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NCAA Division III Coaches' Attitudes and Receptivity Toward Sport Psychology Consulting Services

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Page Grace Allen entitled "NCAA Division III Coaches' Attitudes and Receptivity Toward Sport Psychology Consulting Services." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Kinesiology.

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NCAA Division III Coaches' Attitudes and Receptivity Toward Sport Psychology Consulting Services

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Abstract

In this study NCAA Division III (D-III) head coaches (n = 731) completed an online survey assessing their attitudes (i.e., stigma tolerance, confidence in sport psychology consulting, personal openness, and cultural preferences) and receptivity toward sport psychology consultant (SPC) services, previous experiences with and access to SPC services, willingness to encourage and seek SPC services, support for possible SPC roles at NCAA D-III institutions, and if their attitudes predicted their willingness to use SPC services. Results indicated that coaches who had previous experiences with SPC services and perceived them to be effective were more willing to seek SPC services and had more positive attitudes toward SP consulting. Coaches were more willing to support the use of SPC services for performance-related concerns (i.e., enhancing performance, improving focus, and performing as well in competition as in practice) and their confidence in SPC services was the most significant predictor of their willingness to seek SPC services. Responses to an open-ended question revealed that many coaches were open to SPC services, but lacked the resources and funding. These findings on NCAA D-III coaches support and supplement previous research on coaches' attitudes and willingness to seek SPC services and provide other important insights and recommendations for practitioners and researchers.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In our society, collegiate sports play a major role in providing opportunities for some student-athletes to pursue sport and academics beyond high school. Throughout my experiences participating in competitive sport, as well as pursuing a master's level education, I have increased my awareness of the link between one's physical and mental performance. In particular, mental skills cannot only improve one's physical performance, but can also improve the overall quality of life and well-being (Association for Applied Sport Psychology, 2012; American Psychological Association, 2012; Orlick & Partington, 1988). However, there is still a lot to be learned about the role of sport psychology consultants (SPCs) within collegiate sports, and how student-athletes can benefit from services provided by SPCs. More specifically, previous studies have not been focused on the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III (D-III) athletics and NCAA D- III coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPC services. The purpose of this thesis was to explore some of the gaps in past research to get a better idea of potential opportunities or ways of gaining entry into NCAA D-III athletics, as well as what current NCAA D-III coaches think about sport psychology (SP) and SPC services. Understanding the potential and actual uses of SPCs within NCAA D-III, as well as NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPCs can help expand the field and improve the services that SPCs provide to student-athletes. In this chapter, I will cover: (a) my personal story; (b) brief literature review; (c) statement of the problem; (d) purpose of the study; (e) limitations; (f) delimitations; and (g) definitions.

Personal Story

Sports have always been an important part of my life, from my sampling years where I had the privilege and opportunity to participate in many sports (e.g., swimming, gymnastics, archery, soccer, golf, tennis, and lacrosse), to my high school and collegiate experiences where I began to primarily specialize in and focus on lacrosse. In high school, I played competitive lacrosse year-round, which was a large commitment and very challenging at times; however, I loved playing the sport and stuck with it.

When the time came to select a college, I chose a NCAA D-III college over NCAA D-I and D-II institutions. Attending a NCAA D-III college appealed to me for a variety of reasons. One of the most influential factors was the idea of playing at a very structured, competitive level, while being able to focus on my education and be involved in extra curricular activities beyond sport. Throughout my undergraduate experience, I learned a lot about myself, and the world around me. I had a difficult freshman year, which was a result of trying to do too much; I was a starter on the varsity lacrosse team, I had a challenging class schedule, I was joining clubs and organizations, and was attempting to maintain a social life. Eventually, I felt like I had very little control over my life, and that lacrosse was taking priority over everything else, including my health. Since I did not know how to manage my mental and emotional processes very well, I became burned out, both mentally and physically, and began to resent the sport.

Halfway through my sophomore year, I decided that I wanted to focus on my education, and stopped playing lacrosse. I had never quit anything in my life, and was upset with myself about doing so; conversely, I felt liberated and free from my anxiety. As I continued the rest of my undergraduate experience, I began to realize that I did not dislike the sport; rather, I disliked the feeling of not being in control of my life. During this time, I was studying psychology, and

discovered the field of sport and performance psychology. I began to finally realize how connected the mind and body truly are, and that I wanted to pursue my education in SP and motor behavior so I could help others make the connection, too.

Reflecting on my experience playing a sport at the NCAA D-III level, I feel like SPC services would have been very useful in helping me perform better in and out of sport. At a level where I was expected to be a full-time student and athlete, I found myself in a situation where I felt as if my mind was working against me rather than with me. In coming to the Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior program at The University of Tennessee, I knew I wanted to help others experience the benefits of mental skills training and improve the quality of their sport experience.

Brief Review of Literature

In the United States, sports serve many purposes such as recreation, competition, life skill development, and revenue. Specifically, the NCAA is one of the major sport organizations, with revenue of approximately $845 million dollars in the 2010-11 year, and over 1000 active collegiate members amongst the three main divisions (NCAA, 2012b; 2012c). More specifically, NCAA D-III is the largest division in terms of total members (442 members). Within all three divisions, the term "student-athlete" is used to describe those participating in sport at the collegiate level (Coakley, 1987; Marx, Huffmon, & Doyle, 2008). However, there are many differences amongst the student-athletes and their roles within the three divisions. One of the biggest differences is the fact that student-athletes at NCAA D-III institutions tend to encompass the role of "student" before "athlete" and will often have multiple roles within their campuses; whereas, at the NCAA D-I and D-II levels, many student-athletes are there to participate in the sport(s) for which they were recruited, and will oftentimes make academic and social sacrifices

to fulfill their athletic duties (Murphy, 2006; Wieberg, 2008). Although NCAA D-III is the largest division, there is little research focused specifically on NCAA D-III athletics, coaches, and/or student-athletes; the majority of research regarding collegiate athletics and student-athletes has been conducted at the NCAA D-I level, especially "big time" and very competitive NCAA D-I programs. The experiences and demands faced by participating student-athletes at the NCAA D-III level are unique and should be explored to better help these individuals excel in all aspects of their lives.

According to the SP literature, mental training can serve a variety of purposes and help athletes with all or some of the following: Enhance performance, cope with competition-related pressures, cope with injury and rehabilitation, improve focus, build confidence, enhance quality of life, and increase overall enjoyment of sports (Association for Applied Sport Psychology, 2012; American Psychological Association, 2012; Orlick & Partington, 1988; Williams & Straub, 2010; Wrisberg, Loberg, Simpson, & Withycombe, 2010; Wrisberg, Simpson, Loberg, Withycombe, & Reed, 2009). Although mental skills training is often used within the performance domain, a major concept is the idea of transferring mental skills between athletics and other domains of one's life (e.g., academics, career, hobbies) (Conley, Danish, & Pasquariello, 2010; Gould, Griffes, & Carson, 2011). It is clear that mental skills can complement and enhance one's physical performance and quality of life. In fact, athletes and coaches have consistently reported that mental skills are important to athletic performance success (Partington & Orlick, 1987; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; 2008). However, only roughly 20% to 30% of student-athletes and coaches at the NCAA D-I level report working with an SPC on their mental game (Wrisberg et al., 2009; Wrisberg et al., 2010; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007).

Therefore, there appears to be a discrepancy between importance placed on strong mental skills and actual integration of SP services.

In order to better understand the discrepancy between an emphasis placed on SPC services and actual use of mental skills training, SP researchers have sought to understand athletes and coaches' perceptions and attitudes toward SPCs. Some of the major barriers toward seeking SPC assistance identified in previous research include: stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consultation, personal openness, and cultural preference (Martin, Zakrajsek, & Wrisberg, 2012; Orlick & Partington, 1987; Partington & Orlick, 1987; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Wrisberg, et al., 2009; Wrisberg, et al., 2010; Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). Furthermore, research has found athletes' confidence in SP consultation, stigma tolerance, and personal openness to predict intentions to use SP services in the future (Anderson, Miles, Robinson, & Mahoney, 2004; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek et al., 2011). Therefore, athletes and coaches may understand the advantages of using mental skills to improve performance, but if they associate a stigma with SP and do not believe in the usefulness of SP consulting, then they will likely be less receptive to trying SPC services.

Several variables have been found to influence athletes and coaches' attitudes toward SP services. For example, positive experiences with SP services can influence coaches' and/or athletes' receptivity and attitudes toward SPC services; those who had a positive experience with SPCs and found the services to be valuable were more willing to use SPC services (Martin, 2005; Martin, et al., 2012; Wrisberg, et al., 2009; Wrisberg, et al., 2010). Other variables that may have an effect on athletes and coaches' attitudes toward SPCs include age, gender, and type of sport; younger athletes and coaches, males, and those more involved with contact sports (e.g., American football and wrestling) were less open or willing to utilize SPC services compared to

older athletes and coaches, females, and those involved in non-contact sports (Martin, 2005; Wrisberg et al., 2009; Wrisberg et al., 2010; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011).

Although athletes' attitudes and receptivity toward SPCs have been most studied, coaches are also important to study because of their influence on the athletes they coach. Coaches provide leadership and guidance for athletes as well as set standards and expectations for their teams (Murray, Mann, & Mead, 2010). However, most of the research in this area has been conducted with Olympic and NCAA D-I level coaches (Partington & Orlick, 1987; Wrisberg et al., 2010; Gould, 1991, Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). For example, one study specifically focused on NCAA D-I coaches' support of SPCs and their willingness to seek mental training services (Wrisberg, et al., 2010). Using a web-based survey to collect information from NCAA D-I coaches, results indicated that more coaches were willing to encourage their athletes to use SPC services for performance-related issues rather than personal issues. Findings also suggested that coaches who had more contact with and/or exposure to SPCs and believed them to be effective were more willing to use SPC services, especially for building confidence, improving focus, managing emotions during competition, dealing with pressure, communicating with coaches, and communicating with others (Wrisberg, et al., 2010).

In summary, no research has focused on examining NCAA D-III level coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPC services. Therefore, to better understand college coaches in general and at other divisions beyond the NCAA D-I level, research on coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPC services at the NCAA D-III level is needed.

Statement of Problem

SP researchers have gained an increasing interest in understanding coaches' perceptions of and receptivity to SPC services. One of the most recent studies focused on NCAA D-I coaches (Wrisberg et al., 2010). Although research with coaches has been explored at other competitive levels (e.g., collegiate, high school, and club), this literature is limited. In addition, there is a lack of research specifically relating to NCAA D-III coaches' receptivity to SPC services. Researchers also lack an understanding of what NCAA D-III coaches are looking for in terms of SPCs and the potential benefits of utilizing their services for student-athletes at that level. It has been acknowledged that NCAA D-III student-athletes are the epitome of the term "student-athlete," where the individuals are "students" before "athletes," yet still must meet the high demands of performance success. Understanding coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPC services can help SP professionals understand how to gain entry and work effectively with athletes and coaches at NCAA D-III institutions.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this study was to explore NCAA D-III head coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SP services and better understand usage, availability, and/or perceived benefits of using SPCs at NCAA D-III institutions. Specifically, in this study I aimed to better understand NCAA D-III head coaches': (a) experiences with and access to SPC services; (b) receptivity and attitudes toward SP services; (c) willingness to encourage their student-athletes to use SPC services; (d) willingness to seek SPC services for a variety of purposes; and (e) perceptions of the benefits of and support for SPC services. Additional purposes of this proposed study were to explore; (a) if coaches' attitudes and willingness to use SPC services vary based on age, coaching experience, gender, type of sport, previous personal experience with SPC services,

and perceived effectiveness of their previous experience; and (b) if coaches' attitudes (e.g., stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preference) predict their willingness to use SPC services.

It was hypothesized that the findings would support past research regarding the influence of age, gender, type of sport, and previous experiences on attitudes toward SPC services. Specifically, older coaches, female coaches, non-contact sport coaches, and coaches who have had previous experiences with SPC services (especially positive previous experiences) were expected to have more positive attitudes toward SP consulting and be more willing to use services (Wrisberg et al., 2010; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek et al., 2011). Additionally, it was hypothesized that stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, and personal openness would predict NCAA D-III coaches' willingness to use SPC services (see Zakrajsek et al., 2011; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). Specifically, NCAA D-III coaches with higher confidence in SP services and personal openness as well as those who associate a lower stigma with SP would be more willing to use SPC services compared to coaches with lower confidence and personal openness and higher stigma. Based on previous literature (e.g., Zakrajsek et al., 2011; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007), it was also hypothesized that confidence in SP consulting would be the most significant predictor of NCAA D-III coaches' willingness to use SPC services.

