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ABSTRACT

Throughout the world participation in sport and physical activity is considered to be one of the most important leisure time activities among adolescents (e.g. Rees, Brettschneider & Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1998; Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Patriksson, 1993; Sisjord, 1993; Thomson, 2000; Wang & Olson, 1997; Weiss, 1996; Yamaguchi, 1996). However, the meaning it has may vary among adolescents from different nations due to various social, physical and cultural factors (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000). These variations often result from differing socialisation experiences, which also differ along lines of gender (Coakley, 1998). Much research continues to be carried out on what motivates adolescents to participate in sport and physical activity, due to its in their lives.

The aim of this study was to study these motivating factors in a South Asian country, the Republic of Maldives exploring, in particular the importance and meanings placed on sport by the adolescents of the Maldives, their reasons for sports participation or non-participation, related gender differences, and whether globalisation was influencing their sporting culture. In order to investigate the aforementioned, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 667 secondary school students.

Results showed that Maldivian adolescents ranked sport at 71.9 on a scale of 0-100, suggesting that it had considerable significance for them. Sport meant ‘fun and enjoyment’ to the most participants, followed by ‘health and fitness’, ‘team sports’, and ‘individual sports’. The three most preferred reasons for sports participation were that it is ‘good for the body’, ‘physical fitness’, and the ‘enjoyment of exercise’.
In relation to gender differences, it was found that Maldivian boys were more gender conscious (i.e. prone to gender stereotyping) than girls. The sample was also not as supportive of non-gendered sports participation in comparison to their counterparts from New Zealand and the United States. It was also evident that sport globalisation trends were affecting the Maldivian youth sporting culture, with 'global' sports such as basketball and soccer becoming increasingly popular.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Aishath (my wife), for her never-ending support over the past year, and to Beybe (Hussain Riyaz), Adil (Ali Adil Rasheed) and Boday (Hussain Haleem) for their friendship. “The friend[s] who understands you, creates you” (Romain Rolland).
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"It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end" (Ursula K. LeGuin). First and foremost I thank God for keeping me fit and healthy throughout the past year. Second, I appreciate my wife's friendship and her gentle handling of one of the most 'mysterious' guys in the world, 'ME'.

"The will to win means nothing without the will to prepare" (Juma Ikangaa). Indeed, many thanks to my supervision (coaching) team of Dr. Rex Thomson and Dr. Robyn Jones. I would like to thank Rex for helping me get this scholarship, a room to sleep in for the first few weeks and for the supervision and his friendship. I still remember calling Rex to say how grateful I was for getting this scholarship not knowing the time difference and thus waking him up around 2 or 3 am New Zealand time. Further, I would like to thank Robyn for his friendship and for toughness in giving me feedback during the past year. Thanks also to Dr. Steve Jackson for being on my committee and giving me good advice and to Brian Nevin for helping out with the results chapter. In addition, thanks to the examiners Dr. Paul Potrac (University of Northumbria) and Dr. Tania Cassidy (University of Otago) for accepting my thesis as examiners.

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“Go ahead and make mistakes. Make all you can. Because, remember that’s where you’ll find success - on the far side of failure” (IBM’s Thomas Watson). Extra special thanks goes to fellow graduate students whose friendship made me feel comfortable during the past year. The jokes shared with Kellie, Scotty, Brendan and Joe were pretty ‘cool’. Further, I enjoyed the friendship of Jay, Warrick, Mike, Mel, Claire, Liz, Mikki, Laura, Brendan and the other graduate students, and thank the staff that have helped me in some way or another that I have not mentioned in here because of ‘space’.

“The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up” (Paul Valery). Indeed, this project has been a ‘very good’ warm-up in my preparation for the journey ahead, to complete a PhD within two and half (2½) years (i.e. August 2004, if I am fit and healthy), and it is time to start the ‘real journey’. “To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better …” (Abraham Lincoln).
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Operational definitions

Adolescence: Adolescence is defined as "the period of transition from childhood to adult status, a time with possibilities to become a fully functional and capable individual. It is a time when personal limits are explored and lifetime attitudes and patterns of living begin to be established" (Luke & Sinclair, 1991, p. 31).

Disjunctures: This refers to the "diverse set of consequences that result when global forces and local contexts meet" (Jackson & Andrews, 1999, p. 32).

Globalisation: Globalisation is defined as the "compression of the world into a single place" (Robertson, 1992, p. 6).

In S: In S refers to school organised sports.

Male': Male' (pronounces as MaaLe) is a name of an island and is the capital of the Maldives.

O S: O S refers to sports played outside school (e.g., with family and with friends).

Republic of Maldives: The Republic of Maldives is a developing country that lies in the Indian Ocean, 7 degrees north to south of the equator (see Appendix A for an overview).
**Socialisation:** "Socialisation is a complex, interactive process through which people form ideas about who they are and how they are connected to the world around us. This process occurs in connection with sports as well as with other activities and experiences in people's lives" (Coakley, 1998, p. 113).

**Spare-time sports schools:** "Spare-time schools serve as a means of training future elite athletes. This hierarchical school system provides an environment for sport-specific training combined with academic study" (Wang & Wiese-Bjornstal, 1996, p. 14).

**Sport:** Sport is used as "an umbrella term that includes all kinds of exercise, sport, and physically active pursuits" (Koivula, 1999, p. 221)

**Sport Socialisation:** "Formally and informally, individuals can be socialised into sport roles. This process concerns who gets involved in sport, and how individuals learn sport roles and at what stages in life. The process also identifies when individuals receive the opportunity to become involved in specific sport roles or ultimately to perform at an elite level" (McPherson, Curtis & Loy, 1989; p. 48).

**Sports participation:** Sports participation in this context is taken as involvement in any form of sport(s) (e.g. inter-school competition), extra-curricular sports (i.e. inter-class or inter-house, or any other form of sport within school), or informal sport(s) played outside school.
**Third World countries:** Third World countries [are] those “that stand at the bottom of the international hierarchy of social stratification. They are poor, hardly industrialised, if at all, and heavily dependent on countries in the first (i.e. industrialised) and second worlds. Sometimes they are called ‘developing countries’, a usage that could be misleading if it were taken to imply that the so called ‘developed societies’ of the first and second world are not, themselves, continuing to change and develop in specific ways” (Heinemann (1993; p. 139).

**Villigilli:** Villigilli is the name of an island which is situated 1 kilometre away from Male’ (separated by sea) and counts as a ward of Male’. Thus, including Villigilli, Male’ has 5 wards in total.
INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, physical activity has been considered an important component of the educational process and in diverse ways has been a significant element in all cultures. In its formal institutional form ... it has enjoyed a continuing presence. This presence has been largely grounded in the Aristotelian concept of harmonious balance and variously linked with a range of instrumental outcomes, including individual/group survival, preparation for the rigours of life, politics, militarism, nationalism, conformity, social control through promotion of obedience to authority etc., character building and other psycho-social qualities, healthy well-being, enhancement of quality of life and so on. (Hardman, 1997, p. 25)

As evidenced by the above quote, participation in sport is considered to be one of the most important leisure time activities among adolescents (e.g. Rees et al., 1998; Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Patriksson, 1993; Sisjord, 1993; Thomson, 2000; Wang & Olson, 1997; Weiss, 1996; Yamaguchi, 1996). Similarly, Biddle (1995) states that “there is a widespread recognition of the potential benefits to children and youth of participation in sport and other physical activities” (p. 111) which, in their diverse forms, are playing an increasingly prominent role in the lives of these age groups (Engstrom, 1993). Indeed, involvement in sport, whether as a participant or as a spectator, is believed to be an important component of life in industrialised countries (Miracle & Rees, 1994).

In response to such perceptions, recent research has attempted to study the meanings adolescents of various countries attach to sport (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000) and to find out why sport has become so popular. The findings have yielded differing results. For
instance, New Zealand adolescents, when questioned about what they associated the term ‘sport’ with, rated ‘fun and enjoyment’ first, followed by ‘team sports’ and ‘health and fitness’ (Thomson, 2000), whereas adolescents from the United States rated ‘individual sports’ ahead of ‘team sports’ (Rees et al., 1998). This shows that although adolescents from various nations consider sport important, it means different things in different cultural contexts, raising the question of how and by what these meanings are formed, and about the role that sport is perceived to have within their various cultures.

Eitzen and Sage (1993) suggest that “the study of socialisation into sports roles is concerned with who gets involved in sport, which social agents and agencies are responsible for guiding people into such involvement, how people learn sports roles, and what are the social processes for becoming involved are” (p. 76). Within this context, research suggests that parents (Carron, Hausenblas & Estabrooks, 1999; De Knop, Vanreusel, Theeboom & Wittrock, 1996; Eitzen & Sage, 1993), peer groups (Carron et al., 1999), one’s neighbourhood, one’s school and the mass media are important agents of socialisation into sport (Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Tolleneer, 1993), which inevitably results in differing motivations for involvement. The most common motives for involvement in sport have been found to be intrinsic values such as fun, enjoyment and social reasons (De Knop, Engstrom & Skirstad, 1996; LeUnes & Nation, 1989; White & Rowe, 1996), followed by an awareness of health benefits such as a reduced risk of heart disease and weight control (Health Education Authority cited in Sleap, 1998), is while competition a lesser motivating force behind sport participation (Alexandris & Carroll, 1997).
The diverse reasons for participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity (Wylleman, De Knop, Theeboom & Degreif, 1993), are often related to the opportunities and constraints presented by the social and physical environments. For example, reasons for non-participation or drop-out from sport include educational systems based mainly on acquiring theoretical as opposed to practical knowledge (De Knop et al., 1993), a lack of time, a lack of interest, interest in other hobbies (Brettschneider & Sack, 1996; Wylleman et al, 1993), social class (Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Waser & Prassavant, 1997), a lack of facilities and a lack of social support (McCarthy, 1994; Sisjord & Skirstad, 1996).

Sports participation has also been found to be somewhat influenced by gender. Since 1990, gender relations have become one of the most popular topics in the sociology of sport as increasingly researchers have come to realise the importance of exploring why sports have traditionally focused on men's activities (Eitzen & Sage, 1993) to the exclusion and detriment of females (Coakley, 1998). The primary stereotypical roles of women have been as child-bearers, homemakers and sex objects (Eitzen & Sage, 1993). Consequently, several studies have indicated that girls and boys often have different types of childhood experiences when it comes to physical activities (Coakley, 1987, 1998; Hargreaves, 1996).

In further examining social influences on sports participation, it is vital to address globalisation, which has emerged over the last decade as one of the most debated phenomena within contemporary political, economic, cultural, technological, and intellectual life (Albow & King, 1990; Appadurai, 1996; Jackson and Andrews, 1999). However, the precise nature and influence of the process is still being debated (Donnelly, 1996; Harvey &
Houle, 1994; Harvey, Rail & Thibault, 1996; Maguire, 1994). For instance, Houlihan (1994) argue that a worldwide organizational infrastructure for sport has existed for some time and has facilitated the development of a global sporting culture. Others, however, consider cultural diffusion to be more important, suggesting it is “leading to a trading of sports interests in all directions, and is likely to lead to a global sports culture - modified in varying and often substantial ways by diverse colonial legacies, historical backgrounds, and value contexts” (Wagner, 1990, p. 399). Therefore if globalisation of sport occurs within the Maldivian sporting culture there could perhaps be two possible implications. First, sports that are popular within the most influential countries would become more popular within the Maldives (via the media), and second, that indigenous sports may decline considerably. Indeed, globalisation is clearly significant in much of modern sport, but specific local development patterns and cultural traditions must also be taken into account (Thomson, 2000). Thus “it is the interplay of personal, social and cultural factors that is perhaps most helpful in explaining adolescent interest and involvement in sport” (Thomson, 1998, p. 3).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relevance of sport in the lives of secondary school students in the Maldives. This aim consists of four main research issues. The first investigates the meaning sport has for Maldivian students and its role in their lives. This includes an examination of the importance placed on sport and the meanings attached to sport by the
students. The second issue investigates the students' reasons for participation or non-participation in sport. The third explores gender differences in relation to the above. Finally, the fourth issue examines whether globalisation is influencing the Maldivian youth sporting culture.

Significance of the Study

Sports participation is the most popular organised leisure activity among adolescents (Patriksson, 1993; Sisjord, 1993; Yamaguchi, 1996) and plays a significant role in the lives of many youngsters (De Knop et al., 1996; Eitzen & Sage, 1993). "[S]ports preference can also be seen to stand alongside religious affiliation as an important indicator of a person's cultural and political location" (Sugden & Bairner, 1993, p. 15). Indeed, Bairner (1996) suggests "few activities today provide better or more frequent opportunities than sport for individuals to express publicly their commitment to a particular nation (or their sense of identity), whether as participants or, more commonly, spectators" (p. 314).

According to Duan (1985), physical activity has become a very pervasive social phenomenon in some developing countries (i.e. Third World). This could be due to the fact that, in many such countries, sport is seen as an important school subject, because it is expected to contribute to the formation of the individual's personality and their adaptation to the living and working conditions of a modern society (Heinemann, 1993). For example, since 1994, the Chinese government has increasingly recognised the importance of physical activity to a person's total well being, and is
paying greater attention to developing physical activity among its people (Wang & Olson, 1997).

Engstrom (1993) suggests that sport can be a meaningful occupation for children as it gives them a life-long interest in physical activity, and forms an important part of a healthy way of life by acting as a source of inspiration. Sports participation has been seen to provide positive effects on adolescents social and academic self-concept and educational aspirations (Marsh, 1993), thus contributing to the formation of their personality (Hardman, 1997). In contrast, however, Coakley (1987, 1998) states the notion that sports participation produces good citizens, moral development, or other traits generally associated with good character receives no consistent support. Indeed, one other study claim that sports participation has no positive, or even has negative effects (McPherson, Curtis & Loy, 1989); thus, the evidence on this issue remains somewhat contradictory.

There have also been studies done on the meanings attached to sport by adolescents (e.g. Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). For example, in Rees et al.'s (1998) research, the participants were asked to specify “what they think sport means” (p. 221) (also see Thomson & Soos, 2000). The results, when comparing the findings from New Zealand, Hungary, Germany and the United States, were diverse, although nationally congruent. Despite the importance placed on sport by adolescents from various nations, the preferred meanings differ, which raises the question of how adolescents arrive at the meanings they attach to sporting participation and the role that sport is perceived to have within their various cultures.

Tanking a narrower focus it is interesting to note that school sport, its meaning and value is an area of increasing international research activity
(De Knop et al., 1993; Ren, 1996; Thomson, 2000; Wankel & Mummery, 1996; Weiss, 1996; Yamaguchi, 1996). Within such work, the justification for youth involvement in sport is usually made on the grounds of health, sport performance and education (Biddle, 1999). For example, according to Eitzen and Sage (1993) in the United States, sport and education are inexorably intertwined, with virtually every secondary school being engaged in some interschool sport competition. Thus, parents, siblings, peers, coaches, schools, and the media are all sport-socializing agents and agencies that act on American youth (De Knop et al., 1993). Such agents are so "influential, that it is a rare youngster who is not affected in some way by sport as he or she passes through childhood and adolescence" (Eitzen & Sage, 1993, p. 79). Consequently, "the interest shown by governments and their agencies is not surprising given the well-documented benefits of regular exercise, physical activity" and sporting participation (Carron et al., 1999, p. 1-2).

However participation drops off shaping soon after adolescents finish school. Wylleman et al. (1993) found that "involvement in sport increases steadily from 14 years to 17-18, where it stays on the same level until there is a sharp drop in involvement at the age of 19" (p. 150). Indeed, Rudman (1989) suggests that age is the single most important factor influencing adherence to physical activity and sport. This was consistent with findings of other researchers in the field (e.g. Wasser & Passavant, 1997). In other words, "more people participate in sport during their youth than at any other time in their lives" (Eitzen & Sage, 1993, p. 71).

This is true of both girls and boys, although female participation numbers are lower throughout. During the 1990s, sport sociologists have
placed considerable importance on examining reasons why sport has been defined primarily as a male activity (Eitzen & Sage, 1993) at the expense of female involvement. Some suggest that this could be a consequence of family members, especially fathers, playing with their sons more often and in more physically active ways than with their daughters (Coakley, 1998; Greendorfer, 1993). Consequently, boys tend to receive different messages about physical activities than girls, from both inside and outside family settings. Thus, before children take part in their first organised sport, they have already developed clear ideas about their physical skills and potential based along lines of gender (Coakley, 1998). This may be the main reason why boys are often more active and involved in sport than girls (Ibsen & Ottesen, 1996; Rees et al., 1998; Ross, 2000; Wankel & Mummery, 1996; Wylleman et al., 1993). However, more research is needed in specific areas concerning for instance, stereotypical behaviours among genders when taking part in sport within various cultures if the effect of such considerations is to be truly understood.

Generally, in developing nations, physical education and sport are coordinated by the government (Calhoun, 1987), suggesting that school is a major socializing agent (Hardman, 1997). Within many developing countries, which comprise the poorer nations of the world, much of the population live on or below the poverty line, hence, participation in sport is simply not an available option (Hardman, 1997). For example, in Pakistan, one third of school-age children never have the opportunity of going to school, while studies in many other Asian cultures indicate that educational priority is allocated to academic as opposed to physical achievement (Hardman, 1997). Despite this, sport is an increasingly important school subject in many
developing countries (Heinemann, 1993). Indeed, according to Riordan (1986)

sport in developing societies is a serious business with serious functions to perform. It is accordingly state controlled, encouraged and shaped by specific utilitarian and ideological designs (it is by no means a matter of fun and games). In its development in many countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, it is associated with hygiene, health, defence, patriotism, integration, productivity, international recognition, even cultural identity and nation building. Sport therefore, often has the quite revolutionary role of being an agent of social change, with the state as pilot. (p. 288)

However, simply offering physical education programmes with the objective of achieving health-related physical fitness is no guarantee that the children in those programmes will adopt a physically healthy lifestyle to carry into adulthood (Weinberg, Tenebaum, McKenzie, Jackson, Anshell, Grove & Fogarty, 2000). Indeed, a growing general concern is that youth health and fitness levels have fallen below acceptable standards (Mitchell, 1996). Consequently, Wold & Anderssen (1992, p. 343) believe that “school-age children should be considered one of the main target groups for the promotion of habitual leisure-time physical activity”. Thus one of the major challenges educators are facing is to find ways to motivate children and adolescents to participate in sport and physical activity, leading to a life-long involvement (Mitchell, 1996).

Another challenge is to see how their participation is being affected by globalisation. Cross-cultural analyses of sport indicate that there are quite a number of similarities to be found between them, which have been increasingly linked to globalisation processes (Thomson, 2000). A number of interpretive terms have been used to describe globalisation, for example internationalisation, Westernization (Harvey, Rail & Thibault, 1996),
Americanisation (Kidd, 1991, Maguire, 1990), homogenisation (Wagner, 1990) and creolization (Houlihan, 1994), which has resulted in definitional uncertainty.

Among sport sociologists, certain ideas are emerging about how sport is contributing to this process (Donnelly, 1996; Harvey & Houle, 1994; Harvey et al., 1996; Maguire, 1994). Houlihan (1994) argues that a worldwide organizational infrastructure for sport has existed for some time and has facilitated the development of a global sporting culture. Others consider that "cultural diffusion is leading to a trading of sports interests in all directions", and is further accelerating this development (Wagner, 1990, p. 399). Indeed, it is generally considered that a number of trends are taking place simultaneously in international sport; for example, (1) there is a globalisation of sport whereby all major sports are spreading throughout the globe; (2) international sports competitions are generating worldwide interest in sport, allied with an encouragement to be part of it; (3) the rise and power of the mass media throughout the world, which in recent decades has had a substantial impact on sport in many Third World countries, has generated further excitement and interest in sport; and (4) there is a growing awareness of the political importance of sport, both externally and internally (Wagner, 1990). Therefore, it appears that the general long-term trend is toward greater homogenisation in the world sports culture, although local exceptions exist (Wagner, 1990).

A tendency towards homogenisation within the sporting world appears to be taking place (Maguire, 1994), through the development of international sports organizations, the growth of competition among national teams and the establishment of international competitions such as the Olympic Games.
and World Championship events. However, some cultures are so outside the
global core that they either remain relatively unaffected (Maguire, 1994). Therefore, within the wider debate about the effects of globalisation, the relationship between the global and the local can only be understood in relation to each other (Jackson & Andrews, 1999). Whether this process is quite so evident in developing countries, such as in the Maldives, is a matter of debate.

The Maldives was chosen as a case study for this investigation for a number of reasons. Principal among these was that, to date, there have been no studies done on sport involvement within the schools in the Maldives despite a considerable recent expansion within, and development of, school sports. The Governmental ministries responsible for sports and education have increasingly acknowledged the importance of sport to adolescents, and are thus taking a much more active role in developing it. However, the aforementioned ministries have yet to make an in-depth study to evaluate the initiatives undertaken, and these effects remain unknown. See Appendix A for background information about the Maldives, particularly in relation to sport.

