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# We are One: The Role of Group Identity And Self-Sacrificial Leaders on the Generation of Social Capital Within Youth Sport Programs

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WE ARE ONE:  
THE ROLE OF GROUP IDENTITY AND SELF-SACRIFICIAL LEADERS ON THE  
GENERATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL WITHIN YOUTH SPORT PROGRAMS

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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## DEDICATION

Without the help and support of my family, friends and mentors, this journey would  
never have come to fruition

To my children—Thank you for tolerating my frequent absences, and stepping up to help  
each other as needed during the last 4 years

To my friends—Thank you for proving support, friendship, humor and reminding me  
when it was time to step away from the computer

To my mentors—For always finding the balance between pushing me to find the right  
answer myself, and offering their own expertise and wisdom

To my Viking—Despite your late entry into this process, it is often the last mile that  
makes all the difference.

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***“There is nothing like looking, if you want to find something. You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after.” –The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien***

I have been fortunate throughout my life, to have the opportunity to have had educators along the way that have helped me forge a path to a career in academia. When I first set out on this path; a 16 year old undergraduate student who moved halfway across the country to pursue her own path, I could not have foreseen a journey that would span almost 27 years, four universities, multiple career changes, three children and a lifetime of adventures before I found exactly what I was looking for all along.

It has been this last leg of the journey, which would not have been possible without the support of my advisors at the University of South Carolina, which has illuminated clearly exactly what I set off looking for all those years ago. First, my academic advisor and mentor, Dr. Bob Heere, has pushed me to think critically and explore the areas of academia about which I feel most passionate. Without his support and guidance this dissertation would not have been possible. From the beginning of my PhD career, he has been willing to engage not only my curiosities, but also my opinions, even when they didn't match his own. He has always pushed me to defend those opinions, and to evaluate those positions critically, and hone my thinking.

I have also been lucky to have an unofficial advisor; one who has taught me not just about the academic field of sport management, but about being a woman in

academia, and how to balance the demands of family and career. Dr. Haylee Mercado has been a “life mentor” from my first days in Columbia. She has gone above and beyond, to be a sounding board, not only for academic questions, but also for professional and personal guidance. Her door has always been open; not only to me, but to my entire family. Throughout all, when I was unsure what I wanted, or questioned my own choices, she steadfastly reminded me to “stay in your lane”, advice which proved invaluable and undoubtedly correct.

The other members of my committee have also been important academic, personal and professional mentors who have helped steer me toward a successful career in academia. Dr. Khalid Ballouli has always been an inviting and welcoming supporter, always willing to offer advice and opportunities to advance my scholarship and development as a scholar. Dr. Kirk Foster has always been available to me, and has provided unparalleled perspective, that helped me to look at my research in terms of the bigger picture, beyond the bounds of the sport management discipline. As a professor in the classroom, a mentor in the Civic Scholars program, and a member of this committee, Dr. Foster has always pushed me to not only think critically, but to look for the meaning for my work that extends beyond the academy to the world at large.

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And finally, I would not have arrived at this final stop on my journey were it not for the support of the faculty at Old Dominion University, who both sparked my curiosity in a field I had only just learned existed and worked to ensure that I got the training necessary to be a successful PhD student. Dr. Stephen Shapiro, who saw me through my master's thesis, Dr. Lamar Reams who helped me learn what it means to be a researcher and supported my first attempts at doing research, Dr. Lynn Ridinger, who always offered her support as I searched for graduate programs, and Dr. Bob Case, who always encouraged me to follow my passions.

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equal parts intelligent, stubborn, and opinionated. And to my oldest, Sayali, who has grown from a child to nearly adulthood, while taking on many roles in our home and family that were beyond her years, I cannot offer thanks enough. I can only hope that I will be able to support them in their journeys, as well as they have supported me in mine. And to my Viking, though you only joined this journey at the tail end, it has been the last mile that you have stepped in and helped me find the finish line. Like Frodo and Sam, to you my dear Viking I say, “I am glad you here with me. Here, at the end of all things Sam”. In this case, the end of all things, is certainly the beginning of new things.



## ABSTRACT

Popular culture often assumes that participation in youth sport has a host of positive benefits, including the ability to generate social capital, spur future occupational success and encourage greater levels of civic engagement (Coalter, 2007). There is; however, little empirical evidence to support this ideal (Coakley, 2011). In fact, little is known about the specific conditions within a sport organization that likely to facilitate youth sport organizations to become more adept at generating, maintaining, and distributing social capital to their members.

Using the Community of Practice framework (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002) as a lens, the author investigated the conditions under which youth sport organizations are most effectively able to generate social capital for their members. In doing so, the author explores the relationship between team identification and role identification. This is therefore the first empirical test of the theoretical work of Lock and Heere (2017) that proposed that team identification, driven by social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) and role identification, driven by identity theory, are unique but interdependent constructs.

Using structural equation modeling, the author proposed and supported a model in which the relationship between team identification and role identification was explored. Furthermore, this model examined the importance of self-sacrificial leadership on the ability of youth sport organizations to generate social capital for its members. The results of this study demonstrate that role identification positively impacts the development of

team identification. Team identification and self-sacrificial leadership behaviors of the organization's leaders positively impacted the development of social capital within the organization. Role identification does not have a positive impact on the creation of social capital. Implications for youth sport organizations and participants, including suggestions about the importance of fostering team identification are discussed. Finally, directions for future research, particularly with regards to how to effectively develop team identification and how this may relate to athlete retention are discussed.

## PREFACE

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help of the community of both Columbia Swim League friends, USA Swimming club coaches and athletes, and various other members of youth sport organizations, that were willing to help me along the way. Many of my former swimmers, some of whom are now coaches, worked tirelessly to help me collect data. I hope the findings presented here in this study will help these organizations better understand how to create the richest, most rewarding, and most inclusive environments for their members.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACoP.....	Athlete Community of Practice
AVE .....	Average Variance Extracted
CCoP.....	Coach's Community of Practice
CoP.....	Community of Practice
CFA.....	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CR .....	Composite Reliability
RID.....	Role Identification
SC.....	Social Capital
SEM .....	Structural Equation Model
TID .....	Team Identification
VCoP.....	Virtual Community of Practice

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every year, more than 45 million American children, participate in youth sport organizations (Langhorst, 2016). While this number still represents a large swath of American children, the number of children participating in organized sports has declined over the last decade (Langhorst, 2016). One possible reason for this decline is that the current trend within American youth sport does not support this mythos of positive social benefits for youth based solely on participation in sport. As youth sport becomes increasingly expensive and requires an increasing time commitment from athletes and parents, the once common assumption that youth sport generates positive social benefits, is being questioned.

Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that participation in youth sport organizations ultimately spurs future occupational success and greater levels of civic engagement, and opportunities for reformation amongst at-risk youth (Coalter, 2007). Furthermore, there is some evidence that individuals that participated in sport as children have higher levels of community involvement as adults (Perks, 2007). While it is certainly possible that youth sport may offer positive social benefits (Coalter, 2007; Perks, 2007), the literature reveals that access to these benefits is not a guaranteed outcome of participation (Devine & Parr, 2008). While sport participation may offer

access to these social benefits, there is a lack of empirical evidence detailing the conditions under which youth sport participation actually offers participants long-term access to positive social benefits (Coakley, 2011). In fact, there is increasing question as to what conditions are necessary to allow youth sport organizations to provide social benefits for their members and offer inclusive sport-based experiences for American families.

The professionalization trend within youth sport organizations has led to youth sport participation demanding more extensive time commitments (from both athletes and parents), at increasingly younger ages, with some sports expecting specialization long before a child enters middle school (Gould & Whitely, 2009). There is, however, no evidence that this is likely to generate any positive social benefits for children or their families. To the contrary, this trend conflicts with the primary factors that Scanlan, Carpenter, Simons, Schmidt and Keeler (1993) identified as being instrumental to continued sport participation into adulthood; *fun* and general *social factors*. In fact, this dissipation of fun and social factors has been thought by some scholars to lead to the participant burnout that drives youth sport athletes to leave sport entirely (Goodger, Gorley, Lavalley & Harwood (2007). Instead of being a first step to lifelong sport participation and the social benefits that stem from lifetime participation in civic organizations (Putnam, 1995), youth sport organizations are in fact driving nearly 70% of youth sport athletes permanently out of organized sport participation by the age of 13 (Wallace, 2016), and may be a factor leading to lagging youth sport participation numbers (Lee, 2015).

Furthermore, the increasing professionalization of youth sport organizations, with an emphasis on sport performance rather than youth development, has led to youth sport organizations in which parents, athletes, program administrators, and coaches act based not on a unified set of values or principles, but based on individual, or role based motives that place the needs of the individual ahead of that of the group (Gould, 2009). Instead of focusing on the development of one community of all members of the sport organization, in many youth sport situations athletes, parents, administrators and coaches do not operate as one community, but almost as four separate communities, each of which is centered on the goals, priorities, and needs of each specific role within the organization or sport. For instance, the professionalization of youth sport coaches allows for the potential that they will become more concerned with their own career advancement than fostering an environment in which athletes are encouraged to think of sport participation as a lifetime activity.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is threefold. First, the study seeks to examine the extent to which role identity and organizational involvement lead to the creation of common group identity, in this case, with a sport team in which the individual is involved. The author suggests that both role identity and involvement will be beneficial to the development of common group identity, in this case team identification, between members of an organization. Second, this study seeks to probe the question of how team identification and perceptions of self-sacrificial leadership influence the existence of social capital within youth sport organizations. The author suggests that both team identification and self-sacrificial leadership will be beneficial to the development of

social capital. Finally, this study explores the relationship between role identification and social capital. The author presents the idea that role identification in and of itself is at best immaterial to the existence of social capital within an organization, and at worst, detrimental.

### 1.3 SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research on youth sport participation and its ability to generate social benefits for its members has limited the definition of participant to the athlete itself, failing to recognize the extent to which youth sport participants also include adult participants, namely coaches, program administrators and most importantly, parents. As youth sport organizations have become increasingly professionalized and less focused on the overall development of youth, the quintessential role of adult participants in youth sport has evolved. As organizations hire trained professional sport coaches to replace volunteer coaches from the community and employing professional administrators and board of directors focused specifically on generating revenue for the organization, the focus of these individuals has shifted from participation in youth sport as community service related to professionally based. As such, the modern youth sport organization closely mirrors the structure of other civic organizations, which involve multi-generational participation and a mixture of “members”, volunteers, and professional leaders.

In addition, much like people’s reasons for joining other types of groups, individuals join youth sport organizations based on expectations stemming from a particular role they inhabit, (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), or on pre-existing social bonds that do not necessarily relate to the focus of the group (Katz & Heere, 2013). These reasons have been examined to determine whether they contribute to or negate the

subsequent formation of a separate social identity that is directly tied to membership in the organization itself (Tajfel, 1978), and shared by members of that organization to create an “in-group” (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). The eventual outcome of the creation of shared social identity focused on membership in the specific organization is the development of social capital that can be created, controlled, and distributed by the organization. Therefore, if youth sport organizations were to concern themselves with the development of the organization as a civic organization as opposed to focusing on competitive ends; it would have the potential to create sufficient social capital to ensure that participation with the sport would last a lifetime.

The tendency for individuals to organize themselves into groups, which then evolve into communities that possess significant social benefits for their members is age-old, and stems from a desire to find commonalities with other individuals with whom they share physical or emotional space (Hillery, 1955). Through these commonalities, individuals are able to build connections with others thereby gaining a sense of belonging within a larger society (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). These shared spaces take on many forms and may be rooted in a shared sense of place, shared interests, or shared practices (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Regardless of the many forms that communities come in, individuals who hail from the same community strive to create boundaries that allow for the development of a sense of “we”. These boundaries define those who are both included and excluded from a particular community; thereby giving those included a sense of belonging (MacQueen, McLellan, Metzger, Kegeles, Strauss, Scotti et al., 2001; McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Throughout the development process of a community, the members of that community are linked not only by shared concerns and connections, but also by the resources and strengths that ultimately prove to be the primary benefits offered by community membership. These shared connections grant power to communities by creating enclaves of shared knowledge and understanding that is tailored specifically to the interests of the community members (Chiu, Hsu & Wang, 2006). While there are many types of communities that include connections based on shared knowledge, the community of practice (CoP) has the potential to become part of the organizational culture of almost any group. A CoP is a self-defined group of individuals that are connected by shared bonds of both identity and practice, allowing the community to become a fundamental part of the individual's life (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). While communities of practice can exist in a wide array of settings, they have the potential to be exceptionally powerful under certain circumstances. When CoPs evolve as part of the organizational culture of a sport organization, it requires that members learn and perform specific or parallel skills and practices, while also helping form members' sense of identity. As such, these sport organization are well positioned to create groups that display the same type of transformative and permanence of traditional organizations such as schools, religious groups, and civic organizations.

The formation of a singular unified CoP made up people holding a variety of organizational roles; however, would likely allow that organization to be equipped with enough social capital to encourage a lifetime desire to remain active within the organization. In addition, if the organization holds considerable social capital that the adult actors are able to access, it is likely that those individuals will remain active within

the organization. The current state of youth sport organizations, however, suggests that sense of belonging within the sport organization often centers on what role that individual plays within the sport, instead of based on a general sense of identification with the organization itself (Culver & Trudel, 2008; Galipeau & Trudel, 2004, 2005, 2006). Other literature, however, suggests that as individuals continue to engage with the organization, a distinct group identity that corresponds with the specific organization that the individual is a member of has the potential to emerge (Katz & Heere, 2013; Collins & Heere, 2018). There has been some research looking at the idea of participatory sport organizations as communities, and a considerable amount of that research has focused on the importance of creating positive relationships between athletes and coaches (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Briere, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2007; Sarrazin, Vallerand, Guillet, Pelletier & Cury, 2002). While coaches are undoubtedly an important social agent in the lives of youth sport participants, it is also necessary to further examine what other social agents and organizational characteristics may play a role in creating youth sport experiences that truly deliver the promises made by proponents of youth sport; that is social capital and positive, inclusive social interactions between members of the community.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 DEFINING COMMUNITY

Despite the literature's frequent use of the term community, a universally accepted definition of the term has long eluded scholars. In fact, a standard definition of what comprises a community has never been put forth in either the sport literature or the larger body of social science literature. Because the term community is so often found across a wide swath of literature encompassing a wide array of disciplines; however, a standardized definition of community has long been sought. Hillery's (1955) classic work examining the concept of community provided 94 possible definitions for community. Modern scholars have attempted to hone this list by proposing essential components necessary for being a community. Coulton (2005) suggests that community must have a geographic component. The existence of group cohesiveness amongst its members has also been suggested as a necessary characteristic of a community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). MacQueen et al. (2001) define community as "a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives and engage in joint actions in geographic locations or setting" (p. 1929). Traditionally, scholars have conceptualized two types of communities; that is, those that are geographically based, and those that are relational in nature (Gusfield, 1975). Those communities that are relational in nature have come to be known as communities of interest (Wenger, 1998).

What these varied definitions of community display is that the concept of community is highly contextual, and therefore evolves with society (Fernback, 2007). Modern society is evolving at a rapid pace, and the modern individual is highly mobile (Coleman, 1988), and relies strongly on technology (Giddens, 1990); therefore, community is likely to evolve with it. While it has been argued that the societal benefits of belonging to a community are maximized by traditional civic organizations, religious groups, familial structures and educational institutions (Putnam, 1995; Wuthnow, 1994), as society evolves, this position has been revisited. From a post-modern perspective, the concept of community is fluid in nature and therefore may be defined differently for every individual community, based on the purpose and structure of that community (Fernback, 2007).

## 2.2 BRAND COMMUNITIES

Modern research has proposed that it is possible for people to create a community based around a common use or interest in a particular brand (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). This type of community, coined a brand community by Muniz & O'Guinn (2001) was first applied to individuals rallying around a singular product brand to create a community of like-minded individuals. Underwood, Bond and Baer (2001) first connected the idea of sport organizations and brand communities; proposing that sport organizations are unique brand communities because they more closely akin to a service than a tangible product. Some scholars have taken this a step further to suggest that sport is uniquely positioned to facilitate particularly strong brand communities (Heere, Walker, Yoshida, Ko, Jordan & James, 2011). Recent research has demonstrated that these sport focused brand communities have the potential to allow individuals to gain a sense of both

empowerment and importance (Katz & Heere, 2015). Because individuals' connections to sport teams and organizations are often central to their sense of self, brand communities that initially form based on sport or team identification may be unique, because members of these kinds of communities self-identify not just as consumers, but as members of the sport organization itself (Heere & James 2007).

Furthermore, there is evidence that this identity-based development of community centered on a sport organization can occur for both sport fans (Heere & James, 2007; Heere et al., 2011; Palmer & Thompson, 2007; Reysen & Branscombe, 2010) and sport participants (Galipeau & Trudel, 2004; 2005; 2006; Warner & Dixon, 2011). Brand communities, however, have largely been understood to be communities of interest, that is, a community that forms and is centered largely on a common interest, belief, or value that is shared by its members is generally defined as a community of interest, that is, a community that is relational in nature, but does not necessarily require that everyone in the community share the same activities with relation to that community (Wenger, 1998). Early brand community literature seemed to suggest that brand communities were largely focused on consumption of a product; however, more recent studies have demonstrated that this is not necessarily the case, and in fact brand communities eventually develop shared practices between members (Schau, Muniz & Arnould, 2009). In fact, these practices can be likened to apprenticeships, and were found to be particularly strong in brand communities connected to service-based, entertainment products (Schau et al., 2009). Sport, much like the Xena and TPATH brand communities discussed by Schau et al., is a service-sector based product (Underwood et al., 2001). Furthermore, sport is deeply entwined with the individual's sense of self and, particularly in the case of

participatory sport, requires individuals to all engage in the same behaviors. As such, sport is well suited to challenge the notion that a brand community is able to evolve from being a simply community of interest, into a community that provide benefits that extend beyond consumption of the product that is the focus of the brand community. One of the primary benefits of such an extension is the ability of members to gain access to social capital as a result of participation in the community.

### 2.3 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE CONSTRUCT

There is ample evidence that sport focused brand communities, as they are communities that focus on a service-based product may extend beyond the traditional limitations of more tangible product-based brand communities (Grant, Heere, & Dickson, 2011; Underwood et al., 2001). This concept can be explored by looking to the community of practice (CoP) literature, and by considering the possibility that sport focused brand communities may, in some cases, qualify as CoPs. The concept of the CoP is an extension of the concept of a relational community of interest. Unlike the community of interest; however, a CoP is based not only on shared interest, beliefs, or values, but also is comprised of people that engage in a common activity (Wenger, 1998). In this way, the CoP extends the concept of a relational communities like brand communities, to require that in order to be members of the group, individuals must not only like the same thing, but must all do the same thing, for the good of the organization (Wenger et al., 2002).

While the CoP was first defined by Lave and Wenger (1991) to describe the outcome of a combination of practice and participation in a group setting, and was meant to simply to explain how newcomers to a community learn to replicate actions, it has

been expanded upon since its introduction. While the initial intention of a CoP focused, on replication of skills, later authors shifted the focus to examine how organization might use CoPs to create innovation and improve the organization (Brown & Duguid, 1991). In doing so, this work not only examines how communities interact with one another, but also suggests that all community members participate in the CoP with the same level of importance (Brown & Duguid, 1991).

At a minimum, brand communities are groups that occupy the identity dimension, and are bound by shared identity amongst the individuals comprising the group. A more highly evolved brand community; however, has the potential to evolve beyond merely the identity dimension, and in doing so, become a CoP. In fact, what is characteristic of a CoP is that it has two dimensions; practice and identity (Wenger, 1998). Practice is comprised of three elements; mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire, which work together to form the structure of a CoP (Wenger, 1998). The second dimension of a CoP is identity, which is a quintessential part of learning (Wenger, 1998). Much like identity is a significant force in the format of relational communities (Heere et al., 2011), the identity discussed by Wenger (1998), is rooted in the individual's role within the community. In both these instances, this form of identity is driven by the individual's role within the group, or the focus of the group, rather than on membership in the specific group (Wenger, 1998). This dissertation will examine the idea that at the outset of a CoP all members share an identity that is based on their role within the community; however, if that community is to fill a larger space in the lives of its members, that identity must evolve to become focused not on the role the individual plays within the community but on membership in the community itself.