Limitations

1. Participation was limited to NCAA D-III head coaches who choose to participate in the current study.

Delimitations

1. The study's participants included current NCAA D-III head coaches.

Definitions

Confidence in SP consultation– "the belief that consultation and mental training is useful" (Martin, et al., 2012, p. 3).

Cultural preference in SP consulting – "the identification with one's own cultural background and preference for working with a consultant with a similar background" (Martin, et al., 2012, p. 3).

Mental toughness – "having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables you to: generally, cope better than your opponents with the many demands (competition, training, lifestyle) that sport places on a performer, specifically, be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control under pressure" (Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2002, p. 209).

NCAA D-III – the largest of the three NCAA divisions that "provides a well-rounded collegiate experience that involves a balance of rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and the opportunity to pursue the multitude of other co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered on Division III campuses" (NCAA, 2012d).

Personal openness in SP consulting – "the willingness to try consultation and mental training" (Martin, et al., 2012, p. 3).

Perceptions – one's personal view and interpretation of information (Martin, et al., 2012).

Sport psychology consultant (SPC) – "persons with formal training in sport psychology who are capable of providing student-athletes with the psychological and emotional skills necessary for achieving peak performance and enhancing quality of life" (Donohue, et al., 2004, p.187).

Stigma tolerance in SP consulting – "the belief that athletes are negatively labeled if they seek assistance from a consultant," and having more tolerance toward negative stigmas about help-seeking behaviors and services (Martin, et al., 2012, p. 3).

Student-athlete – "participants in college sport" (Duderstadt, 2006, p. 191)

In the next chapter, I discuss the literature on NCAA D-III athletics and student-athletes, SP and SPCs, Perceptions and attitudes toward SPC services, and coaches' perception of SP.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Sport plays an integral part of many societies, ranging from recreational and social activities to elite and professional levels of competition. The U.S., in particular, places a very high value on sport and athletics. The sport industry within the U.S. is worth an estimated $435 billion dollars including over $24 billion in revenue from professional teams and leagues and approximately $845 million in the National Collegiate of Athletics Association (NCAA) revenue (NCAA, 2012c). These facts and figures show the significance and value of sport to the general public and how much people are willing to invest and spend on good competition and athletes. With so much money being invested into sport, athletes and coaches are expected to produce winning or favorable results.

Furthermore, to live up to the high demands and expectations of the public, organizations, and/or institutions, a considerable amount of time is invested into sport participation and preparing for competition. For example, in the NCAA, student-athletes spend approximately 40 hours a week playing or training for their sport (Wieberg, 2008). This is a significant amount of time, especially when considering that many people deem 40 hours a full work week. However, unlike the average person, student-athletes are also expected to fulfill the requirements of a full-time student. Since so much time, money, and effort are put into the sport industry especially at the collegiate level it is important to explore how to support individual student-athletes in their quest for success. By keeping the mental and physical demands in perspective and providing student-athletes a variety of resources (e.g., mental skills training, academic counseling, life skills training, physical training, athletic training, strength and conditioning, etc.) their overall well-being and lives may be enhanced. In this chapter, I define and examine: (a) NCAA D-III

athletics and student-athletes; (b) SP and the roles of SPCs; (c) receptivity and attitudes toward SPC services; and (d) coaches' perceptions of and attitudes toward SPC services.

NCAA Division III Athletics and Student-Athletes

The NCAA is divided into three main divisions, Division I (D-I), Division II (D-II), and Division III (D-III), each with its own set of governing bodies, bylaws, and characteristics. For example, all three divisions must offer a certain minimum number of sports for men and women, providing an equal opportunity for both men and women teams. The minimum numbers of sports for each institution at their respective divisions are as follows: 14 sports for NCAA D-I institutions, 10 sports for NCAA D-II institutions, and 10 sports for NCAA D-III institutions (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2012). These minimum numbers for sports offered per division often reflect on the size of the institutions within each division – NCAA D-I programs are usually at large, public universities, NCAA D-II programs are usually part of smaller public and private colleges and universities, and NCAA D-III programs are often found within much smaller, private institutions.

In addition to size and type of institution, one of the most noteworthy differences between NCAA D-I, D-II, and D-III programs is that NCAA D-I and D-II institutions can offer individuals financial aid and scholarship for athletics whereas NCAA D-III cannot offer financial aid for athletic achievement. Although NCAA D-III institutions cannot offer athletic scholarships and typically do not have the funding, resources, or publicity of larger NCAA D-I and D-II institutions, it is still the largest division within the NCAA organization, with 442 total members (352 private institutions, 84 public institutions), compared to the NCAA D-I with 335 total members and NCAA D-II with 302 active members (NCAA, 2012).

The differences between the divisions are not only in facts and figures, but also in the experiences and values gained by the student-athletes while enrolled in an intercollegiate institution. All three of the divisions appear to place a large emphasis on the role of the student-athlete, in terms of their performances both in sport and academia. The term, "student-athlete," has been used more recently to describe collegiate athletes, as a way to stress the importance of maintaining the responsibilities and expectations of being both a student and an athlete (Marx, et al., 2008). Although the dual-role of being a student-athlete can be very rewarding and fulfilling, it can also be quite challenging in terms of conflicts that may arise between the expectations associated with both roles. For example, as an athlete, an individual is expected to perform at a consistent and relatively high level of play whereas a student is expected to complete assignments, take tests and quizzes, go to class, and earn appropriate grades (Coakley, 1978).

All three of the NCAA divisions use the term "student-athlete" as a way to shed a positive light on the role of individuals who choose to compete in athletics at the collegiate level. In addition to emphasizing the term, "student-athlete," the NCAA (2012a) provides an academic philosophy for each of the three divisions. In these academic philosophy statements, there are variations between each of the divisions even though they all highlight the importance of being a student and an athlete. The NCAA D-I academic philosophy claims that the goal is for student-athletes to graduate whereas the NCAA D-II statement aims to help student-athletes graduate and obtain skills and knowledge to help them succeed beyond college, and the NCAA D-III academic philosophy is based on attempting to minimize conflicts between academics and athletics, but really focuses on being a student first and foremost (NCAA, 2012b).

NCAA D-I schools are often larger institutions compared to the ones in other divisions and there may be a greater emphasis placed on athletics, creating a conflict in the individual's

ability to have and maintain a well-balanced life. For example, in the case of NCAA D-I programs, many of the student-athletes place a higher priority on their athletics, making their roles as students come second or third in focus (Coakley, 2009). Furthermore, even though most NCAA D-I institutions use the term "student-athlete," and attempt to emphasize the importance of academics and athletics, most of the student-athletes at those institutions are primarily there for athletics, especially if they have an athletic scholarship or are receiving financial aid (Coakley, 2009; NCAA, 2012a). Since many student-athletes at NCAA D-I programs tend to be more interested in maintaining athletic eligibility, along with any athletic scholarships received, a greater emphasis is often placed on the athletic roles they play. As a result, these student-athletes often end up studying more general and less demanding subjects, even if they find these topics less interesting; student-athletes do this because they often cannot maintain the type of curriculum in more demanding subjects such as medicine and law (Duderstadt, 2006).

Some have gone so far as to compare NCAA D-I athletic participation to a full time job, where the student-athlete's job is to perform well and prioritize his or her role in sport before anything else (Murphy, 2006; Wieberg, 2008). Therefore, many NCAA D-I student-athletes must make some type of sacrifice to maintain the athletic demands and standards set by the NCAA and college or university, which usually occurs in the areas of one's academic and social life.

Conversely, NCAA D-III institutions typically have smaller sport programs, and the athletics may not have the same level of competition and intensity as the larger programs, nonetheless, these programs still have very competitive and demanding expectations of student-athletes. However, in smaller programs and institutions, the roles of student-athletes may be more compatible in balancing academics and athletics; therefore, NCAA D-III institutions tend

to most accurately portray the true essence of the term's meaning, by first catering to the needs of the student, then the athlete (Coakley, 1978). Yet, even though NCAA D-III institutions place such a large emphasis on student-athletes' roles as students first, this does not mean their roles as athletes are unimportant or less physically and mentally demanding than within another division, it just means they are different.

According to the NCAA D-III philosophy statement:

Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience, and in which coaches play a significant role as educators. They also seek to establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity among their student-athletes and athletics staff (NCAA, 2011, p.vii).

Variations of this philosophy statement can be found on almost any NCAA D-III athletic website, with the reoccurring theme of helping student-athletes excel both in the classroom and in sport. NCAA D-III student-athletes are typically individuals who want to participate and compete at higher levels, but also want to focus on academics and other campus activities. These student-athletes who choose to play on a collegiate team make a large commitment to themselves and others. In addition to balancing school and extra-curricular activities, they must also devote a significant amount of time to practicing and competing in the sport. The NCAA D-III experiences and demands faced by participating student-athletes are unique to what many others

experience, and should be explored to better help these individuals excel in all aspects of their lives.

The majority of research regarding collegiate athletics and student-athletes has been conducted on NCAA D-I, especially "big time" and very competitive NCAA D-I programs while little research has focused specifically on NCAA D-III athletics, coaches, and/or student-athletes (Coakley, 2009). To better understand the needs and demands of all types of student-athletes, studies should include the other divisions, specifically NCAA D-III. Furthermore, with expectations of NCAA D-III student-athletes being as profound as ever, it is important that those individuals have access to the physical, mental, and social support necessary to fulfill their multi-dimensional obligations. Therefore, the role of SPCs should be examined, specifically in relation to the potential uses within NCAA D-III institutions. However, before examining the role of SPCs within NCAA D-III institutions, the field of SP and the functions of utilizing SPCs and their services should be understood.

Sport Psychology and SPCs

The use of mental skills has always been an integral part of athletic performance, but SP has only gained acknowledgement within the past 40 years as an actual field of study (Williams & Straub, 2010). SP is a multi-dimensional field, and examines the mental, emotional, and social aspects of sport participation and performance. Within any level of sport participation (i.e. competitive, recreational), mental skills can be implemented to enhance one's overall consistency in performance, overcome obstacles, or help an individual enjoy their sport participation.

The roles of sport psychologists and SPCs specifically in competitive sport have truly begun to emerge and develop throughout the years. Applied sport psychology aims to examine

the use of theoretical premises and interventions, based upon "psychological factors that influence participation and performance in sport" (Williams & Straub, 2010, p. 1). According to Williams and Straub (2010), SP services aim to help athletes' reach their full potential and improve overall well-being. Additionally, in the SP literature, researchers suggest that mental skills training can help athletes manage competition-related pressures, cope with injury and rehabilitation, improve focus, build confidence, enhance quality of life, and increase overall enjoyment of sports (Association for Applied Sport Psychology, 2012; American Psychological Association, 2012; Orlick & Partington, 1988; Williams & Straub, 2010; Wrisberg, Loberg, Simpson, Withycombe, & Reed, 2010; Wrisberg, Simpson, Loberg, Withycombe, & Reed, 2009).

Great athletes are typically seen as being both physically and mentally superior to most other athletes. Someone who is mentally tough can usually cope with and focus under various pressures, is resilient to setbacks, and is able to work through challenges (Gould, Griffes, & Carson, 2011). Jones et al. (2002) defined mental toughness as:

> having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables you to, generally, cope better than your opponents with the many demands (competition, training, lifestyle) that sport places on a performer and, specifically, be more consistent and better than your opponent in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control under pressure (p. 209).

This definition of mental toughness describes how managing one's mental state can be advantageous to an individual's performance and is a prime example of how performers and coaches in the sport world understand the mental advantages that can help an athlete be better than the next. In addition to improving mental toughness and using psychological skills to

enhance one's athletic performance, these skills can often be transferred to and utilized in other aspects of one's life, such as in the academic and/or professional realm (Conley, Danish, & Pasquariello, 2010; Gould, et al., 2011). According to Gould, et al. (2011), life skills often help enhance one's life by improving competence and personal growth, as well as help the individual cope with the demands of everyday life. Furthermore, life skills typically encapsulate three primary categories: behavioral skills, inter- or intra-personal skills, and cognitive skills (Danish & Nellen, 1997). Behavioral skills can include communication skills like effectively communicating with peers or authority figures (i.e. coaches). Interpersonal skills relate to assertiveness and social skills; whereas, intrapersonal skills may have to do with more goal setting, motivational, and self-organization skills. Finally, cognitive skills typically relate to making good and effective decisions (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1995). It seems plausible that learning to manage one's thoughts and emotions should be advantageous and transferable from specific sports and athletics to other areas of one's life. For example, a student-athlete who learns to use relaxation techniques to remain composed in a competition can use those same techniques to relax and prepare for an exam or interview. The importance of mental skills in maximizing one's potential in sport and in life further supports the benefits of mental skills training, in addition to physical training.