The significance of the study is thus grounded in the belief that whereas a fair amount is known about why adolescents participate in sport in Western countries, very little is known about the motives of sporting participation among youths in Asian countries (Wang & Wisese-Bjornstal, 1996). Indeed, it is very important to note that much of the research to date has been conducted in North America, particularly in the United States, thus considerable caution is needed before applying the findings to youngsters in other cultures (Brustad, 1993). More research needs to be done in different
parts of the world to examine the reasons for, and the legacy of, sporting policies (Stoddart, 1989).

"... because sport is potentially such an immense social force, it is far too important to be permitted to develop haphazardly, or left to the whim of private clubs, businessmen, circus promoters and rich foreigners as it was in virtually all developing countries before their national liberation and regeneration" (Riordan, 1986, p. 298). This study aims to go some way to address the need to evaluate government policies on adolescent sport participation in developing countries, by examining the case of the Maldives.
Overview

Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Games, stated that "the most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well" (Toohey & Veil, 2000, p. 60).

Although the above quote gives historical credence to the importance of participation, the question remains about how significant a role sport involvement plays in modern society. As stated earlier, throughout history physical activity has been considered an important component of the educational and socialisation process and in many ways has been a significant element in all cultures (Hardman, 1997).

In order to investigate the study's stated purpose, this literature review is divided into four major sections. The first section outlines issues relating to the importance and meanings attached to sport among adolescents of various cultures. The second section outlines issues relating to sport socialisation, including those of the role of socialising agents and reasons given for sports participation or non-participation. The third section reviews literature relating to gender differences, while the fourth section outlines whether globalisation is influencing the sporting culture and related sports participation among adolescents in the Maldives.
1. The Importance and Meaning of Sport

According to Brustad (1993), tens of millions of adolescents around the globe currently engage in organised sport, thus the fact that "children do take part in sport activities is unarguable" (LeUnes & Nation, 1989, p. 358). Indeed, De Knop et al. (1996), after reviewing current trends in youth sport in over twenty different countries worldwide, stated that "sport is the most popular leisure-time activity among youths. In most of the countries in our study, half or more than half of all children in their early teens are active in various sports" (p. 276). Several other studies have also identified the importance of sport as a leisure time activity among adolescents from various countries (e.g. Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Patriksson, 1993; Rees at al., 1998; Thomson, 2000; Wang & Olson, 1997; Weiss, 1996; Yamaguchi, 1996).

Studies done among adolescents in some of the North and South American countries indicate the considerable importance placed on sport as a leisure time activity (DaCosta, 1996; Wankel & Mummery, 1996; Weiss, 1996). According to Wankel and Mummery (1996), all Canadian youth participate in one sport or another at some point, and in the United States it is estimated that 20 to 30 million youths are involved in non-school sponsored sports and 5.6 million are involved in school-sponsored sports (Weiss, 1996).

In some Asian countries, sports as a leisure time activity among adolescents holds a similar popularity status to that in parts of North and South America. For instance, in Japan, 65% of junior high school students and 63% of high school students participate in sport and exercise activities
other than school-based physical education (Yamaguchi, 1996). Similar to what Weiss (1996) found among American adolescents, Japanese youth have a variety of sport opportunities to choose from within their communities and schools (Yamaguchi, 1996). Likewise, the Chinese government recognizes the importance of physical activity to its youth, thus encouraging all school-going adolescents within the country take part in sports and such activities (Ren, 1996).

Within Europe, Belgium was one of the first countries to adopt a "sport for all" policy and, as a result, sport currently appears to perform a significant role in the lives of many Belgian youngsters (De Knop et al., 1996). For example, it was recently found that 66% of Belgium's youth (i.e. ages 6 to 18) were active in sport outside school (De Knop et al., 1996). Similarly, sport occupies about 90% of leisure time for boys and 60% for girls in Denmark (Ibsen & Ottessen, 1996), 51% for boys and 43% for girls in England (White & Rowe, 1996), 70% for boys and 46% for girls in Germany (Brettschneider & Sack, 1996), 85% for boys and girls in the Netherlands (Buisman & Lucassen, 1996), and 88% for boys and 60% for girls in Spain (Puig translated by Rees, 1996). Indeed, there are several other studies conducted in various countries that have quite similar results, which indicate the popularity of sport among adolescents in general (e.g. Hendry & Love, 1996; Laakso et al., 1996).

New Zealand youth also rank sport highly as a leisure time activity (Thomson, 2000). Among the age group of 14-15, 88% of boys and 83% of girls participate in some form of sport (Russell, Allen & Wilson, 1996). Further, Russell et al. (1996) state that out of the total New Zealand youth population (i.e. ages 5 to 15), it is estimated that 80% participate in some
form of sporting activity. Recently, Thomson's (2000) study found that New Zealand youth rated sport as a leisure time activity at 74.6 on a scale of 0-100, further indicating the importance placed on sport by Kiwi adolescents.

In a comparative study (see Table 1) between New Zealand and Hungarian youth relating to actual time spent on sport (Thomson & Soos, 2000), it was found that New Zealand boys and girls spent on average 11.5 hours and 8.6 hours (a week) respectively on sport in and out of school. Hungarian boys and girls meanwhile spent 9.8 hours and 7.7 hours (a week) on sport in and out of school.

**Table 1:** Time spent on sport - New Zealand and Hungarian youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>SAMPLE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In S¹</td>
<td>O S²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>10-18 yrs</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>5.2 hrs</td>
<td>6.3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>10-18 yrs</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>3.5 hrs</td>
<td>6.3 hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures taken from Thomson & Soos, 2000, p.7)

In a similar study among Danish students, it was found that they were spending 5.4 hours on school sport per week (Ibsen & Ottesen, 1996), while English 15 year olds were spending 6 hours on sport outside school per week (White & Rowe, 1996). Young girls in France on the other hand only spent approximately 3 hours on sport per week while boys spent approximately 4 hours per week on sport (Waser & Passavant, 1997).

Sarkin, McKenzie and Sallis (1997) investigated the influence of gender differences on physical activity levels among children during physical

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¹ In S refers to school organised sports.
² O S refers to sports played outside school (e.g., with family and with friends).
education classes and unstructured recess periods. The results indicated that girls were less physically active than boys during unstructured recess periods, but had similar activity levels during structured physical education classes. They concluded that "equivalent levels of physical activity during physical education classes is evidence of the important role that PE plays in providing physical activity for all students" (Sarkin et al., 1997, p. 104). Thus, Sarkin et al. (1997) suggest that the unstructured time of the school day could be redesigned to provide encouragement and opportunities for all students, especially girls, to participate in sport and physical activities.

From the findings of these studies it can be stated that adolescents from a number of nations spend much of their leisure time on sport or physical activity participation. Thus, "it is quite obvious that sport is an important activity among youths all over the world" (De Knop et al., 1996, p. 276). This has been reflected in growing governmental involvement in providing sport, which has increased significantly in many countries during the last decade (Position Statement of the European Federation of Sport Psychology, 1996; Roberts & Treasure, 1993).

There are several reasons why sport as a leisure activity ranks highly among adolescents in many countries. For instance, Biddle (1999) states that sport and physical activity has been recognized as a positive and beneficial activity among youth, in that it helps promote health benefits, sport performance and education. Additionally, according to Weiss and Duncan (1992) "physical educators, coaches, parents, and researchers have long argued that children's involvement in physical activity and sport leads to beneficial outcomes such as competence in sports skills, self-confidence, discipline, sportsmanship, and interpersonal skills" (p. 177). Furthermore,
regular physical activity has been shown to result in several health benefits such as reducing possible risk of stroke, osteoporosis and heart diseases (Health Education Authority cited in Sleap, 1998). Children and youth have thus been strongly encouraged to participate in such activities.

Additionally, "the notion that sport builds character has been and continues to be widely accepted in many cultures" (Coakley, 1998, p. 96). For instance, those that argue that,

- sport builds character point to how sport participants must overcome difficult obstacles, persist in the face of opposition, develop self-control, cooperate with team mates, and learn to live with both victory and defeat. Sport is said to be a vehicle for learning such virtues as fairness, self-control, courage, persistence, loyalty, and teamwork. (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995, p. 174)

Such perceptions perhaps naturally increase motivations for participation.

On the other hand, according to the Position Statement of the European Federation of Sport Psychology (1996), poor management of sport for children may cause problems and a healthy balance needs to be achieved between involvement in leisure time sport and in education. For example, if children's self-esteem is threatened they will not find satisfaction in sport and also if the importance of competition and winning is too highly stressed, sport may lose its educational value (Position Statement of the European Federation of Sport Psychology, 1996). Consequently, the belief that 'sport builds character' appears not so clear cut on deeper analysis.

Significant differences also exist in this body of research in relation to sport participation motives (see Table 2). For example, subjects from the United States chose 'team sports' (35%) as their most preferred meaning of sport, with 'health and fitness' being ranked fifth, whereas subjects from
New Zealand chose ‘enjoyment’ (21%) as the most preferred meaning while ‘team sports’ (18%) were ranked second (Thomson & Soos, 2000). The adolescents from the United States also ranked ‘victory’ as third highest, while adolescents from New Zealand, Hungary and Germany rated ‘victory’ as the lowest (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Thus, although sports can be seen as an important leisure time activity for all the youths studied in the aforementioned research, the meanings sport has somewhat differs among adolescents in various cultures.

Table 2: Meaning of sport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Sports</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Fitness</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Sports</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures taken from Thomson and Soos (2000, p.9)

Basketball and soccer appear to be the most popular sports among adolescents in many countries (see Table 3). For example, respondents from the United States, Hungary, Germany, Japan and New Zealand chose basketball as one of their favourite sports (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000 & Yamaguchi, 1996), while elsewhere soccer was considered equally popular (Engstrom, 1996; Trew, Kremer, Gallagher, Scully & Ogle, 1997). For instance, soccer was very popular among children and adolescents in Hungary, Denmark, Brazil, Finland and Sweden (De Costa, 1996; De Knop, et al., 1996; Engstrom, 1996; Laakso et al., 1996; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Other popular sports among adolescents included swimming
and jogging/running (De Knop, et al., 1996; Engstrom, 1996; Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000).

### Table 3: Favoured sporting activities - Hungary and New Zealand adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>30% (2)</td>
<td>15% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>16% (4)</td>
<td>24% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td></td>
<td>6% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging/ T &amp; F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>32% (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>19% (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
<td></td>
<td>13% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td></td>
<td>6% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch Rugby</td>
<td>15% (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures are taken from Thomson and Soos (2000).

However, there were clear differences among the adolescents when ranking their most popular sport. For example, among the New Zealand adolescents, rugby was the highest ranked and cricket was the third highest (Thomson, 2000), whereas these sports did not feature at all among adolescents from other countries (De Knop, et al., 1996; Engstrom, 1996; Rees et al., 1998; Ibsen & Olsen, 1996). Similarly, the most popular sport for German adolescents was swimming followed by biking (Rees et al., 1998), while these sports did not feature highly among the youth of other nations (De Knop, et al., 1996; Engstrom, 1996; Yamaguchi, 1996). The adolescents of the United States meanwhile, ranked American football as their third most popular sport (Rees et al., 1998), a finding that was unique. Indeed, except for soccer, no single sport was ranked as the most popular sport among adolescents from any two countries (Ibsen & Olsen, 1996; Rees et al., 1998;
Thomson & Soos, 2000). Thus, although some sports appear to be generally popular, other sports are popular only in certain countries. For example, Rugby was the most popular sport among New Zealand adolescents (Thomson, 2000).

2. Sport Socialisation

A large number of children and adolescents continue to engage in various types and levels of sport; however, doubts continue to exist regarding the forces that shape their involvement (Lewko & Greendorfer, 1988). For instance, “when, how, and to what end children play sports is an issue that concerns families, neighbourhoods, communities, and even national and international organizations” (Coakley, 1998, p. 117). Nevertheless, governments, schools, educators, parents, and researchers continue to associate sport involvement with psychological, physical and physiological benefits (Carron, Hausenblas & Mack, 1996).
2.1. Socialisation into sport

Figure 1: A model for conceptualising socialisation into sport

![Figure 1: A model for conceptualising socialisation into sport](image)

(adapted from Leonard, 1998, p. 107)

... a child's early sport experiences are extremely important. Positive beginnings nourish future involvement in sport whether for pleasure or as a career. Early sport experiences have an enormous impact on how a child feels about himself and herself not only in relation to sport but also in relation to holistic self-esteem. (Orlick & Zizelsberger, 1996, p. 330)

Sports are increasingly coming into our lives from different directions and means (Engstrom, 1993). Figure 1 demonstrates how socialisation into sport occurs. Socialisation is the general process through which humans learn their culture and become participating members of a society (Leonard, 1998). Thus, the process involves transmission of cultural patterns, norms, values, ideas and practices, from generation to generation, from group to group, from one individual to another (Hardman, 1997). Consequently, "socialisation into sport refers to the social and psychological influences that shape an individual's attraction to sport. These influences include the prevalent attitudes and values within the family or peer group" (Brustad,
1992, p. 60). The individual will selectively experience these pressures and their impact may vary across persons, although they will inevitably contribute decisively to the formation of one's own attitudes, values, and behaviours (Leonard, 1998). Consequently, anyone interested in the sociological aspects of sport has observed that participants in different sports come from different social origins (Phillips, 1993). As Phillips (1993) states;

Certain sports are more popular in certain regions (e.g. volleyball, water polo, field hockey); some are dependent on geographic conditions (e.g. alpine skiing, surfing); some are limited by economic factors (e.g. tennis, gymnastics); while some have more meaning to certain racial/ethnic groups than others (e.g. basketball, soccer, judo). Patterns of sports participation reflect ethnic, economic, racial, regional, and gender differences. (p. 85)

Socialisation into sports is therefore “strongly influenced by three factors: opportunities to participate, support from significant others, and a perception of self as a potential participant” (Coakley, 1987, p. 56). Consequently, children and adolescents participate in sport and physical activities for complex and various reasons (Weinberg, et al., 2000).

2.2. Psychological, physiological and social reasons for sports participation

Sports participation is believed to hold psychological benefits, such as reductions in anxiety, decreases in the levels of mild to moderate depression, positive changes in personality and improvements in various stress indices (Carron et al., 1996). For example, the International Society of Sport Psychology states that there are a number of individual benefits to physical activity. These include positive changes in self-perception and well-being, an
improvement in self-confidence and awareness, positive changes in mood, a relief of tension and feelings of depression and anxiety, an increased ability to cope with daily activities, increased enjoyment of exercise and social contacts and the development of positive coping strategies (International Society of Sport Psychology, 2000). Such a view is supported by the work of Weinberg et al. (2000), whose results indicated that enjoyment or having fun was rated as one of the main motives for physical activity participation. Indeed, one of main goals of health professionals is to promote positive attitudes and commitment toward an active lifestyle. It is believed that such attitudes and behaviours can be fostered in young children because they are impressionable and form habits that carry into adolescence (Weiss & Smith, 1999).

However, other researchers have argued that early sport involvement can be an emotional 'pressure cooker' in which children are subjected to a host of unusual and undesirable stresses (LeUnes & Nations, 1989). Thus, motivation for involvement in sport and physical activity is clearly a concern for educators (Mitchell, 1996).

A growing body of research in this context focuses on the physical benefits of youth sport (Weiss, 1995). This has emanated from the perception that youth health and fitness levels have fallen below acceptable standards (Mitchell, 1996) despite the growing awareness that regular physical activity is an important aspect of a healthy lifestyle (Mota & Queiros, 1996). Indeed, studies have shown that moderate physical activity enhances the prevention of heart disease, decreases blood pressure, and improves muscle strength and flexibility and maximum oxygen uptake (Health Education Authority, 1995 cited in Sleap, 1998). Consequently, health professionals and
governments have shown an interest in raising the numbers of individuals who regularly participate in sport and physical activity (Biddle, 1995). For example, the International Society of Sport Psychology encourages all people to participate in free choice vigorous physical activity on a regular basis and recommends that they engage in more than one activity, challenging both their aerobic and anaerobic capacities to develop a healthier lifestyle (International Society of Sport Psychology, 2000). School-age children are one of the main targets for this initiative, while the continuing challenge facing educators remains is to discover how children and adolescents can be influenced towards establishing regular physical activity as a long lasting habit (Wold & Anderssen, 1992). As Thomson (1996) states;

In examining the nature of children’s experiences in physical activity, it is clear that adults play a key role in shaping such experiences. This early socialisation through play, games and sport has significant implications for the development of young people ... . (p. 22)

For today’s youth, some of the main socialisation agents are parents, peers, schools and the mass media (Eitzen & Sage, 1993). However, sports participation also depends upon available activities in the geographical area, in addition to location within a country and within a specific community (Sisjord, 1993). For instance, individuals in the countryside often have different opportunities from those in urban areas suggesting the availability of sport facilities is an additional determining factor in participation (Sisjord, 1993). Furthermore, “sport participation (and non-participation) is the result of decisions negotiated within the context of a young person’s social environment and mediated by the young person’s view of self and personal goals” (Coakley & White, 1992, p. 34).
2.3. Socialising agents

Eitzen and Sage (1993) state that the most important social environment in a young person's life is perhaps the family. Indeed, there is overwhelming evidence that the family, its social status, its structure, and its patterning of activities is the most significant influence in socializing children into sport (Eitzen & Sage, 1993).

Research indicates that children are more interested in sport when they receive encouragement from parents (Carron et al., 1999; Phillips, 1993), and consequently parents remain very important agents of socialisation into sport (De Knop et al., 1993). For example, Wold and Anderssen (1992) studied the effects of parents' sport involvement on their children. The results indicated that children (i.e. ages of 11.5, 13.5 and 15.5) whose parents, siblings and best friends participated in sport, were much more likely to participate in sport themselves than children whose significant others were not involved in sport (Wold & Anderssen, 1992).

Studies dealing with parental influences on sport and how involved children are in physical activity indicate that fathers, in particular, play a significant role in socialising their children (Carron et al., 1999; Yang, Telama & Laakso, 1996). For example, Yang et al.'s (1996) study suggested that youngsters (i.e. ages 9 to 15 years) of active fathers are more likely to participate in sporting activities than the children of passive fathers. In addition, both parents undoubtedly have the potential to influence their children's involvement (or non-involvement) in playing sports, for example as a motivator, as a trainer initiating the child's practice of the sport, as a supervisor of the process of sports participation and as an organiser of
children’s sport (De Knop et al., 1993). Indeed, if parents are the first to introduce a child to sport or physical activity, programmes that meet the needs of the parents might encourage more parents to support their children in sport participation (Jambor, 1999).

As important as the family, the peer group also serves as a powerful socializing agent for sport involvement, especially when children move into adolescence (DeKnop et al., 1993; Wold & Anderssen, 1992). Indeed, “during adolescence less time is spent with the family, and more time is spent with peers. When peers are involved in sports, young people frequently experience a great deal of pressure to become involved also or to give up cherished social relationships” (Eitzen & Sage, 1993, p. 78). Consequently, “peers are particularly influential significant others during early adolescence” (Smith, 1999, p. 329), with research indicating that the sport participation behaviour of a best friend is one of the strongest predictors of a child’s sport and physical activity involvement (Trew, et al., 1997; Smith, 1999; Wold & Anderssen, 1992).

According to McPherson et al. (1989), along with the family and peer group, the educational system is an influential institution in the process of sport role socialisation. For instance, one of the main reasons why physical education, intramural and interscholastic competition were introduced into the curricula was to socialise youth into sport skills, and to teach values and character traits deemed essential by society (McPherson et al., 1989).

Interschool sports have become so vitally important that contemporary schools might appear to an outsider to be more concerned with sports than with scholarly endeavours (Eitzen & Sage, 1993). Indeed, “in secondary schools, sport is an integral part of the youth subculture and is highly
valued by students, parents, and teachers. Adolescents thus have both opportunity and impetus to participate in sport" (McPherson et al., 1989, p. 67). For example, the position of sport in the United States appears to be an important aspect of a school’s culture and depends on community norms and values as well as the relative power of the principal, coaches, and teachers (Fejgin, 1994). Thus “the sport culture of schools undoubtedly affects student participation” (Fejgin, 1994, p. 222).

An investigation into the significance of school sport experiences was recently undertaken by Trew et al. (1997) who found that, among young people (i.e. ages 7-17 years) attending schools in Northern Ireland, 31% mentioned ‘because of school’ as the reasons for their sport involvement. Schools also have the potential to promote health-related physical activity for all children (Sarkin, et al., 1997).

Furthermore, because children spend a considerable amount of their day in school, it is important to examine how active children are in this environment (Sarkin, et al., 1997). Educators have long regarded children’s involvement in sport as a means of deriving beneficial outcomes such as self-confidence and interpersonal skills (Weiss, Smith & Theeboom, 1996). For instance, the positive effects of participation in sport were influenced by academic self-concept and educational aspirations, supporting the idea that sport participation enhances identification with the school (Marsh, 1993).

Marsh (1993) examined the effects on students of sports participation during their last two years of high school (in the United States). The results indicated that sport participation had positive outcomes on social and academic self-concept, educational aspirations, course work selection, homework, reduced absenteeism, and subsequent college attendance. Thus,
Marsh (1993) states that the “promotion of participation is likely to have positive effects across a wide variety of educationally relevant outcomes for a diversity of students” (p. 38).

