Urban Aboriginal children in sport: Experiences, perceptions and sense of self

Cheryl S. Kickett-Tucker

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Urban Aboriginal Children In Sport:
Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self.

by
Cheryl S Kickett-Tucker PhD

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of
Doctor of Philosophy.

At the Faculty of Community Services, Education and Social Sciences.
Edith Cowan University, Mount Lawley.

Date of submission: 9 November 1999
Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the sense of self for a group of urban Western Australian Aboriginal children through analysing their perspectives and experiences in school sport and physical education. A symbolic interaction inquiry paradigm complemented with qualitative data collection methods was utilised. Informal conversational interviews and non-participant observations were employed. Interviews were conducted with participants and those whom they reported as their significant others. Participants were also observed in the school sport setting during physical education classes and intra and inter school sport competitions.

Eight Western Australian Aboriginal children who resided in an urban suburb of Perth, Western Australia and attended a coeducational state school were the participants. Upper primary students, aged 11 to 12 years were included with an equal representation of both males and females. Data were analysed in accordance with Colaizzi's (1978) procedure. Significant participant responses were extracted and meanings were identified in order to group the meanings into various themes.

It was found that Aboriginal students mostly experienced positive interactions with others in the school sport setting. They demonstrated above average sport skills and were consistently rewarded with praise from their fellow peers and teachers.

Aboriginal students did not enjoy physical education since it limited their participation, social interaction with others and their enjoyment. Team
sports were preferred, but females reported that they disliked coeducational sport competition.

Aboriginal students reported that participating in sport (particularly team sports) made them feel happy about themselves since it provided an opportunity for them to feel proud of identifying as an Aboriginal. Opportunities for equality and acceptance from others were more accessible in the school sport domain, since feedback for performances was constant and contained positive information. Feedback was often supplied immediately after a performance and was directed to the student concerned.

For some though, sport participation could also result in students experiencing shame. This occurred when a mistake was performed or when significant "others" were present and observed their participation.

In all, school sport provided the opportunities for Aboriginal students to develop positive and favourable self-perceptions, particularly with regard to their Aboriginal identity.
Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii) contain any defamatory material.
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My husband and son are my inspiration.

My mum is my strength.

My dad is my determination.

My spirit is my own.

I would like to acknowledge the support of my husband Quinton and particularly the patience my young son Jaylon possessed whilst I completed this thesis. I would also like to acknowledge my mother's strong words of encouragement when things weren't going right and my dad's drive to keep me going.

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Finally, this thesis is dedicated to the memory of the late Mr Peter Clements. Peter was my first basketball coach who had a huge impact on my life as a youngster. He encouraged and supported many young Aboriginal basketballers and influenced their lives in a positive way through sport.
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Glossary

Common abbreviations used throughout this thesis include:

ABS - Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIEW - Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker
AANA - All Australian Netball Association
ASSH - Australian Society for Sport History
ASSPA - Aboriginal Student Support Parent Awareness Committee
ASC - Australian Sports Commission
CPDD - Community Planning Development Division
DOTT - Duties Other Than Teaching
EDWA - Education Department of Western Australia
HRSCATSIA - House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
JSDU - Junior Sport Development Unit
MZSCSC - Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-concept Scale for Children
PE - Physical Education
PINSEF - Participant Interview Notes, Summary and Evaluation Form
PORS - Personal Observation Record Sheet
PSP - Priority Schools Program
SEPEP - Sport Education in Physical Education Project
The following terms are used throughout the study and therefore require some clarification:

Aboriginal: "defined as a person who is a descendant of an indigenous inhabitant of Australia, identifies as an Aboriginal, and is recognised as Aboriginal by members of the community in which she or he lives" (Jonas, Langton & Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1993, p. 2).

Nyoongar: this term can be spelled in a number of ways and this study has adopted the above spelling. Although, the boundaries of Nyoongar communities are indefinite, 'Nyoongar' is a collective term that denotes Aboriginal people of the south west of Western Australia (Palmer & Collard, 1993). Anecdotal evidence suggests the boundaries that determine the Nyoongar region overlap (S. Forrest, personal communication, February 10, 1996). For the purposes of this study, Nyoongar country can be located between the towns of Dongara-Geraldton region in the mid west of Western Australia, and Merredin-Southern Cross region in the east to Albany in south west corner and along the south coast to Esperance (S. Harris, personal communication, March 11, 1996).

Self-concept: the beliefs and knowledge that individuals have about themselves and which comprise descriptions, values and expectations. Individuals may possess multiple and varied self-concepts, depending on the salient aspects of the individual's self as well as time, place and context (Hattie, 1992).

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Self-esteem: the combined evaluations or judgments which individuals make of their self-concepts. Self-esteem is considered to be the evaluative component of self-concept (Mussen, Conger & Kagan, 1984).

Sense of self: a set of multiple self-concepts that collectively describes the holistic nature and being of the individual (Fontana, 1988).

Sport: "a human activity which: (a) is by nature competitive, (b) requires physical exertion and/or physical skills in competition, and (c) is organised competitively with the objective of achieving a result" (Western Australian Sports Federation, n.d.). In this study, the term 'school sport' is used and unless otherwise stated, it refers to experiences in physical education and intra and inter school sport under the auspices of the school.

Urban: refers to those individuals who reside in the boundaries of a metropolitan city (HRSCATSIA 1992).

Wadjullah: is a common Nyoongar term that refers to white people (S Harris, personal communication, March 11, 1996).
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Some children enjoy playing sport and some do not (Carlson, 1995b; Portman, 1995). Some children feel that sport is good for them while others feel alienated (Australian Sport Commission [ASC], 1991). For their children, Aboriginal people consider that sport is a central part of their socialisation (Atkinson, 1991; Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs [HRSCATSIA], 1992) as well as an important part of socialisation with members of mainstream society (Coolwell, 1993; Geelagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Perkina, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988). More specifically, it is commonly perceived that sport participation can assist Aboriginal children who are experiencing social problems associated with their sense of self (HRSCATSIA, 1992) and perhaps deter them from committing criminal acts (Mason & Wilson, 1988).

The importance of sport to sense of self and its development has not been investigated. In fact, Aboriginal children’s views of sport, their experiences in sport and their perceptions of themselves in the sport setting have rarely been investigated. Such information is necessary for the development of appropriate sport programs. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore a group of urban Western Australian Aboriginal children’s experiences and perspectives of sport and how this relates to their sense of self in the sport context. Data were collected from 11-12 year old, male and
female Aboriginal students who attended a coeducational state primary school located in a suburb of Perth, Western Australia.

Background To The Study

According to Dudgeon and Oxenham (1989) the sense of self of Aboriginal people in Australia is constructed from a number of elements external to the culture of the group itself. In contemporary Australian society, urban Aborigines live in two worlds. They are expected to respect the rules, customs and obligations of their people, while at the same time they are subjected to the values of the majority society (Haralambos & Heald, 1984; Hughes, 1987). The perception that urban Aborigines have of who they are and where they belong is influenced by two contrasting elements - identity as a member of an Aboriginal group and identity as a member of the majority society (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989). Connected with these contrasting identities are the personal evaluations, or self-esteem which urban Aborigines possess of themselves. Some urban Aboriginal children, at a very young age, have an awareness that they are different from their non-Aboriginal peers (Coolwell, 1993; Sykes, 1994). This awareness is generally experienced in the early years of attending predominantly Anglo schools and as they get older they become more aware of their Aboriginality (Coolwell, 1993). Often, they are confronted with a conflict regarding their sense of self (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989; Partington & McCudden, 1992). Within the wider community, sport has been promoted as a remedy to counteract
problems associated with sense of self, specifically self-esteem (HRSCATSIA, 1992). Empirical evidence to support the use of sport in this manner however, does not exist. The following study therefore aims to explore the experiences and perceptions of sport as well as sense of self in the sport context for a group of urban Western Australian Aboriginal children.

Significance Of The Study

This study is framed within the popular notion that sport is considered a remedy to conflicts of sense of self among Aboriginal children and youths (HRSCATSIA, 1992). The following factors however, also contribute to the significance of the study.

First, sport is considered by Aborigines as a central component of Aboriginal socialisation (Atkinson, 1991; HRSCATSIA, 1992). Sport encourages bonding between Aboriginal people and unifies them as a people. It is also perceived as an opportunity to experience relaxation and enjoyment (HRSCATSIA, 1992).

Second, there are few academic and biographic resources that provide knowledge of the sense of self of Aboriginal children (Davis, 1991a; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Morgan, 1987; Ward, 1987, 1991; Weller, 1981, 1990). Of the current literature, little is known about the sense of self for urban Western Australian Aboriginal children. Furthermore, there is little mention of how urban Aboriginal children perceive themselves in the sport setting. Finch (1973), Wright and Parker (1978) and Callan and St John
(1984) completed empirical investigations of sense of self for other Aboriginal populations of Eastern Australia. Only Pedersen, Walker and Glass (1997) examined the self-concepts for urban Western Australian children. These studies were primarily comparative since they compared the sense of self of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in terms of academic performances in the school setting. In each study, quantitative data analysis methods using instruments developed primarily for non-Aboriginal sense of self were employed. Prior investigation of the elements that comprise Aboriginal sense of self would have been preferable so that the researchers were aware of its characteristics prior to comparing it with others' self-perceptions.

Third, literature that describes or explores the sporting experiences of urban Western Australian Aboriginal children is lacking. There are some biographic resources from well known Aboriginal athletes (Coolwell, 1993, Goulagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988), but most focussed on adult male athletes who participated in elite sports and who do not identify as urban Western Australian Aboriginal people. Furthermore, the majority of the general sporting literature concentrate on the history of Aboriginal involvement in sport and in most cases is presented from a non-Aboriginal perspective (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995).

Fourth, low self-esteem is considered a potential catalyst for many social problems associated with Aboriginal people. Specifically, sport has
been promoted as a means of dealing with the low self-esteem of some Aboriginal youth and children, for instance, sport is considered to provide two important functions: (a) occupy free leisure time to reduce boredom, and (b) have external control over the types of activities during free leisure time in order to prevent anti-social acts (HRSCATSIA, 1992).

Fifth, the majority of empirical research in the field of social psychology of sport is concentrated upon North American populations (Duda & Allison, 1990). Most studies reflect the following: (a) "Race" often refers to "black" American population, (b) "black athlete" often refers to "black male" athlete, and (c) race is not distinguished from class (Birrell, 1989, pp. 194-222). This study is significant since it provided an Indigenous Australian perspective of the social and psychological influences of sport.

Sixth, it has been well documented (Education Department of Western Australia [EDWA], 1998; Malin, 1988, 1990, 1994, 1998; Munns, 1998; Nicklin Dent & Hatton, 1996; Reference Group Overseeing the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 1995) that in general, Aboriginal students do not perform well academically (except for physical education), have high absenteeism and truancy rates as well as high incidence of misbehaviour when compared to the majority of Australian school children. These studies have mostly been conducted in the class room setting. They do not however, examine educational outcomes in the context of school sport and physical education (except for EDWA 1998 data). According to the data from EDWA's (1998) Monitoring Standards in Education,
Indigenous students outperformed their peers in regards to physical education. It is interesting to note that sport has been used as a tool to improve the self-esteem of Aboriginal youth. Little research however, exists to validate this claim. The present study is significant because it provides a rich insight into the dynamics of school sport and physical education and Aboriginal students' sense of self. More specifically, the current study is important because it reports the demonstrated sport and physical outcomes of urban Aboriginal students including their attitudes, experiences and self-perceptions. Furthermore, this study initiates research interest in the achievement domain of school sport and physical education for urban Aboriginal children attending mainstream schools.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, this study is practically significant since the: (a) criteria for a suitable learning environment are identified, (b) preferred sports and activities of urban Aboriginal children are reported and, (c) culturally appropriate methods of coaching and teaching Aboriginal children sport and physical education in a mainstream school system are presented.

**Purpose Of The Study**

The purpose of this study was to conduct an exploratory investigation of a group of urban Western Australian Aboriginal children's experiences and perceptions of school sport including their sense of self in the school sport context. The principal question was:
What were the experiences and perceptions of school sport for 11-12 year old urban Western Australian Aboriginal children and how did they perceive themselves in the school sport setting?

In order to provide an understanding of these issues, sub-questions were necessary to guide the investigation and consist of:

(i) What experiences do urban Western Australian Aboriginal children have in school sport?

(ii) What perceptions do urban Western Australian Aboriginal children have of school sport?

(iii) What perceptions do urban Western Australian Aboriginal children have of themselves in the context of school sport?

In order to provide an understanding of these key issues, particularly the construct of a sense of self, a theoretical perspective based on symbolic interactionism is utilised. This perspective is appropriate since it provides an understanding of the social nature of individuals, their interactions and socialisation (Charon, 1992). In particular, symbolic interactionism views social interaction as the most important component of the development of the self. It is therefore the purpose of this thesis to explore the social interactions that take place in the school sport setting and examine their influence upon Aboriginal students' perceptions of themselves, their
experiences and perceptions of school sport. It is not the intention of this study however, to critically review the content of the physical and sport education curriculum and it's applicability to the development of Aboriginal students' sense of self.

Researcher's Biography

It is vital that I share with the readers my personal background, so that you may understand my reasons for conducting this study and its real life significance to Aboriginal children, coaches, physical educators and sport administrators.

I am a Nyoongar and I have lived all my life in urban Perth. I come from a large family of eight children and our mother raised us mostly on her own. My siblings are all sports minded and have participated in competitive sport at some level. Both my parents were sports enthusiasts as youngsters who competed seriously in a range of sports. To date, my father is a state golf champion and fanatical about the game. My mother is a well respected visual artist and designer. I recognise that my parents, particularly my mother, had a profound effect on me to strive for nothing but the best. I was a track and field enthusiast during my earlier years at state school, but took up basketball later in my teens. I have competed in the highest standard of Australian women's basketball by participating in the Women's National Basketball League as well as representing Western Australia in basketball on many occasions.
Reflecting on my primary school years, I was a very shy person, unable to speak with others, particularly my non-Aboriginal classmates and teachers. I felt that we didn’t have much in common and therefore little to converse about. Sport however, was an avenue that had a profound affect on me. The sporting environment was much to my liking, much more than the classroom. Over time, the experiences I had in sport were very positive and happy ones. I excelled in all sports, particularly athletics and before I knew it, I was standing in front of a school assembly accepting many awards for sport including the captain’s role of my faction athletics team as well as the inter school athletics team. I was no longer shy but outgoing and I began to display some leadership qualities. It is my firm belief that my sports experiences taught me valuable life skills such as responsibility, confidence, assertiveness, goal setting and commitment. It is also my belief that I unconsciously transferred the use of these skills to other achievement areas of my life such as striving for good grades at primary school and making friends. At my Year Seven graduation, I was presented with the Citizenship Award by the school. I felt really good about myself. School mates, teachers and others accepted me.

The situation however, began to change when I became a teen and ventured to high school. Expectations from others about my ability to achieve at high school did not match my own and therefore I had to dismiss their expectations and rely on my self-confidence. My expectations of striving for excellence, moreover were fuelled by the stereotypes I and other Aboriginal
youths faced at high school. It seemed that some non-Aboriginal students and some teachers held a negative attitude towards Aboriginal people and as a consequence treated us as such. For instance, they distanced themselves when communicating, stared constantly, refused to make physical contact, called names based on skin colour or made general negative remarks about Aboriginal people when we were in their presence. Their expectations of our successes (academically or otherwise) were low.

I did not believe that I was useless or stupid because my sport experiences told me otherwise. I refused to accept and act out the negative stereotypes and low expectations some non-Aboriginal students and teachers had of me. Instead, I was propelled into believing that I had to prove to everyone that I was a good person who wanted nothing but the best and who was willing to work hard for it. I made it my dream for instance, at the young age of 14 to “go all the way” at university and to study in the United States of America. From my roots in Midland, a suburb of Perth, I attended a state primary school and at most times was the only Aboriginal in my classes. In secondary education, I was one of only a handful of Aboriginal students who attended one of the largest high schools in Western Australia. My standard of education was considered atypical for Aborigines since I completed my final year at high school (year 12). In 1992, following completion of a Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport Science at Edith Cowan University, I went to Oregon in the United States of America to undertake my Master of Science and so fulfilled my dream.
Whilst gaining my qualifications I was employed in various young Aboriginal people's sport and recreation programmes, notably as a Sport Consultant at the Ministry of Sport and Recreation's Aboriginal Sport Unit. After returning from Oregon with my Master's degree, I accepted the Executive Officer's position at the Aboriginal Development Foundation for Sport and Recreation in Western Australia (WA). I have been officially employed in the WA Aboriginal sport and recreation industry for approximately 12 years but have been involved in sport all my life.

I firmly believe that my positive sport experiences at primary school taught me to strive for the best and in order to achieve the best I learned to set goals and work toward them in a committed and responsible manner. Since learning these vital life skills at a young age, I had practised them for a number of years until they became a habit. I now set goals for other aspects of my life, particularly in education and family life. When I succeed I feel confident, full of esteem and particularly proud of my Aboriginality. I believe that sport was and still is a positive influence on my life. In the instances when I had bad or negative experiences in sport (such as racism, questionable umpiring decisions, lack of team cohesion), I found my own mechanism to deal with them in a positive way. Rather than react with negative emotion, I internalised the negativity and utilised it as a form of encouragement to push me even further. I also learned to be thick skinned and committed to staying on track regarding my goals and not let anyone or anything prevent me from realising my ambitions.
Realising the positive influence sport had on me as a youngster, I have made it my ambition to find out what experiences other urban Aboriginal children have in sport, their perceptions of sport and how they view themselves in sport. I have been compelled to gain the necessary qualifications in order to provide the Aboriginal voice in sport. My academic career has shown me that there is a definite need for Aboriginal researchers to conduct research about our people from our perspective. Furthermore, my own personal sporting experiences as an athlete, coach, umpire and administrator has shown me that many sports personnel, particularly coaches and physical education teachers, require practical knowledge about coaching and teaching Aboriginal children in sport. There is little knowledge about urban Western Australian Aboriginal children's experiences and perceptions in sport, and it is hoped that this study will pave the way for this knowledge so that both may experience sport in a positive way. So I come to this study as a Nyoongar, an elite sports person and a higher achiever in academic pursuits. This biography clearly indicates that sport has been a central influence on my life. In this, there is a danger in the research that I may approach the data with a bias towards finding similar outcomes for the participants. Awareness of this potential bias, however, will enable me to guard against such an outcome. While my life has been positively influenced by sport, I will rely on the data from the participants to guide my findings. Of course, my qualifications and experience in sport provide a solid foundation to make sound judgments in sport related matters and I will utilise these
skills to analyse the data effectively.

The Research Setting

Population

In Australia, there are 353,000 Indigenous people (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders). This amounts to approximately 2% of the entire Australian population. Thirty percent (30%) of Indigenous people reside in urban areas of major cities whilst 42% reside in smaller urban centres. Another 11% live in larger rural areas and 17% live in smaller rural centres or remote regions (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 1998a).

In Western Australia (WA) there are 1,726,095 people of which 50,062 are Indigenous (ABS, 1997a). WA’s Indigenous population represents 2.9% of the state’s total population. Almost half of these live in the Perth metropolitan region where they comprise 1.37% of the population (ABS, 1997a).

The district in which the research is conducted is located in the East Metropolitan Statistical Subdivision of the Perth region. It is the fourth largest district of the remaining 150 Perth Statistical Subdivisions (ABS, 1997b). The district has a population of 69,112, of which 1952 (or 2.8%) are Indigenous people. The population is relatively young with an average age of 29 years (ABS, 1997b). Over a fifth of Indigenous people who reside in the research district are aged between 20 to 34 years old and the average age is a
relatively young 17 years (ABS, 1998b). Over a third of Indigenous people associate themselves with the Catholic religion, whilst another 13.9% are Anglicans (ABS, 1998b).

Family Types and Households

In the research district, 46% of the total population include families who comprise couples with dependent children, whilst a further 30% of couples do not have any children (ABS, 1997b).

For the Indigenous population in the district, almost 60% of families have children who are dependent on parents. More specifically, a third of families consist of two parents with dependent children and another quarter consist of single parents with dependent children.

Furthermore, most Indigenous households (85%) accommodate only one family1 per home, whereas another 10.6% are single person households. On average approximately four individuals reside in over 82.5% of Indigenous homes. They reside mostly in rented homes (44.8%), although 29% homes are being purchased and a further 6.5% are fully owned. In comparison, a greater proportion of non-Indigenous people are buying their homes (45.4%), and over a quarter of families already own their homes (25.2%). A small percentage rent their homes (15%) (ABS, 1998b).

1 Statistics are not available to identify whether the term "family" includes nuclear and/or extended family members.
Education

In the research district, the majority (74%) of youths aged 16 or older are still at school (ABS, 1997b). Comparatively, approximately 77% of Indigenous youths leave school between the ages of 14 and 17 (ABS, 1998b) and most Indigenous peoples do not possess a tertiary qualification.

Employment

Indigenous people are four times more likely to be unemployed than non-Indigenous people (ABS, 1998b). Of those Indigenous people who are employed, they work in government jobs or in health and community service related areas (ABS, 1998b). Non-Indigenous people are employed in manufacturing and retail industries (ABS, 1998b).

The most common type of occupation held by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is described as intermediate jobs, which include clerks, salespersons and service workers. The second most common occupation for Indigenous people is in labouring, whereas non-Indigenous people are employed primarily as trades persons (ABS, 1998b).

Non-Indigenous people in a single household contribute more to the weekly budget than do Indigenous people. On average, the non-Indigenous household weekly income ranges from $800 to $999, whereas the Indigenous household totals $300 to $499 per week (ABS, 1998b).
Facilities and Services Surrounding the School

The district is fairly well equipped with a range of facilities and services. The educational facilities and services include government and non-government schools, University and TAFE campuses. A district hospital and mental health clinic are located in the heart of the local district, but some distance from the research school. There are no playgroup associations for children in the suburb, although there are three in surrounding suburbs. The district has a Police and Citizens Youth Club and Neighbourhood Centre. There are short term emergency accommodation for youths, families and women in the district.

The suburb is well equipped for sports and recreation. For instance, it has a park, multi purpose sports hall and aquatic centre, indoor and outdoor netball courts, indoor cricket, cycling velodome, sports ground and calisthenics centre. For passive recreation, the district has a library, cinema complex and a regional shopping centre (Community Planning Development Division [CPDD], n.d.).

Aboriginal Services. There are two Aboriginal community corporations operating in the district. Both provide child care assistance, recreation and family support services. At the time of writing, an Aboriginal Interpretive Centre was being established in order to provide some knowledge and promotion of Aboriginal culture in an educational setting in conjunction with the Ministry of Education (CPDD, n.d.).
The School

The school to be known as Naples Primary\(^2\) is a government facility which has been in operation since the 1950s. It houses 14 classrooms, 2 transportable classrooms, a football sized grassed oval, bitumen playing areas and a pre primary centre. There are 17 staff, who range from new graduates to teachers with over 25 years teaching experience (Naples Primary School, n.d).

Professional support. In addition to the teachers and administrative staff, the school has a number of others who assist with particular school programs. These include one part time and two full time Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEW), a social worker, psychologist, nurse, speech therapist, physiotherapist, dentist, teacher assistants (Special Needs) and a First Steps focus teacher. Of these, the AIEWs and teacher assistants (Special Needs) play significant roles with the school's Aboriginal student population and will be described in more detail later in the thesis. For now however, these will be presented here briefly.

All the AIEWs are Aboriginal. Leonie Curry and Ken Trevin are employed full time, whereas Matthew Ball is part time. Leonie and Ken are both native to the Northern Territory. They spend most of their time in the classrooms assisting class teachers, whereas Matthew mostly assists in the school’s sports programme (that is, physical education, intra and inter school sports competitions). Matthew is well known to many Aboriginal students.

\(^2\) All names of people and places have been changed to ensure confidentiality. Pseudonyms are therefore used throughout this thesis.
particularly the males, since he lives locally and competes in the local club football competition.

Nancy Quance and Eliza Cutters are the teachers’ assistants for children with special needs (that is, physically and mentally impaired students). Both work in the lower primary for four full days per week. They sometimes assist in the school’s sport programme (intra and inter school sport) as assistants, umpires and coaches when required.

Students. A survey conducted in 1995 shows that the school has a student population of just over 300, with 30 being from non-English Speaking backgrounds (approximately 9%) and 120 children of Aboriginal heritage (approximately 37%). There is also a high incidence of students with only one parent and over fifty percent of the population are from a “depressed socio-economic background” (Naples Primary School, no date, p.6).

The longest serving school employee, of more than 20 years, is the handyman/gardener Mr Keith Davin. He stated that three to four generations of the school’s population experienced unemployment (K. Davin, personal communication, June 10, 1997).

The school’s student population fluctuated over the school year with almost 30% being transferred to other schools. Additionally, there was a small percentage of students who re-enrolled several times during the school year. Finally, there was a poor attendance rate within the school and this was particularly prevalent among Aboriginal students.

School Programs. The school qualified for additional EDWA funds
under the Priority Schools Program (PSP). The funds allow the school to target priority areas for development. These include reading comprehension (language stream), basic facts (mathematics stream) and social development (social justice stream).

Current mainstream programs include a literacy program called First Steps, which provides professional development for teachers. An anti-bullying program was developed that utilised peers to mediate tense situations among themselves. Finally, a self-esteem program is offered at the school by an external agency and is targeted at children who are identified by their class teachers as possessing low self-esteem.

Programs that specifically target Aboriginal children include the Aboriginal Student Support and Parental Awareness (ASSPA) committee and homework classes. Programs for parents of students include "Being a parent today", friendly and informal parent coffee chat groups as well as parent education programs that attempt to assist in identifying problems within the family. Although these programs are listed in the school development plan, they were not operating during the year when research data were collected for this study.

Organisation of Thesis

This thesis has been organised into 12 chapters. The first chapter argues the need to conduct the study with the purpose of exploring the perceptions and experiences of sport and sense of self for a group of 11-12
year old urban Western Australian Aboriginal children. In the second chapter, the current literature is critically reviewed, followed in the third chapter by a description of the symbolic interaction theoretical framework adopted for the study. The fourth chapter describes the methodology utilised, whilst Chapter 5 details the profiles of the participants of the study and their significant others. Finally chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 explore the findings of the study and chapters 11 and 12 present a discussion, draw on major emerging themes and present some implications for the future.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

During the 1990s, indigenous athletes such as 1996 Olympic Games silver medalist, Cathy Freeman, gold medalist hockey star Nova Peris-Kneebeone and ex-Australian Rugby captain Mark Ella have catapulted the indigenous Australian athletes' contribution to Australian sport into the limelight. Today, positive images appear in: (a) newspaper and magazine articles (Harris, 1995a, 1995b; Jamrozik, 1995; Kickett, 1993; Tatz, 1987, 1994, 1995), (b) biographies of famous athletes (Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994), and (c) video productions (Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988) culminating in the recognition by the wider society of Aboriginal achievements in sport. Due to the success sport has brought to some Aboriginal athletes, a fallacy has been to utilise sport as a means to alter the alleged low self-esteem among Aboriginal children and youth. To date however, Aboriginal children's perspectives and experiences are lacking and the majority of the current literature portrays the perspectives of adult, male Aboriginal athletes who compete at elite levels of sport.

This chapter has three specific purposes. First, the existing literature will be presented to disclose the extent of what is known about the experiences and perceptions of sport for urban Western Australian Aboriginal children as well as their sense of self in the sport context. Second, the review will reveal the gaps in existing knowledge and finally, research methodologies will be addressed in order to determine the
appropriateness of previous inquiry methods. This review will be presented in six sections and will consist of: (a) The general literature relating to sense of self, (b) urban Aboriginal sense of self, (c) the meaning of sport for urban Aborigines, (d) general sport research conducted in the school setting, (e) general literature relating to sport and sense of self and, (f) Aboriginal sense of self and sport.

Sense of Self

The following section will present the definitions related to sense of self and briefly mention the existing general self-esteem theories. In particular, Harter's (1978, 1980, 1985) perceived competence model will be highlighted because of its applicability to children.

First, in order to fully understand the concept of a sense of self, it is necessary to highlight terms that are used interchangeably by authors and researchers. These terms may consist of self-concept, identity, self-esteem, self-perception and self-image among others. It is easy to understand why there is confusion among these terms as they all relate to the definition and comprehension of the 'self' as an entity. It is important to note that the current literature relating to sense of self is derived mostly from the sense of self of peoples and cultures from Western societies (Hattie, 1992). In this literature review, the labels of sense of self and self-esteem will be used, however their universal definitions may not define the sense of self for peoples of non-western cultures. For the purposes of this study an initial perspective of sense of self and its properties is necessary. Since there are no definitions from
urban Western Australian Aboriginal children's perspectives, these terms will be used and their universal definitions presented in this thesis.

When people describe who they are, they are relaying messages about the concepts they have of themselves. More specifically, they are describing the qualities, skills, abilities and attributes they possess as individuals. These descriptions are collectively known as the individual's sense of self. Campbell (1990) provided a detailed definition of sense of self as a "cognitive schema" that organises the memories we have of ourselves and controls information that relates to the self. More simply, Fox (1992) stated that sense of self is a set of self-descriptions. Collectively, sense of self refers to an accumulation of self-concepts which individuals have of themselves (Fontana, 1988).

Self-esteem

When individuals describe themselves, judgments and feelings are consequently attached to the descriptive statements made. The process of evaluating and judging sense of self and the feelings attached to self-descriptions are considered to reflect an individual's self-esteem.

Child development and personality theorists, Mussen, Conger & Kagan (1984) made the distinction that a sense of self is a set of concepts about one's self that are descriptive, whilst self-esteem relates to values made of one's self that are judgmental. More specifically, self-esteem is considered to constitute the evaluative component of sense of self.

An initial perspective of a sense of self is necessary, therefore a preliminary model is provided to show the components for a sense of self
as presented in the current literature. Elements of a sense of self and its related properties and definitions from Fontana (1988), Campbell (1990) and Hattie (1992) are combined as a model and are presented at figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1. A Sense of Self
According to Campbell (1990), a sense of self (refer to figure 2.1, page 39) is comprised of two components: (a) evaluative, and (b) knowledge elements. The evaluative component is referred to as "trait self-esteem" because it expresses a global sense of how individuals feel about themselves. Trait self-esteem is divided further to include: (a) outer self-esteem, which consists of temporary and changing feelings or evaluations of the self that are influenced by roles, feedback and reflected appraisals; and (b) inner self-esteem, which relates to a more global feeling of worthiness that remains fairly stable over time and is more resistant to change than outer self-esteem. The knowledge component of the self relates to the set of self-concepts individuals have about themselves (Fontana, 1988). Self-concepts are varied depending on time and place as well as aspects that individuals consider important. Self-concepts are primarily composed of descriptions, as well as expectations and one's values.

Hattie (1992) stated that an individual's culture and self-concept have a relationship such that culture may influence self-concept and vice versa. An example of this relationship, specifically the influence of culture upon self-concept, is evident in Aboriginal families and their ties with their extended families. Aborigines describe themselves in terms of their relationship with their heritage, such as ties to the land or where they come from (Forrest, 1998). Alternatively, self-concept may influence one's culture, for example, some Aboriginal people are good at sport and they tend to participate in Aboriginal sports carnivals, particularly during National Aboriginal Week. These sports carnivals become part of the
Aboriginal way of life (culture) (Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988).

**Domain specific self-esteem.** From middle childhood, children learn to differentiate their capabilities and categories are formed to describe their abilities in an array of domains and consequently multiple self-concepts are formed (Hattie, 1992). The notion of multidimensionality of self-esteem is best illustrated by Harter (1978, 1980, 1985). She preferred the term "perceived competence" to describe domain specific self-esteem and stated that an individual can feel competent in a number of achievement domains. Harter stated (1978, 1980, 1985) that these domains consist of social acceptance, scholastic competence, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioural conduct and global self-worth. An individual for instance, may feel competent as an athlete (physical domain), but not as a student (scholastic domain).

The competence motivation theory is the framework in which the perceived competence model is grounded. The components that constitute the core of Harter's (1985) model include: (a) domain specific self-esteem, (b) influences of significant others, including the amount and quality of feedback, reinforcement, modelling and instruction, (c) self-evaluation criteria and the consequent adoption of achievement goals, (for example, the preferred criteria used to judge individuals' accomplishments and the type of goals utilised to judge and maintain performance), (d) consequences of failing and/or succeeding, (for instance what impact does a successful or failed outcome have on individuals?), (e) perceptions of
competence and performance control, (such as how do individuals perceive their performance achievements and what reason is given for the achievement outcome?) and, (f) affective outcomes, (for example joy, shame, pride and sadness may be displayed when a performance outcome is reached).

According to Harter's theory (1985), individuals are motivated to feel competent and therefore partake in mastery experiences such as sport. If these experiences are positive, then the individual's feelings of competency (domain specific self-esteem) improve, which will sustain an individual's persistence in further participation of mastery experiences. The rationale of the competence motivation theory is based on self-perceptions of one's competence and locus of control, as they both have a significant effect on an individual's motivation to sustain or withdraw from sport. Individuals who perceive their competence to be positive and also feel that they are in control of their behaviour will expend more effort, show more interest, persist longer in the task and will experience positive feelings than those who have low perceived competence in their abilities.

According to Harter (1978, 1980, 1985) the most critical element of the perceived competence model is the impact of feedback, reinforcement and modelling from significant others on the individual's development and maintenance of self-esteem.

well as the influence of affect upon self-esteem in her model. In recent times though, Harter's perceived competence scale has been scrutinised (Marsh, 1993; Marsh & Hattie, 1996).

**Urban Aboriginal Sense of Self**

For urban Aborigines, a sense of self may have two forms. In other words, urban Aborigines may possess a public and private sense of self (Beckett, 1988). A public sense of self refers to that which is presented to the wider community, whereas a private sense of self refers to that which is presented to the Aboriginal society. It has been argued that because urban Aborigines are forced to develop two forms of self, a conflict of identity arises (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989). In the case of children from minority backgrounds, Partington and McCudden (1992) make the point that children who enter mainstream society via the education system may have problems with their sense of self. They may attempt to affiliate with several social groups whose members may expect conformity to their own values, behaviours and morals, which may differ considerably from those of urban Western Australian Aboriginal social networks. Confusion about which behaviours and morals to adopt may cloud the child's notions of sense of self. Howard (1998) goes on to state that "continually, as Aboriginal children attend school and become educated they have to keep asking, 'who am I?"

It has been argued that Aboriginal students' identity and sense of self is not acknowledged in the class setting (Malin, 1989, 1998) and students are in jeopardy of misbehaving, taking low risks, achieving poor
academic outcomes (Malin, 1989, 1990, 1994, 1998; Munns, 1998; Nicklin Dent & Hatton, 1996; Reference Group Overseeing the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 1995) and feeling "shame" (Munns, 1990; Munns & Connelly, 1996). Malin (1998) suggested that in order to achieve successful schooling outcomes such as improved behaviour, attendance and academic performance, teachers must encourage, foster and share in students' Aboriginality in the classroom setting.

The scope of the present body of literature is severely limited to Aboriginal adults' experiences and perspectives particularly those forcibly removed from their families and raised on missions, thus Aboriginal children's perceptions of self therefore, are largely ignored. The following information about Aboriginal sense of self is derived mostly from Aboriginal adults' perspectives.

Drawing mostly from Aboriginal biographies and stories as well as some academic perspectives, several commonalities regarding Aboriginal sense of self have evolved: (a) Aboriginal sense of self is derived from two principal sources, (b) it has a communal aspect, (c) it is severely undermined, (d) identity is misplaced and displaced, (e) external "others" have a very powerful role, (f) there are low expectations, (g) there is a perception of having to prove one's self twice as much as others, (h) there are stereotypes, racism and prejudice, (i) pride and shame are experienced, (j) there is a notion of low self esteem, (k) there is a difference in the perceptions of actual competence versus potential competence, and (l) there is a notion of lack of self-confidence. Each of these will now be
explored.

Sources of Aboriginal sense of self

A sense of self for urban Aboriginal people is considered to be a derivative of the behaviours, values and attitudes located in two principal sources: (a) Aboriginal community, and (b) wider Australian society (Beckett, 1988; Carter, 1988; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Hattie, 1992).

The primary source of Aboriginal sense of self is embedded in the culture of one's parents and consists of the knowledge, beliefs and feelings attached to: (a) identity, (b) family, (c) heritage, and (d) culture. Identity refers to identification as an Aboriginal person and the feeling of connectedness, regardless of the diversity that exists within the Aboriginal community (Coolwell, 1993; Day 1994; Hattie, 1992; Myers, 1979; Wright, 1985). Also, in this subcategory, Aboriginal role models, particularly athletes, are a prime source of information for Aboriginal sense of self (Coolwell, 1993; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.). The family consists of the relationships which exist among the nuclear and extended families (Day, 1994; Hudspith & Williams, 1994). In particular, the mother "figure head" is considered to be the most vital contributor of self-esteem for her family (Carter, 1988; Coolwell, 1983; Sykes, 1994). In the case of some young males however, there is a degree of influence from their peers to abide by group rules in order to affirm their Aboriginality (Davis, 1984, 1989; Weller, 1981, 1990). Heritage refers to the knowledge of one's traditional and/or family ties to
the land, and more importantly being 'actively' connected to it (Coolwell, 1993). Culture encompasses a system of values and morals that is characteristically Aboriginal (Coolwell, 1993).

The secondary source of Aboriginal sense of self is a product of the attitudes, values, expectations and judgments wider Australian society has of the general Aboriginal population (Haralambos & Heald, 1984; Hudspith & Williams, 1994; Hughes, 1987). There are a number of people and institutions that provide the secondary source of information for Aboriginal sense of self including "generalised others" and "significant others". Generalised others may consist of members of the justice system, education, religious orders, tourism, media, general public, peer group, government and sport institutions. Significant others refers to those individuals that Aborigines deem as salient providers of information for their sense of self and self-esteem, such as the media and sports role models.

Communal sense of self

A common theme highlighted by the existing literature revealed that the general sense of self for a collective group of people has a great impact upon an individual's personal self-esteem (Day 1994; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Hattie, 1992; Issacs, 1988; Myers, 1979; Wright, 1985). Since an Aboriginal person is attached to the group by the concept of Aboriginality, the essence of the group's sense of self reflects the individual's sense of self. This is not to say that all Aborigines have the same sense of self. Rather, it is argued that Aboriginality connects all
Aborigines regardless of the community to which they belong. The primary sources of sense of self such as the land, customs and family kin are as diverse as the many Aboriginal communities that exist and these will differentiate the sense of self amongst Aboriginal groups.

**Sense of self is undermined**

Aboriginal sense of self is considered to consist of very different values, behaviours and morals when compared to the sense of self of Anglo Australians (Hudspith & Williams, 1994). These differences are very apparent in specific achievement environments such as the school (Malin, 1989, 1990, 1994). These values, behaviours and morals are characterised by Aboriginal children's preferred ways of learning (Christie, 1987; Harris, 1987) and it is argued that Aboriginal learning patterns are severely undermined in the school environment (Malin, 1989, 1990). For instance, Aboriginal children value working in groups, cooperation, sharing of common group goals and learning by observation. They want to understand the real life significance of school based activities and they prefer jovial social interactions in the learning environment. These values and behaviours are rarely encouraged in a mainstream academic context. Some Aboriginal children's competence and esteem in academia therefore, are affected as well as their social competence and esteem (Malin, 1989, 1990).
Identity is misplaced and displaced

Some Aborigines, particularly those who were raised during the Protection and Assimilation eras, feel misplaced and displaced in contemporary society (Partington, 1998; Pilkington, 1991; Sykes, 1994). Their identity and their family were taken from them as youngsters. They were placed on missions and settlements, away from their families and taught to live like "white" people and learn "white" values, behaviours and beliefs. In contemporary times, these people are still searching for their brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. They feel lost and cannot feel like a whole person until they find the place where their families come from (Langford, 1988; Morgan, 1987; Ward, 1987). In other cases, some Aborigines are detained in prisons for many years and are caught up in a system that has an overwhelming impact on their identity (Keneally, 1988). They feel unable to regard themselves with esteem until they find and exercise their identity in order to fulfil their sense of self.