More recently, attention has been given to the implementation of SPC services, specifically within the collegiate athletic domain. Student-athletes have the ability to perform and compete at a higher level than most of the population; however, these individuals have to adjust and learn to play sport in a more competitive and intense environment than in high school or recreational athletics. For many student-athletes, college is unlike any of their previous experiences, since they typically take on many more responsibilities and stressors, such as

balancing school and athletics, managing time appropriately, and adjusting to a new type of independence and self-reliance (Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). In addition to the college-life demands, the sport demands may increase as well, with more practices and mandatory team events, as well as new types of training and development to which the individual may not be accustomed. All of these added pressures and challenges could affect student-athletes' abilities to perform at their best when it comes times to compete. On the other hand, there may be student-athletes who have yet to unleash their full potential, and mental training can help them reach the top of their sport. In these and other types of situations, an SPC and mental skills training can be beneficial toward performing at one's best, and should be further explored to understand the usefulness of SPC services at the collegiate level.

Athletes and coaches continue to report that strong mental skills are important for athletic success, and recognize that being mentally tough and using mental strategies can contribute to an advantage over competition (Laguna & Ravizza, 2003; Spieler, et al., 2007; Weinberg & Comar, 1994; Wrisberg, et al., 2009; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). Despite acknowledgment by coaches and athletes about the importance of mental skills in sport, only 20-30% of NCAA D-I universities report using SP services (Martin, Zakrajsek, & Wrisberg, 2012; Wrisberg, et al., 2010; Wrisberg, et al., 2009; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007).

Literature lacks information regarding the use of SPC services at the NCAA D-III level, specifically. Therefore, the usage of and attitudes toward SPC services at NCAA D-III institutions should be further explored; especially since SPC services could help NCAA D-III student-athletes thrive in their sports and overall lives.

Perceptions and Attitudes Toward SPC Services

In order to better understand the discrepancy between importance placed on and actual integration of mental skills, researchers have explored sport participants' perceptions and attitudes toward SPC services. By exploring perceptions and attitudes of athletes, coaches, and administrative staff toward SPC services, SPCs can understand the needs of sport participants, how to gain entry, and how to work more effectively within the athletic environment.

The Multidimensional Model of Sport Psychology Service Provision (M²SP²) (see Appendix A) (Zakrajsek & Martin, 2011) was developed from literature exploring attitudes toward SP and the factors that may be relevant toward an individual's likelihood in seeking and/or implementing the services of SPCs. Within this model, antecedents, or various types of characteristics (situational, consultant, athlete, coach/leader/instructor, and significant other), influence attitudes and beliefs about SPC services, which subsequently impact consequences related to SPC service use (intentions, behaviors, and satisfaction). These consequences of SPC service use can then influence and modify attitudes and beliefs, which then influence future intentions, behaviors, and satisfaction; therefore, there is a cyclical relationship between the two. By better understanding the interactions between antecedents, attitudes and beliefs, and consequences, SPCs can gain more insight into identifying how to approach coaches, athletes, and athletic administrators and provide more satisfying services (Martin, et al., 2012).

The primary attitudes that appear to influence athletes and coaches use of SPC services include stigma tolerance (associating negative stigma with SPC services or the belief that athletes are labeled negatively if they work with an SPC), confidence in SP consulting (belief that mental training is useful), personal openness (willingness to try consultation and mental training), and cultural preference (identification with own cultural background and preferences

for working with an SPC with a similar background; Martin, 2005; Martin, Kellmann, Lavallee, & Page, 2002; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007, 2008; Zakrajsek, et al., 2011). Overall, confidence in SP consultation continues to be highlighted as the most influential attitudinal variable impacting athletes and coaches' use of SPC services (see Anderson, Miles, Robinson, & Mahoney, 2004; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011). Personal openness and stigma tolerance have also been reported by athletes and coaches as a factor influencing service use.

Initially, one of the biggest obstacles for SPCs has been overcoming the stigma that SP is only for athletes facing major psychological problems (Martin, 2005; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). Conversely to those who understand and accept the usefulness and benefits of SPC services, there are still many who think of mental skills training and SP with the same negative connotations and stigmas as those associated with clinical psychology. Although the fields do share some similarities and approaches, they are used for very different reasons. Since clinical psychology typically helps individuals with clinical issues and diagnoses of psychopathologies (e.g., depression, substance abuse, eating disorders) people who do not know the differences between the two fields may think that only athletes with psychological and/or emotional problems need SP help (Park-Perin, 2010; Partington & Orlick, 1987).

Although there are professionals who primarily focus on the psychopathology of athletes, these are sport psychologists whose training is primarily in clinical and/or counseling psychology. SPCs primarily obtain training in kinesiology or sport science based programs and aim to help athletes learn how to use mental skills to enhance their performances and maximize their potentials. Understanding how SPCs can help athletes improve already good performances or become more consistent in sport is an important aspect to understand, in regard to eliminating some of the stigma surrounding the field of SP. Furthermore, it is in the best interest of those

studying and working within the SP field that the public and major academic institutions continue to increase their understanding of and to acknowledge SPCs as being beneficial to the advancement of competitive and recreational athletes.

Many factors may influence attitudes toward SP consulting. Such as one's previous experience using SPC services. In particular, positive experiences with SP consulting can influence coaches' and/or athletes' receptivity and attitudes toward SPC services. Those who had positive experiences with SPCs and found the services to be effective were more willing to use SPC services (Martin, 2005; Martin, et al., 2012; Wrisberg, et al., 2009; Wrisberg, et al., 2010). More effective SPCs, who helped contribute to more positive experiences have been described as available, flexible, knowledgeable, personable, able to build rapport, and seemed genuinely concerned about the athlete's well-being (Andersen, Miles, & Mahoney, 2004; Gould, Murphy, Tammen, & May,1991; Orlick & Partington, 1987; Partington & Orlick, 1987; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Wrisberg et al., 2009). By examining the general effectiveness of SPCs, researchers, and those providing SPC services can better understand attitudes and beliefs about SPC services.

Other variables that may affect one's attitudes toward SPCs include age, gender, and type of sport. For example, one study focused on high school and collegiate athletes' attitudes toward SPC services (Martin, 2005). Using the Sport Psychology Attitudes-Revised form (SPA-R), responses from 793 athletes were analyzed and examined. Results found gender, age, and type of sport to influence attitudes toward SPCs; specifically, male athletes, younger athletes (high school-aged), and athletes who participated in contact sports (American football and wrestling) tended to be less open to using SPC services compared to female athletes, older athletes (college aged), and athletes who participated in non-contact sports.

Studies on attitudes and perceptions are important for SPCs, and help understand potential participants with varying backgrounds and characteristics who could benefit from SPC services. Furthermore, there is barely any research, if any, which focuses specifically on NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes and perceptions of SPC. Since coaches are the primary leaders of athletes and teams, research should focus on them to gain a better understanding of SPC services within NCAA D-III.

Coaches' Perceptions of Sport Psychology

Coaches hold a central role within the sport setting; they are seen as teachers, leaders, and mentors, and are usually considered to be very influential and respected by the athletes they coach (Dieffenbach, Gould, & Moffett, 2002; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007) In addition to providing a form of leadership and guidance for the individual athletes, coaches also set standards and expectations for their teams. A coach is often expected to utilize skills and attributes that enhance coach-athlete interactions, as well as maximize athletes and the team's potential and performance within one's sporting domain (Murray, Mann, & Mead, 2010). Coaches encounter many pressures and conflicts, and have to regulate and balance the expectations set by others and themselves to work in an effective manner (Coakley, 1978).

Specifically, within the world of collegiate sport, most of the programs and athletic departments are comprised of many different individuals, with various roles and responsibilities. More specifically, each team has the student-athletes and the coaching staff; and depending on the division, size of program, and sport, there may be different types of coaches. However, each sport has a single head coach, who holds the responsibility and control of maintaining the program and team's integrity, structure, and discipline (Duderstadt, 2006). Along with the various other roles and responsibilities of a coach, the coach bears the responsibility of the

team's successes and failures; and a coach is often evaluated on the outcomes of the student-athletes' performances and competitions, which can cause the coach to feel more pressure to do whatever is in his or her power to bring success to the team (Coakley, 1978). Since winning and having a successful record is of great importance to a coach, the individual's decisions about his or her team and staff may be greatly impacted or directed by the need to succeed, in addition to having effective teaching and leadership skills.

Coaches have a power in the hierarchy of collegiate sports, as well as in general sports, and should be aware of this so they can use the knowledge and power for the advancement and benefit of the student-athletes and program by which they are employed (Howland, 2007). The coach typically has the final say in decisions relating directly to the team. One decision a coach may make is who can or cannot have access to the student-athletes. Therefore, the decision to use SPC services and mental skills training, as well as the decision to continue or terminate those services, are often up to the head coach. In addition to deciding whether or not an SPC's services are used, coaches' attitudes can greatly influence the student-athletes' receptivity or willingness to work with SPCs (Tod & Andersen, 2005). In order to better understand the trends and likelihoods related to the utilization of SPCs, factors that influence coaches' perceptions of and attitudes toward SPC and mental skills training should be further examined.

With athletics being as popular as ever, and less research about coaches' perceptions about SPCs in the SP literature, it is important to examine the potential roles and opportunities for SPCs by surveying the coaches, who pose as leaders of athletic teams. Most of the research in this area has been conducted with NCAA D-I or Olympic coaches (Partington & Orlick, 1987; Wrisberg et al., 2010; Gould et al., 1991, Zakrajsek, et al., 2007). For example, Wrisberg et al. (2010) found that NCAA D-I coaches were more willing to support the use of SPC services

when they perceived the services to be effective and made available. Willingness to use SPC services was also influenced by gender, where female coaches were more willing than male coaches to support the use of SPCs. In addition, coaches were more likely to support the use of SPC services for performance-based issues (e.g. dealing with pressure, improving focus, building confidence, increasing communication skills, and controlling emotions) rather than for personal issues.

Very little research has been conducted on other NCAA divisions, such as NCAA D-III athletics. An exception to this is the Zakrajsek and Zizzi's (2007) research on factors that influence track and swimming coaches' intentions to use SPC services, which surveyed 374 track and swimming coaches, from all three NCAA divisions. Using the Sport Psychology Attitudes Revised Coaches-2 form (see Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; 2008; Zakrajsek et al., 2011) this study found that confidence in SP consulting, stigma tolerance, and expectations of SPC services accounted for most of the variance in coaches' intentions to use SPC services. Although many of the coaches indicated interest in using SPC services, only 21% of the coaches reported the use of SPC services. Future research should examine reasons for this discrepancy.

Some may argue that NCAA D-III institutions are not as demanding as the other divisions, which may be true in regard to athletics alone; however, when looking at the overall demands of athletics, academics, and whatever else the student-athlete is involved in, NCAA D-III student-athletes face a lot of challenges. Therefore, NCAA D-III student-athletes could benefit greatly from SPCs and their services, which is why more research should be done on gaining entry and meeting the needs of these individuals.

Furthermore, because research indicates that athletes tend to be greatly influenced by their coach(es), it seems important to examine coaches' perceptions and attitudes on

implementing the services of SPCs. Since there is very little research on the usage of SPCs specifically at NCAA D-III institutions, it would be beneficial for SPCs to understand more about this division and NCAA D-III coaches' perceptions of and attitudes toward SPCs.

This chapter included some of the literature and findings about NCAA D-III athletics and student-athletes, SP and SPCs, perceptions and attitudes toward SP services, and coaches' perception of SP services. Most of the research has focused on NCAA D-III student-athletes and coaches' perceptions and attitudes toward SPC services, which does not tell us much about the other divisions or how these topics relate to other divisions of sport.

In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology for this thesis, which includes the participants, instrumentations used, procedures, pilot study, research hypotheses, data analyses; and analysis of open-ended comments.

Chapter III

Methodology

In this quantitative study, I used a descriptive and correlational research design. This chapter is organized by the following sections: (a) participants; (b) instrumentations; (c) procedures; (d) pilot study; (e) research hypotheses; (f) data analyses; and (g) analysis of open-ended comments.

