980). Bridging moral cognition and moral action: A critical review of the literature. *Psychological Bulletin, 88*, 1-45.

Blasi, A. (1984). Moral identity: Its role in moral functioning. In G. G. Noam & T. E. Wren (Eds.), *The moral self* (pp. 99-122). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bohman, J. F. (1991). Holism without skepticism: Contextualism and the limits of interpretation. In D. R. Hiley, J. F. Bohman, & R. Shusterman (Eds.), *The interpretive turn: Philosophy, science, culture* (pp. 129-154). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1984). Divergence in moral reasoning about sport and everyday life. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 1*, 348-357.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986a). Athletic aggression: An issue of contextual morality. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 3*, 15-29.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986b). Game reasoning and interactional morality. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 147*, 257-275.

Bull, S. J., Shambrook, C. J., James, W., & Brooks, J. E. (2005). Towards an understanding of

mental toughness in elite English cricketers. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 17*, 209-227. doi: 10.1080/10413200591010085

Clair, J. A., Ladge, J. J., & Cotton, R. (2016). This is how we do it: How perceived prosocial impact offsets negative personal outcomes associated with carrying out necessary evils. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 25*, 301-321.

Colby, A., & Damon, W. (1992). *Some do care: Contemporary lives of moral commitment.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Eades, J. F., & Gray, J. (2017). Applying positive psychology in the primary school: Celebrating strengths, a UK well-being project. In C. Proctor (Ed.), *Positive psychology interventions in practice* (pp. 107-121). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In C. Willig & W. Stainton Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 179-194). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York, NY: Norton.

Fisher, L. A. (1993). “Building one’s self up”: The construction of self-identity amongst professional female bodybuilders. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California at Berkeley.

Fisher, L. A. (1997). “Building one’s self up”: Bodybuilding and the construction of identity among professional female bodybuilders. In P. Moore (Ed.), *Building bodies* (pp.135-161). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Fisher, L. A. (2014). “Where are your women?” The challenge to care in the future of sport. *Sex Roles, 74*, 377-387. doi: 10.1007/s11199-014-0399-z

Fisher, L. A., & Bredemeier, B. J. L. (2000). Caring about injustice: The moral self-perceptions of professional female bodybuilders. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 22*, 327-344.

Funk, C. D., Shields, D. L., & Bredemeier, B. L. (2016). Contesting orientations, self-determined motivation, and sportspersonship: Further validation of the contesting orientations scale. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 27*, 66-77.

Gadamer, H. (1975). *Truth and method.* New York, NY: The Seabury Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women’s development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Giorgi, A. (1985). Sketch of a psychological phenomenological method. In A. Giorgi (Ed.), *Phenomenology and psychological research* (pp. 8-22). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.

Guivernau, M., & Duda, J. L. (2002). Moral atmosphere and athletic aggressive tendencies in young soccer players. *Journal of Moral Education, 31*, 67-85.

Haan, N., Aerts, E., & Cooper, B. A. B. (1985). *On moral grounds: The search for practical morality.* New York, NY: New York University Press.

Haan, N., Smith, M. B., & Block, J. (1968). Moral reasoning of young adults: Political-social behavior, family background, and personality correlates. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 10*, 183-210.

Hart, D., Atkins, R., & Ford, D. (1998). Urban America is a context for the development of moral identity in adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues, 54*, 513-530.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology.* (W. R. B. Gilson, Trans.). New York, NY: Humanities Press. (Original work published 1913)

Iacono, V. L., Symonds, P., & Brown, D. H. K. (2016). Skype as a tool for qualitative research interviews. *Sociological Research Online, 21*(2), 12-35.

Jones, G., Hanton, S., & Connaughton, D. (2007). A framework of mental toughness in the world's best performers. *The Sport Psychologist, 21*, 243-264.

Jurkiewicz, C. L., & Giacalone, R. A. (2016). Organizational determinants of ethical dysfunctionality. *Journal of Business Ethics, 136*(1), 1-12.

Kavussanu, M. (2007). Morality in sport. In S. Jowett & D. E. Lavallee (Eds.), *Social psychology in sport* (pp. 265-278). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Kavussanu, M. (2008). Moral behaviour in sport: A critical review of the literature. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 1*, 124-138. doi:10.1080/17509840802277417

Kavussanu, M., Stanger, N., & Ring, C. (2015). The effects of moral identity on moral emotion and antisocial behavior in sport. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology, 4*, 268-279.

Kavussanu, M., Willoughby, A., & Ring, C. (2012). Moral identity and emotion in athletes. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 34*, 695-714.

Kim, Y. (2010). The pilot study in qualitative inquiry identifying issues and learning lessons for culturally competent research. *Qualitative Social Work*, *10*, 190-206. doi: 10.1177/1473325010362001

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization. In T. Lickona (Ed.), *Moral development and*

behavior: Theory, research and social issues (pp. 31-53). New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Lottman, T. J., Zawaly, S., & Niemiec, R. (2017). Well-being and well-doing: Bringing mindfulness and character strengths to the early childhood classroom and home. In C. Proctor (Ed.), *Positive Psychology Interventions in Practice* (pp. 83-105). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Mackey, S. (2005). Phenomenological nursing research: Methodological insights derived from Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 42*, 179-186.

NCAA. (2017a). *As a Division II student-athlete…do you know?* Retrieved from http://www.ncaa.org/governance/committees/division-ii-student-athletedo-you-know

NCAA. (2017b). *NCAA Division I*. Retrieved from http://www.ncaa.org/about?division=d1

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2003). Positive psychology as the evenhanded positive psychologist views it. *Psychological Inquiry, 14*, 141-146.

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification* (Vol. 1). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Quinlan, D. M. (2017). Transforming our schools together: A multi-school collaboration to implement positive education. In C. Proctor (Ed.), *Positive psychology interventions in practice* (pp. 123-142). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Sage, L., & Kavussanu, M. (2010). Moral identity and social goals predict eudaimonia in

football. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 11*, 461-466.

Sage, L., Kavussanu, M., & Duda, J. L. (2006). Goal orientations and moral identity as predictors of prosocial and antisocial functioning in male association football players. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 24*, 455-466.

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5-14. doi: 10.1037//0003-066X.55.1.5

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist, 60*(5), 410-421. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.5.410

Shields, D. L. L., & Bredemeier B. J. L. (1995). *Character development and physical activity.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Shields, D. L., Funk, C. D., & Bredemeier, B. L. (2015). Contesting orientations: Measure construction and the prediction of sportspersonship. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 20*, 1-10.

Smith, J. A. (1996). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology and Health, 11*, 261-271.

Smith, J. A. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 1*, 39-54.

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sonstroem, R. J. (1997). The physical self-system: A mediator of exercise and self-esteem. In K. R. Fox (Ed.), *The physical self: From motivation to well-being* (pp. 3-26). Champaign,

IL: Human Kinetics.

Stephens, D. E. (2001). Predictors of aggressive tendencies in girls' basketball: An examination of beginning and advanced participants in a summer skills camp. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 72*, 257-266.

Stephens, D. E., & Bredemeier, B. J. L. (1996). Moral atmosphere and judgments about aggression in girls' soccer: Relationships among moral and motivational variables. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 18*, 158-173.

Tasimi, A., & Young, L. (2016). Memories of good deeds past: The reinforcing power of prosocial behavior in children. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 147*, 159-166.

Taylor, C. (1971). Interpretation and the sciences of man. *The Review of Metaphysics, 25*, 3-51.

Thelwell, R., Weston, N., & Greenlees, I. (2005). Defining and understanding mental toughness within soccer. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 17*, 326-332. doi: 10.1080/10413200 500313636

Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2010). Bracketing in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work, 11*, 80-96. doi: 10.1177/1473325010368316

Turiel, E., & Rothman, G. R. (1972). The influence of reasoning on behavioral choices at different stages of moral development. *Child Development, 43*, 741-756.

Weiss, M. (1987). Teaching sportsmanship and values. In V. Seefeltd (Ed.), *Handbook for youth sport coaches* (pp. 138-151). Reston, VA: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Chapter 2: The White Line Theory: Moral Dilemmas Faced by U.S. NCAA Division I (DI) Female Soccer Players (Manuscript #2)

Abstract

To date, relatively little research exists with regard to how athletes think about morality within the sport context and even less exists which explore the concept of *bracketed morality* or *game reasoning* (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986b; Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Kavussanu, Boardley, Sager, & Ring, 2013; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, 1987). The studies that do exist report on participants' moral reasoning with regard to hypothetical dilemmas; very few studies are designed to ask participants to define sport moral dilemmas for themselves (e.g., Fisher, 1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000). Thus, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the moral dilemmas faced by participants in elite-level sport. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to use interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 1996) to understand 10 U.S. NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of moral dilemmas they face in sport. The participants in the current study ranged in age from 18 to 24 years (M = 20.1 years) and had been participating in soccer for an average of 14. 9 years. This is part of a larger study examining components of sport moral identity within this population. Results from the current study were developed around two major themes: (a) on-field dilemmas and (b) off-field dilemmas. Recommendations are also given for how sport psychology professionals (SPPs) can understand the real-world dilemmas NCAA DI athletes face in sport and how to best to help athletes manage them.

Introduction

Bredemeier and Shields (1984) were the first researchers to explore whether sport moral reasoning was distinct from everyday life reasoning. Using four hypothetical dilemmas (two in sport, two in everyday life), Bredemeier and Shields (1984) interviewed 50 high school students (20 non-athletes and 30 basketball players) and 70 college students (20 non-athletes, 30 basketball players, and 20 swimmers) regarding moral reasoning. They found that moral reasoning about sport dilemmas was significantly lower than moral reasoning about everyday life dilemmas for the entire sample. In addition, when looking across gender, athletic standing, and school rank, the findings held true. Based on these findings, Bredemeier and Shields (1986a) proposed that sport promotes a type of “game reasoning” or “bracketed morality,” a temporary assimilative style of moral reasoning not used in everyday life. In a follow-up study, Bredemeier and Shields (1986b) utilized similar dilemmas at the collegiate level and found a significant difference between athletes’ and non-athletes’ moral reasoning about daily life versus sport dilemmas; athletes scored significantly lower in moral reasoning maturity than their non-athlete counterparts.

Since the mid-1980s, however, little research has been conducted which examines bracketed morality within sport (Kavussanu, Boardley, Sagar, & Ring, 2013; Kavussanu & Ring, 2016). Kavussanu et al. (2013) conducted a study to explore consistency in prosocial and antisocial behavior in both the sporting and university context. In the first study, the researchers utilized the *Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale* (PABSS; Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009) with 331 British university athletes. An adapted version of the PABSS was developed in order to measure prosocial and antisocial behaviors in the university setting. The researchers found that participants reported higher antisocial and prosocial behavior toward teammates in

sport than toward other students in a university setting.

Finally, and most recently, Kavussanu and Ring (2016) aimed to determine if differences existed in both moral behavior and moral judgment between sport and student life at university. Four dilemmas (intimidating an opponent/a student, criticizing a teammate/student, stopping to help an opponent/a student, lending equipment to an opponent/notes to a student) were presented to 372 students at a British university. The researchers found that intimidation was much more likely to happen toward opponents in sport than toward students at university. Furthermore, criticizing teammates and helping opponents were less likely to occur in sport than criticizing or helping another student at university. The findings of this study provided evidence of bracketed morality.

Another factor within sport that may contribute to the moral reasoning of athletes is the moral atmosphere (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Shields and Bredemeier (1995) defined moral atmosphere as "the prevailing moral norms that recognized in a group" (p. 86). Moral atmosphere has received little attention within sport psychology research, but most researchers have examined it within adolescent sport teams (e.g., Chow, Murray, & Feltz, 2009; Faccenda, Pantaleon, & Reynes, 2009; Kavussanu & Spray, 2006; Malete, Chow, & Feltz, 2013; Romand Pantaleon, & d'Arripe-Longueville, 2009; Stephens, 2001; Stephens & Bredemier, 1996). There are several components which make up the moral atmosphere, including formal rules, informal rules, coaches, teammates.