"Others" have a powerful influence

Significant others and generalised others influence how Aborigines perceive and judge themselves. For instance, they feel they are being constantly watched and judged at their every move by contemporary wider society (Sykes, 1994). In particular, Aboriginal people perceive that parents of Anglo-Australian children reinforce their negative attitudes of Aborigines to their children, who consequently express them in the classroom (Davis, 1987).
Low expectations

It is perceived by some Aborigines that wider society has low expectations of them (Sykes, 1994; Weller, 1981, 1990) and this is particularly evident for Aboriginal children in the school environment (Day 1994; Christie, 1987; Harris, 1987; Malin, 1989, 1990, 1994). The consequences of such expectations are low motivation to achieve, the adoption of limited goals and low risk taking (Malin, 1989, 1990).

Stereotypes, racism and prejudice

Aborigines perceive that they experience stereotypes from wider society, thus resulting in negative labels, racism and prejudice (Davis, 1984, 1987, 1991b; Day 1994; Ngarritjan-Kessaris, 1994a, 1994b; Sykes, 1989, 1994) which consequently promotes an unfavourable and negative image of Aboriginal sense of self (Coolwell, 1993; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990). For a group of successful Aboriginal high school students however, Day (1994) found that negative stereotypes were used as a means to motivate them to succeed in wider society and thus prove the stereotypes wrong.

Pride and Shame3

Despite the negative images associated with Aboriginal stereotypes, some Aborigines (particularly those who consider themselves achievers in wider society) tend to reject these negative

3 In the context of this study, shame refers to a conscious awareness of a negative or unfavourable self-identity. Self-identity therefore, encompasses a social-identity and cultural identity (Curriculum Corporation, 1994). Social identity refers to the individual’s sense of belonging in their social world. Cultural identity however, refers to their attachment to their parent culture (Peterson, 1996).
stereotypes and favour their own perceptions of themselves (Coolwell, 1993; Sykes, 1994). Some individuals' self-perceptions contain salient information that confirm their sense of self, thus promoting pride. Negative stereotypes influence individuals' self-perceptions which then produce shame. It has been shown that shame is experienced by some urban Aboriginal children, particularly when they commence formal schooling (Malin, 1989, 1990).

Low self-esteem

Wider society perceives that Aborigines suffer from low self-esteem because some may adopt limited goals, are lazy, unmotivated and are low achievers (Chadbourne, 1984; Malin, 1989, 1990). Chadbourne (1984) suggested that wider society is quick to label Aboriginal people, and that these labels are incorrect. Compared to their Anglo classmates, Aboriginal children may view themselves unfavourably since they receive more negative feedback about themselves from members of the wider society. Furthermore, Chadbourne (1984) and Forrest (no date) stated that the behaviours and values utilised in labelling Aboriginal children tend to be regarded highly in wider society, but are not significant in Aboriginal society. Also, the impression that Aboriginal children portray about themselves and how they feel about themselves may not necessarily reflect a true account of what they actually say about themselves. In other words, their body language and gestures may not mean the same as what they say.
Competence and Confidence

Aboriginal children's perceptions of their competence may vary according to their actual ability as opposed to their potential ability (Chadbourne, 1984). In some cases for instance, Aboriginal children may not feel competent in their present ability, but feel very positive of their future ability. Often this difference is not accounted for.

Many Aborigines are incorrectly labelled as suffering from a lack of confidence. However, a distinction needs to be made of the site for this lack of confidence (Chadbourne, 1984). It has been argued that Aborigines do not suffer from a lack of self-confidence, rather they are not confident in “the system” that governs their society (Chadbourne, 1984; Coolwell, 1993; Davis, 1984, 1989, 1991b; Sykes, 1994). For example, Aborigines who wish to seek private rental housing may not be confident in the system because they are very aware that the private housing system would rather not rent a property to Aboriginal families.

An Empirical Perspective of Aboriginal Sense of Self

Most empirical research of Aboriginal sense of self was mostly conducted from an educational perspective during the 1970s and 1980s (Callan & St John, 1984; Finch, 1973; Wright & Parker, 1978), except for that of Pedersen, Walker and Glass (1997). Collectively, the studies focussed on the comparisons of self-esteem for Aborigines and Anglo Australians in suburban and rural populations. Only Pedersen et al. (1997) examined the self-concept of urban Western Australian children. Each of the studies have a common purpose that targets self-esteem as a
means of understanding children's classroom behaviours and achievement.

Collectively, the studies cited showed no differences among the sense of self of Australian Anglo and Aboriginal children, except for that shown by Pedersen et al. (1997), who revealed that although personal self-concept did not differ, group self-concept scores showed differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children.

In all, it may be argued that the instruments used to assess sense of self are culturally biased against Aboriginal children since they were not normed for them (excluding the study by Pedersen et al.). Furthermore, important detail relating to the components of sense of self for Aboriginal children is lost during the statistical analysis stage, a common feature of most of the studies mentioned. Therefore, the existing empirical literature is somewhat devoid of knowledge about the sense of self for urban Aboriginal children, particularly Western Australian Aboriginal children. There are three concerns related to the current general literature regarding Aboriginal sense of self: (a) The present perspective, (b) the nature of the definition, and (c) the instruments used to analyse sense of self.

Aboriginal sense of self has been primarily explored in the educational domain from the 1970s to the 1990s. There are a few empirical studies (Callan & St John, 1984; Finch, 1973; Pedersen, Walker & Glass, 1997; Wright & Parker, 1978) but most information is derived primarily from academic analyses (Beckett, 1988; Cadigan, 1989; Carter, 1988; Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1988; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990;
Information relating to Aboriginal children is of interest in this review and the literature focussed mostly on low self-esteem amongst Aboriginal children in the school setting. This interest has evolved from the poor academic grades and withdrawal from school and the perceptions held by teachers and others in educational institutions that Aboriginal children perhaps suffered from low self-esteem. Since the concern with Aboriginal sense of self has evolved from the educational perspective, it may be argued that only the sense of self of children in the school environment is illustrated. Moreover, academic self-concept has been highlighted. Hence, the literature provides a version of self-esteem which is drawn from the secondary source of esteem present in the wider society.

Biographical and fictionalised stories do, however, provide some information about Aboriginal sense of self from an Aboriginal perspective but children's insights are lacking. Furthermore, many sources draw from personal experiences of the past when Aborigines were subjected to early government policies of protection and assimilation. A contemporary perspective about being Aboriginal and what it feels like living in a contemporary society for urban Aboriginal children is not present.
The universal definitions for sense of self and self-esteem are based on the behaviours and values considered appropriate for the Anglo society. It has been argued that the characteristics of self-esteem as defined by the Anglo society are not appropriate or important in Aboriginal culture and perhaps do not define Aboriginal self-esteem (Chadbourne, 1984; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Forrest, n.d.). The definition also encourages individualism as opposed to communalism. It was revealed earlier that Aboriginality as a source of esteem represents a communal feeling amongst Aborigines, and the western definition does not address this issue (Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Hattie, 1992; Myers, 1979; Wright, 1985). The definition also fails to recognise the diversity within and amongst the Aboriginal people in terms of customs and lifestyles of the various Aboriginal groups, as well as the primary and secondary sources of esteem (Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990). Since the definition is not culturally appropriate for Aboriginal people, it may be argued that the instruments used to measure the sense of self and particularly self-esteem are questionable in terms of their appropriateness. Dudgeon et al. (1990) stated that the present inventories are not an authentic measure of an Aboriginal sense of self.

Meaning of Sport for Aborigines

Although Aboriginal people comprise only 1.6% of the total Australian population, their representation in state, national and international sport is much greater (Tatz, 1994). Further, Tatz (1994)
revealed in a historical review of Aboriginal sports people that there was a great over representation given their small numbers in population of Aboriginal boxers, Australian Rules and Rugby League footballers. In fact, of the 43 Aboriginal boxers, Tatz (1994) made the claim that “the disproportion between their numbers and titles is greater than for any other single community in world sport” (p. 4). Furthermore, Aboriginal Australian Rules Football players in the Western Australian league make up 13% of players, yet they comprise only 2.6% of the total population. Kickett (1993) noted that Aborigines are represented in an array of sports at state level including golf, athletics, basketball, soccer, BMX racing, darts, judo, cricket, netball, lacrosse, karate, touch football, hockey, and ballroom dancing.

The following literature addresses the meaning of sport for Aboriginal athletes who participate at an elite level of organised sport (such as state, national and international representation). These athletes are predominantly adult males. The meaning of sport presented in the current body of literature does not reflect children’s perspectives, therefore the following literature will review the elite Aboriginal athlete’s meaning of sport in terms of the: (a) psychological, (b) material, and (c) physical benefits it provides. These will now be discussed.

For the psychological benefits, many reports support the notion that participation in sport leads to positive feelings of Aboriginal identity as well as freedom and respect from the wider society (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995; Tatz & Tatz, 1996; Tatz, Ramsey, Stocks, Bass, Winkler, Eva, Quayle & Blake,
1998; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d). Sport participation brings the family and extended kin together (Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989), and is an enjoyable activity (Roberts & Rijavec, 1988). Success in sport enables the individual(s) to feel equal and accepted (Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Perkins, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988) and generates a communal feeling of success for all Aboriginal people (Broome, 1980; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988).

In terms of material and physical gains, sport provides monetary rewards for most elite athletes (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992). Sport for some Aboriginal people however, is also fraught with racism (Tatz, 1994), exploitation (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; Tatz, 1984, 1987), subjective media reports (Nadel, 1993) and discrimination (Australian Society for Sports History [ASSH], 1992).

Literature relating to the meaning of sport for Aboriginal people is minimal and in most cases is presented from a non-Aboriginal perspective. The only information available from an Aboriginal point of view comes in the form of a few biographical resources (Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Perkins, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988).

School Sport Studies

To date there is limited literature that presents the meaning of sport in the school setting for urban Western Australian Aboriginal children (Education Department of Western Australia [EDWA], 1996). However, there has been more research that has investigated the school
sport experiences and perceptions of non-Aboriginal children and adolescents (Australian Sports Commission [ASC], 1991; Carlson, 1995a, 1995b; Junior Sport Development Unit [JSDU], 1996; Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997; Portman, 1995). These studies will be presented in order to provide some basis of knowledge of sport in the school setting for children.

In 1994, the Education Department of Western Australia (EDWA, 1996), completed a study of years 3, 7 and 10 students attending government schools in Western Australia. The focus of the research was to examine the standards of students participating in school health and physical education. The study provided data for specific focus groups, in which the Aboriginal student population was included. The results provide some understanding of Aboriginal students' attitudes, experiences and perceptions of physical education in the school setting. More specifically, experiences and attitudes to movement skills, game strategies, personal and social skills and fitness were studied. It must be noted that intra and inter school sport was not researched.

In terms of attitudes and perceptions, it was found that Aboriginal students in all years possessed positive attitudes toward physical education (PE). In particular, they stated that: (a) they enjoyed PE, (b) it helped them to stay healthy and, (c) they enjoyed the game aspects of PE the most. An important finding was that years 7 and 10 students preferred participating in PE to doing work in the classroom. They stated that they always performed to the best of their ability in PE. Furthermore, students held the perception that the skills they learned in
PE actually assisted them when they participated in club sport. Students however, reported that PE was not as important as other school subjects.

Aboriginal students stated that PE comprised of a range of games (team based) and these were considered to be an important part of PE. However, they reported that they did not receive much individual attention from their teachers when engaging in PE activities.

The ASC (1991) examined the importance of sport for students aged 13 to 18 years across ten Australian high schools. Questionnaires, interviews and group discussions were employed to the students, their teachers, parents and staff of the various State governments' Junior Sport Development Units. The results showed that sport is considered to be a valuable part of life as it allowed most students to develop their sports skills, learn commitment and to develop their self-worth. However, there were some students who felt that sport was not good for them. "Bad" experiences with the coach or parent stopped students from playing sport. For year 7 students, interactions with their coaches and parents are paramount in determining the students' degree of sports participation. Finally, a link between self-esteem and school sport participation was found. Those students who perceived to have positive self-esteem found school sports a comfortable environment in which to demonstrate their physical competence. For others however, a lack of self-esteem was perceived as a barrier to competing in school sports.

Carlson (1995a) concentrated her studies on students who felt alienated during physical education. In her first study Carlson (1995a)
examined the impact of the sport education teaching model for alienated students as an alternative to the physical education model. Carlson was also interested in the quality and nature of peer group cohesion in relation to alienated students and their peers. Eighty-eight students from years 8 and 9 participated in the initial data collection. This consisted of observations in the field utilising video recordings. Twenty-four students were then selected to represent three different skill levels. Of the twenty-four, eight represented the low skilled group. This group consisted of females only and interviews were employed during the secondary data collection stage. The results showed the low skilled group were very much aware of their lack of skill and that they just accepted it. However, by the end of the sport education unit, their perceptions of their skill increased and so did their actual skill level. It was also found that group cohesion was positively influenced to the betterment of the low skilled students, who in the end were assisted by their peers to successfully accomplish a task for the team as a whole.

In another study, Carlson (1995b) reported the reasons alienated students gave in relation to their non-participation or non-involvement in PE. One hundred and five North American students who attended a combined middle and high school were surveyed and another six students from the same high school were targeted as the alienated group and were personally interviewed. A survey was developed from initial pilot work and all students participated in the school's physical education unit which concentrated on traditional sports and games. Most of the students who were surveyed were grades 7 to 9. The majority of the students who were
interviewed considered themselves average to highly skilled sport people. It was found that 21% of the surveyed sample did not enjoy gym class, of which most were female. Only eight surveyed students reported physical education had no importance or bearing to life, and this was also reported by most of the alienated student sample. In some cases, the nature of sport, particularly traditional sports, was perceived to be far too competitive for the alienated group and this deterred them from participating. Furthermore, some of the alienated students (especially the low skilled) felt isolated from their peers in the sport setting.

Portman (1995) utilised field observations and interviews to report the sporting experiences for thirteen sixth grade students. Only two males were represented in the sample. When data were analysed, four themes appeared: (a) I like physical education (PE) when I am successful; (b) I can't because I can't; (c) Mostly nobody helps and; (d) mostly everyone yells at me.

For the first theme, success was determined largely by experiencing fun and enjoyment and engaging in previously accomplished activities. PE was not perceived as a learning environment, rather a place for experiencing success. In the second theme, the sample reported that PE was not fun when they did not experience success and that they experienced more failures than successes. Failure was equated with boring and useless activities. The last two themes suggest the alienated students felt no one assisted them when they required help. They also reported verbal abuse from peers and public ridicule. In sum, Portman's study found that fun and enjoyment determined students' notion of
success. Physical education however, was not perceived as a place to learn.

The Junior Sport Development Unit (1996) compiled a study of sport (both club and school) for 14 to 17 year olds attending government and non-government high schools in the Perth metropolitan region of WA. Firstly, the results showed that in relation to school sport, students who attended non-government schools reported that too much emphasis was placed on winning by teachers.

Secondly, in order to gain access to club sports, adolescents held the perception that primary schools should provide information so that they can get involved in club sports before they attend high school.

Thirdly, the variety of sports offered at school was limited to high profile team sports. Students reported that they wanted to participate in a range of sports so that they could determine their preferences for club sport at a later date.

In another study, Malaxos & Wedgwood (1997) reported that female adolescents attending mixed sex government high schools in both rural and urban WA played sport (PE and school sport) for a number of reasons including: (a) to keep fit, (b) have fun and be with friends, (c) to experience a team feeling, (d) feel good about themselves and, (e) learn new skills. In terms of PE at high school, females reported that they wanted to: (a) experience a larger range of sports and activities, (b) less coeducational sports activities and, (c) more female PE teachers. High school students stated that during primary school there should be an emphasis on the development of a range of sport skills.
The school sport studies that were reviewed showed that not all youths enjoy or want to partake in PE or sport classes at school. Evidence presented by Carlson (1995a, 1995b) and Portman (1995) showed that there are some students who felt alienated in the school sport setting. Other studies (ASC, 1991; EDWA, 1996; Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997) showed some students enjoy PE and participate in school sports predominantly for fun and skill development.

Other commonalities of the school sport studies revealed that PE: (a) lacked a variety of sports and activities made available to them (JSDU, 1996; Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997), (b) was too competitive and that winning was often emphasised (Carlson, 1995b; JSDU, 1996), (c) lacked individual attention by teachers to students (EDWA, 1996), (d) was fun and important because of the opportunity to play team based sports (EDWA, 1996) and, (e) was not as important as other school subjects (Carlson, 1995; EDWA, 1996).

In the school sport studies presented, the samples mostly adolescents attending high schools and in the case of Carlson (1995b), the sample was North American. The remaining studies reported Australian samples and only the study by EDWA (1996) included an Indigenous subgroup. With this in mind, it can be said that little is known of Indigenous Australian children's (particularly Aboriginal) perceptions and experiences in school sport (including PE).

More importantly, the self-perceptions which Aboriginal students possess of themselves in the context of school sport is lacking in the present literature. According to the school sport studies presented, it was
revealed that sport is considered a valuable tool for life. It is perceived as a catalyst for the development and consequent changes to student self-esteem. There have been no studies however, that have investigated an Aboriginal child's development of self in the context of sport. The studies reported in the current literature related to children in sport is rather superficial since they do not reveal intricate detail about what children feel and perceive about themselves in the sport setting.

**Sport and Sense of Self**

It is a popular perception that participation in sport produces positive changes to an individual's sense of self, particularly self-esteem. The relation between sport and the self therefore, has been studied extensively in the present literature, yet here is little empirical evidence to support or refute this notion since the studies to date offer contrasting reports.

According to Weiss (1987), the causal relationship between sport participation and the effects upon the self is complex and not clear. Additionally, she goes on the state that there is a "chicken and egg" situation, whereby there is a contending view to the present issue. For instance, do children with already established levels of self esteem behave in ways that confirm their feelings about themselves or does achievement affect self-esteem?

There are two schools of thought that provide alternative views and which complement each other in order to understand the phenomena. In order to provide an explanation of this dilemma, it is important to
examine both views, that is, the behaviourist approach and the phenomenological view before a review of the literature is presented.

The behaviourist school of thought proposes that in order to produce changes to the self, behaviour needs to be manipulated first. In relation to the perceived competence theory, Harter (1985) proposed that physical experiences provide important information for the development of general self-esteem in young children.

Within the physical domain, there are two important sources of esteem: (a) demonstrated ability, and (b) physical appearance. According to Harter (1990) these constructs play a vital role in the development of a child's perception(s) of competence in the physical domain. Furthermore, physical appearance is proposed as the major determinant of physical self-esteem and is closely related to general self-esteem.

In contrast, the phenomenological view suggests that individuals behave in various ways to maintain or develop their self-esteem. Rosenberg (1979, 1981) refers to this cognitive process as the "self-serving" mechanism. More specifically, when incompetence is revealed an individual's self-esteem is threatened and therefore, he/she will not participate in the activity. On the other hand, experiences that enhance a feeling of competence will ensure motivation and participation and will eventually affect self-esteem positively.

In relation to sport, it is proposed in the phenomenological approach that individuals who are high achievers will have valued perceptions of his/her esteem and will choose optimally challenging tasks,
exert appropriate levels of effort to complete the task and will persist longer (Bressan & Weiss, 1982).

Again, the existing research on sport and the self does not provide any conclusive evidence for either approach since there is little uniformity of the methods used to study the self in sport. More specifically, varied constructs of the self (such as self-concept, self-esteem) and varied instruments to study the self have been utilised. The instruments used include Muller and Leonetti's Personal Self-concept Inventory (PSCI) (Magill & Ash, 1979), Piers-Harris Children's Self-concept Scale (Emmanouel, Zervas & Vagenas, 1992; Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981; Leonardson, 1977; Leonardson & Gargiulo, 1978; Routon & Sherrill, 1989; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989), Martinek-Zaichkowsky’s Self-concept Scale (Karper & Martinek, 1983; Martinek, Cheffers & Zaichkowsky, 1978; Smith, 1982), Marsh’s Self-description Questionnaire (SDQ II) (Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997; Marsh & Peart, 1988), Harter’s Perceived Physical Competence Scale for Children (Brustad, 1988; Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Roberts, Kleiber & Duda, 1981; Weiss, McAuley, Ebbek & Wiese, 1990) Michus, Farrah & Reitz's Self-concept and Motivation Inventory (Maul & Thomas, 1975) and prepared questionnaires with a Likert scale (Iso-Ahola, 1976). Furthermore, the majority of these studies used quantitative measures to evaluate and assess differences in the self-constructs of various populations.

A review of these above mentioned studies revealed that the constructs of sport and the self have been investigated using two methods.
Firstly, elements of sport have been identified and their relation with the self have been examined. The most common elements of the self that have been examined are self-concept (Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997; Emmanouel, Zervas & Vagenas, 1992; Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981; Karper & Martinek, 1982, 1983; Magill & Ash, 1979; Marsh & Peart, 1988; Martinek, Cheffers & Zaichkowsky, 1978; Maul & Thomas, 1975; Routon & Sherrill, 1989; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989; Smith, 1982), perceived competence (Brustad, 1988; Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Leonardson, 1977; Leonardson & Gargiulo, 1978; Roberts, Kleiber & Duda, 1981), self-esteem (Brustad, 1988; Iso-Ahola, 1976; Smith, Smoll & Curtis, 1979; Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck & Wiese, 1990) and self-efficacy (Weiss, Wiese & Klint, 1989).

Secondly, the construct of the self has been explored in relation to characteristics and elements of sport. The most common types of sport characteristics that were investigated in terms of the relation with the self-constructs include motivation orientations (Brustad, 1988), game outcome (Iso-Ahola, 1976), motor performance (Karper & Martinek, 1982, 1983; Magill & Ash, 1979; Martinek, Cheffers & Zaichkowsky, 1978), sport structure (Emmanouel, Zervas & Vagenas, 1992; Marsh & Peart, 1988; Smith, 1982), attributions (Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck & Wiese, 1990), physical fitness (Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989), feedback (Brustad, 1988; Smith, Smoll & Curtis, 1979), affect (Brustad, 1988), attitudes toward physical education (Routon & Sherrill, 1989; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989), skill levels (Emmanouel, Zervas & Vagenas, 1992; Smith, 1982) and sport
participation/involvement (Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997; Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Maul & Thomas, 1975; Roberts, Kleiber & Duda, 1987).

A further characteristic of these studies is that they were mostly conducted using North American populations and were comparative, so that groups of people with specific characteristics were investigated. For instance, the groups sampled included asthmatics and non-asthmatics (Routon & Sherrill, 1989), winners and losers (Iso-Ahola, 1976), individuals with low and high fitness (Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989), participant and non-participant (Magill & Ash, 1979; Maul & Thomas, 1975), participant and drop out/discontinuers (Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Smith, 1986) and handicapped and non-handicapped individuals (Karper & Martinek, 1982, 1983).

Of these, only a few studies examined race as a distinguishing characteristic of the self in the context of sport (Karper & Martinek, 1982, 1983; Martinek, Cheffers & Zaichkowsky, 1978; Smith, 1982). Each of these studies utilised the Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale for Children (MZSCSC) to test for differences among the self-concepts of young white American and African-American children who attended school from kindergarten to grade 5. In each of these studies, the results did not reveal any differences.

It may be inferred that the MZSCSC may not have been an appropriate device to evaluate racial differences of self-concept unless it has been normed for both groups. Additionally, although the MZSCSC
may be suitable for children, it may also be inferred that very young children may not be able to define their self-concept as clearly as older children and it is possible the MZSCSC is ineffective in demonstrating existing differences in self-concept. The remaining studies will now be presented in order to reveal knowledge of the relation of the self and sport in the existing general literature.

Over half of the reviewed studies did not find any differences of self-concept with their samples (Emmanouel, Zervas & Vagenas, 1992; Karper & Martinek, 1982, 1983; Magill & Ash, 1979; Marsh & Peart, 1988; Martinek, Cheffers & Zaichkowsky, 1978; Routon & Sherrill, 1989; Smith, 1982). It is interesting to note that all but one of these studies utilised samples of young children ranging from Kindergarten to 10 years of age. Only Marsh and Peart (1988) investigated an Australian sample of adolescent females.

Less than half of the studies found differences of self-concept among their samples (Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997; Brustad, 1988; Feltz & Petlichkoff, 1983; Roberts, Kleiber & Duda, 1981; Sherrill, Holguin & Caywood, 1989; Smith, Smoll & Curtis, 1979; Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck & Wiese, 1990; Weiss, Wiese & Klint, 1983). More specifically, Smith, Smoll and Curtis (1979) found that coaches who were trained in effective feedback techniques had a pronounced influence upon children's self-esteem over time.

Roberts, Kleiber and Duda (1981) and Feltz and Petlichkoff (1983) examined the relationship between perceived competence and sport experience (duration over time). Roberts et al. (1981) investigated white
American children aged 9 to 11 years, who resided in middle class suburbs of Illinois, United States of America. Feltz and Petlichkoff (1983) examined adolescents participating in a range of team sports. Both studies utilised Harter's Perceived Physical Competence Scale for Children and found that participants reported higher levels of perceived competence than dropouts and that males also were higher in perceived competence than females. In all, Feltz and Petlichkoff (1983) reported that sport experience and perceived competence have an insignificant relationship. Roberts et al. (1981) stated that perhaps sport may attract those individuals who already possess favourable perceptions of their competence in the first place.

Brustad (1988) investigated self-esteem, perceived competence, motivation and anxiety for male and female children aged 9 to 13 years. The findings revealed that differing levels of self-esteem influence the type of affect experienced in sport. For instance, children who possessed low levels of self-esteem experienced high levels of anxiety. Conversely, children who were motivated by challenges in sport experienced positive affect.

Sherrill, Holguin and Caywood (1989) examined fitness levels in sport as a determinant of self-concept and attitude to physical education classes. The sample included North American children in grades 4 and 5 and the results showed that children high in fitness possessed positive attitudes towards physical education and their self-concepts.

Weiss, Wiese and Klint (1989) examined the role of self-efficacy for young male gymnasts aged 7 to 18 years. They found that gymnasts who
possessed positive goals for their potential performance demonstrated high self-efficacy (the strength of the conviction for success) and actually demonstrated success. In other words, the perceptions they had of their potential performance in sport influenced their current and future performances.

Weiss, McAuley, Ebbeck and Wiese (1990) explored self-esteem and the attributions (reasons) children present for their sport performance. The sample consisted of children aged 8 to 13 years who attended a seven week North American summer sport program. It was found that children who possessed favourable levels of self-esteem attributed their sport performance to internal, stable and controllable reasons such as themselves. What this means is that these children did not rely on external, unstable and uncontrollable elements such as luck for their successes.

Brandl-Bredenbeck and Brettschneider (1997) completed an interesting comparative study that explored the self-concepts of North American and German adolescents in the sport context. It was found that the importance placed upon sport impacted on adolescents' self-concepts. More specifically, the greater the perceived importance of sport, the more favourable were the perceptions of self-concept.

It was also found that although both groups rated sport important, the North American teenagers' self-concepts were more positive and favourable than German self-concepts. These results may indicate that the culture of North American teenagers may have influenced their perceptions of the importance of sport upon their self-concepts.

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Other studies which were not comparative in nature are particularly useful since they attempted to explore the elements that constitute self-concept (Leonardson, 1977; Leonardson & Gargiulo, 1978) and the attributes of sport that affect self-concept (Iso-Ahola, 1976; Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981).

Leonardson (1977) and Leonardson and Gargiulo (1978) for instance, found that in their studies of high school and college students, perceived competence was an important contributor of self-concept.

Iso-Ahola (1976) found that sport outcomes did not influence the self-esteem of children. Rather, individual self-esteem was more influenced by the degree of team success and failures (or thus team self-esteem).

Guyot, Fairchild and Hill (1981) explored physical fitness, sport participation, physical appearance and self-concept for children. The results showed that the elements of sport that influence self-concept are related to gender. For instance, both males and females reported that physical and motor fitness influenced their self-concepts. Females also stated that physical appearance was a contributor to their self-concepts. Males on the other hand, reported that active sport participation influenced their concepts of themselves. Furthermore, it was found that children who possessed high levels of fitness also reported high (or favourable) self-concepts.

From these studies, it can be concluded that the relation between sport and self-concept is not clear. Furthermore, the influence of cultural factors upon sport and self-concept has been overlooked. In fact, after
examination of the empirically based research on sport and the self, it is evident that there is a lack of sample groups who are ethnic, minority and indigenous. Weiss and Chaumeton (1992) stated that there are contextual factors that have an influence upon the self, of which cultural variation is one. In the discipline of socio-psychology of sport, there are few empirically based studies that identify cultural variation as a contextual factor (Duda & Allison, 1990).

Aboriginal Sense of Self and Sport

As mentioned earlier, the knowledge relating to sport and Australian Aboriginal childrens' sense of self is rather limited. There is some information however, about adult Aboriginal people in sport and these are mostly presented in the form of government sponsored and technical reports (Atkinson, 1991; Farag, 1991; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Mason & Wilson, 1988). The information contained in the various reports showed that there is a connection between sport and Aboriginal sense of self. This connection is revealed in both the primary and secondary sources of Aboriginal sense of self as well as Aboriginal self-esteem. These will now be explored.

Primary source of Aboriginal sense of self and sport

The elements of identity and family are considered primary sources of Aboriginal sense of self, both of which are influenced in some way by sport. Specifically, sport involvement such as annual sports carnivals and Aboriginal Week celebratory sporting activities unite the family and
extended kin (Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989). Tatz (1984) stated that sport is also an avenue for Aborigines to express their identity whereas in contrast Broome (1980) wrote about Aboriginal boxers and found that many of them had to deny their Aboriginality (identity) in order to succeed in sport. A reason for this discrepancy is that Tatz (1984) documented a variety of contemporary Aboriginal athletes, whereas Broome (1980) explored sport for Aboriginal boxers during a period when Australia exercised the 'white Australia' policy. Furthermore, the nature of the sport of boxing during this period represented a white man's game and therefore Aboriginal boxers had no choice but to deny their Aboriginality to succeed.

Secondary source of Aboriginal sense of self and sport

Sport is a tool that allows some Aborigines to: (a) feel accepted within the wider society (Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Perkins, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988), (b) gain freedom through social mobility (Cadigan, 1989), and (c) feel respected for their sport achievement (Hawke, 1994). However, sport is also considered a vehicle in which Aborigines feel manipulated and controlled (Harris, 4

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4 During the 1930s in Australia, government policies were put in place to assimilate Aboriginal people so that they would live according to white standards. The government tried to achieve this via the establishment of missions and reserves. It was the understanding of the government that those Aboriginal children who were a "light coloured black" had tendencies that were more civilized than the "dark coloured black", such that they had more chance to be educated as a "white person". The government determined Aboriginality from the biological composition of one's blood. Hence, terms such as "half caste", "quarter caste" and "quadroon" were used to classify Aboriginal people. The legislation forced light coloured black children to become wards of the state and were thereby under the control of the Chief Protector of Aborigines. These children were forcibly taken from their families and placed in missions and reserves. This practice continued up until 1972 (Aborigines Act, 1905, 1936).
Aboriginal self-esteem and sport

It is a common belief, especially amongst government authorities, that participation in sport assists in the development and maintenance of self-esteem. In particular, sport is used to combat the low self-esteem of Aboriginal children and youths (HRSCATSIA, 1992) and specifically juvenile offenders (Mason & Wilson, 1988). Sport in this sense occupies children's time and relieves boredom, and so is considered a remedy for the social problems experienced by Aboriginal youth. Aborigines who have achieved in their sporting careers (such as league footballers) are utilised as role models and mentors by sporting authorities and others in order to foster the positive development of self-esteem in children and youths (HRSCATSIA, 1992; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.). It seems that further evidence is required to justify this connection of sport and self-esteem for Aboriginal children. Atkinson (1991, p. 2) warns against using sport in this sense and strongly stated that sport "as a panacea for all social ills is rejected."

Summary

The present literature provides some knowledge of the general sense of self for the Aboriginal population and their sport experiences. The literature however, does not provide an insight into urban Western Australian Aboriginal children's sense of self and their experiences and perceptions of sport. It was found that Aboriginal sense of self is
comprised of two sources. The primary source constitutes the behaviours and perceptions experienced in Aboriginal culture, while the secondary source is a derivative of the expectations and stereotypes of Aborigines yielded by wider society.

Sport participation has some connection with urban Aboriginal sense of self, but this connection is not clear, particularly for urban Western Australian Aboriginal children. Low self-esteem has been targeted as a catalyst of poor school performance, low achievement standards and deviant behaviours amongst Aboriginal children and youth and sport has been viewed as a tool to improve self-esteem, yet there is no empirical evidence to support this.

There are a number of issues to address in regard to the methodologies utilised in previous empirical studies (Callan & St John, 1984; Finch, 1973; Wright & Parker, 1978; Pedersen, Walker & Glass, 1997) to assess Australian Aboriginal sense of self. Firstly, from the studies reviewed, each used a different instrument to evaluate Aboriginal sense of self. There is no accepted inventory that is considered appropriate for the study of Aboriginal sense of self. More importantly, there is a question of trustworthiness and authenticity of the instruments utilised to examine Aboriginal sense of self. Secondly, the operational definition of self-esteem from an Aboriginal perspective needs to be addressed before examination of Aboriginal sense of self can occur. It is impossible to compare or even evaluate Aboriginal sense of self without first investigating its characteristics. Thirdly, quantitative analysis of data is not an entirely appropriate methodology for the study of
Aboriginal sense of self since there is no foundation of information to commence statistical analysis.

In terms of the studies of sense of self and sport for general populations, it was revealed that there is no clear relationship between sport and the self. The studies reviewed utilised a variety of instruments and tested a variety of self-related constructs. There was no uniform methodology and consequently no firm relation between sport and the self. Furthermore, another criticism is that the samples were mostly North American children and youths. It cannot be determined from the studies reviewed that they reflect the phenomena for Australian Aboriginal children?

In terms of the current literature of Aboriginal people in sport, this review has clearly demonstrated that it is limited to the personal sports experiences of Aboriginal athletes who are predominantly adult males competing (or who have competed) in elite levels of competition. There is a need to examine Aboriginal children's sport experiences in relation to their sense of self. In particular, the experiences and perceptions of urban West Australian children requires exploration.

Finally, there is considerable diversity amongst Aboriginal groups and each has distinct behaviours, values and attitudes. Recognition of this diversity should be encouraged in the current literature. With these criticisms, it is concluded that little is known about the sense of self for urban Western Australian Aboriginal children and their perceptions and experiences in school sport.
CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Since the present study is a qualitative and naturalistic inquiry, then an interpretive paradigm is appropriate. Because the study attempts to seek information from human subjects, it is important to take into account that the social context is subject to change. In the literature review it was pointed out that Aboriginal peoples' cultures are always evolving (Issacs, 1988) and so the interpretive paradigm is appropriate. Since the focus of the present study has not been investigated empirically and there are no theories on which to base the study, an interpretive paradigm is desirable because it allows the researcher to examine the phenomena, make interpretations and explanations and so develop principles as a foundation for theory.

Affiliated with the interpretive paradigm is the symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective. According to this perspective, individuals are active agents of the social world(s) they inhabit. This is consistent with the general premise of the interpretive paradigm and is therefore appropriate for this study.

The Theory of Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a theoretical perspective located within the social sciences. More specifically, it is a foundation of the sociological social psychology school. The purpose of symbolic interactionism is to provide an understanding of the social nature of individuals, their interactions and
socialisation (Charon, 1992). In particular, symbolic interactionism views social interaction as the most important component of the development of society. Individuals use symbols such as language to identify, determine and describe experiences, perceptions, physical objects and other people (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 1989, 1992; Hewitt & Livingston Hewitt, 1986; Mead, 1934).

Another important component of symbolic interactionism is the meaning that is conjured for each symbol which is presented in society. In terms of social interaction, individuals must determine the meaning of another individual's behaviour (symbol) in order to prepare an appropriate response. The ability of individuals to determine and interpret the meaning of symbols (for example, those related to behaviour, experiences and perceptions) in society, indicates that individuals are active agents within society. This is another important component of symbolic interactionism.

In sum, the symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective states that, "what we are and what we do as human beings depend upon our capacity to act in and upon the world by symbolic means" (Hewitt & Livingston Hewitt, 1986, p. 10).

Rationale for the Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

The symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective is selected as the most appropriate framework within which to conduct an exploratory study of Aboriginal children's sense of self in relation to sport. A number of issues must be presented in order to inform the reader of the primary reasons for
the selection of the symbolic interactionist perspective.

First, an individual's perception of a sense of self arises from the social interaction with others (Cooley, 1902/1970; Harter, 1978, 1980; Hattie, 1992; James, 1890; Mead, 1934). The study of the self and its related components (self-esteem, identity, self-concepts) therefore must be explored in relation to society and its members.

Second, the symbolic interactionist perspective considers the social structures that exist within society and states that individuals act within these structures and are also constrained by these structures. The active ability of the individual is highlighted by this perspective (Hewitt & Livingston Hewitt, 1986). In the case of minority people, a sense of self is subject to influences from both their society and that of the majority society. The sense of self for Australian Aborigines, for example, is embedded in the parent culture (Carter, 1988; Coolwell, 1993; Day 1994; Hattie, 1992; Hudspith & Williams, 1994; Myers, 1979; Sykes, 1994; Wright, 1985) but is also subject to external societal influences from an array of institutions and individuals (Beckett, 1988; Carter, 1988; Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Haralambos & Heald, 1984; Hudspith & Williams, 1994; Hughes, 1987).

Third, the paradigm of symbolic interactionism encourages inductive reasoning, thus allowing the researcher to search and discover patterns or categories of the phenomenon in question, rather than define them (Miles & Huberman, 1988; Patton, 1990). The purpose of this study is to conduct an
exploratory study and seek to induce conceptual information rather than impose it as in the logical positivist approach. Further, since the present topic has not been investigated empirically and there are no previous models or theories on which to base the framework of the present study, then the symbolic interactionist perspective allows the researcher to examine a phenomenon and make interpretations and explanations as a basis for speculations.

Bearing these considerations in mind, the symbolic interactionist perspective is considered as the most appropriate theoretical framework in which to study sense of self.

Assumptions of the Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

There are four assumptions relating to this perspective that suit the style and the objectives of this study: (a) Interactions are the focus of symbolic interactionism, (b) behaviour is considered to be a consequence and a catalyst of social interactions, (c) there is a focus on the events, incidents and behaviours occurring at present and, (d) the individual is considered an active and unpredictable object within the environment who makes conscious choices and behaves with intent (Charon, 1989, 1992; Cooley, 1902/1970; Mead, 1934; Rosenberg, 1979, 1981; Schwandt, 1994). These assumptions are now described in detail.

Focus on Interactions. The symbolic interactionist framework focusses on the interactions that take place between individuals. The
process of interaction means that, "human beings act in relation to one another, they take one another's acts into account as they act" (Charon, 1992, p. 23).

Interactions encompass a range of behaviours such as talking, perceiving, defining, describing, interpreting and acting for example. For the symbolic interactionist, interactions imply that individuals are responding to each other, interpret the meaning of their interactions and plan an appropriate response. What this means is that interactions occur in relation to others in such a way that there is a constant process of change occurring simultaneously. Interactions, therefore, are considered dynamic exchanges between individuals and thus perpetuate an active rather than passive individual.