Similarly, in a longitudinal perspective, Fejgin (1994) analysed the effect of athletic participation on academic performance. The results demonstrated that students who were more involved in school sports had higher grades, higher self-concept, more internal locus of control, higher educational aspirations, and less discipline problems in school (Fejgin, 1994). Indeed, “whatever the explanations, it appears that participation in high school competitive sports provides some kinds of positive experiences that enhance student adjustment to school rules, school work, and the basic values of an achievement-oriented society” (Fejgin, 1994, p. 224).

Although sports participation in school has been seen as beneficial to students and ranks highly among adolescents from various nations (e.g. Fejgin, 1994; Marsh, 1993; Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000), this does not mean that the value of sports participation is universally accepted. While several studies proclaim the benefits of physical activity and sports participation (e.g. Fejgin, 1994; Langley & Knight, 1999; Marsh, 1993), other studies claim that sports participation has no positive or may even have negative effects (Foon, 1989; McPherson et al., 1989; Thomson, 1996).

Consequently, not all research shows a positive correlation between sports participation and academic performance. For example, Foon’s (1989) study of year 10 school children (i.e. average age of 15 years) indicated that sports participation was not found to be systematically related to academic achievement or to estimates of academic ability. Thus, research has shown
both positive and negative influences on the effects of sports participation on academic performance, making conclusions somewhat unclear.

Although the impact of sports participation on academic performance is debatable, the impact of another factor, mass media, on sports participation is more clear cut. Irlinger (1994) stated that "through mass media, sports culture has become omnipresent: even those who are not interested in sport cannot escape it" (p. 202). Indeed, "through sport exposure via television, radio, cinema, and the press, many youngsters become acquainted with sports" (Leonard, 1998, p. 112). For example, it could be argued that in Germany the increase in the number of people playing tennis is explained somewhat by the impact of seeing Boris Becker and Steffi Graf on television (Irlinger, 1994).

McPherson et al. (1989) state that an individual's values, beliefs and knowledge about sport are shaped by how the mass media present the games and the sport news. "[W]hat appears or does not appear, what is said or not said, and what is highlighted (e.g. replays or slow-motion) can define and shape public perceptions of the sport event, issue or personality" (McPherson et al., 1989, p. 152). Thus, the mass media in their representation of the sport appear to have an effect on the nature and extent of sport participation.

2.4. Limitations on sport participation

Age appears to affect sport participation (Rudmen, 1989). For instance, Waser and Passavant (1997) studied levels of sports participation among the youth of France and found there was a direct relation between age and
sports activity. The younger (i.e. 12 years) the individual, the more likely he/she was to participate in sport. For example, results showed that participation declined from 71% at 12 years of age to 34% at 19 (Waser & Passavant, 1997). Indeed, several studies show that as individuals age there is a linear decrease in both involvement and adherence levels in physical activity and sports (McPherson, 1983, 1984; Rudman, 1984, 1986). In addition, the students who spent relatively high amounts of time on schoolwork were the same ones who spent much time in sports (Waser & Passavant, 1997). Thus, age appears an important predictor influencing sport participation or non-participation (Rudman, 1989).

Like age, social status seems to have a significant influence on sports participation among youth (Yang et al., 1996). For instance, Yang et al.’s (1996) study of boys and girls between the ages of 9-15 suggest that those individuals’ whose fathers have high status are more likely to be involved in sport than those whose fathers have a defined low status. Similarly, Waser and Passavant (1996) examined how this variable influenced the sports participation of children and adolescents (i.e. 12-18 years of age) in France. The results indicated 31% of participants came from lower income level families, while 63% came from higher income families within the school population. Additionally, the study also demonstrated that upper-class children engaged in more physical and sporting activities than the middle and lower-class children. Thus, as Fasting and Sisjord (1985) state:

Even if people are free from work obligations, they may experience barriers to participating in certain leisure activities such as physical exercise and sports. These barriers could be a lack of financial resources, a lack of physical skills, and a lack of opportunities to get away from the house. Motivation is probably a key factor in this regard. People who are strongly motivated to
participate in sport will put more effort into breaking down barriers to participation. (p. 349)

Indeed, children from low-income (or single parent) families do not usually have the same opportunities as other children when it comes to involvement in sports (Coakley, 1987). Growing up relatively poor usually means that sports equipment is scarce and that exposure to different kinds of sports is limited (Coakley, 1987).

Although some research indicates that social class does affect sport participation among adolescents (e.g. Yang et al., 1996), other research shows no clear differences or marginal differences in sports participation as a result of social class. For example, Hasbrook (1986) analysed data from two studies that specifically investigated the potential relationship between formal youth sport participation and social class background. The results suggested that formal youth sport participation is not associated with the social class background of males but that such participation, to some extent, is associated with the social class background of females (Hasbrook, 1986). Thus, we need more “studies of sport participation in high-income and low-income communities, and among wealthy and poor individuals and families” (Coakley, 1998, p. 112) to find out the extent and influence of social class as a variable that affects participation.

In addition to social class, religion appears to be a limiting factor with regard to sport and physical activity participation. For instance, the victory of a Muslim Moroccan woman in the 1984 Olympic Games appears to have caught the world by surprise, because the term ‘Muslim woman’ usually evokes stereotyped concepts of a heavily veiled, secluded and segregated
female. Access for these women into sport would be rather difficult and their participation very controversial (Sfeir, 1985).

Within this context, Sfeir (1985) studied sporting participation in 29 predominantly Islamic countries and stated that the situation varies from country to country, from rural to urban areas, and depends on the impact of Islamic resurgence, secularism, nationalism, Westernisation and socialism. Furthermore, although he found that physical education is officially compulsory in the schools of the countries investigated, this is often neglected in practice partly due to traditional attitudes and the lack of facilities for segregation of the sexes. Consequently, he concluded that Muslim women continue to be “bound by social restrictions and taboos isolating them from the world and from the public in their own society” (Sfeir, 1985, p. 284). For instance, the rules of Islam, which relate to privacy of the body, changing facilities, mixed sex sessions and ‘Ramadan’ are influential factors on participation or rather non-participation (Hardman, 1997). Indeed, after interviewing many Muslim parents, McGuire and Collins (1998) stated that during Ramadan (a Muslim fasting period) parents requested the schools excuse their children from strenuous physical activities. Furthermore, physical contact between men and women after puberty is not a common practice in Islam (Benn, 1996). However, Sfeir (1985) states:

since 1960, there has been an increasing appearance of women in sport activities through the Islamic world. In Pakistan ... financial support to women’s sport organizations has increased. Efforts and reforms are made to improve women’s status and increase women’s freedom. ... there are many different Islamic ways to accommodate or absorb modernization and innovation. ... [even though] participating in sport may be considered contrary to the traditional values. (pp. 284-301)
Thus, while opportunities for Muslim women in sport vary; a change is taking place, but very slowly (Sfeir, 1985), and the choices now available to women are greater than ever before (Coakley, 1998). Nevertheless, age, social class, gender, religion and cultural matters remain highly significant determinants on the extent of one's involvement in sport (Hardman, 1997). In addition, parents of Muslim children view sports activities as having relatively low status, compared to the value of academic work (McGuire & Collins, 1998).

Developing countries are “those countries where efforts are being made to catch up with countries which have already taken a mighty leap forward in industry and commerce, in education, science and technology” (Ayi-Bonte cited in Riordan, 1986, p. 287). However, developing societies contain the bulk of the world’s people and over three quarters of its nations (Riordan, 1986) with many being located in the Asian region. Indeed, most of the world’s population lives in the developing countries, with many being classed as pre-industrial and desperately poor (Calhoun, 1987). Also, politically, they are generally former colonies that have never known democratic self-rule (Calhoun, 1987).

It can be argued that cultural imperialism is one means by which sports have been introduced in South Asia. For instance, Guttman (1994) states that British missionary educators resorted to cricket or soccer in their tireless efforts to Christianise the native people of Asia and Africa. Indeed, political motives have been important, for example, in British India and elsewhere with relation to sport development, and there were many occasions where the colonizers forced modern sports upon the colonized (Guttman, 1994). For example, because the Maldives was a British
protectorate from 1887 until independence in 1965, perhaps could be a major reason for soccer being such a popular sport, particularly among men.

Generally, within developing countries the government will coordinate physical education and sport (Calhoun, 1987). In the Maldives, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, together with the national Olympic Committee and national sports associations, coordinate and run sport. The Ministry of Education looks after sport in schools with limited assistance from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. However, as Calhoun (1987) suggested there are many problems that are faced in developing countries. For instance, Calhoun (1987) stated that in many developing countries there are no adequate sport facilities, no institution that offers training for specialists in sport and no long-term planning to develop sports.

Perhaps the biggest problem that has to be solved within this context is whether to stress sport as mass participation or to invest in competitive sport? Indeed, “how far Third World countries can promote both ‘mass’ and ‘elite’ sport is limited by the poverty of their economies” (Calhoun, 1987, pp. 171). In addition, other similar problems faced include a general lack of finances, lack of proper facilities, and the availability of managers and trainers (Heineman, 1993). Indeed, “one has to proceed fundamentally on the assumption that sport as mass sport and high-performance sport, as it has developed in western societies, is of only minor importance in developing countries” (Heineman, 1993, p. 148).
2.5. Reasons for sport participation or non-participation

A significant amount of research has been devoted to the identification of children's motives for sport participation (Brustad, 1993). Indeed, socialisation into sport is a continuous process grounded in the social and cultural contexts in which people live (Coakley, 1998). Thus, "people make decisions to participate in sport for different reasons at different points in their lives" (Coakley, 1998, p. 93).

For instance, Wang and Wiese-Bjornstal (1996) studied the motives for sports participation among students (i.e. ages 7-17) enrolled in spare-time sport schools and in regular schools of China. The main reasons students from regular schools cited for sport participation were fun, fitness, competence and social motives (Wang & Wiese-Bjornstal, 1996). However, students from spare-time schools cited factors such as competence/competition, energy release, family influence and achievement/rewards as more important motives for sports participation, while regular school students gave significantly higher scores on factors such as team orientation and social activity as the main reasons for their involvement in sport (Wang & Wiese-Bjornstal, 1996). Thus, "children in China [at regular schools] were found to share many of the same motives (i.e. fun oriented) for youth sport participation with North American youth" (Wang & Wiese-Bjornstal, 1996, p. 21).

Further, Thomson and Soos (2000) studied reasons for sports participation among the adolescents of New Zealand and Hungary. The reasons for participation in sport among New Zealand adolescents were 'good for the body', 'physical fitness', 'excitement', 'enjoyment of competition',
enjoyment of exercise' and 'to be with friends' (Thomson & Soos, 2000). The reasons for sport participation among Hungarian adolescents differed somewhat from New Zealand adolescents. For instance, while Hungarian adolescents’ main motive for sport participation was similar to that of New Zealand adolescents (i.e. ‘good for the body’), Hungarians ranked ‘enjoyment of exercise’ as the second most important motive (Thomson & Soos, 2000).

Indeed, it is clear that "children highly value improving skills, having fun, learning new skills, playing for the challenge, and being physically fit as reasons for sport involvement" (Brustad, 1993, p. 698). However, "additional cross cultural research is necessary to help provide a better understanding of how participation in (sport)... physical activity is influenced by the particular social milieu in which these activities occur" (Weinberg et al., 2000, p.343).

It has been recognised that, children’s motives for participation in sport, and the factors underlying their decisions to discontinue sport involvement, are two of the most heavily studied areas in sport psychology (Brustad, 1993). Indeed, “clearly, youth sport is popular and participation is multidimensionally determined; however, it is not rewarding to equal degrees for all who participate” (LeUnes & Nation, 1989, p. 360). For instance, in a study conducted by LeUnes and Nation (1989) the most frequent reasons for drop out from sport were not getting to play enough, not having fun, too much emphasis on winning or competition, too much pressure from parents and peers, poor coaching, and conflict of interest with other life activities. Similarly, Brustad (1993) observed that dissatisfaction with practices, and the desire to participate in other activities were reasons his participants dropped out of sport. Indeed, it is clear that one of the “most commonly
identified motives for withdrawal involves 'having other things to do' (Brustad, 1993, p. 699); however, it is somewhat unclear whether youngsters find other activities more attractive or if their withdrawal is a result of negative experiences they may have had in sport.

Coakley (1998), after analysing dozens of studies, makes the following generalisations. First, when individuals drop out of particular sports, they don't drop out of all sports forever; in fact, many play different and less competitive sports or move into other sport roles. Secondly, dropping out of sports is usually part of a process involving changes and transitions in the rest of an individual's life (e.g. changing schools, graduating). Thirdly, dropping out of sports is not always the result of victimization or exploitation, although negative experiences can and do influence decisions to change or withdraw from sport participation. Thus, changes in participation are grounded in decision-making processes tied to the "lives, life courses, and social worlds of those involved" (Coakley, 1998, p. 96).

Indeed, in order to advance this knowledge, future investigations need to incorporate "comprehensive, theoretically based perspectives that more fully address the variety of factors that shape children's participatory experiences" (Brustad, 1993, p. 703). Furthermore, we need to research "how people make participation decisions about different types of sports" (Coakley, 1998, p. 112).

3. Gender Differences

During the past two decades, there has been a growing scholarly interest in the issue of female participation in sport and physical activity
Despite female involvement in sport increasing significantly during the last decade, many consider that it remains subservient to that of male involvement (Bodenstedt & Wasmund-Bodenstedt, 1988). For instance, in most western countries, “men’s participation in sport has traditionally been regarded as a ‘natural’ phenomenon, whereas women’s involvement in this traditionally andocentric arena has often been viewed as anomalous” (Pirinen, 1997, p. 239). Thus, it is no surprise that in most countries women are less involved in sport than men (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985).

Indeed, researchers have argued that “traditional gender roles (continue to) create more significant participation barriers for women than for men” (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985, p. 345), since the “socialisation process generally shapes the experiences of males and females in different ways” (Ryckman & Hamel, 1992, p. 148). However, increasing female athleticism represents a somewhat genuine quest by women for “equality, control of their own bodies, and self-definition, and, as such, stage a challenge to the ideological basis of male domination” (Messner, 1988, p. 197). Such a challenge is increasingly being fought in the arena of sports participation.

3.1. Historical view

Feminists maintain that “women’s involvement in sport and leisure activities has been historically structured by the perceptions, stereotypes, and limitations that have been placed upon women’s physical and biological capabilities” (Jarvis & Maguire, 1994, p. 164). Thus, in the past, Western cultural ideology has defined women as inferior to and dependent on men (Eitzen & Sage, 1993), and as a consequence many women tend to view their
future as being limited to marriage, housekeeping and child-rearing (Hargreaves, 1996). Consequently, combining the roles of woman and successful athlete was virtually impossible (Eitzen & Sage, 1993). Indeed, women who wished to participate in “sports and remain ‘feminine’ faced almost certain social isolation and censure” (Eitzen & Sage, 1993, p. 348). This suggests that parity in participation numbers with men will take a number of years to be fully realized.

At the start of this century, competitive sport for women was restricted to a few ‘appropriate’ sports, such as tennis, golf and swimming (Pirinen, 1997). Over the past decade the number of sports open to women has expanded considerably (Pirinen, 1997), “discrimination against female sport has become more subtle, but still is effective” (Bodenstedt & Wasmund-Bodenstedt, 1988, p. 63). For example, the debate surrounding “gender roles, their definition, tradition and acquisition in relation to sport is still underdeveloped in relation to its impact on social life, social action and social judgement” (Bodenstedt & Wasmund-Bodenstedt, 1988, p. 63). Consequently, the messages young boys receive often differ from the messages girls receive regarding sporting involvement both inside and outside family settings (Coakley, 1998). In her work in the United Kingdom, Hargreaves (1996) generally found that in school, while boys were encouraged to learn metalwork and woodwork, girls were taught needlework and cooking. Thus, even before most children take part in their first sport or physical education session, they have clear ideas about their physical potential (Coakley, 1998).

Some feminist scholars have argued that, in addressing issues among men and women, researchers have been focusing on the differences rather
than similarities (Hargreaves, 1990). Consequently, this has led to a general failure to incorporate, systematically, relations of power between the sexes and to relate them to other structures of power in society (Hargreaves, 1990).

According to Lenskyj (1990), there are parallels in the classification of masculine and feminine sporting activities. However, the vast majority of activities defined as sport in the western world are tests that favour men, of physical strength and endurance, rather than tests of kinaesthetic ability, flexibility, coordination or other physical attributes (Lenskyj, 1990). The ideal male sporting body as one who is strong, aggressive and muscular has been a popular symbol of masculinity used against women, who, in turn, have been characterised as relatively powerless and inferior (Hargreaves, 1996). This has inevitably worked against women as men are usually stronger and have greater endurance, while women are better at flexibility (Lenskyj, 1990), among other skills. For example, the findings from Rees et al.'s (1999) study indicated that girls were perceived as 'not suited' for violent aggressive sports, while boys were 'not suited for expressive (i.e. aesthetically pleasing) sports. A common claim is that men are 'naturally' more aggressive, more competitive and therefore, better at sport than women (Hargreaves, 1996). For instance, some suggest that sport was a male-created cultural sphere that provided men with psychological separation from women, thus providing dramatic "proof" of the natural superiority of men over women (Messner, 1990). As Messner (1988) states;

Football, based as it is upon the most extreme possibilities of the male body (muscular bulk, explosive power and aggression) is a world apart from women, who are relegated to the role of cheerleader / sex objects on the sidelines rooting their men on. (p. 202)
Thus, some sports such as football or rugby in their present ‘violent’ forms tend to support male dominance through the association of male and maleness with valued skills and the sanctioned use of aggression, force and violence (Bryson, 1994). In extracurricular activities in American schools, boys’ activities have been found to emphasise masculine values such as achievement, toughness, endurance, competitiveness, and aggression, whereas girls activities have been shown to foster emotional management and glamour for appearance (Alder, Kless & Alder, 1992, cited in Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997, p. 91).

It could be argued that men and women are different in terms of their potential for physical strength, endurance, agility and grace (Messner, 1988). For example, the average age adult male is about 5 inches taller than the average female and the average male has a larger and more powerful body. Additionally, males average 40% muscle and 15% body fat, while females average 23% muscle and 25% body fat (Messner, 1988). Thus, women have on average 18% (or 10 kg) less weight as compared to males (Bodenstedt & Wasmund-Bodenstedt, 1988). Consequently, Theberge (1991) suggests that biological differences were seen as biological facts rather than cultural variations, and thus incontestable and unchallengeable.

3.2. Social/ cultural stereotyping

It is argued that, in many families, gender stereotyping is part of everyday life and so there is a significant difference in the psychological experiences of being a male or female (Hargreaves, 1996). For instance, from the earliest hours of life, the physical body is the focus for the construction
of gender, and because gender is experienced through the body, masculinity and femininity seem absolutely intimate and fundamental (Hargreaves, 1996). Hargreaves (1996) expresses it thus:

We understand our gender because we are given names, colour coded, dressed, talked to and treated in particular ways, which accord with our sex. Girls tend to be handled more gently; boys are tossed around and wrestled with more frequently and vigorously; girls are more closely supervised and allowed less physical freedom; boys are encouraged to be adventurous and to play vigorous out-of-door games; girls are given domestic toys, skipping ropes and Barbie dolls; boys are given fighting toys, footballs and Action Men; girls are restricted in methods used and distances covered when travelling; boys are allowed more freedom when travelling away from home for sports meetings. (p. 147)

This constant exposure to a social world full of cultural signs of sexual differences makes it very difficult for children to behave in a similar way (Hargreaves, 1996). This may be one reason why researchers have indicated that females have been unfairly excluded from many sports opportunities (e.g. Phillips, 1993). For example, the first female entrant in the Boston Marathon had to sneak into the crowd at the starting line and count on friends (i.e. some male runners) to fend off officials attempting to remove the 'illegal' female competitor (Phillips, 1993). As Hargreaves (1996) states that, "the construction of images of males and females is stereotyped as if the differences between them are real and 'natural'" (p. 163). Furthermore, males tend to be portrayed as physical and aggressive, and their actions and accomplishments are highlighted, while women's femininity is symbolized through glamorous and sexualised shots (or through implied masculinization) and by the use of informal and intimate names (Hargreaves, 1996).
Indeed, socially defined maleness and femaleness (i.e. gender role stereotyping) severely constricts human behaviour because it encourages us to accept differences between males and females as ‘natural’ and permanent (Rees et al., 1999). It seems that sport is more conservative than other areas in society in this regard, with women being assigned secondary roles (Sisjord, 1997). For example, Sisjord (1997) argues that decisions related to the design of women’s sport programmes (for women) are usually made by male administrators and coaches; females thus suffer because of patriarchal values and structures which leaves them disadvantaged in the sport system. Consequently, organised sport “as we now know it, emerged as a male response to social changes which undermined many of the bases of men’s traditional patriarchal power, authority, and identity” (Messner, 1990, p. 204). Furthermore, Messner (1990) states:

> Early developmental experiences, rooted in the fact that it is women who mother, create a very different balance between separation and attachment in males and females, thus setting the stage for different kinds of problems with relationships, identity, and sexuality throughout the life course. (p. 208)

As evidenced by the above quote, it is no surprise that men and women have different motives for participation, and thus often take part in different types of physical activities (Koivula, 1999). As a result, children’s ideas about sport are consolidated through their relationships with parents and sibling (Hargreaves, 1996). For example, Chepyator-Thomson and Ennis, (1997) examined the frequency of enrolment among junior and senior secondary school students in aerobic and weight training classes. The results indicated that 62% of the students enrolled in weight training classes
were boys and 92% of the students enrolled in the aerobics classes were girls. The students' justification for the fact that "few boys registered for the aerobics class were related to the idea of aerobics being gender specific- a feminine activity" (Chepyator-Themson & Ennis, 1997 p. 93). Similarly, Colley et al. (1992) studied the relationships between liking the play activities stereotyped for one's own as opposed to the opposite sex among 9-year-old children. The results showed that no boys played 'female' sports but 20% of girls reported playing 'male' sports. This suggests that boys are more highly sex-typed than girls. However, due to the age group investigated (9 year olds), it can be said that sex stereotyping is not as powerful at this stage as in adult samples (Colley et al., 1992). Furthermore, in a study that investigated American and German adolescents' perceptions of whether sport is a gendered activity, the results suggested that boys would have less pressure to conform to the demands of restrictive stereotypes in their future sports choices than girls do (Rees et al., 1999).