Participants

A total of 5591 e-mails were sent out to all NCAA D-III head coaches' whose e-mails were available through their respective athletic department websites. There were 732 completed surveys returned following the first ($n = 453$) and second ($n = 278$) round of e-mails sent to the head coaches. One completed survey from the first round of e-mails was eliminated because the participant did not fit the criteria for this study. Therefore, a total of 731 (441 males and 290 females) participants were included and represented a return rate of 13.1%.

The majority identified themselves as being Caucasian ($n = 654$), and the remainder as African American ($n = 17$), Hispanic ($n = 14$), Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 13$), American Indian ($n = 2$), or Other ($n = 16$). Fifteen of the participants chose "prefer not to answer." The average age of participants was 43 years ($SD = 12.11$). Participants were grouped into four age categories, 20-29 years ($n = 111$), 30-39 years ($n = 217$), 40-49 years ($n = 179$), and 50+ years ($n = 223$). Participants' highest educational achievement included high school diploma ($n = 6$), bachelor degree ($n = 219$), master's degree ($n = 471$), and doctorate degree ($n = 33$). The majority of participants had competed as a student-athlete at the collegiate level ($n = 663$), whereas some competed at the professional level ($n = 114$), national level ($n = 46$), and Olympic

level (*n* = 12). Five participants responded that they had never participated in an organized competitive sport.

Participants ranged in years of coaching experience (*M* = 18.51, *SD* = 10.96) and were grouped into three experience categories: 0-6 years (*n* = 96), 7-15 years (*n* = 245), and 16+ years (*n* = 390). For the purposes of this study, type of sport was categorized into two groups: physical contact and physical non-contact. Physical contact sport was defined as sport that involves full or limited contact between players and equipment, intimidation, and aggression as a means of sport participation (e.g., American football, baseball, basketball, lacrosse, soccer, and wrestling) (Coakley, 2009. Physical non-contact sport was defined as sport that does not involve physical contact or intimidation between players or equipment during the sporting event (e.g., golf, gymnastics, rowing, swimming, tennis, and volleyball) (Coakley, 2009). In this study, participants who reported coaching at least one physical contact sport were grouped into the "physical contact" sport category (*n* = 452) and those who did not coach a contact sport were grouped into the "physical non-contact" category (*n* = 277).

Instrumentations

An online survey (see Appendix B) was used to collect information from participating NCAA D-III head coaches. The survey consisted of four sections: demographic information, attitudes toward SP consulting, support for and willingness to seek SPC services, and an open-ended question for coaches to provide additional comments about the use of SPCs. Each is described below.

Demographics. The demographic section of the questionnaire included the following items: gender, age, race, institutional conference, highest academic achievement, sport participation, years of coaching experience, and sport(s) they coached at the NCAA D-III level.

Additional information collected included previous experience with SPC services and availability of an SPC at their institution, Questions were modified from previous research with NCAA Division I (D-I) coaches (Wrisberg et al., 2010).

Attitudes toward SP consulting. NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes toward SP consulting were measured using the Sport Psychology Attitudes Revised Coaches-2 Brief Questionnaire (see Appendix C) (SPARC-2 brief) (Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007, 2008; Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011). The SPARC-2 Brief Questionnaire has 15 items and uses a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Additionally, the SPARC-2 Brief Questionnaire includes the following four subscales: stigma tolerance (5 items), confidence in SP consultation (4 items), personal openness (3 items), and cultural preference (3 items). Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) estimates have been found to be good to excellent (Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2008): Stigma Tolerance (.81), Confidence in SP Consultation (.75), Cultural Preference (.81), and Personal Openness (.69). Interpretations of scores on the SPARC-2 Brief Questionnaire are obtained by averaging the responses within each subscale. Higher scores (closer to 6) indicate a more negative attitude toward seeking SP consultation (stigma tolerance); a belief that SP consultation and mental training is useful (confidence in SP consultation), an unwillingness to be involved in SP consultation and mental training (personal openness), and a stronger identification with cultural background and preference for working with an SPC with a similar background (cultural preference).

Support for and willingness to seek SPC services. Items in this section included coaches' willingness to seek mental training for a variety of purposes, willingness to encourage their student-athletes to see an SPC, perceptions of the benefits of an SPC available to them, and their support for various SPC roles at their institution. Responses related to willingness to

encourage student-athletes to see an SPC ranged from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*definitely*). Responses

related to willingness to use SPC services and the perceptions of the benefits of having an SPC

available ranged from 1 (*not al all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Responses related to support for various

roles of an SPC included "yes," "no," and "maybe". Items in this section have been used in

previous research with NCAA D-I coaches (see Wrisberg et al., 2010).

   Open-Ended item. An optional open-ended item was available for coaches to provide

additional information or comments regarding SPC services at the NCAA D-III level.

Procedures

   Upon receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, an online survey on the

University of Tennessee's server was utilized to collect data from NCAA D-III head coaches. E-

mail addresses for NCAA D-III head coaches were obtained from their institutions' athletic web

sites. Coaches were contacted via e-mail, and asked to participate in this study (see Appendix D).

The e-mail identified the purpose of the study, assured coaches that their participation and

responses would remain confidential. Coaches were also informed that completing the survey

would give their consent to participate and they could withdraw from the study at any time

without penalty. Coaches were able to access the survey by clicking on the link embedded in the

cover letter e-mail. A follow up e-mail (see Appendix E) was sent one week after the initial e-

mail to help increase participation and serve as a reminder to coaches who had not completed the

survey. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Pilot Study

   An initial pilot study was conducted at a NCAA D-III institution in the mid-Atlantic

region of the U.S. with head and assistant sport coaches (*N* = 10). Pilot study participants'

responses were not included in the final data set used to analyze results of the study. The purpose

of the pilot study was to test out the logistics of the web-based survey, such as making sure the survey link and survey itself worked properly, gain feedback about the content and clarity of the items, and to measure the length of time it took to complete the survey. Based on the positive feedback from the pilot study, no modifications were made to the survey. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Research Hypotheses

It was predicted that the findings would support past research regarding the influence of age, gender, type of sport, and previous experience with SPC services on NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes and perceptions toward SPC services. Specifically, older coaches, female coaches, non-contact sport coaches, and coaches who have had previous experiences with SPC services (especially positive experiences) were expected to have more positive attitudes toward SP consulting and be more willing to use services, compared to male coaches, younger coaches, contact sport coaches, and coaches who have had no previous experience or a previous negative experience with SPC services (Wrisberg et al., 2010; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek et al., 2011).

Additionally, previous researchers have found attitudes, specifically stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, and personal openness to predict coaches' willingness to use SPC services (Appendix A) (Zakrajsek et al., 2011; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007). It was hypothesized that NCAA D-III coaches with higher confidence in SP consulting, more openness toward SPC services, and those who associated a lower stigma with SPC services would be more willing to use SPC services compared to coaches with lower confidence in SP consulting, less openness toward SPC services, and those who associated a higher stigma with SPC services.

Data Analyses

Data analysis was conducted using a statistical analysis program, SPSS Statistics 19. Several aims of this study were to better understand NCAA D-III head coaches': (a) experiences with and access to SPC services; (b) receptivity and attitudes toward SP consulting; (c) willingness to encourage their student-athletes to use SPC services; (d) willingness to seek SPC services for a variety of purposes; and (e) perceptions of the benefits of and support for SPC services. Means and standard deviations were used to describe the sample of NCAA D-III coaches in terms of demographic information, their overall attitudes (e.g., stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preferences), previous experience with SPC services, willingness to encourage and seek services, and support for various SPC roles at their institution.

Another aim of this study was to assess the influence of demographic variables on coaches' attitudes toward SP consulting. Separate one-way ANOVAs were used to assess mean differences between NCAA D-III coaches' age, coaching experience, and perceived effectiveness of previous experience using SPC services (independent variables) and attitudes toward SP consulting (dependent variable) (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2011). Sequentially, multiple comparisons (i.e., Bonferroni) were examined to find any significant differences within the independent variable groups. Independent samples t-tests were used to assess mean differences between gender, type of sport, and previous experience with SPCs (independent variables) and attitudes toward SP consulting (dependent variables) (Thomas et al., 2011).

An additional purpose of this study was to assess if demographic variables influenced NCAA D-III coaches' willingness to seek SPC services. Separate one-way ANOVAs were used to assess mean differences in NCAA D-III coaches' age, coaching experience, and perceived

effectiveness of previous experience using SPC services (independent variables) and willingness to use SPC services (dependent variable) (Thomas et al., 2011). Sequentially, multiple comparisons (i.e., Bonferroni) were examined to find any significant differences within the independent variable groups. Additionally, independent samples t-tests were run to assess mean differences between gender, type of sport, and previous experience with SPCs and willingness to seek services (Thomas et al., 2011).

Lastly, an aim of the study was to assess if NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes predicted their willingness to seek SPC services. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to test if coaches' attitudes (e.g., stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preference) (predictor variables) predicted their willingness to seek SPC services (criterion variable) (Thomas et al, 2011).

Analysis of the Open-ended Question

A consensual qualitative research method was used to analyze open-ended comments (see Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997; Thomas et al., 2011). My thesis advisor and I independently examined all the open-ended comments ($n = 173$) provided by the NCAA D-III coaches to begin the initial coding process of analysis and make sense out of the data. We independently examined the comments and coded responses into categories based on the reported content. Then, we met to create and agree on categories by discussing prevalent themes that emerged from the data (Thomas et al., 2011). My thesis advisor and I agreed that the majority of the comments reported ($n = 162$, 93.6%) could be categorized as "supportive or supportive but contingent upon other resources," "unsupportive," or "neither supportive nor unsupportive." The remaining comments ($n = 11$) were classified as "other," since they were not relevant to the purpose of the study.

After coming to a consensus about the main themes, my thesis advisor and I independently classified each comment into one of the four categories. Then, we met to compare how we categorized the comments. An acceptable inter-rater agreement (85.8%) was achieved on all the relevant comments. Discussion about the remaining comments continued until consensus was achieved (Thomas et al., 2011).

In the next chapter, I reveal the findings and results of the study based on the original purposes that include coaches' experiences with and access to SPC services, attitudes toward SP consulting, willingness to encourage and seek SPC services, and support for possible SPC roles. Demographic factors that influence attitudes toward and willingness to seek SPC services, attitudes that predict willingness to seek SPC services, and open-ended comments are also reported.

Chapter IV

Results

The aims of this study were to examine and describe the participants' overall attitudes toward SP consulting, previous experiences with SPC services, willingness to seek services and encourage student-athletes to seek services, and support for various SPC roles at their institution. Another aim was to assess if there were any differences in NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes toward SP consulting and willingness to use services with respect to age, years of coaching experience, gender, type of sport, previous personal experience with SPC services, and perceived effectiveness of previous experience. Lastly, I explored if NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes toward SP consulting (stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preference) predicted willingness to seek SPC services.

Coaches' Experiences with and Access to SPC Services

Out of the NCAA D-III coaches who completed the survey ($N = 731$), approximately 60% of the coaches ($n = 447$) had not personally received SPC services, whereas, 40% had personally received SPC services in the past. Coaches who had personally received services from an SPC reported that they met with an SPC either 1-3 times ($n = 141$, 19.3%), 4-5 times ($n = 42$, 5.7%), or more than 5 times ($n = 101$, 13.8%).

Out of the 731 participants, 76% ($n = 561$) did not have access to SPC services at their institution and 10% ($n = 76$) were unsure if they had access to SPC services at their institution. The remaining 13% ($n = 94$) reported that they had access to an SPC at their institution, and indicated that the SPC was a full-time ($n = 5$, 5.3%) or part-time ($n = 7$, 7.4%) employee, contracted ($n = 50$, 47%) employee, a graduate student ($n = 17$, 18.1%), a volunteer ($n = 20$, 21.3%), or did not know ($n = 7$, 7.4%). Additionally, 65% ($n = 61$) of participants who had

access to SPC services were unsure if the SPC at their institution was certified through the

Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP). The remaining participants who had access

to an SPC at their institution indicated that the SPC was AASP certified (*n* = 27, 28.7%) or was

not AASP certified (*n* = 6, 6.4%).

Coaches (*n* = 94) who answered that they had access to an SPC at their institution were

also asked about their perceptions of the services provided to the student-athletes. Overall, most

coaches perceived the SPC services to be a positive experience (*n* = 64, 68.1%) or had mixed

thoughts about the experience (*n* = 28, 29.8%) while two coaches' (2.1%) had a negative

perception about the services provided. Out of the coaches who had access to an SPC, 60% (*n* =

57) said they had referred a student-athlete to an SPC while the remaining (*n* = 37, 39.4%) had

not referred a student-athlete to an SPC.