**Focus on Behaviour.** The interactions exhibited by individuals are a result and a catalyst of social interactions. Individuals for instance, interpret situations, apply meaning and then interact accordingly. Hence, behaviour is viewed as a result of interaction. Despite this, interactions can instigate behaviours with the result that individuals interact with one another, apply meaning to the interactions and then exhibit appropriate behaviours.

**Focus on Active Individuals.** Individuals are active agents of society in that they are engaged in a constant process of interaction. In this regard, individuals act, interpret, apply meanings, define situations, plan responses and react and redefine in several situations. The symbolic
interactionist therefore perceives that the individual has a capacity to be active within his/her environment and makes choices and acts in accordance with his/her choices, as well as in relation to others.

**Perspectives and Reference Groups**

Within the symbolic interactionist framework, perspectives are an integral part of individuals. This is because individuals engage in developing definitions whilst interacting with others. A perspective of the situation between individuals becomes a shared experience. The roles individuals play with each other have an impact on the perspective that is developed and shared. Social interactions may occur with many people and therefore perspectives may be developed and shared.

The perspectives which are formed during interactions guide the interpretations individuals compose of situations. Since situations are varied, then so too are the interpretations and consequently the perspectives held by individuals.

The important point here is that individuals engage in interactions with a number of people and a number of groups. For the symbolic interactionist, these groups are referred to as reference groups. The notion of reference groups is particularly important in this study because several reference groups may exist in the school sport setting.

In short, individuals share the perspectives of particular reference groups. These may be religious, ethnic or minority groups or social class
status groups. The point is that the individual and the group share the same perspective or the same culture.

Perspectives are developed during interactions and are a product of communication. Individuals learn the elements that comprise the group's perspectives by interacting with its members via communication. Individuals engage in a number of perspectives with a number of reference groups (or societies or social worlds). They use perspectives to define situations, interpret meanings and plan their behaviours.

Notions of Reality

According to symbolic interactionism, individuals possess three distinct views of reality. First, individuals perceive reality through socially developed perspectives. In other words, individuals have experiences with objects in their realities. They identify situations, interpret the meaning of the situations, classify them and prepare appropriate responses (or interactions). These experiences of reality occur during social interaction with others. The notion of reality therefore, is socially constructed and the perspectives held of reality are composed in relation to the interactions with others.

Second, there exists a reality that is objective and which remains independent of the social notion of reality. Individuals are not directly responsive to the objective reality, but are perhaps influenced by indirect means. In other words, the perceptions and consequent interpretations of a
situation within the objective reality is developed as a result of the social interactions encountered with others. Hence, social reality indirectly influences the objective reality.

Third, in order to account for individuals differences and experiences, the symbolic interactionist perspective states that individuals also possess an individual personal reality. This is based on the varied differences individuals have on the perceptions of their social world (realities) (Charon, 1989, 1992; Hewitt & Livingston Hewitt, 1986).

Objects

In order to make sense of realities, the symbolic interactionist framework states that realities are comprised of objects. These consist of experiences, perceptions, physical objects, thoughts and attitudes for instance. Objects are learned from the interactions individuals have with others. In other words, they are socially constructed and are often termed social objects.

Objects are not stable. Since they are social in nature and are defined in social interactions, then they are susceptible to changes, alterations and reinterpretations as long as the individual continues to engage in social interactions (Charon, 1989, 1992; Hewitt & Livingston Hewitt, 1986).

The meanings and importance attached to objects are not rigid since they too are developed in relation to the interactions with others. The important point here is that others assist in the development and degree of
salience that is attached to all objects that exist in a multitude of realities. Objects are susceptible to change simply because during social interactions, individuals alter and redefine the meanings and importance of the objects (Blumer, 1969).

Objects are given names and labels and are defined in relation to their perceived function in a given situation in a given reality. Objects, therefore, may possess a number of definitions or meanings, since they possess a number of functions (which are dependent on the situation of the reality). The meaning that is applied to the object is dependent on the way in which the individual wishes to use it. According to Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969), individuals perceive an object, assess its meaning and function and then prepare to act accordingly. They go on to state that actions and behaviours occur in a line of action, since the perceptions we possess of the function of objects are organised accordingly to achieve a desired outcome.

In sum, individuals define the meaning and function of objects in their realities based on the interactions with others. These objects are then used to display or perform a desired result (behaviour/interaction) in relation to individuals' needs. Reality therefore, is developed by individuals who engage in social interactions.

**Symbols.** Symbols represent a class of objects which are used for communication and representational purposes during social interactions. Symbols are distinguishable by their attributes. For instance, symbols are social, significant and meaningful. More specifically, they are developed by
social means, possess meaningful definitions and a common significance which is shared by both the receiver and user during interactions.

Language is a special set of symbols and is the primary tool used in social interactions. It assists the individual in representing experiences and perceptions to others and assists presenting a verbal perspective of situations, objects and realities to others. "Symbols are the individual’s eyes to the world" (Charon, 1989, p. 58).

The importance of symbols is best summed by Charon (1989, p. 63), who stated that "symbols make three contributions to the human being: They are our reality, they form the basis for our social life, and they are central to what it means to be human" (Italics added).

First, the world is comprised of social objects and individuals behave and interact with each other through communication. Meaning is developed via communication and is portrayed by symbols (hence, symbolic communication). When interactions occur, perspectives of various social situations are developed. Furthermore, appropriate behaviours associated with these perspectives are also developed. Individuals therefore, interact in meaningful ways and act in accordance with their perspectives of social realities (Charon, 1992).

Second, individuals need symbols in order to interact with others and thus share their perspectives of realities. In this way, they share the rules, expectations and values of a group of people (or a culture) which in turn gives them the ability to continue social communication and perceive their reality.
Symbols allow individuals to engage in human life within a complex society (Charon, 1992).

Third, symbols create an active individual who engages in a number of communicative activities during social interactions. Symbols allow individuals to: (a) label, remember and code objects, (b) develop perceptions, (c) engage in cognitive thinking, (d) solve problems and issues, (e) develop abstract thoughts, (f) direct the self, (g) be creative, (h) move away from the present in order to consider the past and future and, (i) imagine and consider the world from the perspectives of others (Charon, 1989, 1992).

The Symbolic Interactionist View of the Self

Since the sense of self is the focus of this study, it is important to present the symbolic interactionist perspective of the self. For symbolic interactionists, all objects are socially defined. For the self, it too is a social object which is influenced by the interactions experienced with others. It is often referred to as "me". The self however, also encompasses an "I" component. It refers to the self as a subject and which responds to social situations. For symbolic interactionists, the self as an object is the focus and will be described in detail here.

The self as an object which is defined socially because whilst interactions are occurring, elements of the self are labelled, described and considered. Since social interactions occur constantly, they produce changes to the self on a constant basis also. In other words, the self as a social object
is subject to the varied social situations and thereby the symbolic interactionist perspective states that these situations produce an active social self which is subjected to constant deliberation, definition and change.

The processes of socialisation allow individuals to treat themselves as objects since they are able to embrace the perspectives of others and look upon his/her self. An important aspect of symbolic interactionism is pointed out by Mead (1934) who stated that the self is developed when the individual can perceive the perspectives of others and objectively view his/her self.

Development of the Self

According to the existing literature, the self develops in four stages as depicted by Mead (1934) and Shibutani (1955). Stage one is called the preparatory stage and is characterised by the imitations that children make of adults' interactions with them. There is a lack of vocabulary and the meaning associated with interactions and behaviours lack meaning (symbolic understanding). The concept of the self is not defined.

During the second stage, called the play stage, language is slowly acquired and thus the meaning for objects and behaviours is gradually developed. The self is labelled and defined by others and they share this knowledge. The individual now begins to understand that he/she too is an object which is acted toward and interacted with. The notion of "me" develops and so too does the intent to act accordingly to the descriptions of
the self. These descriptions are developed during interactions with others who are significant to the individual (such as mother, father, grandparents, siblings). There is a preference for particular significant others during specific social situations. The individual begins to comprehend that significant others have differing perspectives about the individual and thus differing perceptions of the self emerges. These differing self-perceptions develop as a consequence of the individual's attempts to take on the perspective of the significant others and play their roles accordingly. In this sense, the individual begins to comprehend the perceptions others possess of him/her and acts accordingly toward him/her self as he/she thinks others would act toward him/her.

The third stage is called the game stage. Here the individual can enact the perspectives of several significant others at a time. What this means is that the individual now learns that there are a number of complex social skills required to function as part of the group. Cooperation and coordination with others is essential to learning the social positions in a complex society. In this stage, a culture or group perspective is learned and shared with its members. The adult self develops and there is a distinction of significant and generalised others. The self changes during interaction but is not totally influenced by the social interactions that take place with all significant others. In other words during this stage, some significant others are more important than the rest during the development of self. The interaction engaged by the individual with others helps define society and its
relation to the individual. In this sense, the rules, expectations and judgments of society are learned, so society's notion of the individual self is presented.

The reference group stage represents the last phase of the development of self. During this level, the individual learns about the different social worlds (or societies) that exist. He/she learns of the differing perspectives that each may possess, including perspectives about him/her self. Interactions with each group may occur and those which are perceived as favourable and positive to their self-development, will encourage the individual to seek membership to the group. He/she becomes part of the culture of the group. The symbolic interactionist perspective states that individuals may belong to a number of reference groups depending on the social situations.

Elements of the Self

The self is comprised of several self-concepts which are developed in relation to the perceptions individuals think others have of them and by the way in which the individual acts toward others. The collective self-perceptions developed in relation to others represents an individual's collection of self-concepts. There is a general global self-concept and several other self-concepts which are influenced by the social groups that are deemed salient by the individual. Refer to figure 3.1 (page 91).
Self-concepts are varied and are stable over time and across situations but are influenced by specific circumstances. They are subject to adjustments and alterations which occur during interactions in which the self is presented. Individuals may possess several self-concepts since they interact and affiliate with several reference groups. The important point here is that those groups must be salient to the individual (Charon, 1992).

The term self-perception is often used synonymously with self-concept because in order to illustrate a self-concept, the individual must perceive the self. In other words, the individual engages in self-perceptions to determine self-concepts (Charon, 1989).

Encompassed within the construct of self-concept is self-esteem. It refers to the judgments and evaluations individuals possess about
themselves. Self-esteem is developed from interactions with others, particularly the judgments they make of the individual's self. These judgments are mostly provided by significant others and particular reference groups who are salient to the individual. It is important to note that it is the individual's perception of others' judgments that forms the basis of self-esteem. Individuals may be selective in that they choose elements and characteristics of others' judgments to reflect what they think about themselves. Individuals may select, ignore, redefine or alter others' judgments of themselves to suit the picture they possess of themselves. In other cases, some significant others possess some control over individuals' self-esteem. For instance, those significant others who have the power to manipulate children's self-esteem include parents, teachers and peers in particular.

Charon (1992) suggested that positive appraisals are conditional upon the appraiser such that the supplier will more than likely praise behaviours and actions which conform to that of the group (or institution). Charon stated that “to obey passively becomes action rewarded with praise and approval, so a positive self-judgment, as it becomes more and more dependent on authorities, is tied to obedience” (1992, p. 81).

Another aspect of the self is the construct of identity. The labels that individuals attach to themselves are termed identities. Significant and generalised others may also attach labels upon the individual's identity. When an individual identifies him/her self, then he/she is announcing
reference to a particular group or reference to a social category. For instance, identities reveal locations of individuals in their social realities. According to Charon (1992) there are three types of identities: (a) basic, (b) general and, (c) independent identities. A basic identity may identify items such as age and sex. A general identity may refer to identities such as a mother, daughter or judge. An independent identity describes in more detail the social location of an individual who for example, may identify him/her self a Challenge Bank Teller or a primary school physical education specialist. An identity is determined by the commitment the individual exerts toward it and the importance of the identity to his/her self.

Functions of the Self

Socialisation allows the self to be shared as an object and a subject between the individual and him/her self and with others. The self as a social object allows the individual to communicate with him/her self, define his/her self-concepts and manipulate and control the him/herself (Blumer, 1962). The self as a subject of conversation and interaction means that the individual can talk about him/her self with others (self as subject). The process of talking about one's self with others and with one's self is termed self-communication.

Individuals possess the capacity to think, interpret meanings, label social objects, define social situations and illustrate things to the self. The process of self-communication is the most important function related to the
self since it makes all other functions possible (Charon, 1989, 1992). Self-communication enables meaning to be attached to items of interest during social interactions. Comprehension of the communication is influenced by the use of the meaning of the symbols (symbolic interaction) which is understood by all parties concerned.

Another important function of the self is self-control or self-direction. Here the individual is an active agent of society who pauses to consider a line of action based on the symbolic meaning of an interaction. The individual has the influence over him/her self to direct and control his/her own behaviour. In this sense, the self is not an agent of society that is only subjected to the external forces of society, but is active in his/her own decisions to behave accordingly. The consequent behaviours are influenced by the membership the individual possesses with particular reference groups and is also influenced by significant and generalised others.

A Conceptual View of Urban Aboriginal Sense of Self

The aim of a conceptual framework is to show how concepts and constructs proposed by the research are expected to interact or relate (Preissle-Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The following conceptual framework is derived from the elements presented in the literature previously reviewed. It is not the intention to manipulate the study by this conceptual framework, rather this study is exploratory as the concepts derived from the literature review will provide a starting point from which to conduct investigations.
Since the literature review focussed on the self-reports of Aboriginal adult male sports people competing in elite sports, it is possible that the concepts may be limited to this group. In order to ensure that urban Aboriginal children's self-perspectives are represented, the conceptual framework must be flexible to discover new concepts, follow leads, verify researcher's hunches and rediscover themes (Schwandt, 1994). Additionally, the flexible structure of the framework is compatible with symbolic interactionism which focusses on the dynamic and changing elements of human social interaction (Charon, 1992; Schwandt, 1994).

Figure 3.2 (page 96) provides a conceptual map of urban Aboriginal sense of self and shows that primary sources of sense of self comprise inner trait self-esteem which remains fairly stable over time (Campbell, 1990). Inner self-esteem is embedded in Aboriginal culture and consists of the knowledge, beliefs and feelings regarding: (a) family, (b) heritage, (c) culture, and (d) identity (Carter, 1988; Coolwell, 1993; Hattie, 1992; Myers, 1979). The sub-category of identity refers to identifying as an Aboriginal and feeling connected to other Aboriginal people regardless of the diversity that exists. Included in this category are Aboriginal role models, whom provide a significant source of information for sense of self. Family includes the relationships that exist among nuclear family members and extended kin. In particular, a major contributor of self-esteem for Aboriginal people is the mother of the family, while for young males, their Aboriginal peers also play a significant role in contributing to their self-esteem.
Sense of Self

Trait self-esteem (evaluations)

Knowledge (descriptions)

Inner self-esteem
  Primary

Outer self-esteem
  Secondary

Qualities
  Skills
  Attributes

Family
  Heritage
  Culture
  Identity

Nuclear
  Extended kin

Value
  Aboriginality
  Role Models

System

Identity

Education
  Peers
  Religion
  Tourism
  Government
  Sport
  Media
  Wider Community
  Justice

Primary School

Sport & Physical Education

Figure 3.2. An Holistic Perspective of Urban Aboriginal Sense of Self
Heritage refers to the knowledge of traditional and/or family ties to the land and being "actively" connected to it. The final sub-category of culture encompasses a system of values and morals that underpin the above mentioned sub-categories. The primary sources of sense of self for urban Aboriginal children are considered the foundation upon which the secondary sources impact. The primary sources however, also have some influence upon the secondary sources.

The secondary sources are considered outer trait self-esteem (Campbell, 1990). A feature of the secondary sources is that they are constantly changing and reshaping, thus keeping in tune with societal changes. Secondary sources are considered external forces which have a dynamic impact on primary sources of urban Aboriginal sense of self and vice versa.

According to the literature, these sources are grouped into at least nine elements: (a) peers, (b) religion, (c) tourism, (d) government, (e) education, (f) sport, (g) media, (h) wider community, and (i) justice (Edgar, 1980; Sargent, 1988; Waters, 1989). For the purposes of this study only the domain of school sport is represented in figure 3.2 (page 96) and figure 3.3 (page 98).
Figure 3.3. Conceptual View of the Interaction of Elements upon Urban Aboriginal Sense of Self

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Within each of these elements are significant others and generalised others which impact upon the primary sources of urban Aboriginal sense of self. Education encompasses primary school and within this area, school sport and physical education are the focus of this study.

According to figure 3.3, significant and generalised others in the school sport context may include but are not limited to, the coaches, sports teachers, teammates, role models, umpires and peers. Figure 3.3 represents the relationship among the various factors influencing sense of self. The primary sources illustrated in this diagram were discussed in Chapter 2.

The heavy arrows in figure 3.3 show that the primary sources are subjected to the influences of the external secondary sources. These external sources offer “their” notions and ideas in regards to urban Aboriginal sense of self. These influences are in the forms of: (a) attitudes, (b) values, (c) expectations, and (d) evaluations and judgments about Aboriginal people in general. The lightly shaded arrows represent the degree of influence primary sources such as family, heritage, culture and identity may have upon sense of self. The influence of the secondary sources in the school sport setting (such as attitudes, expectations, judgments and values of designated significant and generalised others) is represented by a heavier shaded arrow and demonstrates a significant amount of influence upon sense of self.

Low self-esteem is considered a potential catalyst for many social problems among Aboriginal youth and sport has been promoted as a means to combat these problems. However, there is no empirical evidence to
support this. Therefore, the purpose of the following study is to explore urban Aboriginal children's experiences in sport, perceptions of sport as well as how they perceive themselves in sport within the school context.

Summary

The symbolic interactionist framework suits this study because of the focus of interactions upon the development of the self. It is assumed that social interactions are the most vital contributors to the development of society and also to the development of a sense of self (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 1989, 1992; Mead, 1934).

The symbolic interactionist perspective was selected as the most appropriate framework in which to study urban Aboriginal children's sense of self in the school sport setting because of the appropriateness of the assumptions of the perspective for this study. For instance, it assumes that: (a) social interactions make reality possible, (b) behaviour is a consequence and catalyst of interactions, (c) there is a focus on the present and, (d) the individual is an active agent of society.

In this study, interactions between Aboriginal students, teachers, friends and peers are the focus since they are considered salient agents who may contribute to the sense of self of Aboriginal students. This study aims to explore who and what contributes or influences Aboriginal sense of self in the school sport setting. Additionally, this study aims to explore the interactions which influence students' experiences and perceptions of school
sport.

The social structures that exist in the school sport context are also of interest in this study because of their influence upon Aboriginal students' self-perceptions. In sum, social structures and social interactions are appropriately accounted for by the symbolic interactionist perspective and therefore make it appealing for use in this study.
CHAPTER 4

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

In the previous chapter, it was explained that the symbolic interactionist theoretical framework is the most suitable perspective from which to study urban Aboriginal children's experiences, perceptions and sense of self in the school sport setting. Consistent with this theoretical perspective, an interpretive design utilising qualitative methodology is adopted for this study. The remainder of this chapter will present in detail the methodology and procedures utilised for the exploration of urban Aboriginal children in school sport.

Design

The following study is best described as qualitative research that is conducted in a naturalistic context, employing an interpretive paradigm and utilising ethnographic methodology.

This study seeks to gain information from a group of individuals about various social phenomena from their perspective, thus capturing the nature of the context of their world (Patton, 1990). It is important then for the researcher to conduct the study with no predetermined ideas or themes that will influence the respondents. In short, qualitative research consists of detailed description of the social phenomena at hand in the context of the setting from which it was taken. Therefore, since the concepts of Aboriginal
sense of self and sport have not been empirically investigated, the nature of qualitative research allows for the present study to seek in depth rich description from the target group's perspective.

Based on the qualitative nature of the study, it is appropriate that it is conducted in a naturalistic setting, thus allowing respondents to describe phenomena in context. Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide support for this approach. They state that a naturalistic setting allows the researcher and subject to interact closely, thus ensuring rich detail of the concepts of interest. When conducting research with Aboriginal children, Kearins (1988) stated that close contact is essential in order to gain information. Partington and McCudden (1992) stated that for effective two way communication there must be interaction between both parties so there is affiliation, sincerity, goodwill and mutual respect. Additionally, Kearins (1986) stated that Aboriginal children are less dependent on adults for control and direction and prefer interaction rather than domination from adults. A naturalistic paradigm therefore, will allow the researcher to gain information, whilst at the same time respect cultural norms and behaviours.

A criticism of naturalistic paradigms is that the inquiry is value bound, in that the researcher's prior assumptions, ideals and expectations may influence the study, such as choice of questions, design of the study, methodology and interpretations of results. This was taken into consideration and presented in the researcher's biography located in Chapter
One. Readers need to consider the author's position when reflecting on all aspects of the study.

Because this study attempts to seek information from human subjects, it is important to take into account that the social context is subject to change. It was revealed in the literature review that Aboriginal people's cultures are always changing and evolving (Issacs, 1988). Therefore, the interpretive paradigm is appropriate. Since the subject matter has not been investigated in an empirical sense and there are no models or theories on which to base the framework of the study, the interpretive paradigm allows the researcher to examine a phenomenon and make interpretations and explanations to which assumptions may be proposed.

Based on the information provided, the methodology that is best suited is derived from ethnography. Non-participant observations were conducted in order to capture urban Aboriginal childrens' perspectives and experiences of school sport, including their perception of their sense of self. Observations of the students in the school sport setting were prepared and were preceded and followed by the personal interviews. Interviews were conducted with students and significant others.

Participants

It is a common feature of qualitative research to select participants utilising purposeful sampling approaches (Sandelowski, 1995). Since the present study explored urban Aboriginal sense of self and sport, the students
were selected on the following criteria: (a) the parent(s) of the students were of Aboriginal decent, and (b) the students were involved in the school's sport programme (that is, intra school sport, inter school sport and/or physical education).

Sport in the school setting was nominated to examine how urban Aboriginal children perceived themselves in sport for a number of reasons. First, there was greater access to the students during school hours when compared to after hours club sport competitions. Second, there was a lack of resources for the study to include other sporting avenues. Third, children who participated in after school club sports may be considered (by the readers) as sport seekers. This study however, aimed to include those who do not actively seek sport after school hours (potential sport avoiders) as well as sport seekers.

Consultation with Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEW) and the physical education teacher ensured the selection criteria for the students were met. A list of potential participants was then prepared and nine students were selected once again in consultations with the AIEWs. The final selections were based on the stability of students' school attendance. This criterion was essential since Aboriginal students at the target school were susceptible to truancy and relocations due to family circumstances. Thus, those students who were selected to participate in this study attended school more often than other Aboriginal students. This is not to say that the participants were not absent from school. Some of them had
some experience with absenteeism due to family circumstances.

The students consisted of male and female Aboriginal children who resided in an urban suburb of Perth and who attended a coeducational State Primary School. In this study, a total of nine students were selected to allow for pilot work and possible attrition. In all, four males and five females comprised the target group. Of these, one female participated in the piloting of the initial interviews and observations.

Research Instruments

Knowledge about an individual's reality was accessed by inquiring about their perceptions. These were constructed cognitively and therefore the appropriate method to access such perceptions was by way of a hermeneutic-dialectic process. Constructions of an individual's reality were accessed by the researcher engaging in continual close interactions with the individual (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Schwandt, 1994). Knowledge about a phenomenon was gained when commonalities were present in several of the individual's perceptions. Hence, in this study constructions were obtained using interviews and were then compared and contrasted via systematic reasoning between the researcher and participants until consensus was achieved. Knowledge of the phenomenon was created as the inquiry proceeded so that the researcher was closely linked to the investigation at hand. In order to gain a comprehensive picture that was specific to urban Aboriginal children in sport and thus overcome the problem of prepared responses common in
questionnaires, data were collected utilising personal interviews and non-participant observations. Such methods allowed the observation and recording of naturally occurring events in a natural setting. These methods are consistent with qualitative methodology.

The data were collected from self-reports of urban Aboriginal children's experiences and perceptions of school sport as well as their own self-perceptions in the sport context. In order to obtain appropriate responses that were deemed accurate representations of the individual's self, the researcher developed rapport with participants over 16 months (4 months prior to data collection and 12 months during data collection) and collected and analysed data over a nine month period.

According to Patton (1990), there are three types of interviews: (a) informal conversational, (b) general interview guide, and (c) standardised open ended interview. For the purposes of this study a general interview guide was employed in a conversational format. This suited participants since it was performed as a conversation and participants were not self-conscious about responding to questions. This approach assisted in developing rapport and obtaining knowledge. In the case of Aboriginal children, West (1994) suggested that interview questions should be styled as a 'shared experience' in which the researcher and the participants share their experiences in order for knowledge to be extracted, although the researcher must be aware that she does not 'put words into participants' mouths'. For Aboriginal children, the general interview guide (employed as a conversation)
is the most appropriate format for eliciting information about themselves since it: (a) allows them to feel as though what they are saying is important, (b) is a familiar form of communication that is part of everyday communication, (c) allows them to respond in their own words and raise issues that are important to them about sport and their sense of self (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). More importantly, Aboriginal people in general prefer: (a) a personalised approach, (b) to be treated equally in status, (c) indirect questioning, and (d) courtesy (Harslett, 1992; Ngarritjan-Kessaris, 1994b; West, 1994).

Interviews conducted with significant others, particularly AIEWs and carers, were also performed in the same manner as that outlined for the Aboriginal students. In regards to interviews conducted with non-Aboriginal interviewees (such as the Deputy Principal, class and sport teachers), an interview guide was used in a more direct format, which elicited direct responses. Both interview methods allowed the researcher to remain adaptable to the responses received as well as allowing for probing of responses so as to discover new concepts which can then serve to guide subsequent interviews and observations.

By gaining rapport through close personal contact, the researcher is in a position to determine the value of the statements and descriptions used to describe one's self. In the case of Aboriginal people, the process of verbal communication is complemented by non-verbal hand signals and gestures (Partington & McCudden, 1992). For the Aboriginal students of this study
Chadbourne (1984) recommended that it is vitally important to distinguish between the gestures Aboriginal children present about their sense of self and what they say, since the two may vary considerably. Also, since the researcher is Aboriginal herself, she is aware of the body gestures used by Aboriginals as a means for communication. Therefore, the researcher determined the value of self-descriptive statements by taking note of their body language. A written record regarding observations made by the researcher during and after the interviews was scribed into the Participant Interview Notes, Summary and Evaluation Form (PINSEF).

Student interviews were conducted in the school setting. Significant others were interviewed in an environment that was sensitive and suitable to them. Significant others were interviewed since social interactions with significant others provided a source for sense of self and self-esteem (Cooley, 1902/1970; Harter, 1978, 1980, 1985; Mead 1934; Weiss, 1987). This also enhanced data validity.

Non-participant observations were made of students as they engaged in sport. The researcher observed each student directly in the school sport setting during practice (physical education) and competition (intra and inter school sport).

Observations took place at the school grounds on the designated sporting fields during class time. For physical education classes, observations occurred on the grass football oval or the undercover bitumenised area. For inter and intra school sports, observations took place
on bitumenised basketball and netball courts or the grassed football oval.

Social interactions between the students and "others" in the sport setting were observed. In this study, "others" in the sport setting refers to the coaches, teachers, umpires, teammates, spectators and the opposing team members.

Observations were recorded by making descriptive field notes as well as retrospective comments (Evertson & Green, 1986). These were scribed into the students' Personal Observation Record Sheet (PORS). Observations were made of: (a) the students and their overt behaviours; (b) the students' social interactions; (c) routines associated with sport, such as the game outcome and rules; (d) the social organisation of the sport and its setting; (e) any interpretations made by the researcher, and finally, (f) any unusual occurrences, such as injury (Denzin, 1989; Adler & Adler, 1994). Particular attention was given to observations that related to, or highlighted students' sense of self and its characteristics. A breakdown of the observations and a completed PORS record are presented in appendix A.

Observations were important in this study for three reasons: (a) They assisted in clarifying and confirming responses received in the initial general interview, (b) they guided subsequent interview sessions and observations, and (c) they assisted in triangulating the findings. Support for recording observations in this study is provided by Malin (1989) as she explored Aboriginal performance in the classroom and recommended that future research with Aboriginal children should consist of observational data.
collected over a time span so that: (a) there is scope in the invisible becoming observable, (b) interactions between individuals are overtly recorded, and (c) there is a permanent record of naturally occurring events for analysis purposes and for triggering the students' memories. In this study, 24 formal observations were conducted over a period of four and a half months. The duration of observations differed depending on the session. For instance, the physical education session entailed no more than an average of 25 minutes duration, whereas the intra school sport session lasted one hour and the inter school sport sessions were an average of 1 hour and 45 minutes duration. Refer to table 4.1 (page 112).

The preparation, competition/practice and pack up time for each individual observation represented the total amount of time allocated for each observation. A set of data for each individual participant consisted of a minimum of: (a) two interviews with the participant, (b) four individual interviews with four significant others (class teacher, sport teacher/coach, AIEW and carer) and, (c) three observations. Observations occurred during sports class periods and practice periods, with two conducted in the sport class period on Fridays and one during the practice period (physical education class) earlier during the week. There was no set pattern in terms of the sequence for interviews and observations since it was dependent on students' school attendance and participation. Where possible however, an initial interview was performed first with students and observations followed. Additional interviews were then conducted accordingly.
Table 4.1

Duration of Observations per School Sport Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport Session</th>
<th>Duration (minutes)</th>
<th># Recorded</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Total (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>May-July (3 mths)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra School Sport</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>May-June (2 mths)</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter School Sport</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>May-Sept (5 mths)</td>
<td>1160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(away games)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>1840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all, 20 interviews were conducted with 9 students and another 20 interviews were conducted with care givers and various school staff. The interviews were performed over a period of five months between March and September. Interviews varied in duration from 45 minutes to 1 and half hours. Refer to table 4.2 (page 113).

Researcher's Role

The researcher's role was an interactive one and this may be viewed as a concern as the researcher's history, values and assumptions may have some
influence on the inquiry and its outcomes (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Rew, Bechtel & Sapp, 1993). The background of the researcher was presented in Chapter One.

Table 4.2

Data Collection Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th># items</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>April to August (4 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care givers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>August (1 mth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Teachers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>June (1 mth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>July-August (2 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>March-June (4 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIEWs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>May-June (2 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>May-Sept (5 mths)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equipment and Data Recording Methods

Le Compte and Preissle (1993) state that the researcher's senses are the 'primary tools' to record data, and that these work together with 'mechanical tools'. The mechanical tools used for this study consist of a handheld audiotape cassette recorder and audiotapes. With the consent of the subjects, the audiotapes were recorded to present a verbatim account of
the interviewees' experiences, feelings, opinions and perceptions. Other data consisted of the researcher's written notes recorded daily in a journal. Information recorded in the journal comprised of when and where the notation was made, who the participant was and characteristics of the situation. The journal served to collate additional data from the researcher's own experiences and perspectives on how the respondents answered the questions, thus adding to the trustworthiness of the study.

All written correspondence to participants and subjects, as well as reports, papers and researcher's journal and diaries are included as part of the researcher's field notes.

At the completion of interviews, a transcribing machine was used to transcribe each tape to its written version. A Macintosh LCII, with ClarisWorks word processing software (version 2.1) and a Hewlett Packard Laser Jet 6MP were used to prepare the transcriptions into a verbatim account of each interview. All participants' identities were concealed using pseudonyms.

Management of study materials. The following written forms and letters were used to assist in the management and progression of the study. The "in house" documents included: (a) progress and demographic forms, (b) interview summary and evaluation forms, (c) transcription cover sheets and contents page, (d) introduction to study and instructions to respondents, (e) interview guides, and (f) checklist for preliminary interview.
Progress sheets were used to chart the progress of each respondent and contained the following information: (a) follow up letters, (b) order for transcription, (c) order for auditing, (d) dates of contact with researcher, (e) dates for interviews, transcription and auditing, (f) where interviews took place and, (g) checklist of items to complete.

Summary and evaluation forms contained personal details of respondent, tape details and a summary of the interview as well as an evaluation. A summary and evaluation was performed by the researcher. A transcription cover sheet included respondents' personal details and recording information.

A written guide was used to inform respondents about the study, in particular the purpose, their rights, how information was to be used and why the study was being conducted. The researcher also outlined the format for the interviews and left time available for respondents' questions. This document served as a reminder for the researcher during subsequent interviews.

Storage of study materials. During the study, cassettes were transported from place of interview to the researcher's home in a polystyrene bag. After the study, recording tags were removed to ensure that cassettes are not over recorded. All written documents were placed in a lever arch file and filed according to their pseudonym. The file was placed in a locked melamine filing cabinet for security purposes.
Procedure

In order to gain entry to the research school the following steps were followed: (a) telephone communication was made and written correspondence was submitted to the Manager, Ministry of Education Aboriginal Education Branch to inform him of the study and gain written approval, (b) telephone communication was made to the Secretary of the school to book an appointment with the Principal, (c) written correspondence was prepared and sent to the secretary confirming the date and time of the meeting with the Principal, (d) personal contact was made in the first instance with the Principal in order to gain informal permission to carry out the study, (e) written correspondence was supplied to the Principal outlining the study, its objectives, rationale and use and assistance was sought from the school (see appendix B), (f) consultations with AIEW were conducted by telephone to secure a meeting time, (g) a formal lunch time meeting with AIEWs and some of the Aboriginal students, (h) a formal meeting was held with school sport specialist, (i) an informal lunch meeting was held with all class teachers, (j) an informal meeting with the Chairperson of the Aboriginal Student Support Parent Association (ASSPA) to gain acceptance and verbal approval of the study and, (k) a group meeting of potential student participants was held to invite them to the study.

Prior to any data collection (that is, 4 months preceding the data collection in the latter part of the previous year), meetings were conducted with the Principal of the school as well as other staff members, including the
AIEWs. The meeting with the Principal entailed collecting information about the school, the programmes, its staff and students. Extensive meetings were then conducted (in the early part of the following year) with Leonie Curry (AIEW) and Miss Quill (physical educator) in order to select a sample of participants for the study (refer to figure 4.1 below) for time line of data collection and analysis).

![Figure 4.1. Data Collection and Analysis Timeline](image-url)
Target students were aged 11 to 12 years and were year 6 and 7 upper primary students. Consultations with the relevant upper primary class teachers as well as the physical educator were then conducted in order to: (a) gain consent (see appendix C for a sample of the consent form), (b) familiarise them with the study, (c) present the study's objectives, (d) promote the usefulness of the study to the school, (e) describe the tasks involved and the procedures, (f) describe the scope of their involvement and, (g) answer any questions.

Consultations were again conducted with Leonie Curry in order to disseminate information and consent forms to the students (see appendix D) and their primary care giver(s) (see appendix E). A list of students was decided upon by myself and Leonie Curry. Students were then approached individually by Leonie to attend a meeting about the study in the school library. At the meeting, Leonie introduced the study and me. I then informed the students about the study, answered their questions and disseminated written consent forms. I read the forms to them and requested that they take them home to their care givers. It was important to inform the students that they did not have to be a part of the study and that it was their choice (with no repercussions) for non-participation. Also vitally important, was the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality.

The school Principal, AIEWs and I decided that the AIEWs would disseminate care givers' written consent forms during their home visits. Prior to this however, I supplied Leonie with information about the study and
conducted a prompting exercise to ensure she was totally conversant with the intent of the study. When I was satisfied and Leonie was comfortable, she hand delivered consent forms and information sheets and conversed with the primary care giver(s). Again, it was vitally important to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity. I followed up with telephone calls after Leonie had completed all home visits. The purpose of the calls was to introduce myself as the researcher (although Leonie had done this earlier) and answer any questions and clear any ambiguities. I also met with the Chairperson of the school's Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) commmittee to gain verbal acceptance of the study. Additionally, I met all school staff at the school's lunch time period to introduce myself and the study. After participant and care giver consent forms were completed and returned, I commenced piloting the interview and observations.

**Pilot Study**

To test the assumptions and methods of data gathering employed in this research, a pilot study was conducted involving collection and analysis of a full series of data from a female year 7 student. Two observations were conducted during physical education and intra school sport sessions. An initial interview was completed after the observations. When pilot data were collected, two informal question sessions were employed with the pilot student regarding the appropriateness of the processes for the interview and
observations. In particular, the following items were assessed by the pilot student for suitability for subsequent student interviews: (a) style, (b) duration, (c) format, (d) venue, (e) process and, (f) difficulty of questions.

The first interview conducted with each individual student was also piloted to ensure suitability for that particular student because it was found that although students were classified in year 6 or 7, most of them (all but three) were working at lower academic levels (year 3 or year 5), particularly for English and spelling. The interview questions therefore, were manipulated for each student to reflect their current academic level so they were able to comprehend the questions. The focus and content of the questions remained the same although the vocabulary reflected some alteration.

The pilot study conducted with the female year 7 student was important, since it provided the opportunity to: (a) design the interviews and observations in a manner that was deemed comfortable and appropriate to the students concerned, (b) organise all interviews and observations in the most time efficient manner, (c) analyse student interview responses, so that the researcher could assess the appropriateness of the questions, (d) expose the researcher to the school rules and procedures (such as times for recess and lunch, as well as process for sport sessions), (e) be seen in the school (particularly during recess, lunch and sport periods) by other Aboriginal students and thereby assist in the development of rapport between researcher and all participants of the study (including teachers and care
givers), (f) assist in triangulation of data, (g) demonstrate that although observations might be common over time, they also allowed for unusual incidents to be recorded, (h) utilise some incidents that occur during the observations for probing purposes during interviews and (i) provide a site and time for informal questions to be made to students after observations.

Some considerations for observational data collection were highlighted by the pilot study process. It became apparent that no more than two students should be observed at the same time, during intra or inter school sport sessions. During physical education however, only one student at a time could be observed since there was less than 25 minutes per session. All means possible should be used to ensure that students were comfortable when being observed in the sport ground. An option used in this study was to locate myself in an area that was not readily in the eye of the students. I positioned myself under trees, behind cricket nets or on the school's veranda, but still in view of the entire class.

It was important not to inform students that they were being observed. In two cases, students approached me and asked who I was watching. I replied by stating that I was observing the entire class, including non-Aboriginal students and the sport teacher or physical educator.

I remained inconspicuous as possible by blending into the local environment (Kearins, 1976). This was achieved by wearing appropriate clothing such as shorts and track suits. Additionally, I only carried a clipboard file and pen to each observation site.
Immediately after each observation (if time and circumstances permitted), informal conversations between the researcher and student were encouraged. Written notes of these interactions were prepared of the conversations and appeared on the students' PORS. This informal social interaction assisted in developing rapport and also provided opportunities for triangulation of the data collated from the observations.

In terms of the interview, the following considerations were highlighted during the pilot processes. The pilot student for instance, reported her discomfort when other students or teachers entered the room where the interview was taking place. She did not want any one to know that she was part of the study and certainly did not want any one to hear what she was saying. Thus, it was imperative that the interview site was free from any distractions.

Probing of responses was necessary since it was revealed that the pilot student was very reluctant to talk about herself initially, until I spoke to her about myself or about her family. It was also revealed during the study interview that males were far more shy than females and this may be attributed to the fact that the researcher was female. Development of rapport was essential in making interviewees comfortable to talk about themselves. Rapport was also vital for extracting detailed responses from students.

The most appropriate interview structure for students was the general interview guide employed in a conversational format. It was apparent that
an interview guide was required since the pilot student was very shy and hesitant to talk about herself. Questions were rephrased and responses were probed in order to capture the full picture and meaning of items of interest from the student's point of view. It is important to note that the questions were employed in a conversational style. This style of interview format suited care givers as well, although, it must be noted that non-Aboriginal school staff preferred the interview to be employed in a more formal style rather than the conversational. An interview guide was also used for school staff but was employed in a formal format.