Formal rules are implemented within sport to minimize the amount of responsibility between those individuals who are participating (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Rules are important to the sport context because they: (1) ensure that there is a fair environment at the start between all athletes; (2) give all individuals competing the same amount of information in hopes

of decreasing the amount athletes have to choose between legitimate and illegitimate strategies; (3) provide each individual the same amount of protection from harm; and (4) assign pertinent penalties for violations of rules (see Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). In addition to formal rules, other factors such as behaviors and policies of a specific sport may also contribute to the moral atmosphere (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Informal rules or norms, coaches, and teammates, are of the most important factors that contribute to the moral atmosphere. And, researchers have shown that coaches play a significant role in the decision-making of athletes (e.g., Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Miller, Roberts, & Ommundsen, 2005; Shields, LaVoi, Bredemeier, & Power, 2007; Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996).

It is important to note that almost all researchers exploring bracketed morality in sport have utilized hypothetical dilemmas, or dilemmas given to participants. Only one study to date used a design where both a hypothetical as well as self-defined moral dilemma was presented (Fisher, 1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000). And, little research exists with regard to the moral atmosphere sport, especially at the collegiate level (e.g., Stephens, 2004). Thus, the purpose of the current study was to understand the self-identified moral dilemmas faced in sport by NCAA DI female soccer players and the role of the moral atmosphere. The researchers aimed to answer the following research question:

> What role does the sport context play in US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of how they experience moral dilemmas in sport (e.g., the role of coaches, parents, significant others)?

Method

See Chapter 1 Methods section.

Results and Discussion

As previously stated, the guiding research question for the current study was:

> What role does the sport context play in US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions of how they experience moral dilemmas in sport (e.g., the role of coaches, parents, significant others)?

Utilizing game reasoning, moral atmosphere, and IPA to interpret the data, two superordinate themes with regard to NCAA DI female soccer players' experiences with moral dilemmas were identified. These results are part of a larger set of data related to NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding the components of their sport moral identity, including the saliency of their moral and athlete selves to their overall identities and also whether conflicts had arisen between self-components that are described in Manuscript I. Each theme presented next also includes subordinate themes as well as indicative quotes to support it.

Theme #1: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of Experiences with On-Field Moral Dilemmas

While there was a diverse range of moral dilemmas faced by participants during the course of play, two main subthemes emerged regarding on-field dilemmas. The first related to *the aggressive nature of soccer*, and the fact that players had to wrestle with how much aggression was too much aggression. As Carley stated:

> I mean, soccer gets pretty aggressive and just doing anything to win the ball or score…and if you hurt someone doing that, then you obviously don't want to, but you might have to, in order to get what you need to do.

While injuring another player may be a result of the aggression utilized in soccer, many of the athletes made it clear that injury was not the intent. According Weinberg and Gould (2015), what

Carley is referring to is called instrumental aggression; instrumental aggression is defined as aggression occurring in the "quest of some nonaggressive goal" (p. 540).

Furthermore, Jess talked about aggressive behaviors as a result of being in the zone. "you'll throw words around...I guess you just see that sometimes if you're really in the zone or really aggressive."

It is no surprise that aggression was an on-field dilemma that many participants in the current study faced. Much of the research conducted within morality in sport, even from early on, focused on aggression (e.g., Chow, Murray, & Feltz, 2009; Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Malete, Chow, & Feltz, 2013; Stephens, 2001). Participants in the current study noted that injuring another player was not the goal of their aggressive play, and any injury toward an opponent was purely accidental; this is instrumental aggression versus what social scientists have defined as hostile aggression, where the goal of the individual is to "inflict injury or psychological harm on another" (Weinberg & Gould, 2015, p. 540).

A second subtheme that came up in relation to on-field moral dilemmas was centered on *using tactical strategies* in order to do whatever it takes to win. For example, Lisa said:

> If someone's going in for a tackle and it's not a foul like it's clean, but you just dive on the floor to try and get a free kick or penalty…and that's always been taught. It's because that means that you can win…it just increases your chance of winning. So that's where it tests your morality and honesty as well. Say you kick the ball out and the referee calls it for you…are you going to stop and say, 'no, that was theirs?' Like, no. So I think in those instances…stuff like tactical fouling where a girl is about to score, you just pull their shirt back. It doesn't make you a bad person, really. But in the context of sports, it's tactical, it's considered part of the game.

Lauren also provided a reason as to why some athletes may do whatever it takes to win, stating:

> Athletics is so often centered around being competitive and I think that competitiveness kind of draws from morality a little bit. I think when people are very competitive and they really want to win, their mindset kind of shifts from do the right thing to do whatever it takes to win. I guess that drive to win and the drive that cause people to be competitive takes away from their more sensible side.

There are many points of interest to sport psychology researchers in Lisa and Lauren's remarks. First, Lisa discussed that doing whatever it takes to win, or increasing your chances of winning through tactical fouling has been taught to her; without knowing for sure, one could suppose that a coach or parent taught Lisa these behaviors. Secondly, Lisa's example of lying to an official gets at Bredemeier and Shields' (1984, 1986a, 1986b) construct of bracketed morality; athletes are taught that the responsibility for knowing whether or not to be moral rests with coaches or the officials. In other words, athletes are taught the adages "no harm, no foul" and "if the ref didn't see it, it didn't happen." Finally, Lisa's point of "it's part of the game" and Lauren's point about her mind shifting from being moral to doing whatever it takes to win is also important to note. It is these "borderline" behaviors within sport that are particularly interesting, as they are not violations of the formal rules of the game, but rather, athletes use the rules to their advantage. Lisa's comment about behaviors being taught in sport is important to note, too, as coaches have been found to be instrumental in the moral development of their athletes and their willingness to partake in transgressive behaviors in sport (e.g., Kavussanu & Spray, 2006; Romand et al., 2009; Steinfeldt, Rutkowski, Vaughan, & Steinfeldt, 2011).

Another participant, Sam, also described the phenomenon of bracketed morality in her experience, especially as it related to her athlete identity. She stated:

> You should have multiple parts of you. So when I'm on the soccer field, soccer is the only thing that matters at that moment. But when I'm not on the field, I am a student-athlete so therefore my grades are of the utmost importance…but I'm not going to at all slack on the field or putting the work in.

Sam's experience epitomizes bracketed morality, where she is completely separating the two identities of moral self and athlete self (see Fisher, 1993, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000). Participants in Fisher's (1997) study on professional female bodybuilders also demonstrated that female athletes could talk about how performing in the moment in sport could cause them to do things (e.g., take steroids) that they would never do in other spheres of life. The "White Line Theory" is a phrase used in soccer that creates a physical representation of this phenomenon. Once an athlete steps over the white line (i.e., sideline), everything off the field no longer matters, and the same is true when the athlete steps back over the white line into the "real world."

Theme #2: US NCAA Division I Female Soccer Players' Perceptions of Experiences with Off-Field Moral Dilemmas

A number of participants in the current study also described moral dilemmas they faced that were within their sport, but not on the playing field. For example, Jess talked about her experience of gender inequality, specifically as it related to the weight room at her university:

> I think definitely being talked down to just because you're a woman. I mean, coaches in the weight room, if you're a girl, when football comes in, that's their room…you gotta leave, because that's football. You're just soccer, you're just a girl…what are you doing here? Let's let the big dogs in and let them train for what really matters most. I definitely get a lot of those vibes.

Jess described both an inequality related to gender as well as related to the type of sport she plays. Other athletes also discussed gender inequality. Both Lisa and Lauren grew up playing with boys, and as a result, saw the inequality between genders. Lauren described how boys would be surprised when she was able to do something good like score a goal. Lisa pointed out the discrepancy in pay between men and women at the international level:

> And then moving into only women and then seeing what men get versus women. I think that's been one thing that's always stuck out to me. Especially being international as well and seeing discrepancies in pay when it gets to like high level, professionalism.

Lisa's status as an international player heightened her awareness even more to the discrepancies between men and women, especially as it relates to pay. Jess's account of the weight room and football is an interesting addition as she had no experience playing with boys growing up; however, she was keen to the fact that inequalities existed at her own university. Liberal feminists attempt to provide girls and women with the same opportunities and resources as boys and men (Hall, 1996), especially as it relates to sport. For example, before Title IX (the U.S. educational amendment that made discrimination illegal in educational settings), there were 16,000 female athletes participating in women's athletes and 90% of head coaches of women's teams identified as female; however, at the time, there were very few of those female coaches who were paid (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012).

Another off-field dilemma many participants in the current study faced within their sport was within the coach-athlete relationship. Some described their coaches asking them to do things that they did not necessarily agree with, but never questioned. For example, Lauren stated:

> When the ball rolls out near the bench [my coach] doesn't let us throw it back to the other team. And he wastes time by making them walk pretty much through us to get the

> ball…or around us…I just don't like that and I think the sportsmanlike thing to do would be to give the ball back, even if we're trying to waste time a little bit…it always makes me feel like it's not right.

When asked if she had ever approached or asked her coach about this, Lauren responded "no," but said that she had talked with her teammates about it. Jess described a similar situation where her coach asked her and her teammates to perform a drill in practice that involved the athletes physically moving each other out of the center circle on the soccer field. At the time, she was a first-year student-athlete and did not realize how wrong the situation was; as a result, she did not speak up in resistance to it. Finally, Natalie talked about coaches promising her more scholarship money and playing time throughout her career. She stated that when her coaches did not follow through, she felt it was unfair and immoral; however, she also stated that because the conversations were held within the sport context, it was "okay" and not a big deal. She contrasted that with being outside of sport in "real life" and expecting adults to follow through on promises. The difference in expectations and behaviors of the coaches as well as the athletes is yet another demonstration of bracketed morality (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986b). What is considered moral (or immoral) in one context is not the same as what is considered moral (or immoral) in another.

Jess, Lauren, and Lisa also mentioned coaches and moral dilemmas in one way or another. Jess's and Lauren's experiences both included coaches asking them to do something that crossed their own moral boundaries; however, neither of the athletes challenged those coaches. Jess would later comment that in that moment, that was her greatest sport moral failure. Lisa made mention that her coach has asked her to engage in behaviors that increase their team's chances of winning, and then he justifies said behaviors because they fall within the context of

the game. This is another example of bracketed morality.

The coach-athlete relationship can have a tremendous impact on athletes' decision-making within sport. Although a power differential exists between coach and athlete, it is a relationship that involves interdependency between the two parties (Jowett, 2005; Jowett & Cocerkill, 2002; Jowett & Meek, 2000; Jowett, Paull, & Pensgaard, 2005). Jowett and colleagues (Jowett, 2005; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett & Meek, 2000; Jowett et al., 2005) operationalized this interdependent relationship through the constructs of *closeness*, *commitment*, *complementarity*, and *co-orientation*. If a coach-athlete relationship promotes positive closeness (i.e., belief and respect), encourages discussion about sacrifice and finding common ground (i.e., promoting co-orientation), and balances compromises and sacrifices made by both parties (i.e., increase commitment), the result may be a more facilitative and effective relationship. If this type of relationship is created, athletes may perceive the power differential that exists to be minimized, and may feel more empowered to speak up when they do not agree with their coaches. If participants in the current study, namely, Lauren and Jess, had had this type of relationship with their coach, they may have felt more empowered to stand up to them.

Conclusions

The purpose of the current study was to understand moral dilemmas faced by NCAA DI female soccer players. As stated by Bredemeier and Shields (1984, 1986a, 1986b), sport promotes a temporary style of moral reasoning (i.e., game reasoning or bracketed morality) where athletes are taught that they are supposed to let coaches and officials make moral decisions for them. Prior researchers exploring bracketed morality have utilized hypothetical dilemmas in attempting to understand moral reasoning; however, the current study was designed to elicit participants' own moral dilemmas experienced. Thus, it is hoped that the findings add to

current sport psychology literature. Furthermore, this method provides a different avenue for examining and exploring moral reasoning within sport.