Of the coaches with access to an SPC at their institution, 74 (78.7%) reported that they

used the SPC services for their team(s). Coaches responded that an SPC met with their team

either 1-3 times (*n* = 36, 38.3%), 4-5 times (*n* = 8, 8.5%), or more than 5 times (*n* = 30, 31.9%).

Coaches whose team(s) had met with an SPC were asked to rate the effectiveness of the

experience on a 5-point scale that ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Based on coaches'

responses, the overall average experience was perceived as "moderately" to "highly" effective

(*M* = 3.51, *SD* = .90).

Coaches' Attitudes Toward SP Consulting

In general, the participating NCAA D-III coaches' responses to the SPARC-2 Brief

Questionnaire indicated they had relatively positive attitudes toward SPC services (see Table 1).

The SPARC-2 Brief Questionnaire contains a 6-point Likert scale and ranges from 1 (*strongly

disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). The coaches indicated a low stigma toward SPCs and were

confident in SPC services. Responses to the personal openness questions indicated that participants tended to be open toward participating in SPC services. Lastly, the coaches did not appear to have strong cultural preferences for working with SPCs of similar cultural backgrounds as themselves or their student-athletes.

Coaches' Willingness to Encourage and Seek SPC Services

Coaches were asked how willing they would be to encourage student-athletes to seek an SPC for personal concerns and for performance-related issues. Responses were based on a Likert scale and ranged from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*definitely*). Overall, coaches reported a higher willingness to encourage their student-athletes to work with an SPC for performance-related issues (M = 4.24, SD = 1.00) than for personal concerns (M = 3.87, SD = 0.86). Additionally, coaches were asked how willing they would be to seek assistance for student-athletes for 14 different SPC services (see Table 2). The Likert scale for the questions ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Extremely*). Coaches' highest ratings (i.e., M = 4.0 or higher) of their willingness to seek assistance for their student-athletes were for "performing as well in competition as in practice" (M = 4.12, SD = 0.96), "improving focus" (M = 4.12, SD = 0.91), "enhancing performance" (M = 4.10, SD = 0.96), and "building team cohesion" (M = 4.10, SD = 0.93).

Coaches' Support for Possible SPC Roles

Coaches were asked about how beneficial they felt it would be to have an SPC available at their respective institutions, amongst their department support staff, and present at their practices and competitions (see Table 3). Responses were measured on a Likert scale and ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Extremely*). Overall, participating NCAA D-III coaches responded that they thought it would be beneficial to have SPC services available at their institutions, but it would not be beneficial to have an SPC at practices and competitions.

Additionally, coaches were asked about their support for the use of an SPC if other institutions in their conferences were doing so and/or if other NCAA D-III institutions were using SPCs. Coaches could respond with a "yes," "no," or "maybe." When coaches were asked about whether or not they would support SPCs at their institution if other teams in their conference were doing so, the majority (*n* = 573, 78.4%) said "yes" they would support an SPC at their institution. The remaining coaches responded "no" (*n* = 24, 3.3%) or "maybe" (*n* = 134, 18.3%). Coaches' support for an SPC if other NCAA D-III institutions were utilizing them revealed very similar responses, 568 coaches (77.7%) responded "yes" they would support an SPC at their institution and the remaining coaches said "no" (*n* = 138, 3.4%) or "maybe" (*n* =138, 18.9%).

Demographic Characteristics and Attitudes Toward SPC Services

A one-way ANOVA was used to assess if there were any significant mean differences between NCAA D-III coaches' ages and attitudes toward SPC services. The test of homogeneity of variances revealed that equal variances could be assumed for confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preference. Equal variances could not be assumed for stigma tolerance, in which adjusted F and degree of freedom values were reported. Results revealed a significant difference between age and confidence in SP consulting [$F(3, 729) = 4.07$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .017$]. Multiple comparisons revealed that coaches who were 30-39 years of age were more confident in SP services (*M* = 5.12, *SD* = .054) than coaches 50 years of age and older (*M* = 4.86, *SD* = .060) ($p < .01$). Statistical significance was not found between age groups and stigma tolerance [$F(3, 340.79) = 2.13$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .007$], personal openness [$F(3, 729) = 2.21$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .009$], and cultural preference [$F(3, 729) = 2.06$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .008$].

A one-way ANOVA was used to assess differences between years of coaching experience and attitudes toward SP consulting. Results revealed a significant difference between years of coaching experience and personal openness [$F(2, 730) = 3.43$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .009$]. Multiple comparisons revealed that coaches with less coaching experience were less open to SPC services than those with more coaching experience. Specifically, coaches with 6 or less years of coaching experience ($M = 2.91$, $SD = .908$) were less open to SPC services than coaches who had 7-15 years of coaching experience ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .961$) ($p < .05$) and 16 or more years of coaching experience ($M = 2.64$, $SD = .909$) ($p < .05$). No significant difference was found between years of experience and stigma tolerance [$F(2, 730) = .84$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .002$], confidence in SP consulting [$F(2, 730) = 2.27$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .006$], and cultural preference [$F(2, 730) = 2.97$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .008$].

An independent samples t-test was used to assess mean differences between gender and attitudes toward SPC services as well as type of sport and attitudes toward SPC services. Results revealed significance differences between NCAA D-III coaches' gender and stigma tolerance [$t(729) = 4.06$, $p < .001$, $d = .313$] and confidence in SP services [$t(729) = -5.23$, $p < .01$, $d = -.399$], but not with personal openness [$t(729) = 5.38$, $p > .05$, $d = .408$] or cultural preference [$t(729) = 2.21$, $p > .01$, $d = .167$]. Based on the descriptive statistics (see Table 1) female coaches reported more positive attitudes toward SPCs (low stigma) and more confidence in SPC services than male coaches; type of sport coached (i.e., physical contact or physical non-contact) did not differ with regard to attitudes toward SPC services (i.e., stigma tolerance [$t(723) = -1.13$, $p > .05$, $d = -.337$], confidence [$t(723) = -3.87$, $p > .05$, $d = .289$], personal openness [$t(723) = -.01$, $p > .05$, $d = -.188$], and cultural preference [$t(723) = -.61$, $p > .05$, $d = -.149$]).

An independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference between previous personal experience with an SPC and attitudes toward SPC services, specifically stigma tolerance [$t(729) = -4.31$, $p < .001$, $d = -.337$] and confidence in SP consulting [$t(729) = 3.77$, $p < .001$, $d = .289$]. Coaches with previous personal experience with SPC services had lower stigma tolerance and higher confidence in SP consulting compared to coaches without previous personal experience (see Table 1). A one-way ANOVA was used to analyze mean differences between the number of times coaches received SPC services and their attitudes toward SP consulting. Results revealed significant differences in coaches' confidence in SPC services [$F(2, 730) = 3.428$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .009$]. Multiple comparisons revealed coaches who had received SPC services 1-3 times ($M = 5.03$, $SD = .829$) were less confident in SPC services than coaches who had received services 6 or more times ($M = 5.35$, $SD = .695$) ($p < .01$).

Lastly, coaches' perceptions of the effectiveness of their previous personal experience and their attitudes toward SP consulting were assessed. For analyses purposes, the original 5-point Likert scale for coaches' perceived effectiveness of SPC services was adjusted to make 3 groups (i.e., "low," "moderate," and "high"). The two higher responses were grouped as "high," the middle response remained "moderate," and the lower two responses were grouped as "low." A one-way ANOVA was used to check for any significant differences between the 3 groups of perceived effectiveness and attitudes toward SP consulting. The test of homogeneity of variances revealed that equal variances could be assumed for confidence in SP consulting and personal openness. Equal variances could not be assumed for stigma tolerance and cultural preference, in which adjusted F and degrees of freedom values were reported. Results revealed significant differences between perceived effectiveness and confidence [$F(2, 283) = 26.78$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .160$], personal openness [$F(2, 283) = 9.332$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .062$], and stigma tolerance [$F(2,$

91.08) = 3.86, *p* < .05, η² = .027]. Statistical significance was not found between perceived

effectiveness and cultural preference [*F*(2, 91.08) = 2.33, *p* > .05, η² = .016]. Multiple

comparisons revealed that participants who perceived SPC services to be "highly" effective (*M* =

1.15, *SD* = .373) had lower stigma tolerance than those who had "moderate" perceptions of SPC

effectiveness (*M* = 1.30, *SD* = .568) (*p* < .05). Additionally, coaches who perceived "high"

effectiveness (*M* = 5.43, *SD* = .715) with their previous personal experiences reported higher

confidence in SPC services compared to coaches who rated the effectiveness as "moderate" (*M* =

5.04, *SD* = .695) (*p* < .001) or "low" (*M* = 4.51, *SD* = .817) (*p* < .001) effectiveness.

Furthermore, coaches who reported "high" effectiveness (*M* = 2.34, *SD* = .833) were more open

to SPC services compared to coaches in the "low" effectiveness group (*M* = 2.89, *SD* = .947) (*p*

< .01).

Demographic Characteristics and Willingness to Seek SPC Services

For analyses purposes, a total willingness to seek SPC services score was created by

averaging the 14 willingness to seek SPC services items (see Table 2). A Pearson's correlation

test was performed to check for correlations between the 14 "willingness to seek SPC services"

variables. All variables were moderate to highly correlated, which provided further support for

creating an overall willingness score.

A one-way ANOVA was used to assess willingness to seek SPC services and age, which

indicated a significant difference [*F*(2, 729) = 3.014, *p* < .05, η² = .012]. Multiple comparisons

revealed that coaches 30-39 years of age (*M* = 4.02, *SD*= .822) were more willing to seek

assistance for their student-athletes or selves compared to coaches in the 50 years and older

group (*M* = 3.81, *SD*= .811) (*p* < .05).

A one-way ANOVA was used to examine years of coaching experience and willingness to seek SPC services, but no significant differences were found [$F(2, 730) = .806$, $p = .447$, $\eta^2 = .002$]. Additionally, an independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference between type of sport (i.e., physical contact and physical non-contact) and willingness to seek SPC services [$t(723) = 1.654$, $p = .099$, $d = .126$].

An independent samples t-test was used to assess mean differences between gender and willingness to seek SP services. Results revealed a significant difference [$t(729) = -5.269$, $p < .001$, $d = -.404$], in which female coaches reported that they were more willing than male coaches to seek SPC services (see Table 2).

An independent samples t-test was used to assess mean differences in previous personal experience and willingness to seek services. Results revealed a significant difference [$t(729) = 4.523$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.346$], in which coaches who had previous personal experience with SPC services were more willing to seek SPC services for their student-athletes and themselves as compared to coaches who had no previous personal experience (see Table 2). Moreover, a one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference between the number of times a coach had received services from an SPC and their willingness to seek SPC services [$F(2, 283) = 5.858$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .040$]. Coaches who had received SPC services 6 or more times *(M = 4.28, SD= .665)* were significantly more willing to seek assistance from SPCs than coaches who had received SPC services 1-3 times (*M = 3.95, SD= .825*) (*p < .01*).

Lastly, coaches' perceptions of the effectiveness of their previous personal experience and their willingness to seek SPC services were assessed. As noted previously, the original 5-point Likert scale for coaches' perceived effectiveness of SPC services was adjusted to make 3 groups (i.e., "low," "moderate," and "high"). The two higher responses were grouped as "high,"

the middle response remained "moderate," and the lower two responses were grouped as "low".

A one-way ANOVA found significant mean differences between the 3 groups of effectiveness

and willingness to seek SPC services [$F(2, 283) = 18.352$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .116$]. Multiple

comparisons revealed a significant difference between "low" ($M = 3.53$, $SD= .880$) and

"moderate" ($M = 4.04$, $SD= .756$) groups ($p = .001$), "low" and "high" ($M = 4.31$, $SD= .636$)

groups ($p < .001$), and "moderate" and "high" groups ($p < .01$). Overall, coaches who perceived

"high" effectiveness with their previous personal experience were more willing to seek SPC

services compared to coaches who rated the effectiveness as "moderate" or "low". Additionally,

coaches who perceived their previous personal experience as "moderately" effective were more

willing to seek SPC services compared to coaches who rated the effectiveness as "low."