Questions in the interview were arranged in a format that enabled all interviewees (students, care givers, school staff) to answer with ease and confidence. Initial questioning for students for instance, contained items that were familiar to them. Items such as sport, family, favourite food, musician, actor and the like provided the basis for a good start to the interview since these items allowed students to answer questions with ease thus giving them confidence in their responses. Additionally, only one idea per question was appropriate for students so that they could comprehend what was required of them. For care givers and Aboriginal school staff (AIEWs), initial questions were directed at family and family structures. For non-Aboriginal school staff, initial questions were also directed at family and their roles at school.

For student interviews, items regarding sport were left until at least one or two sport observations were completed. The observations provided a
basis for the researcher to validate what was observed and a basis for a 'shared experience' between students and researcher, thus assisting in the establishment of rapport. This was particularly important since the main purpose of the study was to investigate the Aboriginal students' self-perceptions in the sport setting. Thus, in most cases it was found that the last interview conducted with students was almost totally devoted to sport and the construct of sense of self.

The pilot student feared responding with incorrect answers so it was necessary to assure all interviewees that all answers were confidential and pseudonyms were used throughout the entirety of the study. Furthermore, prior to any interviews, I conversed with the interviewees regarding the format of the interview, its purpose, interviewees' rights and the provision of answers (in that there were no incorrect answers).

The most suitable duration of interviews was no longer than 45 minutes but if interviewees were comfortable with the interview proceeding then it continued until they indicated otherwise.

A hand held recording device was utilised to record the interviews. The pilot student as well as other students and care givers expressed their discomfort when the recorder was visually present. It was then appropriate to hide the recorder under a book or bag. I did however, inform the interviewee that the recorder was in use because I needed to ensure that I would not lose any important details in their responses.

After the pilot study was completed, an initial interview was
conducted with the school's deputy principal. The purpose of this interview was to seek information about Aboriginal students' attendance and behaviours from the school's perspective. It also provided an insight into the school's procedures and policies. Initial interviews were then conducted with each participant and then alternated with observations (refer to appendix F for a sample of the student interview guide). At this point, an initial interview with the full time female AIEW was conducted for much the same reasons as that conducted with the deputy principal. Interviews with class teachers were collected in conjunction with the second round of student interviews (see appendix G for a sample of the class teacher's interview guide). Sport teacher interviews were then conducted in conjunction with the remaining observations and the final round of student interviews (refer to appendix H for a sample of the sport teacher's interview guide). Finally, when a completed set of data was collated from each student (that is, personal interviews, observations and interviews from significant others at school), then interviews were conducted with the students' respective primary care giver (s). Refer to table 4.3 (page 126) for the process of interviews.

The process of interviews with care givers requires some elaboration. Prior to any data collection at the site, approximately 30 minutes was spent on chatting socially with caregivers in order to get to know each other and work out family structures.

All interviews conducted with adults were prepared to represent a true account and in order to ensure this, all interview transcripts were returned
for their written validation and alterations (refer to appendix 1). Validation of student interviews was conducted in the preceding interviews.

Table 4.3

Sequence of Data Collection Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method And Sequence of Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0  First Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Deputy Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 AIEWs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0  First Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0  Second Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 AIEWs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0  Second and Third Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0  Third Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0  First Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Class Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Sport Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0  Second Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Class Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Sport Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0  First Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 Care giver(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Data Analysis

Data were generated from several sources for each participant: (a) self-reports from the students including interview notes scribed on PINSEF, (b) interview responses from significant others, (c) field notes from observations recorded on PORS, and (d) researcher's journal. Field notes and information contained in the researcher's journal were reviewed, commented and classified into appropriate nodes on QSR NUD.IST, version 3.0.5 (Qualitative Solutions and Research, 1995). Analysis of each item of data was performed in accordance with Colaizzi's (1978) steps:

1. Each set of data (transcripts, field notes and journal entries) were read twice so that the researcher grasped a feeling of the holistic content.

2. Significant participant responses that directly related to the phenomena were extracted and coded using QSR NUD.IST. A sample is available at appendix J. Direct responses were underlined and notes made in the margin of the transcripts. Significant responses included, but were not limited to: (a) memorable events or phrases, (b) a summation of events and/or people, (c) examples of any emerging themes, (d) any negative responses or ones that contradict the researcher's ideas, and (e) a variation of any emerging themes (Riley, 1990). In order to confirm and/or disconfirm evidence, it must be made clear what the researcher deemed as evidence. According to the universal definition of sense of self presented in the literature review, the term sense of self consists of a set of self-concepts individuals have of themselves which is derived from descriptions, values
and expectations (Hattie, 1992). For Aboriginal sense of self, the literature showed that there were two sites that provided sources of information for Aboriginal sense of self: (a) The primary source was derived from Aboriginal culture and consisted of the family, heritage, culture and identity and; (b) the secondary source was derived from the wider society and included non-Aboriginal attitudes, values, expectations and judgments of Aborigines. The evidence relating to Aboriginal sense of self included reports that contained descriptions, expectations and values that pertained to self-concepts. In particular, statements containing adjectives to describe concepts of self were considered descriptive. As stated in the glossary located in Chapter 1, page 14, self-esteem refers to the judgments individuals made of their sense of self and the consequent feelings attached. Therefore, self-reports containing judgmental statements, as well as statements that reflected feelings and emotions were considered evidence for self-esteem. For the purposes of this study, a judgment is deemed as an opinion or decision of one’s self based on comparisons against others. Feelings consisted of, but are not limited to, emotions such as joy, pride, shame and frustration.

3. Meanings were formulated by attempting to spell out the significance of each statement by way of “creative insight”. Colaizzi (1978) stated that creative insight means to leap from what the participants say to what they mean, such that the formulations discovered and illuminated the hidden meanings behind what the participants said. All sources of data were reviewed several times in order to develop meanings.
4. Meanings were formulated for each set of data and grouped into the relevant themes. The researcher's comments from each set of data were arranged into commonalities. Themes were then examined in the light of the original data to identify any discrepancies and to ensure relevant information from the original data was included.

5. A very detailed account of the themes and their meanings were prepared.

6. A detailed description of the structure of the phenomena was made.

7. The data were returned to the participants for verification in order to validate the construction of the themes and subsequent meanings. Any amendments or new information were included (Colaizzi, 1978).

Colaizzi's (1978) data analysis method is a flexible technique which complemented the style of this study. This method was also simple to utilise and thus encouraged a more effective and efficient application. Furthermore, the researcher was comfortable with this method of analysis.

Evaluations of students' sport and physical education performances and skill levels were assessed jointly by the researcher and students' respective sports teachers. These assessments were based the collaboration of the researcher's observations and journal entries as well interviews conducted with sports teachers. Agreement was reached between the researcher and the teacher in regards to students' level of demonstrated sport and physical skills as well as their overall sport performance (particularly for inter and intra school competitions). In order to show
rankings of Aboriginal students' skills and performances in school sport, comparisons were made with other students' skills and performances. These comparisons were also made jointly between the researcher and sports teachers.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Due to the naturalistic context of the present study, the value of trustworthiness must be addressed. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness is assessed by four criteria, which will be presented here: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability.

Credibility relates to the authenticity of the findings and interpretations. The researcher engaged in informal discussions with the participants in order to establish a rapport. Furthermore, during the process of collecting data, additional time was spent with participants in order to identify responses that required clarification. Constant analysis and a daily written journal was used to record: (a) the researcher's own biases and assumptions to show the direction(s) taken during the process of conducting this study; (b) any unusual situational occurrences in the setting; (c) the salient issues of the study, whilst dispensing with the unnecessary (Huberman & Miles, 1994; Riley, 1990). Triangulation of findings and interpretations is best served by collating data from a number of interviews and observations, as well as gaining data from different sources, such as the use of participants' direct quotes and thoughts and those of significant others (Miles & Huberman, 1998).
Transferability relates to the extent to which the results of the present study may be generalised to other settings and populations. Therefore, it is important to provide detailed descriptions of: (a) the participants, (b) the setting from which data was collected, (c) the assumptions and biases of the researcher, (d) the concepts and constructs under investigation, and (e) the methods of collecting and analysing data. It is not the intention of this study to transfer or apply the findings to other settings however, if the readers wish to do so, then it is appropriate that the context, time, place and selection criteria of this study are clearly defined.

Dependability is concerned with the reliability of the results and interpretations based on the processes of data collection and analysis. Confirmability refers to the end products of the study and the consequent verification with raw data. Both of these items were attended to during the debriefing sessions with my principal supervisor.

Ethical Considerations

Individuals involved in the study have the right to privacy, as well as the right for non-participation in the study. Prior to conducting any data collection, direct consent was obtained from both the schools, students and their parents, AIEWs and teachers. A letter of introduction and forms for informed consent were supplied to each of them.

All participants reserved the right to remain anonymous and therefore a pseudonym was used instead of recording names. Additionally, the
researcher explained that individual data collection was not the focus of the study and that group information was sought and warranted.

All participants have the right for their data to remain confidential. Data in the form of audiotapes, questionnaires, transcripts and computer disks were stored in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's premise. Only the researcher had access. Data will be stored for no less than five years, that is, until the year 2001, then the information will be disposed of in the manner appropriate and acceptable to the university.

The participants have the right to expect that the researcher will be totally responsible and will carry out the task at hand in a responsible manner that is sensitive to the participants (Thomas & Nelson, 1990). Finally and perhaps most importantly, the cultural norms of the participants were recognised and respected. Sensitivity to the cultural needs of all participants was assured at all times. Ethics approval from the University is located in appendix K.

Summary

An interpretive paradigm complemented with qualitative methodology best suits the style of this study since together they provide the most appropriate format for the study of urban Aboriginal children, their experiences, perceptions and sense of self in the school sport setting.

A feature of the method and design of this study is that it fits with the symbolic interactionist theoretical framework (as discussed in chapter
three). More specifically, the chosen design and method allows the exploration of social phenomena in naturalistic settings, thus allowing the researcher to interpret the interactions that take place in the school sport setting and the meaning of the interactions with regard to students' experiences, perceptions and sense of self.
CHAPTER 5

PROFILES

Profiles provide an indication of the participants' backgrounds which may play a part in their actions, values, behaviours and beliefs. Therefore a description of profiles is needed in order to provide a benchmark for subsequent interpretations of the findings from the study. This chapter will provide a description of the profiles of the participants, their primary care givers and significant others in the school environment, such as their class teachers and sports teachers.

Participants and Carers

In this study, the school was a coeducational state primary school located in a low socioeconomic suburb of metropolitan Perth. As mentioned previously the school will be referred to as Naples Primary School.

The primary carers of the children in this study consisted mostly of two parents in a nuclear family. Two of the children, however, were raised by their grand mothers who were single. The carers were relatively young with an average age of 36 years. There were eight children who were the participants of the study. Except for Heather and Taylor, they were all cousins.

Kellie

Kellie was a 12 year old female who was born at the local hospital not
far from the school. She was a year 7 student and her class teacher was Ms Miller. Kellie’s primary education commenced at a rural Western Australian (WA) primary school. Her family however, relocated to metropolitan Perth, where Kellie attended an all-Aboriginal school. In year 4, she attended Naples Primary School, returned to the all-Aboriginal school for year 5 and then returned to Naples for her final two years of primary education. Kellie was the second eldest member of her nuclear family. She had 4 siblings, a sister aged 11 and 3 brothers aged 13, 9 and 6 years old.

Kellie’s father was born in a rural WA town and her mother was born in the same hospital as she was. Her father attained a year 11 level of education and her mother gained a year 8 level of education. At the time of the study, Kellie lived with her parents and all of her siblings. Kellie’s parents were legally married and her mother was 31 years of age and her father was 32. Kellie’s parents did not have a vehicle. Her father was in receipt of a sickness allowance as he was unable to work. Kellie’s mother was in between jobs and so was unemployed.

Kellie’s father was involved in club sports as an adult, notably as a player in the Western Australian Amateur Football Association and A grade cricket. He also coached junior cricket and was active in boxing, swimming and tennis as a youngster. Kellie’s mother participated in competitive swimming at high school and was previously a member of a women’s social netball team (Mr Archer DEMOS).

Kellie had previously played club basketball at the local recreation
centre and at the time of the study was invited to play again in another local club basketball team in the under 13 female division. Kellie was elected the school councillor and female sport faction captain. (Kellie DEMOS).

Heather

Heather was a female of 12 years and was born at the same hospital as Kellie. Heather had attended Naples Primary School all her primary school life and was a member of Ms Miller's year 7 class.

She was the third youngest of a family of eight and had of four sisters and three brothers. Her siblings were aged 22, 17, 16, 16, 15, 10 and 9. Heather lived with her parents and all of her siblings, except for one sister. Heather’s family had lived in the same house for the past nine years and had a family vehicle. Heather’s parents were legally married and her mother was 41 years old and her father was 44. Both parents were born in rural Western Australia with the father being born in a mission and the mother in a rural town. Both parents attained a year 10 level of education with Heather’s father gaining education at a rural senior high school and her mother at the local senior high school in the same district as Heather’s primary school. Heather’s mother worked part-time in a government department and she had assisted in Naples Primary School’s homework classes and was an active member of the school’s Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) programme. Heather’s father held a volunteer position at a local Aboriginal public transport service. Both parents participated in an indoor
mixed cricket team in the local shire (Vealler Family DEMOS). Heather had played junior tennis at a club level and was a member of the same local club basketball team as Kellie (Heather DEMOS).

Taylor

Taylor was a 12 year old female. Although she was born in urban Perth, Taylor was not born at the local hospital. Previously, she had been a student of two other primary schools, both of which were located in rural towns in the state. Taylor commenced as a new student at Naples Primary School late in 1996 as a year 6 student and was now a member of Ms Miller's year 7 class.

Taylor was the oldest of her family. She had two step sisters and three step brothers who were aged 9, 7 and 6 years old. Her mother had married twice and her siblings were the result of the second marriage. Taylor lived with her primary carer, her Grandmother (her mother's mother) and extended family. Her mother and step father lived in a neighbouring suburb, while her father lived with her other grandmother in the city some distance away. All of her half-siblings lived with her mother and her step father. Taylor shared a home with many members of her extended family who were mostly from a rural town. Taylor's step father and mother were legally married, while her grandmother did not have a partner. Taylor's grandmother was 47 years old and was born in a rural Western Australian town and raised at a rural Aboriginal mission where she was educated to
Taylor's grandmother was very ill, unable to work and was a recipient of government benefits. She did not have a vehicle (Ms Eaton DEMOS).

As a youngster, Taylor's grandmother did not participate in organised sport. Taylor however played local club basketball in the past and she was a current member of an under 12 female netball team and junior darts team (Taylor DEMOS).

Wendy

Wendy was born at the same hospital as Kellie and Heather. She was also a 12 year old female. Wendy had moved among five different primary schools previously and was currently a member of Ms Miller's year 7 class. She had been a student at Naples Primary School for intermittent periods during her fifth and sixth years of schooling. She had also attended an all Aboriginal primary school. Wendy spent all of year 7 education at Naples.

Wendy was the oldest in her nuclear family (her brother Sean was also a participant of this study). Wendy had four siblings and who ranged in ages from 11, 8, 7 and 3. Wendy and Sean lived with their mother, father and siblings. Their parents had a de facto relationship and they were aged in their early thirties. Their mother was born in a rural WA town and their father was born at the same hospital as Wendy and Sean. Both parents were educated to year 10. Their father was unemployed and their mother was a full time carer of their family.
The family did not have a vehicle and both parents were not involved in club sports, other than as spectators. In the past, their mother played local club basketball on a social basis and their father was a competitor in the Sunday League Football competition (Ms Quand DEMOS). Wendy however, had not participated in any club sports outside of school in the past, nor during the study (Wendy DEMOS).

Sean

Sean was an 11 year old male who was born at the same district hospital as his sister, Wendy. He had moved among five different primary schools previously and was a student in Ms Zenith’s year 5/6 class. Sean had been a student at Naples Primary School for approximately three years, although he had moved to two other schools during this time, subsequently returning to Naples. He spent his sixth year entirely at Naples.

Sean was the second eldest child (behind Wendy) in his family. He was a member of the local club football team and had been involved in club football in the past (Sean DEMOS).

Trevor

Trevor was born at the same district hospital as most of his peers. He was a male of 12 years of age and in Ms Miller’s year 7 class. He had previously been a student at five different primary schools and had relocated eight times. Trevor attained his lower primary education at both rural and
urban schools in WA. He attended Naples Primary School as a Year 6 student, then relocated to another urban WA school, returning to complete his year 7 education at Naples.

Trevor had one sister who was 10 years old. Trevor was cared for by his mother and father. He lived with his parents, sister and 10 year old male cousin who had lived with Trevor's family for several months. Both of Trevor's parents were born in separate rural WA towns. They lived in a de facto relationship and are both aged in their mid thirties. They both attained a year 10 level of education, were not working and did not have a family vehicle. Trevor's mother was involved in club sports, specifically B grade women's netball and his father was previously a football player in the high schools' competition, but did not engage in club sports as a competitor (Ms Tommi DEMOS). In the past, Trevor had primarily played club football but was not involved in club sports at the time of the study (Trevor DEMOS).

Carl

Carl was a 12 year old male. He was born at the same district hospital as his peers and was a year 7 student in Ms Miller's class. He spent most of his primary education (from grades 2 to 6) at one urban WA primary school. He had also attended four other schools including an all-Aboriginal school, at which he spent intermittent periods. He enrolled at Naples Primary School at the commencement of his year 7 education.

Carl was the oldest child of a family of eight. He had three sisters and
four brothers who were aged 11, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5 and 8 months. Carl lived with his mother, father and siblings. His father was born in a rural WA town, while his mother was born at the same hospital as Carl. His parents had a de facto relationship and were aged in their early thirties. Carl’s mother and father attained a year 9 level of education and they had a family vehicle. Carl’s mother was a full time carer of the family and Carl’s father was ill and did not work.

Carl’s mother did not play any club sports while his father had been a professional boxer (before his illness) (Ms Crothers DEMOS). Carl had previously been active in three different club sports, namely junior boxing, basketball and football and during the study he opted to play local club basketball for an under 13 male team (Carl DEMOS).

Chris

Chris was a 12 year old male who was born at the same local hospital as most of his peers. He was a year 7 student and a member of Mr Crisp’s year 6/7 class. Chris’s education started at Naples Primary School in pre primary and in year 3 he relocated to another urban school for a short while and then returned to Naples to complete grades 4 to 7.

Chris was the eldest of six siblings. He had 2 brothers and 3 sisters aged 10, 9, 4, 3 and 1 year old. Chris’s primary carer was his Grandmother with whom he lived along with some extended family members. Chris’s mother and father were separated. He was the eldest child in his family but
his two brothers and three sisters siblings resided with his mother. Chris had been in his Grandmother's care since he was an infant.

Chris's Grandmother was born in a rural WA town and was 55 years old. Chris's Grandmother was a student at a Perth University where she was completing a pre tertiary general studies certificate. She completed her formal education at year 5. Chris's grandmother did not have a family car or partner.

During her younger years, Chris's Grandmother was a social basketball player (Ms Tate DEMOS). In the past, Chris played junior club tennis and was involved in junior boxing, basketball and football. More recently however, Chris concentrated on playing in the same local club basketball competition as Carl (Chris DEMOS).

Table 5.1 (page 143) presents a summary of the participants' general demographics and table 5.2 (page 144) shows a summary of their educational and club sport details.

Table 5.3 (page 145) presents a profile of the participants' primary male carers and table 5.4 (page 146) shows a summary of the participant's primary female carers details.
Table 5.1
Participants' General Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Birth order</th>
<th># Siblings</th>
<th>Home Status</th>
<th>Primary Care(e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>3rd youngest</td>
<td>4 sisters, 3 brothers</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>2nd eldest</td>
<td>1 sister, 3 brothers</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>1 sister, 3 brothers</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>2 half-sisters, 1 half-brothers</td>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>3 sisters, 4 brothers</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>3 sisters, 2 brothers</td>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>2nd eldest</td>
<td>2 sisters, 2 brothers</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Urban area*</td>
<td>Eldest</td>
<td>1 sister</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Mother, Father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Denotes participant were born at the same hospital.
Table 5.2

Participants' Educational and Club Sport Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Years Attended</th>
<th>Previous Schools</th>
<th>Club Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Pre primary - Grade 7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Grade 4, 6, 7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Parts of 5-6 and all of 7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Parts of 6 and all of 7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Darts, Netball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Grade 7 only</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>Mr Crisp</td>
<td>Pre primary to 3, part of 4, and all of 5 to 7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Ms Zenith</td>
<td>Parts of 4-5 and all of 6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>Parts of 6 and all of 7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.3

**General Demographics for Primary Male Carer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Club Sports Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Rural Mission WA</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Volunteer- Transport</td>
<td>Indoor Mixed cricket***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Unable to work</td>
<td>Football, cricket, boxing, tennis, swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Urban Perth</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor*</td>
<td>Urban Perth</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Rural town</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Unable to work</td>
<td>Boxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Rural town</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Denotes that a male primary carer not present.

**Denotes that details are identical to those of Wendy.

***Denotes current club sport involvement. Others listed denotes past club sport involvement.
Table 5.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Club Sports Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Volunteer- ASSPA</td>
<td>Indoor Mixed cricket***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kallie</td>
<td>Urban WA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Home duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Home duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor*</td>
<td>Rural Mission WA</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Unable to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Urban WA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Home duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chris*</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>University Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sean**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social netball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** *Denotes that the primary female carer was the Grandmother

**Denotes that details are identical to those of Wendy.

***Denotes current club sport involvement. Others listed denotes past club sport involvement.*
Class Teachers

The class teachers were Ms Miller, Mr Crisp and Ms Zenith, whom were all of Anglo-Celtic origin. Profiles will now be presented.

Ms Miller

Ms Miller was the year 7 class teacher for Kellie, Heather, Wendy, Carl, Taylor and Trevor. She was 43 years of age and was born and reared in a rural WA town. Ms Miller received a Bachelor of Education in 1986. She had 20 years experience in the teaching profession and had been a teacher at Naples Primary School for the last seven years. Ms Miller had two children and a grandchild and lived in a de facto relationship. She had been involved in social netball clubs and had completed a Nationally Accredited Level 1 Coaching Certificate. She was a coach of junior female gymnastics and junior school netball (Ms Miller DEMOS).

Mr Crisp

Mr Crisp was Chris's year 6/7 teacher. Mr Crisp was aged 32 and was born in England. He moved to Australia with his family when he was seven years old. Mr Crisp had two sisters and apart from his immediate family, all his relatives resided overseas. Mr Crisp was engaged to a teacher aide who also was employed at Naples Primary School during the study.

Mr Crisp received a Bachelor of Education five years ago in 1993. He had been teaching for four years, the last two of which were at Naples.
Previously he taught at a remote Aboriginal community school for the first two years of his teaching career.

Mr Crisp was a coach for an under 13 female basketball team who competed in the local club basketball competition. The team comprised mostly of students from Naples Primary School (Mr Crisp DEMOS).

Ms Zenith

Ms Zenith was the year 5/6 class teacher and taught Sean, a year 6 student. Ms Zenith was 54 years old and was born in Perth, WA. She had two children and was married. Ms Zenith had been teaching for over 30 years and it was her first year of teaching at Naples Primary School. Ms Zenith had completed a Teacher's Certificate, Bachelor of Education and a degree in Political Science. She also had less than five units remaining in order to qualify for a degree in literature. Ms Zenith was not involved in sport, nor had she been in the past (Ms Zenith DEMOS). Table 5.5 (page 149) presents a profile of the class teachers.
Table 5.5

Class Teachers' Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Last Graduated (Years)</th>
<th>Experience (Years)</th>
<th>Naples* (Years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Miller</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Rural town</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>Bachelor: Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Zenith</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Urban WA</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Bachelor: Education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Crisp</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Bachelor: Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Denotes length of time teaching at Naples Primary School
Sports Teacher and Coach

In this section, only the primary providers of sport and physical education are presented and include Miss Quill (Primary Physical Education Specialist and coach of inter school netball team) and Mr Davin (organiser of intra school athletics and coach of the inter school football team). Although Matthew\(^5\) (AIEW) assisted in the delivery of school sport, his profile is not provided due to his consistent absenteeism. It is important to provide the backgrounds of the principle school sport providers because of their engagement with the students and the social interactions that occurred in the school sport setting.

Miss Quill

Miss Quill held the position of Primary Specialist at Naples, in which she taught sport and physical education. She was 25 years old and had been a teacher for four years, of which she had been a teacher at Naples for the preceding six months. Previously Miss Quill had been teaching at a rural WA primary school for two years. She had attained a Bachelor of Arts in Primary Teaching and a Bachelor of Education, which she completed five years ago. Miss Quill's major stream of study was drama.

Miss Quill was born in Perth, WA and had two brothers, of which she was the eldest. She played club sports on a social basis and was mostly involved as a competitor of indoor women's netball, mixed basketball, tee

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5 Throughout this thesis, Matthew is not referred to as "Mr" because the students and teachers did not address him as "Mr".

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ball, and karate (Miss Quill DEMOS).

Mr Davin

Mr Davin was employed at Naples Primary School as a full time gardener and handy man. He had been a staff member for 21 years and was the school football coach and assisted as an official for the inter and intra school athletic teams.

Mr Davin was born in a rural WA town and was 53 years old. He had been educated to year nine and had two siblings. Mr Davin was heavily involved in club sports, specifically cricket, football and basketball. He had been coaching Naples Football club for over 35 years and was a life member. He held the position of assistant coach of a seniors’ Sunday Football League team and was also the Chairperson of Selectors.

Mr Davin was heavily involved in junior football, was a life member of the district junior football council and head director of coaching at Naples Junior Football Club.

Mr Davin also held the position of district junior cricket development coach for the past 15 years and he had coached the Naples Junior Cricket Club for 20 years. He was also the director of coaching of a senior cricket team and the inaugural life member of the local Junior Cricket Council.

Mr Davin was also a life member of the local district basketball club. He was also the Development Coach for Naples Junior Basketball Club and was the coach of a local male veteran basketball team and an under 16 male basketball team (Mr Davin DEMOS). Table 5.6 (page 153) provides a
summary of the sports teacher/coach profiles.
### Table 5.6

**Sports Teacher/Coach Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Position at Naples</th>
<th>Time at Naples</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Sports Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Quill</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Urban WA</td>
<td>Specialist-Sport</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts: Education</td>
<td>Social competitor: Tee ball, Karate, Indoor Netball, Mixed Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Davin</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Rural WA</td>
<td>Gardener/Handyman</td>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Life member: Local football club, District junior football, Local junior cricket club, District basketball club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coach:**
- Local junior football club
- Local senior football club
- Local junior cricket club
- Local junior basketball
- Local senior basketball

**Coaching Director:**
- Local junior football club
- Local senior cricket

**Development Coach:**
- Local junior basketball
- District junior cricket

**Chairperson of Selectors:**
- Local senior football club
Summary

The students of this study were mostly aged 12 and 7 of the 8 were the eldest or second oldest siblings of nuclear families. The primary carer(s) were mainly the mother and father of the participants.

In terms of sport, most of the students were presently involved in a club sport outside of school. The most popular sport among males and females was basketball. In the past, the majority of students had also been involved in club sport. Females previously participated in tennis and basketball. Males however, previously participated in football, boxing, basketball and tennis.

Most parents were in a de facto relationship. The average age of male care givers was 35 years and the average age of female care givers was 38 years. The majority of carers were born in rural Western Australia, with two being raised on a government mission. In contrast, most children (except for Taylor) were born in an urban Perth hospital located in the district in which they currently reside.

Mothers' and grandmothers' level of education was lower than that of fathers. Most female carers stayed at home to care for the family. Most male carers however, were either unemployed or unable to work because of illness.

There were three class teachers who were involved in the study, one of whom was male. Their ages ranged from 32 to 54. Each were qualified with a Bachelor of Education. Ms Zenith however, also possessed a degree in Political Science.
Ms Miller was the class teacher for the year 7 students and had more than 20 years teaching experience with the last 7 at Naples. Ms Zenith was the year 5/6 teacher with 30 years teaching experience. She had only recently commenced teaching at Naples Primary six months previously. Ms Crisp was the year 6/7 teacher with 3 and half years teaching experience. He had taught at Naples for the past year and a half.

The primary deliverers of sport at Naples were Ms Quill and Mr Davin. Ms Quill possessed a Bachelor of Education and held the position of Primary Specialist for sport and physical education. She had four years teaching experience and had been at Naples for the previous six months. Mr Davin was 53 years of age with over 35 years coaching experience. He did not possess any formal qualifications but was credibly experienced. Mr Davin was employed as the gardener/handyman of Naples Primary for the past 21 years.
CHAPTER 6

DELIVERY OF SCHOOL SPORT

According to Harter (1978, 1980, 1985) significant others provide vital information to an individual's sense of self. In the school sport domain for instance, significant others may include coaches, sport teachers, peers and officials. In this chapter, the manner and method in which significant others deliver school sport is featured. The influence of significant others upon Aboriginal student sense of self is explicitly detailed in Chapter 11.

The three forms in which sport was delivered in the school environment included physical education, intra school sport and inter school sport sessions. A description of the delivery of school sport in each of these three forms will consist of: (a) the games and sports available, (b) when games and sports were played, (c) where the games and sports were conducted, (d) who delivered and/or taught the games and sports and, (e) how games and sports were delivered and/or taught. Observations of physical education, intra school and inter school sport sessions for terms one and two will be provided in the following sections.

Physical Education

Two 30 minute sessions of physical education were conducted for each class. Afternoon and morning sessions were organised on different school days. Chris for instance, attended physical education sessions scheduled for his year 6/7 class on Monday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. Kellie, Heather, Taylor, Wendy, Trevor and Carl attended
physical education sessions for year 7 students Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. Sean was the only student of the year 5/6 physical education class scheduled on Monday morning and Wednesday afternoon.

Games and Sports Available

Games refer to organised competitions between two or more teams that result in an outcome (win, loss or draw). The games were familiar to the students and mixed gender participation was encouraged. Activities were mostly team based and encouraged the development of basic physical skills such as throwing, catching and running. Activities however, did not result in an outcome for either team. In this case, activities were merely practice sessions for skills required in the games. Refer to table 6.1 below for a list of games and activities (Carl PORS 1; Chris PORS 1; Heather PORS 3; Kellie PORS 1; Sean PORS 3; Taylor PORS 1; Trevor PORS 1; Wendy PORS 1).

Table 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tabloids</td>
<td>Football handball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader ball</td>
<td>Running in 4s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 'n' English</td>
<td>Kick to Kick activity (using footballs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge</td>
<td>Piggy in the Middle (using footballs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modified Football Game -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kick 'n' Field</td>
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<td>Chasey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modified Football Game -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
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</tbody>
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Venues

During good weather (i.e. no rain) physical education classes were normally conducted on either: (a) a bitumenised space measuring 12 metres in width and 25 metres in length in an undercover area of the school (with no sport markings), (b) a grassed football oval and, (c) bitumen courts (marked for netball and basketball). In the event of rain, the bitumenised undercover space sufficed or the class retired to Miss Quill's room for sport and health related lessons (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 258-270).

Staff

Miss Quill was responsible for the delivery of physical education. At times however, Matthew (AIEW) assisted her during football drills and Mr Carter was her relief physical education teacher.

Matthew was employed on a part time basis at Naples Primary as the Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker (AIEW). Mr Carter relieved Miss Quill when she had a two week period of leave from her duties.

Delivery

Observations of physical education classes showed that: (a) preparation for physical activity and cool down routines were not always conducted, (b) the nature of some activities did not encourage physical involvement of all students, and (c) a lack of staff control was evident during activities which utilised large playing areas. These findings will
Preparation for Physical Activity. Warm up, stretching and cool down procedures were not always conducted. Only one observed physical education class performed a warm up routine (running in fours) with no stretching (Wendy PORS 1). Also, cool down activities were not conducted.

Nature of Activities. Some activities did not encourage the physical involvement of all students. The nature of the activity sometimes was a factor limiting students' physical involvement. For instance, observations showed that some activities were fairly static in nature. These activities can best be described as those which only entailed one major movement of a limb such as the kicking action in football (Carl PORS 1; Taylor PORS 1; Wendy PORS 1). At other times students were required to wait in line for their opportunity to have a kick, as in the kick 'n' field football game (Carl PORS 1; Taylor PORS 1) or wait for every team member (approximately 10 in a team) to run until they could perform the same skill, as required in the game of leader ball (Chris PORS 1).

In all but one of the observed physical education sessions, static activities which required only one major limb movement were conducted (Carl PORS 1; Chris PORS 1; Heather PORS 3; Kellie PORS 1; Taylor PORS 1; Trevor PORS 1; Wendy PORS 1). The only difference was that of Sean's (PORS 3) physical education session where tabloids were conducted and which encouraged the execution of several limb movements at one time. Tabloids included game related activities such as kicking
goals in a soccer net, dribbling a hockey ball through an obstacle course using a hockey stick and shooting a basketball in a bucket to score a goal. During this observation, Mr Carter organised the session.

During the games of dodge and French 'n' English for instance, the ball was the focus and was shared among the entire physical education class of approximately 25 students. Whoever had control of the ball therefore, possessed control of the game and experienced more participation than others. In most cases, play was limited to those students who were competent at sport or who were located in the areas where the ball and play was congested. For the game of French 'n' English, play was congested either near the goalie or at the middle boundary. Both games were played on approximately half a basketball court.

For the game of dodge, participation was limited to those students who attempted to tag opponents with the ball. Often the ball was restricted to those students who were competent at throwing and tagging others.

During the game of French 'n' English, Taylor and Wendy stood on the fringes of play whereas Heather, Kellie and Carl sought to stand close to the congestion either in the middle of the playing area or at the goalie’s area. Sometimes Carl and Heather would chase the ball around their team’s playing area or call out to team mates in order to secure the ball. They took advantage of opportunities to get involved in the play. Trevor attempted to be part of the action as well, but stood his ground in the area he allocated for himself. He did not actively seek the ball like Carl.
and Heather. He would often share the ball with his team mates, especially those who were standing out of play. Most times, he would share with other males who were non-Aboriginal.

**Staff Control.** Carl's control was influenced by the supervision and movement of the teacher. For instance, when large playing areas such as the grassed oval or basketball courts were utilised, control of the activities and students was lacking (Kellie PORS 1; Sean PORS 3; Wendy PORS 1). Teachers and other staff (AIEW) did not physically rotate to observe all groups of students performing the activities. A lack of rotation was more evident in physical education sessions in which relief teacher Mr Carter assumed total responsibility (Sean PORS 3).

Sean, for example, misbehaved during a physical education session in which a tabloid activity was set out over half of the football oval. Sean misbehaved throughout the session, failing to perform the activities that were required. He annoyed his peers by taking their equipment and disrupting their participation. Mr Carter did not attend to Sean or his group of three members for the entire length of the session. Sean was only approached when he climbed the roof of the sport shed to retrieve a ball (Sean PORS 3).

In other separate cases Miss Quill did not rotate her position in order to observe and control several small groups. The following incidents were observed. Heather and Kellie, physically and verbally annoyed and stirred one another as well as other Aboriginal peers (Kellie PORS 1). Wendy appeared bored with the activity at hand (such that she stood with her arms folded for extended periods of time) and failed to fully execute
the skill required (Wendy PORS 1). Miss Quill's control however, was far greater than Mr Carter's.

**Intra School Sport**

Due to the hot weather conditions experienced in Perth in the later months of the year (December) to the early months (January to March), intra school sport sessions were held on Friday mornings from 9:30 am to 10:30 am. At all other times (April to August), sessions were conducted on Friday afternoons from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm and only students from years 4 to 7 participated in intra school sport.

**Games and Sports Available**

For term one, the activities offered for intra school sport for year six and seven students were team based, encouraged mixed gender participation and consisted of tee ball, soccer, volleyball and basketball (Journal 7/3/97). For term two, intra school sports sessions were utilised as training sessions for the inter school sport teams who competed in the Sharp Shooters Netball Cup and the Eagles Football Cup. For those students not participating in inter school sport, soccer and volleyball were made available. For term three, preparation and training were conducted for the intra and inter school athletics carnivals which were held later in the term. For term four, basketball, tee ball and swimming classes were made available.
Venue

Tee ball, soccer, football and field athletic events were performed on the school's grassed football oval. Basketball and netball were conducted on bitumen courts. Swimming classes were conducted at the local district's indoor swimming pool situated less than one kilometre from the school.

Staff

For term one, upper primary class teachers were responsible for the supervision and delivery of sports offered. Mr Crisp (year 6/7 class teacher) coached soccer. Tee ball was the responsibility of Mrs Miller (year 7 class teacher) and Mrs Zenith (year 5/6 class teacher). Miss Quill (physical education teacher) and Ms Cutters (Teacher Assistant - Special Needs) coached basketball (Journal 7/3/97).

During term two, Matthew was responsible for training the football team for Friday intra sport sessions. Miss Quill, Mrs Miller and Ms Quance (Teacher Assistant - Special Needs) conducted training for the netball teams. All of the Aboriginal students in this study were involved in the inter school team sports squad.

During term three, Miss Quill was the event coordinator for the intra and inter school athletic carnivals. For the intra school athletic events, she was also responsible for teaching the skills of track and field events to the students during term three physical education session times.
Class teachers were allocated to a faction (4 factions in total) and they were responsible for supervising training during intra school sport sessions. Teachers also were required to place students in their respective race divisions. Miss Quill reported that every student was placed in a race, except for long jump and long distance running events (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 507-517).

For the intra school athletic carnival, Mr Davin prepared the school grounds for the day of the competition. He marked running tracks and prepared the long jump pitch on the school oval. Mr Davin also assumed the role of the race starter on the day of the athletic meet (Journal 4/9/97).

Delivery

For term one sports (tee ball, soccer, volleyball and basketball) it was found that: (a) teachers assumed mostly one role when delivering sports, (b) team games which resulted in an outcome (win or loss) were played and, (c) mixed gender participation was encouraged. These findings will now be presented.

Staff Roles. During intra school sport session, a majority of the time was allocated to a timed game during which staff mostly assumed the role of umpire (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1642-1677; Journal 7/3/97). For teachers, this role limited their opportunity to coach and teach skills and tactics. Aboriginal students reported that they wanted to learn the tactics of popular team sports (Chris SCRIPT 2, 537-551 Heather SCRIPT 1, 1692-1717; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 800-823; Sean SCRIPT 2, 608-
620; Taylor SCRIPT 2, 388-400) and game rules (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 741-761).

By standing or sitting in one position throughout the games, the teachers limited their involvement on the sport field when teaching the female students. Aboriginal males however, did not report similar experiences and nor was it observed. Heather reported that her teacher sat on a chair to umpire a game of tee ball (observations revealed that her chair was placed approximately five metres from the tee ball playing area). She said:

Oh she [Ms Miller] should get up and just like help people to field. Like Mrs. Igloo our old sport teacher she'll get up and tell us how to hold the mitt and. To go places. Umpire, properly. Miss Miller she just walks. And Mrs Zenith she always stands behind the tee and every time like you hit it, and you just slobber it, and then you run around the bases she moves the tee so you could jump on the mat. That's what Miss Miller should do but she doesn’t do that. (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1642-1677).

In other cases, observations showed that teacher movement and rotation were limited particularly when the teacher was instructing and umpiring a game (Heather PORS 2; Kellie PORS 2; Taylor PORS 2; Wendy PORS 2). For instance, the teachers' movement was linear and was restricted to the outside boundaries of the basketball court and did not extended past the three point line boundaries. Furthermore, only Miss Quill umpired with a whistle (Journal 7/3/97).

Nature of Sports Offered. For term one intra school sport, students were allocated two preferences for participation in four team sports (tee ball, basketball, volleyball and soccer) and in most cases, first preferences were fulfilled. All team sports encouraged mixed gender
Females reported that they did not enjoy playing soccer because it was a slow paced game in which they experienced minimal involvement (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 193-207). Heather said that she disliked playing soccer because she did not like kicking a ball around the playing field and there was an increased risk of being injured (Heather SCRIPT 2, 71-74).

