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## A comparison of participation motives of competitive and non-competitive youth age swimmers

Shane T. Harris  
*Edith Cowan University*

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**A Comparison of  
Participation Motives of Competitive and  
Non-competitive Youth Age Swimmers**

**By**

**S. T. Harris**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Award of  
Bachelor of Science (Sports Science) Honours  
at the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering,  
Edith Cowan University**

**Date of Submission: 7th December, 1995.**

## USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

## Abstract

Understanding the participation motives of youth athletes is vital if their needs are to be met and their sport involvement enhanced. The purpose of this study was to examine the participation motives of a squad of competitive and non-competitive, youth-age, male and female swimmers. A qualitative interview technique was employed to identify the participation motives of 12 youth-age swimmers. The interview schedule was based on theories describing participation motivation, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Data was deductively analysed, with statements classified into the motivation categories described by Passer (1981). Consistent with previous studies on participation motives in youth sport, the swimmers cited multiple reasons for participation. Fitness was revealed to be the most important motive across the sample. Competitive swimmers were more competitively oriented than their non-competitive counterparts, while non-competitive swimmers emphasised improving strokes and excitement motives. Being in the water was an important motive identified by all non-competitive swimmers, indicating that they participate, in part, for the intrinsic joy being in the water brings. The motives cited by competitive swimmers suggest a more extrinsic motivational orientation, while the non-competitive swimmers are more intrinsically motivated. Male and female swimmers identified similar motives for participation. However, female swimmers identified stronger affiliation motives than male swimmers, who were more competitively oriented. Non-competitive male swimmers were notably more competitively and extrinsically oriented than

their female counterparts. It is important that young swimmers' reasons for participating, as well as the differences between competitive and non-competitive, and male and female swimmers, be identified, so that the needs of all youth-age swimmers can be realised and met.

## Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature...

Date..22-1-96.....

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

Medical findings have shown that there is a direct correlation between physical activity at a young age and continued physical activity as an adult (Van Gerven, Van Eynde & Peerlinch, 1984). Positive youth sport experiences can only enhance the desire to engage in physical activity. The reasons why youth participate in sport are complex. By understanding the reasons why young people participate in competitive and non-competitive sports, the needs of these youth sport participants can be realised. In turn, measures can be taken to encourage continued participation. Furthermore, by increasing the incidence of positive youth sport experience, life long participation in sport and exercise is likely to be enhanced.

It is also important for coaches, parents and teachers to know the possible differences between competitive and non-competitive athletes, so that the needs of both groups can be catered for, and participation of both groups encouraged. For these reasons, awareness of participation motives are of importance not only to sport psychologists and coaches, but to those individuals interested in organising and developing youth sport activities.

## Background

The field of participation motivation examines how and why people become actively involved in sport. More importantly researchers endeavour to

understand why athletes continue and maintain their involvement (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). Substantial research has been conducted in this area using quantitative methods to collect data. Research has revealed fun, fitness, and the improvement of skills to be the most important reasons for sport participation (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983; Horn, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1986; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Romar, 1994).

While much empirical data has been collected on the participation motives of competitive youth athletes, only limited information has been collected concerning the reasons why non-competitive athletes participate. The research that has been conducted in this area suggests that non-competitive athletes will be less competitively oriented in their motivation (Gill, Dzewaltski & Deeter, 1988; Knoppers, Schuiteman & Love, 1988; Martindale, Devlin & Vyse, 1990). Knoppers and colleagues however, found no significant differences in competitive orientations between male competitive and non-competitive tennis players.

Research into participation motives has also revealed gender differences in reasons for participation. Males are more competitive in their motivation orientation, while females have been found to be more socially oriented (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Mathes & Battista, 1985; Romar, 1994). Additionally, boys have been found to be more intrinsically motivated than girls (Harter, 1978). These gender differences are tied to socialisation processes rather than any innate characteristic of males and females (Brown, 1985; Coakley, 1994).

Expanding the scope of participation motivation research, by using qualitative methods, will not only provide a clearer view of the topic, but will also



help identify limitations in existing research. The quantitative methods used to date have left gaps in the research relating to a lack of opportunity for subjects to express themselves in their own terms. Qualitative methods can help fill these gaps by lending a depth of understanding beyond those provided by quantitative methods (Brustad, 1992).

### Significance

It is important to examine the reasons why young athletes participate in sports. Only by identifying the reasons athletes participate, can their needs be realised and fulfilled. When the needs of athletes are not identified, and consequently not catered for, the probability of withdrawal from sport is increased (Brown, 1985; Lindner, Johns & Butcher, 1991). Additionally, negative sport experiences may result when an athletes needs are not met. This can result in an aversion to sport and physical activity that lasts into adulthood (Walker, 1993).

Most studies examining participation motives have used questionnaires, asking subjects to rate researcher derived motives for participation. The data gained from quantitative methods may be valid, but it is not always a true reflection of what the subject thinks and feels (Weiss & Petchlikoff, 1989). This study will employ qualitative methods to provide a clearer understanding of participation motives from the swimmers' perspective in their full complexity, thus contributing to the body of knowledge on participation motivation.

Several studies have examined participation motives of swimmers (Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985; Horn, 1983; Longhurst & Spink, 1987). However, most of

these studies have used only swimmers who compete at some level. With increasing efforts to promote exercise and fitness, understanding the participation motives of non-competitive athletes is of increasing importance. Limited research has investigated the participation motives of non-competitive athletes, with no studies being identified that examine the motives of non-competitive swimmers.

Much of the research examining non-competitive athletes participation motives has tended to be sport-general, using athletes from a variety of sports (Martindale et al., 1990; Gill et al., 1988). The sample used in this research offers a unique opportunity to study competitive and non-competitive athletes who participate in the same sport, training under the same conditions, at the same time, and under the same coach.

Examining the participation motives of male and female athletes will help to identify differences in their reasons for participating. Considering the greater incidence of attrition in female sport as reported by Brown (1985), examining gender differences in participation motivation may help coaches and educators satisfy the needs of both male and female athletes.

Most of the participation motivation research has been conducted in the United States (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). Although some research has been conducted examining the motives of Australian youth sport participants (Longhurst & Spink, 1987), no sport-specific studies have been identified that focus on swimming. Due to the likely impact of different cultures on participation motives (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992), a need exists to examine the participation motives of Australian youth swimmers.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the motives for participation of a squad of youth-age male and female swimmers. The squad being investigated contains both competitive and non-competitive swimmers, thus allowing comparisons to be made. Gender differences between male and female participation motives will also be examined.

### Research Questions

In light of the fact that only limited research has investigated the motives of competitive and non-competitive youth athletes in the same study, the major research question is:

What are the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive male and female youth age swimmers?

Other sub-questions addressed include:

1. What are the differences in participation motives of competitive and non-competitive youth age swimmers?
2. What gender differences exist in the participation motives of youth age swimmers?

### Delimitations

1. The focus of this study is delimited to identifying and comparing the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive, male and female youth age swimmers. While theories of motivation are discussed, no attempt is made to

validate any one theoretical framework.

2. This study is limited to athletes from the sport of swimming.

3. Subjects selected are aged from 13 to 15 years with a minimum of 18 months experience in squad training.

### Limitations

The following factors were identified as limitations to the study:

1. The subjects are drawn from only one squad of swimmers. This squad is unique in that both competitive and non-competitive swimmers are members. For this reason it may not be representative of other typical swimming squads.

2. Results from this study cannot be easily generalised to athletes in sports besides swimming, either competitive or non-competitive, nor to the general population.

3. Data is collected from only a small number subjects for this study. The data cannot be generalised to the general swimming population, but rather is a reflection of the participation motives of the squad selected.

### Definition of Terms

#### Squad

The term squad refers to a group of swimmers who train on a regular basis under the same coach. For this study a junior squad will be used. The term junior alludes to the age of the squad members, between 12 and 15 years.

### Participation Motives

Participation motives refer to the reasons why people take part in a given activity, such as swimming. People can have more than one participation motive for a given activity (Bakker, DeKoning, Van Ingen Schenau & DeGroot, 1993; Gould et al., 1985; Romar, 1994).

### Competitive Swimmers

Competitive swimmers are swimmers who participate in organised competitions against other individuals or teams.

### Non-competitive Swimmers

Non-competitive swimmers are those swimmers who do not participate in organised competitions against other individuals or teams. An exception to this is school swimming competitions. Swimmers may participate in school swimming and still be non-competitive swimmers if they do not compete at any other level.

### Motivation

Motivation refers to the intensity and direction of behaviour. The intensity of behaviour refers to how much effort is put forth to achieve the behaviour, and the direction indicates whether a situation is approached or avoided (Silva & Weinberg, 1984).

### Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation exists when an individual participates when there is no apparent external reward. The act of participation is an end in itself (Deci, 1980).

### Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation exists when an individual participates for external rewards such as money or acknowledgment (Deci, 1980).

### Summary

Identifying the participation motives of athletes is important. Examining why competitive and non-competitive, male and female athletes participate in youth sport enables their needs to be identified and met. Fulfilling the needs of these athletes will enhance their involvement in sport, and increase the likelihood of positive sport experiences, thus encouraging participation in sport and exercise into adulthood. This research will examine the reasons why competitive and non-competitive, male and female swimmers participate in swimming, and identify differences in their participation motives.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Literature

Motivation is an important issue for coaches of youth sport. It is essential for understanding why youth take up sport, continue to participate, and drop out. Substantial research has been conducted on the participation motives of competitive athletes, but little known research has investigated the motives of non-competitive athletes, particularly non-competitive swimmers. Some of the research has also examined gender differences. This review will examine participation motivation research focussing on both of these areas.

This review will be presented under the following headings: (a) Theories of motivation; (b) Participation motivation research; (c) Passer's (1981) categories of participation motives; (d) Conceptual Framework; (e) Methodological considerations; (f) Summary.

#### Theories of Motivation

Much of the recent research on youth sport participation motives is based on participation motivation theories, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). Three main participation motivation theories have been employed. These are: competence motivation theory (Harter, 1978; 1981); achievement goal orientation theory (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980; Nicholls, 1984); and social exchange theory (Smith, 1986; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Two intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theoretical approaches have also been applied. These are:

cognitive evaluation theory (Deci, 1975; 1980; Deci & Ryan, 1985); and theories based on competence and mastery (Harter, 1978, 1981; White, 1959). More recently, Weiss and Chaumeton (1992) have presented an integrated model on motivational orientation in sport.

### Participation Theories

#### Competence Motivation Theory

An important theory for studying participation motivation in youth sport is Harter's (1978; 1981) theory of competence motivation. Extending the earlier work of White (1959), Harter theorised that children are motivated to experience feelings of competence when dealing with their environment, and do so by engaging in mastery attempts. When mastery is achieved perceived competence is enhanced, which in turn increases competence motivation.

Harter (1978, 1981) argues that the competence motive is multidimensional and situationally specific. She also identifies important psychological correlates of domain specific perceived competence. These include intrinsic versus extrinsic motivational orientation, and the child's locus of control. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated within a given mastery domain would also perceive themselves to be relatively competent in that domain, and to feel in control of their successes and failures (Harter & Connell, 1984).

A number of studies have supported Harter's theory of competence motivation in relation to participation motivation. Feltz and Petchlikoff (1983) conducted a study examining perceived competence among interscholastic sport participants and dropouts. Using questionnaires, the researchers found that current



sport participants scored significantly higher on perceived cognitive and physical competence, general self-worth, and expectations for future success, than did dropouts. A limitation to this research was the small number of dropouts, 43, compared to current participants, 239. Additionally, the researchers did not comment on whether the dropout subjects are sport dropouts or sport transfers, that is, they have left one sport for another.

A later study by Klint and Weiss (1987) tested the relationship between perceptions of competence and particular motives children have for participating in competitive gymnastics. Subjects from non-school gymnastics programs were asked to complete questionnaires with results revealing that children high in perceived physical competence were more motivated by skill development reasons, while children with high perceptions of their social competence were more motivated into sport involvement by affiliation considerations. While this study relates perceptions of competence to participation motives, it provides no evidence of athletes high in perceived physical competence being more apt to discontinue participation if their skills do not improve.

#### Achievement Goal Orientation Theory

According to the achievement goal orientation theory, three primary orientations of achievement behaviour exist. These are ability, task and social approval orientations (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980; Nicholls, 1984; Roberts, 1984). Ability oriented individuals participate in an effort to demonstrate high ability and minimise low ability. Task oriented individuals participate in an effort to perform at his or her maximum, regardless of any competitive outcome. Finally, the

individual primarily oriented by social approval goals participates and displays maximum effort to seek approval from significant others.

To fully comprehend achievement behaviour, the individual's perception of success and failure, as well as his or her achievement goals must be understood. Motivation in an achievement contexts depends on whether the child perceives that his or her achievement goals are satisfied (Roberts, 1984; Ewing, 1981).

Ewing (1981) tested the notion that achievement goal orientations are related to sport persistence in children and youth. Ewing developed the Achievement Orientation Questionnaire and administered it to adolescent subjects. This research demonstrated that current sport participants were more oriented toward social approval goals, while dropouts were more oriented toward ability related goals.

#### Social Exchange Theory

The third theory dealing with participation motives is the social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Smith (1986) adapted this theory within a cognitive-affective model to explain athletic burnout. According to social exchange theory, decisions to participate and continue involvement in sport are a function of costs ( time, effort, anxiety, social disapproval) and benefits (feelings of competence, trophies, recognition), with the athlete striving to maximise the benefits and minimise the costs. Interest and participation in sport is sustained when the benefits outweigh the costs. Withdrawal from sport occurs when the costs outweigh the benefits.

The decision to remain involved in sport is not completely explained by a

basic benefits minus costs equation. Rather, decisions to participate and persist include two levels of satisfaction. These are satisfaction with the activity currently being pursued, and satisfaction with alternative activities. Therefore when making a decision to participate, an individual considers the benefits, costs and satisfaction of an activity and compares them with an alternative activity. According to this model, an individual may choose to stay involved in an activity when costs outweigh benefits, if no alternative activities are available. (Smith, 1986 ;Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Unfortunately empirical testing of this theory has been limited. Petchlikoff's (1988) study, cited by Weiss and Chaumeton (1992), is the only known research that includes a cost-benefit analysis examining participation motives. Petchlikoff found that starters and non-starters had higher levels of satisfaction than survivors, dropouts or individuals who had been cut from a team. Survivors also had lower levels of satisfaction than dropouts.

While this theory may help to explain participation motives, further testing is required to establish its validity. Simply assessing levels of satisfaction may be too basic and may only provide a partial picture of a cost-benefit analysis of participation (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992).