These results point to traditional gender role patterns being manifested in psychological and sociological forms (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985). The ultimate consequences in this respect seem to be that women and men, due to specific patterns in gender role socialisation, develop different values and behaviour patterns. Indeed, the roles developed by women differ markedly from desirable qualities in masculine culture and the world of sport (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985). Thus, the apparent differences between the sexes in relation to displays of aggressiveness and competitiveness could be explained as a result of social and cultural experiences (Hargreaves, 1996). As Messner (1988) states;
To say “she plays like a man” is a double-edged sword - it is, on the surface, a commitment to an individual woman’s skills, but it also suggests that since she is so good, she must not be a true woman after all. The outstanding female athlete is portrayed as an exception that proves the rule, thus reinforcing traditional stereotypes about feminity. (p. 205)

Indeed, Marion Jones’ statement after receiving the 2001 Jesse Owens international trophy award as the world’s outstanding amateur athlete of 2000, that “I was a tomboy. I liked athletics” (Rosenthal, 2001, p.1), reflects that gender stereotyping still exists. Further, with reference to Jones’ statement, women who play sport may be more willing to describe themselves as possessing masculine attributes because they have already overcome sex role stereotyping in taking up sport. Alternatively, these women may be more aware of their masculine attributes because they behave in a masculine way in a sporting context (Colley, et al., 1992). Nevertheless, women’s participation in sport continues to be less than that of men, and can be viewed as a consequence of differential treatment based on socialised gender roles and expectations (Ogu, 1999). Therefore, females continue to experience role conflict between the sport role and the female role (Harris, 1983). Consequently, masculinity and femininity are relative concepts, which are socially and historically constructed and because they emerge into a social world where gender differences are intrinsic in everyday life, they acquire gender stereotypical identities (Hargreaves, 1996).

3.3. Current research into sport and gender

Tens of millions of boys and girls around the world currently engage in some form of organised sport (Brustad, 1993). However, research suggests that despite the importance given to sport by both genders, differences exist
between them (e.g. Eitzen & Sage, 1993; Wyllemen et al., 1993). For instance, although sport ranks highly among both genders as leisure time activity, boys favour involvement in sport higher than girls when compared to other leisure time activities (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). For example, New Zealand boys spend on average 3 hours more than girls per week on sport (Thomson, 2000). Similar results have been found among boys and girls from Hungary, Denmark and England (Ibsen & Ottesen, 1996; Thomson & Soos, 2000; White & Rowe, 1996).

Research also shows that boys favour aggressive sports more than girls, whereas girls prefer non-contact individual sports (Rees et al., 1998). Thus, when choosing favourite sports it is no surprise that the choices differ considerably between the sexes (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Indeed, the meaning of sport for boys tend to relate to notions associated with 'team sports' ahead of such constructs as 'enjoyment', while for girls, the reverse appears to be true (Thomson, 2000). Similarly, research done in Germany and the United States indicates that girls seem to associate sport with fun more than boys do, while boys rate the importance of competition higher than girls (Rees et al., 1998).

Likewise, Trew et al. (1997) studied reasons for sports participation among youths (i.e. ages 7 to 17 years) of Northern Ireland. Results indicated that boys tend to demonstrate more competitiveness than their female counterparts when participating in sports (Trew et al., 1997). Similarly, Weinberg et al. (2000) investigated the participation motives of youth in the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Although there were similarities with adolescents in the three countries, significant differences among the genders were identified (Weinberg et al., 2000). For example, the results
indicated that competition and social motives were more important for males than females. On the other hand, females favoured motives relating to fun/fitness and teamwork as more important than their male counterparts (Weinberg et al., 2000).

Wang et al. (1997) studied youth (i.e. ages 7-17 years) involvement in sport in China. The results showed similarities with the above referenced study conducted by Weinberg et al (2000). However, one finding of Wang et al. (1997) contradicted that of results found in other countries. That is, girls rated team orientation as more important than boys, whereas boys rated fitness/energy release and friendship more highly than girls. Thus, although the researchers hypothesized that girls would rate more highly the health-related motives for sport involvement, in fact it was the boys who did so (Wang et al., 1997). However “whether located in biology or culture, the difference between young men’s and young women’s enthusiasm for, and performance” (Burrows, 2000. p. 33) in, sport and related activities are constructed as a problem. Thus, “despite the increasing attention to equal rights issues in education, gender divisions are still apparent at all levels of schooling” (Hargreaves, 1996, p. 151).

4. Globalisation and Sport

According to Brandl-Bredenbeck and Brettschneider (1997), “increasing globalisation is a major feature in the development of sport culture(s) among adolescents” (p. 357). Similarly, Donnelly (1996) suggests that “we are living in a world whose national borders are becoming ever more porous” (p. 239). Consequently, a popular trend is occurring as the
worldwide communication network spreads and an increasingly commercialised multinational leisure culture grows up while tourist opportunities for adolescents expand (Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997).

Robertson (1992) defines globalisation as "the compression of the world into a single place. ... and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (pp. 6-8). Giddens (1990) meanwhile defines globalisation as the intensification of social relations at the world level, linking distant locations such that local events are structured by events occurring across the globe. In this respect, Harvey et al. (1996) suggest that globalisation is transforming sport in three principal yet different ways:

First, the economic, political, and cultural global dimensions are inducing a process of homogenisation of sport through Western commodified sport forms. Second, new social movements constitute a force (although limited) in the promotion of socially progressive transformations of sport. Third, the receptivity to dominant sport forms at the national level creates different reactions of conformity or opposition. (p. 274)

In this regard, Harvey et al.'s (1996) model of the global development of sport endorses two levels, 'global' and 'national' (Figure 2). At the global level they identify four dimensions of globalisation: political, economic, cultural and social.
Harvey et al. (1996) state that we have witnessed a proliferation of multicultural as well as transnational organizations and agreements in recent years; for example, the G7, general agreement on tariffs and trade, and the World Trade Organization. However, Rosenau (1993) states that global trends are obscure and are difficult to assess. This demonstrates the political dimension of the model. Economic globalisation on the other hand can be attributed to two major forces, international capital and transnational corporations (Harvey et al., 1996). For example, 47 of the world's 100 largest economies are multinational corporations (Horsman & Marshall, 1994).

At the cultural level, Rieff (1993) states that the term Americanisation has been described as global culture. However, Harvey et al. (1996) see globalisation at the cultural level “as involving the emergence of a common ethos and values shared by an increasing number of individuals with a sense of shared destiny” (p. 267). The social dimension relates closely to the
cultural dimension (Harvey et al., 1996), to the extent that it is not only the individual actors who contribute to the development of international links and relationships, but that new social movements also make significant contributions (Harvey & Houle, 1994). For instance, the feminist, ecologist and pacifist movements are important in the context of globalisation (Harvey et al., 1996), as was, for example, the anti-apartheid movement in relation to the 1980s sports boycott of South Africa to achieve in the quest for a political goal.

With respect to the aforementioned four dimensions of globalisation, this paper will focus on the cultural and social aspects. In this regard, the following discussion concentrates on the current debates within the field of globalisation, for instance, on the global and local issue on homogenisation and heterogenisation and whether globalisation is influencing the sports culture of the Maldives.

Sport is often seen as a useful contributor to the process of globalisation (Thomson & Soos, 2000), and how sport achieves this is emerging as an important research topic among sport sociologists (Donnelly, 1996). In this regard, the cultural impact of globalisation has been much debated (Andrews, Carrington, Mazur & Jackson, 1996; Thomson & Soos, 2000) with its impact being increasingly classified into one of two distinct theoretical camps; the homogenisers and the heterogenisers (Silk & Jackson, 2000).

On the one hand, homogenisation heralds the advent of an era dominated by creeping global standardisation (Andrews, Carrington, Jackson & Mazur, 1996). This suggests that people are becoming more alike and heading towards a uniform global culture (Silk & Jackson, 2000). This is
not only reflected in the types of sports they play but also in their motivation for participation and their views on the purpose or value of sport. For example, Rees et al.'s (1998) study of adolescents from Germany and the United States indicated that there is a shared belief that sporting activities need to be strenuous, with performance and competition being important elements. Further, it appears that achievement oriented sport is a male activity on a global scale, while it is clear that girls choose fun as a more important component of sport than boys (Rees et al., 1998).

On the other hand, heterogenisation rejects the influence of global technologies and products in favour of stressing the inherent uniqueness of every localised cultural context (Andrews et al., 1996). It consequently emphasises cultural differences and the power of the particular (Silk & Jackson, 2000). Thus, the local is viewed as more of a self-contained, static, cultural site, contributing to a process of heterogenisation (Jackson & Andrews, 1999).

According to Jackson and Andrews (1999), there are two key features of the global and local debate; firstly, how to conceptualise the 'local', and secondly, the nature and extent of the global economics and cultural forces' effect on local processes (Jackson & Andrews, 1999). Consequently, the global and local can only be understood in relation to each other. Additionally, it needs to be recognised that “globalisation itself is constitutive of, and constituted by, multiple processes which are engaged to differing degrees, at differing intensities and in differing spatial locations” (Jackson & Andrews, 1999, p. 32). Thus, disjunctures occur that can “provoke conflict, incongruence, and resistance but can also refer to expression of
accommodation and acceptance, and even ambivalence" (Jackson & Andrews, 1999, p. 32).

It is no surprise that sport sociologists have disagreed about how to best theorize sport within the context of globalisation (Rees et al., 1998). For instance, supporters of the modernizing theory (e.g. Guttmann, 1991; Wagner, 1990) have tended to believe the spread of sport is part of a general process of cultural diffusion. For example, around the world, especially in Asia and Africa, sport traditions are blending together (Wagner, 1990). As Wagner (1990) states;

Cultural diffusion is leading to a trading of sports interests in all directions, and is likely to lead to a global sports culture-modified in varying and often substantial ways by diverse colonial legacies, historical backgrounds, and value contexts. ... the long-term trend is toward greater homogenisation in world sports culture. (p. 399)

Such a theory indicates that a number of trends are occurring simultaneously in international sport (e.g. Wagner, 1990), for example, the world cup competitions in various sports. However, supporters of a more economic-based approach (e.g. Kidd, 1991; McKay & Miller, 1991) have explained globalisation as a unidirectional process through which American-style capitalism is spread around the world as a modern form of cultural imperialism (Rees et al., 1998). For instance, studies comparing sports development and participation in New Zealand, Hungary, the United States and Germany found similarities in that basketball was found to be one of the favourite sports among adolescents from all four countries, suggesting a globalisation effect on sport was evident (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). The spread of basketball among the adolescents of these countries provides support for the "Americanisation" model, since the sport originated
in America and is now popular with the youth among the nations studied. Thus, supporters of Americanisation theory cite such evidence to back up the idea that sport concepts are becoming more homogenised (Rees et al., 1998).

Indeed, the group of scholars that support the economic-based theory state that sport has been transferring from dominant countries (e.g. the United States) to less dominant countries, and as a result there is a process of acculturation of the dominated economies into the values and sport practices of the economies they are dominated by (Harvey & Houle, 1994). For instance, sport in the Maldives may have some of its foundation in the games and sports of the British Empire, as the Maldives was a British protectorate for 78 years. Indeed, soccer is the most popular sport there while cricket, tennis and netball (women only) have long traditions in the islands. Thus, Guttman (1994) states that in British India and elsewhere in the Empire, there were many occasions where the colonisers forced modern sports upon the colonised.

Thomson (1998) suggests that it is “the interplay of personal, social and cultural factors that is perhaps most helpful in explaining adolescents’ interest and involvement in sport” (p.3). Maquire (1994) agrees by stating that, “globalisation trends involve broad, multifaceted processes where no single causal factor predominates, and these processes are the result of a complex interweaving of intended and unintended sets of interdependence” (p. 401). Nevertheless, in either case one must also be aware “that sport has also been a key element in the process of globalisation that threatens distinctive national identities” (Bairner, 1996, p. 315).
Globalisation is often seen as a two way process (Maguire, 1994); people will not passively accept sport forms but interpret sport for themselves, and there will be local or national differences in the way sport is played (Thomson, 2000). For example, Rees et al.'s (1998) study shows that American football and baseball were not popular among German, nor among New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents (Thomson & Soos, 2000), which supports a static model of sport in America having little influence on global developments (Rees et al., 1998). Consequently, Silk and Jackson (2000) state that, “rather than seeing globalisation in terms of the domination of one country, either politically, economically or culturally, ... [we need] to understand contemporary global flows as being multidimensional” (p. 102). In this context, it is important to understand that ‘American’ products and styles are often localised or made to fit local meanings (Silk & Jackson, 2000). For instance, although tennis may have come to the Maldives through the influence of the British, the Maldives has created a game using tennis equipment called ‘Bashi’. Bashi could be said to be the most popular sport in the Maldives among women, especially in rural areas, and is a game, which uses tennis rackets, nets and balls. The local culture appears to have adapted an important game to meet local needs.

Further, Maguire (1994) cautions that some cultures are so outside the global core that they may either remain relatively unaffected or cannot interchange. Although this might be the case elsewhere, on first glance, such a case does not appear to be so in the Maldives. For example, the televised World Cup cricket competition in 1998 was shown live in the Maldives through the courtesy of local businesses and government organizations. As a result, many government workers were absent from work due to a disruption
in their sleeping patterns while people could be seen playing cricket everywhere. Global sport fashions are therefore evident in the Maldives, with a common sight being that of local fishermen wearing Nike or Adidas caps and tracksuits while fishing.

Indeed, it seems that increasing encounters with global products and services create opportunities for a country (such as Maldives) to reach new markets and redefine or recreate national identities (Silk & Jackson, 2000). Further, it indicates that although globalisation is significant in sport, there are meaningful local cultural differences in the way sports are practised (Thomson, 2000). Indeed, “over time, one can hope that this global sports culture will develop in ways that are in harmony with the likes, interests, desires, and values of diverse peoples all over the world” (Wagner, 1990, p. 402). Thus, one aim of this study is to find out whether globalisation is influencing the sporting culture among adolescents of the Maldives.
This chapter consists of the method used in investigation the present study's purpose and is divided into four subheadings providing information relating to the schools and subjects that were selected for the study. In addition, it explains the instruments and measures applied and the procedures used when administering the questionnaire. Finally, discusses how the data is analysed.
Subjects

The subjects for this study were secondary school students from four government schools in the Maldives. That is, one boys (school A) and one girls (school B) school from Male’ (mid Maldives), one co-educational school from a southern atoll (school C), and one co-educational school from a northern atoll (school D). In total, 667 students took part in the study which included 199 students from school A and 187 students from school B, 70 boys and 94 girls from school C and 49 boys and 68 girls from school D. Of the 667 respondents (318 boys and 349 girls), 650 responses were considered to be valid. The 17 invalid questionnaires were decided on the basis of the number of questions answered. Any questionnaire with less than 90% of questions answered was regarded as invalid.

The sample’s age range was 13 to 21 years (16.14 mean), with boys comprising a mean of 16.20 and girls 16.08. The rationale for selecting government schools was because they follow a similar curriculum, thus the children should have relative uniformity in their physical education and school sport experience. A sample of at least 500 was chosen for the study so as to enable the use of chi square tests, which was increased to a final total of 667 to allow for non- or incomplete responses (Zar, 1984).

School A and school B, both located on Male’, are two of the oldest schools in the Maldives. In 2000, the student population in these schools was 2320 and 2511 respectively (Educational Statistics, 2000). The students attending these schools come from seven feeder primary schools situated in the locality, which cater for grades 6 through to grade 10 (ages 11 to 18). At the completion of their grade 10 year, the students undergo the London
Board GCE 'O' level examination. The majority of the students in these schools are residents of Male' and Villigilli but some students from other atolls temporarily reside in Male' to attend these schools. The two schools are well established, with a reputation for providing high quality education. However, physical education is limited to two 30-minute sessions a week and only for grades 6 and 7. There is no formal curricular physical education for latter grades. Nevertheless, these schools provide a better environment for those who want to pursue sport more seriously than other Maldivian schools. Each year there are extra-curricula inter-house competitions in selected sports as well as fiercely competitive interschool competitions.

Schools C and D, the co-educational schools situated on a northern and southern atoll respectively, were established due to the growing population of the country and because of the need for students to attend a school closer to their homes. Thus, the majority of the students who attend these schools are from these and other nearby atolls. To attend these schools, the students must attain a given level of educational proficiency at primary school. In 2000, the student population in school C was 447 boys and 603 girls, while the student population in school D was 360 boys and 452 girls (Educational Statistics, 2000).

Instruments and Measures

For the purpose of this study an existing instrument called the 'Sport Attitude Survey' was used. This Sport Attitude Survey was designed by Wolf-Dietrich Brettschneider, formerly of the Free University, Berlin, and C. Roger Rees, of Adelphi University, New York (Brettschneider & Rees, 1994). The
survey consists of questions regarding demographics as well as about the importance and meaning of sport to participants, factoring in the possible effects of gender and ethnic differences in addition to individual sporting preference.

This questionnaire, which was originally validated for the context of youth sports participation by Brettschneider and Rees (1994), has been utilised in earlier research to survey adolescents in Germany, the United States, New Zealand and Hungary (Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997; Rees et al., 1998, 1999; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000). For the purpose of this study, certain questions within the instrument had to be slightly amended to ensure cultural ease of understanding. For example, questions on the highest academic level achieved by the study's subjects' parents were amended to suit the local academic system. The amended questionnaire contained 13 parts, which included both 'fixed' and 'open' ended questions (see Appendix E) that covered the four main research areas, that is, (1) the meaning sport has for secondary school students; (2) how adolescents are socialised into sport and the reasons for their sports participation or non-participation; (3) gender differences in relation to sports participation and, (4) whether globalisation is influencing the sport culture in the Maldives.

The researcher investigated the opinions of the students regarding how they organised and spent their free time, the meanings and importance they placed on sport, how they evaluated their physical abilities, their level of sport/physical activity participation and their reasons for their participation or non-participation in sport. Furthermore, the number of hours students spent on sports per week with regard to school related sports and non-school related sports was sought, as was the students' favourite sports and sporting
heroes. Finally, the survey recorded students' demographic factors such as gender, sex, height, weight and ethnicity while also ascertaining information about the students' academic level.

Procedures

Initially, the researcher contacted the Ministry of Education by letter, requesting permission to administer the questionnaire to the selected four schools (see Appendix B). Attached to the letter was a copy of the information sheet, which was given to students, the consent forms for parents and the questionnaire. Once permission was gained from the Ministry of Education and subsequently the schools in question, information sheets to the students (see Appendix C), and the information sheets and consent forms to the parents (see Appendix D) were distributed.

Once the signed consent forms were received from the parents, the researcher met with the relevant staff members in each school separately and explained the purpose of the study, and the proposed procedures. Due to the allocated dates for administering the questionnaire, the researcher recruited two assistants to administer questionnaires in schools C and D, and they were briefed (by the researcher) at length accordingly. In order to keep with the methodological uniformity, the two research assistants were given a written copy of the procedure with the necessary steps to be followed, in addition to being briefed by the researcher. At schools B and D the questionnaire was administered to all the study's sample on the same day and time, whereas at schools A and C it took two days to collect data due to administrative reasons.
Each school administration informed participants about the date, time and place of the administering of the questionnaire and further procedures were announced over the microphone during the assembly. Prior to administering the questionnaire the researcher (or research assistants) explained the procedure using the information sheet and reminded the participants at each school that the information gathered would be kept confidential. During the administering of the questionnaires the researcher (or research assistants) was present at all times to answer any queries. This was to ensure that the participants completed the questionnaire satisfactorily.

Data Analyses

Once all the questionnaires were collected from the participants, the data were expressed through a statistical software programme called SPSS. Descriptive analyses were done using cross tabulation with a chi square test, a Mann-Whitney U test and a Kruskal-Wallis test, to examine, for instance, the effects of gender, school type and academic grade. Further, cluster analyses were used to define groups of students with particular characteristics in relation to sports participation and tests of analysis of variance were used, after transformation of the data using logs. Normality and equal variance assumptions were satisfied and Tukey tests were used to distinguish differences between means.