Carl reported that he disliked some of the modified rules of soccer (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1451-1459). In particular, kicks that encouraged ground balls (those which travelled no higher than the knee) formed part of the modified rules and Carl stated that he wanted to kick the ball so that it could travel above a player's knee.

Basketball and tee ball were very popular sports among the males and females. Observations and interviews revealed that these sports appealed to all Aboriginal students, regardless of their level of sport performance and/or physical competence. Female participation in basketball for instance was a positive experience, since it allowed them to run during the game without starting and stopping (as in netball), be a part of a team, share the ball with team mates, receive the ball more than in other games, make friends (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 187-197, SCRIPT 2, 193-207) and shoot goals (Wendy SCRIPT 1, 973-976). Females, however, also reported that playing in a mixed team with males during intra school sport tended to limit their involvement since some of the males, particularly those who were competent, would not pass the ball to them. Kellie stated that Aboriginal males were more likely to share the ball with males than females (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 567-577).
Males' basketball experiences were also positive, particularly for Chris and Carl who demonstrated their competence and challenged their male peers (Carl SCRIPT 2, 27-114; Chris SCRIPT 2, 68-93). All the males were experienced at playing basketball since Trevor, Sean, Chris and Carl participated regularly during lunch time (Journal 28/07/97; Journal 30/07/97) and recess basketball games (Journal 25/09/97). Furthermore, Carl and Chris played for a local basketball club (Carl DEMOS; Chris DEMOS; Journal 13/09/97).

Although with large teams, tee ball may be considered a very passive game, in this case the students' enjoyed it because they had the opportunity to bat, since the game required all team members to bat. Observations also revealed that fielding positions were rotated so that many students had the opportunity to experience several fielding positions as well (Journal 7/3/97).

During the early weeks of term two, intra school sport sessions for year 6 and 7 students were primarily utilised as training preparation for members of the netball and football inter school sport teams. Inter school sport sessions commenced during the middle of the second school term and will be discussed in the following section.

Miss Quill, Ms Quance and Ms Miller trained and prepared the netball squad for inter school competition. Three teams were represented, consisting of a year 6 team, year 7 team and a year 6/7 team. For the football team, Matthew trained the football team during intra school sport sessions and Mr Davin coached them during inter school football.

6 Ms Quance and Ms Cutters were employed at the school as Teacher's Assistants (Special Needs) and they often assisted in umpiring team games for intra school sport.
Organisation of Intra School Sport Sessions. All intra school sport sessions consisted of a warm up and stretching routine, skill development activities and timed, modified and/or full rules games. They did not, however, include cool down exercises at the conclusion of physical activity (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Heather PORS 2; Kellie PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Taylor PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2; Wendy PORS 2).

A typical training session for the netball teams commenced with a jog around the school's two netball courts for two laps and star jumps, after which three hamstring stretching exercises were conducted by Ms Miller (Heather PORS 2). The following three activities were then completed and consisted of (a) running and tagging (in groups of four), (b) running, listening to the whistle and stopping and, (c) running, listening to the whistle and completing a two foot stop. These activities were conducted by Ms Quance. Teams were divided into three, with the majority of year 7 students in Team A, year 6 students in Team B and a combination of year 6 and 7 students in Team C. A fully timed netball game was conducted between two of the teams and Ms Quance and Miss Quill were the umpires. The remaining team was under the direction of Ms Miller who taught fundamental netball skills such as catching and throwing on a nearby netball court.

A typical netball skills training session conducted by Ms Miller included the following in sequential order: (a) instruction in a bounce pass, (b) stationary practise of bounce passes in groups of three, (c) stationary practise of bounce passes in pairs, (d) a change of partners and
practise of a variety of passes whilst remaining stationary, (e) practise catches and chest passes in motion (in pairs), (f) practise goal shooting whilst in a semi circle formation (Heather PORS 2). After the skills training session, the entire group was sent to Miss Quill to play a game of netball. All groups had approximately 15 minutes of skills training and approximately 30 minutes game time during one intra school netball session (Heather PORS 2; Kellie PORS 2; Taylor PORS 2; Wendy PORS 2).

During the skills training session, Ms Miller demonstrated the bounce pass to the students. Ms Miller explained the skill and utilised a team member as the subject to demonstrate the skill. She then proceeded to explain the formation of groups. For each new drill, Ms Miller utilised the same subject for demonstration purposes (Heather PORS 2), or she demonstrated the skill herself (Wendy PORS 2).

Aboriginal males received training for their inter school football team during intra sport sessions. Matthew was the trainer and a typical session encompassed a warm up, stretch, ball skills and football activities. The warm up consisted of one lap of the football oval. The team was then instructed to do stretching. Less than three minutes was allocated to stretching and Matthew did not instruct players how to perform the stretches. Males were told by Matthew to "do stretches" (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2).

The skills training session consisted of one handball drill which was completed twice. In this session, Matthew instructed players how to handball a football. He demonstrated a handball himself and then
organised the team into three groups to complete a handball drill. Matthew stood in the middle of the groups and in full view of all players to explain the drill. He then utilised a group to demonstrate the drill completely. This particular drill was repeated twice.

After the skills training component, the football squad played two modified football games which consisted of two teams and an outcome. The first game was a scratch match utilising only handball skills and not kicking skills. The second game was a kick to kick scratch match utilising handball and kicking skills. One goal end was used for both teams and only half the football oval was used for the modified games.

Matthew selected two captains for the teams of the modified football games. Carl and Chris were selected as captains for both games. They then selected their team mates by calling their peers by name. Those selected sat on the grassed football oval in front of Carl and Chris who were standing. Those first selected by Carl and Chris were other Aboriginal peers who were competent at football and then the more competent non-Aboriginal players were selected.

Rotation and Involvement of Teaching Staff. For the netball skills training session, Ms Miller stood in one position whilst giving instruction. She did not move among the groups who were actively performing. The bounce pass drill (as described earlier) was conducted in the space of a half netball court. Ms Miller remained at the front of the groups and in a stationary position throughout the entire drills.

Not all groups were positioned in single lines and facing the instructor when performing the skills and so they were not observed.
Ms Quance acted in the role of umpire for the netball games. She moved and involved herself on the court in a fashion expected of netball umpires. For instance, she ran alongside the netball boundaries which extend from baseline to baseline (All Australia Netball Association [AANA], 1994).

Miss Quill was the umpire, coach and organiser of the intra school sport session for the netball teams. Her involvement in the game was limited since her movement was confined to the centre third of the court. During modified football games (handball and kick to kick scratch matches), Matthew rotated throughout the teams. He did not remain stationary and was jogging in order to view play from an appropriate angle whilst umpiring (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2).

Matthew involved himself in the game and was able to assist players who were tackled hard and who fell during the games (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Trevor 2). Matthew assisted both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal players. Chris for instance, was tackled hard by Carl (Carl PORS 2). He fell to the ground with a complaint regarding his arm and elbow and Matthew immediately helped Chris to his feet and investigated his arm and elbow.

Although Matthew was umpiring the scratch matches he sometimes involved himself in the games as a competitor. During the handball scratch match, Chris's team were losing and Matthew picked up a loose ball from the ground, ran and hand balled it to the goals to score for Chris's team. This incident occurred in the latter part of the game.
Carl, the captain of the opposing team, responded by yelling, "That's not fair" (Carl PORS 2).

Feedback and Instruction. Competent netball players such as Heather and Kellis did not receive any verbal, corrective feedback from Ms Miller while practicing bounce passes (Heather PORS 2; Kellis PORS 2). Furthermore, a complete set of instructions for a bounce pass was not provided. Instruction regarding the movement of the feet when preparing to make a bounce pass and the position of the hands on the ball for instance, were omitted (Heather PORS 2; Kellis PORS 2).

When conducting skills training for the year 6 and the combined year 6/7 teams, Ms Miller frequently gave corrective feedback as well as praise to the less competent netball players including Taylor and Wendy (Taylor PORS 2; Wendy PORS 2).

During the games, Ms Quance (Teacher Assistant) frequently gave general, positive feedback and praise to all team players regardless of competence. Ms Quance acted in the role of umpire during the game and she verbally gave instruction and game rules to the players, particularly when infringements were called. Ms Quance explained the infringement to the player(s) concerned before proceeding to umpire the game (Heather PORS 2).

Observations revealed that the rules of netball, corrective feedback and negative feedback were rarely given by Miss Quill while she umpired (Taylor PORS 2). Furthermore, when infringements were called, Miss Quill did not explain to the players what the infringements were, nor did she inform the players of the penalty. Furthermore, it was observed that
Miss Quill was constantly interrupted by other teachers who were conducting intra sport sessions elsewhere in the school and she was unable to consistently call violations and infringements while umpiring. The violations that she often neglected included stepping, off-side and the three feet obstruction rule (Heather PORS 2; Kellie PORS 2; Taylor PORS 2; Wendy PORS 2).

In another situation, Ms Quance called a double violation in which two players (from opposite teams) had obstructed each other. For a double violation, the umpire is required to toss the ball between the two offenders. The ball toss must not travel any higher than the height of their shoulders (AANA, 1994). Miss Quill was responsible to toss the ball since the offence had occurred in her umpiring area. Miss Quill however, tossed the ball above the two players' heads so that they had to jump and tap the ball as in the game of basketball (Wendy PORS 2).

In another incident, Taylor requested permission to go to the toilet during the game half time period. When the half time period was completed, Miss Quill did not wait for Taylor to return from the toilet and resume her position as goal shooter. The game was recommenced without her on the court (Taylor PORS 2).

For intra school football sessions, Matthew acted in the role of coach. When he was instructing a handball skill, Matthew demonstrated the skill himself and at the same time, recited the following instructions: (a) hold ball in hand, (b) make first with other hand, (c) punch ball with fist and, (d) handball in front of team mate (Sean PORS 2). Furthermore, Matthew was observed giving corrective feedback as well as
encouragement on a consistent basis to teams during the skills training sessions. Corrective feedback was often directed at individuals and included remarks such as, “keep on running to the next line” (Chris PORS 2), and instructions such as, “do not handball behind the player. Handball in front of him” (Sean PORS 2).

During modified games, however, Matthew did not instruct players on their skill but rather gave them encouragement, which was targeted at the teams as a collective unit, rather than individuals. Positive feedback included remarks such as, “keep going” (Chris PORS 2) or “that’s the way” (Carl PORS 2) or “well done” (Trevor PORS 2).

Staff Control. There were approximately 25 males training for football and 22 female netball players training during intra school sport. Miss Quill, Ms Miller and Ms Quance supervised the netball teams, whilst Matthew was solely responsible for the entire football squad. Observations showed that there was a lack of control during intra school sport football activities.

Incidents occurred in football mostly while Matthew was organising the drills and teams for competition or when he was instructing. Carl for instance, performed a hand stand whilst Matthew was instructing the rules of the handball scratch match to the teams (Carl PORS 2). In other incidents, particularly when Matthew was organising the scratch match, Sean was play fighting and tackling with another Aboriginal male named Stuart (Sean PORS 2). Carl stirred non-Aboriginal males by rubbing his hand through their hair, hitting them on the head and tackling them. He also applied a shoulder bump to Stuart and chased Chris (Carl PORS 2).
Chris tackled and playfully fought with all males, especially a non-Aboriginal male named Kye, whom Chris constantly stirred. Chris also rubbed others' heads with his hand and was chased by Carl (Chris PORS 2). The majority of the football squad were constantly talking to each other and play fighting while Matthew was attempting to organise teams and provide instructions. Matthew almost lost his voice (it became hoarse) in the latter part of the intra school sport session, since he had to continuously yell instructions to the football squad (Carl PORS 2). It was also during these incidents that Matthew stopped instructing, held the ball and addressed the players and told them they were wasting their own time and thereby reducing their game time. He put the onus onto the players to calm down so that they could receive maximum playing time for the kick 'n' field scratch match.

Inter School Sport

Inter school sport sessions offered team sports (netball, football, volleyball and soccer) as well as track and field events. Inter school team sports were conducted during winter months and were conducted on Friday afternoons from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm for home games and 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm for away games. Only year 6 and 7 students were involved in inter school team sports. Also, structured competitions were organised for netball (Sharp Shooters Cup) and football (Eagles Cup). For soccer and volleyball however, games with other schools were not part of a structured competition, but rather were organised on the day. Soccer and volleyball games were organised when all playing positions for netball
and football were filled and there was a surplus of students for both schools on the day of competition.

Athletics were available to all students (pre school to year 7), although a squad consisting of upper primary students (years 4 to 7) were chosen to represent the school at an inter school athletic carnival held late in term three.

The following information relates to the observations from participation in netball and football since all of the Aboriginal students of the study were members of the netball or football inter school teams. In the research school, all students were encouraged to some extent to be involved in competitions, whether they played an entire game or played a half a game or spectated.

**Eagles Football Cup**

Naples Primary School participated in the Eagles Cup. One team consisting of year 6 and 7 males represented the football team. Games were played on a home and away basis on Friday afternoons. Chris, Carl, Trevor and Sean participated in the Eagles Cup football team (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Trevor PORS 3; Sean PORS 1).

**Rules and Regulations.** The rules played under the Eagles Cup consist of: (a) two umpires with one representative from each school, (b) no boundary umpires, (c) no scoring umpire and, (d) use of a league sized football (Sean PORS 1).

**Organisation.** Each game consisted of four quarters, each of 15 minutes duration resulting in 60 minutes of play time. Only one game of
football was played during the allocated time for the Friday inter school sport session. Mr Davin selected his starting players and their positions prior to the game.

Staff Roles. Mr Davin coached the football team and organised the supply of their uniforms. He made a set of junior football uniforms available to the school team. The uniforms were from Mr Davin's junior club football team. Matthew was often the school's representative umpire. On some occasions, Mr Crisp accompanied the team and was a spectator who verbally encouraged the team.

Mr Davin was equipped with a pen and notebook which he used to organise players and positions. Prior to the game, Mr Davin engaged in a pre game talk with the players. It was during this pre game talk that he allocated positions to players, and presented clear, understandable instructions such as “always give 100%”, “back each other up”, “jump on the loose balls” and “have fun”. (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3).

At half time intervals, Mr Davin instructed the captain to group the team so that he could address them. In this talk he highlighted the good and unfavourable aspects of the game, including those elements that he wanted the team to work on in the second half of the game. A post game team talk with similar content was also conducted by Mr Davin.

Traditions. Mr Davin expected that all team members were clothed in the correct attire, including football boots, socks, shorts and football jumper. He also expected that the jumper be tucked into the shorts at all times (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 325-332). Uniforms consisted of
black football shorts and a maroon and gold football jumper.

Prior to the football games, Mr Davin selected a captain and a vice captain. His decision for the captaincy roles were based on players' previous game performances (Sean PORS 1). A year 7 student was named as the captain and the vice captain's role was allocated to a year 6 student.

The captain led the team onto the oval and at the commencement of a game he ensured his team was positioned in a linear fashion and facing the opponents. The captain was responsible for the coin toss. Carl (Carl PORS 3), Chris (Chris PORS 3) and Trevor (Trevor PORS 3) were each nominated captain on three separate occasions.

At the end of the game, the captain ensured his team were in a line, and facing the opponents again. Verbal cheers were conducted and then all players shook hands with every member of their opponent team. The captain then led the team to the coach for the post game team talk.

Sharp Shooters Netball Cup

Naples Primary School fielded three netball teams with team A consisting of year 7 students, team B with year 6 students and team C comprised both year 6 and 7 students. The competition was organised with home and away games. The away games were held at the same school as the football team who competed for the Eagles Cup.

Taylor played in team C (Taylor PORS 3) and Heather, Kellie and Wendy played in team A (Heather PORS 1; Kellie PORS 3; Wendy PORS 3).
Rules and Regulations. Full netball rules were played with no modifications to the rules or equipment. The teams used a full sized netball (size 5) although in one of the games a soccer ball was used instead (Wendy PORS 3). The team uniform consisted of a gold shirt and blue sport skirt.

Organisation. Games were organised so that team A played first, then team B and finally team C. A fully timed netball game consisted of four quarters of 10 minutes each, totalling 40 minutes of play time. Of all the games that were observed and recorded, only one game played by the year 7 team A actually played four quarters, each of 10 minutes duration and this only occurred because only one game was played on the day (Wendy PORS 3).

In other cases, team C (year 6/7) did not participate in a fully timed game. Instead, they played only two or three quarters instead of the game regulation of four (Taylor PORS 3).

Similarly on another occasion, the year 7 (team A) netball game was reduced to three quarters. This occurred when the school team arrived late to the game venue preventing a fully timed game (Heather PORS 1; Kellie PORS 3).

On the court, players mostly organised themselves, taking up playing positions and making substitutions (Heather PORS 1; Taylor PORS 3). Heather took the responsibility of organising the year 7 team on the court and sometimes she organised the players and their positions for the other two teams as well.

Staff Roles. Miss Quill assumed total responsibility and
coordination of the entire inter school squad which included three netball teams and one football team. Miss Quill was also the coach and umpire of the netball teams. She also ensured that timekeepers and scorers were made available to both the netball and football teams. In some netball games, Ms Miller assumed the role of timekeeper.

In the role of umpire it was observed that Miss Quill made similar mistakes to those performed during intra school netball games. In one situation however, she was the only umpire for the game, since the opponents did not field their own representative umpire (Wendy PORS 3). The following information relates to the game in which Miss Quill was the only umpire.

Miss Quill made a ball toss and threw it above the players' head so that they had to jump (as in basketball). Observations revealed that all ball tosses were conducted in this manner (Wendy PORS 3). Furthermore, Miss Quill consistently missed calling violations such as three feet, obstruction and off side. Although she did not make any calls for off side, my recordings showed that five off side offences occurred. For the three feet ruling, only two calls were made for six occurrences and only three calls were made for nine obstructions (Wendy PORS 3).

Ms Miller assumed the role of timekeeper for some of the games. She stood behind the scorer for the entire intra school netball games. She did not give any feedback or assistance to the team (Heather PORS 1).

Traditions. At the end of the netball game, all team members shook hands with each of their opponents and then cheered ('three cheers for opponents, three cheers for Naples and three cheers for the umpires').
This tradition was only observed during the last inter school netball game of the year (Wendy PORS 3).

Summary

This chapter examined the delivery of school sport in its three forms: (a) physical education, (b) intra school competitions and, (c) inter school competitions. The types of games and activities and the method in which the sport sessions were conducted were described.

Firstly, the types of activities played during physical education were static with the result that some students experienced limited participation and boredom. Students' experiences of boredom will be addressed more extensively in Chapter 9.

Mixed gender participation (specifically during physical education sessions) was encouraged but not enjoyed, particularly by female Aboriginal students. For inter school sports, only netball and football were offered.

A significant finding was that many of the staff who assisted in the delivery of intra and inter school sport were not trained or qualified in teaching sport to children, or did not have experience in coaching and umpiring. Mr Davin however, was employed at the school as the handyman/gardener and although he did not possess any coaching certificates, he had over 30 years experience in teaching and coaching sport to children in the school's district.
CHAPTER 7
SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Social interactions are defined as those experiences between two or more individuals in which verbal and non-verbal communications are performed with the aim of identifying an association. Social interactions include verbal discourse (praise, encouragement, teasing, negative remarks, talking), physical acts (pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, hugging) and non-verbal communication such as smiling, frowning, hands placed across the mouth and head lowered. Social interactions are explicitly detailed in this chapter because of the potential influence significant others possess in regards to another's sense of self (Harter, 1978, 1980, 1985). This chapter describes the actual experiences students had when they socially interacted with others in the sport domain. The impact of these social interactions upon sense of self however, are detailed extensively in Chapter 10.

In the account of sport in school outlined below, it will be seen that the present study suggests that the main function of Aboriginal peer interaction in the sport setting appears to be the exploration of one's sense of social belonging and to affirm one's sense of place in the school environment. It was found that interactions between the Aboriginal participants of this study and other Aboriginal students were different from their interactions with non-Aboriginal students. For instance, the relations between Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students were mostly positive and fairly stable over time, although the relations between Aboriginal students and their
Aboriginal peers were challenged constantly in the sport setting.

Social interactions between Aboriginal students and adult significant others (teachers, coaches) in the sport setting were limited to Matthew (an AIEW) and the year 6/7 class teacher, Mr Crisp. Social interactions with other staff members (including female staff) were meagre to report.

The following sections will present the findings of the interactions that occurred in the sport setting at school and will provide a description of the interactions between Aboriginal students and: (a) non-Aboriginal students, (b) other Aboriginal students and, (c) adult significant others. Gender differences in the social interactions of participants will also be reported.

Interactions with Non-Aboriginal Students

The following themes were revealed about Aboriginal students' interaction with non-Aboriginal students: (a) The interactions were mostly positive, (b) the social tools employed by Aboriginal males differed from those of Aboriginal females, (c) there were increased opportunities for receiving positive feedback from non-Aboriginal students and, (d) cooperation and sharing among all students were encouraged and experienced on the sport field. These themes will now be reported.

Nature of the Interactions

Most often, positive interactions occurred between non-Aboriginal students in the school sport setting. These interactions were commonly
displayed during organised and structured games performed during intra
school and inter school sport sessions. Intra and inter school sport sessions
consisted of team sport competitions such as basketball, netball, tee ball,
soccer and football. The study revealed that a team environment was
conducive to the promotion of close interactions with students and significant
others.

Team sports were preferred by all Aboriginal students. Females
preferred fast games such as basketball which provided opportunities for
students to share the ball with their team mates and cooperate with each
other. This led to a greater level of participation (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 183-199;
Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1374-1377). More importantly, it was reported that
team sports also provided opportunities to make friends with non-Aboriginal
students (Heather SCRIPT 2, 108-109, 123-129; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 658-673).
Heather stated that playing team sports allowed Aborigines to gain
popularity with non-Aboriginal students although this popularity was
developed only when competing in inter school sports. When competing in
intra school sport and physical education activities, some peers "got sooky"
(upset) when Aboriginal students performed better or beat them (Heather
SCRIPT 2, 159-161).

Aboriginal males reported that team sports allowed them to
demonstrate their competence to their non-Aboriginal peers. In particular,
Aboriginal males displayed their abilities and skills (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1040-
1054; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 229-237) and were often sought by non-Aboriginal
students to play in their teams (Chris SCRIPT 1, 956-977). Team sports also allowed Aboriginal males to share the ball with non-Aboriginal students. This was particularly evident during football games (Chris SCRIPT 2, 347-361; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1432-1445; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 171-214).

Observations and journal entries of students' performances and interactions on the sport field were conducted. Data were analysed and the common interactions among males revealed that Aboriginal males tended to interact with non-Aboriginal males predominantly using non-verbal means of communication. Males verbally instructed, hugged, cheered, joked, tackled, wrestled, chased, fought and patted/rubbed each other on the head. Refer to figure 7.1 below.

![Figure 7.1. Process and tools of interaction performed during school sport between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal males.](image-url)
Aboriginal females however, interacted mostly with verbal approaches. They instructed, cheered and assisted non-Aboriginal females in sport. Aboriginal females received verbal praise and cheers from non-Aboriginal females. Refer to figure 7.2 below.

**Figure 7.2.** Process and tools of interaction performed during school sport between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal females.

Positive interaction was often received from peers of the same gender. Females, for instance, tended to interact mostly with other females in sport and thereby female students were often a major source of positive interaction. Similarly, males interacted mostly with other males, who were also a major agent of positive interaction.
Aboriginal females' interactions with non-Aboriginal males were limited. Heather for instance, received positive praise from a non-Aboriginal male peer named Victor regarding her performance during an intra school tee ball game. Victor and Heather played on opposite teams and Heather reported that “sometimes Victor says I’m gonna hit this one real fast so Heather can’t even catch it” (Heather SCRIPT 1, 306-306). Interactions between Aboriginal males and non-Aboriginal females were not observed, nor were they reported by students.

There were two reported reasons for limited mixed gender interaction. Firstly, there were differences in intensity of play in sport as demonstrated by males (i.e. males play rough) compared with females and secondly, females experienced a lack of game involvement when participating in a mixed sport activity. As Kellie related:

I: What about kids that you don’t want to play with, are there any?
Kellie: Boys.
I: Why?
Kellie: Like if cause say we’re playing against Carl, Chris and Stuart and all that, and other boys like they’d be rough and all that.
I: Oh okay.
Kellie: And when you’re playing like say we had a mixed team and there was more boys than girls they they wouldn’t pass it to any of the girls (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 567-577).

Non-Aboriginal students interacted mainly with Aboriginal students who were competent at sport and who were generally popular in the school environment. Figure 7.3 (page 189) revealed there is some connection between Aboriginal students’ sport competence, their interaction and popularity with non-Aboriginal students in the school sport setting. Sport
competence was assessed following observations of all students playing sport at the time. Using a Personal Observation Record Sheet (PORS) checklist (see Appendix A), a record of skills displayed and overall performance in sport was made. In this section, interactions in sport relate to those that occurred specifically with non-Aboriginal students. Categories for determining popularity included personality attractiveness, physical attractiveness, sports prowess (competence) and leadership qualities. More specifically, popularity was determined in relation to how students and teachers interacted with each other before, during and after sport activities. An analysis of students' popularity was determined by assessing descriptions made by all interviewees (parents, teachers, students, AIEWs) as well as descriptions made during observations and in journal entries. A judgment of students' popularity was then made and verified with all interviewees mentioned above.

Figure 7.3 (page 189) shows that in most cases, the degree of sport interaction is similar to the level of competence displayed in sport and the degree of popularity in the school environment. Heather, Taylor and Trevor for instance, were assessed as possessing a moderate degree of sports competency and popularity. They experienced moderate levels of interaction with non-Aboriginal students.

In this study, leadership qualities included a display of responsibility, confidence, assertiveness, commitment, cooperation and sportsmanlike behaviours. An individual with leadership skills possessed an ability to work independently as well as an ability to motivate and guide others in a team like fashion.
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**KEY:**

- Sport competence
- Interaction
- Popularity

*Figure 7.3. Relation of Aboriginal Students' Sport Competence, Popularity and Interaction with Non-Aboriginal Peers in the School Sport Setting*
For Carl and Sean, the situation was a little different since their level of sport competence outweighed their popularity and sport interaction. Sean possessed a high level of sport competence similar to that of Chris but Sean's low popularity matched his low sport interaction with non-Aboriginal students.

Carl demonstrated high levels of sport competence but he experienced moderate levels of popularity and interaction with non-Aboriginal students in sport. In Wendy's case, her sport competence matched her popularity with both being low. She also experienced low levels of sport interaction with non-Aboriginal students.

Only one negative or unfavourable interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students was observed in the sport setting. The incident involved Sean who physically annoyed and disrupted a non-Aboriginal student's participation in a physical education activity (Sean PORS 2). Sean and his team mate, Dean (also Aboriginal), took another group's soccer ball. The other group consisted of two members both of whom were non-Aboriginal. Sean and Dean kept on kicking the ball between themselves in order to keep it from the non-Aboriginal students which prevented them from participating in the soccer activity. The non-Aboriginal students who were clearly annoyed with Sean and Dean pleaded with them to return the ball.

A few other cases were reported (by teachers) but were not witnessed. For instance, Miss Quill reported that during an intra school sport session, Heather criticised a non-Aboriginal female:
We were practising pass ball for athletics. And one of the other girls, a tiny little thing and she's in the ed support, like the disabled sort of class. And she was sort of the only weak one and Heather was opposite her, so they were passing to each other. And she and this little girl came to me crying that Heather had criticised her. I had to have a word to her [Heather] because she was criticising this little girl and she she didn’t really understand that she was even she was just saying well she can’t do it (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 30-42).

In another instance, Heather took advantage of the sport environment to avenge an interaction that had occurred during class. She reported the following:

Heather: And basketball, when when there’s girls on the court that you don’t like then you just rush into ‘em.
I: Which do you which girls do you rush into? The most?
Heather: In tee ball I rush into Lena cause I hate her.
I: Lena?
Heather: Yeah.
I: Is she a Wadjallah girl?
Heather: Yep.
I: Why do you rush into her for?
Heather: Cause she’s a smart alec, she’s a little boney, Wadjallah.
I: Does she say anything to you?
Heather: Yep, she gets smart, she, because she had this new friend. I don’t like her anyway. She had this new friend and she thought she was good, and this girl, and they kept on calling me, I mean, no they kept on staring at me and Kellie giving us dirty looks. So I went up and said to Lena ‘why are you keep on staring at us, giving us dirty looks’. And she goes ‘why don’t you shut up and go away’. And I go ‘don’t get smart or I’ll hurt you’. And every time in class she tries to be smart (Heather SCRIPT 1, 621-642).

Sean also reported that the interactions between him and non-Aboriginal students in sport were not good. Sean stated that he was the receiver of verbal abuse from a non-Aboriginal male. Whilst he was playing sport for example, he was sworn at and during other times he was called
“charcoal,” usually by the same person, a non-Aboriginal male (Sean SCRIPT 1, 1047-1059, SCRIPT 2, 284-329).

Common Techniques of Communication

Aboriginal students provided verbal feedback in the form of instruction. They also physically assisted non-Aboriginal students. In contrast, Aboriginal students received verbal praise for their sporting efforts from non-Aboriginal students.

Instruction and Assistance. The instruction and assistance provided to non-Aboriginal students were often given consistently by Aboriginal students who: (a) were competent at sport, (b) held or had previously held a position of authority (captain) in their sport teams or, (c) possessed leadership qualities8 (for example, responsibility, confidence, assertiveness, commitment, cooperation, sportsmanlike behaviours, an ability to work independently as well as motivate and guide others in a team like fashion).

Often the instruction and assistance was provided during structured games conducted for inter school and intra school competitions and Chris, Carl, Heather and Kellie were the most likely to assist their non-Aboriginal students. It was also revealed, however, that Aboriginal students who perhaps were not as competent at sport, such as Chris, Carl, Heather and

8 In this study, leadership qualities were assessed by observing students at sport and analysing transcripts from significant others. An assessment was prepared for each student and then verified with significant others.
Kellie, also assisted their non-Aboriginal students. Trevor and Wendy helped others in sport also, but it was perhaps not given as consistently as the more sport competent Aboriginal students. Trevor, for instance, helped a non-Aboriginal student named Jordan kick a football:

I try and tell 'em how to kick, kick [inaudible] put the ball on ya hold the ball and then just drop it but you gotta drop it where how [inaudible] you don't you don't just drop the ball and kick it. Or drop the ball on your foot and then you kick you kick your foot. So they done that and then it and he went coonyie way (meaning silly or clumsy). And then I told him to do it again, do it again do it again til they got better and better (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 393-403).

No observations of instruction and assistance were recorded for Sean and Taylor.

**Physical Interactions.** Verbal communications with non-Aboriginal students were often accompanied by overt physical interaction such as wrestling, chasing, play fighting and messing with another's hair, rubbing peers' heads and patting each other (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 1, 2; Sean PORS 2). This form of interaction was mostly demonstrated by males and often performed prior and after physical education and intra school sport sessions. Three of the four Aboriginal male participants of the study performed some form of physical interaction. No observations were recorded for Trevor. Often, these acts were displayed while the teacher/coach was organising the sport session and Chris and Carl were often the instigators whilst Sean retaliated against non-Aboriginal's physical efforts. Chris and Carl directed their interactions at those males (Kye for instance) who were competent at sport (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2).
During football skill activities and modified football games, Carl displayed a greater intensity than other Aboriginal males when tackling, wrestling and play fighting. The intensity he displayed was not targeted solely at non-Aboriginal males, but rather at all males. The display of assertive sport skills (tackling) and social skills (play fighting, wrestling) were often confused with rough play and his peers (especially non-Aboriginal peers) discouraged the intensity of his physical contact and thereby their participation with him. Carl was well aware of his physical impact and the reaction of non-Aboriginal students:

I: What are things you don't like? What is the biggest dis things you dislike? Or people or things or whatever?
Carl: This boy.
I: Which boy?
Carl: Heaps of em, they're stupid.
I: They're stupid? Are those little Wadjallah boys or Nyoongar boys?
Carl: Wadjallahs.
I: They're all Wadjallah boys. How many of them are there?
Carl: About 10.
I: 10? Are they all at this school?
Carl: Yeah.
I: And why don't you like them?
Carl: I don't know they don't, they don't want me to play footy and all that, they think I'm too rough (Carl SCRIPT 1, 370-404).

During inter school sport competitions, males tended to praise one another by patting each other on the back and rubbing each others' heads with a closed fist). At times, they would verbally praise one another (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3). It appeared that the coach (Mr Davin) was the instigator of this interaction and the football team modelled their coach's behaviour.
Aboriginal females rarely engaged in physically interactive acts like their male counterparts, rather they mostly possessed a more verbal approach when interacting with non-Aboriginal students. They were more often the receivers of social interaction in sport and their non-Aboriginal students sought to interact with sport competent and/or popular females such as Kellie and Heather. The competent females however, did not actively seek to socially interact with their non-Aboriginal students, unless they were friends (such as Netti). Heather and Kellie interacted mostly with each other off the field. During intra and inter school netball games, both Heather and Kellie interacted with Netti (a non-Aboriginal girl) and sometimes Netti also accompanied them off the field (Heather PORS 1, 2; Kellie PORS 2, 3). Miss Quill made the comment that Heather and Kellie believed that they were better than other students and thereby they did not have to extend themselves to interact and make friends unless they wanted to (Ms Quill SCRIPT 1, 620-662, SCRIPT 2, 53-57):

Miss Quill: They [Heather and Kellie] talk a lot and they think they are you know?
1: Just good?
Miss Quill: Yeah and they sort of run the run the team and if they weren’t in the team they wouldn’t sort of win attitude (Ms Quill SCRIPT 1, 635-643).

The less competent females (Taylor and Wendy) interacted both on and off the sport field with a best friend (Taylor PORS 1, 2, 3; Wendy PORS 1, 2, 3). Taylor’s best friend was Lena (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 160-162) although Wendy stated that Taylor was her best friend (Wendy SCRIPT 2/0,
Taylor and Wendy rarely actively instigated initial social contact with others but, they both were more willing than Heather and Kellie to accept their fellow students' efforts for interaction.

Feedback. Non-Aboriginal students' responses to Aboriginal students' performances in sport consisted mostly of general, positive, verbal feedback such as 'oh, they're good' (Heather SCRIPT 1, 239-239) which was usually given directly after a performance and was constantly supplied. Feedback from non-Aboriginal students was common for the more competent Aboriginal students (Carl, Chris, Kellie and Heather) who were applauded regularly for their performances.

Those Aboriginal students who displayed average or below average level of sport competence (Trevor, Taylor, Wendy), mostly received feedback from their friends. Trevor said:

Some of my friends. They like, cheer me on when I when I for a hoop in the basketball. When I win, when I get a home run, when I get a homer, when I hit the tee ball, when I play soccer and I score (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1393-1400).

Sean did not report any positive feedback from non-Aboriginal students and observations supported this.

Aboriginal students responded similarly to their non-Aboriginal students' verbal praise, particularly during inter school sport competitions, although this was more common for Aboriginal males who were competent at sport (for instance, Carl and Chris). Aboriginal males engaged in positive, verbal encouragement and praise toward non-Aboriginal males but usually
this was mostly targeted toward the team as a whole. Comments included "come on you boys", "let's go" and "good job" (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3). Similar remarks from Trevor and Sean were uncommon (Sean PORS 1, 2; Trevor PORS 3). Social interaction off the sport field however, was limited to Aboriginal students. Chris, Sean, Carl, Stuart, Trevor and Bob (who comprise the Aboriginal members of the inter school football team) interacted with one another off the football field. They played kick to kick, chasey, joked, laughed, pushed each other and talked (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3).

Positive feedback (praise) received from non-Aboriginal students was the most common and constant form of interaction for Aboriginal females. Praise was often given for above average individual performances on the sport field and was often directed at only Heather and Kellie. During a game of intra school tee ball for instance, Heather reported:

When we was playing against the year 5's, me and Kellie hit a big one and they were saying "oh they're good they put all their power in it." And and there was this Nyoongar girl, Kellie was standin in the middle being the pitcher ready to get her out. And every time Kellie got them out that girl said 'Oh she's not, Mrs Zenith can't you just move Kellie' she was soaking, cause we kept on getting her out (Heather SCRIPT 1, 237-239, 305-311).

Kellie also stated that she received praise from non-Aboriginal students because "some of the Wadjallah kids think that I'm better because like if I get a home run or anything they cheerin' and shoutin' and all that (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 516-518).
Taylor and Wendy did not report any positive and verbal feedback from their non-Aboriginal students in regard to their sport performances. Observations did not reveal any verbal comments either.

Collectively, Aboriginal females employed group feedback like that displayed amongst the males, but it was not demonstrated as consistently (Heather PORS 1; Kellie PORS 3). Also, competent female Aboriginal athletes (Heather and Kellie) were more likely to cheer non-Aboriginal females who were also competent at sport.

Like their male counterparts, females gave general feedback (in the form of cheering) which was targeted at the team as a whole and was employed mostly during inter school sport competitions, rather than during intra school sport and physical education sessions. Heather, Taylor and Wendy rarely gave feedback to individual students for their sport performances. Although Aboriginal females verbally encouraged their team mates whilst on the sport field, their interaction was limited to their friends off the sport field and in most cases, their friends were Aboriginal (except for Netti and Lena who were non-Aboriginal).

Cooperation and Sharing. Taylor and Wendy (less competent at sport than Heather and Kellie) were more likely to seize an opportunity during physical education classes to assist their non-Aboriginal students and cooperate with them. Interaction however, was often instigated by non-Aboriginal students since Taylor and Wendy possessed quiet and reserved personalities (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 263-277, 557-564, 1640-1644). Mrs
Curry reported the following about Taylor's ability to instigate sharing and cooperation on the netball court during competition:

I'm sure if she had a bigger voice, and she could yell, "here here here I am". They would throw the ball to her more often and and she could, play really well but, at the moment she just sort of, stands back (Curry SCRIPT 2/2 & Trevin SCRIPT 1/2, 992-999).

Heather and Kellie however, were more likely to assist others when they were competing in intra and inter school sports competitions. They offered assistance by physically showing non-Aboriginal students where to position themselves so that they could participate fully in the game at hand. For example, Heather adjusted the height of the tee to the height of the batter, so that the ball was hit (Journal 07/03/97). Additionally, verbal instructions were given in order to execute a skill correctly, for example Kellie told a non-Aboriginal female to step closer to the goal ring so that she had a better opportunity to score a goal for the team (Kellie PORS 2,3).

Aboriginal males often instigated cooperation and sharing with non-Aboriginal students and these interactions were common during physical education and inter school sport competitions.

Trevor however, was the recipient of assistance from non-Aboriginal members of the school football team. At the commencement of the Eagles Cup competition, Trevor did not possess football boots or the correct school football uniform and his non-Aboriginal team mates borrowed boots, shorts and socks to ensure Trevor's participation in the inter school football games. Football coach, Mr Davin reported the following about Trevor's situation:
I think you know the kids [non-Aboriginal team mates] been pretty good. They've lent shorts and things like that and then his his Mum's sort of like you know got somehow and got some shorts and things and that for him. And I think that made him made him a little bit more happier too you know? But the boots were the real problem. I think you know it's got nothing to do with you know like that he couldn't get 'em, like the kids in the team sort of helped out which was really good. You know when he when he didn't have the the socks that was required they went and got 'em and give it to him (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 653-656, 658-659, 661-664, 669-671).