This occurs because over time, the shared practices of a CoP facilitate “negotiated experience, community membership, learning trajectory, nexus of multi-membership, and a relation between the local and the global” (Wenger, 1998, p. 149). This ultimately leads to the evolution of a larger shared group identity—that is, one that is connected to membership in the CoP itself. As such, CoPs can be used as a framework for examining the nature, function and outcomes of community itself (Wenger, 1998). One outcome of community it has been established is social capital (Putnam, 1993).

In recent years, just as the concept of what it means to be a community has evolved to reflect a changing society less constrained by social orthodoxy (Giddens, 1990), the concept of what constitutes a CoP within an organization has shifted from one that centers on the necessity of a joint enterprise that stresses replication of practices (Wenger, 1998). Instead, Wenger et al. (2002) positions the CoP as a framework that fosters innovation by focusing on learning and sharing knowledge. This in turn has benefits for both the organization and the individuals that comprise that organization (Wenger, 2004). This new streamlined CoP has three critical elements: domain, community, and practice, and may take on many different forms, and are therefore no more static in nature than any other kind of community (Wenger et al, 2002). As such, Wenger et al. offer the definition of CoPs as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (2002, p. 4). Since the original definition of what constitutes a CoP, scholars have examined the possibility of CoPs existing in a variety of organizational settings that stretch well beyond the skilled trades first proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991).

**CoPs in Educational Settings.** While the concept of the CoP originated outside the educational sphere specifically because its creators were trying to offer a new perspective on what learning is (Wallace, 2007), it is unsurprising that the construct has now been applied to educational settings (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders & Goldenberg, 2009; Saunders, Goldenberg & Gallimore, 2009). Within the educational literature, there is considerable discussion of both learning communities, which focus only on the practice side of learning, and CoPs, which require both the practice and the identity function of learning (DuFour, 2004). A learning community focuses on the learning and instructing of students, whereas the CoP focuses on the community members and not only enhanced learning through practice, but also identity (Gilbert, Gallimore, & Trudel, 2009). Just as a relational community is focused on shared identity, a learning community is a group focused on shared practice. When these two characteristics are found in one community, that community has achieved the multi-dimensionality required for being considered a CoP. Because the CoP requires both shared identity and shared practice amongst members, it has the ability to serve as a powerful organizational tool.

The educational literature includes both classroom and out-of-classroom learning, as coaching is compared to teaching, and how often it struggles with the same issues of professional development and engagement (Gilbert et al., 2009). Coaches mirror teachers; athletes mirror students, and the playing field is at least a rough equivalent of the classroom (Gilbert et al, 2009). As such, this body of literature is particularly relevant to the application of the CoP construct to the sport participation setting.

**CoPs for students.** It has been found that within the classroom setting interaction rituals and student engagement could help move a classroom towards becoming a CoP

(Olitsky, 2007). In the case of the ethnographic study of a middle school science class, it was determined that as science became part of the identity of students (identity), interaction rituals (practice) helped students stay engaged, a CoP was created, resulting in increased peer learning (Olitsky, 2007). The converse has also been demonstrated; in educational settings in which students are unable to find shared identity within the organization and opportunities to engage in shared practices with other members of the organization, it was difficult to keep students in the organization (a university) at all (Herzig, 2004). This suggests that the ability of an organization to foster bonds of both shared practice and shared identity based on that practice are not only critical to the existence of a CoP, but also have clear benefits for both the organization and the individual (Herzig, 2004). This study was particularly interesting because it highlights the importance of the multi-dimensionality of the CoP. Herzig (2004) studied female doctoral students in mathematics and found that because they did not connect with faculty members in or out of the classroom setting, despite high levels of skill and investment in math (practice), the inability to connect and share identity with others led them to leave the university. Furthermore, while they may have had personal identity tied to being mathematics students, because they did not connect with faculty members (leaders), they were not developing the shared practice necessary to make their identity that of mathematicians. This study also suggested that faculty members and graduate students could potentially be part of the same CoP; reinforcing Wenger et al.'s (2002) idea that the CoP should focus not on identical practice amongst members, but on growth through shared learning and knowledge.



**CoPs and learning communities for teachers.** While the aforementioned studies focused on CoPs designed primarily for students, there is also literature that examines CoPs for teachers. A particular challenge to the creation of CoPs within the educational setting has been found to be the tension between professional development activities teaching new pedagogical methods and professional development activities that were designed to help teachers gain more knowledge in their specific fields (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001). Be this as it may, it has also been demonstrated that while benefits of creating a CoP for instructors within the university setting allowed for the creation of high quality educational experience for all students, the organizational structure of the university setting made it difficult for adequate time, resources, or reward for the creation of, participation in, and maintenance of these CoPs to occur (McDonald & Star, 2006). As such, McDonald and Star (2006) argue that if CoPs are to become a part of the higher education landscape, there will not only need to be further study about how to create and sustain these groups, but also a shift in organizational culture to meet those requirements.

While the majority of educational research on community development looks at learning communities, as opposed to CoPs, there is enough similarity between these concepts for the findings of this study to have at least some relevance (Gilbert et al., 2009). Stable educational settings, trained peer facilitators, teams of teachers teaching similar content, and published protocols establishing guidance were critical elements to building a successful program have all been suggested as fundamentally important to the development of a learning community (Gallimore et al., 2009). Similarly, Saunders et al. (2009) found that student performance could be improved by creating stable settings,

distributed leadership, and explicit protocols when creating teacher teams. While these studies examined learning in the classroom context, they are of particular relevance to youth sport organizations because the necessary elements of the teacher learning community can be transferred to coaching education almost completely seamlessly (Gilbert et al., 2009).

**Communities of Practice and Sport.** The similarities and affinity between the education sector and the sport participation sector have led scholars to use the CoP construct to examine the organizational structure of sport organizations, in particular, youth sport organizations. Because sport has been found to be a powerful force in the development of new communities for many modern individuals (Heere et al., 2011), it is not surprising that the concept of CoPs in sport has garnered interest. Sport science scholars seem to favor the idea that sport organizations cannot be one CoP because individuals within these organizations tend to have firmly established roles, and roles which differ. For example, Galipeau and Trudel (2004, 2005, 2006), argue that sport participation settings have two primary CoPs; the athlete's community of practice (ACoP) and the coach's community of practice (CCoP). They make this argument based on the notion that the ACoP is focused on the actual performance of the sport, whereas the CCoP is focused on teaching sport skills. In short, Galipeau and Trudel (2004, 2005, 2006) argue that coaches and athletes cannot be part of the same CoP, because they do not share practices.

This leaning toward strict adherence to identical roles of individuals within a CoP is evidenced by a theoretical overview of the existing literature on sport and CoPs (Culver & Trudel, 2008). While this work is valuable in that it includes an evaluation of

how the CoP construct can be related to Wenger's (1998) framework; it fails to consider the revised understanding of CoP when discussing CoPs and sport found in Wenger et al. (2002). While this assessment is well in line with Wenger's early thinking, it does not consider the newest definition of CoP that suggests that the real goal of CoPs is sharing knowledge and fostering innovation, rather than simply replicating an existing practice (Cox, 2005).

**Coaches' Community of Practice.** Just as the educational literature examines how CoPs might benefit teachers, the sport literature suggests that for sport coaches, a coach's community of practice (CCoP) could create more effective coaches. The concept of coach education has, as youth sport becomes more and more commercialized and parents are demanding assurances of competency in exchange for larger sums of money being invested in youth sport, become particularly relevant (Gilbert et al., 2009). The literature includes a variety of potential coach education models, ranging from formal certification, to hands on experience, to a reflective process, to various models of learning communities; however, some general conclusion about coach education can be drawn from this literature. First, it is understood that the way that coaches learn is highly sport specific (Lemyre, Trudel & Durand-Bush, 2007). Second, it is widely accepted that experience as an athlete is critical to attaining a high level of coaching knowledge (Cote, 2006, Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, Lemyre et al., 2007). Finally, it has been found that reflection can play an important part in advancing knowledge within a coach (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001).

Furthermore, Bertram and Gilbert (2011) explore the possibilities of creating a learning community-based coach education model, using Gilbert et al.'s (2009) five

recommendations for creating a successful coach education learning community. Though this attempt to empirically test Gilbert et al.'s framework experienced some success, the authors suggest that ultimately the learning community approach is not a substitute for more traditional coaching education programs. Therefore, a learning community might be a stepping-stone toward a CoP and could possibly facilitate an eventual evolution of a CoP as the people in the learning community become more identified with the community. (Bertram & Gilbert, 2011). An attempt has been made to identify the specific benefits coaches reap from participation in a learning community (Kuklick, Gearity, Thompson and Neelis, 2015). In doing so, the social-psychological dynamics of the learning community, as well as how social learning occurred as the result of the coach's connection to the learning community provided empirical evidence of how learning communities can facilitate coaching education by focusing on reflective thinking, as an enhancement to more experiential learning (Kuklick et al., 2015). It has also been shown that in a learning community setting, interactions between community members suggest that parallel practices between community members with different areas of expertise facilitated sharing of knowledge within the learning community (Kulick et al., 2015). As such, if one uses Wenger et al.'s (2002) definition of a CoP, the learning community studied by Kulick et al. (2015) could very easily evolve into a CCoP.

It has been found that most coaches used either their own experience as an athlete, as an assistant coach, or as an instructor to learn how to coach, as opposed to formalized educational programs, and that for most coaches there is no learning community that bridges individual programs and gives coaches opportunities to interact with coaches from other programs (Lemyre et al., 2007). This is supportive of other research that

found that because most coaches spend far more time on the field or in the arena coaching than in any sort of formal educational program, coaching education is highly experiential (Gilbert, Cote, & Mallett, 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). While the sport research holds that athletes and coaches cannot inhabit the same CoP because they do not have the same practices (Culver & Trudel, 2008), the fact that most coach learning is drawn from experience as an athlete would suggest that in fact coaches and athletes do have shared practices. It could be argued that even if those practices are not being carried out concurrently, the coach's experience as an athlete makes the coach an expert, while the youth athlete is a newcomer who is likely to gain knowledge from the coach. Further research is warranted to study the possibility that within youth sport there is a unique opportunity for coaches and athletes to inhabit the same CoP.

The sport literature's examination of CCoPs includes CCoPs that have been engineered by community leaders, as opposed to those that occur organically (Callary, 2013; Culver, 2004; Culver & Trudel, 2006; Culver, Trudel & Werthner, 2009; Lemyre, 2008). This suggests that the more modern ways of thinking about how CoPs come about (Swan, Scarbrough & Robertson, 2002; Wenger et al., 2002) could provide a more realistic vision of how CoPs actually evolve within the sport sector. Scholars have found that not only can it be challenging to create a CoP in the sport context; it is even more challenging to sustain such a community (Culver et al., 2009; Lemyre, 2008).

While the research has demonstrated that creating a CCoP within a sport organization is possible, the continuation of that community, in the event of the leaders of the community changing, has been difficult (Culver & Trudel, 2006; Culver, 2004; Culver et al., 2009). Even though participation in the CCoP was readily accomplished

during the study, and all found the experience to be beneficial, the fledgling CCoP could not be sustained beyond the duration of the study (Culver & Trudel, 2006). Similarly, in another study once the leader/facilitator was no longer involved the CCoP it simply faded away (Culver, 2004). Finally, a study in which a visionary but authoritarian leader attempted to change the culture of youth sport across an elite youth baseball league found that, over time, coaches benefitted from the CCoP and felt empowered to share their knowledge across teams (Culver et al., 2009). However, once the league's leader left, the CCoP folded and the league's organizational culture reverted to the way it had been prior to the creation of the CCoP (Culver et al., 2009). This CCoP certainly did not evolve organically, nor could it be maintained organically, which supports the current thinking that while there is room for organizational support for the creation of CoPs (Swan et al., 2002; Wenger et al., 2002), if such organizational support is authoritarian in nature, the created CoP may not be sustainable. Gongla and Rizzuto (2004) noted that this phenomenon of unsustainable CoPs occurred frequently enough to cause problems for organizations that had come to rely on them as a part of the organizational culture. Similarly, Katz and Heere (2013) found that when leaders did not delegate responsibility to group members those leaders were detrimental to the sustainability of the community. The authors referred to such a leader as the Achilles Heel of a community (Katz & Heere, 2013). This suggests that leaders are a critical component to the ability of the members of the group to evolve into having a strong sense of identity connected to membership in the group itself.

While the sport literature does not offer many examples of sustainable CCoPs, a study of a Canadian youth skating club demonstrated that it is not only possible for a CoP

to form within a sport organization, but it is possible to sustain that community, long enough for it to become an accepted part of the organization's culture (Callary, 2013). This study is particularly valuable because it creates a roadmap of what a club might do to actually create a sustainable CCoP. First and foremost is the concept of longevity of the members of the community leaders; in this case, more than 20 years, a time span in which these leaders were both youth athletes and later coaches with the organization. As such, both community members consider being a part of the skating club as very significant part of their identities (Callary, 2013). This finding supports Wenger's (1998) contention that both dimensions, practice and identity, must occur, in order for a CoP to be successful. This suggests that in order for a CoP to be sustainable, individuals must be involved not only with the focus of the community, but with the community itself, and as such, must develop an identity that connects not only to the focus of the community itself.

While involvement can be difficult to define (Muncy & Hunt, 1984), modern scholars have suggested that involvement can be defined as behavioral, cognitive, or affective (Funk & James, 2001). The inherent difference between the sustainability of the CCoP in the elite baseball league (Culver et al., 2009) and that of the skating club (Callary, 2013) may lie in the fact that the identity dimension of the skating club coaches was tied to the club itself in addition to the individual coaches' identity as skating coaches. To the contrary, the coaches in the baseball league had a primary identity tied to their roles as baseball coaches, as opposed to being part of the league itself. Furthermore, this suggests that the development of a CoP is longitudinal, and in order for the CoP to be sustainable, it must survive long enough to truly change the organization's culture, so that

it survives inevitable changes in leadership and membership. This is unsurprising when one considers that the development of social identity tied to relational communities of interest is also longitudinal and shifts over time from simply being tied to the purpose of the organization to the organization itself (Collins & Heere, 2018). The length of time the skating club primary coaches had been with the organization suggests that this shift is longitudinal in nature and takes considerable time to occur.

Another unique aspect of this community was the fact that the community leadership, which was extremely stable, also focused on shared decisions making and empowering other members of the community (Callary, 2013). Interestingly, this supports research on the formation of communities of interest that have found sustainability of new communities is strongly tied to leaders' ability to empower followers (Katz & Heere, 2015).

**ACoPs: A gap in the literature.** While there clearly are separate types of communities within sport organizations based on the roles held within the organization, athlete communities of practice (ACoP), receive little attention in the literature. Galipeau and Trudel (2004) do examine this question using Wenger et al.'s (2002) work on cultivating community as a framework. The authors found that coaches can facilitate the existence of an ACoP, and by doing so can make the transition to full participation in the team easier for newcomers, suggesting that in the sport sector, organizational input is required for the creation of CoPs, and it is unlikely that such a community will simply evolve organically in a competitive environment. (Galipeau & Trudel, 2004). As such, it again appears that Wenger et al.'s (2002) is a more practical approach to creating CoPs, particularly in sport settings, where leadership must use influence to counteract the



competitive tension that can undermine creation of CoPs. Galipeau and Trudel (2005) study of collegiate athletes, however, used Wenger's (1998) framework for communities of practice, and evaluated whether joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and shared repertoire were in fact evident in athlete interactions. The authors in this study found that the existence of an ACoP extended beyond the playing field and encompassed both the academic and social spheres of the community members (Galipeau & Trudel, 2005). Furthermore, the authors were able to demonstrate that once the ACoP came into existence, members began to independently create a framework of expected behavior for community members, further supporting the idea that an ACoP has the potential to extend beyond the athletic setting and is in fact a holistic structure that influences various dimensions of the athletes' lives (Galipeau & Trudel, 2005).

While Galipeau and Trudel's work (2004; 2005) examined ACoPs in highly competitive sport settings, Light and Nash (2006) look at ACoPs in a recreational sport setting. This recreational sport organization had a cooperative nature that community members repeatedly cited as what made it different from other organizations, and the cultivation of practices and sharing of knowledge was seen as a cooperative effort for the public good (Light & Nash, 2006). While there were some competitive elements within this recreational sport organization, unlike the other ACoPs discussed in the literature, competition was not the primary mission of the group (Light & Nash, 2006). As such, this work, when considered in conjunction with that of Galipeau & Trudel (2004; 2005) suggests that ACoPs may be able to exist across various levels of sport.

While the literature concerning ACoPs is limited, what research does exist suggests that ACoPs have the potential to transcend the immediate purpose of the youth

sport organization and become a force that connects members of the community in other aspects of their lives. Based on the literature on both ACoPs and CCoPs further research is warranted to investigate the potential for these two types of CoPs to exist as a singular CoP within a youth sport organization, based on the highly experiential learning of coaches, and the shared identity and practices of these two elements of the CoP. Finally, further research is warranted to determine if the combination of shared identity and shared practice is makes the ACoP a particularly powerful type of community, that is ultimately capable of creating, maintaining and distributing social capital to its members.

**Formation of Communities of Practice.** The application and definition of what exactly constitutes CoP has evolved and expanded over time, therefore it is unsurprising that the literature also reflects a changing understanding of how CoPs are created.

Initially, scholars held that in order for a CoP to be impactful for an organization it had to evolve completely organically (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Everest, 2001; Wenger, 1998). In fact, some scholars went so far as to suggest that the ability of the CoP to manifest itself without interference from the organization is what differentiates it from other organizational structures like project teams or working groups (Lesser & Everest, 2001; Wenger, 1998). More modern scholars, however, have taken the position that the relationship between an organization and a CoP contained within it is not so black and white. It has been suggested that a variety of criteria, including size, lifespan, density, diversity, whether they exist within or across boundaries, level of spontaneity, and level of institutionalization, that must be considered when discussing formation of a CoP (Wenger et al., 2002). Some empirical evidence has been found showing that a CoP that was intentionally created by an organization could successfully change organizational

practices (Swan et al., 2002). Furthermore, it has been suggested that paying attention to domain, community and practice simultaneously will allow an organization to cultivate a CoP and thereby increase organizational performance (Wenger, 2004). Finally, some scholars have taken this notion a step further, suggesting that CoPs have become a crucial part of the actual structure of many organizations (McDermott and Archibald, 2010).

While the existing literature seems to point toward CoPs having the potential to be a critical part of the structure of an organization, what has not been studied in depth is what processes must occur in order for the members of an organization to evolve from individuals merely participating in an activity together to a CoP that is capable of generating social capital for those members. In this dissertation, I will propose a model that better explains why some CoPs are both powerful and sustainable, defined by the existence of social capital within the organization while others are unable to gain significant traction or survive changes in membership. This dissertation explores the possibility that through the development of role identity and team identity, coupled with self-sacrificial leaders, a youth sport organization can become a sustainable CoP, characterized by strong social capital for its members.

## 2.4 SOCIAL CAPITAL

It has been established that the construct of community is continually evolving (Fernback, 2007); people are forming their own communities, tailored to their own interests (Heere et al., 2011); and that sport is able to facilitate the formation of strong communities (Heere et al, 2011; Underwood et al., 2001). What has not been firmly established is what benefits members gain from membership in these new types of communities. At the forefront of this argument is the question of whether or not special

interest communities are capable of generating social capital (Putnam, 1995; Wuthnow, 1994). In contrast, it is well accepted that traditional membership organizations such as churches, schools and large civic organizations provide significant benefits to members; perhaps the most important of which is social capital. (Putnam,1995). The construct of social capital has been widely studied across disciplines, and while there is a general consensus that in order to generate social capital, an organization or community must offer its members access to some type of social network (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Social networks can therefore be considered a necessary and defining element of social capital. The intangible nature of social capital's origins, however, has allowed for considerable debate as to what characteristics of social networks are of quintessential importance for an organization's ability to create, control, and distribute social capital (Glanville & Bienenstock, 2009). Perhaps most notable in this dichotomy is the fact that Coleman conceptualized social capital as the product of large heterogeneous organizations comprised of various smaller groups (Coleman, 1988), whereas Bourdieu (1985; 1986) looked at smaller organizations that are more homogenous as the primary generators of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Despite these differences, the theoretical roots of social capital as conceptualized by Bourdieu (1985; 1986) and Coleman (1988) lie in the notion that social capital is generated through the social relationships that exist between individuals, as opposed to as a result of tangible goods possessed by those individuals (Glanville & Bienenstock, 2009). These social networks are found within communities, which can be viewed as a frame in which organizations are able to not only create social capital, but also regulate and govern access to that social capital (Foster & Maas, 2014). Social capital is the

operationalization of accepted social theories into an actionable concept (Coleman, 1990). At the heart of social capital theory is the idea that for any investment made, either at the individual or group level, in social relations, the investor can expect that there will be some sort of return (Coleman, 1988; 1990, Lin 2002, Putnam, 1995). In fact, some scholars go so far as to suggest that social capital is in fact the very reason that individuals choose to continue to participate in communities (Putnam, 1993).