Attitudes and Willingness to Seek SPC Services

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to assess if attitudes (i.e., stigma

tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preferences) predicted

coaches' willingness to seek SP services. Bivariate correlations between independent variables

and the collinearity statistics (i.e., tolerance, VIF) revealed that multi-collinearity was not an

issue. Results revealed a two variable solution [$F(2, 730) = 304.29$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .455$] that

accounted for 45.5% of the total variance in willingness to seek SPC services. Confidence in SP

consulting ($\beta = .623$, $p < .001$) was the strongest predictor variable and accounted for 44.2% of

the variance, whereas, the remaining 1.3% of variance resulted from personal openness toward

SPC services ($\beta = -.124$, $p < .001$). As confidence in SP consultation and personal openness

increased, coaches' willingness to seek SPC services also increased.

Open-Ended Comments

A total of 173 (24%) coaches responded to the open-ended question. Of the total number of comments reported, 52% (*n* = 90) were "supportive or supportive but contingent upon other resources." The remaining responses were "unsupportive" (*n* = 14, 8%), "neither supportive nor unsupported" (*n* = 57, 33%), or "other" (*n* = 11, 6%). In addition, 39% (*n* = 68) of the coaches who responded also mentioned a lack of funding and/or resources in their comments.

"Supportive or supportive but contingent upon other resources" represented coaches who were supportive of SPC services and acknowledged the importance of SPC services in helping student-athletes perform to their full potential. The following comment was from a coach who was supportive of SPC services for helping student-athletes in every aspect of their lives:

I think due to the demands placed on student-athlete[s] at [NCAA] Div[ision] III

that this would be a plus for our student-athletes as they struggle to find balance

with academics and athletics. It tends to be all or none approach at [NCAA]

Div[ision] III. We should be striving for a well-rounded student at all levels.

Responses in this category also represented coaches who were supportive of using an SPC, but their support was contingent upon funding and other resources needed at their respective institutions or contingent upon finding an SPC that was trustworthy and credible. For example, one coach wrote, "I would jump at the chance to use a sport psych[ology] consultant, but we do not have the budget to do so at our level." Another coach stated, "I think it would work with the right person and personality of the Sport Psychologist."

Comments classified as "unsupportive" represented coaches who were against the use of an SPC at the respective institutions. The coaches who left "unsupportive" comments did not support the use of resources for bringing in an SPC, such as one coach who stated, "Because of

obvious limited resources in our department I wouldn't support this type of a position as a priority." Others felt that the coach's role included SP-related services (e.g., "A coach is a sport psychologist"), had negative previous experiences using SP services (e.g., "My experiences in sport psychology are not good"), or had formal education and training in SP and other related fields (e.g., "I had a concentration in SP in grad school so wouldn't want to spend any funding on bringing someone in from the outside").

Coaches who left "neither supportive nor unsupportive" comments did not have an obvious opinion about whether or not they would want to utilize SP services at their institution and/or with their student-athletes. Once again, funding and resources was a prevalent sub-theme amongst this category (e.g., "Money/cost is probably the biggest barrier at the Division III level with availability being the second"). Other coaches provided comments about a need for finding the "right person," but did not mention whether or not they supported SP services (e.g., "The background and qualifications as well as personality of the consultant would matter as much or more than just having 'someone' available"). There were also comments that were generally hard to interpret as to whether the coaches were supportive or unsupportive and seemed somewhat neutral (e.g., "If utilized, it must be universal").

Eleven of the total comments left by coaches were not relevant to the study (e.g., "None"), were difficult to interpret (e.g., "I found all of what we did very informative and helpful"), or claimed to be biased due to educational background (e.g., "I have a PhD in Sport Psychology so I am biased").

In the next chapter, I discuss the results of this study and compare the findings to previous research, examine limitations of this study, present applications for practitioners, and conclude with recommendations.

Chapter V

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to better understand NCAA D-III head coaches' attitudes and receptivity toward SPC services. Specifically, in this study, I examined NCAA D-III coaches' personal experiences with SPC services, receptivity and attitudes toward SP consulting, willingness to encourage their student-athletes to use SPC services, willingness to seek SPC services for a variety of purposes, and perceptions of the benefits of and support for SPC services. Other purposes of this study was to understand if coaches' attitudes and willingness to use SPC services varied based on NCAA D-III coaches' age, coaching experience, gender, type of sport, previous personal experience with SPC services, and perceived effectiveness of previous SPC services. Lastly, I explored if coaches' attitudes toward SP consultation (e.g., stigma tolerance, confidence in SP consulting, personal openness, and cultural preference) predicted their willingness to seek SPC services.

Overall, based on the results of this study, SPC usage amongst NCAA D-III institutions was somewhat limited. Although the sample sizes varied, a lower percentage of NCAA D-III coaches who completed the survey reported that they had an SPC available (approximately 13% of the 731 coaches) than what has been reported with NCAA D-I coaches (approximately 45% of 815 coaches) (Wrisberg, Loberg, Simpson, Withycombe, & Reed, 2010). However, coaches who participated in this study reported a higher percentage of availability compared to what has been reported with high school level coaches (approximately 9% of 235 coaches) (Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011). The findings may imply that higher levels and value of competitive level and financial resources may affect the amount of available resources (i.e., SPCs and SPC services). Although NCAA D-III is the largest of the three NCAA divisions, the institutions in this division

are typically much smaller in size and do not have as much funding for athletics as do institutions within the other NCAA divisions and institutions (NCAA, 2012b). This theme was reinforced within the open-ended comments, in which coaches reported limited funding and resources as an obstacle in access to or usage of SPC services within their athletic departments.

It was hypothesized that age, coaching experience, gender, type of sport, previous personal experience with SPC services, and perceived effectiveness of previous experience with SPC services would influence NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes toward SPCs. Previous studies found that female coaches, older coaches, physical non-contact sport coaches, and coaches with previous positive experiences with SPC services had more positive attitudes toward SPC services than male coaches, younger coaches, physical contact sport coaches, and coaches with no or negative previous SPC experiences (Wrisberg et al., 2010; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007; Zakrajsek et al., 2011). The results of this study complimented the previous findings on gender and previous experience factors. Specifically, gender was found to be a significant factor in analyses on attitudes and willingness to seek SPC services. Similar to the findings in previous studies, female coaches reported more positive attitudes toward SPCs, more confidence in SP consulting, and more willingness to seek SPC services than male participants.

The results of this study differed from previous research findings with regard to age and type of sport (i.e., physical contact and physical non-contact) and attitudes toward SP services (Martin, 2005; Zakrajsek et al., 2011). Specifically, in this study, younger coaches had more confidence in SP consulting than did older coaches (50 years of age and older); however, in general, coaches reported high confidence in SPC services. Additionally, there were no differences between type of sport and attitudes toward SP services or coaches' willingness to seek SP services. However, the lack of significant differences amongst coaches of both physical

contact and non-contact sport were similar to findings in previous studies on NCAA D-I coaches' and athletes' receptivity and willingness to seek mental training services (Wrisberg, Loberg, Simpson, Withycombe, & Reed, 2009; Wrisberg et al., 2010). Similar to the Wrisberg et al. (2009) study, the current sample of NCAA D-III head coaches included a small percentage of those who coached American football or wrestling (5.9%). Previous studies have found American football or wrestling participants (e.g., athletes and coaches) to hold more negative attitudes toward SP consulting compared to other contact or non-contact sport participants (Martin, 2005; Zakrajsek et al., 2011). Previous researchers have suggested that gender role socialization may be a factor, in which cultural and societal gender norms may influence the ideals, attitudes, and behaviors of sport participants (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Foley, 2001). Combative sports (e.g., American football and wrestling) often promote dominance, power, and direct physical confrontation, and have been identified as significantly influential in the construction of masculinity and maintaining traditional values (Coakley, 2009; Foley, 2001; Messner, 1992). Perhaps significant differences would have occurred with a larger representation of football and/or wrestling coaches in the physical contact sport group. More research is needed to gain an understanding of how various sport cultures (e.g., combative nature of American football) influence attitudes toward SPC services and willingness to seek assistance.

In this study, previous personal experience with SPC services was a significant factor and affected NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes toward and willingness to seek SPC services. Coaches who personally received SPC services reported significantly more positive attitudes and higher willingness to seek SPC services compared to coaches who had no prior personal experience using SPC services. Specifically, coaches who have personally used SPC services 6 or more times were more willing to encourage the use of SPC services for a variety of reasons and

reported lower stigma tolerance and higher confidence in SP consulting, compared to coaches who used services 1-3 times. Additionally, coaches who perceived previous SPC services to be more effective also reported more positive attitudes (i.e., higher confidence and personal openness, lower stigma tolerance) and were more willing to seek SPC services than those who reported lower perceptions of effectiveness.

The findings in this study were also consistent with previous research findings that NCAA D-I coaches and student-athletes with previous SPC service experiences were more willing to encourage and seek services for various concerns (i.e., dealing with pressure, building confidence, and improving focus) (Wrisberg et al., 2009; Wrisberg et al., 2010). Additionally, similar to NCAA D-I coaches (Wrisberg et al., 2010), NCAA D-III coach participants were more willing to encourage student-athletes to see an SPC for performance-related issues than for personal concerns, which suggests that the coaches were more interested in using SPC services for performance-related issues than other personal or inter-personal concerns. Furthermore, the findings in this study and previous studies (e.g., Wrisberg et al., 2010) about frequency of personal experience and perceptions of experiences supplement the notion that more positive experiences and exposure to SPC services may be directly related to coaches' attitudes and willingness to use and seek SPC services (Wrisberg et al., 2010). This continues to reinforce that some level of exposure to an SPC (especially a positive exposure) may be a critical component in influencing coaches' openness to SPC services (see Wrisberg et al., 2010).

Additionally, attitudes were found to predict willingness to use SPC services. Similar to previous studies with coaches (see Zakrajsek et al., 2011; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007) confidence in SP consulting was the most significant factor in predicting coaches' willingness to seek SPC services. In this study, personal openness was also an influential factor in predicting willingness

to seek SPC services. NCAA D-III coaches that have more positive attitudes toward and perceptions of SPC services may be generally more willing to encourage their student-athletes to seek SPC services.

Limitations

Results of this study were limited to NCAA D-III head coaches who received e-mails and chose to complete the online survey, which was approximately 13% of the total number of e-mails initially sent out. Although there was no significant difference between the first and second groups of respondents, which may imply that the sample was an accurate representation of coaches at this level of competition. Furthermore, all NCAA D-III head coaches may not have been successfully contacted (e.g., missing contact information on athletic websites or recent changes in coaching staff) or received the e-mails (e.g., deleted or un-opened e-mails and incorrect contact information).

Another limitation of this study was the question regarding race. The survey question limited participants to choose only one race to identify with, unless they opted "other" and filled in a response, which may have affected the outcome of the cultural component of the SPARC-2 Brief Questionnaire. Perhaps allowing coaches to respond more openly or having them identify with ethnicities, versus race, would have provided more insight to participants' attitudes about cultural preferences.

Additionally, there were a relatively small number (13%) of coaches who had access to SPC services at their institutions, which was also a limitation in this study. With such a small sample size, generalizations about perceptions of satisfaction, student-athlete referrals, number of team meetings, and perceived effectiveness of team meetings cannot be assumed. Therefore, responses only reflected the sample of NCAA D-III head coaches who participated in the study.

Furthermore, questions in the survey referred to coaches' willingness to seek SPC services for various reasons and their perceptions about benefits and support for having an SPC available at their institutions. Actual intentions to use SPC services were not explored; therefore, predictors of actual behaviors could not be assumed.

Applications for Practitioners

Coaches have a large influence and impact on the student-athletes they coach, and should be taken into consideration when trying to understand the potential roles for SPCs at varying levels and types of sport. Specifically, the findings within this study may provide implications of potential uses for SPC services within NCAA D-III institutions.

Additionally, NCAA D-III coaches were more willing to seek SPC services for performance-related issues, specifically for "performing as well in competition as in practice," "improving focus," "enhancing performance," and "building team cohesion." This may imply that coaches are more interested in SPCs who are performance-based and focus more on helping student-athletes and teams improve mental skills directly related to improving and/or maintaining consistent performances. Furthermore, since confidence in SPC services has repeatedly been found as a significant factor in coaches' attitudes toward willingness to seek SPC services, practitioners should also think about ways to help build coaches' confidence in SPCs and SPC services. Practitioners should focus on building rapport and having positive interactions with coaches, student-athletes, and teams when given the opportunity, as well as staying up to date with research and effective techniques to provide the most accurate and helpful information.

Based on the open-ended comments, most NCAA D-III institutions have limited resources and funding, meaning there is a scarce full-time, part-time, or contracting job market

for SPCs at this specific division. In addition, many of the participants seemed interested in working with an SPC that "fits in" with their team and has the appropriate credentials. However, since most NCAA D-III coaches had generally positive attitudes and seemed willing and open to seeking SPC services for a variety of factors, practitioners may find it useful in volunteering their services to NCAA D-III teams as a way of gaining entry into other divisions or levels and building rapport within this division. Practitioners may also find value in working with NCAA D-III institutions to help gain more general experience and/or supervised AASP certification hours for themselves or SP students.