Such data presentation is widely used within education and its value is based on the premise that problems can be solved and practices improved through objective and thorough observation, and description (Thomas &
Nelson, 1996). Indeed, one of the most common descriptive research methods is the use of questionnaires to collect data (Thomas & Nelson, 1996), which allows necessary evaluation to occur. The data were analysed in term of the principal research issues outlined earlier, and the findings were compared with other similar studies in order to examine similarities and differences across various cultures and nations.

Limitations of this study

This study used four government schools and did not use any private or community school in gathering the data. The government schools significantly differ from private and community schools, in particular, the way they are administered due to lack of finance. For example, the majority of the teachers who teach at the government schools will have better qualifications and teaching experience than their counterparts from private or community schools. In addition, the majority of the students who attend government schools come from wealthier families than their private and community school counterparts, thus the attitude towards sport among students from these two types of schools may differ.
RESULTS

This chapter consists of the results of the sports attitude survey (Brettschneider & Rees, 1994) conducted among secondary school students in the Maldives. This chapter is divided into four major sections to specifically address the aims of the study. The first section provides information relating to the importance and meaning attached to sport by adolescents of the Maldives. The second section gives the results relating to sport socialisation, including reasons for sports participation or non-participation among the study's sample. The third section provides findings relating to gender differences; specifically, it highlights those findings in relation to gender differences that have not been emphasised elsewhere in the results, as such differences are presented under all four major sections as appropriate. Finally, the fourth section outlines whether globalisation is influencing the sporting culture of the Maldives and the related sports participation pattern of its adolescents through an examination of preferred sports and sporting heroes.
1. The Importance and Meaning Attached to Sport Among Adolescents of the Maldives

1.1. The importance of sport

![Frequency of responses chart]

Figure 3: The importance of sports for adolescents of the Maldives

The importance placed on sports among adolescents of the Maldives on a scale of 0 to 100 is shown in Figure 3 (below). The mean for the study's sample was 71.9 (with standard deviation of 24.10). Mean and standard deviations were based on the number of valid responses (n= 636, 97.8% out of 650 respondents). It is important to note that the majority of adolescents ranked sport very highly (i.e. in the 75-100 bracket), indicating that sport has considerable importance in their lives.

The mean values of both gender groups in relation to the importance placed on sports are shown in Table 4. That is, the boys' mean value was 76.34 while the girls' mean value was 68.11. Thus, boys ranked the importance of sports higher than did girls. Indeed, a Mann-Whitney U test
showed that there was a significant difference between boys and girls ($z=-4.48, p<.001$) when ranking the importance placed on sports.

**Table 4:** The importance of sports among boys and girls of the Maldives on a scale of 0-100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>68.11</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>24.32</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>76.34</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>23.12</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71.93</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>24.10</td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of hours spent on school and out of school sports among adolescents of the Maldives is shown in Table 5. In addition, it shows the number of hours spent on such activities when the students are divided into three age groups. As seen in Table 5, a Mann-Whitney U test shows that there was a significant difference between boys and girls in relation to the time spent on school related sports ($z=-3.421, p<.001$) and on out of school sports ($z=-5.800, p<.001$). There was also a significant difference in time spent on school related sports between age groups, $F(1,299=11.77, p<.001)$. A Tukey test showed that the time spent on sports by the 18 years and over age group decreased relative to the other two age groups (i.e. <16 & 16-18). However, the differences between boys and girls were of the same magnitude, regardless of age groups, $F(2,299=.021, p<.979)$. 
Table 5: The number of hours spent on school related and out-of-school sports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time spent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>MALE Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Med.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>FEMALE Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Med.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>TOTAL Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Med.</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>&lt; 16</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 18</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-school</td>
<td>&lt; 16</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 18</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hrs</td>
<td>&lt; 16</td>
<td>14.54</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>7.09</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>8.29</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 18</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>9.28</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.84</td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>13.98</td>
<td>8.96</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>9.46</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School = school related sports
Out-of-school = sports that are played outside of school (e.g. with friends, family)

Similarly, with regard to the time spent on out of school sports, there was a significant gender difference, F (1, 401= 34.97, p < .001), with boys spending many more hours than girls in such activities. It is important to note that students who answered ‘0’ hours in response to these questions (n= 207, 39.9%) were not included in the final analysis, nor were those who gave more than 23 hours (n=24) for school related sports and 24 hours (n= 25) or more for out of school sports. These responses were considered invalid. The subjects whose answer was ‘0’ was considered invalid based on the question, which wanted to know the number of hours spent on sports and thus ‘0’ hours was considered an invalid answer. On the other hand, subjects who answered more than 23 hours for school related sports and 24 hours or more for out of school sports was considered invalid based on the assumption that it will be unreasonable and thus not possible to spent such long hours (per week) for sports.
1.2. The meaning attached to sport by Maldivian adolescents

Table 6: The meaning attached to sport by adolescents of the Maldives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meanings</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun &amp; enjoyment</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; fitness</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team sports</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual sports</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing &amp; games</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winning, victory</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical effort</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social reasons</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Associations</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Associations</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses and percentages are based on total (multiple) valid responses from 625 valid respondents.

The participants’ responses when they were asked what meanings they associated with the term ‘sport’ are shown in Table 6. The responses, in turn, have been placed into eleven categories. As seen in Table 6, the study’s respondents considered ‘fun and enjoyment’ as the most preferred meaning attached to sports followed by ‘health and fitness’, ‘team sports’, ‘individual sports’, ‘playing and games’, ‘winning’, ‘physical effort’ and ‘social reasons’ respectively. In addition to these, it was identified that various other ‘positive’ (e.g. good for the future) and ‘negative’ terms (e.g. boring, violent)
were given as being associated with sport. Furthermore, meanings that did not fit in any of these categories were recorded under 'others'.

The rest of the responses were also defined as either 'positive' or 'negative' associations and grouped accordingly. The results showed considerably more positive associations with sport than negative. It is interesting to note that the category 'social reasons' was not seen as a popular meaning for sport among the study's sample as it ranked a low seventh (i.e., the least appropriate meaning associated with sport among the Maldivian adolescents).

Table 7: Favoured sporting activities for adolescents of the Maldives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPORTS</th>
<th>TOTAL %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>MALES %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>FEMALES %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table tennis</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashi</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1.3</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>773</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>885</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages and totals are based on (multiple) responses of 773 (46.6%) males and 885 (53.4%) females, from 603 valid respondents, with 47 missing respondents. Total (1658) is the number of valid responses from a total of 650 respondents.
The favourite sports among adolescents of the Maldives are shown in Table 7. Here, when both genders were combined soccer ranked as the most popular sport followed by basketball, volleyball, netball and badminton respectively. In addition, soccer, basketball, volleyball and badminton are ranked among the top five sports for both boys and girls. However, if examined separately, boys ranked soccer as their favourite sport followed by basketball, while girls ranked basketball as their favourite sport followed by netball. In other words, the most popular sport differed for boys and girls.

In addition, it is important to note that one of the most widely played sports among Maldivian women, ‘bashi’ (an indigenous sport played by females only), ranked a low ninth among girls. Furthermore, wrestling, a sport that is not seen live in the Maldives, was given a low popularity ranking among the boys (eg. their tenth most popular sport).
Table 8: Sport/physical activities regularly participated in during the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPORTS</th>
<th>OVERALL %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>rank</th>
<th>MALES %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>rank</th>
<th>FEMALES %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>216</td>
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<td>189</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>91</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>164</td>
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<td>10.4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running</td>
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<td>143</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>113</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6.9</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>1635</strong></td>
<td><strong>53.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>867</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>756</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>1635</strong></td>
<td><strong>53.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages and totals are based on (multiple) responses 867 or 46.6% males and 756 or 53.4% females, from 603 valid respondents, with 47 missing respondents. The total (1635) is the number of valid responses from a total of 650 respondents.

While Table 7 shows the favourite sports for Maldivian adolescents, Table 8 demonstrates the sports in which the study's sample participated regularly in during the past year. It was evident that the study's sample participated most regularly in soccer, volleyball, swimming, basketball and running respectively. Hence, although a number of similarities are apparent in these two tables, there are important differences. For example, while basketball was the second most favoured sport, it was the fourth most popular sport in which adolescents participated within the past year. Further, while swimming and running were not among the top five favourite
sports (see Table 7), adolescents’ frequency of participation in these two sports were third and fifth respectively (see Table 8).

2. Reasons for Sports Participation and Non-participation Among Adolescents of the Maldives

This section examines the reasons that Maldivian adolescents attribute to their sports participation or non-participation. In this regard, Table 9 shows the most and the least important reasons for participating in sport among Maldivian adolescents. The most important reasons given for sport/physical activity involvement among those questioned within this study were, ‘good for the body’, ‘physical fitness’, ‘enjoyment of exercise’, ‘excitement’ and ‘enjoyment of competition’. The least important reasons given for involvement in sport/physical activities among the study’s sample were to ‘make money at it’, ‘because of family’, ‘because of friends’, ‘like being on a team’ and ‘to meet new people’. These were consistent with the findings shown in Table 6, where social reasons for participation ranked low. It is important to note that among the reasons for sports participation that ranked lowest, ‘make money at it’, ‘because of family’ and ‘because of friends’ were more important reasons than the rest.
Table 9: The most and the least important reasons for participating in sport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASONS</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>MF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% T/MT</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Good for the body</td>
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<td>211</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>(33.8)</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2- Physical fitness</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>627</td>
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<td>1.52</td>
<td>.78</td>
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<td>(29)</td>
<td>(4.6)</td>
<td>(4.5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3- Enjoyment of exercise</td>
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<td>207</td>
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<td>4- Excitement</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>(31.7)</td>
<td>(11.2)</td>
<td>(9.3)</td>
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<td>180</td>
<td>56</td>
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<td>79.3</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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<td>(8.9)</td>
<td>(11.8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Can get body in shape</td>
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<td>198</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>1.86</td>
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<td>(10.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7- Physically attractive</td>
<td>304</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>77.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>8- Relaxes</td>
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<td>204</td>
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<td>630</td>
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<td>(11)</td>
<td>(13.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9- Make a career out of it</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>631</td>
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<td>(10.1)</td>
<td>(24.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10- Like to meet new people</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>2.22</td>
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<td>(29.2)</td>
<td>(15.1)</td>
<td>(20.8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11- Like being on a team</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.17</td>
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<td>(37.9)</td>
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<td>(15.6)</td>
<td>(21.8)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12- My friends do</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>627</td>
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<td>2.80</td>
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<td>(36)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13- My family wants me to</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>141</td>
<td>331</td>
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<td>25.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14- Make money at it</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>23.5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MT= Mostly True, MF= Mostly False & F= False are provided with number of valid responses and percentages. % T/MT indicates the total valid percentages of both true and mostly true responses. Totals are the number of valid responses from a total of 650 respondents. Means and standard deviations are calculated using true= 1, mostly true= 2, mostly false= 3 and false= 4.

The gender differences in subjects’ responses as to the reasons why they participate in sport are indicated in Table 10. A Mann-Whitney U test shows that there is a significant difference between the genders in their ranking of the following statements; 'enjoyment of competition' (z = -2.29, p< .012); 'physically attractive' (z = -3.80, p< .001); 'make a career out of it' (z = -2.52, P< .012); 'like being on a team' (z = -3.459, p< .001); 'because of family' (z = -3.49, p< .001) and; to 'make money at it' (z = -4.27, p< .001).
**Table 10:** Gender differences in reasons for sports participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASONS</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>MF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% T/MT</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<td>21</td>
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<tr>
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<td>90</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>335</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>103</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(40.4) (19.5) (9.7) (30.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like being on a team</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(33.9) (22.3) (16.4) (27.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family wants me to</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make money at it</td>
<td>(10.4) (8.6) (22.6) (41.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(29) (23) (87) (195)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MT = Mostly True, MF = Mostly False & F = False are provided with number of valid responses and percentages. % T/MT = indicates the total valid percentages of both true and mostly true responses. Totals are the number of valid responses from a total of 650 respondents. Means and standard deviations are calculated using true = 1, mostly true = 2, mostly false = 3 and false = 4.

3. Additional Gender Differences

As stated in this chapter's introduction, an examination of gender differences in the results has taken place where appropriate throughout the previous sections. This section will highlight those results considered relevant which have not been covered elsewhere.
Table 11: Opinions about some sports being unsuitable for boys and girls to participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPORTS</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th></th>
<th>NO</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some sports are unsuitable for boys</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some sports are unsuitable for girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages and responses were based on multiple responses (i.e. 248 and 242 boys and girls respectively).

Table 11 demonstrates the responses of the subjects when questioned about whether all sports are suitable for participation for both boys and girls. It shows the percentages from the sample when subjects were asked to either agree or disagree with whether some sports were unsuitable for boys or girls. The results showed that the attitudes of Maldivian girls were slightly more supportive of non-gendered than Maldivian boys (chi-square test= 24.99, df= 1, p < .001), when asked whether some sports were ‘not suited’ for girls. However, no differences in proportion were found for sports that were ‘not suited’ for boys (chi-square test= .883, df= 1, p < .883).
As seen in Table 12, netball and ‘bashi’ were clearly seen by both genders as unsuitable for boys to participate in while aerobics and ballet dancing to a somewhat lesser degree were also considered to be unsuitable for boys. On the other hand, there were several sports that were thought to be unsuitable for girls including soccer, cricket, rugby, wrestling, American football, basketball and boxing respectively. In addition, there were other sports mentioned as unsuitable for girls categorised here as ‘others’. It is interesting to note that some sports that were thought to be unsuitable for girls are never played in the Maldives, for example, rugby, wrestling, American football and boxing. There was no list of sports given alongside the questionnaire, the selected sports were chosen by the subjects.
### Table 13: Why sports are unsuitable for boys and girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons given</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable for boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- Always played by girls (for girls only)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Too feminine</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Does not suit boys (e.g. odd for boys)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Boys don't know how to play</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- It's childish</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Boys are strong and powerful</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Because they are boys</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- others</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of responses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable for girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- Girls are physically weak</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Only for boys</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Causes injuries</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Unsuitable for girls (e.g. odd for girls)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- It's dangerous</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- No skill</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Boring</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Others</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of responses</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages and totals are based on (multiple) responses - 248 and 242 valid respondents for boys and girls respectively. N = valid respondents, and % of responses = valid percentages.

The most important reasons why Maldivian adolescents think that some sports are 'not suited' for boys are shown in Table 13. The three most common responses in this regard were that these sports were 'only for girls', that they were 'too feminine' and that they were 'odd for boys'. Likewise, 'girls are weak', 'only for boys', 'causes injuries', 'odd for girls', 'its dangerous' and 'no skill' were the six most common reasons given that some sports were 'not suited' for girls. It is important to highlight that almost half (49.3%) of the Maldivian adolescents (boys and girls combined) gave a similar answer (i.e. only for girls) in describing why certain sports were 'not suited' for boys.
4. Globalisation and its Influence on the Sporting Culture and Sports Participation of Maldivian Adolescents

Table 14: Sporting/physical activities in which adolescents would like to participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPORTS</th>
<th>OVERALL</th>
<th></th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th></th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% N Rank</td>
<td></td>
<td>% N Rank</td>
<td></td>
<td>% N Rank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>14.1 291 1</td>
<td>13.3 123 2</td>
<td>14.8 168 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>12.9 266 2</td>
<td>12.6 116 3</td>
<td>13.2 150 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>12.9 265 3</td>
<td>21.2 196 1</td>
<td>6.1 69 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>9.7 200 4</td>
<td>7.5 69 5</td>
<td>11.6 131 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>8.5 174 5</td>
<td>9.8 90 4</td>
<td>7.4 84 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>8.1 167 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.4 163 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>6.9 142 7</td>
<td>5.0 46 8</td>
<td>8.5 96 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>6.9 104 8</td>
<td>6.4 59 6</td>
<td>6.0 44 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>4.4 91 9</td>
<td>4.7 43 9</td>
<td>4.2 48 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Tennis</td>
<td>4.1 85 10</td>
<td>3.9 36 10</td>
<td>4.3 49 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>3.0 61 11</td>
<td>5.1 47 7</td>
<td>3.4 38 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashi</td>
<td>1.9 40 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 38 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>1.5 30 13</td>
<td>1.6 15 13</td>
<td>1.3 15 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing</td>
<td>1.4 20 14</td>
<td>2.7 25 11</td>
<td>3.4 22 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerobics</td>
<td>1.2 25 15</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9 22 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Wrestling 1.7 16 12  
*Biking 1.6 15 14  
*Dancing 1.5 17 13

TOTAL 100 2057 44.9 923 55.1 1134

Percentages and totals are based on (multiple) responses - 923 or 44.9% of males and 1,134 or 55.1% of females. The total of 2,057 is the number of valid responses from a total of 650 respondents. * These sports do not feature in the overall ranking.

Table 14 shows the sports and physical activities in which Maldivian adolescents would like to participate regularly. The table presents the sample as a total and also divides results along gender lines. The top five sports that the majority of the adolescents of the Maldives would like to participate in were basketball, volleyball, soccer, badminton and swimming. These results show similarities with those found in other countries, for instance in Germany, Hungary, the United States and New Zealand (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000, Thomson & Soos, 2000). Further, it is important
to point out that wrestling is ranked somewhat highly (tenth) among boys, although it is not a sport which is available in the Maldives. ‘Bashi’, an indigenous sport, is also ranked highly in this respect girls despite the limited support the sport receives from the government.

In addition, it is important to note that there were similarities and differences among Maldivian adolescents’ choice of popular sports and those sports that they would most like to participate in (see Table 7 & 14). For example, while soccer was the most favoured and the most frequently participated sport among adolescents (see Tables 7 & 8), basketball and volleyball were the sports in which Maldivians would most like to participate (see Table 14).

**Table 15:** Favourite sporting heroes among adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>MALES N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>FEMALES N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ronaldo</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ali Umar (M)</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>David Beckham</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Michael Jordan</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Zinedine Zidane</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Luis Figo</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Martina Hingis</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Moosa Manik (M)</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Batistuta</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Diego Maradona</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pele</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nizam (M)</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Rock</td>
<td>Pro-wrestling</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Michael Owen</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ali Shiham (M)</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequencies and percentages are based on the number of valid responses (i.e. 396 valid). M = Maldivian sporting personalities.
The most popular sporting heroes for secondary school students of the Maldives are shown in Table 15. The top five sports heroes were Ronaldo (soccer), Ali Umar (soccer), David Beckham (soccer), Michael Jordan (basketball) and Zinedine Zidane (soccer). It is important to note the influence of the media (especially cable television) that might have affected these choices, as most of the heroes are international stars (only five Maldivian athletes featured in the top 15). In addition, it is interesting to note the popularity of The Rock (pro-wrestler - ranked fifth) among boys, as wrestling is a sport that is never played or encouraged in the Maldives, indicating the power of the media. Furthermore, the second most popular athlete when both genders are combined (Ali Umar - current Maldivian soccer player) ranks a low ninth among boys, whereas girls ranked him a clear first. This shows that Maldivian boys do not rank local sports personalities highly; indicating girls choices of local sports personalities may not (only) be based on their playing skills alone. It maybe that some athletes’ popularity lies not in their playing ability alone, but is influenced by other social factors.
DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into four sections, which pertain to the major aims of this study. The first section investigates the meaning of sport to Maldivian adolescents and its role in their lives. This includes an examination of the importance placed on sport and the meaning attached to sport by the students. The second section examines the students’ reasons for sports participation or non-participation. The third section explores gender differences in relation to the above. Finally, the fourth section examines whether globalisation is influencing the sporting culture and sports participation among adolescents in the Maldives.
1. The Importance and Meaning Attached to Sport

In the lives of Maldivian adolescents, sport ranks highly as a leisure time activity. For instance, on a scale of 0-100 the mean value of the sample was 71.9, indicating the importance that sport plays in the lives of young Maldivians. Similarly, sports rank highly in this regard with New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents. For instance, Thomson and Soos's (2000) study showed that New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents ranked the importance of sport at 74.6 and 78 respectively, somewhat higher than their counterparts from the Maldives (71.9). However, adolescents from Germany ranked sports slightly lower (69.3) than the Maldivians, while American adolescents were slightly above (72.9), indicating that similar views are shared between adolescents from these three countries (Rees et al., 1998). These results are similar to those found in LeUnes and Nations' (1989) study which concluded that sports participation was the most important activity for youths, and De Knop et al.'s (1996) finding that identified sport as the most popular leisure time activity among youths. This also appears to be a trend evidenced among Asian countries, as, for example, the Chinese government encourages all adolescents (school going) to participate in sports (Ren, 1996).

Indeed, similarities were found among boys in particular in the ranking given to sport among the youth of New Zealand, Hungary, the United States, Germany and the Maldives, boys from all the aforementioned countries ranked sport significantly higher than their female counterparts. For example, boys from New Zealand and the Maldives ranked sport at 77.45 (Thomson, 2000) and 76.3 respectively out of a ranking of 0-100, while girls
rated sports at 71.38 (Thomson, 2000) and 68.1 respectively, clearly indicating that boys from these countries rated sport somewhat higher than girls. However, Hungarian boys and girls both rated sport at 78, indicating that sports were equally important by both genders (Thomson & Soos, 2000).