While there has been consistent agreement that social capital is important, there are significant theoretical differences about which elements of social networks are most critical to creation and distribution of social capital. These differences stem largely from the perspective from which social capital is being studied. Those scholars who examine social capital at the individual and small group level focus on the level of resources provided (Bourdieu, 1985; Lin, 1999). In contrast, those scholars who focus on social capital at the larger, more collective level place the focus of social capital on trust and reciprocity (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995). For these scholars, social capital is a direct function of social organizations, and the degree of social capital that an organization possesses is determined by how engaged individuals are with the organization (Portes, 1998). According to Putnam, for example, behavior such as reading newspapers or volunteering in the community are measures of social capital.

Modern scholars, however, have suggested that this is not the most appropriate way to view social capital. Much like modern scholars' approach to community as a fluid construct (Fernback, 2007), these scholars take a more fluid approach to the construct of social capital. For example, Glanville and Bienenstock (2009) suggest that social capital evolves with the needs of society and suggest that there are three components of social

capital networks, all of which are of equal importance: network density, level of trust/reciprocity, and level of resources. This way of examining social capital merges the two perspectives from which scholars have traditionally examined social capital. Similarly, Foster and Maas define social capital simply as “access to knowledge and opportunities through networks to enhance social and or economic mobility” (2014, p. 1). Some scholars have also suggested that social capital is a multidimensional construct, which must include structural, cognitive and relational dimensions, as necessary components to the creation of a successful community (Chiu et al., 2006). This dissertation views social capital from this perspective, and therefore measures social capital using the perspective suggested by Chiu et al. (2006).

**Creation of social capital.** While a great deal of academic interest has been invested in defining what social capital is, there is a distinct body of research that further examines how social capital is formed, and how to ensure that the social capital formed is positive, and not exclusionary (Field, 2003). Much like the discussion of the role of “management” or “leadership” in the creation of CoPs (Swan et al., 2002; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002), the literature on social capital suggests that there must be a consideration of power differentials within communities that may lead to social capital that is exclusionary in nature (Glover, 2004). Some scholars have gone so far as to assert that social capital cannot be generated through social engineering by those in power, but instead must be generated as the result of small contributions from individuals when they enjoy their connections with other community members, and take personal responsibility for public life (Etzioni, 1993). While one cannot discount the potential negative aspects of allowing those in power to attempt to create social capital; the literature also suggests

that when done within smaller, more localized communities, if both open communication and learning methods are employed, the formation of social capital that is beneficial to all community members is more likely (Warner, 2001).

Scholars have demonstrated that if the creation of a CoP is done with an authoritarian leader, that CoP is unlikely to be sustainable or capable of influencing organizational culture (Culver et al., 2009). This is markedly similar to the notion that if social capital is engineered without cognizance of societal inequalities, it is likely to be exclusionary in nature, and not provide equal benefits to all members of a group (Glover, 2004). In contrast, the literature supports the idea that when a CoP is facilitated by a more egalitarian leader, it is likely to be sustainable and capable of being a force that guides organizational culture (Callary, 2013). Quite similarly, such egalitarianism is thought to promote social capital that benefits all members of a group (Warner, 2001). The affinity between the way in which a CoP is created and the way in which social capital is effectively generated has not been thoroughly examined in the literature. However, the questions surrounding how a CoP is created, and how social capital is generated have many similarities that lead to the idea that perhaps CoPs are uniquely positioned to generate, manage, and distribute social capital for their members. Inherent in this notion is the idea that shared practice, plus shared identity is particularly effective at creating a social network in which egalitarianism is able to flourish, and thereby create social capital which is beneficial to all members of the organization.

**Social capital and the CoP.** Scholars have also begun to investigate the ability of the CoP to create, maintain and distribute social capital. In fact, the literature can be relied upon to demonstrate the existence of social capital within the CoP; and the

connection between social capital and positive outcomes with regards to knowledge sharing (practice) (Chiu et al., 2006). The education and management literature show some evidence that participation in CoPs mirrors many of the indicators of social capital such as desire to participate in a community, desire to act for the public good, reciprocity and trust. For example, one study demonstrated that as a classroom became a CoP through the creation of shared identity and shared practices within a group of students, markers of relational social capital became evident (Olitsky, 2007). Similarly, in the business literature, studies on electronic communities of practice suggest that participating in sharing of knowledge is in fact part of the public good and found via survey research that early adopters of electronic communities of practice participated in these communities for three main reasons (Wasko & Faraj, 2000). The authors identified these reasons as community interest, generalized reciprocity, and pro-social behavior. From a modern standpoint it is interesting to note that the three communities the authors examined were all technical based Usenet newsgroups. Participation in this community required a high level of knowledge and skill that might make this type of electronic community of practice different from a community of practice that required more generalized knowledge. This study led the authors to some interesting conclusions about the potential value of electronic CoPs, one of which is that “people participate in these communities because they want to participate in a ‘community’ and engage in the exchange of ideas and solutions...the exchange character of the discussion creates a ‘synergy’ effect that is often noted in face-to-face groups, where the end idea is better than the idea contributed by any one individual” (Wasko & Faraj, 2000, 169-170).



Another study that looked at Virtual CoPs (VCoPs) was a 2003 study of employees at Caterpillar, Inc. (Ardichvili, Page & Wentling, 2003). The authors found that employees were most likely to share knowledge if they believe that knowledge is something that belongs to the entire organization, and if there is trust in either group members or the organization as a whole. This supports earlier literature dictating that a supportive organizational culture is critical for allowing knowledge to move from one part of an organization to another (DeLong & Fahey, 2000). Ardichvili et al. (2003) however, expanded on these findings by illustrating that even if the organizational climate is favorable to the sharing of knowledge, there are still significant barriers to sharing knowledge.

The differences between the results of Ardichvili et al. (2003) and Wasko and Faraj (2000) are worth noting; however, it is likely that these differences can be accounted for by the fact that the authors in each study focused on different types of electronic communities of practice. The Usenet groups studied by Wasko and Faraj (2000) banded together people who were otherwise unrelated and were in some cases seeking a virtual community because no face-to-face community was available to them. The online knowledge-sharing group studied by Ardichvili et al., (2003) was part of a corporate organization, and therefore the people involved with it also had face-to-face relationships with people working in the same CoP. This would suggest that CoPs have great potential for building social capital. Further supporting this notion Chiu et al. (2006) found that the two dimensions of a CoP; shared identity and shared practice increased both quality and quantity of knowledge shared within a CoP. Furthermore, the markers of social capital were also found to increased quantity or quality of knowledge

shared. Furthermore, as the community related outcome expectations improved both quantity and quality of knowledge shared (Chiu et al., 2006).

**Sport and Social Capital.** While the larger body of social capital literature might suggest that sport has the potential to create social capital, this has not been comprehensively proven using empirical evidence. While it is well accepted that socialization is a benefit of participation in sport focused groups (Melnick, 1993), and that individuals are attempting to form communities centered on sport (Heere et al., 2011), the extent to which these communities are actually able to create stable enough social networks to support social capital has not yet been conclusively determined.

In recent years, however, scholars have begun to approach this question. Many studies on traditional sport participation groups, which have found that sport does a better job at promoting bonding social capital, while hindering bridging social capital (Devine & Parr, 2008, Dyreson, 2001, Wang, Li, Olushola, Chung, Ogura & Heere, 2012). However, other research suggests that the degree to which sport participation may not be generalizable across different cultures (Coalter, 2007; Wang et al, 2012). Wang et al., found that while sport participation was valuable for the bonding element of social capital described by Putnam (2000), it was not as valuable for the bridging element (Wang et al., 2012). This result is supportive of quite a few other studies that found, essentially, people prefer to participate in sport with others that are like themselves (Devine & Parr, 2008), and in fact participation in sport may help form a bond that is detrimental to the bridging element of social capital (Dyreson, 2001). Dyreson (2001) in fact takes this one step further, in his criticism of Putnam's theory to suggest that sport participation is not at all impactful on building a social capital, and in fact has been a force that has promoted

segregation by both race and gender, and which has done little more than create communities of consumers.

There have also been some sport scholars that have examined the question of social capital within sport fan groups. Many of these studies have included groups that meet in traditional third-place locations (Collins & Heere, 2018, Kraszewski, 2008; Palmer & Thompson, 2007; Weed, 2007); while others have examined the how sense of belonging, and therefore community, develops in within tailgate groups (Katz & Heere, 2013; 2015). In these studies, the more established groups studied (Collins & Heere, 2018; Palmer & Thompson, 2007) demonstrated that sport fan groups are capable of creating social capital much the way more traditional organizations do. Palmer and Thompson (2007) found that despite problematic behaviors of group members, the group studied did in fact demonstrate that there was real social capital, of both the bridging and bonding variety. The group studied in Palmer and Thompson's (2007) work, however, was homogenous in nature, and the bad behavior of its members often made the researchers who were female, unlike the group members, feel uncomfortable, thereby suggesting that there may be some significant barriers to accessing this social capital for individuals who do not match the demographics of the group. Collins and Heere (2018); however, found that in a heterogeneous group, in which new members of all backgrounds were easily assimilated, there was both tangible and intangible social capital of both the bridging and bonding variety. The sport fan group studied by Collins and Heere (2018) had developed these social networks over nearly two decades, suggesting that the generation of social capital is longitudinal in nature. Studies of newer fan groups, for example the tailgate groups studied by Katz and Heere (2013; 2015), did not demonstrate

such strong evidence of social capital; however, this research into fledgling groups did find that in order for a fan group to survive long enough to create social capital, there were some important requirements, one of which was that group members had to be identified with their expected role within the group. Groups that had only one strong leader, as opposed to those that delegated group functions amongst group members were not as likely to survive, in the event that leader did not continue to participate (Katz & Heere, 2015).

These authors demonstrate that the sport fan groups that were created and managed with more egalitarian leadership were also more successful at creating social capital (Collins & Heere, 2018; Katz & Heere, 2013; Palmer & Thompson, 2007). In contrast, the more authoritarian groups, in which a single leader dominated the group's management were not able to survive long enough to generate social capital (Katz & Heere, 2013). Despite successfully generating some elements of social capital, none of these fan groups; however, meet the definition of a CoP. These relational communities of interest are bound largely by identity and did not particularly require members to share practices. In addition, these groups did not have significant membership barriers or require members to compete for opportunities and resources within the group, therefore the social capital that was exhibited was inclusive in nature.

There is some literature that supports the idea that sport participation has the potential to facilitate the creation of new social networks and the maintenance of social networks already in place (Perks, 2007). What make Perks' study both unique and valuable to our understanding of how and why it is important for youth sport organizations to build social capital, is that it connects youth sport participation with

community participation during adulthood. Unlike prior studies that simply looked at youth participation in extracurricular activities, Perks' study specifically considered youth sport participation as an antecedent to access to social capital during adulthood. Perks (2007) suggests that youth sport is particularly adept as a community resource for the creation of social capital within the sport context, an idea that has not been previously tested empirically. In addition, Perks examined the connection between youth sport participation and community participation across a wide spectrum of activities, not merely future sport participation, during adulthood. Perks' (2007) work is particularly significant to this dissertation because it specifically establishes youth sport participation as an antecedent to future participation in one's community. Considering that these effects were demonstrated throughout life, even as far as retirement age, the implication of this research is clear. Increasing the number of individuals that have experiences with youth sport may be a key to improving participation in community amongst adults. Furthermore, Perks (2007) dispels the myth that youth sport participation is only valuable to future sport participation, and instead demonstrates that those individuals who have participated in youth sport are more likely to be socially integrated than those who did not participate in youth sport. There has also been research on several participatory sport organizations that fulfill the requirements of being a CoP, in that they required members to not only share identity, but also practices. In both these studies, a Canadian skating club (Callary, 2013) and a university level volleyball team (Galipeau & Trudel, 2005), managers were able to generate social capital (and thus a sustainable CoP) specifically by intentionally reducing competition for opportunities and resources between group members.

The literature also includes some limited discussion on another form of sport participation, that is, sport volunteerism. Prior research has found that while there is a link between sport volunteerism and social capital, however, it is only a positive correlation, if the volunteerism is a long-term commitment, rather than a short-term experience (Harvey, Levesque, & Donnelly, 2007); which supports the research on sport fans, which strongly suggests that social capital in sport focused organizations is longitudinal. Wang et al.'s study, which found that the obligation to volunteer, at least for the Dutch respondents, was very instrumental in building social capital, because people felt as though that volunteerism was crucial to the continued existence of the sport club (Wang et al., 2012).

In this regard, the social capital that is created by many sport participation organizations is often exclusionary in nature. Scholars, however, have not fully examined why participating in sport as fan may have different benefits from a social capital standpoint than participating in sport as a player does, or why some participatory sport organizations, such as the skating club (Callary, 2013) or the university volleyball team (Galipeau & Trudel, 2005) were able to build positive social capital. It is worth suggesting, however, that the formal hierarchical structure of many sport participation organizations, for example in which senior coaches have absolute authority over not only athletes, but also other coaches, is problematic to the creation of social capital (Lemyre, 2008). The problematic nature of this stems from the fact that such a structure is based on power differentials in the community, and as such may hinder the ability of the organization to provide social capital to all members and is likely to lead to competition between members for resources and opportunities (Etzioni, 1993; Glover, 2004; Warner,

2001). Just as a strong organizational hierarchy did not allow a CoP to form within a sport organization (Lemyre, 2008), there is at least some suggestion that such structures also do not allow social capital to form (Glover, 2004). This is a potential explanation for why some forms of sport focused participation may lead to inclusive social capital (fan groups and volunteerism) while more competitively focused sport organizations are more likely to lead to exclusionary forms of social capital. This point is illustrated by the fact that both the Canadian skating club (Callary, 2013) and the collegiate volleyball team (Galipeau & Trudel, 2005), both offered highly competitive sport opportunities without strong hierarchical boundaries and were able to evolve into sustainable CoPs. In addition, these organizations intentionally created practices that would eliminate competition between group members for access to resources and opportunities (Callary, 2013; Galipeau & Trudel, 2005) As such, these CoPs were able to influence the culture of the organizations in which they existed while providing social capital benefits to all members of the organization. As such, further investigation is warranted to consider the idea that the CoP may represent a unique opportunity for a sport organization to be both competitive and still create the inclusive social capital that benefits all organizational members.

## 2.5 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Social identity theory, developed by Tajfel in the 1970s espouses that all behavior falls on a continuum from purely individual to purely intergroup. Individuals define themselves based on the groups of which they are member. (Tajfel, 1978). Tajfel's initial work has been expanded on to demonstrate how this may lead to conflicts between groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and how these types of social identities influence

people's behavior (Turner, 1991). Identity theorists have also examined the question of identification with an organization and found that organizational identification was a specific and legitimate form of social identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In addition, the identity literature suggests that social identity and the intergroup discrimination that occurs as the result of such identity, occurs because individuals build self-esteem through their sense of belonging as part of the in-group (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). Furthermore, it is known that group cohesiveness begins with the initial attraction of individuals to a group and ultimately develops as membership in that group becomes part of an individual's social identity (Hogg, 1992). With regard to team identification, the social identity theory approach incorporates a significant melding of Tajfel's original theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) with the importance of self-categorization (Turner, 1985).

**Organizational identity.** The literature supports the idea that identification with an organization is a specific type of social identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). More importantly, it is known that social identity derived from organizational identification could have a significant impact on the attitudes and behaviors of individuals (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). In some cases, role identification combines with a desire to remain invested in an organization and its members, in which case it can be said that individuals demonstrate attachment to the organization (Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that bonds of organizational identification are durable. For example, in a study of college alumni, strength of organizational identification was not influenced by amount of time since graduation (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Unsurprisingly, it has also been shown that it is beneficial for organizations to manage and facilitate the existence of relevant organizational identities within work-place environments (Cooper &



Thatcher, 2010). In addition, Cooper and Thatcher (2010) demonstrate that one's self-concept orientation as individualistic, relational, or collectivist will likely to influence which identities are most important to a given individual. Similarly, Dutton, Roberts and Bednar (2010) examined how a work-place related identity is constructed. While this work looks at the individual level of identity construction, this is clearly an antecedent to the creation of shared organizational identity. From these individually constructed identities, comes the idea that over time, multiple members of the organization will develop shared organizational identity (Collins & Heere, 2018; Ellemers, De Gilder & Haslam, 2004).

**Sport and Social Identity Theory.** The concept of social identity was first applied to sport with relation to team identification, within the context of sport fans (Wann & Branscombe, 1990). The literature on team identification presented it as a psycho-social construct that allows individuals to gain a sense of belonging within a larger social structure (Branscombe & Wann, 1991). It has also been found that team identification is often acquired in childhood and is often acquired from the influence of a parent or other important social support in a child's life (James, 2001). Furthermore, it has been shown that team identification is durable, and in some cases may even withstand the team no longer actually existing (Hyatt, 2007). This is consistent with other forms of organizational identification, such as university identification, that is durable and does not diminish regardless of the length of time since leaving the institution (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

## 2.6 TEAM IDENTIFICATION

The concept of team identification was first conceptualized to help gain better understanding of consumer behavior (Wann & Branscombe, 1990). Subsequent early work on team identification sought to identify positive social benefits garnered from involvement with sport organizations (Melnick, 1993; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). At the heart of idea is the idea that affiliation with sport properties has become a crucial part of the self-concept of many individuals (Heere & James, 2007a). While there is little debate that modern individuals use sport to define themselves; and that affiliations with sport-focused organizations or groups is critical to the self-concept of many people (Wann, Melnick, Russell & Pease, 2001); in the development of idea of team identification, scholars failed to establish a definite theoretical background, and as such a clear definition of exactly what relationship the construct “team identification” refers to (Lock & Heere, 2017). Because early work on team identification did not establish a strong theoretical background for explaining team identification, the concept of team identification has been examined through a variety of lenses, leaving considerable discrepancies in both the definition and application of this concept (Lock & Heere, 2017).

While most sport management scholars have used the lens of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to describe this phenomenon, some scholars have attempted to examine the concept using identity theory (Stryker, 1968). Inherent in the use of these theories is the conflict stemming from the fact that identity theory hinges on group-level processes involving interactions between people and social structures for the determination of an individual’s identity (Stryker, 1968), whereas social identity theory relies on individual-level processes that focus on the individual’s membership

within a group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Because there has not been a definitive answer about the theoretical basis for team identification, the way in which both team identification has been defined and applied is inconsistent (Lock & Heere, 2017). For example, some definitions of team identification refer to a psychological connection between the fan and the team (Branscombe & Wann, 1992) while other definitions refer to a connection between individuals who share an interest in a team (Underwood et al., 2001). Lock and Heere's (2017) work is the first theoretical attempt to begin to clarify this discrepancy. In doing so, they present a theoretical argument positing that team identification refers to the relationship between individuals sharing an interest in a sport organization, the underlying theory for which is Tajfel's (1978) social identity theory. Furthermore, they contend that the relationship between an individual and the team itself is in fact better understood as role identity and can be explained using Stryker's (1968) identity theory (Lock & Heere, 2017). Lock and Heere (2017) theorize that these two constructs are different yet related. This dissertation attempts to examine that relationship further with an empirical test of Lock and Heere's (2017) theoretical work.

The scholars who discuss team identification as a construct with theoretical underpinnings in social identity theory, have created a vast amount of literature about team identification, that focuses on the basic benefits of socialization (Melnick, 1993) or views team identification as a tool to increase sport consumption from a marketing perspective (Wann & Branscombe, 1990; 1993). More recent work from scholars using social identity theory to explain team identification has provided significant support for the idea team identification offers sport the opportunity to create communities (Heere et al., 2011; Underwood et al., 2001). Taking this concept one step further, it has been

suggested that these bonds may be strong enough to allow for the creation of groups capable of generating, maintaining and distributing social capital (Collins & Heere, 2018; Palmer & Thompson, 2007). While it has been found that team identification is durable (Collins, Heere, Sharpiro, Ridinger & Wear, 2016; James, 2001), the literature does not do a thorough job of examining specifically how individuals shift their primary identification from that which occurs between fan and team to that which occurs between fans. Only limited research has been done to examine the possibility that individuals may initially use team identification with a sport property to form bonds with other fans that extend beyond identification with the team, to encompass other areas of the individuals' lives (Collins & Heere, 2018; Palmer & Thompson, 2007).