Recommendations for Sport Psychology Practitioners (SPPs)

It is also important for sport psychology practitioners (SPPs) to understand what types of moral dilemmas DI female soccer players face within their sport experience. When SPPs have a better understanding of these real-world dilemmas, they may be able to help athletes better navigate these predicaments. Athletes who are having constant internal turmoil may not be able to perform optimally. Therefore, SPPs may play a unique role with regard to handling moral dilemmas. For example, if the athlete is receiving pressure from her/his coach, the SPP may provide a neutral, third-party opinion. Then, they may also be able to help athletes grow morally within sport. Although not necessarily within one's job description, those SPPs who work through a holistic consulting framework could benefit athletes tremendously.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the current study fills a gap in the literature, there were a few limitations. First, the sample in the current study was relatively homogenous (e.g., Caucasian, middle- to upper--middle class women, etc.). Future research should include a more diverse group of athletes (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender identity, etc.). In addition, the year in school of the athletes may have also impacted the results; in other words, those athletes who are currently participating may be so immersed in their sport that they have not had the opportunity to self-reflect on potential moral issues. Future researchers could interview those student-athletes who had just completed their final collegiate season, or are even one or two years removed from collegiate sport to ask about the moral dilemmas they faced in sport. Furthermore, when interviewing individuals about a sensitive subject such as morality, it is important to take social

desirability into account (Haan et al., 1985); participants in the current study may have been answering in a way they thought they “should” or a way in which they thought the researchers would want to hear. It is hoped, however, that participants in the current study felt as though talking with researchers about moral dilemmas was an important experience.

References

Acosta, R. V., & Carpenter, L. J. (2012). *Women in intercollegiate sport: A longitudinal, national study thirty five year update*. Retrieved from www.acostacarpenter.org

Aquino, K., & Reed, A. (2002). The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*, 1423-1440. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.83.6.1423

Bohman, J. F. (1991). Holism without skepticism: Contextualism and the limits of interpretation. In D. R. Hiley, J. F. Bohman, & R. Shusterman (Eds.), *The interpretive turn: Philosophy, science, culture* (pp. 129-154). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1984). Divergence in moral reasoning about sport and everyday life. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 1*, 348-357.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986a). Athletic aggression: An issue of contextual morality. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 3*, 15-29.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986b). Game reasoning and interactional morality. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 147*(2), 257-275.

Chow, G. M., Murray, K. E., & Feltz, D. L. (2009). Individual, team, and coach predictors of players' likelihood to aggress in youth soccer. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 31*, 425-443.

Faccenda, L., Pantaléon, N., & Reynes, E. (2009). Significant predictors of soccer players' moral functioning from components of contextual injustice, sensitivity to injustice and moral atmosphere. *Social Justice Research, 22*, 399-414.

Fisher, L.A. (1993). "Building one's self up": The construction of self-identity amongst professional female bodybuilders. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California at Berkeley.

Fisher, L. A. (1997). "Building one's self up": Bodybuilding and the construction of identity among professional female bodybuilders. In P. Moore (Ed.), *Building bodies* (pp.135-161). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Fisher, L. A., & Bredemeier, B. J. L. (2000). Caring about injustice: The moral self-perceptions of professional female bodybuilders. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 22*, 327-344.

Guivernau, M., & Duda, J. L. (2002). Moral atmosphere and athletic aggressive tendencies in young soccer players. *Journal of Moral Education, 31*, 67-85.

Haan, N., Aerts, E., & Cooper, B. A. B. (1985). *On moral grounds: The search for practical morality.* New York, NY: New York University Press.

Hall, M. A. (1996). From liberal activism to radical cultural struggle. In M. A. Hall (Ed.), *Feminism and sporting bodies: Essays on theory and practice* (pp. 89-107). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Jowett, S. (2005). The coach-athlete partnership. *The Psychologist, 18*, 412-415.

Jowett, S., & Cockerill, I. (2002). Incompatibility in the coach-athlete relationship. In I. Cockerill (Ed.), *Solutions in sport psychology* (pp. 16-31). London: Thompson Learning.

Jowett, S., & Meek, G. A. (2000). The coach-athlete relationship in married couples: An exploratory content analysis. *The Sport Psychologist, 14*, 157-175.

Jowett, S., Paull, G., & Pensgaard, A. M. (2005). Coach-athlete relationship. In J. Taylor & G. S. Wilson (Eds.), *Applying sport psychology: Four perspectives* (pp. 153-170). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Kavussanu, M. (2007). Morality in sport. In S. Jowett & D. E. Lavallee (Eds.), *Social psychology*

in sport (pp. 265-278). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Kavussanu, M. (2008). Moral behaviour in sport: A critical review of the literature. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 1*, 124-138. doi: 10.1080/17509840802277417

Kavussanu, M., & Boardley, I. D. (2009). The prosocial and antisocial behavior in sport scale. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 31*, 91-117.

Kavussanu, M., Boardley, I. D., Sagar, S. S., & Ring, C. (2013). Bracketed morality revisited: How do athletes behave in two contexts? *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 35*, 449-463.

Kavussanu, M., & Ring, C. (2016). Moral thought and action in sport and student life: A study of bracketed morality. *Ethics & Behavior, 26*, 267-276. doi: 10.1080/10508422.2015.1012764

Kavussanu, M., & Spray, C. M. (2006). Contextual influences on moral functioning of male youth footballers. *The Sport Psychologist, 20*, 1-23.

Malete, L., Chow, G. M., & Feltz, D. L. (2013). Influence of coaching efficacy and coaching competency on athlete-level moral variables in Botswana youth soccer. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 43*, 2107-2119. doi: 10.1111/jasp.12164

Miller, B. W., Roberts, G. C., & Ommundsen, Y. (2005). Effect of perceived motivational climate on moral functioning, team moral atmosphere perceptions, and the legitimacy of intentionally injurious acts among competitive youth football players. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 6*, 461-477.

Romand, P., Pantaléon, N., & d'Arripe-longueville, F. (2009). Effects of age, competitive level and perceived moral atmosphere on moral functioning of soccer players. *International*

Journal of Sport Psychology, 40, 284-305.

Shields, D. L. L., & Bredemeier B. J. L. (1995). *Character development and physical activity.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Shields, D. L., LaVoi, N. M., Bredemeier, B. L., & Power, F. C. (2007). Predictors of poor sportspersonship in youth sports: Personal attitudes and social influences. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 29*, 747-762.

Smith, J. A. (1996). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology and Health, 11*, 261-271.

Smith, J. A. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 1*, 39-54.

Steinfeldt, J. A., Rutkowski, L. A., Vaughan, E. L., & Steinfeldt, M. C. (2011). Masculinity, moral atmosphere, and moral functioning of high school football players. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 33*, 215-234.

Stephens, D. E. (2001). Predictors of aggressive tendencies in girls' basketball: An examination of beginning and advanced participants in a summer skills camp. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 72*, 257-266.

Stephens, D. E. (2004). Moral atmosphere and aggression in collegiate intramural sport. *International Sports Journal, 8*, 65-75.

Stephens, D. E., & Bredemeier, B. J. L. (1996). Moral atmosphere and judgments about aggression in girls' soccer: Relationships among moral and motivational variables. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 18*, 158-173.

Weinberg, R. S., & Gould, D. (2015). *Foundations of sport and exercise psychology* (6th ed.).

Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Weiss, M. (1987). Teaching sportsmanship and values. In V. Seefeltd (Ed.), *Handbook for youth sport coaches* (pp. 138-151). Reston, VA: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Chapter 3: Extended Review of the Literature

Moral Identity Research in Psychology

As previously mentioned, I am interested in exploring the construct of moral identity. Blasi (1980) drew on the work of Erikson (1968) who drew on the work of James (1890) and Freud (1933/1965, 1959). For example, Erikson (1968) described identity as the formation of the self from a psychological lens. He attempted to integrate three perspectives in order to define identity:

> 1. Structurally, identity is thought to involve a reorganization, mostly unconscious, of needs and past identifications.
> 2. Socially, it should mark a new assimilation of social expectations and values and a more personal integration into one's society and culture.
> 3. Phenomenologically, identity is manifested in a new way of experiencing oneself, characterized by a sense of unity and individuality and by a feeling of purposefulness and self-confidence. (pp. 159-165)

Thus, he proposed three characteristics essential to identity: (1) it is experienced as rooted in the very core of one's being; (2) it is described as involving being true to oneself in action; and (3) it is associated with truthfulness, namely, with respect for one's understanding of reality (Erikson, 1964). Further, identity formation:

> Employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them; while he judges their way of judging him in the light of how he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become

> relevant to him. (Erikson, 1968, pp. 22-23)

Although Erikson's theory has been used again and again, there have been several critiques of his work. For example, Sneed, Schwartz, and Cross (2006) suggested that Erikson's population of individuals from which he based his theory consisted of those who identified as White. Furthermore, Erikson's theory has been criticized for being more applicable to boys and men than girls and women. Taking a feminist standpoint, Sorell and Montgomery (2001) argued that Erikson's theory excluded the lived realities of women's lives.

However, Blasi (1980, 1984) utilized Erikson's model as a basis upon which to create his understanding of moral identity. He suggested that identity was the same as the essential self. More pointedly, the essential or core self was defined as:

> The set of those aspects without which the individual would see himself or herself to be radically different; those so central that one could not even imagine being deprived of them; those whose loss would be considered and felt as irreparable. (Blasi, 1984, p. 131)

By following Erikson and defining identity in this way, Blasi saw it as pertinent to moral functioning in two ways. First, being a moral person, acting fairly and in a just way in a general sense may be a part of an individual's essential self. Second, individuals will identify more closely with some moral aspects as compared to others. For example, "where one person sees compassion as being essential to his or her identity, another emphasizes fairness and justice; where one considers obedience as a central ideal, another stresses moral freedom" (Blasi, 1984, p. 132). Moral identity, then, differs by individual, but can be just as important to each person's identity.

Gilligan (1982) has critiqued those theorists like Erikson and Blasi who came before her because they did not include women's identity development and only focused on that of men's.

To that end, Gilligan (1982) interviewed girls and women as well as men to determine if they defined themselves through connection or disconnection and how they viewed their moral selves. She found that women's "identity is defined in a context of relationship and judged by a standard of responsibility and care" (p. 160). Within her (1982) study, she asked participants at age 27, "How would you describe yourself to yourself?" (p. 158). This question elicited answers that confirmed the combination of identity and intimacy within women's [moral and self] development: "all of the women describe a relationship, depicting their identity *in* the connection of future mother, present wife, adopted child, or past lover" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 159). Thus, the ways in which women described themselves were based on an "ethic of nurturance, responsibility, and care" for other people (Gilligan, 1982, p. 159).

Using Gilligan's theoretical framework, Fisher (1997) interviewed 10 female bodybuilders to explore the relationship between the subculture of bodybuilding and female bodybuilders' conceptions of self. Through her personal and social interviews with these women, she found that they often used both justice (e.g., Kohlberg) and care (e.g., Gilligan) reasoning in their deliberations about moral dilemmas. However, Fisher reported that participants often had feelings of self-inadequacy and tried to feel better via the manipulation of their bodies. They experienced low self-esteem prior to bodybuilding competitions based on how their bodies looked (in comparison to the "ideal' female bodybuilder) as well as engaged in patterns of disordered eating behavior to achieve a certain look. As a result of the study, Fisher (1997) proposed that the subculture of bodybuilding promotes unhealthy coping strategies as well as a type of self-focused morality. Many bodybuilders discussed having moral concerns about several aspects of the culture of bodybuilding, especially as it related to the policing of their bodies. Her work examined both personal and social influences on moral identity and on the moral dilemma

that many athletes face regarding taking performance-enhancing drugs.

Finally, using both Erikson and Blasi as a framework, Aquino and Reed (2002) attempted to quantitatively measure the self-importance of one's moral identity and its relationship to moral cognition and moral behavior. The researchers posited that in addition to understanding moral identity with regard to traits, moral identity might also be influenced by one's social identity. Similar to Blasi, Aquino and Reed (2002) defined moral identity as "a self-conception organized around a set of moral traits" (p. 1424). So, in making the connection between moral identity and moral traits, they set out to determine how essential an individual views the moral trait to be to her/his self-concept.

Aquino and Reed (2002) created the Self-Importance of Moral Identity Inventory, a 10-item measure with two subscales: internalization and symbolization. The internalization dimension measured the self-importance of the moral characteristics, while the symbolization dimension measured a general sense of one's moral self as a social entity who can portray that s/he upholds those characteristics. The Cronbach's alphas of the 347 respondents were .73 and .82 for the internalization and symbolization subscales, respectively (Aquino & Reed, 2002).