It was a common practice amongst the more confident Aboriginal students to ensure that the majority of players in their teams experienced active participation during games, particularly for intra and inter school sport competitions. In particular, Kellie and Chris instigated and actively sought to share the ball (during team sports) amongst all their team members especially those who wouldn't have had the opportunity to be a part of the game (Chris PORS 2, 3; Kellie PORS 2, 3). During inter school competitions, Kellie and Chris played in positions where they had the opportunity to handle the ball or be a part of the play more than their team mates and in doing so, they were in a position to control the play and share the ball.

Kellie assumed a key position and for the majority of the inter and intra school netball games, she retained centre position of the school netball team. Her position allowed her to control the movement of the ball and thereby the degree of involvement of her team mates (Kellie PORS 2, 3). Kellie was also nominated by her fellow peers as the sport captain, giving her responsibility to prepare and organise the sport environment with the
necessary equipment (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 1175-1232).

In Chris's situation, he assumed the centre half back position and his role was to prevent the ball from reaching his opponents' offensive end (Chris PORS 3). In doing so, Chris had to read the movement of the ball from the centre bounce and then verbally instruct his team mates to position themselves in such a way as to prohibit the ball reaching the opponents' goal square (offensive end). Football coach, Mr Davin said the following about Chris:

He can actually get kids to do things more easily than other kids he's sort of like can make a kid play a little better that's not normally that that good or he can get a kid involved that not normally involved (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 77-83).

The less confident Aboriginal athletes (Carl, Sean, Trevor, Wendy and Taylor) also shared with their students, but were not the instigators since most times they were not in control of the situation on the sport field like Kellie and Chris. There were exceptions however, when Aboriginal students were nominated by their coach as the captain of their respective team and thereby somewhat in control of their team mates. Chris, Carl and Trevor for instance, were nominated as captains (on separate occasions). They played a leadership role which included sharing and cooperating with team mates (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Trevor PORS 3).

In one of the inter school football games, Carl was not selected as the captain, but at the end of the game, he physically and verbally pulled the team together to conduct the end of game cheers and hand shakes (with
opponents). Because the nominated captain had not experienced the customary protocol, Carl appropriated the captain's role in order to do it (Carl PORS 3).

Perhaps the only incident where sharing with others was not performed was when Heather would not substitute herself from the goal shooting position and share the position with others (Heather PORS 2,3; Taylor PORS 2). This occurred during intra and inter school netball games and particularly when the female netball team had to make substitutions themselves. In physical education sessions however, students were encouraged to share with one another since the sport teacher intervened and controlled the environment.

Interactions with Aboriginal Students

The purpose of interactions that took place among Aboriginal students appeared to be quite similar to those among non-Aboriginal students. For Aboriginal students, sport was utilised to challenge other Aboriginal students' physical and sport competence and thus challenge their social standing in the school environment. When interacting with non-Aboriginal students, sport was also a way to prove one's self, although the following differences among Aboriginal interaction were revealed: (a) The nature of interactions were based on challenging others' sport performances, (b) the social tools employed to challenge and prove one's self to other Aboriginal students were significantly different to those methods employed to show non-
Aboriginal students and, (c) the social groups formed in sport were insular. These will now be described, including differences in gender interactions.

Nature of Interactions

Interactions among Aboriginal students at play in sport consisted primarily of stirring and teasing one another, especially when a game outcome was reached (for instance, a win or loss). Aboriginal students made use of common Aboriginal vocabulary when engaged in teasing episodes and the purpose of these interactions was centred on challenging others' performances in the sport field. Unlike interactions with non-Aboriginal students, relations among Aboriginal students were challenged constantly.

Common Techniques of Communication

Interactions among Aboriginal students can be described as jovial as the Aboriginal students frequently giggled, made jokes of each other and laughed when interacting with each other.

When Aboriginal peers interacted with other Aboriginal students in sport they did not overtly praise each other's individual performances but rather acknowledged it in other ways such as teasing, making jokes and laughing. These verbal forms of interaction are the primary social tools used by Aboriginal students to interact with other Aborigines in sport.

Males tended to utilise physical means of interaction more than females. Also, the social groups formed among Aboriginal students in sport
were very insular and restrictive. These will now be presented.

Teasing. Teasing was a common interactive tool used to prove one's competence at sport to other Aboriginal students. Teasing referred to verbal attacks often made in relation to a game or activity outcome. The purpose of teasing was to torment and gain a reaction from others (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 152-154) and consisted of remarks such as "ahah", "you lost", "you're winyarn (weak)", "I'm boss (the leader)", "I'm 'orse (the best)" and "reject" (Carl PORS 1,2; Chris PORS 1,2; Heather PORS 1,2; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 118-130). If an individual lost a competition, or his/her team experienced a loss, then he or she was teased by opponents. If a win was experienced, then the winners teased those whom they had overcome in competition.

The sport competent Aboriginal students (Carl, Chris, Sean, Heather and Kellie) often engaged in teasing episodes during and after sport competitions. This mostly occurred during physical education and intra school sport sessions. Teasing was not observed during inter school sport competitions and after conducting interviews it was revealed that teasing did not occur since all school team members competed and represented the school together. In other words, there was no need to tease each other since all the students were on the same team and together they were all winners or all losers:

I: Well what's the best thing about playing inter school sport, against another school?
Kellie: Because like you don't see that school everyday and they don't torment you and all that.
I: Mmm.
Kellie: Like when you like like say you lost.
I: Yeah.
Kellie: They they don't tease ya as much as like when you're playing intra school (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 317-326).

The important finding is that teasing was restricted to specific individuals and was common among males. All Aboriginal males in this study teased one another, particularly those who were competent at sport. Interestingly, relations (cousins) were targeted and teased even if the relations were not competent at sport.

Aboriginal females who were competent at sport and who were friends teased one another, but did not tease other Aboriginal females. Only Heather and Kellie engaged in teasing and it was often directed at each other.

**Jovial Approach.** Both the males and females interacted with other Aboriginal students in a rather jovial fashion. This was evident in the methods they utilised to communicate with one another. Aboriginal students often told jokes, laughed, giggled and made fun of each other. Also, their body language showed that they were comfortable and relaxed when interacting with other Aboriginal students, since they were smiling more often and they presented themselves in a loose fashion rather than a rigid fashion as when interacting with non-Aboriginal students. A loose fashion can be described as head up, shoulders open, arms swaying and back relaxed. All Aboriginal students participated in some jovial form of interaction, regardless of their level of physical and/or sport competence, or their reserved or shy personality. The females perhaps tended to smile and giggle and the
males usually made some sort physical contact (pushing, wrestling, play fighting, chasing) to coincide with the verbal comments they made at each other (Carl PORS 1,2,3; Chris PORS 1,2,3; Heather PORS 1,2,3; Kellie PORS 1,2,3; Sean PORS 1,2,3; Taylor PORS 1,2,3; Trevor PORS 1,2,3; Wendy PORS 1,2,3).

Aboriginal Vocabulary Utilised. Aboriginal students tended to utilise common Nyoongar words during their verbal interactions with other Aboriginal students, including themselves (that is, self talk). During a football activity for example, Carl did not correctly execute a football handball to his team mate. Carl immediately said, "coonyie hand ball" (Carl PORS 2), meaning a silly or clumsy hand ball. Other words often used included winyarn\(^9\), wadjallah\(^10\) and mundung\(^11\).

Aboriginal-English words were also used and consisted of "choo" (an expression that publicly announces embarrassment or is an attempt to publicly tease another), "nyorn" (meaning to feel sorry for another), "boss", "orse" and "solid" (refers to the individual being the best or may refer to their actions and behaviours and thus indicating approval by others) (Carl PORS 1,2; Chris PORS 1,2; Heather PORS 1,2; Heather SCRIPT 1, 668-668; Kellie PORS 1,2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 456-468; Sean PORS 2,3; Trevor PORS 1,2; Wendy PORS 1,2).

\(^9\) Winyarn refers to hopeless or weak.
\(^10\) Wadjallah means a non-Aboriginal person.
\(^11\) Mundung refers to popular and good looking.
Physical Interactions. Physical contact was often executed in conjunction with verbal communications among Aboriginal students. Some of the more common physical forms of interaction that were performed included wrestling, hair rubbing, play fighting, pushing, and chasing. Other forms that were not as common included hugging, shaking hands, pat on the shoulder and kicking.

Males tended to act in a more physical manner than the females and most of the physical contact associated with interaction was performed on other Aboriginal males. Wrestling, play fighting, kicking, chasing and pushing were often acted out during physical education and intra school sport sessions (Carl PORS 1,2; Chris PORS 1,2; Sean PORS 2,3; Trevor PORS 1,2) whereas other forms of physical contact such as shaking hands and a pat on the shoulder were considered protocols of good sportsmanship and were performed during inter school sport competitions (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3).

The intensity of physical contact among Aboriginal males was similar to the intensity displayed when interacting with non-Aboriginal males. Physical interactions were not observed nor reported among Aboriginal females.

Social Groups

Social groups were formed in sport and the membership was mostly confined to Aboriginal students. Interactions among Aboriginal students
occurred both on and off the sports field. Kellie and Heather for example, played sport together and then after the game they interacted in a social manner by laughing, giggling, teasing, whispering and talking (Heather PORS 1, 2, 3; Kellie PORS 1, 2, 3). Carl, Chris, Sean and Trevor interacted with other Aboriginal males both on and off the sport field. They mostly teased, pushed, talked, laughed, joked, chased each other and wrestled (Carl PORS 1, 2, 3; Chris PORS 1, 2, 3; Sean PORS 1, 2, 3; Trevor PORS 1, 2, 3).

The only difference found was that Taylor regularly interacted off the sport field with a non-Aboriginal female named Lena, who was also reported as Taylor's best friend (Taylor PORS 1,2, SCRIPT 1/2, 160-162). Additionally, Wendy did not interact with Kellie and Heather. She seldom spent time with Taylor, but rather stuck to herself (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 160-178). Sometimes though, after playing sport with Carl, she tormented and teased him (Wendy PORS 1,2).

When Aboriginal students chose their team mates or partners in sport, they often selected other Aboriginal students. Carl and Chris, for example, were selected as captains for a modified football game which was played during an intra school sport session. The captains selected their own teams and the first four selections consisted of Stuart, Sean, Bob and Trevor. These four selections comprised the total number of Aboriginal students, as there were only six Aboriginal males playing football at that time (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2).

In another situation, year 6 and 7 students selected their own teams to
compete in an intra school lunch time basketball competition. The students chose their own team members, captain and team name. There were approximately six teams in the competition and three of them consisted of Aboriginal students (Journal 28/07/97). Two of the teams comprised Aboriginal females, while the other team consisted of Aboriginal males. Taylor and Wendy were team mates in team one and Heather and Kellie were members of team two. Sean, Carl, Trevor and Chris comprised team three (Journal 28/07/97; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 370-387).

In some instances, non-Aboriginal students sought to interact with Aboriginal students prior to, during and after sport participation. Netti sometimes accompanied Heather and Kellie both during and after sport (Heather PORS 3; Kellie PORS 3). Also, Kye socially interacted with Sean, Chris and Carl (Carl PORS 2, 3; Chris PORS 2, 3; Sean PORS 1, 2). Observations revealed that Kye and Netti were popular and competent at sport and they interacted more with Aboriginal students who were competent at sport also.

Non-Aboriginal students who were less competent at sport also actively sought to interact with Aboriginal students. Lena for instance, socially interacted with Taylor and Wendy, before, during and after participation in sport (Taylor PORS 1, 2, 3; Wendy PORS 1, 2, 3).
Interactions with Adult Significant Others

Social interactions among Aboriginal students and adult significant others in the school sport setting were limited to Mr Crisp (Year 6/7 class teacher) and Matthew (AIEW). Most of the teachers and coaches assumed more than one role in sport such that they were coaching, umpiring and organising sport sessions for over 25 students. Time for socialising was limited.

The following information relates to the interactions between Matthew and Aboriginal male students during organised sport sessions and interactions between Mr Crisp and Aboriginal students which took place in a structured sport setting (social basketball game) during recess and lunch time. The social interactions between Mr Crisp and Aboriginal students had a positive influence on their relationship in the school environment, particularly in the classroom, are presented here.

Interactions with Aboriginal Education Worker

Matthew interacted mostly with Aboriginal male students since he often trained them during intra school sport sessions (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Sean PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2). Additionally, during physical education sessions, Miss Quill sometimes divided students into small groups for sport activities and in these situations, Matthew often chose the group(s) or students to supervise and on most instances Matthew selected groups of Aboriginal males. The males he mostly interacted with were Chris
The types of interactions that occurred between Matthew, Carl and Chris consisted of teasing (stirring), laughing and talking. Furthermore, common words of the Nyoongar vocabulary as well as words of the Aboriginal-English vocabulary were often used during communications. Nyoongar words included "coonyie," "winyarn" and "wadjallah." Aboriginal-English words consisted of "shame," "solid," "choo" and "nyorn." These words were often spoken loudly and often included in the teasing and stirring episodes (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2).

Matthew consistently responded to Carl and Chris's attempts of social interaction. Matthew approached Carl and Chris in a similar fashion as they approached him. The approach was jovial with laughter accompanying the verbal communications. Physical interactions between Matthew, Carl and Chris were not reported nor observed.

Interactions with Year 6/7 Class Teacher

During recess and lunch breaks at school, Mr Crisp (year 6/7 class teacher) often played basketball with Aboriginal students. The basketball game was conducted and organised by the students and was performed on the school's bitumenised basketball court. The game was played in one half of the court since another game was played at the same time at the opposite end of the court. Both males and females played as well as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Mr Crisp played basketball with students on a
regular basis. The only times that he did not play was when he was on yard
duty, supervising children or attending to other school matters.

The Aboriginal students who interacted with Mr Crisp during the
basketball games were Carl, Chris, Sean, Trevor, Heather and Kellie. Chris,
Sean and Carl however had more contact with Mr Crisp, since he often joined
the male basketball teams more than the Aboriginal females' teams. Mr
Crisp often played in the team competing against Carl and Chris:

I get out sometimes and play basketball with the boys. They're rather
insular the boys there's there's Chris, Carl and Stuart. They're very
competitive amongst themselves so they they've always got their own
games going so I tend to play with the other kids, whoever's there (Mr
Crisp SCRIPT 2, 358-360, 365-368).

Mr Crisp made the point that he did not instigate interaction with
Aboriginal students, but rather waited for an invitation to play:

But like I say some of 'em are a little bit more insular in that they
play with that certain group every day and and occasionally they'll
ask you in. But like I won't push myself into a group, I won't go over
and say right I'm playing with you, I'll wait until they ask me (Mr
Crisp SCRIPT 2, 400-405).

The types of interactions that took place during recess and lunch time
basketball games consisted of verbal interactions such as laughing, talking,
teasing and joking with one another (Chris SCRIPT 2, 534-602). Aboriginal
words (such as those described previously) were used by Aboriginal students
during their interactions with each other. Aboriginal words were not used
during verbal communications with Mr Crisp.
Mr Crisp reported that playing basketball with the students had a positive influence on relationships because the students tended to speak freely about themselves. Mr Crisp said that "you get out there [play basketball] and you're talking, they'll come up and tell you stuff freely" (Mr Crisp SCRIPT 2, 393-395). More importantly, Mr Crisp strongly believed that the social interactions that took place in the sport setting assisted in developing his relationship with students in the classroom environment (Mr Crisp SCRIPT 2, 354-410).

Summary

This chapter presented the social interactions that took place in the school sport setting between Aboriginal students, non-Aboriginal students and adult significant others who taught or coached sport.

The interactions which Aboriginal students experienced with non-Aboriginal students were mostly positive since non-Aboriginal students often praised and cheered Aboriginal sport performances. Aboriginal students who were perhaps not so competent at sport as others also experienced positive interactions since the mere participation in sport allowed them to make friends and share the enjoyment of sport participation with non-Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal students' interactions with other Aboriginal students tended to consist mostly of teasing one another. Teasing was a social tool used mostly by competent Aboriginal students to tease one another in
relation to an outcome in sport. It was found that the purpose of teasing was to torment and agitate one another in order to challenge one another's sport competence. Words of the Aboriginal-English as well as the Nyoongar vocabulary were used during the teasing episodes.

Limited social interactions were observed and reported between Aboriginal students and adult significant others (teachers and assistants). Only Matthew (Aboriginal Education Worker) and Mr Crisp interacted in a social manner with Aboriginal students in the sport setting.

The interactions that took place with Matthew consisted of teasing incidents similar to Aboriginal students' teasing episodes. The interactions, however, were limited to Aboriginal males who were competent at sport.

Mr Crisp interacted with Aboriginal students in structured basketball games which occurred during recess and lunch periods. Mr Crisp often competed and believed that the social interactions that took place in the sport setting assisted in the development of rapport and consequent relationship between him and Aboriginal students in the classroom environment.
CHAPTER 8

DEMONSTRATED SCHOOL SPORT PERFORMANCES

This chapter will describe the performances displayed in school sport. In particular, the following items will be presented to provide a holistic picture of Aboriginal children's level of performance at school sport: (a) skill level, (b) knowledge and demonstration of team game tactics, (c) knowledge and demonstration of team game rules, (d) roles and positions assumed in school sports, (e) nature of team sport participation and, (f) the influence of others upon performance.

Sport performances will commonly refer to those displayed during intra and inter school sport sessions since organised games were conducted at these times. Performances displayed during physical education will be described in the section on skill levels since the remainder of the performance indicators mentioned above relate specifically to organised sport games.

Skill Level

The overall skill level displayed by Aboriginal students at school sports was above average. For team sports, six of the students from this study exhibited above average skill levels and the remaining two children displayed average to below average team sport skills. For individual sports such as track and field events, performances varied depending on the event.

Aboriginal students were conscious of their skill levels, as were their sport teachers and peers. They performed in accordance with their
perceptions of their skill levels and they were often placed in or held positions in school sport that were critical to their teams' performances.

An estimate of each Aboriginal student's level of skill was attained by observing and assessing performances for physical education and intra and inter school sport sessions. A description of each student's performances was made by the researcher\textsuperscript{12}. Interview transcripts from the sport teacher, coach and the student verified the observations.

Team Sport Skills

Netball and football were the two team sports that were consistently observed in the school setting. These were conducted during intra and inter school competitions and a description of the skills displayed by Aboriginal students in these sports will now be presented.

In the game of netball, the following skills were considered essential and therefore were observed: (a) catching, (b) throwing, (c) pivoting, (d) making a lead, (e) shooting, (f) defending, (g) agility and, (h) pace. For football, skills included: (a) making a lead, (b) tackling, (c) marking, (d) kicking accuracy and distance, (e) agility and, (f) pace.

Netball. Heather and Kellie displayed above average skills in the game of netball (Heather PORS 1, 2; Kellie PORS 2, 3; Miss Quill

\textsuperscript{12} The researcher has credible skills and experience in assessing students' demonstrated sport skills since she: (a) possesses an undergraduate degree in Sport Science, (b) was a member of a national professional sport team for over 6 years, (c) was a member of a state professional team for over 17 years, (d) has been a local club, children's sport coach for 4 years, (e) was a founding coach of the Sports Challenge programme for 3 years, (f) has been a district sports coach for a total of 4 years, (g) held the Executive Officer's position of the Aboriginal Development Foundation for Sport and Recreation WA for over one year, (h) held the position of Sport Consultant with the Ministry of Sport and Recreation's Aboriginal Sport Unit for 2 years, (h) held the position of Supervisor of Children's Sport and Holiday programmes for 2 years.
Taylor demonstrated an average to above average level of skill (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 769-793; Taylor PORS 2, 3) and Wendy possessed average to below average skills (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 397-411; Wendy PORS 2, 3).

There were a number of attributes that set Heather and Kellie apart from their teammates (including Taylor and Wendy) in regards to their skill levels they: (a) possessed an athletic build, (b) gave maximum effort towards all tasks at all times, (c) possessed a balance of credible sport skills, (d) performed at sport in accordance with their self-perceptions and, (e) described their perceptions of their sport competence with accuracy when compared to the assessment of performance from the sport teacher, Miss Quill and the researcher.

Heather for instance, was one of the shortest students in the team but she didn’t let her height disadvantage her (Heather PORS 1,2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 220-227). In fact, Heather always made good leads when seeking the ball. She made full use of her arms by stretching them as far as she could and away from her opponent’s reach. Miss Quill made the point that although Heather was short (in height), she took advantage of other opportunities, such as her agility and ability to shoot goals to compensate (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 94-108).

Heather considered herself one of the better players of the school netball team (Heather SCRIPT 3, 376-407). Miss Quill reported that she was not the best player, but rather was one of the top three players on the school netball team in terms of performance and skill (Heather PORS 1,2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 94-103, 113-125). Heather was the goal shooter
and if she found herself too far from the goal ring, she took a step closer, balanced on one leg and shot the ball (Heather PORS 1,2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 134-137).

Heather possessed a balance of strength, fitness and accuracy. She attempted all tasks presented and exerted maximum effort (Heather PORS 1,2 3; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 220-227).

Kellie was perhaps the most valued player in the school netball team (Kellie PORS 2, 3). She had an athletic build (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 384-412) and possessed highly developed sport skills and this was evident in the method in which the skills were displayed (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 497-513). Often, Kellie combined two or three major limb movements in one skilled performance. She ran and passed the ball in one movement, or she faked a pass and pivoted at the same time (Kellie PORS 1, 2). Like Heather, Kellie was always willing to perform to her best (Kellie PORS 1, 2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 384-412) and was always focussed on the game at hand (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 594-614). Miss Quill (SCRIPT 1, 649-662) reported that peers (both male and female) looked up to Kellie. She often assisted them and was well aware of her sports abilities.

Taylor possessed an athletic build (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 769-793) and always performed at an average to above average standard (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 745-748; Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/2, 988-999; Taylor PORS 2,3). She lacked some of the complex netball skills such as zoning, pivoting and defending but to her credit she always gave her best (Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/2, 804-813).
Wendy was slightly overweight, lacked pace, agility and strength. She was capable of basic catching and throwing skills, but did not possess the more developed netball skills such as pivoting, zoning and defending as well as performing more than one limb movement at a time (pass and run) (Wendy PORS 2, 3).

Wendy’s performance mirrored her evaluation. She tried hard at all times, but realised she did not have the skill to be a talented team player. Rather, she was content with participation in the school netball team (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 387-396, 412-421).

Football. Carl’s sport attributes were assessed as average (Carl PORS 2,3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 139-158) and his self-perception of his football competence matched his on field performance. The assessments made by his coach and the researcher’s observations confirmed these perceptions (Carl PORS 2,3, SCRIPT 2, 745-789).

Mr Davin reported that Carl lacked pace. Although he possessed strength, he did not utilise it to his potential, especially when marking the ball. Carl did not use the left side of his body when kicking and was not consistent in kicking desired distances (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 617-669). Observations revealed that Carl did not kick the ball correctly. For example, the ball was kicked utilising his shin rather than his foot (Carl PORS 2,3).

Carl was carrying excess weight and was slightly uncoordinated and as a consequence he tended to drop the ball more often than his team mates (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 617-669, 1310-1319). Unlike most of the female Aboriginal students, Carl did not push himself to deliver his
potential. Mr Davin stated that Carl was capable of performing at a higher standard, although his actual skill level was equivalent to that displayed by most of the members of the school football team (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 139-158).

Chris had lost weight during the school year and by the time the inter school football competition began he was in good shape and had gained confidence. His skill level was above average and he had excellent marking skills and body strength (Chris PORS 2,3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 89-147). He lacked some pace, but always gave his best effort and performed at higher levels than his teammates (Chris PORS 2, 3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 286-295).

Like Chris, Sean possessed above average skill (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 1244-1319). In fact, Mr Davin stated that although Sean was a year 6 student, he was one of the top six players in the school football team (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 1244-1319). Mr Davin described him as an “excellent player” with “natural skills” and likened him to Australian Rules Footballer, Dale Kickett13 (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 958-969, 1329-1329).

Sean had a tall, lean athletic build (Sean PORS 1, 2, 3) and utilised both sides of his body very well when kicking and marking (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 922-934). Sean was a confident runner and possessed fast pace and excellent agility. He was much stronger than Carl, being similar to Chris. Sean used his strength to nudge opponents away from the ball. He possessed well balanced skills and was well coordinated. Sean’s

13 Dale Kickett is an Aboriginal who played Australian Rules Football for the Western Australian club called Fremantle Dockers. He played in the half back flank position and was the runner up for two consecutive seasons before winning the club’s fairest and best award for 1997. He was also the vice captain for the 1997 season (Fremantle Football Club, 1997).
marking and kicking abilities were equal to Chris's skill levels (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 1244-1319; Sean PORS 1, 2, 3).

Trevor was tall, possessed a well proportioned build (Trevor PORS 1, 2, 3) and displayed an average level of skill (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 540-596; Trevor PORS 2, 3). He had good hand-eye and ball coordination. He didn't drop marks and was quite agile since he picked up a football from the ground with ease. Trevor's kicking skills were excellent and Mr Davin reported that they were a "highlight" since he had the skill to place the ball in a position that was to the team's advantage. Trevor lacked some pace, but was fairly agile (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 540-596; Trevor PORS 2,3).

Individual Sport Skills

Track and field events comprise individual sports and were performed at intra school and inter school carnivals. For the intra school athletic carnival, the Aboriginal students of this study competed in 13 events and of these, they were placed first in five events. The first places were gained in the tee ball throw (both male and female title), 100 metre division B female race, the male individual flag race and the male senior champion award. The champion award was allocated to the student who received the most points for successful events and five Aboriginal male students gained a placing with Chris actually winning the male champion's award. Refer to table 8.1 (page 222).
### Table 8.1

**Aboriginal Students' Intra School Track and Field Placings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Carl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Chris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Sean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball throw</td>
<td>Heather: 3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100m Div A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100m Div B</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800m</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag Race</td>
<td>Equal 3</td>
<td>Equal 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Championship 100m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champion Award</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notation:**
- NP refers to participation in the event with a non-placing.
- **Kellie** did not participate in the intra school athletic carnival at Naples Primary School and therefore her results are not available.
- ? Indicates that results are not available.
- - refers to non-participation in the event.

*Note:*
Selections were made for inclusion in the inter school athletic squad and these were based on intra school athletic results. Carl, Chris, Heather and Taylor were chosen with other Aboriginal students (non-participants of this study) to represent the school. The individual events consisted of the 800m race, tee ball throw and the flag race. The team events consisted of pass ball and leader ball. Table 8.2 details the inter school track and field events in which Aboriginal students participated.

Table 8.2
Aboriginal Students' Participation in the Inter School Athletic Carnival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Events Competed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>800 m race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Passball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Leader Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Tee Ball Throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Individual Flag Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Tee Ball Throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>800 m race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Passball</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Leader Ball</td>
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</table>
Skills Demonstrated in Physical Education

The types of skills observed during physical education were dependent on the types of activities performed and thereby assessment of Aboriginal students' performances were made of the major skills required to successfully perform the activity at the time. These included: (a) throwing, (b) catching, (c) hand balling, (d) kicking, (e) marking, (f) agility and, (g) pace. Kicking, marking and hand balling skills relate to football activities and games performed during physical education sessions. The remaining skills relate to the games of dodge, chasey, tabloids and French 'n' English.

Assessment of skills performed during physical education were collected on separate occasions and therefore the assessments will differ since dissimilar skills were observed for each student.

Female Skill Levels. Heather displayed average skills for catching, throwing and agility (Heather PORS 3). Kellie however, performed advanced skills for agility, pace, kicking and marking (Kellie PORS 1). Both Taylor and Wendy rated below average for kicking, marking and agility.

Male Skill Levels. Chris was rated above average for a number of skills. In particular, he displayed his skill in hand balling, catching, throwing and agility. Carl demonstrated an average level of skill for kicking, marking and pace.

Sean's kicking and marking skills were assessed as being above average but his throwing skills were rated average. Trevor was also rated average in throwing, catching, agility and pace.
Game Tactics

Tactics refer to both defensive and offensive plays that are planned mostly in advance of the actual sport experience. In this case, tactics refer to those displayed during organised games of team sports. It was found that Aboriginal students, particularly those who possessed above average sport skills cognitively organised tactics and then physically performed them according to game circumstances.

The following information relates to the game tactics employed during intra and inter school sport competition for netball and football. It is important to point out that netball tactics were not taught during school sport sessions. However, the coach of the football team taught tactics to students during inter school sport competitions.

Netball

The competence displayed in netball skills mirrored the tactical competence of students during the netball games. Kellie, for instance, was highly competent at netball and she consistently displayed more tactical moves on the court than her team mates. In offence, Kellie was also an integral part of the movement of the ball from the centre position. She passed the ball to Netti (non-Aboriginal team mate), read the position of her opponent and then made short shuffle fakes away from her opponent to obtain the pass back from Netti. Kellie then made eye contact with Heather (goal shooter) to receive the ball. If Heather found herself too far from the goals, she would pass the ball back to Kellie, make a better position under the goal and then call for the ball. Kellie was part
of the play from the first centre pass to the last pass in which a goal was scored for her team (Kellie PORS 2, 3; Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 528-536). Defensively, Kellie read the movement of the ball when the opposition had control. She anticipated the passes and often intercepted and forced the opponents to make a turnover (Kellie PORS 2, 3).

Heather was one of the three best players in the school team and her tactics were equivalent to her competence. Tactics were displayed when she was in the goal shooter's position because when the ball was at the opposite end of the court, Heather had time to think how she was going to get away from her opponent, receive the ball and be in a position to consistently shoot for goals before the ball reached her playing zone. Due to Heather's small height, she had to use tactics most of the time to outsmart her opponent, position herself close to the goal and ultimately gain possession of the ball (Heather PORS 1, 2; Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 140-144).

Taylor used tactics sometimes — more than Wendy, but less than Heather and Kellie. These were dependent on the type of position she assumed. As the goal defender, Taylor tried to block the attempt at goal by the shooter. When Taylor was the goal shooter, she used similar tactics to Heather's in order to receive the ball close to the goals. Other positions assumed by Taylor were wing defence and centre but the use of tactics in these positions was not observed (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 1283-1287; Taylor PORS 2, 3).

Miss Quill believed that Wendy was not sport minded and did not purposefully think about tactics during a game (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2,
Observations revealed that Wendy's involvement on the court was very limited since she was uncoordinated, lacked pace, didn't have full knowledge of the rules and so did not have the attributes to play an active role in the team. Rather, Wendy was a passive participant (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 315-322; Wendy PORS 2, 3).

Football

According to Mr Davin, the school's football coach, Carl had knowledge of tactics, but did not display them during school sport competitions. Mr Davin stated that Carl played club football (Saturday competition for under 13 males) and had knowledge of the tactics used at club level, but was reluctant to display them at school sport competitions (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 291-324). Observations revealed that Carl was fairly passive in his performance and did not take opportunities to deliver results (Carl PORS 2, 3). Carl did not motivate himself to perform to his full potential (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 287-324).

Chris, however, had tactical knowledge of the game of football and displayed his knowledge on the field. He was often placed in the back line positions and had the time and opportunity to read the play before it approached his playing area. Chris used his tactical knowledge in the back line to assist his team mates and help them stay with their opponent and in position. Mr Davin said that males who compete at school football tend to chase the ball all over the field, such that there is limited control. Chris however, had the game knowledge and ability to recognise when and where to chase the ball. He remained in his playing
area, alongside his opponent and did not wander onto other's playing areas. Mr Davin reported that Chris's tactical knowledge was well above his team mates (Carl PORS 2, 3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 89-147).

Sean also read the game well and displayed his tactical knowledge particularly in the back line position. Sean did not wander out of position and remained with his opponent and in his designated playing area (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 922-934, 1371-1395; Sean PORS 1, 2).

Trevor was also placed in back line positions. Mr Davin said that Trevor had knowledge of tactics and used them in the game. Trevor, however, was a deep thinker and required time to read the game before it approached his playing area. Consequently, playing in the back line assisted him to read the game and think about the types of strategies required. Trevor's ability to read the game was not as good as the other Aboriginal students, but Mr Davin was confident that over time and with more practice, improvements would occur (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 540-596, 629-642; Trevor PORS 2, 3).

Game Rules

Each student had knowledge of the basic rules for their respective sport. Some, however, had advanced knowledge of the rules and used them to their advantage.

In the game of netball, Heather and Kellie exhibited full knowledge of the rules and played to advantage (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 528-536). When an obstruction was called by the umpire for instance, Heather and Kellie immediately waited for their opponent to stand beside them and
then they made a pass to each other or to other competent students such as Netti\textsuperscript{14} and Donna\textsuperscript{15} (Heather PORS 1, 2; Kellie PORS 2,3). Those students who did not have full knowledge of the game rules were isolated. Wendy, for example, hovered on the fringes of the court and often ran in the way of her team mates. Wendy understood the rules in relation to which zones she was permitted to play in (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 432-437). She did not however, display knowledge of any other rules and was often called for basic violations such as defending too close to her opponent and stepping (Wendy PORS 2, 3). Taylor on the other hand, demonstrated a fair idea of the rules, particularly when playing in defensive positions. Her knowledge surpassed Wendy's, but not Heather's and Kellie's knowledge of the game rules (Taylor PORS 2, 3).

For football, all the males possessed knowledge of the school competition rules and exhibited the rules in school games. Carl and Trevor had a sound knowledge of the school rules, but when playing on the school field, they exhibited signs of confusion with club rules (Carl PORS 2, 3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 619-625, SCRIPT 2, 287-290; Trevor PORS 2, 3). Chris and Sean displayed more knowledge of the rules for defensive positions (Chris PORS 2,3; Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 1353-1364; Sean PORS 1, 2).

Roles and Positions

This section will present the playing positions and the roles available to students in school sport. The roles and positions available

\textsuperscript{14} Netti is a non-Aboriginal year 7 student who was friends with Kellie and Heather.

\textsuperscript{15} Donna is an Aboriginal year 7 student who participated in the pilot study.
during inter school sport and intra school sport will be examined since games were conducted during these sessions and consequently positions and roles were appointed. The students who fulfilled the roles and positions will be reported as well as the methods by which they were selected. Finally, the influences others had upon student selections will be presented.

Positions

Positions relate to the appointment of playing a specified duty on the sport field. For intra and inter school football 15 positions were available to students and in netball seven positions were available at any one time during a game.

The positions that Aboriginal male students assumed for the inter school football team will be presented, since modified activities were conducted during intra school sport sessions and specific positions were not obvious. The positions assumed by females in both intra and inter school sport will be presented since organised and formal games were conducted at both these sessions.

For each inter school football game, the coach, Mr Davin, allocated positions to students prior to the game. He recorded his decisions in a schedule and informed the students of their playing positions during pre game team talks (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3).

For the netball team, students selected the positions they wanted to play for each game and each quarter. After each quarter, Miss Quill
asked if anyone wanted to exchange positions. Miss Quill did not allocate positions to students themselves, unless there was a dispute (Heather PORS 1,2; Kellie PORS 2,3; Taylor PORS 2,3; Wendy PORS 2,3).

Intra School and Inter School Netball. Heather, Kellie and Wendy played in the A team and Taylor played in the B team. Sometimes, when student attendance was down, the two teams were combined.

For both intra and inter school sessions Heather played in two key positions (goal shooter and centre). She was the goal shooter for all of the games, except for the last game of the inter school competition, in which she played two quarters. For the remaining two quarters, she assumed the centre position. It was at this game that Kellie was absent from the school and Wendy had the opportunity to play goal shooter as well for the last two quarters (Heather PORS 1, 2; Wendy PORS 2, 3). Heather reported that Kellie (when present) often instructed and wanted her to play goal shooter (Heather SCRIPT 3, 328-333).

Kellie mostly assumed the centre position for both the intra and inter school netball team (Kellie PORS 2, 3). On one occasion however, she played one quarter of netball as the goal assistant (Kellie PORS 2). Kellie reported that she preferred to play the centre position because she experienced more participation that any other position on the netball court (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 234-243).

Taylor assumed a number of positions including goal defender, goal shooter, centre, goal keeper and wing defence (Taylor PORS 2,3, SCRIPT 2, 42-49). She reported that her favourite position was goal shooter.
(Taylor SCRIPT 1, 1341-1361, SCRIPT 2, 42-49) although she only played goal shooter for one quarter, since the position was often taken by a non-Aboriginal female (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1357-1369). Leonie, the Aboriginal Education Worker said that Taylor was fairly quiet on the netball court and she had a tendency to stand back and let others tell her what to do (Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/2, 988-999).

Wendy’s favourite position was goal shooter but she only played one quarter in the position during the entire intra and inter school netball competition (Wendy PORS 3, SCRIPT 2/1, 320-324, SCRIPT 3, 244-266). Wendy stated that she did not have the opportunity to play goal shooter because Heather was always the shooter and she did not want to share the position with anyone. Wendy often asked Heather to exchange positions but Heather always refused and Wendy ceased the request (Wendy SCRIPT 3, 244-266). Other positions Wendy assumed included wing defence, goal defender, goal keeper and wing attack (Wendy PORS 2,3).

Inter School Football. Carl reported that he preferred to play centre half forward or full forward in the school football team (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1282-1293, SCRIPT 2, 209-216) and during games he played centre half forward (Carl PORS 3).

Chris and Sean played the majority of inter school games in the centre half back position (Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1). Sean however, also played centre and centre half forward positions (Sean PORS 1). Sean and Chris both expressed disappointment when consistently being placed in the back line (Sean SCRIPT 3, 470-510). Sean stated that he
preferred to play in the forward line. Their coach, Mr Davin, stated that Aboriginal players are “natural” forward line players but he believed that they needed to learn the defensive roles as well, since sometimes Aboriginal students who played in the forward positions allowed their opponent to gain possession of the ball more often than they should and then the Aboriginal students were less likely to perform. Mr Davin said the following about Aboriginal football players:

They’re probably natural forward line players. But I think they need to learn tough part of the game where you’ve actually gotta you know play one on one with somebody. And then your natural skills will actually come out. I think when they play on the forward line they get a bit lazy and they try to cheat. Cheat the the system. They try to get ahead of the play and then make their friend that’s on ’em actually gets a lot of the football. And then they that’s when they get a little bit off the the road you know they don’t sort of like they don’t try hard enough then (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 938-938, 940-942, 944-945, 947-948, 950-950, 952-956).

Trevor’s favourite position was full forward (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 157-168). During inter school games however, he not only played in the full forward position but also full back and centre positions as well (Trevor PORS 3). Trevor expressed his concern about playing several positions in one of the inter school games. He said that in the first half of the game, Naples football team were winning and then in the second half, the coach made several changes to the players’ line up and then the team started losing and eventually lost the game. Trevor stated that the coach should have left players in their original positions because the team was playing well (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 329-350).
Roles

Roles relate to a specific appointment associated with sport in which students were nominated and/or elected. Roles were considered as a duty of leadership, authority and/or responsibility. Table 8.3 illustrates the roles available to students during intra and inter school sport sessions and the Aboriginal students who fulfilled the roles.

Table 8.3

Roles Available to Students During School Sport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport Session</th>
<th>Roles Available</th>
<th>Total Available</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intra School</td>
<td>Team Captain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Carl, Chris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport Captain (year 7)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chris, Kellie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter School</td>
<td>Team Captain (year 7)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Carl, Chris, Trevor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Team Captain. Team captains were sometimes selected for team sports conducted during intra school sport sessions and were dependent on the type of activity performed. For example, the school's football squad trained during intra school sport and modified football games were often played between two opposing teams and so two captains were selected (Carl PORS 2; Chris PORS 2; Trevor PORS 2).

For intra school football sessions, Chris and Carl were selected as opposing team captains during a modified football game (Carl PORS 2;
Matthew, the AIEW, was teaching Chris and Carl at the time and made the selections.

During inter school football games, Mr Davin (coach) selected a year 7 student for the captain's role for each game (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 601-604). He also chose a year 6 student as the vice captain. Chris, Trevor and Carl were chosen as the Year 7 football captains on separate occasions (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Trevor PORS 3).