### Intrinsic-Extrinsic Theories

#### Cognitive Evaluation Theory

The major principle behind cognitive evaluation theory is that intrinsic motivation is optimised when individuals feel competent and self-determining in dealing with their environment (Deci 1975; 1980; Deci & Ryan 1985).

Corresponding to cognitive evaluation theory, any occurrence that influences a individual's feelings of competence and self-determination will ultimately have a bearing on their level of intrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan view these events as consisting of two functional components: (a) a controlling component, and (b) an informational component. A controlling component relates to an individual's perceived locus of control within the situation. If an event is seen as controlling a person's behaviour, an external locus of control and a low level of self-determination are developed. This in turn leads to a decrease in intrinsic motivation. An informational component relates to the perceived competence of the individual. If an event provides positive reinforcement about an individual's competence, perceptions of competence will increase and intrinsic motivation will be strengthened. If feedback decreases perceptions of competence, intrinsic motivation will be reduced.

Ryan (1980) conducted a study to test hypotheses based on cognitive evaluation theory. Male and female athletes participating in a variety of sports, from 12 institutions in America, were surveyed. The study revealed that football players on scholarships exhibited lower levels of intrinsic motivation than non-scholarship players, but male wrestlers and female athletes scored higher on measures of intrinsic motivation than their non-scholarship counterparts. In explaining these results, Ryan suggested that wrestlers and female athletes saw their scholarships as an endorsement of how proficient they were, since not all wrestlers and female athletes received scholarships. Football players on the other hand may have viewed their scholarships as a means of controlling behaviour, as

all members of the team had scholarships.

### Competence Motivation Theory

Not only is Harter's (1978; 1981) model important as a participation theory; it also helps explain intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated individuals share the following characteristics: (a) actively seek activities that allow them to demonstrate competence by participating in mastery attempts; (b) use self-determined criteria and mastery aims to measure success and determine levels of competence; (c) have elevated degrees of perceived competence and an internal locus of control; and (d) experience feelings of pleasure or reinforcement as a result of success. Extrinsically oriented individuals may possess the following characteristics: (a) avoidance of mastery attempts to reduce the likelihood of demonstrations of poor performance; (b) measure performance against external criteria; (c) adopt external performance goals such as winning or pleasing others; (d) have reduced perceived competence and an external locus of control; and (e) have feelings of anxiety during mastery attempts (Harter, 1978; 1981; Harter & Connell, 1984).

Klint and Weiss (1987) conducted a study to test the hypothesis that intrinsically motivated individuals actively seek to demonstrate ability in certain achievement areas in which they feel competent. It was found that athletes "who were high in perceived physical competence rated skill development as a more important reason for participating than did low physical competence athletes" (p.62) and "youngsters with high perceptions of their social competence were more motivated into sport involvement by affiliation considerations" (p.63).

### Integrated Model of Motivational Orientations

Each theory previously discussed has much to offer motivational orientation research. However, many of the theories use different terms to describe similar constructs, which can be confounding to researchers. As we look to the future and attempt to explain what motivates athletes to participate in sport, it seems wise to use an integrated model of motivational orientations in sport that combines the various theories and uses a common language (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). The model suggested by Weiss and Chaumeton is initiated with a consideration of the individual's motivational orientation. It then moves on to mastery attempts and performance results, reactions by significant others, and the internalization of a reward strategy and a criterion of goals. An individual's motivational orientation represents the initial stage of the model, and motivated actions as an outcome variable, signify the end point.

An integrated model can help to give a more complete picture of why athletes participate in sport and what motivates them. The strengths of each theory can be combined, and the weakness overcome, through integrating the theories. Additionally, the area of research is made simpler with one common language describing similar theoretical constructs which are found in different theories. The strength of the present study is that it draws on aspects of each of the theories discussed in forming interview questions. The answers to these questions should provide a clearer view on why young swimmers participate in swimming.

## Participation Motivation Research

This section will discuss the major findings of participation motivation research in youth sport. The first part of this section examines important findings of the participation motivation research in relation to competitive athletes. Differences in the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive athletes is then presented. Finally, gender differences in participation motives are discussed.

### Competitive Athletes

Much descriptive research has been conducted examining the participation motives of children and adolescents involved in youth sport, with most of the research using competitive rather than non-competitive subject groups. This research consists of sport-general studies, where subjects are taken from a variety of sports (Gill et al., 1983; Longhurst & Spink, 1987), and sport-specific studies, where subjects are drawn from only one sport (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990; Gould et al., 1985; Horn, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1986).

Research on competitive athletes using questionnaires and data reduction analysis has found fun, increased skill and fitness, perceived excitement, friendship, and perceived success to be the most frequently identified motives for participating in youth sports. Motives rated least important include release of energy and tension, pressure from significant others to participate, and a desire to travel (Gill et al., 1983; Horn, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1986; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Romar, 1994). A further common finding is that children and adolescents cite several reasons for participating in sport (Bakker et al., 1993; Gould et al.,

1985; Romar, 1994). Gill et al. (1983) and Longhurst and Spink (1987) identified only minimal sport type differences in participation motives.

A significant study by Gould et al. (1985) examined participation motives of youth age swimmers using subjects from 26 school and non-school swim teams. Data reduction techniques conducted on multi-item questionnaires revealed that fun, fitness, team atmosphere, skill improvement and excitement rated as the highest participation motives. Additionally, multiple participation motives for each subject were identified.

The method used by Gould et al. (1985), similar to most participation motive research methods, yielded much empirical data. However, the quantitative techniques used only allow the subjects to respond in categories derived by the researcher, rather than categories derived by the subjects themselves. This can be seen as a major limitation of participation motivation research.

#### Competitive versus Non-competitive athletes

While the majority of participation motivation research has focussed on competitive youth athletes, some research has compared competitive and non-competitive athletes (Gill et al., 1988; Knoppers et al., 1988; Martindale et al., 1990). Research has revealed that while most motives are similar, competitive athletes rate competition significantly higher than their non-competitive counterparts (Gill et al., 1988; Knoppers et al., 1988; Martindale et al., 1990). Knoppers and colleagues however, found no significant difference in competitive orientations between young competitive and non-competitive male tennis players.

Martindale and colleagues (1990), using competitive and non-competitive



college athletes, found that while there may be differences between competitive and non-competitive athletes related to competition oriented variables, the relative ranking of pursuit of victory may be low, with health and fitness being the primary motive given by both groups. Research using similar methods has also demonstrated that non-competitive athletes are less win oriented than competitive athletes, with goal orientation being more characteristic of non-competitive sport participants (Gill et al, 1988).

### Gender Differences in Motivation

Both sport-specific (Gould et al., 1985; Ogles, Masters & Richardson, 1995) and sport-general research (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gill, 1988; Mathes & Battista, 1985; Romar, 1994) have identified gender differences in participation motives. Quantitative research has demonstrated that female athletes are more socially oriented in their motivation, while male athletes are more competitively oriented (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gould et al., 1985; Mathes & Battista, 1985; Romar, 1994). Research by Fortier, Vallerand, Briere and Provencher (1995) found that male athletes are less intrinsically motivated, indicating increased focus on competitive motives for participating, than females. A study of obligatory and recreational runners found women to be more likely to endorse a broader range of participation motives, including fitness, affiliation and self esteem, than men (Ogles et al., 1995).

A study by Knoppers et al. (1988) using competitive and non-competitive youth tennis players revealed that competitive females were significantly more win oriented than their non-competitive counterparts, however no significant difference

existed between the competitive and non-competitive male subjects. Approximately 10% more non-competitive males than females placed highest importance on winning.

An important study by Gill (1988) used questionnaires to assess the orientation of college athletes to sport participation. Data analysis revealed that males consistently scored higher than females on competitiveness and win orientation toward sport. However, females were just as high as males, and in some cases higher, on goal orientations, which reflects a non-competitive achievement orientation towards sport performance. Gill concluded that males and females are equally achievement oriented in general, but males are more oriented toward achievement in competitive, interpersonal situations, and sport seems to exaggerate this gender difference.

In spite of increased numbers of women participating in sport, it appears that women have not adopted the same competitive orientation to physical activity as have men. These gender differences are tied to patterns of social interaction rather than to any innate characteristic of men or women (Coakley, 1994). As children get older, boys learn that it's okay to get dirty and play sports, while girls learn that they should be neat and proper and not participate in any sports (Oglesby, 1984).

Literature on gender-role socialisation suggests that there are extensive cultural prescriptions for suitable female roles and behaviour in our society, which are reinforced and reflected through the design of major social conventions. Competitive sport, as a highly instrumental and competitive form of social

interaction, goes against normative images of femininity (Brown, 1985). Gilligan (1982) suggests that because direct competition is encouraged throughout childhood, this aspect of sport involvement may be more important to males than females, and competitive achievement situations may be in conflict with society's idea of femininity. If this is the case, and females are encouraged by society's ideals to avoid activities deemed "unladylike", it is not surprising that differences in participation motives are exhibited.

The current study will examine the participation motives of male and female, competitive and non-competitive swimmers. Unlike much of the previous research, a sport-specific study will be conducted examining these differences. Additionally, all subjects are drawn from the same squad, training under the same conditions, and at the same time. No other research has been identified that compares male and female, competitive and non-competitive athletes who train together in the same sport. This research will extend knowledge in the area of participation motives in relation to males and females, and in the competitive and non-competitive contexts.

#### Passer's (1981) Categories of Participation Motives

Passer (1981, p.232) summarised the participation motivation research and concluded that the major motives youth give for sport involvement could be classified into six major categories. These are as follows: (a) fitness, motives reflecting a desire to be fit and get exercise; (b) affiliation, which can be divided into factors relating to team involvement and to friendship; (c) skill development,

elements involving improving skills and learning new skills; (d) success and status, includes motives such as winning, gaining recognition from peers and significant others, and obtaining rewards; (e) excitement, which includes challenge, a desire to experience action and participate in interesting activities; and (f) energy release, motives such as to get rid of tension and burn off energy are included in this group.

All of Passer's (1981) participation motive groups can be linked to the theories discussed. For example, skill development can be related to competence motivation theory, an individual wishes to develop their skills in order to be competent. Social exchange theory would encompass many of the motive groups, such as fitness, success and status, and excitement, when determining the benefits associated with participation.

Studies by Klint and Weiss (1987) and McCullagh, Matzkanin, Shaw and Maldonado (1993) demonstrated the applicability of Passer's (1981) categories. These researchers used the motive categories to group motives derived from questionnaires for subsequent analysis.

Passer also commented on the construct of the term "having fun" which, as indicated earlier, is an important motive for participation. Passer (p. 233) concluded that "satisfying affiliation, skill development, success and status, and excitement needs will all contribute to players having fun".

### Conceptual Framework

Two separate conceptual models will be used to investigate the participation motives of youth swimmers. Firstly, a model comparing the

participation motives of competitive and non-competitive swimmers will display the differences and similarities between the two groups. A second model will be used to demonstrate the gender differences in the participation motives held by male and female swimmers.

Young people cite multiple reasons for participating in youth sport (Bakker et al., 1993; Gould et al., 1985; Romar, 1994). Some of the more commonly occurring motives identified by researchers include fun, increased skill, perceived excitement, perceived success and friendship (Gill et al., 1983; Horn, 1983; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Romar, 1994). Gould et al. (1985) identify a number of other participation motives for youth age swimmers.

Passer (1981) summarised the participation motives held by youth athletes into six categories: fitness, affiliation, skill development, success and status, excitement, and energy release. These six categories form the foundation of the conceptual models.

#### Competitive Versus Non-competitive Swimmers

Previous research has revealed important differences in the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive athletes, particularly in relation to competitive orientations (Gill et al., 1988; Knoppers et al., 1988; Martindale et al., 1990). For this reason it is anticipated that the motives of competitive and non-competitive swimmers will differ to some degree, with some motives being held just by the competitive swimmers, some by the non-competitive swimmers, and some motives shared by both the competitive and non-competitive swimmers. Figure 1 reflects this pattern of differences and similarities.

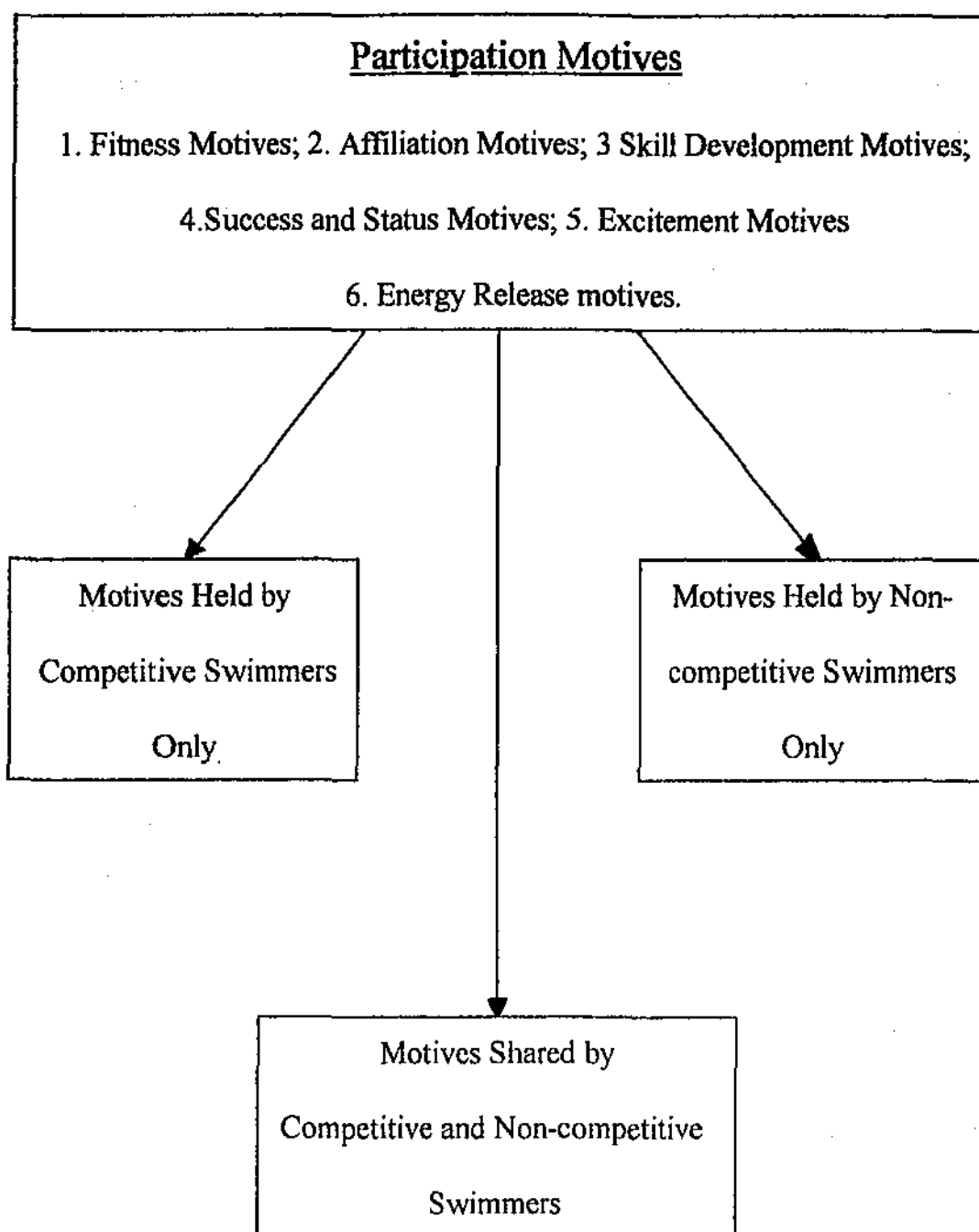


Figure 1: Conceptual model relating to the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive youth-age swimmers.