To explain how individuals create the type of identity necessary to form the backbone of a community, some scholars have also drawn on multiple theories of identification including self-categorization, social identity and identity theory (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe 2004). While this approach hints at the complexity of this issue, it does not delineate that these theories are not interchangeable, and/or which are most appropriately applied based on the context of the identification (Lock & Heere, 2017). Lock and Heere (2017) posit that identity theory (Stryker, 1968), is best applied to discuss the relationship between an individual and a large social structure. In this dissertation, this is operationalized as the individual's role identity with sport they are engaged in. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) is more appropriate for describing team identification as it occurs between consumers that are members of the same group. Over time, the interactions between individuals within a group of similarly role-identified individuals will evolve to describe the relationship not only between the

individual and the team, but between the individuals themselves (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This dissertation will examine the possibility that role identification is crucial to the successful development of group identification. This dissertation posits that group identification, based on membership in the group, can be a catalyst for the formation of bonds that extend beyond interaction with the sport to encompass more significant portions of the group members' lives (Collins & Heere, 2018; Palmer & Thompson, 2007).

As such, it was also determined that socialization is a benefit of sport fan attendance (Melnick, 1993). Furthermore, it has been found that there are positive benefits to be gained from interacting with other like-minded fans (Wakefield, 1995; Wann et al., 2001; Wann, Martin, Grieve & Gardner, 2008), and that fans who engage with other fans are more likely to remain highly identified with the team. Interestingly, this finding holds even if fans are not fans of the team in an attempt to "fit in" as social identity theory would suggest, but are fans because they want to distinguish themselves, as is suggested by optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991). It has been found that fans naturally strive to find other like-minded fans, even if no such group is readily available (Andrijew & Hyatt, 2009). In the case of Andrijew and Hyatt's (2009) study of minor league hockey fans, it was found that even when fans said they were fans of a non-local team in order to set themselves apart from their peers, they still went to extraordinary lengths to find other fans of the same team. If the desire to create a sense of belonging drives fans to seek out other fans, and the desire to distinguish oneself as unique still inspires fans to seek out other fans, it is clear that Wann et al.'s (2001)

assertion that there are positive outcomes to come from interaction with other fans of the same team is justified.

The literature has also found that there is a strong connection between social identity and an individual's attempt to build self-esteem, through the in-group/out-group distinctions within the sport fan realm (Branscombe & Wann, 1992; Wann & Grieve, 2005). There have been many attempts to measure team identification, beginning with Wann and Branscombe's initial attempt to create a scale that would clearly measure how identified an individual is with a team (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Perhaps the biggest challenge to studying and measuring identification early on was that when the first research emerged, it was seen as largely a one-dimensional construct. It is clear, however, that both team identification itself, as well as the process by which team identification develops is more complex than early studies proposed. At a very low level, these in-group/out-group distinctions are the baseline for the formation of a community.

Over time, however, team identification has moved from a one-dimensional construct to a far more complex and multidimensional construct (Heere & James, 2007a). The TEAM\*ID scale (Heere & James, 2007b) is perhaps the most comprehensive approach to this idea, as it recognizes that identification is not merely a construct that is affective, or behavioral or cognitive. By delineating six dimensions of team identification the TEAM\*ID scale encapsulates multiple dimensions of human behavior and is undoubtedly the most comprehensive and useful approach to understanding team identification. This work highlights the fact that if an organization can touch multiple parts of an individual's social identity it will be able to help that individual build stronger bonds of team identification (Heere & James, 2007a). The idea that team identification

must be understood as a multidimensional construct has been further supported by more recent work (Lock & Funk, 2016; Lock, Funk, Doyle & McDonald, 2014). The TEAM\*ID scale, which examines team identity using a social identity theory lens, has been instrumental in an attempt to gain better understanding of how team identification may help create community within the sport realm. The TEAM\*ID scale suggests that all six dimensions of the scale are components representing the same second-order construct, team identification (Heere & James, 2007b). While this scale does help better understand team identification as a complex construct, it stops short of explaining the benefits of team identification to the organizations in which highly identified individuals belong.

A longitudinal study undertaken by Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) that examined the formation of new communities provides a promising hint at the possible evolution of group identification that leads to sense of community. The findings of this work provide a foundation for the hypotheses presented in this dissertation. Specifically, Katz and Heere (2013) found that sense of community only developed if the group had been able to develop a strong sense of group identity. Second, it was found that the behavior of leaders was a determining factor in the ability of a group to build an identity for itself, and it was found that leaders who were able to balance the needs of the group with the needs of individual followers (Katz & Heere, 2013).

Interestingly, the ideas about team identification being multi-dimensional have evolved as the way in which individuals consume sport evolves. In fact, it has been found that a sense of community can be built in ways that extend beyond traditional ideas of live attendance at events (Fairley & Tyler, 2012; Kraszewski, 2008; Palmer & Thompson, 2007; Weed, 2007). The advent of premium sports viewing options have led

to the development of a sense of community being built in third place locations ranging from sports bars to movie theatres (Fairley & Tyler, 2012; Kraszewski, 2008; Weed, 2007). Furthermore, it has recently been suggested that some of these experiences actually provided a stronger sense of community for event participants, as they eliminated the presence of the out-group (Fairley & Tyler, 2012). Still other instances have been found in which a significant sense of community was fostered through the interaction of like-minded fans using internet message boards on which members posted not only sport-related messages, but messages relating to membership in the group itself and personal messages relating to aspects of life beyond sport (Palmer & Thompson, 2007).

**Sport Participants and Team Identification.** While team identification is most often discussed within the context of sport fans, the concept of team identification can also be applied to sport participants, and therefore the notion of social identity being a driving force amongst sport participants is worth discussing. The literature here is not as extensive, however, what literature does exist shows that social identity is also an important piece of the psyche of sport participants. The literature is replete with examples of how individuals become identified with, attached to, and engaged with sport organizations as fans, and similar outcomes are shown in the sport participation literature (Devine & Parr, 2008; Galipeau & Trudel, 2004; 2005; 2006; Light & Nash, 2006; Tonts, 2005; Warner & Dixon, 2011; Warner, Dixon & Chalip, 2012).

In addition, there is also some limited literature that discusses the role of parents and the development of identity within the parents of youth sport participants. Clarke and Harwood (2014) found that parents were socialized into elite sport organizations that



their children were participating in; however, this work also found that parents experienced conflicted feelings about the youth sport organization, based on their desire to protect their children from possible harm (Clarke & Harwood, 2014). The literature on the benefits of participation in youth sport organizations for parents is underdeveloped, and as such this dissertation attempts to provide insight into the way in which parents may fit into the youth sport organization.

**Involvement and Team Identification.** This dissertation suggests that before a strong sense of team identification can develop, the individuals in the organization must develop a sense of identity connected to their involvement with the sport. Within the sport literature, the importance of team identity has been attributed largely to consumptive behavior (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). It has also been theorized that level of involvement an individual has with a sport may have a role in the extent to which a specific sport organization is able to garner the support of that individuals in the face of poor performance (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998). It has been established that identity is closely tied to the points of attachment that make individuals likely to display high levels of consumptive behavior (Robinson & Trail, 2005; Shapiro, Ridinger & Trail, 2013). The sport management literature; however, assumes individuals are already consuming sport, and does not examine how the social structures may influence which individuals are likely to consume a specific team or sport (Lock & Heere, 2017). As such, this dissertation seeks to identify how involvement with a specific sport leads to the development of team identity.

*Hypothesis 1: Involvement, defined as number of hours per week spent participating in the organization, will positively impact team identity.*

*Hypothesis 2: Team Identification will positively impact social capital.*

## 2.7 ROLE IDENTIFICATION

While team identification has been discussed through both an identity theory and also a social identity theory lens (Lock & Heere, 2017); this dissertation builds on Lock and Heere's (2017) work that conceptualizes team identification as descriptive of the relationship between individuals that support the same team, and as such uses social identity as a theoretical basis. Like Lock and Heere's work (2017), this dissertation posits that identity theory is most appropriately used to describe the relationship between an individual and his or her role within a sport, which the author refers to as role identification. This type of identification refers specifically to how one individual positions himself with regard to a specific social structure (the team), which meets the definition of role identification as "a set of meanings applied to the self in a social role or situation, defining what it means to be who one is in that role or situation" (Burke & Stets, 1999, p. 349). As such, it is clear how the concept of role identity stems from identity theory, which posits that a person's sense of self develops as the result of the roles that individual holds within various social structures (Stryker, 1968). Role-identity theorists have used identity theory to further examine the importance of the particular role that an individual occupies within a social structure in the development of that individual's identity (Burk & Reitzes, 1981).

It has been demonstrated that personal investments, including time, play a significant role in individuals' level of sport commitment (Scanlan et al., 1993). Social commitment has been used to describe both the number and importance of the interpersonal relationships that define that role (Curry & Weaner, 1987; Stryker & Serpe,

1982). It has been demonstrated that as the level of social commitment one displays to a role identity increases, so will the salience of that identity (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Scholars have examined the importance of sport-based role identities within an individual's sense of self and determined that social commitment to the sport itself is behavioral in nature and is likely to occupy a significant part of an individual's life (Curry & Weaner, 1987). It has also been established that the number of interpersonal relationships one has that are connected to one's role identity are important to the continued maintenance of that role-based identity (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). In the sport context, it has also been found that individuals choose to participate in roles that allow them to display the role identities that are most important to their sense of self (Curry & Weaner, 1987). Furthermore, it has been found that an increased number of opportunities for involvement have also been found to increase sport commitment (Scanlan et al., 1993). This has been found to occur at both recreational and elite levels of competition; however, as individuals rose to higher levels of competence, the number of opportunities for involvement became more important (Casper & Andrew, 2008).

In addition, scholars have theorized that adopting a role-based identity governs an individual's behavior because the individual will create and adhere to the expectations that relate to their role (Thoits & Virshup, 1997). Furthermore, it is known that interactions and negotiation between individuals occupying various roles within a group are crucial to the development of role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Furthermore, it has been found that both the differences between roles and the interactions between those roles are necessary for the formation of strong role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Scholars have taken this finding a step further to suggest that the absence of

differences between roles will not only lead to individuals' lack of satisfaction with their role in the organization but may eventually drive them from the organization itself (Riley & Burke, 1995).

While identity theory is not the most widely used theory for discussing sport and identity, it has been found to be appropriate for studying sport from a psychological angle (Snyder, 1985). More specifically, identity theory is best used to examine role identification from the perspective that it describes a relationship between an individual and a team (Lock & Heere, 2017). In addition, prior research has determined that identification with the domain in which a sport organization exists is a critical element in the development of identification of groups in which performance outcomes are not the primary reason for identification (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998). As this dissertation is an empirical test of Lock and Heere's (2017) work the author strives to help better clarify that team identification, backed by social identity theory and role identification, which in this case manifests itself as player or coach identity, backed by identity theory, are in fact distinct, yet related constructs. Role identification refers to the relationship between the individual and the sport itself and is therefore likely to begin developing before an individual becomes enmeshed with a group, and may be instrumental in helping create team identification, which refers to the relationships between the individuals in the group (Lock & Heere, 2017). While role identity is accepted as appropriate for understanding individual's identification with a sport itself, there is a gap in the literature with regards to how an individual's role identity may evolve into a social identity (team identification) that is shared with other individuals with similar or parallel role identities within the same sport organization.

Furthermore, this dissertation examines the sport organization from a multiple stakeholder perspective, and includes parents, athletes, coaches and other program administrators as participants in the community. By examining the literature, which suggests that strong hierarchical structures (Etzioni, 1993; Glover, 2004; Lemyre, 2008) are characterized by strong formally defined role identities (Lemyre, 2008) and as such, facilitate competition for community resources, which might be detrimental to social capital. Based on the existing literature, the author proposes that:

*Hypothesis 3: Role identity will positively impact team identity*

*Hypothesis 4: Role identity will negatively impact social capital*

## 2.8 SELF-SACRIFICIAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

The leaders of an organization have been determined to be influential in determining both the sense of individual self and also the sense of identification with the organization felt by members of the organization (Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). In addition, there has been significant research done to examine and identify the behaviors exhibited by leaders most effective at meeting the needs of an organization's members (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Further research has pointed to the idea that charismatic leadership is particularly effective at cultivating a positive self-concept amongst followers (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). Traditional ideas about transformational leadership styles have implied that those leaders that exhibit self-sacrificial behaviors may effective because they are able to better meet the changing needs of an organization's members (Burns, 1978). Similarly, it has been determined that a transformational leader is able to enhance to level of trust, confidence, respect and pride that those working for that leader display (Gardner

& Cleavenger, 1998). Furthermore, other work has demonstrated that leaders that are charismatic may be able to use behaviors that are self-sacrificial in nature to gain the trust of subordinates (Conger & Kanugo, 1987).

While these types of transformational leaders in general demonstrate behaviors that put the needs of their followers first, the concept of self-sacrifice extends beyond a desire to lead in a way that puts their subordinates ahead of themselves (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luve & Neuberg, 1997). Unlike transformational leaders that simply have an altruistic leadership style, those leaders that display self-sacrificial leadership are characterized by engaging in behaviors in which an individual abandons his or her personal interests second to the needs of the organization with regard to the division of labor, the distribution of rewards, and the exercise of power (Mackenzie, 1986). The effects of this type of leadership has been found to inspire members of an organization to view these leaders as both more legitimate and more charismatic, and to be more willing to behave in ways that are beneficial to the organization (Choi & Mai- Dalton, 1999). It has also been determined that in instances where leaders display self-sacrificial behaviors, followers are more likely to be cooperative and demonstrate better performance (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998; De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004).

While self-sacrificial leadership is similar to servant leadership in that in both forms of leadership the needs of the follower is the focus of the leader, as opposed to their own needs, self-sacrificial leadership and servant leadership have subtle differences with regards to focus, motivation, context and outcome (Matteson & Irving, 2006). In fact, self-sacrificial leadership has been considered a mid-point between servant leadership, which is entirely driven by the needs of the follower, and transformational

leadership, which is strictly focused on the organization (Matteson & Irving, 2006). In this regard, self-sacrificial leadership is particularly adept at balancing the needs of the individuals that make up a community, and the needs of the community itself.

Self-sacrificial leadership specifies that the motivation for these behaviors on the part of the leader is to inspire reciprocity between leaders and followers (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). Another important distinction between self-sacrificial leaders and servant leaders is that self-sacrificial leaders often sacrifice power, rather than simply trying to empower followers (Matteson & Irving, 2006). It has furthermore been suggested that self-sacrificial behaviors displayed by a leader is evidence that the leader has both respect and trust for those individuals within the organization (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004). Perhaps even more significant is the fact that when an organization has a self-sacrificial leader, it has been demonstrated that the members of that organization are likely to display higher levels of self-esteem (De Cremer, Van Knippenberg, Van Dijke & Bos, 2006). Additionally, it has been empirically demonstrated that effective self-sacrificial leaders display high levels of identification with the organization (Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005). These characteristics of self-sacrificial leaders suggest that self-sacrificial leaders maybe a key to the creation of communities, and the ensuing social capital that is a positive outcome of strong communities, because these characteristics are also frequently cited as critical to community development or social capital. This link however, has not been empirically proven.

The leadership literature has also explored questions pertaining to specifically which members of an organization are most likely to be influenced by specific leader behaviors and found that there is a relationship between how strongly identified an

individual is with an organization, and the extent to which the leadership style of the organization's leaders impacts that individual (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003).

Drawing on this finding, De Cremer et al. (2006) demonstrated that when group identification was high, there was a positive relationship between and self-sacrificial leadership and self-esteem, however, when group identification was low, there was no relationship between self-sacrificial leadership and members' self-esteem.

It has been suggested that organizational identification has a moderating effect on the effectiveness of leadership styles (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), suggesting that social identity is a critical piece in creating an environment in which leaders are able to lead effectively. This concept, however, is still an emerging body of literature. While it has been shown that self-sacrificial leaders are likely to be group oriented, what has not been studied extensively, is the possibility that self-sacrificial leadership may foster high levels of identification with the group amongst followers. While it appears from the existing literature that self-sacrificial leaders themselves display characteristics that are suggestive of an environment in which social capital is likely to form (De Cremer et al. 2004; De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005) this link has not been empirically proven.

The existing literature also does not make a clear and strong distinction between one's role identity and one's social identity. While the literature does attempt to draw conclusions about how self-sacrificial leadership influences the behavior of individual members of the organization, stops short of examining the effect this type of leadership has on the creation of community. While it does suggest that organizations that have self-sacrificial leaders were more likely to inspire both higher levels of productivity and



cooperation (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998; De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004), the organizational behavior literature stops short of examining what the effect of such behavior is on the permanence of the organization itself.

Turning more specifically to the sport management literature, however, there have been some rudimentary attempts to determine the importance of leaders on the ability of an organization to become a community. For instance, the sport literature has shown that leaders that did not delegate responsibility to community members are the “Achilles heel” of community development (Culver et al., 2009; Katz & Heere, 2013). In contrast, it has been demonstrated that a leadership style that empowers followers to take responsibility for specific organizational functions may aid in creating sustainable communities (Collins & Heere, 2018; Katz & Heere, 2013; 2015). There has been very limited attention in the sport management literature to understanding the relationship between social capital leadership style. In fact, this question is not specifically examined in the existing literature that portrays successful sport focused communities. Be this as it may, the descriptive, qualitative accounts of such communities may provide some further insight into the importance of shared group identity between members and leaders. While many sport-focused communities had difficulty with sustainability beyond the tenure of a particular leader, the few examples of sustainable sport-based CoPs were exemplified by leaders that shared organizational identification with followers (Callary, 2013; Light & Nash, 2010). The sport management literature; however, has not specifically explored the concept of self-sacrificial leadership. Based on the existing literature; however, it would seem that such an exploration is warranted, particularly in light of the idea that within any

sport organization it is often necessary to find a balance between the needs of the individual community member and the needs of the organization itself.

*Hypothesis 5: Self-Sacrificial Leadership Behavior will positively impact social capital.*

## 2.9 SUMMARY

Based on the literature reviewed, in this dissertation I will investigate the possibility that youth sport organizations may possess social capital that the members of that community are able to benefit from. This dissertation will explore the relationship between role identity and team identity. Specifically, I will examine how organizational involvement of individuals with strong role identities may contribute to the ability of these individuals to form a shared team identity based on participation in the organization itself. Subsequently, this dissertation will examine the extent to which this newly evolved strong team identity and self-sacrificial leadership behaviors exhibited by the the group's leaders is instrumental in the ability of the organization to possess social capital for its members. As such, we are proposing the following model that demonstrates not only the relationship between role identity and team identity, but also demonstrates the impact of these constructs on the creation of social capital.