Furthermore, because NCAA D-III student-athletes encapsulate the true essence of the term "student-athlete," practitioners may want to take a more holistic approach in working with coaches and student-athletes within this division (Coakley, 1978; Marx, et al., 2008; NCAA, 2012b). Many institutions within NCAA D-III take pride in preparing their student-athletes for challenges and experiences in and out of sport. Therefore, practitioners trying to gain entry into this division should examine how SPC services can be applied to other domains, beyond sport (e.g., life skills). Making the connection between mental skills training and other domains (e.g., academics) may also help to increase coaches' confidence in SP consulting.

Future Directions

The participants in this study only included NCAA D-III head coaches who were successfully contacted and chose to participate. It would be beneficial to look into more efficient methods of contacting coaches and ways to increase participation. Perhaps more direct approaches of contacting participants would help increase participation (e.g., directly calling coaches or going to coaching conventions and talking to potential participants).

In this study, only NCAA D-III head coaches were contacted, omitting assistant coaches and coaches from other NCAA divisions. To better understand the coaches in general, it may be interesting to compare NCAA D-III head and assistant coaches, as well as to investigate the differences between head coaches from the three NCAA divisions. Doing more research on coaches and coaches in different divisions may help researchers better understand the roles of coaches at their respective levels and help identify the types of services needed and desired within each group. Based on the large number of responses in the open-ended comments, it may be beneficial to do a qualitative study with NCAA D-III coaches to better understand their attitudes and perceptions toward SPC services. Of the NCA D-III coaches who responded, it seemed like they were responsive and willing to share their opinions about the topic of SPC services, and would be helpful in further exploring the potential use of SPC services within NCAA D-III institutions.

Additionally, many coaches noted the lack of funding and resources at their institutions, which may have indirectly influenced their responses related to willingness to seek SPC services responses. Perhaps it would be favorable to include questions about willingness in a manner that address the potential lack of resources, or is phrased as a hypothetical situation that does not inhibit participants' attitudes and perceptions based upon their current access or lack thereof to SPC services. Future researchers may also find it beneficial to survey NCAA D-III coaches on their intentions to use SPC services, pending on the availability or access to SPCs, to see if there are any factors that influence and/or instigate help-seeking behaviors.

In the open-ended comments, several of the coaches referred to SPCs as sport psychologists or compared them to counseling services. Future researchers may also want to include questions in the survey that interpret coaches' understanding of SPC services. It is

important to understand how coaches interpret the roles of SPCs, especially because coaches may have different perceptions of or knowledge about SPC services and the potential benefits for student-athletes. By knowing how SPC services are perceived, practitioners and others in the SP field can help change any negative stigmas or inaccurate information, or work to improve to the needs of coaches and student-athletes.

Ultimately, more research needs to be done examining coaches and student-athletes at every level and division, focusing on their attitudes toward and receptivity of SPC services. In this study, we focused on NCAA D-III coaches whose student-athletes have much different needs and expectations compared to student-athletes at other levels and divisions. Focusing on coaches' attitudes and willingness to use SPC services is only one part to understanding the future of SP and the potential need or place for SPCs in the collegiate sport world, including the NCAA D-III level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Coaches are very important at any level of sport, and numerous studies have aimed to better understand their attitudes and perceptions toward and willingness to seek or use SPC services. However, most previous research on this topic does not include information regarding NCAA D-III coaches, student-athletes, or administrators. This study was conducted to help researchers and practitioners better understand coaches at varying levels and divisions of sport. Also, explored were NCAA D-III coaches' attitudes and perceptions toward SPC services, general demographics, and willingness to encourage student-athletes to seek SPC services.

NCAA D-III coaches appeared to have relatively positive attitudes toward SPC services and seemed willing to seek SPC services, particularly for performance-related issues. Coaches within this division guide student-athletes who often take on many roles and responsibilities that

include school and sport concerns, rather than those who go to school primarily for sport or for school. This study was important for researchers to gain more understanding about what coaches at this division find to be of value and relevance to their job and the student-athletes they coach. It is vital that researchers and practitioners in this field understand more about the varying levels of sport so they can address the needs of sport participants and coaches.

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Appendix

Appendix A

| Antecedents | Attitudes & Beliefs | Consequences |

Antecedents:
- Situational Characteristics
- Consultant Characteristics
- Athlete (Performer) Characteristics
- Coach, Leader, or Instructor Characteristics
- Significant Other Characteristics

Attitudes & Beliefs:
- Stigma Tolerance / Confidence / Personal Openness / Cultural Preference
- Expectations
- Subjective Norms
- Perceived Behavioral Control
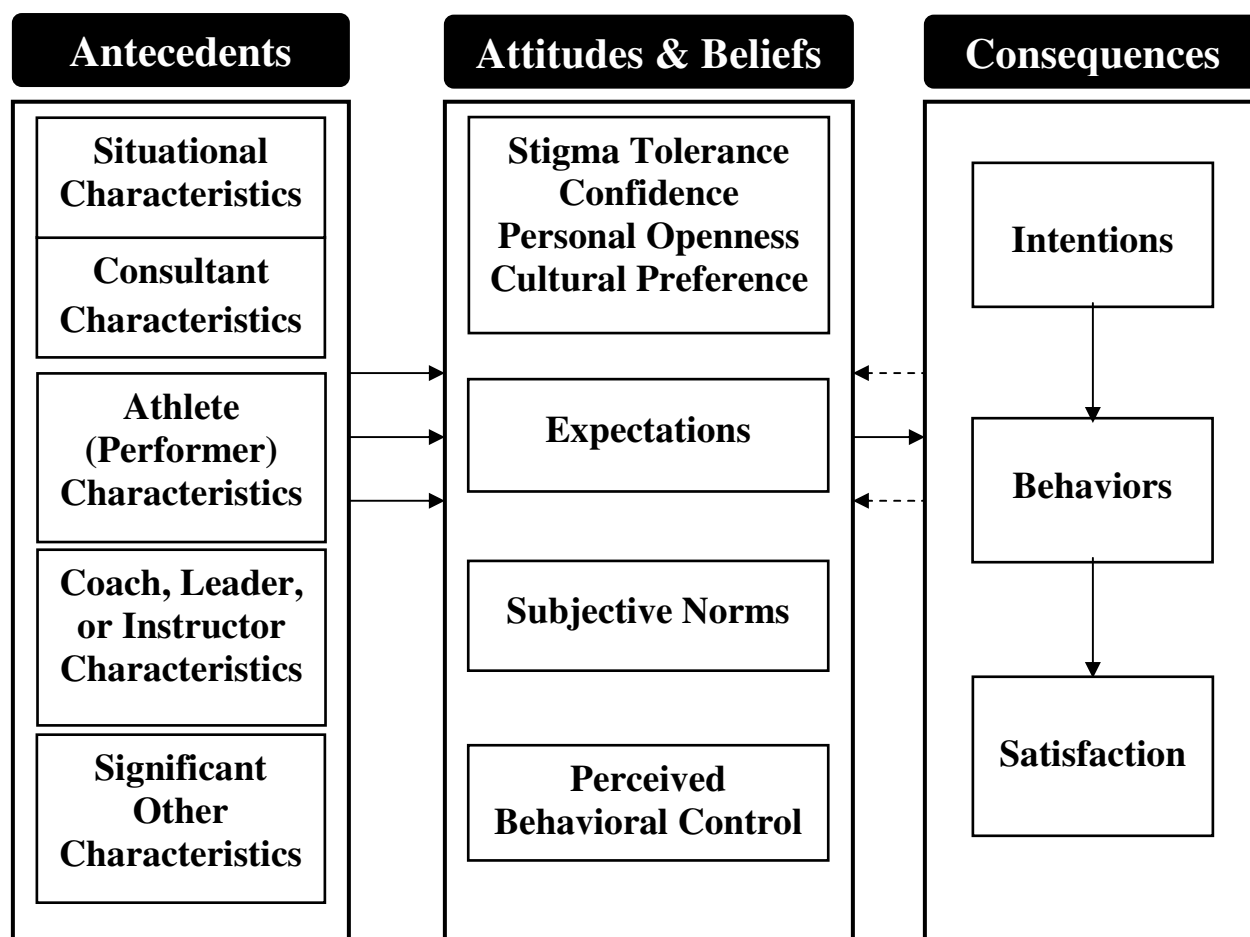
Consequences:
- Intentions
- Behaviors
- Satisfaction

Figure 1. Multidimensional Model of Sport Psychology Service Provision. Adapted from Zakrajsek and Martin (2011).

Appendix B

Online Survey

Title: NCAA Division III Coaches' Attitudes and Receptivity Toward Sport Psychology

Consultants.

<u>COACH</u>

TITLE Sport Psychology Services at NCAA Division III Institutions

Thank you for choosing to participate in the study and completing the following questionnaire. Your participation is completely voluntary, and your responses will be held in strict confidence. Any publications or presentations resulting from the study will be reported in summary form only. Your completion of the questionnaire will constitute your consent to participate. By completing this questionnaire, you are also confirming that you are at least 18 years of age.

1. GENDER What is your gender? Single response
   a. Male
   b. Female

2. AGE What is your age? Fill in the blank response

3. ETHNICITY How do you self-identify with regards to race? Single response
   a. African American
   b. Caucasian
   c. Hispanic
   d. Asian/Pacific Islander
   e. American Indian
   f. Other:_____
   g. Prefer not to answer

4. CONFERENCE I am a member of the: (check all that apply) Multiple response
   a) Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference
   b) American Southwest Conference
   c) Capital Athletic Conference
   d) Centennial Conference
   e) City University of New York Athletic Conference
   f) College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin
   g) Colonial States Athletic Conference
   h) Commonwealth Coast Conference
   i) Eastern Collegiate Football Conference
   j) Empire 8 Conference
   k) Great Northeast Athletic Conference
   l) Great South Athletic Conference

m) Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference
n) Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
o) Landmark Conference
p) Liberty League
q) Little East Conference
r) Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference
s) Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association
t) Middle Atlantic Conference
u) Midwest Conference
v) Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
w) New England Collegiate Conference
x) New England Football Conference
y) New England Small College Athletic Conference
z) New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference
aa) New Jersey Athletic Conference
bb) North Atlantic Conference
cc) North Coast Athletic Conference
dd) North Eastern Athletic Conference
ee) Northern Athletics Conference
ff) Northwest Conference
gg) Ohio Athletic Conference
hh) Old Dominion Athletic Conference
ii) Presidents' Athletic Conference
jj) St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
kk) Skyline Conference
ll) Southern Athletic Association
mm)   Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
nn) Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference
oo) State University of New York Athletic Conference
pp) University Athletic Association
qq) Upper Midwest Athletic Conference
rr) USA South Athletic Conference
ss) Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
tt) Other: _____

5. Academic_Achievement What is your highest level of academic achievement? Single response
    a. High School
    b. B.S. / B.A.
    c. M.S. / M.A.
    d. M.B.A.
    e. Ph.D.
    f. Other

6. Sport_Level What levels of organized competitive sport have you participated in? (check all that apply) Multiple response
   a. High School
   b. College
   c. Professional
   d. National Team
   e. Olympic Competitor
   f. Never participated - Single response

7. EXPERIENCE Total number of years of work experience as a coach. Fill in the blank response

8. Sport What sport(s), at the NCAA Division III level, do you coach over the academic year? (Write all that apply) Fill in the blank response

9. DEFINE For the purposes of this research, sport psychology consultants are defined as persons with formal training in sport psychology who are capable of providing student-athletes with the psychological and emotional skills necessary for achieving peak performance and enhancing life quality.