### Participation Motives of Male and Female Swimmers

Researchers have identified gender differences in the participation motives of young athletes. Female athletes have been found to be more socially oriented in their motivation while male athletes are more competitively oriented (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gould et al., 1985; Mathes & Battista, 1985; Romar, 1994).

Figure 2 represents the anticipated differences between male and female youth age swimmers. It is expected that some motives will be held just by male swimmers, some by the female swimmers, and some motives shared by both the male and female swimmers.

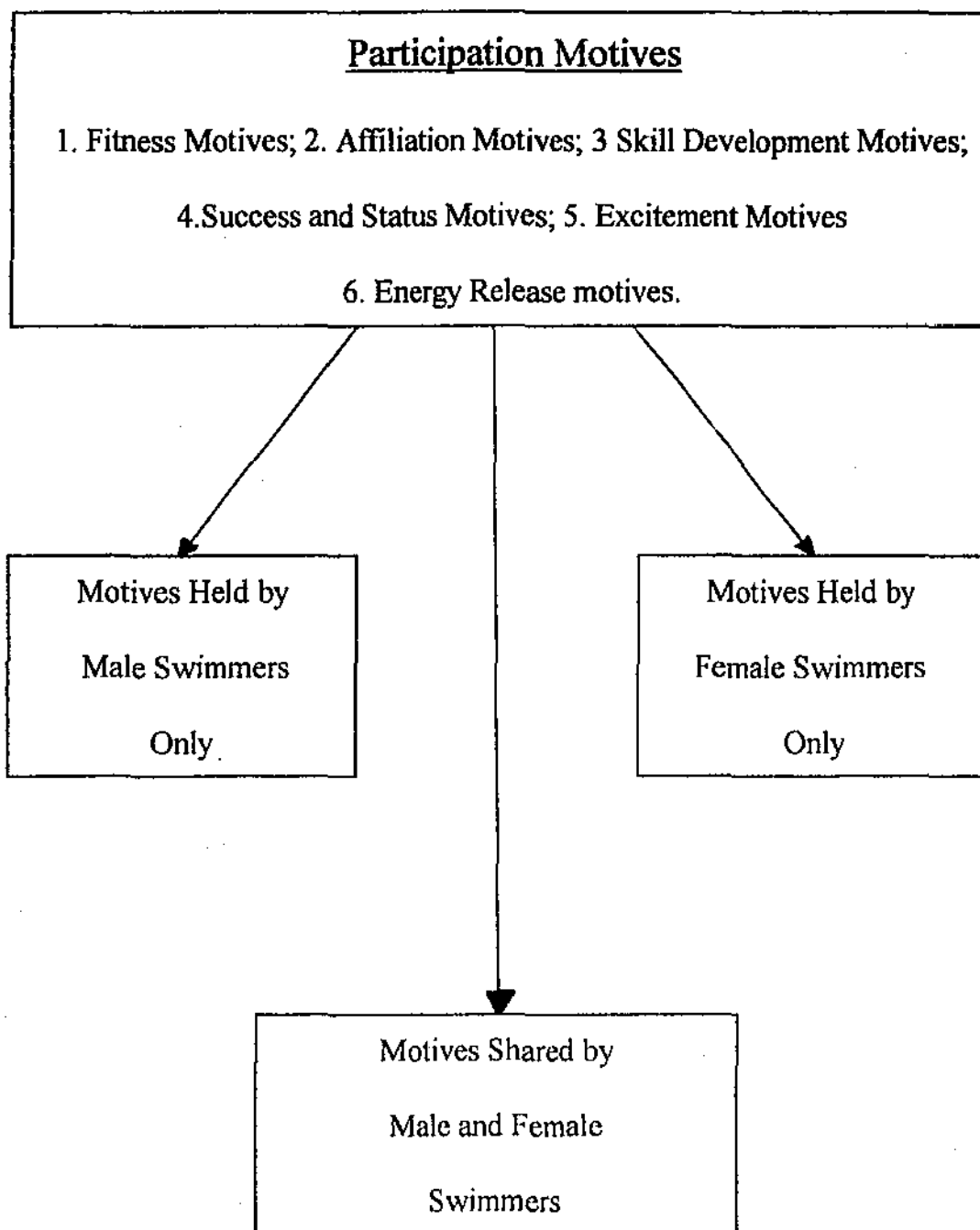


Figure 2: Conceptual model relating to gender differences in the participation motives of youth-age swimmers.



### Methodological Considerations

Previous research in the area of participation motivation in youth sport has predominantly used quantitative methods, primarily questionnaires (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990; Gill, 1988; Gould et al., 1985; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Romar, 1994). While much empirical data has been gathered, the need for qualitative methods to provide depth, detail and allow subjects to be understood in their own terms is emphasised by Scanlan, Stein and Ravizza (1989). Brustad (1992) suggests that appropriately devised qualitative methods can lend a depth of understanding beyond that provided by quantitative methods alone.

Qualitative interviews allow subjects to respond in their own terms using personal experiences, rather than responding in terms determined by the researcher. Interviewing provides an opportunity to get inside another person's world for a short period of time. The in-depth interview allows the researcher to walk [swim] a mile in the head of the subject (Patton, 1990).

Bakker and colleagues (1993) in a study of elite speed skaters demonstrated the usefulness of qualitative techniques. Using in-depth interviews, the researchers found social and life opportunities, perceived competence, and social recognition to be important participation motives. A goal of the current study was to explore the views of the athletes using their own terminology and expressing their own opinions, instead of responding in the researcher's frame of reference.

### Summary

Motivation in youth sport is important because only by knowing what motivates young athletes can their needs be fulfilled and continued participation enhanced. Several theories have dominated youth sport participation motivation research (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992). These theories can be classified into two groups: (a) participation motivation theories which include competence motivation theory, achievement motivation theory, and social exchange theory; and (b) intrinsic/extrinsic motivation theories which include cognitive evaluation theory, and competence motivation theory. From these theories, researchers have tested a variety of motives for participation in youth sports. A more recent development is Weiss and Chaumeton's (1992) integrated model of motivational orientations. All of the theories discussed have provided a basis for the current study and development of interview questions.

Quantitative methods in participation motivation research have yielded significant empirical data. Fun, increased skill and fitness, perceived excitement, friendship, and perceived success are the most commonly identified motives by competitive youth athletes. Research involving non-competitive athletes has revealed similar motives to those of their competitive counterparts. However, competitive athletes have a higher emphasis on competition oriented variables. Examination of gender differences shows male athletes to be more competitively oriented, while female athletes are more socially oriented in their participation motives. Additionally, female athletes have been shown to be more goal oriented

than males. Examining the different groups, competitive and non-competitive, male and female, is important so that the reasons for each groups participation are identified, and their needs catered for.

Two conceptual models are described that investigate the participation motives of youth athletes. Using Passer's (1981) categories of participation motives as a foundation, the first model examines the anticipated differences between competitive and non-competitive youth-age swimmers, while the second model looks at gender differences between male and female youth-age swimmers.

Data reduction techniques of multi-item questionnaires are common of participation motivation research. While much empirical data has been gathered, these methods are flawed as subject responses must be in terms decided by the researcher. Qualitative techniques can lend a depth of understanding beyond that provided by quantitative techniques, thus extending participation motivation research.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology

#### Research Design

Substantial empirical data has been gathered on the participation motives of youth athletes using quantitative research methods. However, such quantitative methods confine subject responses by using questionnaires and rating scales. This gives subjects little chance to present their own point of view, or express their own opinions. Scanlan et al. (1989) emphasises the need for qualitative research that allows subjects to respond in their own terms. Appropriately devised qualitative methods can lend a depth of understanding beyond that permitted by quantitative methods alone (Brustad, 1993).

To understand swimmers' participation motives more fully, an objective of this research was to explore the views of the swimmers using their own terminology, expressing their own opinions, rather than responding in the researcher's frame of reference. To achieve this, the researcher used a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions on 12 swimmers (three competitive male, three competitive female, three non-competitive male, and three non-competitive female) to investigate, in-depth, the reasons they have for participating in swimming.

#### Sample

The sample for this research was selected from competitive and non-competitive swimmers who train together in a junior squad regularly. Six male

and six female swimmers were chosen from the squad. Three male and three female swimmers were in the competitive group, and three male and three female swimmers were in the non-competitive group. The junior squad provided a large source of potential subjects, each training under similar conditions with the same coach.

The junior squad trains on a daily basis at the Swimming Recreation Centre and has no affiliation with any swim club. The squad consists of 32 swimmers who train from one to four times per week. The squad contains 15 male and 17 female swimmers, aged from 12 to 15 years. The junior squad is coached by the same swim coach each day, using one lane in an indoor swimming pool. Each training session is of 60 minutes duration.

As previously stated, two separate groups of subjects participated in the study, competitive swimmers and non-competitive swimmers. To be selected for the study, each swimmer met the following criteria:

1. Currently training in the junior squad at the Swimming Recreation Centre at least once per week.
2. At least one year of participation in squad training, not necessarily in the Swimming Recreation Centre junior squad.
3. Aged between 13 and 15 years.
4. Willingness to participate in the study, along with parental consent for participation.

Additional criteria were employed for the competitive swimmers. These were:

1. Current participation in competitive swimming at some level.

2. At least one year participation in competitive swimming.

Through personal knowledge and discussions with the coach of the junior squad, the researcher identified appropriate informants in respect of age, experience and competitive history. A group of 18 swimmers (four competitive male, six competitive female, three non-competitive male and five non-competitive female) fitting the above criteria was selected. Considering that a large amount of data that can be collected through an interview process, the researcher decided that 12 subjects would be sufficient to represent the squad. Therefore, 12 swimmers, from the 18 identified as suitable, were selected to participate in the study. The researcher approached the oldest and most experienced swimmers first.

The researcher initially approached three swimmers from each cell in the subject pool. The researcher spoke to each potential subject briefly, explaining the purpose of the study, asking them to think about the study, and talk to their parents about participating.

Swimmers expressing further interest collected letters of disclosure, which explained the purpose and aims of the study, and informed consent (see Appendix A), from the researcher. These swimmers presented the letters to their parents to read and sign the consent form. In addition to the disclosure and consent forms, the researcher provided each subject with a preliminary data sheet (see Appendix B) to complete and return with the signed consent form. Of the 12 swimmers initially approached by the researcher, 11 participated in the study. The researcher selected the twelfth subject from the group previously identified as suitable. The researcher approached this subject in the same manner as the other subjects, discussing the

project with him and then supplying the subject with a letter, consent form and preliminary data sheet. The swimmer returned the signed consent form and preliminary data sheet before the researcher arranged the interview.

## Data Collection

### Interview

Data was primarily collected through an open-ended semi-structured interview process. The in-depth interview allows the researcher to "enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 1990, p.278). The interviews were recorded on audiotape as a permanent record. This increased the accuracy of the collected data, permitted the researcher to concentrate on the interview, and allowed observation of the interviewee's reactions (Patton, 1990; Scanlan et al., 1989).

One difficulty associated with the in-depth interview is that access to the interviewee does not ensure mutual acceptance (Fine & Sandstrom, 1988). The interviewer must gain the confidence of the interviewee so they can speak more freely and truthfully (McNeil, 1989; Patton, 1990). As a swimming teacher at the Swimming Recreation Centre, and associate of the junior squad coach, the researcher had previously established rapport with many squad members and their parents. This rapport aided the researcher in overcoming difficulties associated with in-depth interviews, and allowed more thorough data collection.

The researcher used an interview guide (see Appendix C) during interviews to gain similar information from each informant (Patton, 1990). The interview guide contained primarily open-ended questions. However, the interview guide

contained several more probing questions to help clarify responses and obtain more detailed answers from the informant. For example, if a subject responded with superficial statements such as "it's fun" or "I enjoy it", probing questions were used to discover what was fun or what the subject enjoyed about swimming.

Questions on the interview guide were developed from the researchers knowledge of the motivational theories discussed in Chapter 2. For example, the question "Does how good you are affect how you feel about participating?" relates to competence motivation theory. In a similar manner, the question "Is swimming worth the sacrifices you have to make?" is based on social exchange theory.

Initial questions on the interview guide were designed to relax the informants while still talking about their swimming. Questions then concentrated on why the subjects participate in squad training, what they enjoy and dislike about squads, and favourite and least favourite experiences in swimming. Questions asked made the subjects consider why they swim, what benefits there are, and what costs are involved.

Questions regarding competition similar to those regarding squad training were then asked of the competitive swimmers, while non-competitive swimmers were asked to consider why they did not compete. Following this, the interview rounded off with questions verifying information gained on the preliminary data form.

### Pilot Studies

The researcher conducted two separate pilot studies, each using one subject, to test the appropriateness of the interview questions. Following each pilot study,



the researcher adjusted the interview guide to make the questions more open-ended and easier to understand. This was an important consideration due to the age of the subjects. Each pilot study was conducted using the same methods as those used in the research study. Neither data nor subjects from the pilot studies featured in the research.

Further benefits of the pilot studies were that they allowed the researcher to practise his interview skills, and test the methodology used for data collection. As a novice researcher, with limited interview experience, the pilot studies allowed the researcher to develop and refine interview techniques in a low stress environment.