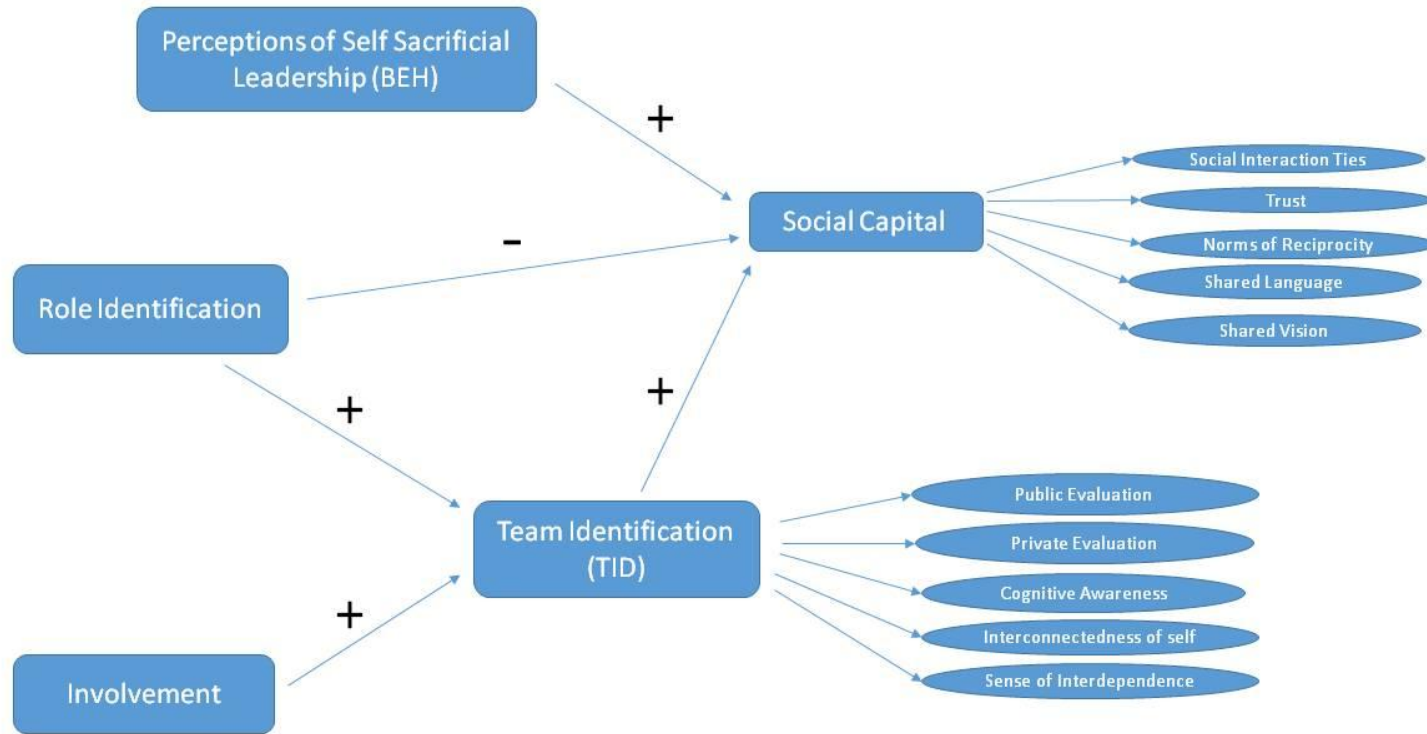


Figure 2.1 Proposed Model of Social Capital Development

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, this study served as an empirical test of the relationship between team identification and role identification, as described by Lock and Heere's (2017) theoretical work. Second, this study sought to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between team identification, role identification, and self-sacrificial leadership and social capital within youth sport organizations. To this end, a model that examined the extent to which involvement and role identity fostered team identification, and then in turn, the extent to which role identity, team identity and self-sacrificial leadership impact the existence of social capital within an organization was created. In doing so, involvement was conceptualized as the number of hours per week an individual spent participating in the organization. This dissertation has created this model with the hope that it will help organizations to create youth sport organizations that are rich in social capital, and are able to evolve into CoPs, characterized by shared bonds of both identity and practice amongst their members. The study's methodology, including research design, sample, data collection procedures, statistical techniques, and data analysis are discussed in this chapter.

#### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This quantitative study employed a cross-sectional descriptive design, that attempted to create a model that would help scholars better understand both the interrelated nature of role identification and team identification, as well as the conditions

under which social capital is created for the organization. In creating this design, I first considered the extent to which involvement and role identity impacted the likelihood that an individual would form team identification. I then also measured the extent to which team identification and perceptions of self-sacrificial behaviors demonstrated by community leaders influenced the ability of an organization to create social capital for the organization's members. The study's first hypotheses employed involvement, defined as the number of hours spent per week with the organization, as the independent variable and how it related to the dependent variable, team identification.

The second hypothesis used team identification as the independent variable, influencing social capital, the dependent variable. Team identification was measured using the TEAM\*ID scale. In order to measure social capital, we elected to use the scale used in Chiu et al.'s (2006) study. This measure was chosen for two reasons. First, it was originally designed to study a community of practice, and the extent to which such a community held social capital. Second, we chose this measurement instrument because it examined social capital as having cognitive, relational, and structural components.

Hypothesis three proposed that role identity is an independent variable that influences the dependent variable, team identification. In order to measure role identification, I used the domain involvement section of Fisher and Wakefield's (1998) scale. I chose this measurement to demonstrate how strong the individual's role identity within the sport itself was. Hypothesis four proposed that role identity was an independent variable that influenced social capital.

Finally, Hypothesis five proposed that self-sacrificial leadership was an independent variable that impacted the dependent variable, social capital. Self-sacrificial

leadership was measured using a section of the Multifactor leadership questionnaire for research (Bass & Avolio, 1995), as used by De Cremer, Mayer, Van Dijke, Schouten and Bardes (2009).

### 3.2 RESEARCH SETTING

The research setting for this study was youth sport organizations throughout the United States. These organizations represented youth sport organizations that offer youth sport opportunities at a wide range of commitment levels. These organizations represented a wide array of sports and included both team sports and individual sports. Organizations served athletes between the ages of 5-18. Overall, participants from 51 youth sport organizations were surveyed, which represented 19 different sports. This wide variety of organizations yielded between one and forty-six responses per organization.

### 3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection for this dissertation took a two-prong approach and was conducted between April 2017 and July 2017. First, the survey instrument was posted online, and the link was shared via social media. In addition, the link to the survey was shared via email from several large youth sport organizations, in order to encourage their members to take the survey. Using this approach, it was difficult to access the intended population for the survey; particularly the youth sport athletes themselves.

In order to attempt to reach a wider and more diverse sample, I made connections at a variety of youth sport organizations, both in South Carolina and Virginia. Through these connections, I was able to gain permission to attend a variety of competitions and practices, at which organizations were willing to allow me to distribute the survey to

parents, coaches and athletes. In order to ensure parental permission for youth to take the survey, if this type of activity was not covered in the waiver already signed by parents for their children to be involved with the organization, emails were sent to parents with the time and date of data collection, giving them the opportunity to express concerns or opt their child out of participation.

### 3.4 SAMPLE SELECTION

This study targeted a representative sample of youth sport participants; which was defined as including not only youth sport athletes, but coaches, program administrators and parents. In order to ensure that youth sport athletes were able to understand the survey, only youth sport athletes ages 13 and older were included in the sample. As described earlier in the chapter, surveys were distributed both in person and via an online link to individuals actively participating in a youth sport organization as a parent, athlete, coach or administrator. In order to ensure that there was enough data for reliable statistical analysis, this survey was successful in reaching more than the 500 (n=518) completed surveys, across the 19 different sport organizations that had individuals agree to participate. The sample size was used because it exceeded the minimum of at least ten survey respondents for each of the 43 variables included in the survey instrument (Nunnally, 1967). The researcher did not have significant resistance from members of the sport organizations with regard to participation and was effective gaining the support of program leaders to encourage people to take the survey. In order to ensure that the sample was an accurate representation of the population of youth sport participants, questions relating to demographic characteristics such as age and gender ensured that the sample was representative of youth sport in general. While the sample did include more parents than

any other group of participants, this is in fact is reflective of the general youth sport population, as in many cases there are two parents for each athlete involved with the organization, and I allowed the parents of any age athlete to participate in the study.

### 3.5 CONSTRUCTS

This study included the measurement of five difference constructs, which included role identification, involvement, team identification, self-sacrificial leadership and social capital. Role identification was a first order construct defined as “a set of meanings applied to the self in a social role or situation, defining what it means to be who one is in that role or situation” (Burke & Stets, 1999, p. 349). This was measured via a five-item scale taken from Fisher and Wakefield’s (1998) that included a 7-point Likert scale for each question, with one representing strongly disagree and seven representing strongly agree. While this scale was termed “domain involvement” by Fisher and Wakefield (1998) I determined that this was an appropriate measurement for role identification because it adequately describes the way in which an individuals conceptualized himself in a social role or situation, defining what it means to be who one is in that role or situation, which is the definition of role identification given by Burke and Stets (1999, p. 349). Role identification was used in this study as an independent variable.

Organizational involvement was a first order construct defined as the extent to which the individual participates in an organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This construct was measured very simply, with people reporting the number of hours per week, on average that they spent with the organization. Involvement was used in this study as an independent variable.



Team identification was measured through a second-order construct that is defined as a multi-dimensional construct that describes an individual's psychological state and includes a person's self-concept, knowledge, the value of membership in a group, and the emotional significance attached to the membership (Heere & James, 2007b). This construct was measured by using seventeen items across five of the six dimensions proposed by Heere and James (2007b). These five dimensions include public evaluation, private evaluation, cognitive awareness, interconnectedness of self, and sense of interdependence. Public evaluation can be understood as "The positive or negative attitude that a person has toward the social category in question" (Ashmore et al., 2004, p. 83). It was measured using three items that used a seven point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). Private evaluation is defined as "The positive or negative attitude that a person has toward the social category in question" (Ashmore et al., 2004, p. 83). Private evaluation was also measured by way of three items that used a seven point Likert scale; with responses ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). Cognitive awareness was defined as "An individual's awareness and/or knowledge of a group in general" (Heere & James, 2007b, p 72). This was again measured with three items that used a seven point Likert scale; with responses ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). Interconnectedness of self was defined as the interconnection of self is a cognitive process in which one's sense of self and an in-group are joined (Tyler & Blader, 2001). This dimension was measured using four items that used a seven point Likert scale; with responses ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). Finally, sense of interdependence can be understood as the perception that others

not only are part of the same group, but also that individuals share the same fate because of their membership in the same group (Gurin & Townsend, 1986). This dimension was measured using four items that used a seven point Likert scale; with responses ranging from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (seven). I made the decision to eliminate the sixth dimension of the TEAM\*ID scale, behavioral involvement, based on the argument that behavioral involvement is encompassed within organizational involvement, as an antecedent to social identification, and also as a part of social capital, that occurs as a consequence of social identification. In this study, team identification served as both a dependent variable, hypothesized to be impacted by the independent variables involvement and role identification, and an independent variable, thought to impact social capital.

Self-sacrificial leadership was a first order construct, which is defined as leadership that is characterized by leaders that abandon his or her personal interests, in deference to the needs of the organization with regard to the division of labor, the distribution of rewards, and the exercise of power (Mackenzie, 1986). This construct was measured using four items taken from Bass and Avolio's (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire for Research, as adapted by De Cremer et al. (2009). Survey respondents were asked to assess the behavior of the leaders of their organization using a seven-point Likert scale. In this study, self-sacrificial leadership was an independent variable hypothesized to impact social capital.

Social capital is a second order construct, which can be understood as "Access to knowledge and opportunities through networks to enhance social and or economic mobility" (Foster & Maas, 2014, p 1). In order to measure this construct, five dimensions

with seventeen total items were used. This measurement tool conceptualizes social capital as having structural, relational and cognitive dimensions, as proposed by Chiu et al. (2006). The first dimension, social interaction ties represents the structural dimension and can be understood as the network ties that allow for the movement of information and resources within a group or organization (Chiu et al., 2006). There was considerable overlap between the social interaction ties dimension of the social capital measure, and the behavioral involvement dimension of the TEAM\*ID scale. As such I elected to leave social interaction ties in the social capital measure and remove behavioral involvement from the TEAM\*ID scale, in order to avoid over-specification. The social interaction ties dimension was measured using four items, each of which asked survey respondents to use a seven point Likert scale to evaluate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the four statements. Trust, which represents the relational dimension, can be understood as the way in which one individual views another individual, with regards to the integrity, benevolence and ability of that individual (Chiu et al., 2006). This dimension was measured using five items, which survey respondents responded to using a seven point Likert scale to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Norms of reciprocity was also representative of the relational dimension of social capital and can be understood as mutually beneficial exchanges between individuals, that both parties see as fair (Chiu et al., 2006). This dimension was measured using two items on which participants were asked to respond to the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. This dimension also used a seven point Likert scale. The final two dimensions of social capital are considered to be part of the cognitive dimension and are shared language and shared vision. Each of these two dimensions used a seven point

Likert scale to assess three items for each dimension. Shared language can be understood as common language; including the use of acronyms, subtlety, jargon, and assumptions that are used in the daily communications between the community members (Chiu et al., 2006). Shared vision is defined as “[embodying] the collective goals and aspirations of the members of an organization” A shared vision is viewed as “a bonding mechanism that helps different parts of an organization to integrate or to combine resources” Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998; p. 467). In this study, social capital functions as a dependent variable, hypothesized to be impacted by team identification and self-sacrificial leadership. An overview of the constructs included in this dissertation can be found in the definition of constructs table found in Table 3.1.

### 3.6 INSTRUMENTATION

This study included a fifty-one question survey, divided into five sections. The first section of the survey included eight questions in which individuals were asked to define their roles within the organization, as well as their basic demographic information, and their level of involvement with the organization. The second section of the survey included five questions asking individuals about the strength of their role identification within the sport in which they are participating is. These questions have been taken from the domain involvement portion of Fisher and Wakefield’s (1998) study of factors leading to group identification. The third section of the survey contained seventeen items measuring five of the six dimension of team identification (public evaluation, private evaluation, sense of interdependence, interconnectedness of self, and cognitive awareness), as outlined by the TEAM\*ID scale (Heere & James, 2007b). Section

Table 3.1 Definition of Constructs

Name	Nominal Definition	Operational Definition	Measure
1. Role Identification	A set of meanings applied to the self in a social role or situation, defining what it means to be who one is in that role or situation. (Burke & Stets, 1999, p. 349)	Low level of role identification=scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0  High level of role identification=scores on 7 point likert scale above 4.01	Domain Involvement Scale (Fisher & Wakefield 1998)  Assessed with a five item scale asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Being a [insert role] in the sport is an essential part of my life</i></li> <li>• <i>I watch or read media about being a [insert role] in the sport whenever I can</i></li> <li>• <i>I know a lot about being [insert role] in the sport</i></li> <li>• <i>Being a [insert role] in the sport is very important to me</i></li> <li>• <i>I think about being a [insert role] in the sport all the time</i></li> </ul>
2. Organizational Involvement	The extent to which the individual participates in an organization. (Ashforth & Mael, 1989)	How many hours a week individuals are spending with the organization	Survey respondents were asked to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many hours a week they spend participating in the organization</li> </ul>
3. Team Identification	A multi-dimensional construct that describes an individual's psychological	Low level of social identification=scores on 7 point Likert scale below	For the purpose of this work, we used 5 of the 6 dimensions of the TEAM*ID Scale (Heere & James,

	state, and includes a person's self-concept, knowledge, the value of membership in a group, and the emotional significance attached to the membership (Heere & James, 2007)	4.0  High level of social identification=scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01	2007). I excluded Behavioral Involvement in order to avoid over-specification. I used the argument that behavioral involvement is encompassed within organizational involvement, as an antecedent to social identification, and also as a part of social capital, that occurs as a consequence of social identification.
a) Public Evaluation	"The positive or negative attitude that a person has toward the social category in question" (Ashmore et al., 2004, p. 83). Public evaluation refers to how other people view the group.	Low importance of public evaluation=scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0  High importance of public evaluation=scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	TEAM*ID Scale (Heere & James, 2007)  <b>Public Evaluation was measured with the following 3 items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall my <i>sport organization</i> is viewed positively by others</li> <li>• In general others respect my <i>sport organization</i></li> <li>• Overall, people hold a favorable opinion about my <i>sport organization</i></li> </ul>
b) Private Evaluation	"The positive or negative attitude that a person has toward the social category in question" (Ashmore et al., 2004, p. 83). Private	Low importance of private evaluation=scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0	TEAM*ID Scale (Heere & James, 2007)  <b>I measured Private Evaluation with the following three items:</b>

	evaluation refers to how the individual views the group.	High importance of private evaluation=scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel good about being a member of my <i>sport organization</i></li> <li>• In general, I'm glad to be a member of my <i>sport organization</i></li> <li>• I am proud to think of myself as a member of my <i>sport organization</i></li> </ul>
c) Cognitive Awareness	“An individual’s awareness and/or knowledge of a group in general” (Heere & James, 2007, p 72).	<p>Low importance of cognitive awareness =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>High importance of cognitive awareness =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.</p>	<p>TEAM*ID Scale (Heere &amp; James, 2007)</p> <p><b>Cognitive Awareness was measured using the following three items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am aware of the tradition and history of my <i>sport organization</i></li> <li>• I know the ins and out of my <i>sport organization</i></li> <li>• I have knowledge of the success and failures of my <i>sport organization</i></li> </ul>
d) Interconnectedness of self	The interconnection of self is a cognitive process in which one’s sense of self and an in-group are joined (Tyler & Blader, 2001).	<p>Low importance of interconnectedness of self=scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>High importance of interconnectedness of self=scores on 7 point</p>	<p>TEAM*ID Scale (Heere &amp; James, 2007)</p> <p><b>Interconnectedness of self was measured using the following four items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When someone criticizes my <i>sport organization</i> it feels like a</li> </ul>

		Likert scale above 4.01.	<p>personal insult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, being associated with my <i>sport organization</i> is an important part of my self-image</li> <li>• My <i>sport organization</i> is an important reflection of who I am</li> <li>• When someone compliments my <i>sport organization</i> it feels like a personal compliment</li> </ul>
e) Sense of Interdependence	Sense of interdependence is the perception that others not only are part of the same group, but also that an individual shares the same fate because of their membership in the same group (Gurin & Townsend, 1986).	<p>Low importance of sense of interdependence=scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>High importance of sense of interdependence=scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.</p>	<p>TEAM*ID Scale (Heere &amp; James, 2007)</p> <p><b>Sense of Interdependence was measured using the following four measures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My destiny is tied to the destiny of [<i>the sport organization</i>].</li> <li>• My [<i>sport organization</i>] has affected me personally.</li> <li>• The behaviour of my [<i>sport organization</i>] will have an impact on my own life.</li> <li>• What happens to my [<i>sport organization</i>], will influence what happens in my life.</li> </ul>
4. Self-Sacrificial Leadership	Self-sacrificial leadership is characterized by leaders that abandon his or her personal interests, in deference to the needs of	Leaders have low incidence of self sacrificial leadership behaviors =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0	Based on Bass & Avolio (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire for research) Adapted by De Cremer, Mayer, van Dijke, Schouten & Bardes,



	the organization with regard to the division of labor, the distribution of rewards, and the exercise of power (Mackenzie, 1986).	Leaders have high incidence of self sacrificial leadership behaviors =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	2009 Measured these characteristics using the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The leaders of this organization go beyond self-interest for the good of [the organization]</li> <li>• The leaders of this organization consider the moral and ethical consequences of their decisions</li> <li>• The leaders of this organization emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission</li> <li>• The leaders of this organization specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose</li> </ul>
5. Social Capital	“Access to knowledge and opportunities through networks to enhance social and or economic mobility” (Foster & Maas, 2014, p 1)	Organization has few indicators of social capital =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0  Organization has strong indicators of social capital =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	Measures taken from Chiu, Hsu & Wang, 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 dimensions</li> <li>• 17 total items</li> </ul>
a) Social Interaction Ties	Network ties that allow for the movement of information and resources within a group or	Organization displays low level of social interaction ties between members =scores on 7 point Likert	Structural Dimension (Chiu, Hsu & Wang, 2006) Measured with the following items:

	organization.	scale below 4.0  Organization displays high level of social interaction ties between members =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I maintain close social relationships with some members in the <i>Sport organization</i>.</li> <li>• I spend a lot of time interacting with some members in the <i>Sport organization</i>.</li> <li>• I know some members in the <i>Sport organization</i> on a personal level.</li> <li>• I have frequent communication with some members in the <i>Sport organization</i></li> </ul>
b) Trust	The way in which one individual views another individual, with regards to the integrity, benevolence and ability of that individual.	Members display low level of trust between members =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0  Members display high level of trust between members =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.	<p>Relational Dimension (Chiu, Hsu &amp; Wang, 2006) Was evaluated with the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> will not take advantage of others even when the opportunity arises.</li> <li>•Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> will always keep the promises they make to one another.</li> <li>•Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> would not knowingly do anything to disrupt the conversation.</li> <li>•Members in the <i>Sport</i></li> </ul>

			<p><i>organization</i> behave in a consistent manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> are truthful in dealing with one another.</li> </ul>
c) Norms of Reciprocity	Mutually beneficial exchanges between individuals, that both parties see as fair.	<p>Members display few norms of reciprocity between members =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>Members display frequent norms of reciprocity between members =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.</p>	<p>Relational Dimension (Chiu, Hsu &amp; Wang, 2006)</p> <p>Evaluated with the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know that other members in the <i>Sport organization</i> will help me, so it's only fair to help other members.</li> <li>• I believe that members in the <i>Sport organization</i> would help me if I need it.</li> </ul>
d) Shared Language	The common language; including the use of acronyms, subtlety, jargon, and assumptions that are used in the daily communications between the community members.	<p>Members display few instances of shared language =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>Members display frequent instances of shared language =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.</p>	<p>Cognitive Dimension (Chiu, Hsu &amp; Wang, 2006)</p> <p>Was evaluated with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use common terms or jargons.</li> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use understandable communication pattern during the discussion.</li> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use understandable narrative forms to post messages or articles.</li> </ul>

e) Shared Vision	<p>“Embodies the collective goals and aspirations of the members of an organization” A shared vision is viewed as “a bonding mechanism that helps different parts of an organization to integrate or to combine resources” Tsai &amp; Ghoshal, 1998; p. 467).</p>	<p>Members display few instances of shared vision =scores on 7 point Likert scale below 4.0</p> <p>Members display frequent instances of shared vision =scores on 7 point Likert scale above 4.01.</p>	<p>Cognitive Dimension (Chiu, Hsu &amp; Wang, 2006)</p> <p>Was evaluated with the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the vision of helping others solve their professional problems.</li> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the same goal of learning from each other.</li> <li>• Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the same value that helping others is pleasant</li> </ul>
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four of the survey included four questions adapted from the Multifactor leadership questionnaire for research (Bass & Avolio, 1995), as used by De Cremer et al. (2009), to measure the self-sacrificial behavior of leaders. Finally, section five of the survey included seventeen items designed to establish the extent to which the organization demonstrates markers of social capital, which was taken from Chiu et al.'s (2006) study of an online virtual CoP centered around use of a specific computer software product. Included in these measures was a behavioral dimension, entitled social interaction ties, which almost identically mirrors the deleted dimension of the TEAM\*ID scale, behavioral involvement. As such, I am proposing that this dimension of team identification is in fact closely traditionally accepted markers of social capital such as norms of reciprocity, trust and the shared practices and habits that make a group form enough social capital to be classified as a community of practice (Chiu et al., 2006).