Indeed, with the exception of Hungarian adolescents, it is important to note that in other similar studies carried out, a pattern of boys placing significantly more importance on sport in relation to girls is clearly evidenced (e.g. Russell, Allen & Wilson, 1996; White & Rowe, 1996). In the Maldives, these differences could be attributed to the religious beliefs held by Maldivian adolescents. For instance, many parents perceived their sons' involvement in sports as natural and normal while their daughters involvement as odd and unnecessary (personal communication, May 2001). Consequently, the messages girls receive regarding sporting involvement from family and from the wider community (e.g. school) could be different to those received by boys (Coakley, 1998).

The results also showed that this study's sample spent a considerable amount of time participating in both school and out-of-school sport, averaging 11.9 hours per week in these activities. Boys and girls spent 6.91 hours (mean) and 5.11 hours (mean) per week respectively on school-related sports and 7.54 hours (mean) and 4.61 hours (mean) per week respectively on out-of-school sports. The total mean of 13.98 hours (for boys) and 9.46 hours (for girls) per week on school and out-of-school related sports, indicates that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in this respect but not within boys and girls between countries (see Table 16). The difference could be attributed to gender stereotyping behaviours within families or communities. For instance, according to Hargreaves (1996), in
many families gender stereotyping is part of everyday life and thus there is a significant difference in the psychological experiences of a male and female. These stereotyping behaviours could be a factor as Maldivian parents are guided by the norms and values governing their religion, which tend to discourage sporting involvement for girls.

**Table 16:** Time spent on sport – New Zealand, Hungarian and Maldivian youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>SAMPLE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In S</td>
<td>O S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>10-18 yrs</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>5.2 hrs</td>
<td>6.3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>10-18 yrs</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>3.5 hrs</td>
<td>6.3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>13-21 yrs</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>6.9 hrs</td>
<td>7.6 hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures taken from Thomson & Soos, 2000)

A comparative study conducted on New Zealand and Hungarian youth found that New Zealand boys and girls spent on average 11.5 hours and 8.6 hours a week respectively participating in sport, while boys and girls from Hungary spent 9.8 hours and 7.7 hours per week on sport (Thomson & Soos, 2000). Thus, it can be seen that youth from New Zealand, Hungary and the Maldives were spending a considerable amount of time in school and out-of-school sports. Furthermore, boys from these countries were spending on average 2 to 4 hours more than girls in sports. Similar results have been found among Danish and English adolescents (Ibsen & Ottessen, 1996; White & Rowe, 1996). Boys spending more time on sports than girls could be a reflection of the way traditional gender role patterns are manifested in sociological forms - boys and girls could develop different behavioural
patterns, due to specific patterns in gender roles socialisation (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985). It is speculated that this could be a major factor in girls spending less time in sports than boys. Other factors that affect both boys and girls' sports participation were 'lack of space', 'access', 'social support', 'media support' and 'positive role models' (personal communication, May 2001). Indeed, this view was somewhat evident in some of the statements made by the study's sample.

The findings also showed that, on average, Maldivian adolescents spent more time in school sports and in out-of-school sports than adolescents from either New Zealand or Hungary. For instance, while New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents spent on average 11 hours and 8.8 hours respectively on sport (Thomson & Soos, 2000), the Maldivian adolescents spent 11.9 hours on sports. As suggested by Weiss and Duncan (1992), the reasons for spending a considerable amount of time in sport could be due to sport being seen by educators and parents as an activity that leads to beneficial outcomes such as self-confidence, discipline, sportsmanship and interpersonal skills.

For example, some schools and the national sports associations who conduct sport programmes in the Maldives assume that if sport is conducted 'properly' it can offer benefits such as improved self-confidence, discipline, sportsmanship and personal skills (government official, personal communication, May 3, 2001). Additionally, Maldivian educators appear to believe that sport should be encouraged as it helps students develop self-confidence and stay healthy (school principal, personal communication, May 6, 2001). However, concern is also apparent over the perceived (negative) way sports are being organised and conducted by the respective ministries (i.e.
the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Education). The attitudes here thus appear a little contradictory, inviting future research.

It is important to note that in the age group of 18 and over within the study’s sample (see Table 5) the total number of hours spent in school and out-of-school sports decreased considerably. Indeed, a Tukey test showed that the 18 years and over age group decreased the time spent on school sports relative to the other two age groups, $F(1,299 = 11.77, p < .001)$. It is not surprising that the time spent on sports decreased in the 18 years and above age groups given that sports are not compulsory in the senior grades in schools. There appears to be little difference in out of school sports played, indicating that in the Maldives the educational situation changes regardless of the students’ interests and choices. This supports the results found elsewhere that age seems to affect sports participation (e.g. Rudman, 1989; Waser & Passavant, 1997). For example, Waser and Passavant (1997) found sport participation declined among French youth from 71% at 12 years of age to 34% at 19. Thus, as the students aged, their interest and choices shifted to other areas, resulting in less time being spent on sports than when they were younger (Lee, 1993).
Table 17: Meaning of sport - for NZ, Hungary, Germany, USA and the Maldivian adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Maldives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team sports</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; fitness</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual sports</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Thomson and Soos (2000)

When asked to consider what they associated with the word 'sport', 'fun and enjoyment' was the students' most preferred meaning. This was followed by 'health and fitness', 'team sports', 'individual sports', 'playing and games' and 'winning' (see Table 17). The results showed that the boys' and girls' associations in this respect were quite similar, although there were some significant differences. For example, the boys chose 'winning' as their fifth preference, while girls ranked 'winning' as their eighth, indicating that boys seem to be more competitive than girls. Similarly, Trew et al.'s (1997) study on reasons for sports participation among Northern Ireland students (ages 7-17 years) showed that boys tend to have demonstrated more competitiveness than girls. Further, among Australian adolescents it was found that boys were more competitive, while girls rated fun and enjoyment as more important when participating in sports (Weinberg et al., 2000).

This echoes the common claim that men are more competitive than women (Hargreaves, 1996) and may support the common stereotypes about differing gender roles between men and women. Indeed, the apparent differences between boys and girls regarding displays of aggressiveness and competitiveness could be described as a consequence of social and cultural...
experiences (Hargreaves, 1996). For instance, it is quite often claimed that men are 'naturally' more aggressive, more competitive and thus better at sport than women (Hargreaves, 1996). In this regard, a study done in relation to extra-curricular activities in the United States found boys emphasising so-called masculine values, such as toughness, competitiveness and aggression, in their physical activities and sport (Alder et al., cited in Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997). Conversely, the same study showed that girls' activities tended to foster emotional management and focus on physical appearance (Alder et al., cited in Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997).

Studies conducted among adolescents from Germany, the United States (Rees et al., 1998), New Zealand and Hungary (Thomson & Soos, 2000) showed similar results in terms of the concepts associated with the word 'sport' when compared with the Maldivian youth. For example, 'fun and enjoyment' ranked as the most preferred meaning attached to sport among adolescents from New Zealand (Thomson, 2000), Germany (Rees et al., 1998) and the Maldives, and also third and second among Hungarian and American adolescents (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000).

However, significant differences also existed (see Tables, 2 & 6). For instance, American adolescents chose 'winning or victory' as their third most preferred meaning associated with sport, while adolescents from New Zealand, Hungary, Germany and the Maldives rated 'winning or victory' as one of their lowest (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Further, it is important to note that Maldivian adolescents chose 'playing sports & games' as their fifth preferred meaning attached to sport, a term not mentioned among adolescents in any of the other aforementioned countries. These
results suggest that although sports ranked highly among adolescents from the United States, New Zealand, Hungary, Germany and the Maldives, the meaning sport has differs somewhat among adolescents in these countries. This could be due to differing values placed on sport in certain cultures. For example, although sport is seen as an important part of Maldivian youth culture, the wider community (e.g. majority of parents) does not actively support sport as a means to grow and develop (personal communication with anonymous parents and government officials, May 2001). This is contrary to the findings elsewhere, where it is believed that sports participation is seen as having definite potential benefits for children and adolescents (Biddle, 1995).

Table 18: Favoured sporting activities - Hungary, New Zealand and Maldivian adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Maldives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>30% (2)</td>
<td>15% (2)</td>
<td>18.6% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>16% (4)</td>
<td>24% (1)</td>
<td>21.4% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>6% (4)</td>
<td>3.9% (7)</td>
<td>3.0 % (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging/ T&amp; F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>32% (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>19% (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.8% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
<td></td>
<td>13% (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td></td>
<td>6% (4)</td>
<td>5.6% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch Rugby</td>
<td>15% (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.0% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>10% (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.1% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.7% (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures are taken from Thomson and Soos (2000).

The most favoured sports among Maldivian adolescents were soccer, basketball, volleyball, netball and badminton respectively (see Table 18). Similarities can be found in previous research: for instance, basketball and
soccer also appear to be popular among adolescents from Germany, the United States, New Zealand and Hungary (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson & Soos, 2000). However, there were clear differences among the adolescents when ranking the most popular sport. Soccer was the most popular sport among adolescents from the Maldives, while basketball, swimming and rugby were the most popular sports among adolescents from the United States, Germany and New Zealand respectively (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Similarly, badminton was popular among the Maldivian sample (see Table 3), while it was not ranked by adolescents from the aforementioned countries.

The popularity of certain sports could be attributed to the ever-increasing influence of the media around the world. For example, most of the soccer and cricket World Cup matches were broadcasted live in the Maldives, further evidence of the globalisation of sport. It should be noted that cricket is ranked 10th favourite sport, not highly ranked but perhaps if not for the world cup being televised live, cricket's ranking would not be in the list of favourite sports at all. In addition to media influences on popularising certain sports, it is also speculated that the popularity among Maldivian adolescents of certain sports such as badminton could be attributed to the fact that the Maldives was once a British protectorate (Guttman, 1994). Several sports, including soccer, cricket, netball and badminton, were introduced and in some instances popularised by the British during their occupation of the Maldives (personal communication, May 2001).

Another significant reason for the popularity of certain sports is the financial clout of their international federations. Local sports associations receive a significant amount of sponsorship from their affiliated international
federations, and, although certain sports were not necessarily the most ‘ideal’ sports for Maldivian adolescents, this finding strongly assisted with the promotion of those sports (personal communication, May 2001). For the year 2001, the Football Association of the Maldives (FAM) received approximately $3 million US from FIFA (Federation of International Football Association) to develop and promote soccer in the Maldives (Official from the FAM, personal communication, May 2001).

Some consider that “Football has become more dear to Maldivians than the blood in their bodies” (maldivesculture.com), while:

... land reclamation is making way for more football fields and the FA (Football Association) receives full support from the government. Needless to say, it’s one of the wealthiest associations on the (wider) sub-continent. (asianfootball.com/online)

It is no surprise that the Maldivian government appears to sponsor and support certain sports. Sports that are popular among ‘high-ranking’ (e.g., government officials) individuals are also promoted as important sports (personal communication, May 2001). Therefore, in addition to the influence of the media, it could be speculated that governmental ‘support’ given to certain sports is affecting the popularity of those sports within Maldivian society.

Although soccer was clearly the most popular sport among boys from the Maldives, girls ranked soccer as their fifth preference. On the other hand, girls ranked netball as their second most popular sport, while their male counterparts did not rank netball at all. It is interesting to note that basketball was ranked as the most and the second most popular sport among Maldivian girls and boys respectively, despite the low priority given to
the sport by the government. There has been a long battle between the players and the Chairman of the Basketball Association regarding the development and organization of the game in the Maldives (personal communication, May 2001) and one senior player recently clashed with the governing body by suggesting that according to the Olympic charter, the chairman of the sports association should be elected, which is not the current procedure in the Maldives (personal communication, May 2001). The situation remains unresolved. To protest against the government policy, one of the leading basketball clubs does not participate in any of the basketball tournaments organised by the Maldives Basketball Association. When examined in this context, the popularity of basketball among Maldivian adolescents could be attributed to the media, especially Sky Television, which regularly televises NBA games from the United States.

Further, it is of interest to note that ‘bashi’ (an indigenous sport), although arguably the most widely played sport among women (of all ages) in the Maldives, ranked only as the ninth most popular sport among the girls in this sample. While most sports (especially sports that have national associations) that are played in the Maldives have a national tournament every year, ‘bashi’ has no formal tournament, suggesting that the government has no interest in developing the sport. Indeed, the Ministry of Youth and Sports does not promote ‘bashi’ at any level, although the Maldives Olympic Committee does organize and conduct national tournaments (government official, personal communication, May 2001). Consequently, the lack of governmental support and patronage for ‘bashi’, despite it currently being a widely played sport, could be a reason for its low ranking by the girls in this study.
2. Reasons for Sports Participation and Non-participation Among Adolescents of the Maldives

The results showed that the five most important reasons for sports participation among adolescents of the Maldives were ‘good for the body’, ‘physical fitness’, ‘enjoyment of exercise’, ‘excitement’ and ‘enjoyment of the competition’. Furthermore, the three least important reasons for sports participation among Maldivian adolescents were ‘to make money at it’, ‘because of family’ and ‘because of friends’. Similarities were found when Maldivian adolescents were compared with New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents in relation to reasons for sports participation. For example, the most important reason for sport participation for New Zealand and Hungarian adolescents was that it was ‘good for the body’ (Thomson & Soos, 2000). Additionally, the top five most important reasons for sports participation given by Maldivian adolescents were the same as those of their New Zealand counterparts (Thomson, 2000), showing similarities between adolescents from these countries.

Similarities were also found among Chinese youth in relation to sports participation when compared to the aforementioned countries. For example, 7–17 year olds from China stated fun, fitness, competition and social motives as their main reasons for sports participation (Wang & Wisese-Bjornstal, 1996). The similarities among Maldivian, Chinese and New Zealand adolescents could be due to a number of reasons, such as the (universal) recognition that regular physical activity has been shown to result in health benefits such as reducing heart disease (Health Education Authority, cited in
Sleap, 1998). In addition, the notion that sports help build character through developing self-control, cooperating with team-mates and learning to live with both victory and defeat (Coakley, 1998; Shields & Bredermeier, 1995), continues to be widely accepted in many countries (Coakley, 1998), although Coakley's work is not conducted in the Maldives. Hence, it is no surprise to see adolescents from various cultures having similar motives for sports participation.

Although reasons given for sports participation among adolescents of the Maldives and New Zealand were quite similar, there were some differences in comparison to their Hungarian counterparts. For instance, while New Zealand and Maldivian adolescents chose 'physical fitness' as their second highest motivation for involving themselves in sport, Hungarian adolescents ranked 'physical fitness' fourth (Thomson & Soos, 2000).

Furthermore, there were also differences among boys and girls of the Maldives in ranking their reasons for sports participation, by a Mann-Whitney U test. In addition, the ratings given for sports participation by boys to 'enjoyment of competition', 'physically attractive', 'make a career out of it', 'like being on a team', 'because my family wants me to' and; to 'make money at it', indicated that they rated each of the aforementioned reasons higher than girls. Thus, although sport was popular with both genders, boys showed considerably more interest in sports than did girls.

The general results of the study also indicated that boys and girls do view sport somewhat differently. For instance, as boys ranked sports higher (see Table 4), and spent more time in sports (see Table 5), than girls it is no surprise that boys' commitment to sport differs to that of girls. As a result of the constant exposure to the social world full of cultural signs of gender
differences, it is very difficult for children to behave in a similar manner (Hargreaves, 1996). Thus, several researchers have indicated that females have been ‘unfairly’ excluded from involvement at various levels in many sports (e.g. Phillips, 1993). In addition, it is speculated that religion appears in this case (Maldives being an Islamic country) to be influencing the way that Maldivian adolescents perceive sport and physical activity participation. Women are bound by certain social and religious restrictions and taboos, traditional beliefs at times isolating them from the public within Maldivian society (Sfeir, 1985). Such beliefs, which are ingrained within the Maldivian society, could be restricting females from participating in sport as much as their male counterparts.

3. Additional Gender Differences

Among the Maldivian adolescents surveyed, there were some similarities between the genders in their responses to the statement that some sports (i.e. same sports for boys and girls) are ‘not suited’ to boys (see Table 11). For instance, when the study’s sample was asked to ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ to the statement that some sports are ‘not suited’ to boys, 46.8% of boys and 46.2% of girls agreed. Thus, nearly half of the Maldivian adolescents felt that some sports were ‘not suited’ to boys participation. There appears to be some similarities between adolescents of the Maldives and their German counterparts on this issue. For example, 47.8% of the German adolescents (Rees et al., 1999) also agreed that certain sports were ‘not suited’ for boys, despite their cultural differences from Maldivian adolescents. It could be that a common adherence to traditional gender roles
and the socialisation process continues to shape the experiences somewhat similarly among adolescents from different countries despite the cultural differences between these countries (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985; Ryckman & Hamel, 1992).

However, there were significant differences in this regard between adolescents from New Zealand and the United States when compared to their Maldivian counterparts. For example, whereas only 35.6% of New Zealand boys and 37.7% of American boys agreed that certain sports were inappropriate for boys (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson, 2000), 46.8% of the Maldivian boys agreed with this statement. This shows that the Maldivian boys were not as supportive of non-gendered sport participation for boys as their counterparts from New Zealand and the United States. Furthermore, New Zealand and American girls were much more supportive of non-gendered (non-stereotyped) sport participation when compared with that of their counterparts from the Maldives. While 81.1%, and 70.7% of girls from New Zealand and the United States respectively agreed with the view that all sports should be appropriate for boys (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson, 2000), only 53.8% of Maldivian girls agreed with this view. The Maldivian adolescents thus demonstrated a significantly more gendered attitude towards sports participation for boys than their counterparts from other countries.

This suggests that Maldivians are more gender conscious (i.e. stereotyping behaviours) than their New Zealand and American counterparts. The difference could lie in the different socio-cultural beliefs (i.e. Maldives being an Islamic country) held among adolescents in these countries (e.g. Hardman, 1997) and thus the society perceives somewhat
differently the roles of females in relation to males (personal communication, May 2001). For example, women are supposed to be gentle and act as housewives rather than playing sports, while men do strenuous activities including work and play (personal communication, May 2001). Additionally, that the Maldives is a developing country and thus has different governmental priorities (e.g. education versus sports) from that of New Zealand and the United States could also be partly responsible for this difference, as sport is seen in such countries (developing countries) as having less significance than academic work (McGuire & Collins, 1998).

There were also strong feelings among Maldivian adolescents regarding the statement that certain sports were 'not suited' for girls. For example, 39.9% of girls and 59.9% of boys agreed with the statement that certain sports were 'not suited' for girls, indicating boys were more gender conscious (i.e. prone to stereotyping) than girls. This pattern was similar to that found among adolescents from Germany, the United States and New Zealand (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson, 2000). However, there were also significant differences between adolescents from New Zealand when compared to their counterparts from Germany, the United States and the Maldives. For example, the majority (75.8%) of the New Zealand adolescents disagreed with the statement that certain sports were 'not suited' for girls (Thomson, 2000), indicating that New Zealand adolescents have significantly less gendered attitudes than their counterparts from Germany, the United States and the Maldives.

However, previous research has also shown that boys are more gender biased than girls in this respect (e.g. Colley, Englinton & Elliot, 1992). For instance, Colley et al.'s (1992) study of 9 year old British students showed
that no boys played ‘female’ sports but that 20% of girls reported playing ‘male’ sports. In addition to boys being ‘generally’ gender conscious (Colley et al., 1992), this tendency is likely to have been exacerbated in the Maldives due to that country’s religious beliefs, particularly in relation to the traditional role of women. For instance, the role of a woman in the traditional Maldivian society is to be a good housewife - mainly cooking and rearing children. The gender climate is changing, however, it used to be odd to see women participating in sports, however in the past decade significant changes have occurred, and these days it is quite frequent to see women playing sports (personal communication, May 2001).

Despite these international differences in gender bias, there were significant similarities among adolescents from Germany, the United States and the Maldives when responding to the statement that certain sports were ‘not suited’ to girls. Adolescents from these three countries were somewhat equally split in their view that certain sports were ‘not suited’ for girls. 51.5% of German, 51.4% of American and 49% of Maldivian adolescents agreed with the statement that some sports were ‘not suited’ for girls, thus displaying quite similar views on the issue.

In addition, there were more similarities than differences among adolescents from Germany, the United States and the Maldives when asked to identify sports labelled as inappropriate for boys and girls (Rees et al., 1999). For example, adolescents from these countries agreed that aerobics and ballet were ‘not suited’ to boys participation. Similarly, when asked to identify sports that were ‘not suited’ to girls, the adolescents from the aforementioned countries listed such sports as American football, soccer, boxing, wrestling, rugby and basketball (Rees et al., 1999).
Similarly, other studies done in the United States also support the idea that boys and girls having different views with regard to sports participation (Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997). For example, one study focussed on frequency of enrolment in aerobics and weight training among secondary school students. The results indicated that 62% of the students enrolled in weight training classes were boys and 92% of the students enrolled in aerobics classes were girls (Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997). Overall, the data from German, American and Maldivian adolescents showed general agreement by both boys and girls on what constitutes ‘male’ and ‘female’ sports. Furthermore, the results suggested that despite the social and cultural diversities that exist between adolescents in these aforementioned countries, there appears to be much they have in common, which may indicate the power of the media and a globalising trend within sport, an issue which will be more fully explored in the following section. Further, similar to that found by Rees et al. (1999), these results indicated that girls were perceived as ‘not suited’ to violent aggressive sports, while boys were thought to be ‘not suited’ to expressive, aesthetically pleasing sports.