#### Researcher as Mediator

As a swimming teacher and part-time swim coach the researcher had several opinions concerning the participation motives of youth swimmers. Following the conduct of the second pilot study the researcher audiotaped his responses to the interview questions. Analysis of responses helped to determine the researcher's bias. This was important to ensure that the researcher's bias did not influence the data collection and analysis.

#### Reflexive Journal

The researcher kept a reflexive journal as suggested by Douglas, Roberts and Thompson (1987). Before commencing the interviews, the reflexive journal was used to record the researcher's attitudes towards participation motives of youth age swimmers.

After each interview the researcher wrote down his impressions including an

evaluation of the interview conduct and subject responses. The journal was also used to identify any methodological decisions made throughout the research and record general reflections by the researcher about the research.

### Data Analysis

With the consent of the subjects, each interview was transcribed verbatim. Transcribing the interviews allowed the researcher to become more familiar with the data, and note important issues during transcription. Each transcript was checked against the audiotape for accuracy on completion.

After transcription was completed, the researcher read the transcript several times. Initially, the researcher highlighted main interview questions and responses in consultation with his entries in the reflexive journal. The researcher then underlined meaningful words and phrases.

In order to identify the participation motives of the swimmers, data was deductively analysed. Deductive data analysis involves categorising data into units derived from theory, hypotheses or logical propositions (Evertson & Green, 1986). The researcher used Passer's (1981) participation motivation categories to group the subjects' statements. Passer's categories and their descriptions, as used for analysis, are as follows: (a) fitness, motives revealing a desire to be fit, keep fit, and do exercise; (b) affiliation, motives relating to team atmosphere, such as being a part of a team and experiencing team spirit, and motives reflecting a desire to be with friends, share experiences with friends, make new friends and meet people; (c) skill development, elements involving learning new skill and improving skills;

(d) success and status, motives such as competing, winning or being successful, gaining recognition from peers and significant others, measuring performance against others, and obtaining prizes; (e) excitement, includes motives such as challenge, a desire to experience action and participate in novel and interesting activities; and (f) energy release, motives such as to relieve tension and expend energy are included in this group.

Meaningful words and statements were classified into the above categories. For example, statements such as "I go to see my friends" and "It's good because you get to make new friends" reflect the affiliation motive category. "I train so I can compete and I compete to win" and "I like it when other people think I'm good" are examples of success and status motives (see Appendix D for examples of analysis of the raw data). During the process of classifying statements, the researcher identified and noted relevant patterns and themes common among interview responses.

#### Reliability of Data Analysis

A Post Graduate Sports Science student helped in establishing reliability of the data analysis. The researcher familiarised the student with Passer's (1981) categories of participation motives, and then asked him to classify a random selection of 50 statements. Of the 50 statements classified by the student, 48 agreed with the researcher's analysis of the same statements.

### Ethical Considerations

The researcher informed all participants verbally and in writing of the purpose, procedures and duration and length of the study before their participation. The researcher obtained informed consent from the coach before approaching any swimmers. As all participants in the study were under 18 years of age, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants' parents, and then from the participants themselves before collecting data. This procedure is advised by Fine and Sandstrom (1988).

The researcher informed participants that taking part in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Only one of the 13 subjects approached decided not to participate in the study.

The researcher conducted each interview in a quiet location with the interviewee's parents nearby. With permission of the participants, the researcher audiotaped all interviews. Participants were assured that all data would be kept confidential and that pseudonyms would be used when reporting findings. Data collected during the study was stored in a locked filing cabinet and will be kept for five years, after which time it will be incinerated.

A final consideration was the length of the interviews. The study involved participants aged from 13 to 15 years. Because of this, the researcher carefully monitored the length of the interviews to ensure that they did not overtax the participants. Maximum interview length was 43 minutes.

## CHAPTER 4

### Findings

The main question guiding this study is: What are the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive, male and female, youth age swimmers? In order to answer this question, the participation motives cited by each subject, as well as the most important participation motive for each subject, will be identified. Four tables will be used to display the participation motives of each swimmer in their group. These are; competitive male (Table 1), competitive female (Table 3), non-competitive male (Table 5), and non-competitive female (Table 7). In addition to the tables displaying the swimmers' participation motives, separate tables will be used to acknowledge the most important participation motive(s) for each swimmer, as identified during the interviews. These are; competitive male (Table 2), competitive female (Table 4), non-competitive male (Table 6), and non-competitive female (Table 8).

Following the presentation of the two tables that relate to a subject group, the participation motives of that group will be elaborated upon with more complete examples from the swimmers. The motives will be discussed according to the motive categories outlined by Passer (1981).

A summary table, showing the number of subjects in each subject group that identify a given motive, as well as a total for the whole sample, will be used to draw the findings together. A separate table will be used to display the most important participation motive(s) for all swimmers in the study.

## Competitive Male Swimmers

Table 1

### Participation Motives of Competitive Male Swimmers

Participation Motives	Swimmers		
	Carl	Chris	Craig
<u>Fitness</u>			
Keep fit / get fit	*	*	*
Get a good workout	-	-	-
Feelings after exercise	-	-	-
<u>Affiliation</u>			
Swim with / see friends	*	*	*
Make new friends	*	*	-
Meet people	-	-	-
<u>Skill Development</u>			
Improve strokes	*	*	*
Improve times	*	*	*
Practice strokes	-	-	-
<u>Success and Status</u>			
Going in competitions	*	*	*
Winning / doing well in competitions	*	*	*
Getting good race times	*	*	*
Recognised as good	-	*	-
Recognised as a swimmer	-	-	-
Good at it	-	-	*
Get prizes	-	*	-
Beat other people	-	-	-
Improve against others	-	*	-
Compare yourself to others	-	-	-
<u>Excitement</u>			
Being in / moving through the water	-	-	-

Note. \* = motive identified by swimmer; - = motive not identified by swimmer.

Table 2

Most Important Participation Motive(s) Held by Competitive Male Swimmers

Swimmer	Most Important Participation Motive(s)
Carl	Getting better and fitness
Chris	Competition and doing well
Craig	Improving fitness and speed

Fitness Motives

Fitness is an important motive for all of the competitive male subjects. Carl and Craig hold improving fitness as one of their most important participation motives. All three subjects comment on the importance of fitness and the benefits it gives them in other sports with statements such as "It [swimming] keeps me fit so I can play other sports" (Carl) being common. While Chris has a lower emphasis on fitness than Carl or Craig, it is still a meaningful motive for him.

Affiliation Motives

Affiliation motives regard being with friends and making new friends, rather than referring to being part of a team and feeling team spirit. Statements such as "I like to go when my friends are there" (Craig) and "I swim with my friends and that makes it more fun" (Carl) indicate the importance of affiliation motives to these swimmers. Chris on the other hand places a lower emphasis on affiliation motives saying "I like it when my friends are there sometimes, but I'd rather train hard than socialise because that's what I go there for".

### Skill Development Motives

Skill development for these swimmers can be divided into: (a) improving strokes, and (b) improving times. While improving strokes is important to these three swimmers, improving times has a higher priority. Statements such as "Improving my times is more important than my stroke" (Carl), "I want to improve my stroke so I'll be faster" (Chris), and "Training helps me be faster" (Craig) demonstrate the importance of improving times over technique.

### Success and Status Motives

Success and status motives make up the rest of the participation motives exhibited by this group. Competing is the most important motive in this area. All three competitive male swimmers identifying competing as a motive, and it is the most important motive for Chris "I really enjoy going to competitions I think it's the main reason I swim". Carl and Craig also emphasise the importance of competition, "When I lose motivation I think of the next competition and that usually gets me going" (Carl), "I like swimming in competitions at school and in pennants" (Craig).

Chris highlights the importance of winning to him by saying "Winning is more important then getting a good time in the bigger competitions like club championships or pennants". Carl and Craig on the other hand place a much lower emphasis on winning saying, "Getting better is more important than winning" (Craig) and "I don't think winning is as important as improving" (Carl). Further aspects of success and status displayed by Chris include being recognised by others, getting prizes, and improving compared to other people outside a race



environment. These motives are not held by Carl or Craig.

### Summary

In summary, with the exception of excitement and energy release, motives from each of Passer's (1981) categories are identified. Each swimmer has multiple motives for participation. The motives and their importance vary between the swimmers, however, several common motives are identified. The most important motives for this group are fitness, improving times, and competing.

## Competitive Female Swimmers

Table 3

### Participation Motives of Competitive Female Swimmers

Participation Motives	Swimmers		
	Chelsea	Claire	Charlene
<u>Fitness</u>			
Keep fit / get fit	*	*	*
Get a good workout	*	-	-
Feelings after exercise	-	-	-
<u>Affiliation</u>			
Swim with / see friends	*	*	*
Make new friends	*	*	-
Meet people	-	-	-
<u>Skill Development</u>			
Improve strokes	*	*	*
Improve times	*	*	*
Practice strokes	-	-	-
<u>Success and Status</u>			
Going in competitions	*	*	*
Winning / doing well in competitions	-	*	*
Getting good race times	*	-	*
Recognised as good	*	-	*
Recognised as a swimmer	-	*	-
Good at it	-	-	*
Get prizes	-	-	-
Beat other people	-	-	*
Improve against others	-	-	-
Compare yourself to others	-	-	-
<u>Excitement</u>			
Being in / moving through the water	-	-	-

Note. \* = motive identified by swimmer; - = motive not identified by swimmer.

Table 4

Most Important Participation Motive(s) Held by Competitive Female Swimmers

Swimmer	Most Important Participation Motive(s)
Chelsea	Improve fitness
Claire	Improve fitness
Charlene	Competing and winning

Fitness Motives

The importance of fitness varies between the subjects in the group. Fitness is the most important motive for Chelsea and Claire with statements such as "The only reason I go is to keep my fitness up so I can play other sports like netball" (Chelsea) and "I think fitness is the biggest reason I go" being common of these swimmers. Charlene, on the other hand, relates the importance of fitness to competition "I train so that I keep fit so that when I compete I can do well". While fitness is important to Charlene, it has a lower priority for her compared to the other two competitive female subjects.

Affiliation Motives

Affiliation motives revolve around being with friends and making new friends. These motives are held at different levels of importance by all of the competitive female subjects. Being with friends and making new friends is more important for Claire than the other two competitive female subjects with statements such as "Swimming is good because I get to see my friends" and "I don't enjoy training when my friends aren't there" indicating this. Chelsea, while

enjoying having her friends there, places a lower emphasis on affiliation motives saying "Friends sort of make it fun, but I would rather train harder than have fun with my friends at swimming". Charlene places the lowest emphasis on affiliation out of the three subjects saying "Sometimes it's good to have friends there, but most of the time I'd rather have only a few people at training so I can have a good workout".

### Skill Development Motives

Skill development for the competitive female swimmers is divided into: (a) improving strokes, and (b) improving times. While identifying improving strokes as a motive, Charlene emphasises the importance of times over technique to her with statements such as, "Improving my times is much more important than having a good technique". Chelsea believes her times are important and improving them is important because they provide her with a measure of fitness "If my times are improving then that means I'm getting fitter so the training is worth while". Claire places equal importance on her techniques and times saying "I really want to improve my stroke" and "It's really good when you break your times, it encourages you".

### Success and Status Motives

The success and status motives held by each competitive female vary to a degree. All three subjects emphasise the importance of competition, but for different reasons. Chelsea competes in state championships to produce her best times so she can gauge her fitness. Claire says "I just like going in competitions and doing well and improving my times". Charlene, when asked why does she

train, responded "I train so I can compete and I compete to win". Charlene places the greatest emphasis on competing out of the three competitive female subjects saying "What's the point of doing it [swimming] if you don't compete".

Recognition by others is an important motive for all the competitive female subjects. Chelsea says "It's good to go to state championships and just know that you're good enough to be there and everyone else knows as well". Charlene expresses the importance of recognition as a motive to her with statements such as "When you win and everyone sees you it is really good". Claire holds recognition as an important motive, not so people can see how competent she is, but as a means of identity, "I think it's important to do a sport and I feel better to say I do swimming than saying I don't do any sport and people can identify you, they say 'yeah she's a swimmer'".

### Summary

Multiple participation motives are cited by each swimmer. The motives, and their importance, vary for each of the competitive female swimmers. The major motives identified for this group are fitness, skill development, and competition related motives.

## Non-competitive Male Swimmers

Table 5

### Participation Motives of Non-competitive Male Swimmers

Participation Motives	Swimmers		
	Nigel	Nathan	Nick
<u>Fitness</u>			
Keep fit / get fit	*	*	*
Get a good workout	-	-	-
Feelings after exercise	-	-	-
<u>Affiliation</u>			
Swim with / see friends	*	*	*
Make new friends	*	-	*
Meet people	*	-	-
<u>Skill Development</u>			
Improve strokes	*	*	*
Improve times	-	*	*
Practice strokes	-	-	-
<u>Success and Status</u>			
Going in competitions	-	-	-
Winning / doing well in competitions	-	-	-
Getting good race times	-	-	-
Recognised as good	-	*	*
Recognised as a swimmer	-	-	-
Good at it	-	*	*
Get prizes	-	-	-
Beat other people	-	-	-
Improve against others	-	-	-
Compare yourself to others	-	-	*
<u>Excitement</u>			
Being in / moving through the water	*	*	*

Note. \* = motive identified by swimmer; - = motive not identified by swimmer.

Table 6

Most Important Participation Motive(s) Held by Non-competitive Male Swimmers

Swimmer	Most Important Participation Motive(s)
Nigel	Improve fitness
Nathan	Improve fitness
Nick	Improve fitness, strokes and times

Fitness Motives

Fitness motives are the most important motives for each of these swimmers. Remarks such as "I think fitness is the most important reason why I swim" (Nigel), "I just want to swim to get fit and that" (Nathan), and "I guess the main reason I go is to keep fit and get better" (Nick) demonstrate the importance of fitness to these swimmers.

Affiliation Motives

Being with friends and making new friends comprise the affiliation related motives. These motives are important to all the non-competitive male swimmers. Statements such as "I like going because of the people there" (Nigel), "I enjoy it when my friends are there" (Nathan), and "I don't like going when none of my friends are there" display the relevance of these motives.

Skill Development Motives

Improving strokes is the most important aspect of skill development for these swimmers. Comments such as "I'm looking to improve my strokes more than

anything else" (Nigel), "I just want to improve my strokes" (Nathan), and "Some of the main reasons I go are to keep fit and improves my strokes" (Nick) establish how important stroke improvement is. Improving times, while not as important as stroke improvement, is still important to some of these swimmers as it allows them to measure improvement. Assertions that support this include "I like to get faster so I can see I'm getting better" (Nick) and "I want to get faster and better" (Nathan).