### 3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

While some of the surveys were completed online, prior to beginning data analysis all surveys collected using pencil and paper were converted into electronic format and checked for accuracy of data entry. Once it had been determined that the data had been entered correctly, the data was cleaned and evaluated to identify any missing values. The data was almost entirely complete, and there was no need to delete data. The data was first tested for normality and was found to be approximately normal. Descriptive statistics were used, in order to assess the normality of the data, using a frequency histogram and a normal plot. The model was then tested for reliability and validity, using standard statistical measures including Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to demonstrate that all

factors loaded properly on their respective constructs, ensuring that the scales were maintaining reliability and validity.

**Internal Validity.** Since the design was non-experimental, there was no control group and I did not manipulate the group, instead merely drew on the responses of those surveyed. While this dissertation included individuals holding different (and sometimes multiple) roles, including athlete, player, administrator or parent, within an organization, these were merely designations within an organization. As such, all the individuals included in this research were participating in youth sport organizations. As the survey contained questions about participation and demographics (age, gender, role within the organization, organization involved with), elimination of individuals not meeting the requirements of the study was straightforward. The biggest threat to internal validity was the willingness of people to accurately fill out surveys. While every effort was made to ensure a diverse sample of respondents, it is impossible to know if there was some sort of psychological factor that makes people more likely to fill out the survey, and in fact it proved difficult to find individuals who were not at least somewhat identified with the organizations in which they were participating. In addition, this dissertation only employed existing scales that have been shown to be valid in previous studies.

**External Validity.** The decision to seek survey participants from both the Internet and in-person data collection at youth sport events was done in order to provide a sample that was inclusive of participants occupying a diverse assortment of roles within youth sport organizations. The potential external validity concern with an online technique is that those responding to the survey might be more likely to be highly involved with their organizations and might be more likely to be identified with both their roles in the sport

and the team itself. This could potentially be viewed as a weakness in terms of external validity, as some might say that this sample is not representative of the overall community of youth sport participants.

In order to ensure external validity, all survey items were taken from established scales measuring team identification, community identification, and attachment to new media. Reliability of all multi-item scale questions was tested using SPSS, to ensure that Cronbach's alpha was higher than 0.7.

**Structural Equation Model.** In order to evaluate the five hypotheses presented in this dissertation, a structural equation model (SEM) was constructed in order to determine the relationships between role identity and involvement and team identification; and the relationship between self-sacrificial leadership and team identification and social capital. The model was analyzed for fit using fit indices including RMSEA, TLI, NFI and CFI. In addition, AVE scores were calculated to ensure convergent and discriminant validity. Initially, one SEM was created for the entire sample. While this was effective for analyzing the hypotheses relating to involvement, role identification, and their impact on team identification, as well as the hypotheses that related to team identification and self-sacrificial leadership's impact on social capital. This method, however, was not effective for examining the relationship between role identification and social capital. Based on the initial results created from the SEM built to analyze the complete sample, I was concerned that the portion of the sample that was made up of parents might in fact behave differently with regard to role identification and social capital than the rest of the sample.

In order to address this concern, I divided the sample into two groups; one made up only of those individuals who identified their primary role with the organization as parent, and one comprised of all the other roles. The same SEM was then conducted for each group and analyzed for fit. The SEM was then used to analyze the two groups, based on organizational role, specifically to gain better understanding of how role identification impacts social capital may be dependent on organizational role.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

As discussed earlier, the sample was comprised of athletes, ages 13-18, parents of current youth sport participants, youth sport coaches, and program administrators of youth sport organizations. The complete sample included 518 respondents. Some individuals indicated that they had held more than one role with the organization, however, 155 individuals identified their primary role as athlete, 60 individuals identified their primary role as coach, 236 individuals identified their primary role as the parent or grandparent of an athlete, 11 identified their primary role as program administrator, and 56 identified their primary role as “other”, which included those individuals who listed more than one of these roles as primary.

In addition, the sample included respondents from 19 different sports, representing 51 different youth sport organizations. Due to the fact that the majority of the data was collected during the summer months of 2017, 366 of the respondents were involved with swimming, either at the recreational or club level. In addition, respondents represented both team and individual sports, with 424 individuals involved with individual sports and 90 individuals involved with team sports. In addition, 217 respondents represented recreational level youth sport organizations, while 177 individuals represented club, or competitive level youth sport organizations. The largest number of respondents from single organizations was 45 individuals from a recreation-

league summer swim team and 42 individuals from a competitive gymnastics club. The mean number of hours individuals spent engaged with their youth sport organization was 10.91, with the range being from one hour per week to 50 hours per week. The results are presented in Appendix C.

With regard to role identification, the mean score across the role identification section of the questionnaire was 4.98 on a scale of 7. Respondents reported higher levels of team identification, with the average team identification score of 5.19 on a scale of 7. Overall, respondents also reported that the organization's leaders behaved in a self-sacrificial manner, with the mean score across the self-sacrificial leadership scale of 5.36 on a scale of 7. In addition, individuals reported that there were markers of social capital within their sport organizations, with the mean score across the social capital measures being 5.46 on a scale of 7.

#### 4.2 ASSESSMENT OF MEASUREMENT MODELS

Following the descriptive analysis of the overall sample, assessment of the role identification measures, the team identification measures, the measures of self-sacrificial leadership, and the measures of social capital were conducted in order to establish that the data to be used in the subsequent structural equation models that would be used to analyze the measures of constructs were both reliable and valid. First, reliability was assessed and established by evaluating the model's internal consistent reliability and indicator reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite reliability measures, and the loading estimates. Cronbach's Alpha for each construct ranged from 0.84-0.96, demonstrating composite reliability of the scale, as all scores fell above the 0.7 threshold accepted by the literature to indicating that composite reliability has been achieved (Hair,

Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). Composite reliability (CR) was established as the constructs ranged from 0.85-0.98, meeting the minimum established valued above 0.7 established in the literature, thereby demonstrating internal consistency reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Second, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted and the measurement models met all of the CFA criteria. Results from the also CFA then demonstrated that items loaded on their respective constructs, with factor loadings ranging from 0.668-0.95. Only one score fell below the minimum standard of .7 for factor loading, thereby demonstrating indicator reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012). More specifically, the four observed measures for assessing perceptions of self-sacrificial leadership demonstrated factor loading estimates ranging from 0.796-0.885. The five observed measures for role identification demonstrated factor loadings from 0.668-0.806. The five dimensions of team identification also all demonstrated adequate factor loadings. The three items included in public evaluation demonstrated factor loadings ranging from 0.844-0.906. The three items used to measure private evaluation demonstrated factor loadings from 0.856-0.915. The three items used to measure cognitive awareness demonstrated factor loadings ranging from 0.797-0.851. The four items used to measure interconnectedness-of-self demonstrated factor loadings from 0.709-0.921. Finally, the four items used to evaluate sense-of-interdependence demonstrated factor loadings ranging from 0.748-0.810. The five dimensions used to measure social capital also all demonstrated adequate factor loadings. The four items used to assess social interaction ties demonstrated factor loadings ranging from 0.857-0.894. The five items used to assess trust demonstrated factor loadings ranging from

0.745-0.866. The two items used to evaluate norm of reciprocity had factor loadings of 0.896 and 0.913. The three items used to measure shared language demonstrated factor loadings ranging from 0.745-0.906. Finally, the three items used to measure shared vision demonstrated factor loadings between 0.829-0.902.

The model was also tested for validity, using AVE scores to demonstrate convergent validity and comparing the AVE scores to the associated maximum shared variance (MSV) and average shared variance (ASV) scores for each construct to demonstrate discriminate validity. The AVE scores for the constructs ranged from 0.58-0.82, all over the minimum recommend score of 0.5, providing evidence for convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, each construct's AVE score was greater than its highest squared correlation with any other latent construct, thereby demonstrating discriminate validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Furthermore, the CFA established that there was an adequate fit of the model (CFI = 0.94; NFI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.05; TLI=0.93) with a chi square to degrees of freedom ratio of 2.41 which falls below the threshold of 3.0 established in the literature (Hu & Bentler, 1998; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Mueller, 2003).

Table 4.1 CFA results

Construct item	$\lambda$	CR	AVE
<b>Self-sacrificial Leadership</b>		0.912	0.722
BEH1: The leaders of this organization go beyond self-interest for the good of [the organization]	0.796		
BEH2: The leaders of this organization consider the moral and ethical consequences of their decisions	0.862		
BEH3: The leaders of this organization emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission	0.885		
BEH4: The leaders of this organization specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose	0.863		

<b>Role identification</b>		0.868	0.576
RID1: <i>Being a [insert role] in the sport</i> is an essential part of my life	0.790		
RID2: I watch or read media about being a <i>[insert role] in the sport</i> whenever I can	0.735		
RID4: I know a lot about being <i>[insert role] in the sport</i>	0.668		
RID5: Being a <i>[insert role] in the sport</i> is very important to me	0.756		
RID6: I think about being a <i>[insert role] in the sport</i> all the time	0.806		
<b>Public Evaluation</b>		0.909	0.769
PUB1: Overall my <i>sport organization</i> is viewed positively by others	0.880		
PUB2: In general others respect my <i>sport organization</i>	0.906		
PUB3: Overall, people hold a favorable opinion about my <i>sport organization</i>	0.844		
<b>Private evaluation</b>		0.930	0.817
PRIV4: I feel good about being a member of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.915		
PRIV5: In general, I'm glad to be a member of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.954		
PRIV6: I am proud to think of myself as a member of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.856		
<b>Cognitive awareness</b>		0.886	0.722
COG15: I am aware of the tradition and history of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.797		
COG16: I know the ins and out of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.889		
COG17: I have knowledge of the success and failures of my <i>sport organization</i>	0.851		
<b>Interconnectedness of Self</b>		0.904	0.705
COS11: When someone criticizes my <i>sport organization</i> it feels like a personal insult	0.709		
COS12: In general, being associated with my <i>sport organization</i> is an important part of my self-image	0.909		
COS13: My <i>sport organization</i> is an important reflection of who	0.921		

I am

COS14: When someone compliments my *sport organization* it feels like a personal compliment 0.794

**Sense of Interdependence**

0.861 0.610

SOI7: My destiny is tied to the destiny of [*the sport organization*]. 0.748

SOI8: My [*sport organization*] has affected me personally. 0.760

SOI9: The behaviour of my [*sport organization*] will have an impact on my own life. 0.810

SOI10: What happens to my [*sport organization*], will influence what happens in my life. 0.809

**Social Interaction Ties**

0.931 0.772

SIT1: I maintain close social relationships with some members in the *Sport organization*. 0.869

SIT2: I spend a lot of time interacting with some members in the *Sport organization*. 0.894

SIT3: I know some members in the *Sport organization* on a personal level. 0.857

SIT4: I have frequent communication with some members in the *Sport organization*. 0.890

**Trust**

0.901 0.645

TR5: Members in the *Sport organization* will not take advantage of others even when the opportunity arises. 0.775

TR6: Members in the *Sport organization* will always keep the promises they make to one another. 0.866

TR7: Members in the *Sport organization* would not knowingly do anything to disrupt the conversation. 0.783

TR8: Members in the *Sport organization* behave in a consistent manner. 0.745

TR9: Members in the *Sport organization* are truthful in dealing with one another. 0.848

**Norms of Reciprocity**

0.900 0.818

NOR10: I know that other members in the *Sport organization* will help me, so it's only fair to help other members. 0.913

NOR11: I believe that members in the *Sport organization* would help me if I need it. 0.896

<b>Shared Language</b>		0.845	0.647
SL12: The members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use common terms or jargons.	0.745		
SL13: Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use understandable communication pattern during the discussion.	0.906		
SL14: Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> use understandable narrative forms to post messages or articles.	0.765		
<b>Shared Vision</b>		0.907	0.765
SV15: Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the vision of helping others solve their professional problems.	0.829		
SV16: Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the same goal of learning from each other.	0.890		
SV17: Members in the <i>Sport organization</i> share the same value that helping others is pleasant.	0.902		
<b>Involvement</b>			
ZHOURS: How many hours a week do you spend involved with [the sport organization]	1.000	1.000	1.000

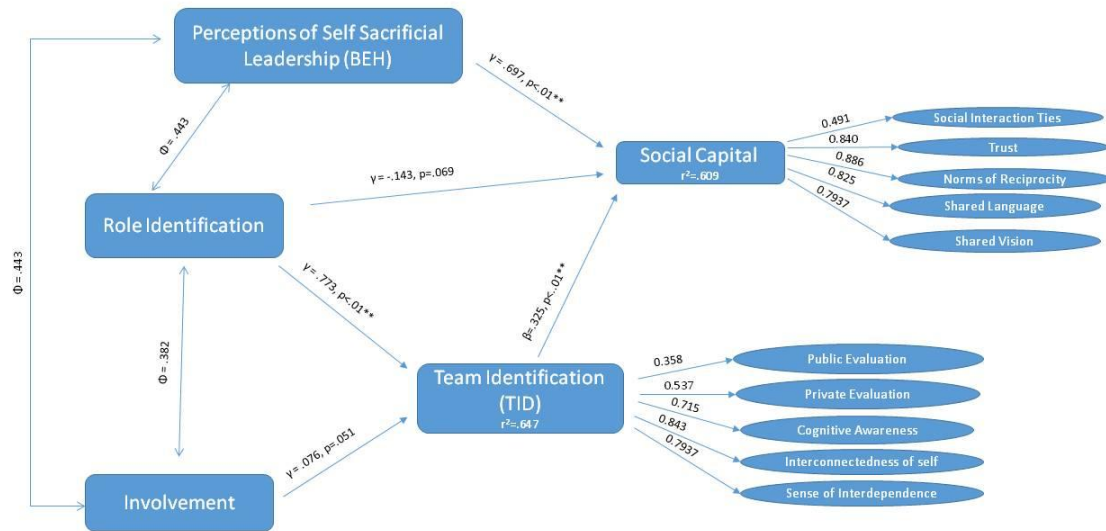
Table 4.2. Average Variance Extracted and Squared Multiple Correlations

	BEH	RID	INV	PUB	PRIV	COG	COS	SOI	SIT	TR	NOR	SL	SV
BEH	0.722												
RID	0.393	0.576											
INV	0.142	0.380	1.000										
PUB	0.528	0.230	0.047	0.768									
PRIV	0.671	0.405	0.171	0.708	0.817								
COG	0.404	0.632	0.354	0.222	0.385	0.722							
COS	0.403	0.622	0.308	0.265	0.410	0.573	0.705						
SOI	0.449	0.745	0.344	0.277	0.458	0.642	0.841	0.610					
SIT	0.332	0.418	0.263	0.185	0.337	0.507	0.399	0.432	0.772				
TR	0.646	0.265	0.017	0.408	0.536	0.325	0.345	0.328	0.359	0.645			
NOR	0.671	0.341	0.142	0.444	0.591	0.424	0.356	0.357	0.515	0.778	0.818		
SL	0.660	0.361	0.086	0.495	0.538	0.421	0.315	0.398	0.445	0.661	0.771	0.647	
SV	0.702	0.288	0.082	0.456	0.566	0.382	0.378	0.383	0.375	0.770	0.719	0.709	0.689

Note: AVE is on the diagonal.



### 4.3 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL



\*\* = significant at the .05 level

Figure 4.1 Structural equation model

Five dimensions were used to measure TID. The dimension found to be the most reflective of TID was interconnectedness of self (0.843), followed by sense of interdependence (0.7937), cognitive awareness (0.715), private evaluation (0.537) and public evaluation (0.358). Similarly, five dimensions were used to measure social capital. Norms of reciprocity (0.886) was found to be the most reflective of social capital, followed by shared vision (0.849), trust (0.840), shared language (0.825), and social interaction ties (0.491).

Furthermore, the SEM established that while the fit of this model is not perfect according to standard baseline measures, these benchmarks are close enough to suggest that is an adequate fit of the model (CFI = 0.90; NFI = 0.86; RMSEA = 0.06; TLI=0.90) with a chi square to degrees of freedom ratio of 3.04, barely exceeding the 3.0 cutoff established in the literature (Hu & Bentler, 1998; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, &

Mueller, 2003). There are some potential reasons why the fit of the model is not high. First, involvement was measured only by a variable, as opposed to a full construct. Second, role identification was measured through a proxy. Finally, because of the overlap between social interaction ties in the social capital construct, and the behavioral involvement dimension of the TEAM\*ID scale, I elected to measure TID without including behavioral involvement. While the fit of the model was perhaps not ideal, I remain confident in the validity of the findings of the study.

The first and third hypotheses were analyzed using SEM to examine the extent to which team identification is positively affected by organizational involvement, which was defined as the number of hours per week an individual spent with the organization. Involvement ( $\gamma = .076$ ,  $p=.051$ ) (H1) did not have a significant effect on Team identification (TID), and therefore was not supported. Role identity ( $\gamma = .773$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (H3), however, was found to positively effect team identification and was therefore supported. The SEM revealed that 64.7% ( $r^2=.647$ ) of the variance in TID could be explained by this model.

Hypotheses 2, 4 and 5 were also analyzed using SEM to determine the extent to which TID, Perceptions of self-sacrificial leadership, and role identification influence the existence of social capital within an organization. TID ( $\beta=.325$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (H2) and Perceptions of self-sacrificial leadership ( $\gamma = .697$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (H5) were found to positively affect social capital and were therefore supported. The SEM revealed that 60.9% ( $r^2=.609$ ) of the variance in social capital could be explained by the model.

With regard to the fourth hypothesis stating that role identification is detrimental to social capital, the SEM of the full model found that role identification was found to

have a negative impact on social capital ( $\gamma = -.143, p=.069$ ); however, it was only found to be significant at the .1 level. While this result is interesting because it suggests that while role identification and team identification are clearly distinct phenomena, they are neither completely complimentary nor completely contradictory. In fact, the SEM demonstrated that while role identity is necessary for the formation of team identification, role identification amongst individuals does not necessarily lead to the development of social capital within an organization, and in fact may even be detrimental to the development of social capital. While this was found to be supported only at the 0.1 level, this finding made me question whether role identification might behave differently for the parent group, who are akin to sport fans, then for the rest of the survey respondents.