Specific areas where sport psychology consultants can have an impact include:
   - confidence
   - motivation
   - communication
   - team cohesion
   - leadership

Skills they are capable of teaching include:
   - goal setting
   - imagery
   - relaxation techniques
   - anxiety management
   - coping with stress
   - thought control
   - recovery from injuries
   - burnout

(Source: Donohue, B., Dickens, Y., Lancer, K., Covassin, T., Hash, A., Miller, A., et al. (2004). Improving athletes' perspectives of sport psychology consultation. Behavior Modification, 28(2), 182-193.) Display text

10. SERVICES Have you ever personally received services from a sport psychology consultant? Single response
    a. Yes –goto question #11
    b. No –goto question #13

11. SERVICES_# How many times have you received services from a sport psychology consultant? Single response
    a. 1-3
    b. 4-5
    c. More than 5

12. EFFECTIVE How effective was your experience? Single response
    a. Not at all
    b. Slightly
    c. Moderately
    d. Highly
    e. Extremely

13. AVAILABLE Is a sport psychology consultant available for coaches and student-athletes at your institution? Single response
    a. Yes –goto question #14
    b. No –goto question #21
    c. Unsure –goto question #21

14. SPC The sport psychology consultant is a: (check all that apply) Multiple response
    a. Part-time athletic department employee
    b. Full-time athletic department employee
    c. Contracted employee
    d. Graduate student(s)
    e. Volunteer
    f. Don't know - Single response

15. AASP Is the sport psychology consultant certified through the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP Certified Consultant)? Single response
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know

16. SATISFY Overall, what is your perception of the sport psychology services provided for the student-athletes at the NCAA Division III institution at which you work? Single response
    a. Positive
    b. Negative
    c. Mixed

17. REFER Have you ever referred one of your athletes to a sport psychology consultant? Single response
    a. Yes

   b. No

18. TEAM_MEET_# How often has a sport psychology consultant met with your collegiate
    team? Single response
       a. Never –goto question #21
       b. 1-3 –goto question #19
       c. 4-5 –goto question #19
       d. More than 5 –goto question #19

19. TEAM_WHERE Where did your team meet with the sport psychology consultant?
    (check all that apply) Multiple response
       a. Team meeting
       b. Practice
       c. Competition
       d. Office
       e. Other

20. TEAM_EFFECTIVE How effective was your experience? Single response
       a. Not at all
       b. Slightly
       c. Moderately
       d. Highly
       e. Extremely

21. ATTITUDES Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.
    Single response grid
       a. A sport psychology consultant can help athletes improve their mental toughness.
       b. I would not want a sport psychology consultant working with my athletes because
           other coaches would think less of me.
       c. I would like to have the assistance of a sport psychology consultant to help me
           better understand my athletes.
       d. I would feel uneasy having a sport psychology consultant work with my athletes
           because some people would disapprove.
       e. Having seen a sport psychology consultant is bad for an athlete's reputation.
       f. Athletes emotional difficulties tend to work themselves out in time.
       g. I think a sport psychology consultant would help my athletes perform better under
           pressure.
       h. A sport psychology consultant could help my athletes fine-tune their performance
       i. If my athletes worked with a sport psychology consultant, I would not want other
           coaches to know about it.
       j. My athletes would be more comfortable with a sport psychology consultant if s/he
           were of the same race or ethnicity as them.
       k. I would think less of my athletes if they went to a sport psychology consultant.
       l. Athletes with a strong character can get over mental conflicts by themselves.

m. An athlete may relate best to a sport psychology consultant if s/he were the same race or ethnicity.

n. Athletes should know how to handle problems without needing assistance from a sport psychology consultant.

o. I would be more comfortable hiring a sport psychology consultant if s/he were from the same cultural background as my athletes.

    i. Strongly Disagree
    ii. Moderately Disagree
    iii. Slightly Disagree
    iv. Slightly Agree
    v. Moderately Agree
    vi. Strongly Agree

22. SITUATION How willing would you be to seek assistance for your athletes or yourself in the following situations? Single response grid

a. Dealing with pressure
b. Dealing with injury / rehabilitation
c. Building confidence
d. Improving focus
e. Preventing burnout
f. Communicating with coaches
g. Communicating with teammates
h. Dealing with personal issues
i. Managing anxiety
j. Increasing enjoyment of sport
k. Enhancing performance
l. Performing as well in competition as in practice
m. Managing emotions during competition
n. Building team cohesion

    i. Not at all
    ii. Slightly
    iii. Moderately
    iv. Highly
    v. Extremely

23. PERSONAL How willing would you be to encourage one of your athletes to see a sport psychology consultant about **personal concerns**? Single response

a. Never
b. Doubtful
c. Maybe
d. Probably
e. Definitely

24. PERFORM How willing would you be to encourage one of your athletes to see a sport psychology consultant about **performance related issues**? Single response

a. Never
b. Doubtful
c. Maybe
d. Probably
e. Definitely

25. BENEFIT_INST How beneficial do you feel it would be to have **sport psychology services available** to you and your athletes at your institution? Single response
    a. Not at all
    b. Slightly
    c. Moderately
    d. Highly
    e. Extremely

26. BENEFIT How beneficial do you feel it would be to include a sport psychology consultant among **athletic department support staff**? Single response
    a. Not at all
    b. Slightly
    c. Moderately
    d. Highly
    e. Extremely

27. BENEFIT_PRACT_MEET How beneficial do you feel it would be to have a sport psychology consultant present at **practices and competitions**? Single response
    a. Not at all
    b. Slightly
    c. Moderately
    d. Highly
    e. Extremely

28. SUPPORT_CONF Would you support the use of a sport psychology consultant at your institution, if other **institutions in your conference** were doing so? Single response
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Maybe

29. SUPPORT_NCAA Would you support the use of a sport psychology consultant at your institution, if other **NCAA Division-III institutions** were doing so? Single response
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Maybe

30. Additional_comments Please provide any additional comments regarding the use of sport psychology consultants at the NCAA Division III level (optional):

Appendix C

Shortened Version of the Sport Psychology Attitudes Revised Coaches-2 (SPARC-2)

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements by circling the response that corresponds to your feelings toward each statement. Please respond to each statement as truthfully as you can.

SD	MD	D	A	MA	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

A sport psychology consultant (SPC) can help athletes improve their mental toughness.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I would not want a SPC working with my athletes because other coaches would think less of me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I would like to have the assistance of a SPC to help me better understand my athletes.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I would feel uneasy having a SPC work with my athletes because some people would disapprove.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Having seen a SPC is bad for an athlete's reputation.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Athletes emotional difficulties tend to work themselves out in time.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I think a SPC would help my athletes perform better under pressure.	1 2 3 4 5 6
A SPC could help my athletes fine-tune their performance	1 2 3 4 5 6
If my athletes worked with a SPC, I would not want other coaches to know about it.	1 2 3 4 5 6
My athletes would be more comfortable with a SPC if he/she were of the same race or ethnicity as them.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I would think less of my athletes if they went to a SPC.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Athletes with a strong character can get over mental conflicts by themselves.	1 2 3 4 5 6
An athlete may relate best to a SPC if he/she were the same race or ethnicity.	1 2 3 4 5 6
Athletes should know how to handle problems without needing assistance from a SPC.	1 2 3 4 5 6
I would be more comfortable hiring a SPC if he/she were from the same cultural background as my athletes.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Appendix D

E-mail (Cover Letter)

Dear NCAA Division III Head Coach:

More and more collegiate athletic departments are utilizing sport psychology services to prepare their student-athletes for the mental and emotional challenges of competitive sport. At our own university, over 150 student-athletes, representing a variety of different sports, used the available sport psychology services. However, in spite of this trend, there is little understanding of sport psychology services and coaches' perceptions of and attitudes toward sport psychology, specifically within NCAA Division III athletics.

In order to obtain more information about the use of sport psychology services at NCAA Division III institutions, I am inviting head coaches to complete a short web-based survey aimed to assess perceptions of and attitudes toward the use of sport psychology services.

The web-based survey can be completed in **5-10 minutes.** Your participation is greatly appreciated and your responses will be held in strict confidence. Any publications or presentations resulting from this project will be reported in summary statistics only.

Please click the link below to activate the survey. Completion of the survey will constitute your consent to participate.

(Link)

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please e-mail Page Allen, master's candidate, University of Tennessee (pallen14@utk.edu).

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. I would greatly appreciate your completion of the survey within the next week to 10 days.

Best wishes in the coming year.

Page Allen

Appendix E

E-mail (Follow-up)

Dear NCAA Division III Head Coach:

This is a follow-up e-mail. If you have already completed this survey, thank you and please do not complete it a second time. If you have yet to complete the survey, please take a moment to read the rest of this e-mail and click on the link below. I would greatly appreciate your participation.

More and more collegiate athletic departments are utilizing sport psychology services to prepare their student-athletes for the mental and emotional challenges of competitive sport. At our own university, over 150 student-athletes, representing a variety of different sports, used the available sport psychology services. However, in spite of this trend, there is little understanding of sport psychology services and coaches' perceptions of and attitudes toward sport psychology, specifically within NCAA Division III athletics.

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The web-based questionnaire can be completed in **5-10 minutes.** Your participation is greatly appreciated and your responses will be held in strict confidence. Any publications or presentations resulting from this project will be reported in summary statistics only.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. I would greatly appreciate your completion of the survey within the next week to 10 days.

Best wishes in the coming year.

Page Allen

Appendix F

Table 1. *Means and Standard Deviations of NCAA D-III Coaches' Attitudes Toward SP Services*

Attitudes Toward SP Services[a]	Males		Females		Previous Experience		No previous experience		Total	
	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*
Stigma tolerance	1.42	.629	1.24	.519	1.23	.484	1.42	.645	1.35	.595
Confidence	4.89	.871	5.22	.781	5.17	.786	4.92	.878	5.02	.851
Personal openness	2.83	.938	2.45	.898	2.57	.922	2.75	.945	2.68	.940
Cultural preference	2.12	1.039	1.95	1.039	1.96	1.011	2.11	1.058	2.05	1.04

[a] Based on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly agree*). Mean scores closer to six indicate a more negative attitude toward sport psychology consulting (stigma tolerance), higher confidence, lower personal openness, and higher cultural preference.

Appendix G

Table 2. *Means and Standard Deviations of NCAA D-III Coaches' Willingness to Encourage Student-athletes to Use SPC Services*

Willingness to Use SPC Services	Males		Females		Previous Experience		No previous experience		Total	
	Mean	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*
Dealing with pressure	3.72	1.023	4.17	.892	4.12	.915	3.76	1.022	3.90	.996
Dealing with injury/rehabilitation	3.73	1.140	4.06	.981	4.06	1.050	3.78	1.108	3.86	1.091
Building confidence	3.89	.973	4.30	.871	4.30	.932	3.95	.955	4.05	.955
Improving focus	4.03	.928	4.26	.863	4.26	.872	4.03	.920	4.12	.909
Preventing burnout	3.53	1.118	3.79	1.074	3.79	1.079	3.53	1.116	3.63	1.108
Communicating with coaches	3.64	1.130	4.02	1.022	3.98	1.043	3.67	1.125	3.79	1.104
Communicating with teammates	3.79	1.082	4.23	.915	4.17	.942	3.84	1.082	3.97	1.042
Dealing with personal issues	3.71	.994	3.99	.972	3.96	.950	3.73	1.011	3.82	.994
Managing anxiety	3.93	.914	4.24	.850	4.15	.876	3.80	1.079	4.05	.901
Increasing enjoyment of sport	3.54	1.112	3.71	1.139	3.80	1.079	3.48	1.138	3.61	1.125
Enhancing performance	4.00	.987	4.25	.885	4.25	.857	4.00	1.001	4.10	.955
Performing as well in competition as in practice	4.00	1.005	4.29	.853	4.30	.888	4.01	.983	4.12	.957
Managing emotions during competition	3.99	.966	4.26	.860	4.27	.879	3.98	.952	4.10	.934
Building team cohesion	3.85	1.079	4.22	1.013	4.19	.964	3.88	1.114	4.00	1.068
Willingness Total	3.81	.838	4.13	.729	4.10	.760	3.83	.825	3.94	.811

Appendix H

Table 3. *Means and Standard Deviations of NCAA D-III Coaches' Support for Possible SPC Roles*

Support for SP roles	Males		Females		Previous Experience		No previous experience		Total	
	Mean	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*	**Mean**	*SD*
Available at the institution	3.81	.982	4.29	.828	4.22	.876	3.86	.974	4.00	.953
Among athletic department support staff	3.63	1.030	4.04	1.037	3.96	1.027	3.68	1.053	3.79	1.051
Present at practices and competition	2.86	1.161	3.16	1.161	3.27	1.143	2.80	1.151	2.98	1.170

Vita

Page Grace Allen was adopted from Seoul, South Korea as an infant and was brought to the U.S. where her parents raised her in Annapolis, MD. She attended Washington College in Chestertown, MD, where she began to develop an interest in the connection between sport and research, and graduated with an undergraduate degree in experimental psychology and minors in sociology and art. Page then moved to Knoxville, TN and attended the University of Tennessee, where she pursued a master's degree in kinesiology, specifically studying sport psychology and motor behavior.