### Success and Status

The most prominent success and status motives for these athletes are recognition and being good at it, with Nathan and Nick both identifying them. Recognition as being good swimmers is important to these two swimmers with remarks such as "I like when other people say I'm getting better like the coach and other kids" (Nathan) and "If someone looks at me I want them to think I'm a pretty good swimmer" (Nick) illustrating this. Being good at swimming is also an important motive for these two swimmers. "I don't think I'd want to go if I was a bad swimmer" (Nick) and "I wouldn't enjoy it as much if I wasn't as good" (Nathan) are examples of statements that reveal the importance of being competent.

While not describing competition as an important motive, statements like "I like it when I overtake people" (Nick) and "I train a bit so I do better at my school carnival" (Nathan) uncover competitive motives that are important to them.

### Excitement

All of the non-competitive male swimmers identify being in the water as a



participation motive. These swimmers mention this motive several times through the course of the interviews, with comments such as "Just being in the water is good" (Nigel), "It's great to be in the water" (Nathan) and "I just like being in the water" (Nick) declaring this to be a participation motive for these swimmers.

### Summary

A wide variety of motives is exhibited by the non-competitive male group. Not all swimmers displayed motives from each motive group, with Nigel identifying no success and status motives. The most important motives for this group are fitness and improving strokes.

## Non-competitive Female Swimmers

Table 7

### Participation Motives of Non-competitive Female Swimmers

Participation Motives	Swimmers		
	Nina	Natalie	Nadia
<u>Fitness</u>			
Keep fit / get fit	*	*	*
Get a good workout	-	-	-
Feelings after exercise	-	*	-
<u>Affiliation</u>			
Swim with / see friends	*	-	*
Make new friends	*	-	*
Meet people	-	-	*
<u>Skill Development</u>			
Improve strokes	*	*	*
Improve times	-	-	-
Practice strokes	-	*	-
<u>Success and Status</u>			
Going in competitions	-	-	-
Winning / doing well in competitions	-	-	-
Getting good race times	-	-	-
Recognised as good	-	-	-
Recognised as a swimmer	-	-	-
Good at it	-	-	-
Get prizes	-	-	-
Beat other people	-	-	-
Improve against others	-	-	-
Compare yourself to others	-	-	-
<u>Excitement</u>			
Being in / moving through the water	*	*	*

Note. \* = motive identified by swimmer; - = motive not identified by swimmer.

Table 8

Most Important Participation Motive(s) Held by Non-competitive Female Swimmers

Swimmer	Most Important Participation Motive(s)
Nina	Be with friends and improve fitness
Natalie	Improve fitness and strokes
Nadia	Improve fitness and swim with friends

Fitness Motives

Fitness motives are endorsed by all subjects in this group, making up part of the major participation motive for each swimmer. "Knowing that my fitness is improving encourages me to go" (Nina), "I enjoy the exercise and the feeling I get after I finish training because I know I'm getting fitter" (Natalie), and "I swim for the exercise and to keep fit" (Nadia) are examples that demonstrate the importance of fitness motives to each of these swimmers.

Affiliation Motives

Affiliation motives are very important for two members of this group. Nina and Nadia include this motive, along with fitness, in their major participation motives. The influence of this motive is demonstrated by statements such as "I swim because I get to go there with my friends and meet other people" (Nina) and "I swim now for the socialising and to keep fit" (Nadia). Natalie doesn't identify any affiliation motives for her swimming. Statements by Natalie such as "Some of the people that swim are not nice and they can put you off wanting to go" and "I

don't go there to make friends I'd rather just swim" display a negative attitude towards affiliation.

### Skill Development

Each of these swimmers emphasise the import of improving their strokes. None of the non-competitive female swimmers are concerned about their times, rather they concentrate on their technique. "Getting better at your strokes is important" (Nina), "I swim because I want to improve my strokes" (Natalie), and "I'm not worried about my times I just want to get stronger in my strokes" are a few statements that demonstrate how meaningful improving strokes is to these swimmers as a participation motive.

### Excitement Motives

Similar to the non-competitive males, the non-competitive females identify being in the water or moving through the water as a motive for participation. The swimmers comment on this motive, saying "Part of the reason I go is because you get to be in the water" (Nina), "I just like being in the water and swimming" (Natalie), and "I like moving through the water" (Nadia).

### Summary

The non-competitive female subjects identify a limited number of motives. The reasons this group participate include affiliation, fitness, skill improvement and excitement motives. Success and status motives are not identified by any member of this group, nor are energy release motives. The most important reasons for participating for this group are fitness, skill development and affiliation.

### Summary of Subject Groups

The participation motive tables clearly depict the motives held by each of the subject groups. A final participation motive table is used to summarise the motives held by each group, showing what motives are held by each group, how many subjects in a group hold a given motive, and the total number of subjects that hold a given motive across the sample. The most important participation motive(s) for the subjects are also summarised using a table. Each of the 12 subjects are listed along with their major participation motive(s). The purpose of these two summary tables is to clearly display what motives are common to all four subject groups, and what motives set them apart.

Table 9

**Summary of Participation Motives of Youth-age Swimmers**

Participation Motives	Subject		Group		Total (out of 12)
	Comp Male	Comp Female	Non-comp Male	Non-comp Female	
<u>Fitness</u>					
Keep fit / get fit	3	3	3	3	12
Get a good workout	0	1	0	0	1
Feelings after exercise	0	0	0	1	1
<u>Affiliation</u>					
Swim with / see friends	3	3	3	2	11
Make new friends	2	2	2	2	8
Meet people	0	0	1	1	2
<u>Skill Development</u>					
Improve strokes	3	3	3	3	12
Improve times	3	3	2	0	8
Practice strokes	0	0	0	1	1
<u>Success and Status</u>					
Going in competitions	3	3	0	0	6
Winning / doing well in competitions	3	2	0	0	5
Getting good race times	3	2	0	0	5
Recognised as good	1	2	2	0	5
Recognised as a swimmer	0	1	0	0	1
Good at it	1	1	2	0	4
Get prizes	1	0	0	0	1
Beat other people	0	1	0	0	1
Improve against others	1	0	0	0	1
Compare yourself to others	0	0	1	0	1
<u>Excitement</u>					
Being in / moving through the water	0	0	3	3	6

Table 10

**Most Important Participation Motive(s) Held by Youth-age Swimmers**

Swimmer	Most Important Participation Motive(s)
Carl	Getting better and fitness
Chris	Competition and doing well
Craig	Improving fitness and speed
Chelsea	Improve fitness
Claire	Improve fitness
Charlene	Competing and winning
Nigel	Improve fitness
Nathan	Improve fitness
Nick	Improve fitness, strokes and times
Nina	Be with friends and improve fitness
Natalie	Improve fitness and strokes
Nadia	Improve fitness and swim with friends

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the participation motives of a squad of youth-age male and female athletes. To do this effectively the following research question was asked: What are the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive, male and female youth-age swimmers? Sub questions, designed to investigate the topic more thoroughly were: (a) What are the differences in participation motives of competitive and non-competitive youth-age swimmers?; and (b) what gender differences exist in the participation motives of youth age swimmers? This discussion will explore these questions using the conceptual frameworks and the relevant literature discussed in Chapter 2. It will particularly relate to motivational theories, research in participation motivation, and the principles outlined by Passer (1981). Each section will be presented using Passer's motivation categories, fitness, affiliation, skill development, success and status, excitement and energy release.

#### Squad Participation Motives

The findings clearly show that each subject has several motives for participating in youth-age swimming, with 20 different motives acknowledged across the sample. This is consistent with other research in the area (Bakker et al., 1993; Gould et al., 1985; Romar, 1994), and also corresponds to the integrated approach described by Weiss and Chaumeton (1992).



## Fitness

Fitness is the most prominent motive cited by the swimmers. All swimmers refer to fitness as a meaningful motive to some degree, with 10 of the 12 subjects identifying fitness as the most important reason for participation. The importance of fitness as a participation motive for these swimmers is supported by a number of other studies where fitness is one of the most important motives for participation (Gould et al., 1985; Horn, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1986). With 10 out of the 12 subjects interviewed identifying fitness as their major participation motive, it is clear that fitness is an important factor in youth swimmers taking up and continuing the sport. Coaches must realise the importance of fitness to young swimmers. They need to structure training sessions so that the swimmers feel they are developing their fitness. For example, providing informative feedback relating to fitness, will provide swimmers with knowledge of their own level of fitness, and any changes in their level of fitness.

## Affiliation

Affiliation motives that the subjects acknowledge are made up of a desire to be with friends, swim with friends, make new friends and meet people. Unlike other research (Gill, et al., 1983; Gould et al., 1985; Longhurst & Spink, 1987), motives relating to team atmosphere or being a part of a team have not been discerned. This may be explained by the fact that the junior squad is not affiliated with any swim club. Team spirit may not be developed because the swimmers do not train as a team, and many swimmers do not compete in a team.

### Skill Development

Research by Gould et al. (1985), Horn (1983), Klint and Weiss (1986), Longhurst and Spink (1987) and Romar (1994) cite improving skills and learning new skills as important motives for participation. While none of the subjects refer to learning new skills as a motive, improving strokes and increasing speed are commonly identified. This finding supports previous research (Gould et al., 1985; Horn, 1983; Klint & Weiss, 1986; Longhurst & Spink (1987); Romar, 1994).

The desire to improve skills also supports competence motivation theory (Harter, 1978; 1981) and achievement goal orientation theory (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980; Nicholls, 1984). For competence motivation theory, individuals are motivated to experience feeling of competence, thus swimmers developing their skills satisfy this need. The task orientation component of achievement goal theory is supported as the swimmers are motivated to participate at their maximum. Skill development helps them to achieve this.

Obviously improving skills is an important motive to these swimmers. Coaches should encourage swimmers to improve their skills by emphasising skill development during training, and providing the swimmers with regular opportunities to assess their skills and speed.

### Success and Status

The most prominent success and status motive cited is competition. Several swimmers, predominantly competitive, show that competition is as an important motive for participation. Research on a variety of competitive athletes (Gill et al., 1983; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Romar, 1994) has identified competition as a

motive for participation. However, the subjects from these studies ranked competition relatively low compared to other motives. Gould et al. (1985) obtained similar findings using competitive swimmers. Subjects from the current study vary in the degree of importance placed on competition, with two of the twelve subjects rating it as one their most important participation motives, and four subjects (non-competitive) making no reference to competition as a reason they participate. Over the whole sample, competition rates as a meaningful participation motive, but not as important as motives such as fitness, affiliation or improving skills. The competitive swimmers seem to place a higher emphasis on competition motives than previous research suggests, while the non-competitive swimmers place a far lower emphasis on competition motives.

With the importance of competition motives to the competitive swimmers, they should be encouraged to compete. Establishing a competitive training environment may be beneficial for some competitive swimmers, motivating them to train more than their current training circumstances.

Other success and status motives that the subjects identify are recognition, being good at swimming, and obtaining prizes. Recognition as a swimmer, as a form of gaining identity, is important to one swimmer, while recognition of competence by others is referred to by five swimmers. The relative standing of recognition is low for these six swimmers when compared to other motives.

Being good at swimming is moderately emphasised as a participation motive by four swimmers. One swimmer acknowledges obtaining prizes, as a motive of relatively low importance. The relatively low emphasis placed on

recognition, being good at swimming, and obtaining prizes across the group, is consistent with research by Gill et al. (1983), Gould et al. (1985) and McCullagh et al. (1993). With the low importance placed on recognition and obtaining prizes by the swimmers, it may be better if elaborate award ceremonies and trophy nights were de-emphasised, in favour of increased opportunities for participation. Although trophies and awards are often valued by parents and club officials, it seems that such extrinsic rewards are not as important to the swimmers in meeting their needs.

### Excitement

The only excitement motive that the subjects identify involves the experience of being in the water or moving through the water. Only the non-competitive swimmers cite this motive, with it being common to all of them. This motive is categorised in the excitement group because it reveals the sheer joy and excitement these swimmers feel about being in and moving through the water. The joy and positive feelings experienced by being in the water reflects Harter's (1978; 1981) theory and White's (1959) earlier theory. The motive "being in the water" is an intrinsic motive that is autotelic in nature, that is, swimmers participate simply for the joy or intrinsic worth of being in the water. It can be thought of as a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). This important aspect of physical activity is often disregarded by those responsible for organising youth sport.

Surprisingly, none of the subjects cite challenge as a participation motive. This contrasts with sport specific research on competitive swimmers by Gould et al. (1985) and Horn (1983), and sport general studies by Gill et al. (1983) and

Longhurst and Spink (1987), which have found challenge to be an important participation motive for youth-age athletes. It is possible that the swimmers in the current study prefer a lower level of arousal, and less challenge related motives, for optimal enjoyment of their sport. Additionally, the non-team, mixed competitive and non-competitive training environment, may serve to limit the amount of arousal experienced by the swimmers. This may result in reduced challenge related motives.

### Energy Release

While Passer (1981) includes energy release motives in his participation motive categories, the subjects in the current study did not cite any energy release motives. Klint and Weiss (1986), in a study on youth gymnasts, had similar findings with no subjects identifying energy release motives. Additionally, studies by Gill et al. (1985), Horn (1983), and Romar (1994) found that energy release motives were among the lowest ranked motives for participation by competitive athletes.

The research method used in the current study may help to explain why no energy release motives are identified. Rather than responding in terms according to the researcher, which would include energy release motives, the subjects responded in their own terms, not identifying energy release motives. A further consideration is, that with quantitative research, subjects may respond to categories simply because they make up part of the questionnaire. With energy release motives included in a questionnaire, subjects may feel that they should acknowledge them as participation motives. The method used in the current study

asked the subjects to identify what was important to them, not the researcher. Even with probing questions by the researcher, the subjects did not cite any energy release motives.

### Competitive Versus Non-competitive Swimmers

The differences and similarities between competitive and non-competitive swimmers are investigated by each motive group described by Passer (1981). This allows clear comparisons to be made for each motive group. Energy release motives are not included in this discussion as no subjects refer to them. The conceptual framework displaying the differences and similarities in motives between competitive and non-competitive swimmers are presented following the investigation of each motive group.

#### Fitness

Fitness is the most important participation motive across the whole sample. Four of the six competitive subjects, and all non-competitive subjects cite fitness as part of their major motives for participation. The two competitive subjects who do not hold fitness as a major participation motive, still place a high emphasis on the importance of fitness. The similarity in the importance of fitness between the two groups is consistent with research by Martindale et al. (1990) who found health and fitness to be the highest ranked motive for competitive and non-competitive athletes.