In order to further explore this question, I split the sample into two groups. The first group included only those individuals that listed their primary role with the organization as parent, while the second group included the individuals who listed any of the other primary roles of parent, coach or program administrator as their primary role with the organization. This split was made because parent is an undefined role that is unrelated to the sport organization, while the role of athlete, coach and program administrator is directly associated with the organization. I then ran the SEM for each group, in order to determine if role identification had a significant impact on social capital for either group. This in fact demonstrated that role identification was not in fact significant for the parent group, demonstrating that at least for some members of the organization, role identification does not have an impact on social capital at all. For the second group; however, role identification was found to have a negative impact on social capital ( $\gamma = -.349, p=.012$ ). This finding demonstrates that role identification in fact has

the potential to be detrimental to social capital; ostensibly in situations in which there is competition for organizational resources. As such, based on the results of the both the original SEM using the full sample, and the SEM of each of the smaller groups, I am prepared to suggest that these findings support hypothesis four. I make this judgment based on the fact that this model demonstrated that role identification is not beneficial to social capital; however, whether its affect is negligible or detrimental depends on the role which an individual inhabits.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 DEVELOPMENT OF TEAM IDENTIFICATION

This study is the first empirical exploration of the relationship between role identity and team identity in sport management. Sport management scholars have used these two constructs interchangeably in the past (Lock & Heere, 2017), yet they represent two distinct constructs that should be examined separately, particularly in the context of youth sports, where their effects on sport participation might be entirely different. Team identification is focused on understanding how people feel about their membership in a particular group or community (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), while role identity is driven by identity theory (Stryker, 1968), and focuses on how people identify with the role they occupy within the community. Team identity therefore can be understood as a type of group identity based on shared bonds with other members of the group (Lock & Heere, 2017), while role identity is driven by one's own sense of self, as it relates to their perceptions of the role within the organization that they inhabit (Lock & Heere, 2017).

The author demonstrates in this study that these two constructs are conceptually and practically distinct, and that role identity plays an important part in the development of team identity. In fact, while scholars have advocated the importance of involvement to team identity (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998; Wann & Branscombe, 1993), this study suggests that involvement does not contribute to team identity. This conflicts with the studies on team identification that have suggested that individuals that are more involved

with a sport property will have higher levels of identification (Shapiro et al., 2013; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). While much of the prior research into identification and involvement center around future consumptive behavior, it has also been found that high levels of prior consumptive behavior has lead to stronger levels of team identification (Trail, Anderson, & Lee, 2006). These studies; however, focused on sport fans, as opposed to sport participants. The fact that involvement was not related to strong team identity makes it clear that the social benefits derived from a high level of team identification can be attained within the confines of a youth sport organization that does not require year-round commitment, extensive numbers of hours, or exclusive commitment from participants.

What the results of this study did demonstrate, however, that what is most important is that individuals have a clear understanding of their role within the organization. This role, which can be defined as a sense of purpose within the organization, can be developed in any youth sport organization. This study, which looked at youth sport organizations as complex organizations made up of a variety of stakeholders, including coaches, parents and athletes, lends support to the idea that it is critical that organizations help participants to develop a sense of purpose within the organization. While involvement with an organization was not found to be related to team identity, role identity was found to be critical to team identity. This result is supportive of other work, for example that of Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) who showed that groups that clearly assigned individual a role within the organization were more sustainable than those which did not assign group members a clear role. While Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) seemed to suggest that the number of hours an individual spent with

an organization was also related to how strong their sense of team identification was, it was considerably less important than having a strong sense of self derived from a clear place within the organization. For example, in their study of tailgate groups, Katz and Heere (2015) found that tailgate groups in which leaders assigned specific duties to members of the group were more sustainable in the event that the leader was no longer involved with the group. In addition, a recent study of a football fan group found that individuals demonstrated high levels of group identification that developed from a strong sense of role identification due to the individuals self-assessed roles within the group (Collins & Heere, 2018).

Where this study extends this literature is that both the work of Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) and Collins & Heere (2018) dealt with team identification amongst sport fans exclusively, while this study examined the relationship between role identity and team identity of various stakeholders within an organization. While the individuals in both Katz and Heere's (2013; 2015) studies and Collins and Heere's (2018) study did display high levels of team identification, and thus were participants in that sense, they were all still sport fans, and not actually participating in the sport itself. In contrast, the author of this study examines the connection between role identity and team identity across various stakeholder groups within an organization. Unlike previous studies, this work looked at stakeholders that had very different role identities within the organization. The author in this study examined various stakeholder groups, including parents, who are akin to the members of the tailgate groups studied by Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) and the members of the non-local fan group studied by Collins and Heere (2018), as well as athletes, coaches and program administrators, who are more direct participants in the

sport organization than the parents. This study demonstrates that regardless of what an individual's role is within an organization, that role identification is critical to the creation of strong team identity. In addition, it appears that not only is this the first empirical test of the way in which role identification and team identification complement each other as suggested by Lock & Heere (2017), but also that it is the first attempt to examine this relationship from a multiple stakeholder perspective.

Considering the vital role that parents play in helping youth to be able to participate in youth sport organizations, there is very limited literature examining the role of parents within the youth sport organization. The majority of the literature relating to this focuses on the influence parental involvement has on the athlete's sport experience (Knight & Holt, 2014). Literature has examined the idea that role identity amongst parents enables them to feel as if they are qualified to make remarks to their children about their sport performance (Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn & Wall, 2008).

There is very limited literature examining the experience of parents within the youth sport organizations in which their children compete. Clarke and Harwood (2014) found that parents were in fact socialized into the culture of youth sport organizations. These scholars, however, found that parents experienced conflicting feelings about the organization, based on their instincts to protect their children (Clarke & Harwood, 2014). This study; however, demonstrates that if parents have a strong sense of role identity with the organization, they are more likely to develop a team identity with the organization.

Amongst the participants in this study, parent was the most common role identity listed as the primary role within the organization. As such, it is clear why parents must be included in any discussion of social capital within a youth sport organization. Based on



the research of Clarke and Harwood (2014), it is known that parents are socialized into the sport and organization. Acknowledging that parents are in fact active participants in the youth sport organization, coupled with the finding that role identification is crucial to the development of team identity, makes it clear that helping these individuals to develop a strong sense of role identification is beneficial to youth sport organizations, because it will help those parents develop the team identity that will allow them to gain social benefits that are known to stem from participation in sport focused groups (Collins & Heere, 2018; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). This study perhaps suggests that it may be possible to counteract the ambiguity parents feel (Clarke & Harwood, 2014) by not just socializing them into the sport or organization, but by first developing strong enough role identification that they are able to build a sense of team identification strong enough that it might prevent parents from solely thinking about their children's interests, and include a sense of how certain decisions affect the overall organization.

The existing literature suggests that the development of role identity amongst participants in sport-focused groups can be informal and as simple as assigning volunteer duties to individuals in the group (Collins & Heere, 2018; Katz & Heere, 2013). The work of Collins and Heere (2018) and Katz and Heere (2013; 2015), in conjunction with the finding that role identity, but not involvement, drives team identity suggests that recreational sport organizations may be able to build team identity among those occupying the parental role. Recreational sport organizations, which traditionally have not had large budgets for professional staff members, have instinctively created role identity amongst parents as they have been forced to rely on parents to perform many essential duties simply to make the youth sport organization function. In these youth sport

organizations, it has long been necessary for parent volunteers to take on roles as coaches, officials, fund-raisers, and facility maintenance people (just to name a few). These activities have, therefore given parents a strong sense of role identity based on the jobs that they perceive as critical to the survival of the youth sport organization. In doing so, youth sport organizations may be able to successfully engage these individuals in such a way that they are able to develop a strong sense of team identification, based on their connections to other members of the youth sport organizations.

In practice, while this phenomenon has certainly not been ignored by club sport organizations, in which the level of involvement of individuals is far higher, larger budgets and more professional staff has led to a lower level of need for parents to be involved in the same way that they are with many recreational sport organizations. The unintended consequence of this more formal structure of club sport organizations may be that the largest group of members of the youth sport organization—the parents—do not have ample opportunity to develop strong role identification, in the same way that it was found to develop in more informal settings, such as the Jets fan group (Collins & Heere, 2018) or the football tailgate groups (Katz & Heere, 2013; 2015). This is a possible explanation for why the parents included in the elite soccer academy study had conflicted feelings about the academies, despite being socialized into the sport (Clarke & Harwood, 2014). This research demonstrates that it is particularly important that these club level sport organizations find ways to help the parents of the youth participants develop role identification with the organization, in order to allow them to define themselves by their place within the organization, and not simply as a parent of an individual athlete, which Clarke and Harwood (2014) demonstrated did not benefit the organization. If club youth

sport organizations are able to successfully foster a strong sense of role identification, based on the individual's place within the structure of the sport organization, they are uniquely poised to create a very strong sense of team identification that is based on shared identity between members of the organization, regardless of the specific role that the individual plays within the organization.

## 5.2 ROLE IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

While this model empirically supported Lock and Heere's (2017) claim that team identification and role identification are distinct, yet complimentary forces, this model also suggests that role identification is not necessarily beneficial to the development of social capital within an organization. The focus of Hypothesis four was to ascertain the extent to which role identity, despite being critical to the formation of team identification may in and of itself have a negative impact on social capital. The model in fact did support the idea that role identity is, at best, inconsequential to social capital, and at worst, detrimental. While this finding may help explain why some prior research has found that participatory sport organizations are more likely to create exclusionary social capital than positive, inclusive social capital (Devine & Parr, 2008; Dyerson, 2001). This research has, for the most part been done examining sport organizations in which competitive outcomes were important to group members, and therefore it is likely that role identity amongst those studied was more likely to be high. For example, in Devine and Parr's study (2008), the barrier to the creation of social capital within the organization was discrepancies in skill level. The offshoot of this is that if individuals with lower skill levels are included in the organization, performance goals are less likely to be met. If one has a high level of role identification, as opposed to group identification,

it is likely that this concern will overshadow concern for the well-being of other members of the organization.

In contrast to this, in studies in which there was evidence of social capital within sport focused organizations (Collins & Heere, 2018; Katz & Heere, 2013; 2015; Palmer & Thompson, 2007), the organizations studied were themselves open to anyone who wished to join. While role identity in all these studies can clearly be identified as a force that helped individuals build loyalty (team identification) with the group, that role identity on its own was not so significant that it overshadowed the individual's feelings of identification with the group (Collins & Heere, 2018). In the case of Collins and Heere (2018) and Katz and Heere (2013; 2015) it is unsurprising that role identity did appear to have a negative impact on social capital, as these studies involved sport fans, who do not have to compete for resources and opportunities within the sport organization. In participatory sport organizations, however, members do have to compete for resources and opportunities within the organization, which serves as a plausible explanation for why role identity may have a negative impact on social capital within this context. This study was the first work specifically designed to empirically test not only the complementary nature of the relationship between role identification and team identification, but also the contradictory nature of the relationship between role identity and social capital.

In order to further study this hypothesis, the authors examined the model using both the whole sample, and the sample divided into two groups; those who identified their primary role as parents and those who identified their primary role as anything else. When examined using all study participants, the authors found that role identification in

fact had a moderately significant, slightly negative impact on social capital. While this finding is interesting, it in fact opened up more questions for the author. These questions are based on the fact that the parent role is very similar to the role occupied by the sport fans participating in Katz and Heere's (2013; 2015) tailgate group study; while the other roles identified by individuals are more closely related to the athletes studied in Devine and Parr (2008). While there is no question that all these roles are vital parts of the organization, the role of parent is unique, as compared to the roles inhabited by athletes, coaches and program administrators. As such, the author was curious to determine if role identity had a significant impact across the different organizational roles.

Splitting the study participants to examine parents, who are akin to fans in that they do not directly compete for organizational resources and opportunities, and everyone else, who were direct, active participants in the sport itself, it was found that role identification was not related to social capital at all for parents. For the athletes, coaches and administrators group; however, it was found that role identification did have a significant but negative impact on social capital.

While the first and third hypotheses were focused on forces that led to the development of team identification and the complementary relationship between role identification and team identification, this fourth hypothesis suggests that “run-away role identity”—that is role identity that overshadows team identification is in fact detrimental to social capital. This is the first time that the idea that role identity within individuals who are defined very strongly by their roles within sport programs (as coaches, or as athletes), without also defining themselves strongly by membership in a specific organization, is a barrier to social capital in a sport focused organization has been studied.

This finding is supportive of organizational behavior literature that has found it is beneficial to organizations to support relevant organizational identities within the workplace (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010).

This is a particularly relevant area of study, in light of increasingly professionalized youth sport organizations, which had led to individuals more concerned with their own role in the sport, as opposed to their identification with the organization. It is understood that one's perspective as individualistic, relational, or collective influences which identities are most important to an individual (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010). Role identity, is highly individualistic and therefore it is unsurprising that strong role identity be less likely to inspire trust amongst other group members and would be less likely to behave in ways that inspire the creation of group norms, which are highly relational and hallmarks of social capital (Glanville & Bienenstock, 2009). While individuals displaying strong role identification may spend a great deal of time with the other members of the organization, if they do not develop team identification it is unlikely that social capital will develop.

This model demonstrates that if youth sport organizations want to facilitate the creation of social capital for members, it is imperative that they encourage people within the organization—regardless of the role they inhabit—to take ownership of their place in the sport, and translate that into a tangible contribution to the organization; a finding that is supportive of earlier work by Katz and Heere (2015).

This study revealed that role identification was not significant at all for building social capital for parents and was negative for individuals holding other roles within the organization. While the impact of role identity was only moderate for the athletes and

coaches, the author feels that the extent to which role identity absent of team identification was detrimental to the development of social capital may have been influenced by several factors. First, it was difficult to access individuals that did not have high levels of team identification, as those individuals were less likely to respond to the online inquiry or be at the team events at which data was collected. Second, because the sample included individuals across a wide spectrum of developmental levels (children and adults) it is possible that the effects of role identity were lessened because of the differences in the way children and adults view social capital. Further research should delve more deeply, beyond just splitting the sample into parents and “other” role, to better understand how variables such as age and specific organization role influences social capital. Be this as it may, the author did find evidence that despite its necessity for the formation of team identification, role identification in and of itself is detrimental to the creation of social capital.

While role identification was clearly shown to be critical to the development of team identification, it clearly did not have the same impact on social capital. To the contrary, has been demonstrated that role identification and team identification are both complimentary, and conflicting, providing a particular challenge for sport organizations to balance. The modern landscape of youth sport organizations, as it becomes increasingly professionalized, has a high number of people that display high levels of role identification. On the one hand, this presents an increasing opportunity for participatory youth sport organizations to generate the powerful team identification and subsequent communities that the research suggests they are uniquely poised to create (Heere et al., 2011). On the other hand, the increasing prevalence of strong role identity in youth sport,

in conjunction with the finding that role identification does not promote social capital directly is a potential pitfall for youth sport organizations. Unless this tension is carefully managed, is likely to lead to youth sport organizations that do not create positive or inclusive social capital, and instead create exclusionary social capital that does not benefit all members of the organization. The challenge for youth sport organizations is therefore to figure out how to encourage role identification for the purpose of fostering the development of team identification, but not allow it to overshadow the development of team identification, and thus become detrimental to the creation of social capital.

### 5.3 TEAM IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

The front half of the proposed model examines the relationship between role identification and team identification; specifically, how role identification is required for the very existence of team identification. While hypothesis four focused on the conflict which may arise between role identity and team identification, hypothesis three focuses on the consequences of team identification, with regard to the ability of an organization to create social capital for its members. While a great deal of research has been done on team identification, there is considerably less literature that examines the extent to which team identification is in fact pervasive enough in an individual's life for that organization to create social capital. This research is supportive of prior work that has suggested that individuals may assign enough value to their participation in sport focused organizations that there is the potential for social capital (Collins & Heere, 2018; Perks, 2007).

This work extends previous work on sport and social capital is by providing an examination of what specific conditions within an organization must exist if that organization is to actually create social capital for its members. As such, this research is



particularly valuable in helping gain understanding as to why the research on sport participation and social capital has displayed such mixed results. While Perks (2007) found that youth sport participation was the strongest indicator of future civic involvement and therefore could be considered to have provided participants with significant social capital, Devine and Parr (2008), found that sport participation was more likely to foster exclusionary social capital than positive social capital. In an attempt to try and help gain better understanding of why some youth sport situations create positive social capital, while others are decidedly negative, the author proposed a model designed to explain why there has been such disparity in this particular area of research. This model suggests that while sport has tremendous potential to create social capital for organizations and individuals, it only actual does so if specific conditions are met, and involvement is accompanied by a clear role identity and a strong sense of team identity. In this model; the author proposed in order for a sport organization to create social capital for members, it is necessary that individuals involved with the organization demonstrate high levels of team identification. This finding is supportive of earlier research that demonstrated that volunteerism with a sport organization was driven by a sense that it was necessary for the continued existence of the sport organization (Wang et al., 2012). This is particularly important because volunteering with the sport organization was found to foster social capital (Wang et al, 2012).

In fact, when one looks at the prior research on sport participation and social capital, it would be difficult to miss the common thread—at the most basic level, sport participation is better at building bonding social capital than bridging social capital (Devine & Parr, 2008, Dyreson, 2001, Wang et al., 2012). It is possible that this occurs

because it has been found that individuals like to participate in sport with other individuals that they perceive as similar to themselves. As such, the challenge for sport organizations is how to convince members that the other people in the organization are, in fact, similar to themselves. Based on the findings of this study, the author suggests that building strong team identification amongst members of the organization is one way to accomplish this. The author theorized that building team identification amongst members of the organization will create bonds between individuals that will bridge across other social, demographic, or role identities. This possibility is particularly plausible if one holds to the idea; that social identity theory should be the theoretical backing for team identification (Lock and Heere, 2017). If one considers that social identity theory posits that individuals define themselves by the groups that they are members of (Tajfel, 1978); then it follows that shared team identification would lead members of the organization to view other members of the sport organization as “like them”.

Furthermore, when one considers that team identification is also known to be very durable (Collins et al, 2016; James, 2001) it is not surprising that team identification can become powerful enough to become more important to individuals than the differences between those individuals. If team identification becomes central to an individual’s sense of identity, it is therefore unsurprising that this shared team identification would be instrumental in the creation of social capital; an assertion that is supported by the results of this research. Furthermore, if this sense of team identification surpasses other types of identity—for example identities based on demographics or role—it is likely to have the ability to create not just bonding social capital, but also bridging social capital that stretch beyond other social boundaries. This notion is also supportive of other research that has

found that social capital is able to form in heterogeneous groups if in fact the individuals share strong bonds of team identification that extend beyond other demographic criteria (Collins & Heere, 2018; Palmer & Thompson, 2007).

Shared team identification can therefore be used to create social capital strong enough not only to bond individuals that are homogenous, but to cross social barriers and create bridging social capital that is far more inclusive than bonding social capital.

Because team identification clearly leads to the creation of this type of social capital, in which members of the organization view themselves as similar, it is arguably also very possible for a sustainable CoP to be created, despite individuals within the organization occupying different roles within the organization itself. While the original definition of CoP required both shared identity and identical practices by all members of the CoP (Lave & Wenger, 1991); more modern thinking about what constitutes a CoP is focused on creating better organizations through shared identity and parallel practices that lead to a shared commitment to organizational success or improvement (Wenger, 1998). If team identification indicates shared identity, the commitment to the success of the organization can be considered shared practice. This is supportive of Wang et al.'s (2012) study that demonstrated that a sense of obligation for the continuation of a sport organization was a driving force that allowed for the development of social capital.

These findings therefore contradict more traditional notions that CoPs within sport organizations can not include individuals that hold differing roles within the organization, because they do not share practices (Galipeau & Trudel, 2004; 2005; 2006). To the contrary, the findings of this study support the idea that social capital is more likely to be beneficial to all members of the community if that community is centered

around connections between individuals and a responsibility to the public life (Etzioni, 1993). Since it is also established that sport organizations are well positioned to create strong communities (Heere et al., 2011); this study adds to the research by demonstrating that social capital is a likely outcome of a strongly developed sense of team identification among the members of an organization.

#### 5.4 SELF SACRIFICIAL LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

In addition to proposing that team identification had a significant impact on the ability of an organization to create social capital, this model also demonstrated that it was critical that the members of the organization perceive a strong sense that the organization's leaders are behaving in a self-sacrificial manner. Self-sacrificial leaders act with the best interests of the organization in mind; even when those interests may conflict with their own self-interest (Cialdini et al., 1997; Mackenzie, 1986). Hypothesis five posits that self-sacrificial leadership would positively impact the existence of social capital within an organization. Unsurprisingly, the author found that perceptions of self-sacrificial leadership behaviors on the part of the organization's leaders was significant for the development of social capital, suggesting that leadership has the potential to help an organization develop social capital. While previous research has demonstrated that self-sacrificial leadership is likely to promote behaviors such as reciprocity (Choi & Mai Dalton, 1999) and trust (De Kremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004) that are often considered hallmarks of social capital, this study is the first empirical test of self-sacrificial leadership's ability to specifically generate social capital for an organization.