Captaincy roles were not made available for females during intra and inter school netball games and activities.

**Sport Captain.** Year 7 male and female students were nominated for sport captains and elected by the students of their respective faction team, of which there were four factions (red, blue, green and gold) (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 1292-1321). Selections were made early in the first half of the school year. Students who were successful fulfilled the role until the end of the school year.

The sport captain was responsible for ensuring that the sport equipment was accounted for on a daily basis. The equipment that was utilised during a typical school day was set up onto the sport field prior to any of the sport sessions being conducted. After use, the equipment was packed and stored in the sport shed for the following sport session. This task was rotated among four sport captains and their respective vice captains (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 1193-1211).

During school term three, the intra school athletic carnival was held and the sport captains were responsible for holding the faction team's flag and leading the team to the team's barracks, ready for competition.
Of the total eight positions available, four were assumed by Aboriginal students and of the four positions, three were taken by year 7 Aboriginal students. Of the participants in this study, Kellie was selected as sport captain (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 1292-1321; Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 556-556). Chris was also chosen as a sport captain earlier in the school year by his peers, however, an altercation with a non-Aboriginal male student occurred which caused him to be relieved of his role. Chris stated that he had physically hit the student because he teased him about his name. Chris reported that he was upset about being stripped of the captain's role (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1191-1215).

Nature of Team Sport Participation

This section will describe the nature of student performances in team sports. In other words, do Aboriginal students perform as members of a team or do they perform as individuals in a team context?

At inter school sport, Aboriginal male students performed both individual and team roles when competing in team sports. During inter school football games, Aboriginal males mostly played a team role although they recognised situations when "something extra special" was required to benefit the team. For instance Mr Davin commented that Chris's style of play was indicative of several Aboriginal males in the school football team. He said of Chris, "He knows when the team's in trouble and he has to play a little bit of individual stuff and I know that he can share the ball when its required "(Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 114-116).
Aboriginal males produced an individual play in which the skill demonstrated was well above the team's standard. A special play included taking a spectacular mark, kicking a goal from a long distance, or making a great tackle. Carl, Chris Sean and Trevor were all capable of playing within the team structure and when required, they also played outside the team structure (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 89-147, SCRIPT 2, 254-270, 958-969, 1259-1273).

Females primarily played a team role when competing in interschool netball games. Although Heather, Kellie and Taylor possessed the ability to demonstrate their individual skills, they chose not to display their skill. Rather, they shared the ball and cooperated with their team mates (Heather PORS 1; Kellie PORS 3; Taylor PORS 3). The only discretion involved Heather, since it was revealed that she did not enjoy playing netball with peers who did not have adequate skill. Miss Quill reported the following about Heather:

She's a team player but she'd prefer to play with people that are quite skilled or you know at her level. So she'd she'd be really happy as a part of that. If there's people weaker than her she's yeah not that good at being a team player with them. I don't think that she would pass to people like that or encourage them (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 153-159).

In Wendy's case, individual plays were not performed (Wendy PORS 3). She did not have the skills to outperform her team mates, but more importantly Wendy enjoyed the structure of team sports since it allowed her to merely participate and share and cooperate with others (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 412-421).
Influence of Others

This section will describe the influence others had upon Aboriginal students’ sport performances and the roles and positions they assumed. The role “others” play is a salient feature in the development of self-concept and self-esteem and requires analysis in this thesis. In particular, the feedback given for children’s competence contains important information that children utilise to determine their self-concepts and evaluate their self-esteem (Harter, 1978, 1980, 1985). The findings revealed that peers (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) impacted little on Aboriginal students’ sport performances for intra and inter school sport but they exerted some control upon the selections of the roles and positions assumed by Aboriginal students in sport.

Sport teachers and coaches had more influence than peers upon Aboriginal students’ sport performances, particularly males’ performances. Females were more likely to be influenced by peers about the positions they played and thus this had some impact on their performances.

The following section will describe intra and inter school performances while a separate section will present the influences others had upon Aboriginal student performances during physical education.

School Sport Performances - Female Students

Females tended to be focussed on the netball game and their performances were less likely to be controlled by adult others (coach or teacher). They were in charge of how they performed (Heather PORS 1;
Kellie PORS 3; Taylor PORS 3; Wendy PORS 3). In Heather's case, her team mates, Kellie and Netti assisted her performance (as goal shooter) because "they're big and they know and they know when to get the ball and that, and they know where to stand to get the ball" (Heather SCRIPT 3, 386-388). Netti and Kellie's performances positively influenced Heather's performances.

Kellie was more likely to assist her team mates, rather than them helping her to perform (Kellie PORS 3). Compared with her team mates, Kellie possessed advanced skill and knowledge and often acted in a leadership role. She shared the ball, helped team mates, encouraged them and showed acceptable sportsmanship qualities at all times (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 384-412). Kellie displayed the ability to influence her team's performance.

Taylor and Wendy were less likely to play in their favourite netball positions because team mates did not share or rotate positions with them (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1357-1369; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 244-266). In this sense, their team mates influenced their participation and performance. Consequently, they were often placed in defensive roles by their team mates (Taylor PORS 3; Wendy PORS 3). Taylor and Wendy possessed quiet and reserved personalities and did not question authority, even that of their team mates and so they were subject to some influence from peers (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 290-292; Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/2, 988-999).
School Sport Performances - Male Students

Mr Davin directed the performance of his team. When males made a mistake on the field, then Mr Davin called the individual from the field to address the mistake or he often spoke to the individual concerned during team talks at half time and full time (Carl PORS 3; Chris PORS 3; Sean PORS 1; Trevor PORS 3).

Mr Davin had high expectations of some students and when they did not perform, he often addressed the individual concerned and stated that they had let the team down. Most often, this address was made during team talks and all students were present to witness what was said. The coach therefore, communicated his expectations to individuals in a team setting. Carl was often addressed in this manner since Mr Davin believed that Carl was not performing to his potential. In one of the inter school games, Mr Davin spoke with Carl and he was immediately substituted during a game. Mr Davin said that Carl gets disappointed, but as soon as he gets back out on to the field, he plays better (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 595-612).

Sean was also influenced by the coach in a manner similar to Carl but he was also influenced by his peers. Mr Davin believed that good sportsmanship qualities were formed with peers and did not necessarily develop from the sport field but from interactions in the playground. Mr Davin said Sean often interacted with friends who consistently misbehaved at school and this influenced his behaviour in sport. During some football games for example, Sean was not permitted to participate because of his misbehaviour in the class room and/or school ground (Mr
Chris interacted with a group of friends who were considered by Mr Davin as the "right group to mess with" (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 1334-1340). Chris's friends displayed good sportsmanlike behaviours in the playground (such as sharing, cooperating, helping, giving others a chance and playing by the rules) and which were modelled in a similar manner on the football field (Chris PORS 2, 3). Mr Davin reported that Chris displayed exceptional sportsmanship qualities (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 58-62) and had the ability to motivate and lead his peers and positively influence their performances (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 64-83).

Trevor tended to interact with his peers in sport in the same manner that he wanted to be treated (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 617-618). Trevor did not allow situations or individuals to dictate or impair his performance at school sports (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 612-616). Mr Davin however, had a positive influence upon Trevor's football performances, since he gave clear and concise instructions that assisted in Trevor's learning and skill development (Trevor PORS 2, 3).

Overall, it can be said that the on field sport performances of the Aboriginal students of this study were not greatly influenced by their peers. Male performances were reasonably directed by their coach, whereas the netball coach had limited influence upon females' netball performances.
Performances During Physical Education

The degree of skill displayed was influenced by student participation. In other words the more involvement experienced then the more opportunity to perform and display skills. Inconsistent participation in physical education did not allow students to fully demonstrate their competence. The inconsistencies were made in relation to how physical education sessions were organised, who taught the sessions and the nature of the game and activities played. For some activities for example, adult supervision was minimal. Also, some activities were not challenging to some students’ skill levels. Mr Davin made the point that physical education is not organised in that the activities performed do not reflect the games performed in intra and inter school sport sessions. He also pointed out that some students, particularly Sean, tended to misbehave during physical education since there was a lack of organisation and control. Furthermore, the level of skill taught at physical education does not challenge those Aboriginal students who excel in sport. The skills displayed by Aboriginal students in physical education were well above average. They did not match the skill levels required in physical education but surpassed it (Mr Davin SCRIPT 2, 995-1021).

Sport Positions Filled By Female Students

The allocation of positions for the school netball team was arranged by the team themselves. Kellie had some influence over the positions that other Aboriginal students filled. She possessed attributes that other
Aboriginal netball players did not. For instance, she was the most competent at netball, students looked up to her, she demonstrated an ability to lead and played in a position (centre) which allowed her to dictate the movement of the ball throughout her team (Kellie PORS 2,3; Miss Quill 1, 649-662).

Heather did not share her position as goal shooter and this had an effect on others in the team since they wanted to play in this position but were refused by Heather. Specifically, Wendy reported that Heather refused her on many occasions and eventually Wendy stopped asking Heather. Miss Quill stated that Wendy was often the student who was always well mannered and always accepted authority (Miss Quill 2, 280-285), whereas Heather questioned authority and was critical of students who were not as competent at sport as she was (Miss Quill 2, 5-26, SCRIPT 2, 163-175). Wendy only played in the goal shooter’s position on one occasion during the entire intra and inter school sport sessions.

In another similar case, Taylor wanted to play goal shooter but was refused since a non-Aboriginal female did not want to exchange positions with any of the team members. Taylor was also reported as an individual who was dictated to by others simply because she was a quiet person (Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/2, 988-999).

Sport Positions Filled By Male Students

For the football team, the coach had control over the positions played. Peer influences did not impact on the coach’s choice and decisions, rather his decisions were based on his coaching and individual student
performances.

Sport Roles

Carl and Chris were selected by Matthew as team captains for a modified football game performed during an intra school sport session. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Matthew joked, laughed, teased and talked with Carl and Chris during sport sessions. Carl and Chris socially interacted with Matthew in a way that was not repeated with other significant adults in the school sport setting and Matthew's social relationship may have dictated his choice and decisions for the team captains.

Selections for the sports captain by school peers revealed that potential captains were known for their sport competence and popularity. In Kellie's case, she was aware of her sport competence and popularity since she did not need to make friends, rather peers approached her (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 649-662). She was also a good leader since she shared the ball with others, she never criticised and always assisted and encouraged team mates (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 386-412).

Chris also had a quality to lead his peers. He had the ability to motivate others and make his team mates play better. He demonstrated sportsmanship on the sport field at all times (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 64-83).

Teachers had influence over the de-selection of sport captains. In Chris's case, the captain's role was taken from him due to his misbehaviour in the school ground.
Summary

This chapter described the sport performances of Aboriginal students and presented the roles and positions assumed in school sport, including the methods in which roles and positions were chosen.

Overall, it was found that Aboriginal students who displayed above average skills in both team and individual sports, also gave effort toward tasks more often than those students who displayed below average skills. Two of the Aboriginal students who did not display above average skills experienced some weight problems, which may have impacted upon their performance and perhaps their desire to do their best.

Aboriginal females tried hard at all times to perform to their highest potential but they were reluctant to display individual skills on a consistent basis. Males, however, were more likely to demonstrate their above average skill to their peers and were also more likely to display individual skills during a team sport. Males acknowledged the game situations when "something special" was required in order for their team to perform. They produced a skilled mark or set up a play which resulted in a favourable outcome for the team. Sometimes, males were confused about the rules played in school sport, since they were confused with club rules.

All skilled students engaged in thinking about and applying tactics in a team game situation. The football coach developed tactics, but the netball coach did not and the females' netball tactics were not developed to the same level as the males' football tactics.

It was found that both males and females nominated offensive
positions as their preferred positions. In netball, females reported the position of goal shooter, while in football, males preferred forward positions.

Sport competent females (Kellie and Heather) played in popular positions such as goal shooter and centre for the majority of the school netball competition. Competent males (Chris and Sean) were often placed in the less popular positions in the defensive back line. Sometimes however, they were repositioned to at least one other position during the game.

The less competent students and those who presented a shy and/or reserved personality (Taylor and Wendy) were often instructed by team mates about the positions they should play. Taylor and Wendy for instance, played an average of three positions in one game and experienced a total of five positions throughout the entire school netball competition. In the football competition, Mr Davin controlled the positioning of his students and regardless of their competence, they played at least two positions in a game.

Students selected their peers for the captain's roles of their respective faction team. The criteria for selection were based on the potential captain's demonstrated competence in sport as well as popularity.

For inter school sport teams (football and netball), only the football team selected a captain and vice captain. The nomination was made by the coach who selected students based on their previous game performance.
For intra school sport activities and games, captains were chosen by Matthew, an Aboriginal Education Worker. His selections were based on the nature of his social interactions with students.
CHAPTER 9
PERCEPTIONS OF AND ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL SPORT

This chapter will present Aboriginal students' ideas of school sport. Information contained in this chapter is drawn directly from students' interviews. Aboriginal students' perceptions of and attitudes to sport in relation to common themes were extracted and are presented here including: (a) physical education, intra and inter school sport sessions (in comparison to club sports), (b) game and sport preferences, (c) perceptions of sports teachers, and (d) attitudes about sports role models, rewards in sport and game outcome. Firstly though, students' perceptions of the overall importance of sport are presented.

Perceptions of Sport

Overall, Aboriginal students' perceptions of sport were positive since sport was viewed as an integral part of developing their social competence. More importantly though, Aboriginal students regarded sport as a vehicle in which Aboriginal people could prove their worth to others and disprove negative stereotypes of Aborigines.

It was found that Aboriginal students viewed school sport (physical education, intra and inter sport) as an opportunity to avoid class work and to avoid being in a classroom. They believed that school sport was important for many purposes such as: (a) learning new games, (b) developing existing sport skills, (c) promoting a healthy lifestyle, (d) alleviating boredom and, (e) providing opportunities to demonstrate sport competence. The following section will present the perceptions Aboriginal
students had of sport in general with a focus on school sport.

Generic Purpose of Sport

Aboriginal students reported that sport was important to all Aboriginal people since it gave them a sense of purpose and pride about identifying as an Aborigine. Students viewed sport as a means for Aboriginal people to capitalise on their sport dominance and gain a sense of equality and acceptance from non-Aboriginal people.

Sport was also perceived as a way to develop life skills, visualise career pathways, improve and develop appropriate behaviours, develop sport and social competence, promote a healthy lifestyle, encourage homework, provide leadership opportunities and experience positive affect (refer to figure 9.1 on page 250).

Development of Life Skills. Students perceived that participation in sport assisted in developing goal setting and visualisation skills (Chris SCRIPT 2, 186-193; Heather SCRIPT 2, 299-310; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 339-343, 378-388).

Kellie and Chris for example, believed that playing sport made them more aware of some of the future sport options available to them. Chris for instance, said he was knowledgeable of the National Basketball Association (NBA) competition conducted in the United States of America. He also was aware of American basketball player, Michael Jordan and stated that “one day you might make it into the NBA [and be like] Jordan” (Chris SCRIPT 2, 190-191). However, he did not report his ideas or awareness of Australia’s basketball competition, nor its players.

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Develop life skills
Promote healthy lifestyle
Seek and gain equality
Develop sport competence
Develop appropriate behaviours
Encourage homework
Leadership opportunities
Develop social competence

Figure 9.1. Student Perceptions of the Generic Importance of Sport
Like Chris, Kellie was not sure of the basketball competitions in Australia, since she described her sporting opportunities in broad terms and did not actually identify the competition structure. She said, "It's like I'm playing basketball and as I get older I could play in one of the big teams" [italics added] (SCRIPT 2, 341-343). Kellie reported that Aboriginal track athlete Cathy Freeman (Commonwealth Games track gold medallist) provided the means and encouragement for her to set long term goals in sport. She said "We could as we're growing up we could be like Cathy Freeman and get to represent all the Nyoongar fullas" (SCRIPT 2, 382-385).

Heather reported that role models assisted in goal setting for life, rather than just for sport. She reported that Aboriginal athletes Cathy Freeman and Nova Peris-Kneebone (Olympic Games hockey gold medallist and Commonwealth Games hockey and track gold medallist) were important because "they're Aboriginal and they win. They put role models on for the younger Aboriginal kids. And for the older kids as well. And they show like to get up there and do something with your life" (SCRIPT 2, 299-299, 304-305, 307-307, 309-310).

It is important to note that Heather, Chris, Sean and Kellie were reported to be highly competent at sport. Students who were rated as average or below average in sport competence (such as Taylor, Trevor, Wendy and Carl) did not consider that sport assisted them in learning and developing goal setting and visualisation skills.

**Develop Appropriate Behaviours.** Aboriginal students perceived that other Aboriginal children and youths were involved in anti-
social activities such as drinking alcohol and sniffing glue and often displayed inappropriate behaviours (fighting and swearing) when in the public eye (Carl SCRIPT 2, 453-480; Heather SCRIPT 1, 910-913; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 1026-1050). Aboriginal students reported that they were aware of friends and relatives who displayed these inappropriate behaviours and anti-social acts. They believed sport was an important tool to discourage Aboriginal children, including themselves, from getting into trouble. More specifically, sport was viewed as an outlet for Aboriginal children to alleviate their boredom, occupy free time (after school and on weekends) and thereby provide an alternative activity to “mischief probably from stealing and maybe drinking [alcohol] and sniffing [glue]” (Carl SCRIPT 2, 473-474), “the streets, sniffing glue and that” (Heather SCRIPT 1, 910-913) and “town and sniff glue. And fight” (Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 1030-1030, 1036-1036).

Again, it is important to note that those students (Carl and Wendy, with the exception of Heather16) who perceived sport as a means to avoid getting into trouble, possessed average to below average levels of sport competence.

Two students who attained average to above average levels of sport competence (Chris and Kellie), perceived sport as a means to encourage and develop appropriate behaviours (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1079-1089; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 1142-1192) since school sport offered opportunities to gain selection in several leadership roles. Both Kellie and Chris held far more

16 In Heather’s case, she had a tendency to occupy herself with other’s troubles at school and was often viewed by teachers and other students as a troublemaker (Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 1142-1186).
leadership positions in school sport than the other Aboriginal students of the study, as well as the other Aboriginal students at the school.

Behaviour was used as a measuring device in school sport. If students, for example, did not exhibit good behaviours then their role was stripped from them. This was the case for Chris who held the senior male captain's role for the gold faction athletic team. He misbehaved in the school ground and then his title was taken from him by the teachers (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1191-1215).

It was perceived that leadership roles such as captain and sport councillor encourage students to display "good" behaviours at school. The importance of school sport leadership positions to promote and reward good behaviours was highlighted by Kellie, who held several leadership roles in the school sport program and was aware of the implications of misbehaving at school:

I used to follow her [Heather] everywhere like get in trouble with her, last year. But. Cause we used to be in the office every day gettin' jarred and all that. Because we were all following Heather around when she was fighting, like making all the trouble. She's the only one who gets in trouble but not that much. Cause like I'm student councillor and sports captain. And I don't want to get into trouble because otherwise I'll lose both those jobs (Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 1142-1145, 1147-1148, 1150-1151, 1182-1183, 1185-1186).

Develop Social Competence. Sport, particularly team sports provided an environment in which close, personal contact with others occurred. Some sports such as basketball and football accentuated social interactions more than other sports (netball, soccer, volleyball). Hence, skills in cooperation, sharing and assisting others were developed. Consequently, Aboriginal students perceived that playing sport provided
the opportunity to make friends and develop popularity, particularly with non-Aboriginal students (Chris SCRIPT 2, 338-361; Heather SCRIPT 3, 414-417; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 591-645).

Chris (SCRIPT 2, 338-361) and Trevor (SCRIPT 2, 591-645) said that they only preferred to play sport if their team mates (in football) shared the ball, did not "hog it", and cooperated with one another. Chris stated it was more important to share the ball than to kick goals.

Regardless of Aboriginal students' levels of sport competence, they assisted their non-Aboriginal team mates in school sport by helping them to perform skills and teaching them how to play by the rules of the games. In this sense, Aboriginal students' abilities to socially interact with others (particularly non-Aboriginal students) improved since they conversed with and physically assisted others (Chris SCRIPT 1, 956-975; Heather SCRIPT 2, 127-138; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 901-942; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 391-405).

Aboriginal students assisted non-Aboriginal students in various ways in sport. Chris, for instance, perceived that he helped others by playing in their team. He said, "when they lose in the footy, they want me to go in their team. And I go in their team" (Chris SCRIPT 1, 970-971).

Heather stated that she had to help others since non-Aboriginal students were not as good as Aboriginal students in sport and that teachers did not assist those students who were not competent at sport. She reported that, "Wadjallahs they they can't hardly play sports good. And because the teachers don't hardly help them, so the other kids gotta
Kellie gave direct instructions to others in sport. For instance, in a game of tee ball Kellie instructed the batter with the following, "keep your eye on the ball and take your time," (SCRIPT 1/2, 907-908) or in netball, she said to the goal shooter who attempted to shoot goals, "take your time" (SCRIPT 1/2, 915-915). Kellie reported she liked to assist students in sport, but preferred to offer her assistance to Aboriginal students because "Wadjallahs think they're better than Nyongars. And they try to do everything. Like better. And they try to make their self look good" (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 924-925, 927-927, 929-929).

Trevor provided verbal encouragement and direct instructions in sport to less competent students. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Trevor indicated his instructions to fellow non-Aboriginal student Jordan (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 393-396, 398-399, 401-403).

Aboriginal students reported that sport was a way to meet and make friends (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1268-1281; Chris SCRIPT 2, 174-185, 236-243, 366-368; Heather SCRIPT 2, 91-104, 108-111, 127-138, SCRIPT 3, 412-419; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 679-689; Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 845-853, SCRIPT 2, 143-153; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 367-380; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 671-672). Club sports however, were preferred to school sport since there were more people playing club sports and thus it was perceived that there were increased opportunities to meet more new friends than at school. This perspective toward club sport was also held by other Aboriginal students, particularly those who currently or previously competed in club sports (Carl, Trevor, Heather, Kellie and Chris for instance). Kellie said, "when
you're at school you already know the people and if you're with clubs you get more friends, get to know more friends. And more people" (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 685-687, 689-689). Heather also believed that sport was a way to make non-Aboriginal friends (SCRIPT 2, 127-129, 134-135, 137-138).

Taylor perceived that sport was an avenue to make friends with Aboriginal students who did not like her or who wanted to argue with her. She stated that sport was important "cause you can meet other Aboriginals and some Aboriginals might co-operate with you and, and become your friend" (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 850-850, 8520-853).

For Trevor, sport provided the opportunities to socialise with the friends he already had, rather than make new friends at school (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 367-380).

Aboriginal students believed that participation in sport did not always produce popularity with other students (Taylor SCRIPT 2, 161-163), unless they demonstrated their sport competence (Chris SCRIPT 2, 236-243), or represented the school during inter school sport competitions (Heather SCRIPT 3, 110-132).

Chris, for instance, stated that intra school sport provided an opportunity to perform in front of his friends and display his competence at sport. He believed that his popularity among his friends was challenged regularly when playing sport with each other (Chris SCRIPT 2, 236-243).

Heather perceived she was liked in the classroom, but not in the sport field. She said that her popularity was conditional. Competing
and beating a competitor in intra school tee ball, for instance, did not make her popular. In fact, Heather reported that the opposition got upset. She stated that non-Aboriginal students possessed a different perspective when she represented the school for inter school competitions and believed that she was popular when she held the goal shooter's position in the school netball team because the team was aiming to win for the school (Heather SCRIPT 3, 110-132).

Other students reported that they socialised in sport with the friends they already maintained (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 367-380; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 506-510). Trevor reported that "we just pick the person that we know, like our friends like Stuart, me, Carl and Bob that's all we pick, us four" (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 373-375). Wendy said, "I just get like all the same friends all the time. Me, Taylor. Oh I won't say my cousins cause they always with me (Wendy SCRIPT 3, 506-507,509-510).

When talking about sport in general, two students reported they would experience popularity if they performed an extraordinary feat such as beating a famous sports person at sport (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 450-465) or achieved publicity and status as a professional athlete (Carl SCRIPT 2, 574-579).

Carl said that he would gain popularity only if he achieved success as a professional football competitor in the Australian Football League and appeared on television every weekend (Carl SCRIPT 2, 574-579).

Kellie perceived that school sport did not make her popular. She believed that her popularity would be greatly influenced only if she competed and succeeded over a famous athlete like basketball icon,
Develop Sport Competence. School sport was considered a minor contributor to the development of students' sports competence. In fact, Trevor believed that sport was more beneficial for non-Aboriginal students since they were less competent at sport than Aboriginal students. Trevor also stated that Aboriginal students did not always possess sport equipment at home and thereby had to utilise makeshift items such as plastic drink bottles and tennis balls as a football. He reported that "blackfellas they play with anything they can play with plastic ball plastic [drink bottle]. They play with anything they got. Just kick play with tennis ball. We just play foogy. Yeah we play with anything" (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 235-237, 270-271, 273-273, 275-275).

Only one female reported that school sport provided Aboriginal students with the opportunities to play and experience varied sport equipment as well as learn games (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 877-885).

Promote Healthy Life Style. Aboriginal students said that sport (that is, no distinction between club and school sport) encouraged them to practise a healthy lifestyle. Specifically sport provided the opportunity to gain fitness (Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 1023-1032, SCRIPT 2, 339-343; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1528-1538; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 982-987, SCRIPT 2/1, 47-53, SCRIPT 3/0, 315-324), reduce sedentary habits such as watching television and playing computer games at home (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1098-1100), alleviate boredom (Taylor SCRIPT 2, 14-15; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 72-111; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 982-987, SCRIPT 2/1, 47-53; SCRIPT 3/0, 315-324) and discourage smoking and the use of...
substances (glue). (Carl SCRIPT 2, 453-480; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 1026-1050).

**Encourage Home Work.** Wendy (SCRIPT 2/1, 203-221) viewed school sport, particularly inter school sport, as an incentive to complete her homework in order to participate in the inter school netball competition. At Naples Primary School, class teachers possessed authority to prevent students from participating in school sport if students had not completed home work or misbehaved in the classroom or playground.

**Leadership Opportunities.** For some Aboriginal students, particularly those rated with above average sport skills, sport was seen as an avenue to experience leadership positions (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1079-1089; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 1142-1192). Kellie stated that school sport was important because it provided her with leadership opportunities. Chris however, said participation in club football was important to realise the role of team captain.

**Equality.** Sport competent Aboriginal females perceived that sport was important for achieving equality as Aborigines within the school environment and within the wider community (Heather SCRIPT 1, 206-260, 612-684, SCRIPT 2, 108-111; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 917-929, SCRIPT 2, 368-377, 386-444). Both Kellie and Heather perceived that non-Aboriginals believed they were “better” than Aboriginal people:

> Wadjallas think they’re the only ones who can, like they show off in front of all their family. And they think that Nyoongurs can’t do that. Sometimes they say like we’re better than you. They try like raise their voice when they’re tryin' to talk. And like they'll look at they'll stare at ya and then they'll turn away and talk. And it makes ya wild because you think that they’re talking about ya (Kellie
Sport however, was perceived as the medium for Aborigines to
determine and judge their equality:

she [Lena] thinks she's good as well. Out the front of her hair she dyes
it all red, she's mundung\textsuperscript{17} for all the boys in the class. And she says
she went out with all the boys in the class, but she hasn't. \textit{She can't
even play, she can't play no sport} [italics added]. (Heather SCRIPT 1,

Nyoongars don't think they're better than everyone and white like
Wadjallahs they're just because they like score a goal or something
they think they're good and all that. \textit{And they think that they're better
than Nyoongars. But they're not. Like better at playing sports than
Nyoongars} [italics added] (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 368-371, 373-374, 377-
377).

School Sport

In this section, Aboriginal students' perceptions of school sport are
presented. In particular, students' thoughts about sports preferences and
sports teachers and coaches are included. A section of students' percep-
tions about club sport is presented last, in order to uncover why
club sport was preferred to school sport (refer to table 9.1 on page 263).

\textbf{Inter school Sport.} Analysis of sport preferences revealed that
students mostly preferred inter school sport to intra school sport and
physical education. The reasons for the preference for inter school sport
were to: (a) seek a challenge (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1152-1157; Chris SCRIPT 2,
130-145), (b) experience competition against other schools and students
(Carl SCRIPT 1, 1152-1157; Sean SCRIPT 1, 637-642; Taylor SCRIPT
1/2, 1286-1291; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 130-152; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 988-997,
\textsuperscript{17} Mundung is a word of the Aboriginal English vocabulary which can be defined as to
flaunt, or to model and display one's self.
the classroom and school work (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1023-1035; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 130-152). In all, the most common theme was that Aboriginal students (regardless of their sport competence) preferred inter school sport because they wanted to play against "new" schools and "new" students.

Highly sport competent males however, expressed their desire to compete against other schools because they were not familiar with visiting teams' standards of play and skill levels. This competition provided an unknown element of surprise and challenge (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1152-1157; Chris SCRIPT 2, 130-145).

Because males had not competed against their opposition previously, they reported that they had to play to the best of their ability in order to "challenge 'em. See how good they are" (Chris SCRIPT 2, 141-141, 145-145).

Less common reasons for the preference for inter school sport competitions were reported by Kellie and Trevor. Firstly, Kellie (SCRIPT 2, 317-326) stated that unlike intra school sport competitions, she perceived she would experience less torment from the opposition team competing in the inter school competitions. She said that she didn't know members of the opposition team and therefore perceived she was less likely to be teased if her school team lost the competition "because like you don't see that school everyday and they don't torment you. Like when you like like say you lost. They they don't tease ya as much as like when
You're playing intra-school (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 320-321, 323-323, 325-326).

Both Trevor (SCRIPT 2, 130-152) and Kellie (SCRIPT 1/2, 1023-1035) reported that they preferred inter-school sport because it provided the opportunity to get away from the classroom and class work.

**Intra School Sport.** Students preferred intra-school sport to physical education because it involved an actual game of a team sport and there was more time involved which gave them more time to play. However, intra-school sport was not as popular as inter-school sport since students competed against their peers and they were familiar with them and their sport abilities and capabilities (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1152-1157, SCRIPT 2, 253-267; Sean SCRIPT 1, 637-642; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1286-1291; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 130-152; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 988-997, SCRIPT 2/1, 244-296, SCRIPT 3, 230-238).

Again, Carl’s perceptions of intra-school sport illustrated his desire to compete. He stated:

*nah that’s [intra school sport] boring it’s just not worth playing. I don’t like playing. Sometimes it’s good. When like, If like Mr Crisp [year 6 class teacher] is playing or someone. Or the teacher. But when it’s just the kids playing it’s boring (Carl SCRIPT 2, 256-267).*

Again, Carl (SCRIPT 2, 302-318) continually expressed his need for a challenge:

I: Is there anything good about playing sport at school?
Carl: Yeah sometimes. Like except when Mr Crisp plays [basketball] with us.
I: When Mr Crisp plays? Like he jumps in the team with yous?
Carl: Yeah or he plays against us.
I: Yeah and do you match up with him?
Carl: Yeah.
I: Oh is that why you like it?
Carl: Yep. Mmm and I like it when, we played the teachers verse student. And when I matched up with Mr White [Deputy Principal].
Table 9.1

**Salient Features of Sport**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Education</th>
<th>Intra School Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dislike for coed competition</td>
<td>Actual team sport games played</td>
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<tr>
<td>No choice in activities</td>
<td>More time for active participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team sport tactics are not taught</td>
<td>Small challenge to sport competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team sport rules are not taught</td>
<td>Opportunity to socialise with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring and simple activities and games</td>
<td>Small degree of competition</td>
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<tr>
<td>No challenge to sport competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity for active participation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity for team sports games</td>
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<tr>
<td>No teaching of new sport skills</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inter School Sport</th>
<th>Club Sport</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competition against unfamiliar opponents</td>
<td>Increased opportunities to socialise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to sport competence</td>
<td>Make new friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release from class and work</td>
<td>More opportunities to demonstrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less opportunity to experience torment from peers</td>
<td>sport competence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>More competitors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Constant challenges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encouragement of new sport skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to play regular rules with adult sized</td>
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<td></td>
<td>equipment</td>
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In sum, intra school sport was viewed as an opportunity to play for fun (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1090-1094; Sean SCRIPT 2, 49-51), something to do (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1090-1094; Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 872-876) and to get "out of class" (Carl SCRIPT 2, 156-159).

Physical Education. Physical education was perceived as boring since children stated that there was a lack of variety in the games and activities available (Chris SCRIPT 2, 529-544; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1145-1162, SCRIPT 2, 332-338; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1462-1484; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 707-761; Wendy SCRIPT 2, 439-462).

Female Aboriginal students stated that similar and familiar activities were repeatedly conducted during physical education and did not contribute to their enjoyment. Females reported that they wanted to learn new sports (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1157-1162; Wendy SCRIPT 2, 439-462) or separate into teams and play popular sports such as basketball and netball during physical education instead of playing modified games and performing activities (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1462-1484).

Aboriginal males reported that they wanted to have a choice in the types of sports and activities conducted for physical education and that the teacher should ask the students about their sport preferences (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1425-1459; Chris SCRIPT 1, 1151-1160).

Furthermore, males wanted to learn new sports that they didn't know or hadn't had the opportunity to play previously. Males reported that physical education should teach sport tactics and rules of team sports (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1151-1184; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 707-761). Chris (SCRIPT 1, 1172-1184) wanted to learn basketball, football, tee ball and
baseball, whereas Trevor (SCRIPT 2, 741-761) nominated tennis, netball, softball and soccer. Trevor said the following about physical education:

Trevor: She [Miss Quill] tries to learn us how to throw tennis balls.
I: Tennis balls?
Trevor: She learns us how to throw tennis balls.
I: What for?
Trevor: Oh step forward and go like that there.
I: Yeah but why do you why do you gotta throw tennis balls for?
Trevor: I don't know. Throwing [inaudible], and running.
I: And running?
Trevor: It's all we did.
I: That's all you do?
Trevor: Throwing a tennis ball and running. Its nothing. Everyone can throw a ball, everyone can run (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 731-745).

Trevor's experience of physical education was that activities were simplistic and did not provide a challenge to him (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 741-761).

Carl (SCRIPT 2, 228-247, 378-401) however, stated that physical education was the "best" activity at school. Analysis of the physical education activities at the time showed that Carl was learning how to pitch for baseball and as part of the activity the pitcher was rewarded with points for the accuracy of the pitch. Carl stated that he enjoyed physical education because the baseball activity provided him with a challenge to beat his own pitching score as well as that of his peers.

Sean stated that changes to the current physical education programme were not required since he was satisfied with the games and activities experienced during physical education (Sean SCRIPT 3, 453-470). He did state however, that tactics of team sports should be taught, since the skills training performed during physical education only assisted minimally during a "real game" situation. Sean's perspective
was supported by other Aboriginal male students (Chris SCRIPT 2, 529-544; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 707-761).

Mixed gender participation in sports such as basketball, football and soccer limited female involvement. Females reported that they did not like playing football or soccer for fear of being injured (Heather SCRIPT 2, 71-74; Taylor SCRIPT 1, 898-917; SCRIPT 1/2, 1383-1403; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 362-371) or for fear of rough play from males (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 571-573; Taylor SCRIPT 1, 898-917, SCRIPT 1/2, 1401-1401). Females enjoyed basketball but reported that males were reluctant to cooperate and share the ball with female team members during a game situation (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 575-577; Wendy PORS 1).

Trevor was the only male who responded to the notion of mixed gender participation of sport. He said that he had played a modified game of football with female team members. He reported that it was a boring experience as he believed that females did not have the skill to play football. Trevor excluded Aboriginal females Heather and Kellie from this judgment, however, because they demonstrated their competence of kicking and hand passing a football during a game. Trevor stated that they were good football players and didn't mind playing with them although he continued to report that he disliked playing with females who were unfamiliar with the game rules (Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 556-579).

Club Sport. Carl, Chris and Kellie were current participants in club sport, playing basketball for their local club teams. They possessed average to above average levels of sport skills (as assessed at school.
Club sports for instance, provided more opportunities for them to develop and demonstrate competence since there were more competitors present compared to school sports and because of the enforcement of 'regular full game' rules. The important finding is that for those currently involved in club sports preferred to play sport against competitors who were unfamiliar to them and thus encouraged them to play at their best at all times. The context of club sports encouraged these Aboriginal students to learn skills and display their competence.

Club sports (particularly basketball) enforced 'regular full game' rules and the use of adult sized equipment. Again, this context allowed Aboriginal students to experience an environment that challenged their competence on a continual basis (Carl SCRIPT 2, 180-197). Aboriginal students were eager to learn new skills and to develop competence in their chosen sport.

Club sports also provided an environment where more opportunities for socialisation existed. For example, there were more people involved and more opportunities to make "new" friends (Carl SCRIPT 2, 180-197; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 679-697), or in Chris's (SCRIPT 2, 174-185) case, socialise with friends from previous schools. It is important to note that those students who preferred club sports to school sport were rated with average to above average sport skills and included Kellie, Chris and Carl. These students were also competitors in current and previous club sport competitions. For a comparison with other
students' preferences, refer to table 9.2 below.

Heather, Sean and Taylor however, who possessed above average to average skill levels and were also current competitors in club sports liked to play both club sport and school sport. Sean played football at the same club as Carl. Taylor was a member of a netball team and Heather played basketball in the same team as Kellie. They (Heather SCRIPT 2, 248-251; Sean SCRIPT 2, 628-631, 550-555, SCRIPT 3, 48-51; Taylor SCRIPT 2, 269-280).

Table 9.2

Sport Preferences According to Skill Level, Gender and Club Sport Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Skill Level</th>
<th>Sport Preference</th>
<th>Club Participation</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
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Key: 1------Average
2------Above average
3------Average to above average
4------Below average to average

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Wendy and Trevor were not current participants of club sport and they expressed their preference for inter school sport because of the opportunity to play sport against children other than those who attended their school (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 130-152; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 290-298).

Preferences. Team sports were preferred by Aboriginal students because of the increased opportunities for active participation, although females reported that they also enjoyed individual sports (refer to table 9.3 below). It is important to note that all of the sports preferences reported by students were available at the school and were played at some time.

Table 9.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Sport Preferences According to Gender</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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Males for instance, preferred baseball (Carl SCRIPT 2, 248-249), football (Sean SCRIPT 2, 121-122, SCRIPT 3, 38-44; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 151-154, SCRIPT 2, 129-156) and tee ball (Sean SCRIPT 2, 224-225; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 238-247), while females enjoyed volleyball (Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 1098-1106), netball (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 889-893, SCRIPT 1/2, 1374-1377, SCRIPT 2, 34-35), basketball (Heather SCRIPT 1, 612-642; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 955-975; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 966-970) and tee ball (Heather SCRIPT 1, 612-642; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 955-975; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1404-1416).

There were a number of reasons why students preferred team sports. The main one was the increased opportunities to get actively involved in the actual play. Sports such as netball, football and basketball provided ample playing time and involvement. In netball however, Wendy pointed out that her involvement was limited to the positions assumed and the respective zones permitted to play (Wendy SCRIPT 1/1, 966-970).

Other reasons for the preference for team sports reported by males were: (a) the appealing nature of the game itself (Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 151-154), (b) the opportunity to demonstrate sport competence (Carl SCRIPT 2, 248-249), (c) experiencing positive affect (Sean SCRIPT 3, 38-44), (d) challenging self (Carl SCRIPT 2, 248-249) and, (e) cooperating with peers (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 129-156).

Females' additional reasons for the preference for team sports included: (a) opportunities to experience a number of playing positions during a team game (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1374-1377; Wendy SCRIPT 1/1,
966-970), (b) demonstration of sport competence (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 889-893), (c) opportunities to experience and display a number of sport skills (Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1404-1416), (d) cooperating with peers (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 183-199), and (e) seeking companionship (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 183-199).