### Affiliation Motives

Affiliation motives relating to friendship are similar for nearly all subjects, with 11 of the 12 subjects identifying motives such as "To be with friends", "To make friends" or "To swim with friends". The only subject not to acknowledge friendship as a participation motive is Natalie. Statements such as "Some of the people that swim are not nice and they put you off wanting to go" and "I don't go there to make friends I'd rather just swim" suggest that Natalie has previously had a negative experience with a squad member, thus explaining her lack of affiliation motives.

Research on competitive and non-competitive athletes by Martindale et al. (1990) found competitive athletes to value social experience motive more than non-competitive athletes, with the authors suggesting team affiliation may be part of the cause. This is not the case in the present study with nearly all swimmers emphasising friendship as an important motive, and two of the non-competitive female swimmers holding friendship as one of their major participation motives. The lack of team affiliation motives, which is probably the result of training in a combined squad, may explain why competitive athletes do not place a higher emphasis on friendship compared to their non-competitive counterparts.

### Skill Development

The swimmers acknowledge two skill development motives. These are improving stroke technique and improving times. The competitive swimmers, while identifying stroke improvement as a participation motive, place a higher emphasis on improving times than strokes. All of the non-competitive swimmers

acknowledge improving strokes as a participation motive, with only two citing improving times as a participation motive. These two swimmers still place greater importance on stroke improvement. This is an important difference between the two groups, indicating competitive athletes are more concerned with times than with how good their technique is. Non-competitive athletes on the other hand are more concerned with correct technique.

Gill et al. (1988) found non-competitive athletes to be more concerned with mastery and goal orientation than their competitive counterparts. Findings of the present study support those of Gill and colleagues. Non-competitive swimmers are more concerned with skill mastery, in the form of stroke improvement, than competitive athletes. It is likely that the emphasis on improving times by the competitive athletes is a reflection of a more competitive orientation toward swimming. This finding is consistent with research by Gill et al. and Martindale et al. (1990) in which competitive college athletes, from a variety of sports, were found to be more competitively oriented than their non-competitive counterparts.

### Success and Status

Competing is the major motive that distinguishes the competitive groups from the non-competitive groups. All of the competitive swimmers identify competing as an important participation motive, with two of them placing it as their most important motive. Predictably, none of the non-competitive subjects directly cite competing as a participation motive. However, one of the non-competitive male swimmers indicates "comparing himself with others" as a participation motive. This swimmer, along with one other non-competitive male



swimmer, also indicates improving times as important. These motives suggest a competitive orientation for these swimmers to some degree.

These findings are supported by Gill et al. (1988), Knoppers et al. (1988) and Martindale et al. (1990), who found competitive athletes to have a higher competitive orientation than non-competitive athletes. Knoppers and colleagues however, also found competitive male and non-competitive male tennis players to not differ significantly on their competitive orientations. This lends support to the unexpected competitive orientation of two of the non-competitive athletes. Therefore, differences in competitive orientations between competitive and non-competitive groups are not as absolute as one might initially predict.

Two competitive athletes identify desire to win. Three other competitive swimmers acknowledge doing well in competitions as a participation motive. This is consistent with the research by Gill et al. (1988) and Knoppers et al. (1988) who found competitive athletes to be more win oriented than non-competitive athletes.

Recognition is the second most acknowledged success and status motive. Recognition as a swimmer, as a form of identity, is cited by only one competitive swimmer, while recognition by others of high ability is important to three competitive and two non-competitive swimmers. The importance placed on recognition by each of these swimmers is relatively low compared to other motives. However, an important difference between the competitive and non-competitive groups for this motive exists. This finding coincides with findings by Martindale et al. (1990) who found that competitive athletes placed higher emphasis on demonstrations of ability than non-competitive athletes.

The swimmers also refer to other success and status motives. These include being good at swimming and getting prizes. Two competitive and two non-competitive swimmers cite being good at swimming as a motive. No known research investigating both competitive and non-competitive athletes has examined this motive. However, research by Gill et al. (1983), Gould et al. (1985), Longhurst and Spink (1987), and McCullagh et al. (1990), using competitive athletes, found motives similar to "doing something I'm good at" to have a moderate ranking by subjects.

One competitive swimmer places a low emphasis on obtaining prizes as a participation motive. This motive does not feature as a reason for participating by any other subjects in the study. This indicates that obtaining prizes does not significantly differ as a motive between the competitive and non-competitive groups. No known research has compared competitive and non-competitive athletes on this motive. With the low ranking of obtaining prizes as a motive, it is likely that many clubs and sport administrators overemphasise the importance of trophies and awards to swimmers.

### Excitement

The only excitement motive that the subjects identify relates to being in the water. All six non-competitive swimmers cite this motive, while none of the competitive swimmers do. This is an important distinction between the two groups, with the non-competitive athletes participating, to some degree, because of the experience of being in, and moving through, the water. No known studies, have included being in the water as a motive for participation, for either

competitive or non-competitive swimmers.

Non-competitive swimmers are clearly more intrinsically motivated than their competitive counterparts. Only non-competitive swimmers cite the intrinsic motive "being in the water". By contrast, competitive swimmers place a higher emphasis on competing, doing well in competitions and recognition. These motives show a more extrinsic motivational orientation for competitive swimmers compared to non-competitive swimmers.

#### Participation Motives Model

The conceptual model, relating to the participation motives of competitive and non-competitive swimmers, describes how some motives are held only by competitive swimmers, some only by non-competitive swimmers, and some shared by both groups. The motives held by each group, and the motives shared, have been identified from the data. Figure 3 details which motives are held by each group and which motives are shared. Only the more commonly occurring motives are contained in Figure 3. Isolated motives, such as obtaining prize, which is identified by only one subject, are not included.

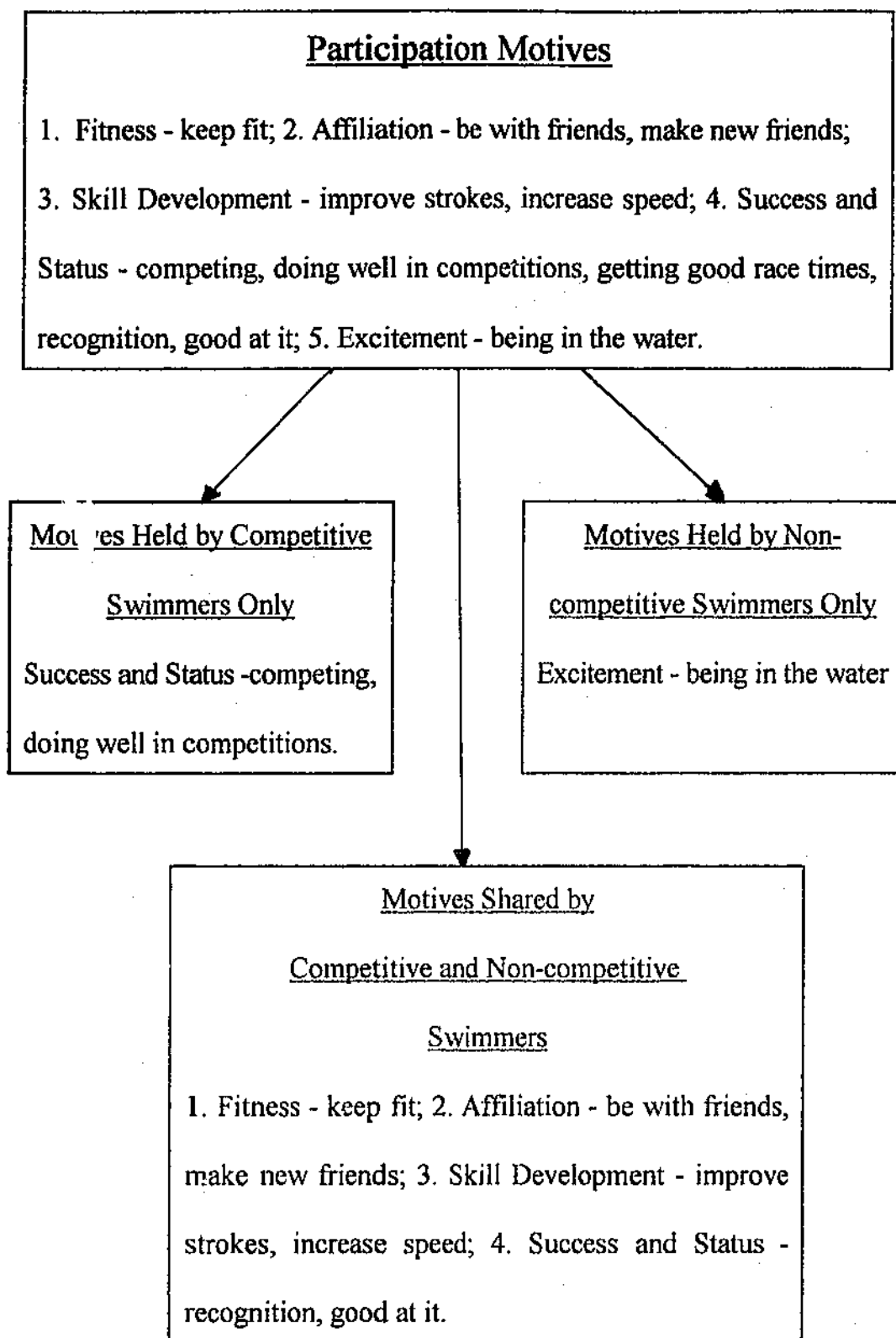


Figure 3: Model showing the motives held by competitive swimmers, non-competitive swimmers and motives shared by both groups.

Figure 3 clearly displays that both competitive and non-competitive swimmers participate for multiple reasons. This figure shows that the competitive and non-competitive groups share many of the same participation motives: Differences in motives between the two groups are centred around competition, performing in competitions, and the experience of being in the water. These differences indicate that competitive athletes are more extrinsically motivated, while non-competitive athletes are more intrinsically motivated. Also, non-competitive athletes are more concerned with stroke improvement, while competitive athletes concentrate on improving times. This demonstrates that non-competitive athletes are more goal oriented than competitive athletes.

An important difference between Figure 3 and the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 is the removal of energy release from the initial participation motive groups. This has been done because no subjects cite any energy release motives.

### Gender Differences

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 suggests that males and females differ in their reasons for participation. It is important that these differences be further investigated so that the needs of both male and female athletes can be identified and catered for. The differences and similarities between the males' and females' participation motives in this study will be examined and related back to the conceptual framework found in Chapter 2. As with the comparison of competitive and non-competitive swimmers, differences will be investigated by motive group, excepting the energy release motive group, which will not be used.

### Fitness

To be fit or get fit represent the most important motives across the whole sample, with five male and five female swimmers naming them as one of their most important participation motives. The male and female swimmers who do not hold fitness as one of their most important motives still place a high emphasis on it. The importance of fitness as a motive to these swimmers is consistent with research demonstrating that male and female athletes rate health and fitness as the most important motive for participation (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gould et al., 1985; Mathes & Battista, 1985). In spite of media focus, and societal stereotypes of the macho-male, females clearly have similar fitness needs to males. Coaches, sport organisers and parents involved in youth swimming need to recognise this similarity, and cater for the fitness needs of female swimmers as well as male swimmers.

### Affiliation

All the male swimmers, and five of the six female swimmers, cite being with friends or swimming with friends as a motive for participation. Natalie, the swimmer who did not identify any friendship related motives, indicated negative experiences with other squad members. Her statement, "Some of the people that go there are not so nice and they can put you off wanting to go", helps explain her lack of affiliation motives. Three male and four female swimmers acknowledge making new friends as a motive.

Although both male and female groups indicate friendship as a motive for participation, the female swimmers place more emphasis on the importance of

friendship motives. Two of the six female swimmers hold friendship motives as one of their major participation motives. Studies by Flood and Hellstedt (1991), Gould et al. (1985), Mathes and Battista (1985) and Romar (1994) support this difference, with findings suggesting that female athletes are more socially oriented than male athletes. The fact that female swimmers value affiliation related motives more than their male counterparts is an important distinction between the two groups. Coaches must realise the differences between male and female swimmers in respect of their affiliation motives, and cater for the needs of both groups. To encourage females to take up swimming, opportunities to socialise should be provided, both in and out of training. This could take the form of social occasions for squad members, and activities in training that encourage socialisation, such as relays.

### Skill Development

Both male and female swimmers emphasise skill development, with all subjects identifying skill development motives. Five of the six male swimmers cite improving times, as well as strokes, as a motive. Only three of the six female swimmers refer to improving times as a motive. Across the whole sample, male swimmers place more emphasis on time improvement than females. However, when considering the competitive and non-competitive groups separately, male and female competitive swimmers place equal emphasis on improving times. It is the non-competitive males and females who differ regarding this motive, with two of the non-competitive males acknowledging improving times as a motive. If a preoccupation with times indicates competitiveness, then non-competitive male

swimmers are more competitive than non-competitive female swimmers.

Knoppers et al. (1988), in a study on youth tennis players, found non-competitive male tennis players to be more competitively oriented than non-competitive female tennis players. The citing of increasing times as a participation motive by two of the non-competitive male swimmers in the present study suggests a competitive orientation, lending support to Knoppers' and colleagues' findings.

Previous research comparing male and female competitive athletes has shown female athletes to place more emphasis on skill development motives than male athletes (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gill, 1988; Longhurst & Spink, 1987). The findings of the current study do not support this with male and female swimmers placing similar emphasis on improving strokes. The lack of gender differences, in relation to skill development, may be attributed to the select sample, and the fact that the sample is made up of both competitive and non-competitive swimmers. A further factor could be sport differences, with previous research investigating a variety of sports in the same study. Male and female swimmers may emphasise skill development motives more equally than athletes from other sports.

### Success and Status

Competitive male and female swimmers have similar ratings for competing as a motive, with all competitive swimmers citing competition as a motive for participation. Additionally one male swimmer and one female swimmer acknowledge competing, and doing well or winning, as their most important participation motives. Previous research comparing male and female competitive athletes has suggested that male athletes are more competitively oriented than



female athletes (Flood & Hellstedt, 1991; Gill, 1988; Gould et al., 1985; Mathes & Battista, 1985; Romar, 1994). The findings of this study are not consistent with previous research on competitive athletes. No gender differences regarding competitiveness have been identified for the competitive groups. An explanation for the lack of gender differences on competition motives may be that Australia has a very strong swimming background, with several role models for both male and female swimmers. This may encourage male and female swimmers to strive towards similar competitive goals.