Furthermore, this study marks the first time that an author has attempted to extend what is known about the positive benefits of self-sacrificial leadership on organizational

identification (Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005) to determine whether or not this leadership style is powerful enough to play a significant role in the creation of social capital for the organization. Earlier research has also found that specific leadership behaviors inspire individuals to behave in ways that are positive (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), and as such this study supports the idea that leadership can help individuals to behave in ways that facilitate social capital. Furthermore, because this study found that both team identification and self-sacrificial leadership positively impact social capital, this research lends some support to the idea that when individuals are identified with the group, they will also be impacted by leadership behaviors (De Cremer et al., 2006; Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). This study, however, attempts to extend these findings by demonstrating that the impact of these leadership behaviors are so significant that they lead to the production of social capital. The scale used in this study to measure social capital measured structural, relational and cognitive forms of social capital, and as such this study demonstrates that leadership has a strong impact on all three dimensions of social capital. This result is particularly interesting because it suggests that the role of leaders is critical to the development a community, which stems from the creation of structural, relational, and cognitive social capital. The leadership literature also acknowledges that leadership styles impact various functions of an organization. For example, Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg (2005) found that self-sacrificial leadership behaviors had an impact on follower self-esteem, which represents the relational dimension. Other literature has found that self-sacrificial leadership is likely to inspire both cooperation (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998), which can be considered to be

structural and relational, as well as productivity (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004) which represents a cognitive function of social capital.

This study extends the literature in that it is the first time that the concept of self-sacrificial leadership has been applied to the sport setting. It is also worth noting that self-sacrificial leadership may be particularly successful at creating CoPs in the sport arena due to the fact that the goal of self-sacrificial leaders is to create individuals who will imitate their behavior and conduct themselves in a way that benefits the organization (Cialdini et al., 1997). Self-sacrificial leadership has been viewed as a midpoint between servant leadership, in which the leader is concerned only with the needs of the individual, and pure transformational leadership, in which the leader is only concerned with the needs of the organization (Matteson & Irving, 2006).

Because self-sacrificial leadership attempts to balance the needs to the individual and the organization and as such is well suited to sport organizations, in which these needs are often conflicting. Furthermore, this form of leadership may be particularly well suited to the development of CoPs because it encourages the members to replicate the behavior of the leaders, and in doing so is effective at creating a structure that is characterized by shared practices and behaviors. This is supportive of previous studies on CoPs that found that strong, consistent leadership within an organization was critical to the ability of a sport organization to evolve into a sustainable CoP (Callary, 2013). This study is the first attempt to examine how self-sacrificial leadership may lead to the development of social capital, and that it is particularly well suited to sport focused organizations that are seeking to use social capital in order to form CoPs. This result supports the idea that role of leaders in the creation of a community is critical (Katz &

Heere, 2013). With regard to the creation of CoPs, this result may shed some light on the debate over whether or not CoPs develop organically ((Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Everest, 2001; Wenger, 1998), or if organizations can facilitate the development of such communities (Swan et al., 2002; Wenger et al., 2002; Wenger 2004). It would seem that the findings of this study would support the idea that organizations, if led by individuals who behave in a self-sacrificial way, can in fact support the creation and existence of CoPs. This seems to provide further support for studies that have suggested that an organization can subtly foster the creation of CoPs as a part of the organizational structure of a group (Swan et al., 2002; Wenger et al., 2002; Wenger, 2004). By placing leaders who demonstrate self-sacrificial leadership in key positions within the organization, the organization may be able to facilitate the creation of social capital, which then in turn can help foster the development of a CoP. This study supports the idea that the CoP can be sustainable if the leader can successfully promote of culture in which self-sacrificial behavior is modeled and followed by members of the organization.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, & LIMITATIONS

#### 6.1 CONCLUSION

This study provides a valuable contribution to the literature, as it provides considerable insight into the complex relationship between role identification and team identification. These two constructs are in fact unique; however, the literature has often used them interchangeably, and without providing solid theoretical grounding for either construct. This work provides the first empirical test of the theoretical work of Lock and Heere (2017) that attempts to better define the theoretical underpinnings of these two constructs and expand upon the ways in which they are both complementary and contradictory. By creating and supporting a model that demonstrates that role identification is paramount to the creation of team identification, this dissertation makes a powerful statement about the fact that these two constructs are in fact unique. In addition, this dissertation demonstrates that while team identification is important to the creation of social capital, role identification is not. This is also supportive of Lock and Heere's (2017) work that asserts that team identification and role identification are unique constructs which should not be used interchangeably. In fact Hypothesis 4 of this dissertation clearly demonstrated that these two constructs have very different outcomes for members of a youth sport organization, and for the organization itself.

This dissertation provides empirical support for the widely held notion that participation in youth sport organizations generates social capital for its members



(Coalter, 2007; Perks, 2007). Be this as it may, this dissertation also provides empirical evidence that youth sport organizations do not automatically create social capital for their members, and in fact may not promote inclusive social capital, as has often been suggested by critics of youth sport organizations (Coakley, 2011; Devine & Parr, 2008). In fact this dissertation fills a gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence into what forces promote inclusive social capital within a youth sport organization, and perhaps more importantly, which forces do not.

Hypothesis five of this dissertation also demonstrates the importance of leaders within an organization on the creation of social capital within that organization. This is the first attempt to apply the theory self-sacrificial leadership (Mackenzie, 1986) specifically to a sport organization. Furthermore, this dissertation marks the first time there has been an empirical link established between the existence of self-sacrificial leadership behavior and the ability of an organization to generate social capital.

Finally, this dissertation refutes earlier work that has suggested that a youth sport organization cannot represent a single CoP. This research demonstrates that by creating team identification within members of the group holding a variety of roles within the organization, the aims of a CoP can be achieved (Wenger et al., 2002). This research does so by using the modern definition of a CoP, which focuses on shared identity and shared practice with the aim of creating better organizations, (Wenger et al., 2002). Furthermore, by demonstrating that self-sacrificial leaders lead to the type of social capital likely to be found in a CoP (Chiu et al., 2006), this dissertation provides some empirical support for the idea that organizations can at least gently facilitate the existence of a CoP as part of the organization's basic structure (Swan et al., 2002).

## 6.2 IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have clear implications for the growing, and increasingly commercialized youth sport industry. The model proposed, tested and supported by this dissertation provide a road map for youth sport organizations, that can help them create more positive and exclusive experiences for all participants. Because there is a widespread public perception that youth sport participation leads to social benefits, but very little concrete evidence as to the conditions under which those benefits actually materialize, this dissertation provides insight into how organizations may be able to foster the development of these benefits.

First, this dissertation provides the adults participating in youth sport organizations—especially coaches and program administrators evidence of the importance of helping individuals develop strong ties to the organization itself, as opposed to solely focusing on the role the individuals play within the sport. In the case of parents, this dissertation suggests that youth sport organizations must somehow involve the parents in a way that focuses on the creation of a sense of investment in the organization itself. Implicit in that is the idea that this sense of investment will be driven by investment in one another. While role identification has been identified as critical to the development of this sense of team identification, this dissertation made it clear that role identification does not lead to the development of social capital. As such, if youth sport organizations rely on individual's sense of identification with their role in the sport, they are unlikely to create the positive social benefits that people perceive as a benefit of participation in youth sport.

While role identification was simply insignificant for parents, the findings of this study have even more implications for coaches, program administrators, and athletes, in which role identification actually had a significant detrimental effect on the creation of social capital within the youth sport organization. This dissertation clearly demonstrated the dangers of allowing individuals to become too focused on their role within the sport. In an age of increasing professionalization of youth sport, there has been a tendency for youth sport organizations to view coaching and competing as an outcome based endeavor, as opposed to a process driven experience in which values other than winning are rewarded. This dissertation provides empirical evidence for individuals both at youth sport organizations and at governing bodies as to why it is important to reward youth sport organizations (and coaches and athletes) that adopt a process driven approach to program structure.

Furthermore, the finding that self-sacrificial leadership on the part of an organization's leaders leads to social capital for the organization's members provides empirical evidence suggesting that leaders—be they parents, athletes, coaches or administrators should be rewarded. The current professionalization of youth sport organizations has often made it difficult for individuals to behave in a self-sacrificial way within the organizations, because often the sacrifices that individuals must endure, in order to act with the best interest of the organization as a whole in mind, are incompatible with career success.

Finally, this dissertation demonstrates to youth sport organizations that it is in fact possible to create youth sport organizations in which there is enough social capital for organization members to be a CoP. The implication for youth sport organizations is that

by structuring their program in such a way that leaders who act based on the greater good for the organization, and that followers are encouraged to invest in the organization itself instead of just their own role within the sport, organizations can realize an inclusive environment, replete with social capital. This dissertation provides empirical evidence that youth sport organizations that are process, as opposed to product, driven are much more likely to create the social capital widely assumed to be available to youth sport participants.

### 6.3 LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this dissertation provides empirical evidence that a youth sport organization can generate social capital, as well as the conditions under which it is likely to do so, what it does not do is provide empirical evidence of what the creation of such social capital, and the resulting CoP will lead to. Further study needs to be undertaken to determine if organizations that are able to successfully foster social capital laden CoPs are in fact more likely to retain participants within the organization. It is unknown whether this social capital is sufficient to overcome other reasons that individuals leave youth sport organizations, such as coaching changes, costs or competing interests. In addition, further research should be done to determine if youth who participated in organizations that create social capital rich, inclusive CoPs are more likely to continue in sport overall, in particular as adults.

Furthermore, this dissertation does not explore how an organization should go about using participants' existing role identity to create team identity. As such, more research is needed to determine what types of processes are most effective at converting role identity to team identity. It also does not examine how role identity should be

developed, therefore more research is needed to determine how organizations can support role identification well enough to facilitate the development of team identification, but without allowing it to overshadow team identification. A limitation of this dissertation was that it was difficult to find individuals that did not report at least moderate levels of team identification, as those individuals were more available and willing to participate in the research. Future research should focus specifically on individuals who have particularly low levels of team identification, while reporting particularly high levels of role identification, in order to better understand the impact of role identification on social capital, without the presence of team identification.

Finally, because the CoP was used as a guiding framework for this dissertation but was not in fact part of the model created, more research should be done to determine what the youth sport organization's role in facilitating the development of a sustainable CoP. While this dissertation provides empirical evidence that the type of social capital associated with a CoP can be created in a youth sport organization, it does not explore the extent to which the organization can facilitate this development, as opposed to simply allowing it to evolve organically. While this dissertation does demonstrate that self-sacrificial leadership is important to the development of social capital, it does not define which leaders are most likely to generate social capital. This dissertation simply asked respondents if the organizations leaders behaved in a self-sacrificial manner. Future research should investigate the extent to which self-sacrificial leadership behavior by different kinds of leaders—for example peer (athlete) leaders, as opposed to leaders amongst the parents, as opposed to coaches and administrators—is able to effectively generate social capital for the program's members.

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APPENDIX A  
IRB APPROVAL OF STUDY



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN RESEARCH  
EXPEDITED APPROVAL LETTER  
with a WAIVER of CONSENT

Dorothy Collins  
Hospitality, Retail, & Sport Management  
Sport & Entertainment Management  
701 Assembly Street, Coliseum 2026-L  
Columbia, SC 29208

Re: **Pro00065452**

Study Title: *We Are One: The Role of Social Identity and Self-Sacrificial Leaders on the Generation of Social Capital Within Youth Sport Programs*

Dear Ms. Collins:

The referenced study was reviewed and approved by the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 4/7/2017 by Expedited review (category 7). This approval includes a Waiver of Signed Consent.

Approval is for a one-year period from **4/7/2017** to **4/6/2018**. The Principal Investigator must submit a Continuing Review and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure. IRB approval for the study will expire if continuing review approval is not granted before **4/6/2018**.

When applicable, approved consent /assent documents are located under the "Stamped ICF" tab on the Study Workspace in eIRB.

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING APPROVAL CONDITIONS**

- The research must be conducted according to the proposal/protocol that was approved by the IRB.

- Changes to the procedures, recruitment materials, or consent document must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
- *If applicable*, each subject should receive a copy of the approved, date stamped, consent document.
- It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to report promptly to the IRB:
  - Unanticipated problems and/or unexpected risks to subjects
  - Adverse events effecting the rights or welfare of any human subject participating in the project
- Research records, including signed consent documents, must be retained for at least three years after the termination of the last IRB approval.
- No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date, or after the expiration date. For continuing research, an update of the study is required prior to the expiration date. The PI is responsible for initiating the Continuing Review process. At the time a study is terminated (closed) a final report should be submitted to the IRB.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the USC Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, please contact Arlene McWhorter at [arlenem@sc.edu](mailto:arlenem@sc.edu) or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Johnson  
IRB Assistant Director

## APPENDIX B

### SAMPLE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:** You are being asked to volunteer for a research study conducted by Dorothy Collins. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sport and Entertainment Management, at the University of South Carolina. The University of South Carolina, Department of Sport and Entertainment Management is sponsoring this research study. The purpose of this study is to learn more about the benefits of participating in youth sport organizations. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are involved with a youth sport organization. This study is being done at the University of South Carolina, and will involve approximately 650 volunteers. This form explains what you will be asked to do, if you decide to participate in this study. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask questions before you make a decision about participating.

**PROCEDURES:** If you agree to be in this study you will be asked to complete a survey about your participation in a youth sport organization. Participation in the study will take 15 minutes, and is anonymous. There are no risks or expected discomfort from participating in this study, and the study is completely anonymous. In exchange for participating in this survey, if you choose to supply an Email address at the end of the survey, you will be entered to win a \$25 Amazon gift card. One gift card will be available for every 250 responses received. **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:**

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free not to participate, or to stop participating at any time, for any reason without negative consequences. Opening the survey implies that you consent to participate in this study. In the event that you do withdraw from this study, the information you have already provided will be kept in a confidential manner. If you wish to withdraw from the study, simply close your browser and discontinue participation in the survey.

If you have any questions about participation in this study, please contact Dorothy Collins at [Dorothyc@email.sc.edu](mailto:Dorothyc@email.sc.edu). Questions about your rights as a research subject are to be directed to, Lisa Johnson, IRB Assistant Director, Office of Research Compliance, University of South Carolina, 1600 Hampton Street, Suite 414D, Columbia, SC 29208, phone: (803) 777-7095 or email: [LisaJ@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:LisaJ@mailbox.sc.edu).

**Statement of Assent:** I am a researcher from the University of South Carolina. I am working on a study about youth sport participation and I would like your help. I am interested in learning more about your feelings about the youth sport organization in which you participate. Your parent/guardian has already said it is okay for you to be in the study, but it is up to you if you want to be in the study. If you want to be in the study, you will be asked to answer some written questions about your involvement with a youth sport organization. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete this survey. Any information you share with me (or study staff) will be private. While we may share the results with your youth sport organization, the survey does not include your name and your email will not be associated with your answers. You do not have to help with this study. Being in the study is not related to your training or competition with the organization. You can also drop out of the study at any time, for any reason, and you will not be in any trouble and no one will be mad at you. Please ask any questions you would like to about the study, by emailing me at [dorothyc@email.sc.edu](mailto:dorothyc@email.sc.edu). Completing the survey means that, you have read the information (or it has been read to you), and that your questions have been answered in a way that you can understand, and you have decided to be in the study.

Q1 Which of the following roles have you held with the youth sport organization in which you are involved (check all that apply)?

Athlete (1)

Coach (2)

Parent of athlete in organization (3)

Program administrator or official (4)

Other (please specify) (5)

Q2 If you chose other for question 1, please specify what role you fill with the youth sport organization in which you are involved

---

Q3 Which of the roles you have served in that are listed above do you currently consider your primary role with the youth sport organization in which you are involved?

---

Q4 How many months a year do you participate in the youth sport organization in which you are involved?

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---

Q5 How many hours a week do you spend involved with the youth sport organization in which you are involved?

---

---

Q6 What is your Gender?

Male (1)

Female (2)

Other (3)

Q7 What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

Q8 What is your ethnicity? \_\_\_\_\_

Q15 What is your race? \_\_\_\_\_

Q9 Please answer the following statements based on your feelings about your primary role with relation to the sport in which you are involved.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
My role in the sport is an essential part of my life (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I love all levels of the sport (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I watch or read media about my role the sport whenever I can (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know a lot about being in my role in the sport (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My role in the sport is very important to me (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think about being in my role in the sport all the time (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 Please answer the following statements based on your feelings about the specific youth sport organization in which you are involved.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
Overall my youth sport organization is viewed positively by others (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, others respect my youth sport organization (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, people hold a favorable opinion about my youth sport organization (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good about being a member of my youth sport organization (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, I'm glad to be a member of my youth sport organization (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm proud to think of myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

as a member of my youth sport organization (6)							
My destiny is tied to the destiny of my youth sport organization (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My youth sport organization has affected me personally (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The behavior of my youth sport organization will have an impact on my own life. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What happens to my youth sport organization will influence what happens in my life (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When someone criticizes my youth sport organization it feels like a personal insult (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, being associated with my youth sport organization is an important part of my self-image (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My youth sport organization is an important reflection of who I am (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When someone compliments my youth sport organization it feels like a personal compliment (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am aware of the traditions and history of my youth sport organization (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the ins and outs of my youth sport organization (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have knowledge of the successes and failures of my youth sport organization (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 Please respond to the following questions about the leaders of your youth sport organization, and how you believe you would respond to those leaders

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
The leaders of this organization go beyond self-interest for the good of my youth sport organization (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders of my youth sport organization consider the moral and ethical consequences of their decisions (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders of my youth sport organization emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders of my youth sport organization specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If they ask me to do something to help my youth sport organization I do it even if it might involve extra responsibility (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If they ask me to do something to help my youth sport organization I do it even if it might involve some risk (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If they ask me to do something to help my youth sport organization, I do it even if it might bring me some discomfort (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If they propose a temporary change or reduction in benefits or privileges from all members of the organization, to help my youth sport organization, I	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



would agree to it (8)							
Their behavior inspires me to carefully exercise my authority and power and sacrifice my own privileges, if the situation in my youth sport organization requires it (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 Please answer the following questions about your youth sport organization.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I maintain close social relationships with some members of my youth sport organization (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I spend a lot of time interacting with some members of my youth sport organization (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know some members of my youth sport organization on a personal level (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have frequent communication with some members of my youth sport organization (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization will not take advantage of others, even when the opportunity arises (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization will always keep the promises they make to one another. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization would not knowingly do anything to interrupt the conversation. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Members of my youth sport organization behave in a consistent manner (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization are truthful in dealing with one another (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know other members of my youth sport organization will help me, so it's only fair to help other members. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that members of my youth sport organization would help me if I need it (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The members of my youth sport organization use common terms or jargons. (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization use understandable communication patterns during discussions (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization use understandable narrative forms to post messages or articles. (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization share the vision of helping others solve their problems (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization share the same goal of learning from each other (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Members of my youth sport organization share the same value that helping others is pleasant. (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 Please list the sport and organization about which you have answered these questions.

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Q13 Please enter your email here, if you wish to be included in the drawing for a \$25 Amazon Gift Card.

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APPENDIX C  
DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE STUDY

Primary Roles	Athlete	Coach	Parent	Program Admin.	Other
	155	60	236	11	56
Competition Level	Recreational		Club		
	217		177		
Year Round/ Seasonal	6 months or less		7-12 months a year		
	225		293		
By Sport					
	Baseball		11		
	Basketball		19		
	Cheerleading		1		
	Football		7		
	Hockey		3		
	Lacrosse		4		
	Roller Derby		1		
	Soccer		35		
	Softball		7		
	Volleyball		2		
Total Team Sport Participants = 90					
	Bowling		1		
	Dance		2		
	Diving		1		
	Equine		1		
	Gymnastics		43		
	Martial Arts		5		
	Running		3		
	Swimming		366		
	Wrestling		2		
Total Individual Sport Participants = 424					
Gender	Male		Female		
	166		352		

Age	<18	19-35	36-50	Over 50
	164	54	242	55