In response to a question asking why some sports may be considered ‘not suitable’ to boys, the results showed ‘only for girls’, ‘too feminine’ and ‘odd for boys’ (see Table 12) as the most common responses among Maldivian adolescents. Indeed, nearly half (49.3%) of the study’s sample gave the reason that ‘because they were played only by girls’ (i.e. only for girls) as the main reason for a sport’s unsuitability for boys. In this respect both genders showed a similar pattern. Similarities were also found when Maldivian adolescents were compared to their American and German
counterparts. For instance, adolescents from the United States (40.1%), Germany (17.4%) and the Maldives (49.3%) gave 'only for girls' as the most common response (Rees et al., 1999), although the German figure shows less in relation to their counterparts from the Maldives, and the United States.

There were also some differences among adolescents from Germany, the United States and the Maldives on this issue. For example, adolescents from the United States (19.6%) and the Maldives (9.7%) gave 'too feminine' as their second most common response as to why certain sports were 'not suited' to boys, whereas their counterparts from Germany (3.2%) placed this as their ninth ranked response (Rees et al., 1999). In addition, Maldivian adolescents were asked to comment on why certain sports were 'not suited' to girls. The results suggested that 'girls are physically weak', 'only for boys', 'causes injuries', 'odd for girls', 'dangerous' and 'no skills' were the most common reasons given. Unsurprisingly, these results indicated that the sports considered 'not suited' for girls were perceived to be characterised by violence and injuries (Bryson, 1994).

In addition, more than half (56%) of the Maldivian adolescents stated 'biological predisposition' and 'lack of strength' (girls are physically weak) as the most common reasons for certain sports being 'not suited' to girls (see Table 13). Further, 22.3% of the Maldivian adolescents stated 'only for boys' as the reason for certain sports being 'not suited' for girls. These results showed similarities to those found by Rees et al. (1999) in comparative work between adolescents from Germany and the United States. For instance, Rees et al.'s study (1999), showed that in addition to violence and injuries, 'biological predisposition' and 'lack of strength' (girls too weak) added up to the majority (75%) of the American and over half (51%) of the German...
adolescents' responses (Rees et al., 1999). It appears that many of the adolescents of these countries perceive that girls are physically weak and fragile compared to boys, and thus consider certain sports being 'not suited' for girls to participate in (Rees et al., 1999).

Hargreaves (1996) has stated that masculinity and femininity are concepts that are socially and historically constructed and are part of a social world where gender differences are intrinsic to everyday life. In this regard, combining the expected roles of women and successful athletes is virtually impossible (Eitzen & Sage, 1993). Thus, it is no surprise that the messages young boys receive differ from the messages girls receive regarding sports participation both inside and outside family settings (Coakley, 1998). For instance, sports such as rugby in their perceived 'violent' form tend to attract male support through their association of male and maleness with values like the use of aggression, force and violence (Bryson, 1994).

In addition, it is argued that predominantly male administrators design women's sport programmes, thus females suffer because of patriarchal values and structures that leave them disadvantaged in the sport system (Sisjord, 1997). Thus, it is acknowledged that sex role socialisation continues to encourage certain sports participation in boys whilst discouraging it in girls (Greendorfer cited in Colley et. al., 1992). Consequently, despite the diversity among adolescents in these countries there exist significant commonalities in relation to attitudes towards different sports, indicating gender stereotyping in relation to sports involvement.
Maldivian adolescents chose soccer as their favourite sport followed by basketball, volleyball, netball and badminton (see Table 7). However, when asked to identify the sports that they would most like to participate in regularly, there were significant differences between the sexes. For example, Maldivian adolescents chose basketball as the sport that they would most like to participate in followed by volleyball, soccer, badminton and swimming (see Table 14). However, soccer was clearly the favourite sport for boys, while girls ranked soccer as their seventh most popular sport. The most favoured sport for girls was basketball.

There were also similarities and differences among boys and girls of the Maldives in choosing their ‘favourite sports’ (see Table 7), ‘sport done regularly’ (see Table 8) and those sports in which they ‘would like participate’ (see Table 14). Indeed, these results indicated that while soccer was the most popular sport in the Maldives, netball was seen as a sport ‘only’ for females. However, it is interesting to note the increasing popularity of volleyball and basketball, sports not played by women until very recently.

It is important to note that ‘bashi’, an indigenous sport among Maldivian women, remains somewhat important among girls. For example, girls rated ‘bashi’ as their ninth most popular sport and the seventh most popular participant sport, indicating cultural and historical roots are clearly important influences on sporting activities chosen. Similarly, rugby, as historically the most significant sport among New Zealand males, remains as the most preferred sport of New Zealand adolescents, although it does not
feature in the preferences of Maldivian, German, American and Hungarian adolescents (Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1994; Thomson & Soos, 2000).

The case of 'bashi' for women lends some support to the concept of the heterogenising influence of globalisation, where it rejects the influence of global technologies and products in favour of stressing the inherent uniqueness of every localised cultural context (Andrews et al., 1996). The cultural value attributed to 'bashi' by the female subjects in this study, despite a lack of government support, emphasises cultural differences and the power of the particular (Silk & Jackson, 1999). Consequently, the local is thus viewed as more of a self-contained, static, cultural site, contributing to a process of heterogenisation (Jackson & Andrews, 1999). Indeed, globalisation is often seen as a two way process (Maguire 1994) and people will not passively accept sport forms but interpret sport differently for themselves. Consequently, there will be local or national differences in the way sport is played (Thomson, 2000). Thus, despite global development and the impact of the international media, differing cultural and historical roots are clearly evident in some of the sport preferences among adolescents from differing cultures.

However, regarding the Maldivian adolescents' most popular sport preferences, there were similarities between them and their counterparts from Germany and the United States. For example, adolescents from the aforementioned countries rated soccer, basketball, swimming, and running (or jogging) among their top six sports in which they had participated in the past year. These results have several implications for the current debate on the 'globalisation of sport', as similar sports are being popularised among various countries despite widely differing geographical locations. For
instance, there is evidence of similar sport preferences among German, American, New Zealand, Hungarian and Maldivian adolescents (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000). These adolescents participate in many of the same sports, such as soccer, basketball and running, which exist as professional sports at a global level (Rees et al., 1999). Indeed, the global media shows these sports live throughout the world, thus influencing the popularity of such sports among adolescents.

Significant similarities were found among adolescents from Germany, Hungary, New Zealand, the United States and the Maldives when examining the meanings associated with the word 'sport'. For example, adolescents from the above mentioned countries rated ‘fun and enjoyment’ as one of the most preferred meanings attached to sport. Further, from the work carried out in these countries it appears that males are generally more competition oriented than their female counterparts (Rees et al., 1999). This suggests the development of a global sporting culture (Silk & Jackson, 2000), where the global patterns of sports participation and consumption may be developing, however it is difficult to know the specific meaning of any sport in a culture.

An example of a globalised sporting culture, wrestling, a sport never played in the Maldives, was ranked somewhat highly among Maldivian boys, and ‘The Rock’, a pro-wrestler, ranked as one of their sport heroes. This may indicate that multi media is a significant factor in the popularising of certain sports (and their heroes) within Maldivian society. Consequently, it is speculated that a lot of sports that are popularised via media inevitably will become popular among Maldivian adolescents.

Finally, in this respect, the Maldivian adolescents ranked Ronaldo (soccer), Ali Umar (soccer), David Beckham (soccer), Michael Jordan
(basketball) and Zinedine Zidane (soccer) as their most popular sport heroes (see Table 15). It is interesting to note that although the second most popular sport hero was Ali Umar (a local soccer player) when both genders were combined, he was ranked only ninth among boys, indicating boys do not support local sport heroes as much as girls. It was boys who ranked Ronaldo as the most popular sport hero, while girls ranked the Ali Umar as their favourite sport hero. Further, there were only four local stars in the top fifteen, suggesting the influence of the media in the emergence of popular sport heroes in the Maldives. Indeed, Michael Jordan was ranked second and fourth as a sports hero among New Zealand and Maldivian adolescents respectively (Donne & McDonald, 1991; Melnick & Jackson, 2000), indicating him to be a globally popular cultural icon (Andrew et al., 1996). Thus, it is speculated that globalisation of sport is occurring within the Maldivian culture, even though local resistance and historical differences are also obvious.
VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relevance of sport to the lives of secondary school students of the Maldives by focusing on four main research issues. The first investigated the meaning that sport has for Maldivian students and its role in their lives. This included an examination of the importance placed on sport and the meanings attached to sport by the students. The second issue investigated the students' reasons for sports participation or non-participation while the third explored gender differences in relation to the above. Finally, the fourth issue examined whether globalisation has influenced the sporting culture and sports participation of adolescents in the Maldives.

This study used an existing instrument called the 'Sport Attitude Survey' (Brettschneider & Rees, 1994), which has been utilised considerably in earlier research to survey adolescents in Germany, the United States, New Zealand and Hungary (Brandl-Bredenbeck, 1997; Rees et al., 1998, 1999; Thomson, 2000; Thomson & Soos, 2000). For the purpose of this study, which was for use in the Maldives, certain questions within the instrument had to be slightly amended to ensure cultural ease of understanding. The amended questionnaire contained 13 parts, which included both 'fixed' and 'open' ended questions (see Appendix E) that covered the four main research areas.

Maldivian adolescents ranked sport at 71.9 out of a scale of 0-100, suggesting that sports have a positive ranking with these students. These
results were in line with the current literature when compared with adolescents from New Zealand, Hungary, Germany and the United States (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Thus, these findings showed that despite the cultural and social differences that exist in the aforementioned countries, adolescents in general perceive sports quite highly, confirming the importance of sports among adolescents worldwide.

This study also concluded that despite the importance placed on sport by adolescents, there were significant gender differences in this regard - Maldivian boys ranked the importance of sport at 76.3 in comparison to their female counterparts who rated sport at 68.1. These results were similar to those found elsewhere (e.g. New Zealand, see Thomson, 2000). Indeed, it is speculated that generally sports rank highly among adolescents, and that boys place sports higher in this respect than do girls. In addition, the findings also showed that, on average, Maldivian boys spent more time (on average four hours more) in school and out-of-school sports than did Maldivian girls. These results were similar to those found among adolescents in New Zealand, Hungary and the United States (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson & Soos, 2000).

The meaning attached to ‘sport’ among Maldivian adolescents showed significant similarities and some differences between boys and girls. For example, the findings showed that ‘fun and enjoyment’ were the most preferred meaning attached to sport among Maldivian adolescents (boys and girls combined), followed by ‘health and fitness’, ‘team sports’, ‘individual sports’, ‘playing and games’ and ‘winning’. This pattern was quite similar when Maldivian boys and girls were independently analysed. However, there was one significant difference between boys and girls. That is, boys chose
'winning' as their fifth preferred meaning attached to sport while girls ranked it eighth. This pattern of boys emphasizing winning was also apparent in other research (e.g. Rees et al., 1999; Thomson & Soos, 2000), which indicates that boys in general associate sport with 'winning' more than girls do.

Furthermore, the results indicated that 'good for the body', 'physical fitness', 'enjoyment of exercise', 'excitement' and 'enjoyment of competition' were the five most important reasons for sports participation. Conversely, the three least important reasons for sports participation among adolescents of the Maldives were 'to make money at it', 'because of family' and 'because of friends'. Similarities were found between this study's sample and that of their counterparts from New Zealand and Hungary (Thomson & Soos, 2000). For example, adolescents from the aforementioned countries' main reason for sports participation were that it is 'good for the body'.

Significant differences were also found between adolescents from the Maldives when compared to their counterparts from Hungary. For example, while Maldivian (and also New Zealand) adolescents rated 'physical fitness' as their second most motivating factor in sports participation, Hungarian adolescents ranked 'physical fitness' fourth (Thomson & Soos, 2000). Thus, while there were similarities in the reasons for sports participation among adolescents from the Maldives, Hungary and New Zealand, there were also significant differences.

Indeed, it is speculated that, in general, boys and girls do view sport somewhat differently. For instance, Maldivian boys ranked sports highly (see Table 4), spent more time in sports (see Table 5), and gave varying reasons
for sports participation or non-participation (see Tables 9 & 10) that differed from girls reasons.

Maldivian adolescents were not as supportive of sport participation that challenges gender stereotypes in comparison to their counterparts from New Zealand and the United States (Rees et al., 1998; Thomson, 2000). One possible reason for this is that the Maldives are governed by Islamic rules and regulations (which are significantly different), in contrast to New Zealand and the United States, thus contributing to the differences found in this study.

Furthermore, there were significant gender biases among Maldivian adolescents in response to the statement that certain sports were ‘not suited’ to girls. For instance, Maldivian boys were more gender conscious (i.e. prone to gender stereotyping) than Maldivian girls. This pattern was similar to that found among adolescents from Germany, the United States and New Zealand (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson, 2000), and appears to reflect a global trend, with some exception such as Hungary.

Significant similarities were found among adolescents from Germany, the United States and the Maldives when responding to the statement that certain sports were ‘not suited’ to boys and girls. Thus, despite the cultural diversity found in these three countries, it appears that an adherence to traditional gender roles and the socialisation process continues to shape similar experiences for adolescents (Fasting & Sisjord, 1985; Ryckman & Hamel, 1992).

It is important to point out that the popularity of volleyball and basketball is increasing in the Maldives, and this constitutes a change (personal communication, May 2001). Basketball, a sport not even played by
women (other than in Seenu atoll) until very recently, is gaining in popularity among adolescents (personal communication, May 2001). Furthermore, it is important to note that 'bashi', an indigenous sport among Maldivian women, remains somewhat important among girls. Indeed, differing cultural and historical roots are evident in some of the sport preferences among Maldivian adolescents, despite global development and the impact of the international media.

Adolescents from the Maldives chose soccer as their favourite sport followed by basketball, volleyball, netball and badminton (see Table 7). These findings were in line with previous research of this nature. For example, soccer and basketball were popular among adolescents from Germany, the United States, New Zealand and Hungary, and gender differences were also common (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Indeed, there is evidence for similarities in sport preferences among German, American, New Zealand, Hungarian and Maldivian adolescents (Rees et al., 1999; Thomson & Soos, 2000). Supporting the concept of the 'globalisation of sport', as similar sports are popular among the youth of various countries despite their geographical location. That the global media appears to be influencing the popularity of such sports among adolescents suggests that people are becoming more alike and heading towards a (uniform) global culture (Silk & Jackson, 2000). Indeed, to a certain level homogenisation of sport is taking place within the sporting culture of the Maldives. Hence, although differing cultural and historical roots which exist within the Maldivian sporting culture continue to provide some local resistance, it is evident that globalisation of the sporting culture is occurring.
5. Implications and Future Research

This quantitative study provided an overview of the current status of sport within the Maldives. Its findings could be useful for national Maldivian sports associations, the Maldivian Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth and Sports as a guideline when preparing sport related policies and programmes as it has identified certain key areas of sport within the Maldivian youth sporting culture.

This research is the first of its kind conducted within the Maldives and more research is needed to increase the depth of knowledge regarding the views of the people and the state of sport. In order to get a clear picture that represents the whole of the Maldives, future research should include private schools and schools situated in atolls that were not surveyed for the purpose of this study. Additionally, future research should use qualitative methods, perhaps cases studies and ethnographic research, to find out more in depth information on the issues raised in this present study.

It is very important to identify the differences between adolescents attending private schools versus public schools, as private schools are somewhat different in the way they are administered and run. For example, the available resources to provide opportunities to encourage sports participation among private school students are quite limited in comparison to government-run public schools (personal communication, May 2001). The current study was limited to only four government schools (which are by far the major schools in the Maldives) in three different atolls. Consequently, to get an accurate sample that would represent the whole of the Maldives,
schools other than the four schools selected for the purpose of this study would need to be examined.

Furthermore, although tailored to suit the local situation, the present investigation used an adapted questionnaire developed to use on German and American adolescents. In order to suit the local context, it is recommended that in future research the questionnaire be further adapted to minimise the number of questions in the instrument. This is because one of the main problems faced while collecting data for the present study was the time that was required to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, because such surveys are rarely conducted among school children in the Maldives, many students felt anxious about the exact reasons for the survey, and despite being reminded by the researcher that the information given would be completely anonymous, there was some degree of anxiety among the respondents (personal observation, May 2001).

In addition, future research should also focus on evaluating and suggesting appropriate methods to formulate government (sport) policies, and objectives in promoting school sports. To this end, research should investigate wants and needs of schools, their students and the general public to find out where the sporting culture is heading and where it should go in order to achieve the maximum benefits from it. Indeed, it is hoped that the information provided from this study will assist, in a productive way, all the related and relevant organizations within the Maldives, thus enhancing the importance of sports and sports participation among its adolescents. Further, it is hoped that this study will provide some ideas for further research to scholars who are interested in sport sociology in developing countries, especially in the South Asian region.
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regarding parents' perceptions vs. children's activity. International


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: The Republic of Maldives
MALDIVES - An overview

The Republic of Maldives consists of approximately 1,190 tiny islands scattered across the Indian Ocean, of which 200 are inhabited. These islands lie 7 degrees north and south of the equator. Marco Polo dubbed the Maldives the 'Flower of the Indies', and thereafter their reputation as a tropical paradise has made the Maldives a popular destination for tourists seeking sun, sand and relaxation. Ibn Batuta, who travelled extensively during the 14th century and who lived on the islands, stated that the Maldives was one of the 'Wonders of the World' (President's Office - website, 2000).

The Maldives consists of twenty-six natural atolls, 130 kilometres at their widest point, stretching for 823 kilometres, with a population of 269,010 (Census, 2000). Its nearest neighbours are India and Sri Lanka situated northeast about 600 and 670 kilometres respectively (Amin, Willets & Marshall, 1992). The government of the Maldives have divided the 26 natural atolls into 20 administrative atolls (The Maldives - website, 2000). The Ministry of Youth and Sports, for the purpose of organising and managing sporting competition, has divided the 20 atolls into 9 zones. The main criterion used for division was the population in population (except Male'); hence the population of each zone will be quite similar to all the other zones.

The Maldives, being on the equator, has a tropical humid climate. However, tropical monsoons are mild and not as well defined as in the neighbouring countries of India and Sri Lanka. The average annual
temperature is 28 degrees C, with little seasonal variation, and average rainfall is 2,163 mm (President's Office - website, 2000).

Each year is divided into two seasons, (i.e. two monsoons). The dry period, ‘Hulhangu’, the north-east monsoon, blows from November to April when after initially strong winds and squalls, the sky turns an endless blue and the sun shines from 6 in the morning to 6 at night. The wet period, ‘Iruvai’, the southwest monsoon, blows from May to November (Amin & Willets, 1992).

History

The debate on who ruled the Maldives and how they did so rages on. However, there is evidence that the Maldives was settled more than 2,400 years ago. The Norwegian explorer, Thor Heyerdahl, who surveyed the many islands during the late 1970s, states that it is possible that the islands were inhabited as early as 1900 BC (Presidents Office - website, 2000). Despite their frequent contact with foreign explorers, the people of the Maldives have remained uniquely homogeneous in terms of language, religion and culture (Maldives Diary, 1999).

It has been suggested that the first visitors to the Maldives arrived through nature's whims, borne by kindly currents or storm tossed and exhausted, in need of refuge (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997). Further, it has been suggested that the early or first settlers would have come from among the people of Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, India and Sri Lanka (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997).
There is architectural evidence that Buddhists and Hindus did live in some islands. Furthermore, it is logical that since many travellers came from Arabia, Islam was the faith of many settlers long before its acceptance as the religion of the Maldives (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997).

Over the years there have been a number of invasions of the Maldives. The Portuguese ruled the Maldives for 15 years starting from 1558 (Maldives Story - website, 2000), and during the 17th Century, thirteen wars were fought to preserve the islands’ independence. During the 1880s, to protect the Maldives from invaders, the sultans of the Maldives became close allies with the British when the British naval influence spread through the Indian Ocean. As a result, the British acknowledged the Maldives, and as the latter had influence over the Indian Ocean, the statehood of the Maldives was recognised. However, the British had no power to interfere in internal matters, though they did control external affairs and hence regarded the Maldives as a protected state (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997; Maldives Story - website, 2000).

It was not until 1932 that a written constitution was formulated and this was largely based on the customs, conventions and other traditional administrative practices that had been followed for centuries (Amin et al., 1992; Maldives Story - website, 2000). The constitution was amended several times, and the 10th constitution led to the replacement of the sultanate and the creation in 1968 of the current Republic, together with the appointment of its first president (Mr. Ibrahim Nasir). The Maldives became a member of the United Nations in 1965 and a member of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1985 (Maldives Story - website, 2000). The Maldives became
independent on the 26th July, 1965 and the country's English name, Maldives Islands, was changed to Republic of Maldives (Amin et al., 1992).