The male and female non-competitive swimmers however, do differ in their competitive orientation. As mentioned during the discussion comparing competitive and non-competitive swimmers, two of the three non-competitive male swimmers, Nathan and Nick, cite improving times as a participation motive. Nick also identifies comparing himself to others as a motive for swimming. This indicates a competitive orientation for these swimmers to some degree and is consistent with the findings of Knoppers et al. (1988).

Recognition is cited by one competitive male, two non-competitive male and three competitive female swimmers. However, the relative emphasis placed on these motives is low. No real difference between the male and female swimmers exists for recognition. Gould et al. (1985), in an investigation of competitive swimmers participation motives, found male swimmers to value recognition more than female. This is not the case for the current study. Cultural, sample or methodological differences may help to explain this difference.

Additional success and status motives include obtaining prizes and doing

something I'm good at. Obtaining prizes is a minor participation motive for only one swimmer, showing no clear gender difference. "Doing something I'm good at" is moderately emphasised by three male swimmers and one female swimmers. Gill et al. (1983) and Gould et al. (1985) suggest that male athletes place slightly more importance on this motive than female athletes. The findings for the competitive male and female groups do not support this, with one male and female acknowledging this motive. However, support is found in the non-competitive male and female groups. Two of the three non-competitive males cite this motive, while no non-competitive female swimmers identify it. Non-competitive male athletes are partly motivated to participate because they are competent swimmers.

Fortier et al. (1995) found male athletes to place higher emphasis on extrinsic motives, such as competing and recognition, while female athletes were more intrinsically motivated. The non-competitive athletes in the current study support this finding with the male athletes displaying an extrinsic orientation to some degree, identifying competition, recognition and doing something I'm good at. The competitive athletes only show minor differences in recognition as a motive, due to it's ranking, and no differences in competing or the motive "doing something I'm good at". While the findings on non-competitive swimmers are consistent with those of Fortier and colleagues, findings for the competitive swimmers are not. The success Australians have in the pool, along with the many swimming role models in Australia, may explain the contrast in findings for competitive swimmers.

### Excitement

The excitement motive "to be in the water" is held by three male and three female swimmers. No gender differences exist for this motive across the sample; or for competitive and non-competitive groups. Male and female swimmers are similarly motivated by the autotelic experience of being in the water. While no known studies have identified this motive, research by Gill et al. (1983) and Longhurst and Spink (1987) found male sport participants to value excitement motives more than females. This was not found in the present study with no other excitement motives being cited. The competitive and non-competitive nature of the training squad, where challenge and other excitement motives may not be fostered, provides a possible explanation for this difference.

### Participation Motives Model

Chapter 2 describes a conceptual framework relating to gender differences in participation motives. The motives held by male and female swimmers, as well as the motives shared by both groups have been identified from the data. Figure 4 shows which motives are held by male swimmers, female swimmers and both groups. Isolated motives for each gender, such as "doing something I'm good at" for females and "obtaining prizes" for males, are not included in the model.

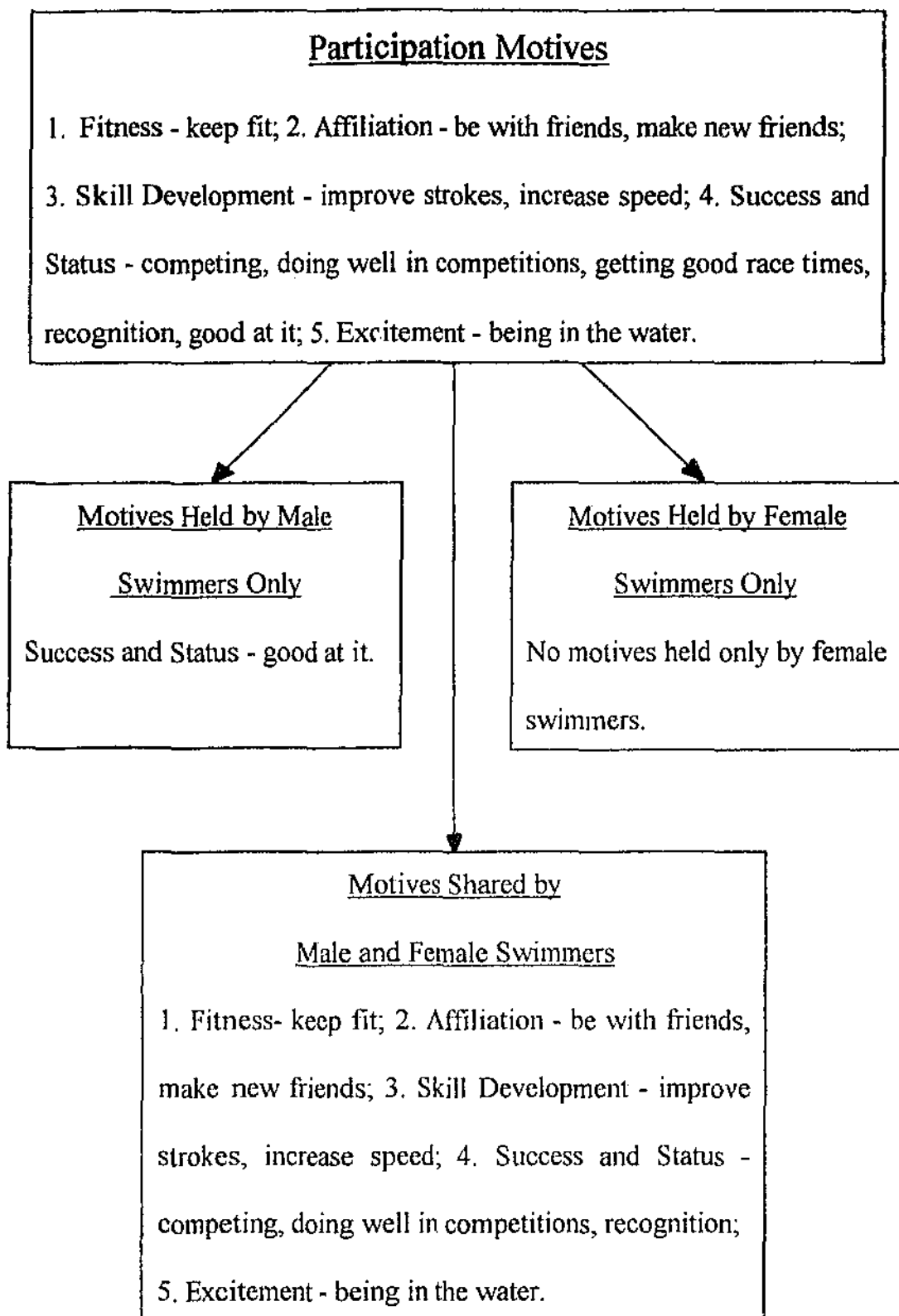


Figure 4: Model showing the motives held by male swimmers, female swimmers and motives shared by both groups.

The model comparing the participation motives of male and female swimmers shows that only one motive is held by the male swimmers that is not held by the female swimmers. This motive involved doing something I'm good at. No motives are held solely by the female group.

While figure 4 does not show substantial differences in the participation motives of male and female swimmers, the importance placed on motives reflects gender differences. Affiliation related motives such as seeing friends and making new friends are more important to the female swimmers than the males. Additionally, the non-competitive male swimmers identify a competitive orientation that is not reflected by their female counterparts. The non-competitive male swimmers are also more extrinsically motivated than the non-competitive female swimmers.

### Summary

There are a multiplicity of participation motives held by youth age-swimmers. Each swimmer cites multiple reasons for participating, with the swimmers identifying 20 different participation motives. This is consistent with the integrated model of motivational orientations proposed by Weiss and Chaumeton (1992). It is important that parents, coaches and sport organisers realise swimmers have several reasons for participating, and attempt to meet these needs.

Fitness is clearly the most important participation motive acknowledged by

the swimmers. Obviously fitness is an important reason why young people take up and continue swimming at both the competitive and non-competitive level. Other important motives that all the swimmers identify are: being with friends, making friends, improving strokes, increasing speed, recognition, and "doing something I'm good at". The energy release motive group described by Passer (1981) does not feature in the responses of any of the subjects. Swimmers' motives can be seen to reflect aspects of earlier theories discussed in the review of literature.

Differences between competitive and non-competitive groups relate mostly to competition and the excitement motive being in the water. As expected, competitive swimmers place more importance on competition than the non-competitive swimmers. Competitive swimmers also emphasise increasing speed over improving strokes. This suggests that competitive swimmers are more competitively oriented than non-competitive swimmers. Non-competitive swimmers, identifying stroke improvement over time, are more goal oriented than competitive swimmers.

A finding that was not anticipated was that all of the non-competitive swimmers cite being in the water as a motive, while no competitive swimmers refer to this motive. The autotelic motive "being in the water" is important to the non-competitive swimmers as it indicates that these swimmers participate partly for the sheer intrinsic joy being in the water brings. The competitive swimmers are more extrinsically motivated, citing competition motives and preoccupation with swimming times, while the non-competitive swimmers are more intrinsically

motivated.

Gender differences are not as obvious as the differences between competitive and non-competitive swimmers. The only difference in motives identified by the model is participating because "I'm good at it". This motive is identified by three of the male swimmers and only one female swimmer. Although the same motives are held by male and female swimmers, the emphasis placed on the motives differ to some degree. Females regard friendship associated motives as more important than males, while competition is more important to the male swimmers across the group, with two non-competitive male swimmers indicating a slight competitive orientation.

Across the whole sample, male swimmers are more extrinsically motivated than the female swimmers. The non-competitive male swimmers are notably more competitively and extrinsically oriented in their motivation compared to their female counterparts. These differences in gender are important for coaches, parents and sport organisers, who should cater for the needs of both male and female swimmers.

## CHAPTER 6

### Summary, Conclusions and Implications

This study provided support for previous research findings suggesting participation motives for engaging in sport, and more specifically swimming, are multiple and varied in nature. Of the many motives investigated, fitness emerged as the most important for the subject group, with 10 of the 12 subjects identifying it as one of their major participation motives. An important finding, which adds to the body of knowledge in this area, is the difference between competitive and non-competitive swimmers regarding the motive "being in the water". This autotelic motive shows that non-competitive swimmers participate, somewhat, for the sheer joy and experience being in the water provides. Competitive swimmers identified competitive factors as meaningful to them, whereas non-competitive swimmers placed greater emphasis on stroke improvement. However, the relationship between non-competitive swimmers and competitive motives is not as clear cut as one might think, with non-competitive male swimmers suggesting a slight competitive orientation. By employing qualitative methods, the study provided information from the participant's perspective, a perspective that has largely been neglected by previous research.

#### Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate the motives for participation of a squad of youth-age competitive and non-competitive, male and female



swimmers. Comparisons were drawn between the competitive and non-competitive swimmers. The study also investigated gender differences between male and female swimmers.

The researcher interviewed twelve youth age swimmers, aged from 13 to 15 years. Interview questions were based on participation theories, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories. Data obtained from the subjects was deductively analysed, categorising relative statements into the motive groups described by Passer (1981).

Each subject identified several participation motives. Keeping fit was the most important motive cited across the sample. Other motives acknowledged by all subject groups were: "to be with friends, make new friends, improve skills, increase speed, and recognition". The subjects made no reference to any energy release motives.

The findings showed competition related motives, and the excitement motive "being in the water", to be the main motives separating competitive and non-competitive swimmers. All of the competitive swimmers identified competing as a reason for participating, and four of the six cited doing well in competition or winning as a participation motive. No non-competitive swimmers cited competing or doing well in competitions. While the non-competitive swimmers did not directly cite competition as a motive, two non-competitive male swimmers displayed a degree of competitive orientation in some of their motives. The competition related motives acknowledged by the competitive group exhibit a degree of extrinsic motivation.

Being in the water was identified as a motive by all of the non-competitive swimmers. No competitive swimmers cited this motive. Being in the water is an important motive because it shows that the non-competitive swimmers participate partly for the pure intrinsic enjoyment being in the water brings. The flow experience that "being in the water" represents indicates an intrinsic motivational orientation for non-competitive swimmers.

The study identified limited gender differences in relation to the motives held by male and female swimmers. Swimming because "I'm good at it" was the only motive held by male swimmers and not by female swimmers. Female swimmers did not cite any motives which were not also displayed by the male swimmers. Important gender differences were found when examining the importance of motives, with female swimmers placing more importance on friendship related motives. Comparing the competitive male with the competitive female swimmers, and the non-competitive male with the non-competitive female swimmers, revealed that the non-competitive male swimmers were more competitively oriented than their female counterparts. Because of this, the male swimmers were found to value competition motives more than the female swimmers across the sample. The slight competitive orientation identified by the non-competitive male swimmers, combined with a lower emphasis on affiliation motives than non-competitive female swimmers, demonstrates a more extrinsic motivational orientation for the non-competitive male swimmers compared to their female counterparts.

## Conclusions

The findings of this research suggest that youth swimmers have multiple motives for participating in their sport. The most important of these reasons is fitness, with 10 of the 12 swimmers naming fitness among their major participation motives. Clearly, fitness is a major reason young people take up and continue swimming.

Meaningful differences in participation motives exist between competitive and non-competitive swimmers. Competitive swimmers value competition motives more than non-competitive swimmers. Unexpectedly, competitive motives are also of some value to non-competitive swimmers. Non-competitive swimmers are motivated by the experience of being in the water to some degree. The autotelic nature of being in the water emerged as important to those swimmers who participate for non-competitive reasons. This motivational factor is not evident in competitive swimmers. Competitive swimmers, through their competitive motives, are more extrinsically oriented in their motivation, whereas non-competitive swimmers display a more intrinsic motivational orientation.

By contrast to previous research, gender does not profoundly affect participation motives. However, friendship related motives are more important to female swimmers, while competition related motives are more important to male swimmers. More meaningful differences exist between non-competitive male and non-competitive female swimmers compared to their competitive counterparts. Non-competitive male swimmers are more competitively and extrinsically oriented than non-competitive female swimmers.

The qualitative method used in the study represents an effective way to gather meaningful data about the participation motives of swimmers. Importantly, it allows swimmers to identify their most important participation motives, cite particular reasons for participating, and express their feelings towards different motives.

## Implications

### Practical Implications

This study clearly shows that youth-age swimmers have multiple reasons for participating in their sport. Young swimmers will be encouraged to participate when the reasons they have for swimming are identified, and their needs met. Coaches, parents and club officials must recognise the various reasons why youth-age swimmers engage in their sport. With this in mind, sport organisers should develop an environment that meets the many needs of young swimmers.