A number of researchers have utilized the Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale (e.g., Clair, Ladge, & Cotton, 2016; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2016; Tasimi & Young, 2016); however, only a few sport psychology researchers have utilized the scale within sport (Kavussanu, Willoughby, & Ring, 2015; Sage & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Shields, Funk, & Bredemeier, 2015). For example, as stated in Chapter 1, Sage et al. (2006) examined the influence of goal orientation and moral identity of both prosocial and antisocial functioning in 210 male football players in the United Kingdom (UK). These researchers found that moral identity did not predict prosocial functioning; however, it explained the greatest variance in

antisocial variables and negatively predicted both antisocial judgment and behavior. In the next study, Sage and Kavussanu (2010) examined whether moral identity and social goal orientations could predict eudaimonia (i.e. a highly positive affective condition experienced when an individual moves toward self-realization, or hedonic enjoyment) in 365 footballers in the UK. They found that moral identity was a significant positive predictor of eudaimonia; in other words, when an individual's moral self was central to her/his identity, s/he was more apt to feel complete and fulfilled while competing and to feel deeply involved in football.

Kavussanu et al. (2015) examined whether moral identity inhibits antisocial behavior in 866 university students competing in a variety of team sports using the internalized dimension of the Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002) and the Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale (PABSS; Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009). The researchers found that moral identity was negatively related to antisocial behavior toward both opponents and teammates, suggesting that individuals who perceived morality as part of her/his essential self were less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors. Finally, Shields et al. (2015) investigated the influence of moral identity on moral disengagement in 713 US National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) student-athletes. The researchers utilized Aquino and Reed's (2002) internalization subscale of the Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale as well as Boardley and Kavussanu's (2008) Moral Disengagement in Sport Scale-Short (MDSS-S). Shields et al. (2015) found that those athletes who perceived moral identity to be more salient to their sense of self scored lower on a moral disengagement scale.

In summary, although little research exists in the sport context with regard to moral identity, there seems to be an increase in recent years. While many researchers like Kavusannu are testing valid and reliable measures from the field of psychology in the sport context, others

like Fisher have explored moral identity in relation to the social identity of being a competitive athlete in a competitive environment.

Sport Activism and its Relation to Moral Identity

At a very basic level, the highest level of moral development is centered around doing what is best for everyone involved (Kohlberg, 1976). When defined this way, athletes who take a stance on a political or social injustice put other people's needs in front of their own, and as a result, achieve the highest level of moral development. Acting morally, acting in a way that helps promote social and political justice, often requires self-sacrifice.

As previously stated, within moral development, Blasi (1980, 1984) proposed moral identity to be the bridge that connects moral thought to moral action. Blasi (1980, 1984) suggested that identity was the same as the essential self, and included being true to oneself in thought and action. One could argue that living with integrity, living truly as one's essential self, could also contribute to some athletes' sense of wanting to serve as an activist. For example, raising awareness and fighting social and political injustice could be perceived as a moral stance. Thus, when those athletes who choose to take action (instead of intend to take action) stand up for some cause, they are living to their true, essential self. For the purposes of the current review, I utilize Totten's (2015) definition of sport activism:

> Sport activism is advocating or acting for social or political change in sport, or through sport; for social or political change elsewhere....Sports activism engenders critical consciousness and acts as a form of critical praxis and resistance to dominant hegemony; ideologically, economically, politically, socially and culturally, in sport and sometimes outside sport too. (p. 455)

Researchers have made the delineation between those acts of activism found within sport, and

those acts external to sport (Darnell, 2012; Smith et al., 2016). However, according to Darnell (2012), athletes who "regularly embody and act upon a responsibility as sportspeople to contribute to efforts at social change that are external to sport" (Darnell, 2012, p. 2). This type of activism includes acts that target social problems, international development, peace education, and political issues (Darnell, 2012).

A number of athletes have chosen to use their status and position to raise awareness of issues of race or take a political stance. There were those individuals who formed the Olympic Committee for Human Rights (OPHR) at San Jose State University who helped empower athletes like Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games (Edwards, 1969). Other examples include student-athletes at Marquette University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Wyoming who all used their role as student-athletes to speak about racial politics and engage in the civil rights struggle during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Barrett, 1996; Edwards, 1969; Henderson, 2009). And, most recently there have been examples of athlete activists such as NBA players, Carmelo Anthony, Christ Paul, Dwyane Wade, and LeBron James at the ESPY awards (ESPN.com, 2016).

In addition, Myrdahl (2011) suggested that identity development through sport may be multidimensional:

> ...identity development is also intimately tied to the *spaces* that are produced by those performing and otherwise involved in sport. In other words, the production of identity is tied not just to sport participation but also to the sport spaces with which one is engaged. (p. 159)

According to Myrdahl (2011), *spaces* are a product of social relations. As a result, the shape and feel of a social space are produced through an exchange between "hegemonic discourses and

concomitant material practices on the one hand and resistance to these dominant norms and performances on the other hand" (Myrdahl, 2011, p. 157). With regard to sport, Myrdahl (2011) defines *sport spaces* as the environment in which sport is played and watched, in addition to the discourses, practices, and identities instrumental to the form and function of such spaces. Thus, in addition to living with one's true essential self, athletes must also be in an environment that supports their actions in standing for political and social justice. One of the most important influences within that environment is the coach. The coach-athlete relationship and its potential effect on moral identity is discussed next.

The Coach-Athlete Relationship and its Potential Effect on Moral Identity

It is no secret that the coach-athlete relationship can have a tremendous impact on athletes' decision-making within sport. Although a power differential exists between coach and athlete, it is a relationship that involves interdependency between coach and athlete (Jowett, 2005; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett & Meek, 2000; Jowett, Paull, & Pensgaard, 2005). This interdependent relationship also has a significant influence on an athlete's satisfaction, self-esteem, and performance (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). For example, Jowett and colleagues (Jowett, 2005; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett & Meek, 2000; Jowett et al., 2005) have suggested that the interdependent relationship can be operationalized through the constructs of *closeness*, *commitment*, *complementarity*, and *co-orientation. Closeness* includes the emotional connection within the coach-athlete relationship and is concerned with the connectedness of the coach and athlete and the depth of those attachments (Jowett & Cockerill, 2002). Characteristics such as trust, like, and respect are often located within this construct. *Commitment* is the coach and athlete's willingness and intention to maintain their relationship (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004). *Complementarity* refers to the type of interaction the coach and athlete engage in, as well

as the motivations and resources in developing the relationship. For example, complementarity of resources involves a reciprocal relationship whereby the coach offers knowledge of the sport and the athlete must also apply that knowledge into her/his performance. Cooperation is a key factor within the coach-athlete relationship because it can positively influence the performance of the athlete as well as contribute to the ease with which the athlete and coach function during training and competition. Finally, *co-orientation* describes the common views and opinions developed by the coach and the athlete throughout their relationship. In all of these constructs, it is said that effective communication is vital within this relationship to help the coach and athlete understand each other's thoughts, perspectives, and values.

Jowett and Meek (2000) found that negative closeness (distrust), disorientation (incongruent goals), and non-complementary interactions (power struggles) negatively impacted the quality and effectiveness of the coach-athlete relationship. Thus, a coach-athlete relationship that promotes positive closeness (i.e., belief and respect), encourages discussion about sacrifice and finding common ground (i.e., promoting co-orientation), and balancing compromises and sacrifices made by both parties (i.e., increase commitment) may result in a more facilitative and effective relationship. If this type of relationship is created, athletes may perceive the power differential that exists to be minimized, and may be more apt to make moral decisions during competition without fear of repercussions from the coach. And, within this type of relationship, coaches may be able to help athletes develop a more moral conscious that enables them to act in a moral way during competition.

Summary

As reviewed above, athletes' moral identity may be influenced by a number of factors within sport. For example, the sport culture has a tremendous influence on one's ability to speak

up about injustices or immoral actions that occur both within and outside of sport every day. Furthermore, many athletes have much to lose as a result of speaking up and thus are not always willing to do so. The coach-athlete relationship also has a tremendous influence on an athlete's moral identity development. This is because the coach is highly influential in athletes' moral decision-making within sport, and, therefore holds a lot of power within this relationship. Though these factors influence athletes' moral decision-making in sport, athletes' moral identity saliency may also have a strong impact on individuals who choose to make "the right" decision in the sporting context.

References

Aquino, K., & Reed, A. (2002). The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(6), 1423-1440. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.83.6.1423

Barrett, J. E. (1996). The Black 14: Williams v. Eaton. *Wyoming History Journal, 68*, 2-7.

Blasi, A. (1980). Bridging moral cognition and moral action: A critical review of the literature. *Psychological Bulletin, 88*(1), 1-45.

Blasi, A. (1984). Moral identity: Its role in moral functioning. In G. G. Noam & T. E. Wren (Eds.), *The moral self* (pp. 99-122). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Boardley, I. D., & Kavussanu, M. (2008). The moral disengagement in sport scale – short. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 26*(14), 1507-1517.

Clair, J. A., Ladge, J. J., & Cotton, R. (2016). This is how we do it: How perceived prosocial impact offsets negative personal outcomes associated with carrying out necessary evils. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 25*, 301-321.

Darnell, S. C. (2012). Paying the price for speaking out: Athletes, politics and social change. *International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education special bulletin, 63.*

Edwards, H. (1969). The revolt of the black athlete. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Erikson, E. H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility.* New York, NY: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York, NY: Norton.

ESPN.com. (2016). LeBron James on social activism: 'We all have to do better'. Retrieved from http://www.espn.com/espys/2016/story/_/id/17060953/espys-carmelo-anthony-chris-paul-dwyane-wade-lebron-james-call-athletes-promote-change

Fisher, L. A. (1997). "Building one's self up": Bodybuilding and the construction of identity among professional female bodybuilders. In P. Moore (Ed.), *Building bodies* (pp.135-

161). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Freud, S. (1959). The dissolution of the Oedipus-complex. In *The standard edition of the complete works of Sigmund Freud: Vol. XIX* (pp. 173-182). London: Hogarth Press. (Original work published 1924)

Freud, S. (1965). *New introductory lectures in psychoanalysis.* New York, NY: Norton. (Original work published 1933)

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Henderson, S. (2009). Crossing the line: Sport and the limits of civil rights protest. The International Journal of the History of Sport, *26*(1), 101-121. doi: 10.1080/0952336080 2500576

James, W. (1890). *Principles of psychology.* New York, NY: Hold, Rinehart and Winston.

Jowett, S. (2005). The coach-athlete partnership. *The Psychologist, 18*, 412-415.

Jowett, S., & Cockerill, I. (2002). Incompatibility in the coach-athlete relationship. In I. Cockerill (Ed.), *Solutions in Sport Psychology* (pp. 16-31). London: Thompson Learning.

Jowett, S., & Cockerill, I. M. (2003). Olympic medalists' perspective of the athlete-coach relationship. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 4*, 313-331. doi: 10.1016/S1469-0292(02) 00011-0

Jowett, S., & Meek, G. A. (2000). The coach-athlete relationship in married couples: An exploratory content analysis. *The Sport Psychologist, 14*, 157-175.

Jowett, S., & Ntoumanis, N. (2004). The coach-athlete relationship questionnaire (CART-Q): Development and initial validation. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports, 14*, 245-257.

Jowett, S., Paull, G., & Pensgaard, A. M. (2005). Coach-athlete relationship. In J. Taylor & G. S. Wilson (Eds.), *Applying sport psychology: Four perspectives.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Jurkiewicz, C. L., & Giacalone, R. A. (2016). Organizational determinants of ethical dysfunctionality. *Journal of Business Ethics, 136*(1), 1-12.

Kavussanu, M., & Boardley, I. D. (2009). The prosocial and antisocial behavior in sport scale. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 31*, 97-117.

Kavussanu, M., Stanger, N., & Ring, C. (2015). The effects of moral identity on moral emotion and antisocial behavior in sport. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology, 4*(4), 268-279.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization. In T. Lickona (Ed.), *Moral development and behavior: Theory, research and social issues.* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Myrdahl, T. M. (2011). Politics “out of place”? Making sense of conflict in sport spaces. Leisure/ Loisir, 35(2), 153-168. doi: 10.1080/14927713.2011.567064

Sage, L., & Kavussanu, M. (2010). Moral identity and social goals predict eudaimonia in football. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 11*, 461-466.

Sage, L., Kavussanu, M., & Duda, J. L. (2006). Goal orientations and moral identity as predictors of prosocial and antisocial functioning in male association football players. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 24*, 455-466.

Shields, D. L., Funk, C. D., & Bredemeier, B. L. (2015). Predictors of moral disengagement in sport. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 37*, 646-658.

Sneed, J. R., Schwartz, S. J., & Cross, W. E. (2006). A multicultural critique of identity status theory and research: A call for integration. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory*

and Research, 6(1), 61-84.