Notable natives

'Giraavaru' (an island) people claim to be the original inhabitants of the Maldives and throughout the centuries have kept themselves apart from the rest of the society. They are generally considered to be Tamils from southern India (Amin et al., 1992). Giraavaru women are recognisable by their custom of tying their hair in a bun on the right-hand side of their head, whereas other Maldivians tie it to the left. They have a special kind of silver embroidery around the top of their 'libaas' dress, and they are extremely modest. Furthermore, although they do not have different customs, they speak with a different accent than other people on Male', in a way similar to the dialect of Seenu atoll (also called Addu Atoll) in the south. However, they may not be around for long as their numbers have been reduced to about 150. The young are now marrying outside their group and trying to make it in the mainstream society, and it is therefore unlikely that they will remain an identifiable people for more than a generation (Amin et al., 1992).

Economy

Fisheries and tourism are the backbone of the economy, which has resulted in an impressive growth rate of about 10% per annum since 1980 (The Maldives - website, 2000). The fishing industry has developed since the 1970s. Until then, most fishing vessels (masdhoni) were sail powered. However, with mechanisation, dhonis were able to reach the fishing grounds faster and spent more time looking for fish (The Maldives - website, 2000). At
present, the annual total catch amounts to more than 100,000 metric tons and half of this is exported. The Maldives specialises in four main methods of fish processing - freezing, canning, smoking and drying, and salting (Maldives Diary, 2000).

Tourism was born during the 1970s, with two resorts opened in 1972 and twenty-two tourists arriving from Italy. In the following years, a number of resorts opened and there was a significant increase in arrivals. Today, there are ninety resorts (i.e. one resort per island), which catered for 429,666 arrivals in 1999 (Tourism Statistics of Maldives, 1999). Tourism is now the largest industry and accounts for more than 18% of GDP, and more than 60% of the Maldives foreign exchange receipts. 90% of government tax revenue comes from import duties and tourism-related taxes.

For years, seashells (i.e. cowry) were the currency used by the people of the Maldives. The cowry shells were accepted currency from Africa to China until the sixteenth century. In 1948 the Maldivian ‘Rufiya’ was introduced and presently, 1 US dollar is equivalent to approximately 11.9 Rufiya (Maldives Story - website, 2000).

Religion

Since many travellers came from Arabia, it seems logical that Islam was the faith of many settlers long before its official acceptance as the religion of all the Maldives in 1153. It is believed that the people of the Maldives welcome visitors warmly and legend suggests some notable visitors; for example royalty from Sri Lanka (then Rasgetheemu) and a visitor from Maghreb (North Africa), namely Abul Barakaath Yousuf Al Barbary. They
were welcomed so royally that they remained in the Maldives. This began the dynasty, which influenced religion and the change to a sultanate (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997; The Maldives - website, 2000). In 1153, Islam was officially declared the religion of Maldivians, thus the king became the sultan, beginning a series of dynasties that prevailed for over 800 years until 1968 (Ellis & Amarasinghe, 1997).

The religion followed in the Maldives is not as strict as in some other parts of the Muslim world. For example, it is not a requirement for women to wear a veil to cover their hair or to cover their face, although people who are caught drinking alcohol receive severe punishment.

The local term for the Maldives is 'Dhivehi Raajje' and the inhabitants call themselves 'Dhivehin', meaning islander, and speak their own language, 'Dhivehi'. It is written from right to left in a script that is unique to the Maldives and is called 'Thaana'. Ellis and Amarasinghe (1997) state that Dhivehi can best be described as an Indo-Aryan language influenced by Sinhala, Hindi, Arabic and Bengali, although its development, since it was spoken by isolated islanders, was independent of the mainstream (Maldives Story - website, 2000).

Although the language spoken by all the Maldivians is the same, 'Dhivehi', the dialect of the people of the north compared to the south islands is easily distinguishable. In other words, although all speak the same language, the dialects are quite different from atoll to atoll.
Political System

The president is the head of the republic, elected every five years by popular vote and has the executive power to run the country. A cabinet is appointed by the president and is responsible to the citizens’ Majlis (i.e. parliament) that comprises of two members from each atoll and Male’ as well as 8 members appointed by the president. Other than the eight members who are appointed by the president, the rest are chosen by vote from the people of the Maldives.

Each of the twenty atolls has an atoll chief appointed by the president. The Ministry responsible for the administration of atolls appoints island chiefs, ‘Bodu Katheeb’, and assistants to the island chiefs, ‘Kudha Katheeb’.

Tiny Male’ island (approximately 2 square kilometres) is one of the smallest capitals in the world, too small even to have its own airport, but an international airport is just a kilometre away on the nearby island called Hulhule. However, Male’ is the hub of all the atolls and it has grown rapidly. It now houses 70,000 inhabitants, about one-third of the entire population, including a floating population of several thousand people who come to sell their wares and buy goods (Amin et al., 1992). To cope with the swelling population, land has been reclaimed in the shallow waters inside the southern and western reefs, adding almost one-third again to the island’s original size, but this is still not enough (Amin et al., 1992).

For centuries, Male’ has been the political, economic, and cultural centre of the Maldives. Although there are no factories or skyscrapers, Male’ is the home of all government offices, banks, and communications, and of the key public and private organizations that oversee the economic and
social life of the nation. From all over the archipelago, islanders come to do business in the waterfront shops, the ‘bazaar’ and the small shops in the narrow lanes where nearly all the goods are imported (Amin et al., 1992). Other than Male’ only five islands have a population of more than 5000 people with the majority of the other islands the population is less than 300 people.

Sport

As a form of social gathering, various forms of sport have been played throughout the country. These sports include modern sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, tennis, cricket, badminton, swimming (no swimming pool), track and field (no synthetic track, only a sand track), carrom, shooting (only National Security Services personnel) and some traditional sports that are unique to the Maldives such as ‘Bashi’ (exclusively for women), ‘Thinmugoalhi’ (both genders), and ‘Mandi’ (exclusively for men).

Our elders say that during the early part of the 20th century, cricket, tennis, volleyball and soccer were played frequently, usually on special occasions such as on New Year’s Eve. At present, the most popular sports are soccer and volleyball, followed by other sports such as swimming, track and field, badminton, table tennis, cricket and basketball (government official, personal communication, May 2001).

During the early 1990s, a specific government ministry was formed for the development of sport. The main aim of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is to develop sport throughout the country and to monitor and regulate the financial and other matters of the national sports associations. It also aims
to educate coaches and officials by conducting courses with assistance from related national sports associations.

The Maldives Olympic Committee was formed to enhance elite sports and was recognised by the International Olympic Committee in 1985. Thirteen National Sports Associations were created in 1983. The purpose of these associations are to (1) train the youth sports teams selected from schools; (2) to conduct inter-school tournaments with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education; (3) to run regional and national tournaments with support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports; (4) to conduct coaching and officiating courses for coaches and officials, and; (5) to prepare national sports teams for international tournaments. All the national sports associations are funded by the government, and are supervised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The biggest local tournaments are the national tournaments, where in some sports the format of competition is divided into divisions. There are several local clubs competing in these tournaments. There are players who play semi-professional sport, mainly in soccer and volleyball. For instance, the most highly paid soccer player will earn approximately 2000 NZ dollars per month. In 1978, the Maldives first took part in an international competition at the Indian Ocean Island games in soccer and volleyball.

The most important international competition for the Maldives is the South Asian Federation (SAF) Games held every two years. Seven countries, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and the Maldives compete in various selected sports such as soccer, volleyball, swimming, track and field, shooting and table tennis.
The Maldives first took part in the Summer Olympics in 1988 in Seoul, South Korea, and has yet to take part in a Winter Olympics. The Maldives participated in these games under the Olympic ideal, that is, the important thing is not to win but to take part.

Education System

The country's first president, elected in 1953, (Al Ameeru Muhamed Ameen Dhoshimeynaa Kilegefaanu) was the person who laid the foundation for education in the Maldives (Maldives Story - website, 2000). The Maldives has a literacy rate of 99%, one of the highest in the world. Education in the English language began in 1961 in two schools (Aminiya and Majeediya Schools). English is the second language, and the majority of the schools use English as the language of instruction.

The Ministry of Education administers the running of the schools. There are three main types of schools, government, community and private. The educational system comprises of pre-primary (i.e. nursery, LKG & UKG), primary (i.e. grades 1-5), middle (i.e. grades 6-7), lower secondary (i.e. grades 8-10) and upper-secondary schools (i.e. grades 11-12) (Education Statistics, 2000).

At the end of grade 10, the students undertake the London 'O' Level exams, and two years after this they undertake the London 'A' levels. After that, unfortunately, the Maldives does not have a university, and further studies are limited. Only the fortunate ones get some scholarship assistance through the government to study overseas.
Physical education is taught up until grade 7 for two sessions a week (i.e. 30 minutes a session). In a typical physical education class, the teacher might take the children outside the classroom and give them some exercise or allow them to play netball or another game.

There are inter-house and inter-school sports. The schools compete vigorously in these competitions to bring pride to the school and themselves. The Ministry of Education conducts these competitions in cooperation with the related national sports association. The main difficulty in practicing or in competition is the lack of facilities, as land is very scarce for any purpose.
APPENDIX B: Letter to Minister of Education
I am a Masters degree student from the School of Physical Education, University of Otago, New Zealand, and am writing to you to request permission to carry out research work within secondary schools in the Maldives. My work is being supervised by Dr. Rex Thomson and Dr. Robyn Jones from the University of Otago.

My research topic concerns the reasons for children’s sport participation or non-participation in the Maldives. The purpose of the study is to examine the relevance of sport to the lives of secondary school students (i.e. grade 9 and 10) within the Maldives. This investigation consists of four main research issues, (1) the meaning sport has for Maldivian students and its role in their lives, for instance, the importance placed on sport and, the meanings attached to sport by the students; (2) the students’ reasons for sport participation or non-participation; (3) are there any gender differences in relation to the above? and (4) whether there exists any evidence that globalisation is influencing the sporting culture and sport participation among adolescents in the Maldives.
A questionnaire has been adapted to obtain information for this study, which will take approximately 20 minutes to answer. The schools in which I hope to administer this survey are Aminiya school, Majeediya school, Southern secondary school and Northern secondary school. These schools will be approached for inclusion in the study following the hoped confirmation of your support for the study. I intend to do the investigation in May and June 2001.

Attached to this letter for your perusal is a copy of the information sheet, which will be given to the participating students and the questionnaire to be administered. Also, enclosed are consent forms to be completed by the parents/guardians of the participating students.

Thanking you in anticipation, and I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Hussain Haleem, B.P.E, B.Ed & M.Ed
APPENDIX C: Participants Information Sheet
Participants information sheet

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read the information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. Participation is voluntary; if you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the aim of the project?

This investigation will provide an understanding of the relevance of sport in the lives of secondary school students of the Maldives.

What will the participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to voluntarily complete a questionnaire regarding the above issue. The questions included within the questionnaire relate to your views about sport and its personal value to you. The questionnaire will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Please complete the questionnaire anonymously; that is, DO NOT write your name [and/or] address on the sheet.

Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?

You may withdraw your participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

How will the information be used?

Please note that any personal information obtained from the questionnaire will remain strictly anonymous and your confidentiality will be preserved at all times. Only the three researchers involved in the project will have direct access to personal information. No information that could possibly identify participants will be disclosed or published. Upon consent, each participant will be assigned a unique, coded number or pseudonym and
from this point on each individual will be identified by this number or pseudonym only.

A plain language summary of the results will be available upon request.

If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to call or email either;

Hussain Haleem (643) 03 479 7746 (Office) kudahusen@hotmail.com
(643) 03 477 4019 (Home)
Dr Rex Thomson (643) 479 8941 rthomson@pooka.otago.ac.nz
Dr Robyn Jones (643) 479 5281 rjones@pooka.otago.ac.nz

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University's research policy, any research data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed.

The Ethics Committee of the University of Otago has reviewed and approved this project.
APPENDIX D: Guardian/Parental Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form
Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read the information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to allow your dependent to participate. Participation is voluntary; if you decide to allow your dependent to participate we thank you. If you decide not to allow your dependent to take part there will be no disadvantage to you or to your dependent of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the aim of the project?
This investigation will provide an understanding of the relevance of sport in the lives of secondary school students of the Maldives.

What will the participants be asked to do?
Should you agree to allow your dependent to take part in this project, they will be asked to volunteer their time to complete a questionnaire regarding the above issue. The questions included within the questionnaire relate to their views about sport and its personal value to them. The questionnaire will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. They will be asked to complete the questionnaire anonymously; that is, they DO NOT write their name and/or address on the sheet.

Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?
You may withdraw your dependent from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself or your dependent of any kind.

How will the information be used?
Please note that any personal information obtained from the questionnaire will remain strictly anonymous and your dependent confidentiality will be preserved at all times. Only the three researchers involved in the project will have direct access to personal information. No
information that could possibly identify participants will be disclosed or published. Upon consent, each participant will be assigned a unique, coded number or pseudonym and from this point on each individual will be identified by this number or pseudonym only.

A plain language summary of the results will be available upon request.

If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to call or email either;

Hussain Haleem  (643) 03 479 7746 (Office)  kudahusen@hotmail.com
(643) 03 477 4019 (Home)
Dr Rex Thomson  (643) 03 479 8941  rthomson@pooka.otago.ac.nz
Dr Robyn Jones  (643) 03 479 5281  rjones@pooka.otago.ac.nz

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University’s research policy, any research data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed.

The Ethics Committee of the University of Otago has reviewed and approved this project.
I .................................................. (please print name) agree to allow my dependent to participate in the study being conducted by Hussain Haleem, under the supervision of Dr. Rex Thomson and Dr. Robyn Jones, School of Physical Education, at the University of Otago. It is further understood that I have received the following information concerning the study.

1. The study has been explained to me. I understand the explanation that has been given and what my dependents' participation will involve.

2. I understand that my dependents' participation is entirely voluntary.

3. I understand that I am free to discontinue my dependent from participation in the study at any time without penalty.

4. I understand that the results of the study will be treated the in strictest confidence and that my dependent will remain anonymous within it. Within these restrictions, the results of the study will be made available at my request.

5. I understand that at my request, I can receive additional explanations of the study at any time.

.................................................. ........................................
Signed Date

Contact phone number: ............... 

I wish to receive a copy of the results: Yes / No
APPENDIX E: Sports Attitude Survey Questionnaire
Sports Attitude Survey

We would like to find out as much as possible about your attitude towards sport, what sports you play, how, and with whom you play sport. However this questionnaire is not only about sport but also about you and your opinion about certain aspects of life.

*It is important for us to find out YOUR OPINION. We would therefore like you to fill out this questionnaire ON YOUR OWN. Your answers are entirely confidential.*

First of all we would like to find out something about your free time. In the following, you will find different statements about free time. Please $\checkmark$ the answer that applies to you. Please try to make a $\checkmark$ next to each statement.

1. I have enough free time for my hobbies.

2. I can plan my free time the way I want to.

3. Quite often I don't really know what I should do during my free time.

4. Studying and doing my homework leaves me with very little time for other activities.

5. I have enough time to hang around with my friends.

6. I'm always so busy that I sometimes wish I had more free time.

There are many different possible ways of how to organize your free time. We would like to find out which activities are most important to you personally.

Please go through the following list and $\checkmark$ how important each activity is to you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Neither Important nor Unimportant</th>
<th>Somewhat Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Listening to music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Watching TV/video</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Hanging around with friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Doing crazy things (e.g.: fighting/drugs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Video games / computers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reading (e.g.: books, magazines, comics)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Informal sport (e.g.: aerobics, skateboarding, going to beach)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Playing a musical instrument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Extra work for school, in addition to homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Going to parties, dances</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now we come to the section about sport

Think for a moment and then write down the three things that come to your mind when you think about sport.

When I think of the word sport I think of ...

a. ______________________________________

b. ______________________________________

c. ______________________________________

Please use the scale below to rate the importance of sport to you. The numbers on the scale should be treated like the numbers on a ruler, with equal distances separating them. You may use any number from 0 to 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of no importance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderately important</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As important to me as I can imagine</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. The importance of sport to me (from 0 to 100) is:__________

Which are your favourite sports?

a. ______________________________________

b. ______________________________________

c. ______________________________________

d. I don't have a favourite sport, because I like to play several sports

e. I don't play any sports

Which are your sport heroes? (rank them in order)

1. ______________________________________

2. ______________________________________

3. ______________________________________

4. ______________________________________

5. ______________________________________
Think of informal physical activities (those not organized in school and/or sports clubs).

List up to five sports/physical activities you have done regularly within the last year:

a. 

b. 

c. 

d. 

e. 

List up to five sports/physical activities you would like to do regularly if given the chance:

a. 

b. 

c. 

d. 

e. 

24. How do you evaluate your physical ability? √ only ONE of the statements below.

- I am really good at one sport.
- I am good at different sports.
- I am average at sports.
- I am not good at sport.
- I don't play any sport at all.

25. Which of the following statements describes your ability in organized sports (in school or outside school)? Please √ only ONE of the statements below.

- I am very good at sport (eg: interhouse, interschool, national).
- I am in the 1st team at school.
- I am not in the top team but I play regularly.
- I am usually a reserve.
- I do not participate.

In the following, different opinions about sport are expressed.

Please √ the answer that represents your opinion about the following statements.

26 Regular practice is an essential part of sport. 

27 In sport you need to be ready to practice even if you don't feel like it. 

28 You cannot be involved in sport unless you are ready "to push yourself" physically.

29 Generally speaking, one of the important things about sport is improving performance.

30 The definition of sport can be very broad. The important thing is to move around and to do something for your body.

31 People can call themselves athletes even if they don't participate in competitive sport.

32 Being successful or unsuccessful in sport does not matter. The important thing is to have fun.
33 Physical activity that is not very strenuous also counts as sport.
34 Competition is an essential part of sport.

Different reasons for participating in sport are listed below. Circle the appropriate box for each statement.

35 I participate in sport because I want to make a career out of it.
36 I participate in sport because I like to meet new people.
37 I participate in sport because I can do something good for my body.
38 I participate in sport because I enjoy competition.
39 I participate in sport because my friends do.
40 I participate in sport because I want to be physically fit.
41 I participate in sport because it relaxes me.
42 I participate in sport because I enjoy exercise.
43 I participate in sport because I like being on a team.
44 I participate in sport because my family wants me to.
45 I participate in sport because I can get my body in shape.
46 I participate in sport because I can make money at it.
47 I participate in sport because it is exciting.
48 I participate in sport because it makes me physically attractive.

In addition to the questions about sport and free time we are interested in some general information about you.

49 Sex: Male / Female
50 Age: ____________
51 Height: ____________
52 Weight: ____________
53 Atoll/Country: ________________________

54 What type of student do you consider yourself to be? Please circle the correct grade.

Grade A B C D E
Please √ below the highest educational level of your parents or guardians.

55. Father or Male Guardian

- Does not apply
- Did not complete 'O' levels
- Completed 'O' levels
- Did not complete 'A' levels
- Completed 'A' levels
- Completed Diploma
- Completed a degree (ie. undergraduate)
- Completed graduate studies (ie. masters or PhD)

56. Mother or Female Guardian

- Does not apply.
- Did not complete 'O' levels
- Completed 'O' levels
- Did not complete 'A' levels
- Completed 'A' levels
- Completed Diploma
- Completed a degree (ie. undergraduate)
- Completed graduate studies (ie. masters or PhD)

Present occupation of:

57. Father or Male Guardian

- Employed
- Occupation __________
- Unemployed

58. Mother or Female Guardian

- Employed
- Occupation __________
- Unemployed

If you add up all your sports activities all in all, how many hours per week are you involved in sport?

59. School related sports...........(hours per week)

60. Sports which have nothing to do with school .........(hours per week)

In school how do students get respect from their peers or classmates? Please rate the importance of each characteristic given below.

An important characteristic for getting respect is:

61. Being physically attractive

62. Being an individual

63. Being a good athlete

64. Being a good student

65. Being a rebel

66. Being a student leader

67. Being popular

68. Getting by without making waves

69. Having a lot of money to spend

Other ____________________
In the following, different opinions about sport for girls and boys are expressed. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

70. Generally speaking boys and girls are about the same at sport.
71. I like girls who are good athletes.
72. I enjoy playing sport with boys.
73. I enjoy cheering for the girls when they are playing sport.
74. The main things that count when girls play sport are competition and performance.
75. Generally speaking boys are better at sport than girls.
76. I find good athletes of the opposite sex attractive.
77. I enjoy cheering for the boys when they are playing sport.
78. I like boys who are good athletes.
79. Generally speaking girls are better at sport than boys.
80. I enjoy playing sport with girls.
81. The main things that count when boys play sport are competition and performance.

Now we would like to know if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

82. Some types of sports are not suitable for boys.
   If you ticked “agree”, please write down a couple of sports that are not suitable for boys.
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   Why are they not appropriate?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

83. Some types of sports are not suitable for girls.
   If you ticked “agree”, please write down a couple of sports that are not suitable for girls.
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   Why are they not appropriate?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND HELP