Fitness is perhaps the most important reason young people participate in swimming. Coaches need to recognise this and structure training sessions so that athletes feel they are enhancing their fitness. Additionally, when marketing the sport, fitness should be used to promote swimming to adolescents, appealing to an issue that is obviously important to them.

Socialising is an important motive for youth-age swimmers, particularly for females. Skill development is also important to young swimmers. Coaches, parents and club officials should provide the swimmers with opportunities to socialise both in and out of the training environment, as well as provide situations for

optimising skill mastery. Skill instruction needs to be emphasised, and regular opportunities for swimmers to assess their skills and speed provided. Swimmers should also be encouraged to set goals relating to skill development and speed.

Gender differences in motivation need to be recognised and catered for. Specifically, young female swimmers should be provided with increased opportunities to socialise, while the competitive needs of male swimmers should be met. Each swimmer must be individually assessed and their needs identified. Responsibility for this falls on all persons involved in youth-age swimming programs, coaches, parents and club officials. By working together, these people can identify and meet the needs of youth age swimmers.

### Research Implications

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge on participation motivation in the following ways: (a) it has initiated research into participation motivation on competitive and non-competitive athletes in Australia; (b) it has investigated the participation motives of a unique group of competitive and non-competitive athletes who train together in the same squad; (c) it has examined gender differences in participation motives for competitive and non-competitive youth age swimmers; and (d) it has investigated the participation motives of this group from the swimmer's perspective, rather than the researcher's viewpoint.

Limitations were found to exist relating to interpretations of the findings. These should provide impetus for further research in the area. The subject numbers were limited in the study. Future research should investigate youth-age swimmers using more subjects. This will allow the findings to be generalised more easily, and

further comparisons of the subject groups to be made.

The current research investigated only one sport. Research in the future should branch into other sports, where competitive and non-competitive athletes participate. This would allow inter-sport comparisons of subject groups to be made.

The research used only one method of data collection, interview techniques. While much data was gathered from this method, a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques would expand what is known about the participation motives of youth age swimmers. Future research should use a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to gather data.

This study identified important gender differences. The subject of gender differences warrants further investigation using more subjects and across different sports. Additionally, the contribution of socialisation factors should be investigated to determine what factors are important and how they influence young people.

Subjects in the current study were all from middle class, white, English speaking backgrounds. Also, no attempt was made to investigate cultural differences between the findings from the current study and other research from different countries. Future research should investigate class and ethnic differences in participation motivation in Australia, and cultural differences in participation motivation of young swimmers in Australia compared to other countries.

No attempt was made to test any particular theory dealing with participation motivation in youth sport. Rather, the research drew from a more integrated approach involving a range of theories. Future research must investigate the

validity of various theories to determine if any one is more applicable in describing the participation motivation of youth athletes.

The current study investigated the participation motives of youth-age swimmers. An important topic related to participation motives is attrition in youth sport. Future research should use retired swimmers to investigate the phenomenon of attrition, and establish if any links exist between motives for participating in swimming and motives for leaving swimming. Longitudinal studies, employing both qualitative and quantitative methods would be particularly useful in extending our knowledge in this area.

This research examined the participation motives of a squad of competitive and non-competitive youth-age swimmers. Competitive and non-competitive, male and female swimmers were compared and differences in participation motives identified. Fitness is the most important motive for youth-age swimmers. Non-competitive athletes are far less competitively oriented than competitive athletes. Important gender differences also exist. Female swimmers are more socially oriented, while male swimmers display a more competitive orientation. These findings are important for describing why swimmers participate, allowing their needs to be recognised and fulfilled. This is important to enhance their current participation and future engagement in swimming.

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## APPENDIX A

### Sample Letter and Informed Consent

#### Participation Motivation of Competitive and Non-Competitive

#### Youth-Age Swimmers

Date

Dear Swimmer,

I am seeking your assistance in a research project entitled, 'Participation Motivation of Competitive and Non-competitive Youth Age Swimmers' that I am conducting for my Honours degree in a Bachelor of Applied Science (Sports Science) at Edith Cowan University. I am a swimming teacher at the Leeming Recreation Centre and this area is of great interest to me.

The purpose of the research is to examine why young swimmers like yourself participate in competitive and non-competitive swimming programs. To gather the information, it is necessary for me to interview people who are currently participating. I think that you may be a suitable subject and would be pleased if you would agree to participate in the study.

Your participation in this study would involve you being interviewed which, with your permission, would be tape recorded. The interview is expected to take about 40 minutes and will ask questions on why you participate and what you like and dislike about swimming.

Parental consent must be obtained before you can participate in the study. I would like you to talk to your parents about participating in the study. If you want to be involved return the attached forms and I will contact you to explain more about the study and arrange a time for the interview. You can withdraw from the study at any time if you feel uncomfortable.

If you or your parents have any questions please contact me on [REDACTED] or phone my supervisor, Dr Elizabeth Rose, on [REDACTED]

Yours Faithfully,

Shane Harris.

Participation Motivation of Competitive and Non-Competitive

Youth Age Swimmers

by

Shane Harris

Bachelor of Applied Science (Sports Science) Honours

Edith Cowan University

Form of Disclosure and Informed Consent

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant's Parent) have read the information provided and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to allow \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant's Name) to participate, realising that he/she may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided my child is not identifiable.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Participant's Parent)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Researcher)

## APPENDIX B

### Preliminary Identification Form

#### Participation Motivation of Competitive and Non-Competitive Youth Age Swimmers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

School year: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time in squad training(months): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you swim or have you ever swum competitively? Yes / No

Give Details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Guide

Is it alright if I record this interview on tape?

I want to start by asking you about your swimming.

1. How many times per week do you train?

Where?

2. Could you describe a typical training session for me?

3. Do you learn anything while doing your swimming training or is it simply swimming up and down?

How does this affect how you feel about training?

4. Can you remember why you first started swimming?

Could you tell me about it?

5. Why do you swim now?

6. How does swimming fulfil the reasons you just gave for participating? (ie.

What is fun about swimming? What challenges are there?)

7. Could you tell me how satisfying your swimming is?

Have you found your swimming not to be satisfying at anytime?

Tell me about this time.

8. Tell me about the things you like most in swimming?

9. Now there must be some parts you don't like. Can you share those with me?

10. Do you have a favourite swimming experience?

Could you tell me about it?

What makes this your favourite experience?

11. Is there a least favourite experience that stands out in your mind?

Could you describe it for me?

Why is this your least favourite experience?

12. Do you have any goals you want to accomplish in your swimming?

Could you tell me about them?

13. How far would you like to go with your swimming?

Do you think you will be able to get there? Why?

14. Would you like to be more involved in swimming/ participate more than you do now?

Why?

15. In your opinion, does swimming negatively affect other parts of your life?  
(School, family, friends, other interests)

Is it worth it?

Why?

How does this affect how you feel about swimming?

16. Can you describe any positive impacts your swimming has on other parts of your life?

Are these some of the reasons you continue to participate in swimming?

17. How do you think your parents feel about your swimming?

What makes you think this?

Could you tell me how that makes you feel?

18. Could you describe what level of swimmer you think you are? (excellent , good, average...)

How have you formed this opinion? (Coach, comparing with peers, parents)

Does this affect how you feel about participating? (ie participate because you are good, to prove competence to others)

19. Do you compete regularly?

How often do you compete?

Where do you compete?

20. Why do/don't you compete?

Could you tell me what you enjoy about competing?

Describe the things you dislike about competing?

Could you tell me about a favourite experience in competition?

Is there a least favourite experience you could tell me about in competition?

21. Would you like to compete (more)?

Why?

22. Can you think of one person who has particularly influenced your swimming?

Could you tell me how they have influenced you?

What makes this person so significant?

23. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

What are their ages?

Do they participate in swimming as well?

How does their participating in swimming affect you?



24. Could you tell me about other sports that you are interested in?

How long have you been participating in them?

Do you think they are as important as your swimming?

Why?

Now I just have to ask some questions to confirm the information you gave me on the preliminary data sheet.

25. Could you tell me your date of birth?

26. Could you tell me what school you go to?

What grade are you in there?

Do you like school?

Why?

27. Is there anything else you want to say about your swimming? (General comment on why subject participates)

28. Are there any questions you thought I would ask but haven't?

## APPENDIX D

### Raw Data Analysis Examples

res: Tell me about the things you like most in swimming?

sub: Ah <sup>\* AFFILIATION?</sup> the races and people and that. — COMPETITION (STS)

res: What do you like most about training?

sub: I guess training helps me to improve my strokes and times so that I can swim better when I race and that. — COMPETITION IMPORTANT (STS)

res: Is the social aspect of swimming important to you?

sub: Sometimes but I like to have a good training session and feel like I've done

something to get better rather than go and have fun with the other swimmers. — AFFIL  
DEEMPHASIS  
1.7 FAVOUR OF  
GOOD WORKOUT

res: In your opinion does your swimming negatively affect other parts of your life such as school family friends?

sub: Yeah sometimes if there's like things on Friday nights and I can't go to them because I have but that doesn't happen very often. — COULD INTERFERE WITH FRIENDSHIP?

res: Is it worth it?

sub: Yeah because it doesn't happen very often and I really enjoy swimming and wouldn't want to give it up because I guess I'm good at it. — STS MOTIVE

res: What about any positive impacts that swimming has on other parts of your life?

sub: Well, I keep fit <sup>FITNESS</sup> and that's pretty important and I guess I make friends at swimming so that's pretty good. — FRIENDSHIP (AFFIL)

res: Do you learn anything while you are doing your swimming or is it simply swimming up and down looking at the black line?

sub: I try to think of things that the coach Phillip tells me like what I'm doing wrong and I try and fix it so my strokes get better and that.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT  
STROKE IMPROVE

res: How does this affect how you feel about training?

sub: Um, I guess it makes it more interesting because it feels like your actually achieving something when you do it right like when you get better and the coach tells you.

SKILLED.

RECOGNITION?  
(STS)

res: Can you remember why you first started swimming?

sub: Um, well I had some friends in the squad this was about 18 months ago and they told me that I should come down and see what it was like because I've always been a decent swimmer so I came down and I liked it so I stayed.

\* AFFILIATION

res: Do your friends train in the squads as well?

sub: They used to but they left the squad earlier this year but I've made new friends in the squad and that.

AFFILIATION

res: Why do you swim now?

sub: I guess I swim mostly because I enjoy it.

res: What do you enjoy about it?

sub: Um just being there and knowing that my fitness is getting better because I swim and because I've got my friends there and I'm good at it so I like doing it.

FITNESS.

AFFIL

\*STS.

res: Are there any challenges in it for you or do you have any goals you want to accomplish?

sub: No, there is nothing I really see as a challenge.

Exc \* NO CHALLENGES.

res: Why did you start at Leeming?

sub: Because my old club was moving out to Belmont and well my coach he was just a real moron he was really boring and you see I didn't want to go to the Olympics or anything or the nationals I just like want to do my competitions like state championships but he couldn't accept the fact that I didn't want to go as far as everyone else did so he wouldn't train me as hard so he would just sort of brush me off and he didn't help me get better like with my strokes and that. <sup>SKILL DEVELOP</sup>

res: Can you remember why you first started swimming?

sub: Well yeah there was this one girl at school I really wanted to beat because she always just beat me in the races and everything so I really wanted to beat her but I just sort of did it to be fit sort of thing as well. - <sup>(S+S) COMPETITION/WINNING</sup> FITNESS

res: Why do you swim now?

sub: Just um to probably win the school sports I want to keep up my training and that for the school sports nothing more really except state championships maybe but just to keep fit and healthy so I can participate in other sports and not die at the same time. <sup>COMPETITION (S+S)</sup>  
<sup>COMP. (S+S)</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> FITNESS.

res: So what would be your major reason?

sub: Um fitness. FITNESS

res: What about your competing in the state championships how important is that?

sub: Well it's not very important but it's important to me I mean <sup>TEAM</sup> I like competing in it to um find out how I'm going if I'm getting my personal bests and all that all the time so I suppose it's important because I only do my PB's during competition so it lets me measure my fitness. \* FITNESS MEASURE.

res: Can you remember why you first started swimming?

sub: Um, I first started swimming just to get fit and um then I started to do alright in the races and I wanted to get better and better and um I kept feeling my stroke wasn't right and I was slowing down even though I was trying harder I was slowing down so I went to the squads to correct my stroke so I'd be able to swim faster and get better.

res: Why do you swim now?

sub: Um I swim now for the competition a bit and to correct my stroke I swim with friends and that makes it more fun.

res: What's fun about swimming?

sub: I don't know, I just like getting better and swimming faster. It's good to swim in the squad because get better and faster and muck around a bit um sometimes I like it when we do relays and take times so I can see how I'm doing if I'm getting any better.

res: Tell me about the things you like most in swimming.

sub: Being with friends, like you get to see your friends their and make new friends also the um competition and going in races and doing well is good I also like it when I can tell I'm getting better and my times are improving.

res: What is it about competition and improving times that you like?

sub: Well um the competition is good because when you race you try and do your best so you come up with good times and you can see if your improving and improving times in training is important so that you want to keep coming back and getting better.

## APPENDIX E

### Sample of Interview Transcript

res: Why do you swim now?

sub: Well about a year ago I had a chest infection and got told I had asthma I had to keep up my fitness so I just did swimming.

res: So are there any other reasons besides the medical ones?

sub: Oh, no I just like going to the club and improving .

res: Are there any challenges in your swimming for you?

sub: No not really I suppose I want to improve my strokes I'm trying to improve my breaststroke because that's my best my stroke and I'm good at it.

res: How satisfying do you find your swimming?

sub: Um it's really satisfying when you break your times I guess in general it's good otherwise I probably wouldn't go.

res: Have you found your swimming not to be satisfying at anytime?

sub: I guess when I stopped swimming I didn't like it because I didn't really want to go but apart from that no.

res: Tell me about the things you like most in swimming?

sub: I like it when I'm swimming and I feel good about swimming and I'm swimming well and exercising and getting fit and when I'm told that I'm swimming well by the coach I like going there when I get there and I see my friends and I get to see them and talk to them.

res: Now there must be some parts that you don't like could you tell me about

## APPENDIX F

### Interview Evaluation Sheet

Subject Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Subject's Reaction to Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Subject's Ability/Willingness to Answer Questions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Reaction to Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Performance: \_\_\_\_\_

Suitability of Questions: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Comments: \_\_\_\_\_