Sorell, G. T., & Montgomery, M. J. (2001). Feminist perspectives on Erikson's theory: Their relevance for contemporary identity development research. *Identity, 1*(2), 97-128. doi: 10.1207/S1532706XID0102_01

Tasimi, A., & Young, L. (2016). Memories of good deeds past: The reinforcing power of prosocial behavior in children. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 147*, 159-166.

Totten, M. (2015). Sport activism and political praxis within the FC Sankt Pauli fan subculture. Soccer & Society, *16*, 453-468. doi: 10.1080/14660970.2014.882828

Chapter 4: Extended Methodology

In this chapter, I begin by providing a review of my own positionality and how my identities and previous experiences work to situate me in the world as well as this research study. I particularly focus on my upbringing, race, educational background, and identity as an athlete. Following my positionality statement, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that informed this study. Then, I describe the ontological, epistemological, and methodological paradigms that provided a frame for the current study and the relationship between these beliefs and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Next, I provide a detailed history of IPA and discuss how this methodology fits into the most common research paradigms used in sport psychology. I conclude this chapter by explaining how IPA was used throughout all parts of the current study.

Positionality

I am a 27-year-old Asian American woman living in a predominantly White area of the southeastern region of the United States. I was privileged to grow up with married parents in a middle- to upper-middle class family in the northwest region of the United States. I began participating in sport when I was four years old and played two sports in college (softball and soccer). I am highly educated – I have both a bachelor’s and master’s degree from Exercise Science/Kinesiology programs and am currently a third-year doctoral student in a Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior Program.

Where Are You From?

I was raised in a suburb of Boise, Idaho, in a predominantly White, middle-class area. I lived with my married parents and older sister. I am fourth generation Japanese on my father’s side and fifth generation Japanese on my mother’s side. However, my Asian American identity

never played a prominent role in my life. We would go to some Japanese festivals and we would eat Japanese food, but within my family, we very rarely talked about what being Japanese meant. My sister and I completed projects in grade/middle/high school about the Japanese internment camps that occurred during World War II, as both of our grandparents were interned. I never saw myself as looking different. Through my eyes, I was the same as everyone else. But, that was not the same for everyone else. I clearly have different physical features that separate me from many of my friends, although this was something I never identified closely with – until it was brought to my attention during my doctoral program at a football game.

I attended a small, liberal arts university in the northwest region of the United States in a suburb of Portland, Oregon for my undergraduate degree. It was the first time where I felt like a *majority* (racially), as a third of the students were from Hawaii and most of them were of Asian descent. During this time, I felt a little freer to explore my Asian American identity. I could talk with others about certain Asian foods or customs, something I was embarrassed to do with my White friends growing up. I thought that having different traditions than my White friends would make me stand out and give me unwanted attention.

When I obtained my master's degree from a small college in New England, I was again situated as the racial minority in a predominantly White area. It was an easy transition for me, as I had spent 18 years of my life in a similar environment. The setting of my undergraduate experience where I was much less of a racial minority was out of the norm for me.

I have lived in a variety of places, and have always been asked, "*Where are you from*?" From when I was young until now, I have always answered the same way: "Idaho." When I was younger, I thought that was the right answer, because that is where I was born and raised. As I got older, I began to realize that this was not what people were actually asking – they were really

asking, “What ethnicity are you?”, but I answered it the same anyway - it became a game for me. I wanted them to actually ask me what they wanted to know: “What nationality are you?” And, of course, when they asked, I would answer, “American.” Again, this was just part of the game to get them to ask me. I always knew they were really inquiring about my race and even more so, ethnicity. I was clearly Asian, but they wanted to know what “kind” of Asian. As I have gotten older and become more aware of the difference between race and ethnicity, it makes me challenge people even more in the questions they choose to ask, as well as the answers I choose to give.

This is because since beginning my PhD program at a large university in the southeast region of the United States, I have been challenged to think more critically about my Asian American identity. It has been an interesting experience in becoming more aware of my racial identity in this region of the United States and during this part of my life. I have never been made more aware of my racial identity as in the fall of 2015 at a college football game. A friend and I were standing in line at the concession stand at halftime of the game, and I began to hear a woman behind us uttering something under her breath. Finally, it became clear that she was speaking to us, when I heard her say, “F-ing Asian B****.” My friend and I immediately turned around to ask her what she said, and after her finally coming to the understanding that we had not cut in front of her in line, she apologized for what she said and told us that it was inappropriate. Was that the first time someone has called me that? No, but it is the first time I heard it. I was 25 years old when that happened, and I am not sure if I am grateful or disappointed that it took that long for something like that to happen to me directly instead of invisibly.

From this experience it became even more evident that regardless of how much I

identified (or did not identify) with my racial identity, it was always going to be one of the first things people notice about me. Now that I am much more aware of my Asian American identity, I am constantly self-reflecting on the ways in which my race impacts the interactions I have with others. My double minority status as an Asian American and as a woman may be the first thing that people notice about me and this makes me vulnerable to a number of assumptions that are incorrect (e.g., that I am an international student).

My racial identity has helped me become more aware of myself and the world around me. This is especially true with regard to how I interact with others and the assumptions I bring with me as well. For example, I try not to make assumptions about anybody I meet before getting to know them. This has been especially difficult for me since moving to the South as there are a number of stereotypes that I make associations with in this region of the country. Instead of making assumptions, I must take each person as they come to me with an open mind. Knowing how others may perceive me at first glance makes me more self-aware of how I perceive others. Because I do not want people to judge me based on my race or gender identity, I try and make more of an effort to do the same. But, I have learned that my racial identity does not define me. I am Asian American, but I am also a woman, a scholar, an athlete, a sister, a daughter, and so many other things. Although others may try and put me in a certain box because that is what makes sense to them, there is so much more that contributes to my identity.

In other words, our physical identities, the ways in which we present ourselves (either intentionally or unintentionally), do not define who we are. Thus, I am aware of how many identities the individuals in which I interview will have and I will work to explore as many aspects of their identities as possible.

Identity Development Through Sport

In addition to being Asian American, I have always been an athlete. I began participating in soccer and gymnastics when I was four years old. I started playing t-ball when I was five. I played soccer and softball competitively from when I was nine until I graduated from high school. I was fortunate that my parents were able to afford to pay for both club soccer and club softball. I played basketball through my school experiences as well as in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) from third grade until my second year of high school. I played softball for two years and soccer for four during my undergraduate degree.

My entire sporting career defined a lot of who I was, who I became friends with, and how I lived my life. When I was younger, I met many new friends through sports because they were often separate from the school setting. I always identified as an athlete. As I got older, it became a stronger identity for me as I became more and more invested in the sports I was playing. I loved playing. I played soccer in the fall, soccer and basketball in the winter, softball and soccer in the spring, and softball in the summer. There was not much time for breaks, but playing different sports allowed certain parts of my body to rest. I was fortunate enough to remain mostly healthy in my 18 years of playing competitive sport. The longest I was injured was about six weeks during my junior year of high school with a high ankle sprain. I was never injured in college, and until recently, I was not injured during my doctoral work except for a partially torn calf that I experienced while playing recreational soccer.

Coaches

During my youth sporting experience, I had many positive relationships with my coaches. There was only one coach during high school that I did not get along with, and, unfortunately, that experience deterred me from playing high school softball for two of my four years. In my

early soccer playing experiences, I had very positive relationships with all of my coaches. I developed a close relationship with one of my club soccer coaches. He had played at a very high level, was well respected within the club and held a leadership position, and was very helpful in my growth and development as a soccer player and as a person. My club coach also played an instrumental role in my ability to play collegiate soccer. He was up front with me from the beginning, and helped me a great deal in identifying schools that I would have the ability to play soccer at, and also get a great education. He did not receive a great education in his college playing experience, and, thus, he wanted that for all of his athletes. While in college, I had great relationships with both my soccer coaches throughout my four-year career. Yet again, my negative experience with my softball coach in college led me to only play two of my four years.

Conclusions

To this day, I still believe that sport has shaped me into the person I am. It is not my only identity, as I have a passion for learning and interacting with people, but it has gotten me to where I am today. Because of my positive experience in sport, I have a certain perception of what sport is, and even more so, what it has the potential to be. This arguably influences my approach to my study. I want to hear athletes' stories about the impact sport has played in their lives, and how much a sport moral identity has shaped who they are. Thus, I understand that I believe that sport is positive and can be transformative, and that is something I need to consider when analyzing the data to ensure I am not putting these "positive" assumption onto the participants whom I interview.

Finding My Research Home

My passion for morality in sport came from my *Introduction to Sport Psychology* course my junior year of college. We learned about Beller and Stoll's (1995) research at the University

of Idaho about character and moral development in athletes. Their research suggested that athletes reason at a lower moral reasoning level than their non-athlete counterparts, and the longer one competes in competitive sport, the more her/his moral reasoning level declines (Beller & Stoll, 1995). This was striking to me because I had competed in sport most of my life, and I never would have considered myself or many of my athlete friends immoral people. I thought: I have always had such a positive experience in sport − how could researchers say the opposite?

My master's degree afforded me my first qualitative research opportunity. A faculty member in my department was working on some theory building through moral disengagement and asked if I would be willing to help her in the process. It was through this study and interviewing athletes that I realized my passion for morality in sport research as well as for qualitative research. It was fascinating to me to hear about athlete's experiences about morality, how it was taught, and by whom, and their entire process of decision-making. That is what I love about interviewing people – getting to hear their process of how they came to make a decision.

As a result of that research experience, and in thinking about my dissertation research, it has made me reflect on my own sporting experience. It has challenged me to take a much more critical reflection of my experience and whether or not the behaviors I engaged in were moral or immoral. I thought about the behaviors that my coaches had taught me, and how I often abided by them without question. I think this occurred for a few of reasons. First, I had a very good relationship with many of my coaches growing up and I respected them a great deal. Thus, I never thought that my coaches would ask me to do something that would be immoral. Another reason was because of their role in helping me play at the collegiate level. Because I respected them and we had built a relationship with each other, I fully trusted that they had my best interest at heart when speaking to potential college coaches on my behalf. I think a part of me wanted

them to think highly of me so that they would then speak highly of me to others. As a result, I still question whether certain behaviors I learned in sport were moral or immoral or if they were "part of the game," and also where that line is drawn. Determining what behaviors are considered moral and immoral is something I wrestle with every time I speak with people about moral behaviors in sport.

Perspective is Everything

I have been fortunate to pursue higher education at a number of prestigious institutions. Each degree has proven to be much more difficult than the last, but all the more worth it. My undergraduate degree challenged me in a lot of ways, but also ultimately led me to my career goal and passion for sport psychology. In addition, it gave me such a wonderful experience at a small university that enabled me to build lasting relationships with my peers as well as my professors.

While obtaining my undergraduate degree, I became much closer with my father. He is the most patient person I know and always plays devil's advocate in hopes of understanding other people and their point of views. As a result, I try to emulate this in my relationships, often playing the devil's advocate. I think it was through this experience that I learned how important each person's perspective is, and that there is always more than one side to every story. In addition, I realized that I liked to hear other people's perspectives of the world.

Sport Psychology

I knew I wanted to pursue sport psychology from the first time I heard about it my first fall of college. I always knew I wanted to work with highly motivated athletes, and sport psychology seemingly fit that description much better than physical therapy, which is what I intended to do entering college. Unbeknownst to me at the time, my dad was constantly using

sport psychology techniques with me during my collegiate career. I remember during a particularly difficult part of the season, he said something about controlling what I could, and that was all I could do. Dr. Wrisberg (the founder of UT's Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior Program) is infamous for teaching us, "control the controllables," and this comes to mind when I think back about what my dad taught me.

I believe that the sport psychology field and my doctoral program especially, have challenged me to become a much more self-reflective person. I often try to understand every experience I have gone through and why it may have occurred, and even more importantly, what I can learn from it. I have been challenged in the way I think about sport. Sports are wonderful; they have the ability to bring people together, to teach people about teamwork and cooperation and other skills that translate to everyday life, and to make us better people. Since beginning my doctoral work, I have begun to think more critically about sport and if it is actually doing those things. And although I still consider myself an optimist about the future of sport, I have serious reservations about the structure and culture of sport and what is in store.

Theoretical Framework

One main theoretical framework guides this study: Blasi's (1980, 1984) self-model of moral functioning based on Erikson's (1964) Eight Ages of Man. The framework is discussed below.

Eight Ages of Man

As stated previously, using James (1890) and Freud's (1933/1965, 1959) work, Erikson (1968) described identity formation from a psychological lens. He proposed three characteristics essential to identity: (1) identity is experienced as rooted in the very core of one's being; (2) identity is described as involving being true to oneself in action; and (3) it is associated with

truthfulness, namely, with respect for one's understanding of reality (Erikson, 1964). He proposed eight critical periods that describes the human life cycle, which he called the "Eight Ages of Man" (p. 247). It is not until the third period, "Initiative vs. Guilt" that the individual begins to develop a sense of moral responsibility. During the following period, "Industry vs. Inferiority," the child is learning that her/his identity is formulated through willingness and drive to learn as opposed to physical appearance and family background. During the fifth period, "Identity vs. Role Confusion," childhood has officially come to an end, and youth begins. The youth often over-identifies and as a result, may have a complete loss of her/his own identity. During this period, the adolescent is stuck between childhood and adulthood and is working to navigate the line between the "morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult" (Erikson, 1964, p. 263). As the adolescent is transitioning into a young adult during the next period, "Intimacy vs. Isolation," s/he is eager and willing to combine her/his identity with others. The individual is seeking to commit her/himself to relationships with others, even if these commitments require sacrifices and compromises. It is also during this period that the individual fully transitions into the ethical sense, the mark of an adult. Although not a part of the current study, since I will be interviewing college-aged student-athletes, it will be interesting to observe what stage I think each participant is in according to Erikson's model.

Self-Model of Moral Functioning

As stated previously, Blasi (1980, 1984) utilized Erikson's model as a basis to create his own definition of identity. Blasi (1980, 1984) suggested that identity was the same as the essential self. Blasi's (1980, 1984) self-model of moral functioning contains three main hypothetical statements:

1. Moral understanding more reliably gives rise to moral action if it is translated into

a judgment of personal responsibility.

2. Moral responsibility is the result of integrating morality in one's identity or sense of self.
3. From moral identity derives a psychological need to make one's actions consistent with one's ideals. (Blasi, 1984, p. 99)

Blasi's (1980, 1984) self-model of moral functioning has been utilized to bridge the gap between moral thought and moral action. Blasi (1984) believed that "moral cognition and moral action are not the same; their relation is not a matter of fact but is a matter of obligation and depends on the unity of the self" (p. 133).

Blasi's (1984) notion of the essential self is an important contribution to the moral identity development literature. He suggested that one cannot measure one's essential self through traditional research measures such as rating scales and questionnaires. To arrive at a person's essential self, s/he must get at the unverbalized aspects of oneself that underlies how an individual talks about oneself, the decisions s/he chooses to make, and how s/he experiences her/his emotions (Blasi, 1984). Thus, researchers must ask participants directly about their moral selves.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) will be used in this study. IPA is rooted in phenomenology and hermeneutics; its purpose is to gain a detailed understanding of an individual's lived experience and how individuals make sense of that experience (Eatough & Smith, 2008). IPA draws from a range of phenomenological perspectives including Husserl (1913/1931), Heidegger (1962), and Gadamer (1975) as well as Giorgi (1985). Husserl has informed IPA through the emphasis of reflection such as bracketing (which is discussed further

below). Researchers who use IPA are also informed by Heidegger who utilized an interpretative phenomenological approach. The hermeneutic circle as described by Heidegger and Gadamer also informs IPA. Similar to Giorgi, IPA researchers examine the lived experience of individuals using systematic procedures. IPA differs from Giorgi, however, in that it "is as interested in the diversity and variability of human experience and is therefore, in practice, concerned with the micro analysis of convergence and divergence within a small set of accounts" (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p. 182).

In addition to phenomenology and hermeneutics, the other major influence informing IPA is idiography. "Idiography is concerned with the particular" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 29). This aspect of IPA strays from most psychological research, which is typically nomothetic. IPA's commitment to the particular occurs in two ways. "Firstly, there is a commitment to the particular, in the sense of *detail,* and therefore the depth of analysis. As a consequence, analysis must be thorough and systematic" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 29). Secondly, IPA researchers work to understand the perspective of particular people, in a particular context. As a result, IPA researchers may utilize small, purposefully selected samples.

IPA was selected for the current study because its key feature is to "focus on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for people who share a particular experience" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 45). Furthermore, IPA focuses on individuals' experiences of a particular phenomenon (e.g., sport moral identity) and emphasizes an inductive approach to truly exploring that experience. Sample sizes for IPA studies vary; however, Smith et al. (2009) suggested between three and six participants as a reasonable amount to "provide sufficient cases for the development of meaningful points of similarity and difference between participants, but not so many that one is in danger of being overwhelmed by the amount of data generated" (p. 51). In

another review, Smith (2008) proposed that five to 10 participants is sufficient.

IPA requires a method in which the participants are able to "offer a rich, detailed, first-person account of their experiences" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 56). It has been suggested that semi-structured, one-on-one interviews are the ideal method for IPA, because the goal is to uncover "detailed stories, thoughts and feelings from the participant" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 57). Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to ask pertinent follow-up questions that s/he may find interesting.

Ontological, Epistemological, and Methodological Orientation

In addition to using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) for the benefits discussed above, I chose IPA because its ontological and epistemological assumptions of this methodology align with my own ontological and epistemological beliefs. Ontology addresses the question of, "What is the nature of reality?" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 19). The current study is framed within an interpretivist paradigm, suggesting that I take up a relativist ontology. Relativism posits that reality is subjective and differs from individual to individual (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), much like the hermeneutic circle—interpretation is circular. Benoliel (1996) suggested that within the interpretive paradigm, knowledge is relative to certain circumstances (e.g., historical, temporal, cultural) and multiple realities exist (i.e., interpretations of individuals). Interpretivism encompasses the belief that social reality does not exist, nor can it be accessed, and is independent of us (Smith, 1989). Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) posited that interpretivists believe that reality can never be objective, and that we can only know it through representations.

Phenomenology. Phenomenology focuses on the lived experiences of individuals. "...it is the study of the lifeworld as we immediately experience it, prereflectively, rather than as we

conceptualize, theorize, categorize, or reflect on it" (Adams & van Manen, 2008, p. 614). Within psychology, Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) suggested there to be five main types of phenomenological methods used in the first decade of the twenty-first century: (1) Goethean pre-philosophical experimental phenomenology, (2) grass-roots phenomenology, (3) interpretive phenomenology, (4) descriptive pre-transcendental Husserlian phenomenology, and (5) Husserlian phenomenology based on a return from the transcendental (p. 165). For the purposes of this study, interpretive phenomenology will be utilized and discussed further.

Heidegger (1962) suggested, "interpretation is primary and that description is a special type of interpretation" (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008, p. 167). Thus, Heidegger's approach to phenomenology is often referred to as the interpretive or hermeneutic phenomenological method. Heidegger studied under Husserl who also believed that "both description and interpretation [are] legitimate methods" (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008, p. 167); however, Husserl suggested that description is primary and interpretation is a special type of that description. Heidegger (1962) was primarily concerned with existence itself and "with the practical activities and relationships which we are caught up in, and through which the world appears to us, and is made meaningful" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 17).

Heidegger's most prominent contribution to both philosophy and science is that understanding is circular. When studying a new phenomenon, we are thrown forward into it. In other words, unless it is completely foreign to us, we will have some basic understanding of the phenomenon and potential things that may happen to it (Packer & Addison, 1989). "This means that we both understand it and at the same time misunderstand it; we inevitably shape the phenomenon to fit a 'fore-structure' that has been shaped by expectations and preconceptions, and by our lifestyle, culture, and tradition" (Packer & Addison, 1989, p. 33). Heidegger posited

that understanding occurs within this framework and that it is “projected” by human beings. “Projection is an existential structure; our existence is such (unlike that of the objects around us) that we are thrown into future ways of acting that are made possible by our cultural and personal history” (Packer & Addison, 1989, p. 34).

Heidegger believed that we are constantly interacting with the world around us. Human beings are “’thrown into’ a world of objects, relationships, and language” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 18). Furthermore, our existence in the world is always perspectival, temporal, and in-relation to something. The interpretation of how people make meaning of their activities is central to phenomenological inquiry.

Gadamer (1975), a student of Heidegger, furthered this idea of interpretation into his own work. Gadamer (1975) suggested, “all understanding is interpretation” (p. 350). This reinforces Heidegger’s belief of the hermeneutic circle; “everything is interpretation, and interpretation is itself indeterminate, contextual, and circular” (Bohman, 1991, p. 130).

van Manen (1990) utilized the works of Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer to his praxis; however, much criticism of his approach exist (Dowling, 2007; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). Dowling (2007) suggested that few researchers use van Manen’s approach exclusively, but often in conjunction with other contemporary influences. In addition, Dowling (2007) noted that many researchers only refer to van Manen in passing, especially when the research is framed from a phenomenological lens. Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) critiqued van Manen’s use of integrating the three theorists who came before him (i.e., Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer).

Merleau-Ponty (1962) utilized the works of Husserl and Heidegger to suggest “that, as humans, we see ourselves as different from everything else in the world” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 18). Merleau-Ponty posits that we gain our knowledge of the world from our own particular

point of view, or from some experience of the world. He focused much of his work on the embodied nature of our relationship to the world, suggesting that our bodies are not objects in the world, but rather the means of communicating with it. Thus, our perceptions of others are always formed from our own embodied perspective. So, “while we can observe and experience empathy for another, ultimately we can never share entirely the other’s experience, because their experience belongs to their own embodied position in the world” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 19).

Phenomenology methods vary and may include interviews, observations, journals, poetry, music, etc.; however, in-depth interviews that describe the “meaning of the phenomenon for a small number of individuals who have experienced it” are the most common (Creswell & Poth, 2017, pp. 162-163). The purpose of the phenomenological interview is to elicit individual’s stories about her/his lives. van Manen (1990) suggested that the phenomenologic interview serves two main purposes: (a) may be used to explore and gather experiential narrative material that may provide insight into a better understanding of some phenomenon, and (b) may be used as a tool to develop a conversational relationship with the individual about her/his perception of an experience. Furthermore, Seidman (1998) suggested there to be three iterative interviews for phenomenological interviewing: (a) Interview 1, the Focused Life History; (b) Interview 2, the Details of Experience, and (c) Interview 3, Reflection on the Meaning. The first interview involves the participant stating their personal life history as it relates to a specific phenomenon, from past experiences leading up to the present. The second interview focuses on the present narrative, aiming to understand the individual’s current experience of the phenomenon. Finally, the third interview involves the individual discussing the meaning of her/his experiences (Seidman, 1998). For the purposes of this study, the second type of interview (details of experience) was primarily utilized.

Phenomenology has been used frequently within psychology, especially with Giorgi and his method for conducting phenomenology in psychology. Because of the psychological underpinnings, several studies within the sport psychology field have utilized phenomenology as a methodology (e.g., Crust, Keegan, Piggott, & Swann, 2011; Gamble, Hill, & Parker, 2013; Gearity & Murray, 2011; Surya, Benson, Balish, & Eys, 2015). Thus, IPA seems to be an effective way to understand explore the lived experiences of those within sport.

Participants

The participants in the current study included 10 current and former NCAA DI female soccer players who ranged in age from 18 to 24 years (*M* = 20.1 years; see Table 1, Appendix A) and who had played soccer for an average of 14.9 years. The participants were diverse with regard to year in school: there were two first-year student-athletes, one redshirt (i.e., a year in which a student-athlete does not compete against outside competition; NCAA, 2017a) first-year student-athlete, one redshirt second-year student-athlete, two third-year student-athletes, one redshirt fourth-year student-athlete, and two who had just completed their final collegiate season; in addition, one participant who had completed her collegiate career was currently competing at the national/international level. All 10 self-identified as female and were on athletic scholarship. With regard to race, eight self-identified as White or Caucasian, one as multiracial, and one as African American. Seven of the 10 participants self-identified as Christian (e.g., two as Catholic, one as Episcopalian, one as LDS) and three did not claim any religious affiliation. Half the sample reported being in a significant relationship while the other half reported being single. In addition, all 10 participants reported having intact, heterosexual families (e.g., mother and father) and all but one had siblings.

In addition, four of the 10 participants reported significant knee injuries (e.g., three ACL

tears, one meniscus tear), which kept them out for at least one competitive season at the collegiate level. Additional injuries included those to the ankle, a broken nose, patellar tendinitis, a minor concussion, and a sprained toe ligament. Two participants reported not having any injuries throughout their collegiate careers.

Procedures

Interview Guide Development

A semi-structured interview guide based on previous literature (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Fisher, 1997) was developed for the purposes of the current study (see Appendix B). For the purposes of her study, Fisher (1997) created two interview guides: one that focused on personal moral identity and another that focused on social moral identity. The personal interview guide was created to generate responses with regard to three different aspects of the bodybuilder's identities (e.g., self-as-bodybuilder, self-as-female, and self-as-a-moral-person). The social interview guide was created to elicit answers regarding in- and out-group identities within the bodybuilding culture. Both of Fisher's interview guides were adapted for the current study. The Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002; as discussed in chapter 1) was also adapted for the current study.

Each participant was asked the same questions in relatively the same order. The interview guide began by obtaining general background information related to the participant (e.g., age, sport played, etc.). Then, participants were asked for a definition of sport moral identity. The interview guide then transitioned to asking questions about personal moral identity, followed by social moral identity. Finally, participants were asked about the characteristics as part of the Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale.

Bracketing

Prior to Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix F for IRB application) and data collection, I participated in an audiotaped bracketing interview to identify ways that my identities and experiences may influence the interviews with participants (Patton, 2015). Dr. Fisher interviewed me using the same semi-structured interview guide as described earlier. Upon completion of the interview, I identified any potential biases based on the audiorecording and thematizing of this interview.

In addition to the bracketing interview, memos (Tufford & Newman, 2010) and a reflexivity journal were utilized. Memos were used throughout the entire duration of the process, and I took note of my perceptions, any theoretical ties, potential themes, etc. A reflexivity journal (Ahern, 1999) was also used throughout the entire duration of the study so that I could discuss my own positionality as it related to the study. For example, I believed going into the study that most people would identify as being a moral person. Thus, my assumptions about morality in sport had the potential to influence the follow-up questions I choose to ask and the way in which I interpret the data. It was important for me to validate what each participant said and I diligently worked to create a safe space where she felt comfortable to speak openly about her process, regardless if it dovetailed with my own.

Because of my educational background, it was also important for me to minimize the power dynamic as much as possible between myself and the participant. understood that not every person may be morally self-reflective, and, therefore, may not know what each experience has taught them or have thought about their moral experiences critically. In addition to being aware of the content of my follow-up questions, I was mindful of the ways in which I asked those questions.

Pilot Study Interview

Once my positionality has been noted, I will conduct an interview with a current US NCAA Division I athlete. The pilot interview will be utilized to help me feel more comfortable with the interview guide. In addition, the pilot interview will be used to ensure that participants in the main study will be able to understand the questions and feel comfortable answering them. It will also help test the question sequencing and length of the interview (Kim, 2010). As a result, the pilot study will help improve the rigor and trusthworthiness of the current study (Kim, 2010).

Main Study Interviews

I used criterion-specific purposeful sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2017) to recruit participants for the main study. For example, I sent potential participants an email (see Appendix D) with my contact information asking if they would be interested and willing to be interviewed for a study about moral identity and their experience. Once a participant had responded via email to me and was willing to participate, I set up a time and place to meet in person that was most convenient to her. If that was not possible, a Skype interview was scheduled.

If an in-person interview was conducted, I provided the participant with an informed consent (see Appendix E) to sign before the start of the interview. If the interview was conducted via Skype, an informed consent was emailed to the participant prior to the interview time. The participant was asked to sign and email or fax the form back to me prior to the interview. The interview was audio recorded. Interviews lasted between lasted between 28 and 58 minutes (M = 41 minutes). The shorter length of interviews may have been a result of the timing of the interview (e.g., at the end of the semester, right before break), as well as the sensitive nature of the topic (Haan, Aerts, & Cooper, 1985). Each participant also chose a pseudonym before the start of the interview. After the interviews were conducted, the first author transcribed them

verbatim.

Member Checking

Once all interviews had been transcribed, I sent the completed transcript to each participant to ensure the transcriptions were an accurate representation of what she said (Patton, 2015). Because transcription of the interviews is part of the interpretive process, it is important to confirm with the participant that her words represented her intended meaning (Mackey, 2005). None of the participants asked to make changes to their transcript.

Data Analysis

There is no single method for analyzing the data within IPA. However, analysis is typically informed by eight strategies: (a) line-by-line analysis of each participant; (b) identification of emergent themes, noting both similarities and differences; (c) dialogue between the researchers and their coded data to arrive at a interpretative account; (d) development of a structure that illustrates the relationships between themes; (e) organization of themes and comments to create a final structure of themes; (f) use of supervision, collaboration, or audit to develop the coherence of the interpretation; (g) development of a full narrative, including the interpretation, typically presented in a visual guide; and (h) reflection on one's own perceptions, conceptions, and processes (Smith et al., 2009, pp. 79-80). These strategies do not necessarily move in a linear pattern; however, Smith et al. (2009) provided a set of six steps for the analysis process, especially for those researchers new to IPA.

The six-step process was completed for each case. So, both Dr. Fisher and myself independently completed the six steps for the first transcript, and then moved to the second transcript, and so on. For example, the first step of an IPA analysis involves immersing oneself in the original data, usually the first written transcript (Smith et al., 2009). This step involves

reading and re-reading the data. It is also helpful to listen to the audio recording at least once when first reading the transcript. The second step of an IPA analysis is initial noting and is the most detailed and time consuming (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher works to maintain an open mind, taking note of anything of interest. Steps one and two often merge, as researchers often start writing notes as they read the transcripts. This second step is aimed for the researchers to create a comprehensive and detailed set of notes and comments on the transcripts. There are three main types of exploratory comments the researchers may employ: (a) descriptive comments, (b) linguistic comments, and (c) conceptual comments (Smith et al., 2009). Descriptive comments focus on the content of the transcription, linguistic comments focus on the specific language use of the participant, and the conceptual comments focus on engaging with the transcript at a more conceptual level (Smith et al., 2009). These are not the only types of exploratory comments the researcher may make, but are offered as suggestions.

The third step in an IPA analysis is developing emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). This process involves breaking up the narrative flow of the transcript to reduce the volume of detail. In addition, the researchers should be working primarily with the initial notes as opposed to the transcript itself. This step is one demonstration of the hermeneutic circle. “The original whole of the interview becomes a set of parts as you conduct your analysis, but these then come together in another new whole at the end of the analysis in the write-up” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 91). Themes are generally expressed as phrases that describe the psychological essence of what was said. These themes will not only be a representation of the participant’s original thoughts and words, but also the researchers’ interpretation. The fourth step in an IPA analysis is searching for connections across emergent themes. The researcher aims to create a map or chart of how the themes fit together. During this step, some of the emergent themes may be discarded.

The main premise of this step is in “drawing together the emergent themes and producing a structure which allows you to point to all of the most interesting and important aspects of your participant’s account” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 96). Smith et al. (2009) provided two suggestions for ways to look for connections: (a) type all themes in chronological order into a list, moving themes around to form clusters that are related; and (b) print the list of themes and manually move them around to match themes which are similar (p. 96).

Step five in an IPA analysis is moving to the next case, repeating the first four steps. It is important during this step to try and bracket the ideas/themes from the first case. During this step, the researchers will inevitably be influenced by the themes of the first case; however, it is important to work to discover new themes with each case. The sixth and final step in an IPA analysis is looking for patterns across cases. This involves making comparisons across the map or table created in step four. Usually, the final result is presented in a table of themes for the entire group, “showing how themes are nested within super-ordinate themes and illustrating the theme for each participant” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 101).

The final step used in the current study was having both Dr. Fisher and myself meet to discuss our findings. This allowed us to discuss our preliminary findings and negotiate potential themes.

References

Adams, C., & van Manen, M. (2008). Phenomenology. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 615-620). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ahern, K. J. (1999). Pearls, pith and provocation. *Qualitative Health Research, 9*(3), 407-411.

Aquino, K., & Reed, A. (2002). The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(6), 1423-1440. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.83.6.1423

Beller, J. M., & Stoll, S. K. (1995). Moral reasoning of high school student athletes and general students: An empirical study versus personal testimony. *Pediatric Exercise Science, 7*, 352-363.

Benoliel, J. Q. (1996). Grounded theory and nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research, 6*, 406-428. doi: 10.1177/104973239600600308

Blasi, A. (1980). Bridging moral cognition and moral action: A critical review of the literature. *Psychological Bulletin, 88*(1), 1-45.

Blasi, A. (1984). Moral identity: Its role in moral functioning. In G. G. Noam & T. E. Wren (Eds.), *The moral self* (pp. 99-122). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bohman, J. F. (1991). Holism without skepticism: Contextualism and the limits of interpretation. In D. R. Hiley, J. F. Bohman, & R. Shusterman (Eds.), *The interpretive turn: Philosophy, science, culture* (pp. 129-154). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Crust, L., Keegan, R., Piggott, D., & Swann, C. (2011). Walking the walk: A phenomenological study of long distance walking. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 23*, 243-262. doi: 10.1080/10413200.2010.548848

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dowling, M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen. A review of different phenomenological approaches. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 44*, 131-142. doi: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2005.11.026

Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In C. Willig & W. Stainton Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (179-194). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Erikson, E. H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility.* New York, NY: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York, NY: Norton.

Fisher, L. A. (1997). “Building one’s self up”: Bodybuilding and the construction of identity among professional female bodybuilders. In P. Moore (Ed.), *Building bodies* (pp.135-

Gadamer, H. (1975). *Truth and method.* New York, NY: The Seabury Press.

Gamble, R., Hill, D. M., & Parker, A. (2013). Revs and psychos: Role, impact and interaction of sport chaplains and sport psychologists with English Premiership Soccer. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 25*, 249-264. doi: 10.1080/10413200.2012.718313

Gearity, B. T., & Murray, M. A. (2011). Athletes’ experiences of the psychological effects of poor coaching. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 12*(3), 213-221.

Giorgi, A. (1985). Sketch of a psychological phenomenological method. In A. Giorgi (Ed.), *Phenomenology and psychological research* (pp. 8-22). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.

Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. (2008). Phenomenological psychology. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 165-178).

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Haan, N., Aerts, E., & Cooper, B. A. B. (1985). *On moral grounds: The search for practical morality.* New York, NY: New York University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology.* (W. R. B. Gilson, Trans.). New York, NY: Humanities Press. (Original work published 1913)

James, W. (1890). *Principles of psychology.* New York, NY: Hold, Rinehart and Winston.

Kim, Y. (2010). The pilot study in qualitative inquiry identifying issues and learning lessons for culturally competent research. *Qualitative Social Work*, *10*(2), 190-206. doi: 10.1177/1473325010362001

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization. In T. Lickona (Ed.), *Moral development and behavior: Theory, research and social issues.* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Mackey, S. (2005). Phenomenological nursing research: Methodological insights derived from Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 42*, 179-186.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of perception* (C. Smith, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

NCAA. (2017a). *As a Division II student-athlete…do you know?* Retrieved from http://www.ncaa.org/governance/committees/division-ii-student-athletedo-you-know

Packer, M. J., & Addison, R. B. (Eds.) (1989). *Entering the circle: Hermeneutic investigation in*

Psychology. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Seidman, I. E. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Surya, M., Benson, A. J., Balish, S. M., & Eys, M. A. (2015). The influence of injury on group interaction processes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 27*(1), 52-66. doi: 10.1080/10413200.2014.941512

Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2010). Bracketing in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work, 11*(1), 80-96. doi: 10.1177/1473325010368316

van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience.* New York, NY: State University of New York Press.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to explore US NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding morality in sport. Little research exists with regard to how athletes think about morality within a sport setting (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 198b; Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, 1987). In the first manuscript, the researchers explored NCAA DI female soccer players' perceptions regarding the components of their sport moral identity, including the saliency of their moral and athlete selves to their overall identities and also whether conflicts had arisen between self-components. In the second manuscript, the researchers examined how those same participants experience moral dilemmas in sport.

Based on the interviews with the athletes, in the first study, researchers discovered that athletes identified honesty, kindness, love, and compassion as values important to their moral selves. With regard to their athlete selves, the participants identified hardworking and integrity as important values. Almost all of the participants thought that their moral self was very important to their overall identity. When asked about how important their athlete self was to their overall identity, four of the 10 participants said it was the number one thing in their life, while four other participants stated that being an athlete was important, but it was not their entire identity. Finally, half of the participants stated that there were no conflicts in being a moral person and being an athlete, and two of the participants mentioned that although they did not perceive any conflicts, soccer provided opportunities.

In the second study, the two types of dilemmas athletes experienced included on-field and off-field dilemmas. For on-field dilemmas, the participants discussed aggression as well as using

tactical strategies to do whatever it takes to win. For the off-field dilemmas, responses related to either gender inequality or the coach-athlete relationship.

This study fills a gap in the sport psychology literature and as a result, sport psychology consultants (SPCs) need to be more aware of how athletes self-identify with regard to their moral and athlete selves, as well as help athletes build on their moral strengths. If SPCs are able to do this, they can help athletes develop holistically and use sport as a vehicle to develop skills that can be used in other contexts. In addition, SPCs need to better understand the moral dilemmas athletes face in sport in order to help them deal with these issues.

References

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1984). Divergence in moral reasoning about sport and everyday life. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 1*, 348-357.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986a). Athletic aggression: An issue of contextual morality. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 3*, 15-29.

Bredemeier, B. J., & Shields, D. L. (1986b). Game reasoning and interactional morality. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 147*(2), 257-275.

Kavussanu, M. (2007). Morality in sport. In S. Jowett & D. E. Lavallee (Eds.), *Social psychology in sport* (pp. 265-278). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Kavussanu, M. (2008). Moral behaviour in sport: A critical review of the literature. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 1*, 124-138. doi: 10.1080/175098408022 77417

Shields, D. L. L., & Bredemeier B. J. L. (1995). *Character development and physical activity.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Weiss, M. (1987). Teaching sportsmanship and values. In V. Seefeldt (Ed.), *Handbook for youth sport coaches* (pp. 138-151). Reston, VA: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Appendices

Appendix A: Table 1

Table 1. Description of Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Total years playing soccer	Current year in school	Nationality	Race	Ethnicity	Injuries in college	Family structure growing up	SES growing up
Carley	21	18	RS Sr	American	White		ACL tear (soph year)	Mom, dad, older sister & brother, younger sister	Middle class
Grace	20	16	Jr	American	White			Mom, dad, older sister	Upper class
Jess	20	13	Jr	American	Multiracial	White, Spanish, Indian/Native American	None	Mom, dad	Middle class
Laura	19	15	Soph	American	White	German	Torn ligaments (first year)	Mom, dad, twin brother, younger sister	Middle class
Lauren	20	15	RS Soph	American	Caucasian	Irish	None	Mom, dad, 2 younger sisters	Upper class
Lisa	24	16	Grad Student	International	White	International	ACL tear (sr year)	Dad, mom, older brother, younger brother	Upper- middle class

Table 1. Continued

Pseudonym	Age	Total years playing soccer	Current year in school	Nationality	Race	Ethnicity	Injuries in college	Family structure growing up	SES growing up
Natalie	22	18	Winter grad	American	White		Broken nose, patellar tendinitis, sprained ligament in toe	Mom, dad, 2 older brothers, younger sister	Upper-middle class
Rachel	18	13	First year	American	White		ACL (first year)	Mom, dad, older sister	Upper class
Sally	19	13	RS first year	Female	American	African American	Torn meniscus (first year)	Mom, dad, 2 older brothers	Upper-middle class
Sam	18	12	First year	Female	American	Swedish, Danish	Concussion	Mom, dad, younger brother	Upper class

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

An Exploration of the Components of Sport Moral Identity

1. This part of the interview is a series of questions about your athletic background and personal identity. Please feel free to skip any questions you are not comfortable answering.
Age: ___________

Total years playing sport: _______________

Current status: _________________________________

Nationality:______________________

Race: ________________________

Ethnicity: ________________________

Injuries that make it difficult to compete: ____________________________________

Family structure growing up (e.g., mother, father, siblings, other people in household):

____

Socioeconomic status growing up: ___________________________________

Current relational status (e.g., partner/no partner, children):

____

Any religious affiliation: ____________________________________

2. This part of the interview focuses on how you think about morality in sport.

- **How would you define morality in sport? What things are moral issues that you have faced in sport?**

Sport Moral Identity – Personal (adapted from Fisher, 1993)

1. For some athletes, [insert applicable sport name here] is the most important thing in their life. For others, it's only a part of their life. How important is being an athlete to your identity? How much of being an athlete is who you really are?

2. What values are important to you when you think of yourself as an athlete? Are there other values that are important to you?
3. How would you describe moral people, in general?
4. How would you describe yourself as a moral person?
    a. How is the way you see yourself as a moral person similar to the way you see moral people in general?
    b. How is it different?
5. For some people, being a moral person is the most important thing in their life. For others, it's not such a central focus, not so important in their day-to-day living. How important is being a moral person to your identity? How much of being a moral person is who you really are?
    a. What values are important to you when you think of yourself as a moral person?
    b. Are these values different than the values you've described for being an athlete?
    c. As a moral person in [insert applicable sport name here], have you ever had to compromise your values? If so, what happened?
6. Are there contradictions in being a competitive athlete and being a moral person? What are they?
7. Are there times when being an athlete and being a moral person conflict?
8. Are there times when your coach asks you to do something that conflicts with your moral self?

Sport Moral Identity – Social (adapted from Fisher, 1993)

9. What particular people influenced you throughout your sport experience? (e.g., coaches, parents, teachers, teammates) In what ways?
    a. Aside from people, were there other things that influenced you (e.g., books, movies, experiences)?
10. What do you think have been your greatest moral successes? How, if at all, did those influential people contribute to those moral successes?
11. What do you think have been your greatest moral failures? How, if at all, did those influential people contribute to those moral failures?
12. Have you felt that you have ever been a moral influence on others? In what ways?
13. What do you wish was different about your moral experiences in sport?

Sport Moral Identity Inventory (adapted from Reed & Aquino, 2003)

14. What characteristics do you think make-up a moral athlete?
15. Some characteristics that other people have listed are: caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind.
    a. How would it make you feel if you were an athlete who has these characteristics?
    b. How does participating in your sport help identify you as having these characteristics?
    c. How important is having these characteristics to you?

Appendix C: Example of Reflexivity Journal Entry

Dec. 11 – Interview with Sally

This is potentially my last in-person interview. Another short one - just over 30 minutes. I'm not sure if I need to make more of an emphasis that there is no right answer. I feel like some of these women are just in a hurry to be done with the interview from the start. I try and ask good follow-up questions, but even those don't seem to foster too much more conversation.

Sally also didn't think that being a moral person + being an athlete contradict or conflict, so there isn't much meat in that portion of the interview.

I wonder if the quality of moral interviewing is sparse because of social desirability. I don't think many people are going to say that they are immoral people; so I wonder if there is a sense of having or wanting to answer the questions in a certain way.

Appendix D: Recruitment Email

Dear ___________,

My name is Teri Shigeno and I am currently a PhD student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. My advisor is Dr. Leslee A. Fisher from the UT Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior Program. I am currently doing a study investigating the experiences of moral identity in US NCAA Division I student-athletes. I was wondering if you would be available for a 45-60 minute in-person, phone or Skype interview on this subject at your convenience.

Your confidentiality would be protected throughout the process (unless you waive your rights). Also, if for some reason, you did not like the interview, you can also choose to throw it out afterwards (i.e., drop out of the study). Attached is a consent form, which also provides more information on the study. I would be happy to answer any other questions you may have.

Thank you for your time. If you are interested in participating, I can work around your schedule when it comes to setting a time and date for the interview. In your reply to this email, can you please indicate times and dates that would be convenient for you? I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Have a wonderful day!

Best,

Teri Shigeno

Appendix E: Informed Consent Statement

Project Title: An Exploration of the Components of Sport Moral Identity

Investigators: Terilyn C. Shigeno and Leslee A. Fisher

What is the purpose of this research study?
You are being recruited to participate in a study and interview about US NCAA Division I student-athletes' development and experiences of moral identity. *This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.* The Institutional Review Board is a group of people who review research to protect your rights.

How many people will take part in this study?
We hope to have 5-10 NCAA Division I student-athletes participate in this study.

How long will your part in this study last?
Interviews will last approximately 45-60 minutes. However, you can choose to opt out of the interview and study at any time.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
A phone or Skype interview will be scheduled at a date and time most convenient to you. The co-principal investigator, Terilyn C. Shigeno, will conduct this interview. You will be asked about your experiences as an elite athlete, specifically as it relates to moral behaviors within sport. The interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. You will be sent a copy of the transcript, and, the research team will ask for your feedback to ensure accuracy.

What are the possible risks from being in this study?
If you feel uncomfortable during the interview you can choose to stop the interview and remove yourself from the study, and we can help you find a qualified professional in your area to talk to if you would like. In addition, a loss of confidentiality may be a possible risk as a result of your participation in this research project.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?
It is hoped that you will find it interesting to talk about your experiences, but this is not guaranteed.

How will your confidentiality be protected?
Protecting your confidentiality is of the utmost importance to the researchers. All information and transcripts will be kept confidential; you will be asked to select a "fake name" and your real name will not be used in the interview transcripts. Only those investigators (list names here) involved in the study will have access to all identifiable information, including consent forms. The recordings from the interviews will be erased once they are transcribed. Also, your informed consent forms will be kept in a secure location. If you wish to remove yourself from the study, your data and information will be destroyed. All identifiable information will be kept for three

Initials__________

years from the date on this form.

Contact Information

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study), you may contact either of the principal investigators, Terilyn C. Shigeno at (865) 974-8768 or Leslee A. Fisher at (865) 974-9973. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the UTK IRB Compliance Officer at (865) 974-7697.

Participant's Agreement:

I have read all of the information provided above, and I have asked any questions that I may have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study, and I am aware that I may withdraw at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I have received a copy of this form.

____________________________________ _______________________

Signature of Participant Date

____________________________________ _______________________

Investigator Signature Date

Appendix F: IRB Letter of Approval

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

October 11, 2016

Teri Shigeno,
UTK - Kinesiology Recreation & Sport Studies

Re: UTK IRB-16-03282-XP
Study Title: An Exploration of Current US NCAA Division I (DI) Soccer Players' Perceptions Regarding the Components of Sport Moral Identity

Dear Teri Shigeno:

The UTK Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your **application** for the above referenced project. It determined that your application is eligible for **expedited** review under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1). However, the Board determined that approval of your application is dependent on a satisfactory response to the following **administrative stipulations**.

You must respond to the following provisos using the PI Response to Review form found in your “Incomplete Tasks” and labeled as a “Submission Correction” located in the iMedRIS system online. NOTE: DO NOT complete a new Form 1, Form 2, Form 3, etc. to answer any provisos. Please use the PI Response to Review form to create any necessary revisions to study documents. Call the IRB at (865) 974-7697 with any questions.

Submission stipulations

1. Please revise application item 18.1 (1600 Participant Recruitment) to ask participants to forward information about the study to potential participants allowing them to contact the PI if interested in the study rather than participants providing names and contact information to the PI for these individuals.

Further review by the IRB is contingent upon submission of a satisfactory response. In the event the IRB does not receive a response to this letter **within 60 days**, this project will be considered inactive and reactivation may require resubmission of the original application for Board review.

Sincerely,

Colleen P. Gilrane

Colleen P. Gilrane, Ph.D.
Chair

Institutional Review Board | Office of Research & Engagement
1534 White Avenue Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
865-974-7697 865-974-7400 fax irb.utk.edu

BIG ORANGE. BIG IDEAS.
Flagship Campus of the University of Tennessee System

Vita

Terilyn Chiemi Shigeno was born in Boise, Idaho on November 25, 1989 and was raised in Meridian, Idaho. She is the daughter of Steve and Lynn Shigeno and has one older sister, Jamie Shigeno. Teri received her Bachelor's of Science in Exercise Science and a minor in Psychology from Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon in 2012. Then, she attended Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts from 2012-2014 to obtain her Master's of Science in Exercise Science and Sport Studies with an emphasis in Sport and Exercise Psychology. In 2014, Teri began her doctoral studies in Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior at the University of Tennessee under the supervision of her advisor, Dr. Leslee Fisher. Teri received a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Tennessee in May 2017.