It is interesting to note that sport competent females reported that they enjoyed individual sports such as athletics, particularly running (Heather SCRIPT 2, 229-239; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 824-832).

Basketball was nominated as a favourite sport by both Aboriginal male and female students, regardless of their basketball competence (Carl SCRIPT 1, 851-359; Chris SCRIPT 1, 471-472; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 161-164, 183-192; Trevor SCRIPT 847-853; Wendy SCRIPT 2/0, 4-11). The game appealed to Aboriginal students because it allowed students to cooperate with one another, be part of the game activity, experience the fast pace and demonstrate their competence. Kellie best summed the attraction of basketball for Aboriginal students:

There's more running involved and, like you can pass the ball around. And you're not just standing out in the field or something. And all the rest [other sports] they're like slow, they're not like fast when you're playing basketball you get the ball thrown to ya and you share it around and all that (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 185-199).

Australian Rules Football was nominated by Aboriginal males as one of their favourite sports (Carl SCRIPT 1, 351-359; Sean SCRIPT 1, 193-195, 488-490; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 847-853). This was the second most common response after basketball.

Other favourites included physical education (Carl SCRIPT 1, 486-496; Sean SCRIPT 1, 625-633), tee ball (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 847-853), 800.
metres long distance run (Heather SCRIPT 2, 229-239) and sport in
general (Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 952-954).

In terms of dislikes, females mostly reported a dislike for some
sports because of the fear of getting hurt, rough play and limited physical
participation. The sports they disliked were often organised in a
coeducational context (excluding netball) and included soccer (Wendy
SCRIPT 1/1, 1092-1097, SCRIPT 2/1, 359-375) and Australian Rules
Football (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 898-919, SCRIPT 1/2, 1399-1402).

Teachers. There were three sessions of school sport: (a) physical
education, (b) intra school sport and, (c) inter school sport. Sometimes
students were taught by more than one teacher at each session. The
teachers who delivered sport at the time of the study were Miss Quill who
taught physical education and Ms Miller who delivered intra school sport
activities. For inter school sport, Mr Davin was the coach of the football
team and again Miss Quill and Ms Miller were responsible for the inter
school netball team, therefore the following student perceptions are
specific to these teachers.

Students' perceptions of teachers who delivered school sport were
based on the types of experiences the students had with the teacher
involved. Hence, the perceptions students had of Mr Davin and Ms Miller
were varied. The ideas students possessed of Miss Quill were consistent.

Aboriginal students perceived that Miss Quill was an "average"
teacher of school sport (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1185-1190; Sean SCRIPT 3,
470-480; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1497-1502; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 483-484;
Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 518-526). Heather was the only student who
considered Miss Quill to be a "poor" teacher of school sport (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1642-1677). Wendy (SCRIPT 2/1, 481-496) and Carl (SCRIPT 2, 643-652) both stated that they did not like Miss Quill very much, but Chris (SCRIPT 1, 1138-1146) reported that he liked Miss Quill and that she encouraged him on the sport field (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1138-1146).

The most significant finding was that three students did not prefer their current sport teachers but rather the previous physical education teacher (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1642-1677; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 436-468) or the current relief teacher (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1165-1176). The circumstances for these preferences were explained by Wendy, Carl and Heather. Wendy for instance, did not like Miss Quill as a physical education teacher because the first visual impression Miss Quill made and secondly of the relationship they developed. Wendy stated for instance, that she did not like Miss Quill because "she don't look like a sport's teacher" (SCRIPT 2/1, 64-64). Also, Wendy (SCRIPT 2/1, 481-496) believed she possessed a "better" relationship with Miss Igloo (the previous school physical education teacher) than with Miss Quill. She stated, "if you're really liked puffed out, she won't let you go to the toilet and to get a drink or anything" (Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 77-79).

Wendy, however, acknowledged that she had received encouragement from Miss Quill and was quick to state that Miss Quill was helpful "sometimes" (SCRIPT 2/1, 426-434, 499-506). A distinct difference between Miss Igloo and Miss Quill was the delivery of a variety of team sports and games played during physical education sessions. Wendy pointed out that:
She [Miss Igloo] does all different sorts of sports for us kids like we play all different games instead us just playing the one thing over and over and over [in physical education]. Different sports. We done basketball or we done, or the boys do footy, or or we play softball, or we play that game octopus or we play fruit (Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 447-462).

Carl stated that his relationship with Miss Quill was good only "sometimes" since he perceived that she was angry sometimes and gave him checks (demerit points for misbehaviour) "for no reason":

Sometimes she's angry and I I don’t like her that way when she's angry. Like you just do like say if you just stand up or something then she goes,'You got a check." Or like I don't know sometimes you just do something like ordinary and she gives you a check. Like when you what you ordinary do (Carl SCRIPT 2, 643-652).

Carl said that the male relief teacher, Mr Carter, was a good teacher and the "best" (physical education) teacher compared with Miss Quill (Carl SCRIPT 2, 1167-1167, 1171-1171).

There were differences in student perceptions of Ms Miller's performance at intra school tee ball. Heather for instance, stated she preferred Miss Igloo to Ms Miller for intra school tee ball since Miss Igloo involved herself in the game more and provided verbal and non-verbal instructions to students in comparison to Ms Miller. Heather said "Oh she [Ms Miller] should get up [off the chair] and just help people to field and how to bat. Like Mrs Igloo our old sport teacher she’ll get up and tell us how to hold the mitt and to go places (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1647-1660).

Heather (SCRIPT 1, 1708-1717) suggested that Ms Miller should motivate students so that they are actively involved in the game by manipulating the sport context so that all students have maximum opportunity for active participation. Heather said the following about
intra school tee ball sessions:

She [Ms Miller] should make sure we get in the game [tee ball], right in the game. Like, to get the ball, like let everyone have a like have a touch of the ball, to get the ball. And to everyone have a bat. (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1705-1705, 1708-1709, 1711-1711).

Kellie on the other hand, reported that Ms Miller was “good at tee ball” (SCRIPT 1/2, 1098-1098) and did not see an issue with Ms Miller being seated on a chair during the intra school tee ball session. Kellie also stated that Ms Miller possessed adequate knowledge of tee ball game rules (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1094-1114), whereas Heather stated that Ms Miller “sort of” understood the rules (SCRIPT 2, 324-326). Additionally, unlike Heather, Kellie reported that Ms Miller encouraged her and gave positive feedback and instruction (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1122-1134).

The inter school football coach Mr Davin was perceived as an “average” teacher by Trevor (SCRIPT 1/2, 315-319) and was liked by Carl (SCRIPT 2, 658-661), but he was perceived as a “poor” teacher by Sean (SCRIPT 3, 483-510). Trevor and Sean reported their disappointment of the decisions Mr Davin made in relation to placing them in playing positions and allocation of playing numbers (uniforms) for inter school football games. Sean said that he believed Mr Davin was a good coach “sometimes” (SCRIPT 3, 484-484) because “he [Mr Davin] keep puttin’ us, when we play football he was puttin’ us down in the back line. Me and Chris. Going in the same spot all the time (SCRIPT 3, 486-487, 489-489, 491-491).

Trevor liked Mr Davin as a coach (SCRIPT 1/2, 274-281) and stated
that he encouraged him on the playing field (SCRIPT 1/2, 297-304). Trevor however, preferred that Mr Davin allocated the same playing number (uniform) for players for each game. Unlike Sean though, Trevor wanted Mr Davin to retain the players in the same playing positions, particularly when the change in the playing roster was perceived by Trevor to jeopardise the game outcome. This is not to say that Trevor expressed his need to win every game, but that he acknowledged that the inter school football team did not experience many favourable outcomes and Trevor attributed this to his team’s constant changing of players and positions.

Trevor said Mr Davin should:

Let us [team members] have the same numbers [playing uniform] all the time. I want number 18. Keep us in the same spots [playing positions] cause, we’ve lost two games. We won one by one point. The first half he had us all in the same spots, and we was going good. We was winning by six points. Then he changed us around. But then we lost. He could of kept us in the same spots all the time. Not not every game, but so we’ll win ‘cause up there [playing location] we was going good in the second half. And, by six points and then we lost (SCRIPT 1/2, 287-287, 289-289, 331-332, 344-345, 347-347, 349-349, 351-352, 357-358, 360-360).

When Trevor was questioned about the number of positions he wanted to play, he said he preferred to play only two positions during the game (Trevor SCRIPT, 1/2, 368-375) instead of the four that he actually played for the entire game (Trevor PORS 3).

Attitudes to Sport

The following section will present students' views of: (a) their role models and why it is necessary to have them, (b) the meaning of extrinsic rewards in sport and, (c) winning and losing sport competitions.
Role Models

All but one student nominated prominent and highly successful sports athletes as role models (see table 9.4 below). Male students mostly reported "black" male sport athletes as their role models, of which there were six Aboriginal Australian Rules Football League (AFL) players, three non-Aboriginal AFL players and the remaining two were African-Americans, one of whom was a current competitor of the National Basketball Association (United States of America) and the other an international singer/musician.

Table 9.4

Preferred Role Models According to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Preferred Role Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Cathy Freeman and Nova Peris-Kneebone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>Cathy Freeman and Nova Peris-Kneebone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Cathy Freeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Father (darts)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Preferred Role Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Peter Matera, Scott Chisholm,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Jordan and Michael Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Chris Lewis, Winston Abraham,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dale Kickett, Nicky Winmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Peter Matera, Wayne Carey, Wayne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schwass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>Guy McKenna, Michael Jordan,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the AFL role models selected, the majority consisted of players from the Western Australian AFL clubs and included Peter Matera (Chris
Players from the Eastern States AFL clubs were also nominated and consisted of Wayne Carey and Wayne Schwass of North Melbourne (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 649-653, 685-694) and Nicky Winmar from St Kilda (Carl SCRIPT 1, 563-577).

Other role models who were not AFL athletes and who were nominated by Aboriginal males included Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls fame in the National Basketball Association (Chris SCRIPT 1, 563-568, SCRIPT 2, 194-196; Sean SCRIPT 1, 660-667) and internationally renowned singer/musician Michael Jackson (Chris SCRIPT 1, 563-569).

Male students selected role models so that they could aspire to the same level as those they selected. Sean (SCRIPT 1, 1145-1151) for instance, aspired to be like Guy McKenna and Trevor wanted to be like Wayne Carey (SCRIPT 2, 671-672).

Aboriginal male students were attracted to football role models because of their demonstrated competence in the game of football (Carl SCRIPT 1, 563-577; Chris SCRIPT 1, 1114-1125; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 620-620). Chris (SCRIPT 1, 1120-1121) stated that AFL players appealed to him because, "they're fast and they know how to play and [perform] long kicks."

Another reason for the attraction of AFL players to male students was the affinity students possessed of their role model's playing style.
(Carl SCRIPT 2, 818-828). Carl for instance, stated that the method and manner displayed by Chris Lewis on the football field appealed to him.

Of those non-AFL players, the reasons for the preference of Michael Jordan and Michael Jackson were attributed to the attraction of fame (Sean SCRIPT 1, 660-667) and competence (Chris SCRIPT 1, 563-569).

Female Aboriginal students nominated highly profiled and successful female, Aboriginal and Commonwealth gold medalists (track athletes), Cathy Freeman and Nova Peris-Kneebone (Heather SCRIPT 1, 885-929, 1531-1539; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 378-388, 824-832; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 769-775). Only Heather and Kellie (highly competent at sport) reported reasons for their role model preferences as well as the importance of sports role models in their lives. These will now be presented.

Firstly, Heather (SCRIPT 1, 885-929) reported that she nominated Cathy Freeman and Nova Peris-Kneebone as her sport role models because they demonstrated their competence at sport (SCRIPT 2, 294-301) and thereby showed to other Aboriginal people that it was acceptable to be Aboriginal and proved their worth to non-Aboriginal people (SCRIPT 3, 171-186).

Heather stated that Cathy Freeman's and Nova Peris-Kneebone's achievements in sport made her feel a sense of equality and thereby a sense of pride as an Aboriginal person. Heather stated the following:

They're [Cathy and Nova] good Nyoongars, and they and they show 'em [non-Aboriginal people and particularly Pauline Hanson18] how good they are at sport. And they're making the Nyoongar other peoples feel proud and that, about their colour (SCRIPT 1, 892-893.

18 At the time of this study, Pauline Hanson was the leader of a newly formed political party in Australia called One Nation.

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Heather continued to report the importance of having role models and suggested that they present positive messages to Aboriginal children in regards to appropriate behaviours and goal setting. Heather said that role models are important because they “say to the Nyoongar kids, try and be some somebody, and try and do something with your life instead of just like Nyoongar kids on the streets sniffing glue and that” (SCRIPT 1, 910-913).

Kellie (SCRIPT 2, 378-388; 824-832) selected Cathy Freeman because she showed Aboriginal people that they too can achieve. Kellie viewed Cathy as an aspiration to goal set and stated that she too could represent Aboriginal people, just like Cathy Freeman.

Taylor was the only student who reported that a family member was her sports role model. She said her father was her role model because “he plays darts and I like to play darts” (Taylor, SCRIPT 2, 326-326).

Extrinsic Rewards

Aboriginal students enjoyed receiving extrinsic rewards in the form of trophies, certificates and ribbons for their sporting achievements. They also perceived that trophies and other material awards often resulted in positive affect, directed at the self. More specifically, Aboriginal students believed that they felt positive about themselves, since rewards assisted
in: (a) dispelling negative stereotypes (Carl script 1, 1210-1250), (b) proving self-worth (Chris script 1, 1034-1056; Heather script 1, 263-274), (c) affirning and acknowledging sport competence (Chris script 1, 1034-1056; Kellie script 1/2, 478-487) and, (d) positive affective experiences (Chris script 1, 1034-1056; Heather script 1, 1226-1242, 1582-1595; Wendy script 3, 820-851). There was a difference in the perceived importance of extrinsic rewards and students' perceptions were varied due to their level of sport competence.

Chris (script 1, 1034-1056) and Kellie (script 1/2, 478-487) for instance, were rated as possessing highly developed sport skills and interestingly they were the only students who perceived that receiving trophies affirmed their judgment of their sport competence. Other responses revealed that extrinsic rewards were seen to be important in campaigning for equality and in experiencing pride as an Aboriginal person.

Probably the most powerful statement in relation to the importance of rewards in sport is provided by Carl (script 1, 1210-1250) who stated that a trophy "shows that Aboriginals are not what they seem. Only some are stupid, act like idiots. Like sniff glue or they drink alcohol (script 1, 1220-1221, 1242-1242, 1246-1246, 1250-1250).

Chris said that rewards enable him to prove his self to others, particularly non-Aboriginal people because receiving trophies highlighted the dominance Aboriginal people possessed in sport. He said, for example, that he felt better as an Aboriginal person when he received a trophy because, "Aboriginals can run. Aboriginals can run fast, and like
they can fight. They got the skills to do stuff (in comparison to non-Aboriginal children) (SCRIPT 1, 1042-1043, 1045-1045). Heather also confirmed her belief that Aboriginal people dominated sport, since, “you don't hardly see Wadjallah kids get trophies” (Heather, SCRIPT 1, 272-273).

Finally, Chris (SCRIPT 1, 1034-1056), Heather (SCRIPT 1, 1226-1242, 1582-1595) and Wendy (SCRIPT 3, 820-851) stated that receiving trophies provided an opportunity to experience pride as an Aboriginal person and generated positive feelings about themselves in a holistic sense.

Outcomes of Competition

Outcomes refer to the end result of sport competitions and may be regarded as winning and losing. The findings revealed that sport outcomes were not important, but rather students preferred active participation and fun from sport. Observations of students' sport and physical education performances confirmed students' perceptions and attitudes towards competition outcomes. Students stated that the game outcomes were not important to them, just as long as they actively participated in the game itself (Heather SCRIPT 2, 14-28; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 37-92) and experienced enjoyment (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 34-72; Sean SCRIPT 2, 46-51). Although the game outcomes were not perceived as important, Trevor stated that sport was important for experiencing fun, “but it's good when you win. And to know and just to know that we're we are good, better players than them [opponents]” (Trevor SCRIPT 1,
Other students' responses were varied. Chris for instance, said it was extremely vital that he (or his team) were victors of intra school sport games because he believed that he had to demonstrate his competence to rival his friends and peers, otherwise his social position among them was challenged. When Chris demonstrated his competence at sport, he believed he gained popularity and retained his social position and thereby possessed some form of control over his peers. He said, "I just wanna show 'em [friends] how to play cause if they'll beat me, they'll tease me" (Chris SCRIPT 2, 22-22, 28-28, 33-33).

Carl stated that he didn't really care if he won or lost games for either intra or inter school sport competitions. Carl placed more importance on the outcomes derived from club sport. He said that he loathed losing club basketball games the most (Carl SCRIPT 2, 21-114).

Kellie was the only student who believed that inter school sport was more important to win in comparison to intra school sport. She reported that inter school sport for example, was a legitimate competition, in which students represented the school honour. Inter school sports competitions were not perceived as "just a game" (SCRIPT 2, 56-56) Carl said that he only enjoyed winning against other schools inter school sport when his friends who attended other schools were his opponents (Carl SCRIPT 2, 21-114).
Summary

This chapter presented students' perceptions and attitudes of sport. It focussed on school sport and the generic importance of sport. It was found that positive experiences in sport made Aboriginal students feel good about themselves and feel proud to identify as an Aborigine. The positive sport experiences were either a product of students' direct involvement in sport or were a product of Aboriginal role models' achievements in sport.

Aboriginal students perceived that success in sport was utilised by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to measure self-worth. Sport was also viewed as a tool to be used to gain recognition and approval from members of the wider society.

Students also believed that sport (via role models) encouraged them to set personal and sports goals. Sport role models also provided incentives to students to realise their goals.

It was perceived that participation in sport activities (especially club sports) preoccupied students (especially on weekends and after school) by fulfilling some of their leisure time and thus provided an alternative activity to getting into trouble. Sport was perceived as a means to prevent Aboriginal students engaging in inappropriate behaviours and habits such as stealing, smoking, drinking alcohol, sniffing glue and staying on the streets.

Aboriginal students preferred inter school sport to both intra school sport and physical education because of the desire to compete against students from opposing schools and thus demonstrate their sport
competence. Aboriginal students believed that they had to perform to the best of their ability at inter school sports since they were not familiar with their opponents' standards and styles of play. This was the attraction of inter school sports since they had to challenge others as well as themselves in sport. Physical education and intra school sport sessions did not cater for Aboriginal students' desires for competitions and challenges.

At school, team sports were preferred because of the need to compete and to experience maximum active participation. Team sports also allowed students to experience a number of playing roles and positions. Basketball was nominated as the favourite sport. Australian Rules football was voted (by Aboriginal males) as the second most preferred team sport.

Students' perceptions of the teachers who delivered and coached school sport revealed that Miss Quill (who was the current physical education teacher) was not liked by all students and was not chosen as the preferred physical education teacher. Female students reported that they preferred the previous female physical education teacher, whilst male students preferred the current male relief physical education teacher. Male students also reported that they liked their inter school football coach Mr Davin, but stated that they were dissatisfied about the roles he made Aboriginal students play.

Although Aboriginal students reported that their sports role models did not have to be Aboriginal they mostly nominated prominent successful Aboriginal sports athletes as their preferred role models.
Students believed that role models were important since they promoted positive messages about Aboriginal people in general and assisted in dispelling the negative stereotypes that existed. Students also felt a sense of equality and pride when their role models achieved in sport.

Aboriginal students enjoyed receiving extrinsic rewards for their sport performances. They viewed that trophies and other rewards affirmed their sport competence and thus assisted in dispelling negative stereotypes that existed of Aboriginal people. When students received awards, they felt good about themselves and thus felt as though they proved their worth to non-Aboriginal people.

The end product or outcome of a sport competition was not important to Aboriginal students, but rather maximum active participation in sport was. In other words, students wanted sport to be structured so that they could experience full participation.
CHAPTER 10
SENSE OF SELF AND SCHOOL SPORT

In this chapter, Aboriginal students' perceptions of themselves particularly their self-evaluations of competence in the school sport context are presented. In particular, the social interactions students shared with significant others are a feature of students' sense of self and are detailed here.

It was revealed that school sport was a positive contributor to the sense of self of Aboriginal students regardless of their gender or level of sport competence. Students for instance, described themselves in favourable terms, evaluated their self-concepts positively and thus experienced positive affect. It was interesting to find that all students, particularly those who possessed average to below average sport skills evaluated their self-concepts with accuracy. Those students who possessed average to above average skills tended to protect their evaluations (self-esteem). They did not want to assert their dominance in sport and preferred not to publicly advertise their sport competence unless it was called for. Students' evaluations of themselves in the school sport context were comparable to the researcher's observations and sports coaches and teachers' descriptive assessments of students' skills.

Self-concept

A sense of self is defined as a collection of self-concepts and in this section the concepts Aboriginal students possessed of themselves in the school sport context are presented. Self-concepts contain two important
elements: (a) a description and, (b) an evaluation.

The perceptions students possessed of themselves in the school sport setting were: (a) positive, (b) stable over time, (c) concrete (rather than vague) and, (d) contained elements of their attributes, qualities and skills. Students reported that the self-perceptions they developed in the school sport context were important to them because they allowed them to express themselves favourably as Aborigines, enabled them to prove their worth and thus seek equality. Students’ self-perceptions in school sport impacted favourably upon their self-esteem so that they experienced pride and happiness and felt good about themselves.

Positive Self-perceptions

Students’ self-perceptions contained statements of their attributes, skills and qualities. Statements relating to students’ attributes comprised items such as students’ likes, dislikes and preferences in school sports. Qualities refer to items that provide an insight into students’ personal characters, personalities and identities. Skills relate to descriptions (in general and broad terms) of students’ sport competence.

Students described themselves in positive terms in the school sport context because they were participating in activities that they enjoyed (attributes), which appealed to them (qualities) and allowed them to demonstrate their competence (skill). Typical responses of students’ self-perceptions were “I play footy and I play tee ball, baseball, soccer. I play all sorts of games” (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 812-813) and “I like playing sports
mainly basketball" (Wendy SCRIPT 1, 968-968, 970-970).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, students expressed their preferences for team sports and these featured highly in their self-concepts. It was revealed that males liked team sports such as baseball (Carl SCRIPT 2, 248-249), football (Sean SCRIPT 2, 121-122, SCRIPT 3, 33-44; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 151-154, SCRIPT 2, 129-156) and tee ball (Sean SCRIPT 2, 224-225; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 238-247). Females reported that they preferred and enjoyed volleyball (Wendy SCRIPT 1, 1098-1106), netball (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 889-893, SCRIPT 1/2, 1374-1377, SCRIPT 2, 34-35), basketball (Heather SCRIPT 1, 612-642; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 955-975; Wendy SCRIPT 1, 966-970), tee ball (Heather SCRIPT 1, 612-642; Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 955-975; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 1404-1416) and track running (Heather SCRIPT 2, 229-239; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 824-832).

Students also described themselves in terms of their favourite sports. Again, team sports were featured and the most nominated preference was basketball (Carl SCRIPT 1, 351-359; Chris SCRIPT 1, 471-472, 1172-1179; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 161-164, 183-192; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 847-853; Wendy SCRIPT 2/0, 4-11).

Other favourite sports nominated by females included the 800 metres long distance run (Heather SCRIPT 2, 229-239) and sport in general (Kellie SCRIPT 1/1, 952-954). Males preferred sports such as Australian Rules football (Carl SCRIPT 1, 351-359; Sean SCRIPT 1, 193-195, 488-490; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 847-853), physical education (Carl SCRIPT 1, 486-496; Sean SCRIPT 1, 625-633) and tee ball (Trevor
Students rarely reported negative attributes of themselves in school sport, although it was found that females reported more dislikes than males, since they did not enjoy coeducational school sports such as soccer (Wendy SCRIPT 1, 1092-1097, SCRIPT 2/1, 359-375) and Australian Rules Football (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 898-919, SCRIPT 1/2, 1399-1402). Only one male, however, reported that he disliked school athletics (Sean SCRIPT 1, 193-195).

Students' ideas of their competence (actual and potential) at school sport provided additional positive ingredients for their self-perceptions. Males, for instance, described themselves with general statements such as "I can beat Carl Crothers [at athletics]" (Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 36-36), or "I can kick [a football] straighter" (Sean SCRIPT 1, 932-932), or "I chose football because it's something I'm good at" (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1309-1309) and "I'm a good player. Yeah basketball, footy. I know how to play. Don't make mistakes and that" (Chris SCRIPT 2, 556-556, 558-559).

Females also reported favourable views of their school sport skills. For instance, they stated that they were good athletes in netball (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 437-444; Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 742-744, 889-893), track running (Heather SCRIPT 2, 224-225) and basketball (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 437-444).

Stable and Concrete Self-perceptions

Students' self-perceptions did not contain any material or ideas that were abstract, hence a feature of students' self-perceptions in the school sport context was that they were defined in simple and broad
terms. It was found that the concepts that students possessed of themselves and the consequent degree of self-esteem remained fairly stable over time possibly because the school sport environment also remained stable.

The school sport context was controlled by the activities available and the skill and experience of the teaching staff as well as the skills, abilities and perceptions of the students. Self-perceptions, therefore, were dependent on the games and activities experienced in sport, including the manner and method in which sport was delivered. To some extent however, Aboriginal students possessed a degree of indirect control upon the school sport environment and this was perceived as the integral ingredient to form positive and favourable self-perceptions. For instance, they possessed some opportunities in school sport to form their own teams and groups for competition and they often selected other Aboriginal students as members, thus allowing them to express their collective dominance in sport and experience pride as Aborigines (Carl PORS 1, 2; Chris PORS 2; Heather PORS 2, 3; Sean PORS 2; Wendy PORS 1, 2). In other cases, the teaching staff allowed students to decide upon the activities and games to be played during sport. At Naples Primary school for example, an intra school basketball competition for year 6 and 7 students was organised (Journal 28/07/97). Games were conducted at lunch breaks and teams were formed by the students themselves. An important consideration to keep in mind is, although students were provided with choices, they perceived the range available was inadequate.
Salient Features of School Sport Upon Self-perceptions

There were characteristics of school sport that were commonly featured in students' self-perceptions (refer to figure 10.1 on page 293). Students for instance, reported that school sport was important to them because of: (a) the need to play sport for fun (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1076-1078, 1090-1094; Sean SCRIPT 3, 38-44, 65-67; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1232-1238; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 44-92), (b) the need to share the ball and cooperate with team mates and be in a team (Chris SCRIPT 2, 338-361), (c) the pleasure derived from active sport participation (Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-811; Heather SCRIPT 3, 423-427, 509-515; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 186-196, SCRIPT 2, 556-558, 559-571, 824-832; Sean SCRIPT 2, 178-180, 621-631; Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 845-853, SCRIPT 2, 316-326; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 83-95), (d) the opportunity to demonstrate sport competence and (Trevor SCRIPT 2, 235-237, 270-271, 273-273, 275-275; Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 877-885), (e) the positive influence of sport participation upon their Aboriginal identity (Chris SCRIPT 1, 861-864, SCRIPT 2, 199-209; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 368-377).

The most common theme to emerge from the data was that Aboriginal students expressed their desires to describe themselves in terms of the benefits of sport participation upon achieving equality and pride as an Aborigine (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1191-1202, 1210-1250; Chris SCRIPT 1, 1001-1052; SCRIPT 2, 199-204; Heather SCRIPT 1, 165-214, 257-274, 1580-1598; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 358-429; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1429-1455). Students' ideas of their Aboriginality were often expressed and judged in terms of their sporting efforts and achievements.
Figure 10.1. Salient Features of School Sport That Contribute to Aboriginal Self-concepts.
For some students, mere participation in school sport resulted in positive feelings about themselves; that is, they perceived that their Aboriginality possessed no bearing upon the outcome of sport participation (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1191-1201, 1210-1250; Sean SCRIPT 2, 178-192; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 83-95). Other Aboriginal students felt that participation made them feel proud to identify as an Aboriginal since Aboriginal students perceived that they often dominated (over non-Aboriginal students) at school sports (Chris SCRIPT 2, 199-204; Heather SCRIPT 1, 165-214; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 353-429; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1429-1455). Heather for instance, stated that she was proud to be Aboriginal “Because every time we play sport we play sport good” (SCRIPT 1, 213-214). Kellie said:

Like Nyoongars don’t think they’re better than everyone and white like Wadjallahs they’re just because they like score a goal or something they think they’re good and all that and they think that they’re better than Nyoongars. But they’re not (SCRIPT 2, 368-371, 373-374).

Trevor stated:

All white kids like not good at stuff like Barney, he can’t hit the tee ball, Gordon, he can’t hit the ball. Troy, he can’t hit the ball and Gordon can’t kick, Troy can’t kick, Barney can’t kick. White people can’t kick but Aboriginals, nearly all Aboriginals can kick. Even when they’re little (SCRIPT 1, 1434-1434, 1437-1438, 1440-1440, 1442-1445).

The common finding was that all students (even those that did not state sport participation made them feel proud to be an Aborigine) also reported that they felt proud to be Aboriginal when they received extrinsic rewards in sport (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1191-1202, 1210-1250; Chris SCRIPT 1, 1001-1052; Heather SCRIPT 1, 257-274, 1580-1598). It was found that
rewards presented Aboriginal students with the opportunity to gain recognition for their sports efforts and experience positive affect, particularly pride as an Aboriginal. In the process, rewards assisted students to dispel the negative stereotypes of Aboriginal people, prove their worthiness to non-Aboriginal students and seek equality. In other words, extrinsic rewards influenced students' experiences of positive affect upon Aboriginal identity and thus demonstrated that in the school sport environment rewards were a salient feature of Aboriginal students' self-concepts.

**Self-esteem**

In this thesis, self-esteem refers to how students evaluated themselves in school sport. It was found that Aboriginal students (regardless of skill level) evaluated their competence accurately. Self-evaluations were expressed in positive terms, yet they were described in a general and broad context (that is, there was little use of adjectives to describe competence in sport). Also, students reported that they experienced positive affective responses as a consequence of the self-evaluations they possessed of themselves in school sport.

This section will present: (a) how students evaluated themselves in school sport, (b) the sources used to determine their evaluations and, (c) the consequent feelings generated from their evaluations.

**Self-evaluations**

It was revealed that Aboriginal students evaluated their sport competence parallel to that of the assessments made by both the sports
teachers and researcher. Furthermore, students' levels of sport skill did not make any difference to the accuracy of evaluations. In other words, those students who possessed below average sport competence (Wendy SCRIPT 2/0, 100-102, SCRIPT 2/1, 103-138, 154-185, SCRIPT 3, 255-256, 391-422, 431-451, 470-474) were as accurate in their self-evaluation as those students who were rated as having average sport competence (Carl, SCRIPT 1, 720-750, 835-861, 863-867, 1307-1309, SCRIPT 2, 745-789, 896-905; Heather SCRIPT 2, 224-225, SCRIPT 3, 364-367, 376-388, Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 889-893; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1257-1262, SCRIPT 1/2, 597-596, SCRIPT 2, 351-366) and those who were highly competent at sport (Chris SCRIPT 2, 92-93, 338-361; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 437-444; Sean SCRIPT 1, 218-223, 929-932, SCRIPT 2, 226-236, 263-273).

All students evaluated themselves favourably in relation to team sports. Females for instance, reported that they were competent at netball and basketball (Heather SCRIPT 3, 364-367; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 437-444; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 742-744; Wendy SCRIPT 1, 1000-1011). Males evaluated themselves highly in football and basketball also (Carl SCRIPT 1, 720-750, 835-861, 863-867, 1307-1309; Chris SCRIPT 2, 92-93; Sean SCRIPT 1, 218-223; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 351-366).

There was a difference in the descriptions males used to evaluate themselves compared with females' descriptions. Males for instance, reported more information about their self-evaluations in sport than females since their evaluations contained more adjectives and detail. More specifically, males expressed themselves in terms of specific sport skills, abilities or qualities. For instance, they described themselves with
statements such as, “I’m a stronger marker [in Australian Rules Football]. I’m stronger. I can tackle better” (Sean SCRIPT 2, 266-266, 269-269), “if we play on one on one [in basketball]. I’ll beat ‘em” (Carl SCRIPT 2, 762-763) and “I share the ball around and that. And pass it” (Chris SCRIPT 2, 354-354, 356-356). Females (except for Kellie) tended to utilise broad, general terms to describe their self-evaluations. They rarely referred to skills or abilities to define their self-evaluations in sport. They described themselves with statements such as “I’m good at sports” (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 931-931), “I can beat two boys and one girl” (Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 118-119) and “I can play [netball] properly” (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 893-893).

Kellie (who was the most highly sport competent female Aboriginal student), however, evaluated herself based on her qualities in sport. She stated “I don’t try to be better than everyone. Like I share the ball around [netball and basketball]. I don’t hog it” (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 443-444).

Sources of Self-esteem

It was found that the main sources of self-esteem in school sport for both male and female Aboriginal students were appraisals from significant others (sports coach/teacher, friends, non-Aboriginal peers), extrinsic rewards, demonstration of sport competence and social competence. Appraisals (in a variety of forms) were by far the most common reported source of self-esteem for Aboriginal students in the school sport context (refer to figure 10.2 on page 299).
Feedback. Two forms of feedback were received by Aboriginal students in sport: (a) self-referent and, (b) appraisals. Self-referent feedback involved focusing on the self as a method to evaluate and judge performances. Appraisals however, consisted of encouragement, praise and instructional feedback which were provided by another party to the individual concerned.

The main source of feedback for Aboriginal students was appraisals, which were positive and supplied directly to the student and immediately following a desired performance or display of exceptional skill. Non-Aboriginal students and sports teachers/coach were the primary suppliers of positive appraisals to Aboriginal students. The feedback Aboriginal students received from other Aboriginal students (whom were mostly related or who were considered friends) consisted of teasing.

The parties who supplied positive appraisals included cousins, friends (non-Aboriginal), peers (non-Aboriginal) and adults (sports teaching staff). It appeared that Aboriginal students received similar amounts of appraisals from both sports teaching staff and peers.

Appraisals from teaching staff consisted of praise and it was reported that Aboriginal students mostly received appraisals from the football coach, Mr Davin during inter school games (Carl SCRIPT 2, 481-515; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 297-312) and Ms Miller who, at the time was directing intra school tee ball games (Heather SCRIPT 1, 943-948, SCRIPT 2, 177-191; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1122-1134).
Extrinsic Rewards
Disprove stereotypes
Prove self-worth
Experience Pride as Aboriginal

Feedback
Appraisals
Self-referent

SELF-ESTEEM
Accurate
Definite
Positive

Sport Competence
Team game skills
Game knowledge
Physical capabilities
Overall game performance
Motivation

Social Competence
Sharing
Cooperation

Figure 10.2. Sources of Self-esteem.
Praise given by teachers was often supplied directly to the student concerned and was instantaneous after a favourable performance or display of competent skill (Carl SCRIPT 863-867, SCRIPT 2, 481-515; Heather SCRIPT 2, 177-191; Taylor SCRIPT 1/2, 769-773; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 297-312).

Praise from non-Aboriginal peers as well as close friends (including Aboriginal friends and cousins) were also supplied directly and immediately following successful performances, displays of skill or when a desired or favourable sport outcome (win or scored a goal) was achieved (Carl SCRIPT 1, 863-867; Heather SCRIPT 1, 232-239, 294-320, Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 445-448, 478-483, SCRIPT 2, 513-518, Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1391-1402).

Non-Aboriginal students supplied mostly positive feedback to Aboriginal students, whereas Aboriginal students often teased one another about unfavourable sport outcomes. This form of feedback was common among Aboriginal males and sport competent Aboriginal females (Carl PORS 1, 2; Chris PORS 1, 2; Chris SCRIPT 2, 1-41, 47-62; Heather PORS 1, 2; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 118-130, 317-326; Sean SCRIPT 2, 284-382).

It was also found that less competent Aboriginal students (Taylor and Wendy) or those that were not popular at school (Sean) did not report any feedback (positive or negative) from non-Aboriginal students. Also, Wendy and Taylor did not report feedback from Aboriginal students either.

Aboriginal students who were competent at sport (Carl, Chris, Kellie and Heather) reported they received feedback not only from their
friends but also from a wider audience of non-Aboriginal peers.

Aboriginal students received more positive feedback from non-Aboriginal students, since they were often involved in teasing episodes with Aboriginal students. Teasing was personally directed at the individuals concerned and often occurred at the end of a team sport or activity during physical education and intra school sport competitions. When the outcome was positive (win), student(s) in the winning team/group often teased their opponents. It is important to note that sport competent Aboriginal females, Heather and Kellie (Heather PORS 1,2; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 118-130) only teased each other. Males teased each other regardless of their level of sport competence (Carl PORS 1,2; Chris PORS 1,2; Sean PORS 2). In regards to the teasing episodes, it seemed that sport competent Aboriginal students may have experienced some positive benefits towards their self-esteem, since teasing only occurred among successful students. Teasing is perceived as a significant consequence of success and is therefore included as a salient item of students' esteem in table 10.2 (page 315).

Heather, Wendy, Sean and Chris used self-referent forms of feedback to gauge their performances and define their competence at school sport (Chris SCRIPT 1, 743-761; Heather SCRIPT 1, 277-285, 1188-1192; Sean SCRIPT 1, 916-921; Wendy SCRIPT 1, 1002-1007, SCRIPT 2/1, 114-140).

Heather and Wendy reported that they engaged in comparisons with others in sport in order to evaluate their sport competence. Wendy (SCRIPT 1, 1002-1007, SCRIPT 2/1, 114-140) compared herself to Kellie
and utilised sports performance as the criterion. Wendy said that Kellie was a better netball player. Heather however, compared herself to a non-Aboriginal student named Lena. Heather's dislike for Lena was reported as the motivation for the comparison with others (Heather SCRIPT 1, 277-285, 1188-1192).

Sean and Chris (both highly competent football athletes) stated that they did not engage in comparisons to determine their sport competence. They were able to use self-referent feedback based on their own performances (Chris SCRIPT 1, 743-761; Sean SCRIPT 1, 916-921).

Extrinsic Rewards. Extrinsic rewards were perceived as a major source of self-esteem for Aboriginal students, yet only the highly sport competent students utilised extrinsic rewards as a form of self-esteem. It was reported by most Aboriginal students, however, that sports rewards were important to students' concepts and feelings toward their Aboriginality. This was a common report regardless of students' gender or sports skill levels. As mentioned earlier, rewards in sport played an integral part in: (a) proving wrong the negative stereotypes that exist about Aboriginal people (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1210-1250), (b) proving self-worth as an Aboriginal person (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1034-1056; Heather SCRIPT 1, 263-274) and, (c) experiencing pride as an Aboriginal person (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1034-1056; Heather SCRIPT 1, 1226-1242, 1682-1595; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 820-851).

An interesting finding was that highly competent (and popular) Aboriginal students (Chris and Kellie for instance) mostly reported extrinsic rewards (such as trophies and sports leadership roles) as a
source for self-esteem. They perceived that rewards and roles in sport were important to them to assist in affirming and reaffirming their judgments of their sports competence (Chris SCRIPT 1, 1034-1056; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 478-487). In other words, it could be said that they began to rely on extrinsic rewards as a positive source for self-esteem in the school sport context. It must be noted that Chris and Kellie were often recipients of rewards or leadership roles in school sport. Mrs Curry (AIEW) said “she's always getting awards for, like she's a captain for her her faction and. And you know she gets the, awards for winning at the sports carnivals and stuff like that” (Ms Curry SCRIPT 2/1, 1048-1049, 1051-1052).

Sport Competence. The following items comprised students' sport competence and were utilised to determine their self-esteem in the school sport setting: (a) demonstration of the essential team game skills (for instance, a tackle or mark in football) (Carl SCRIPT 2, 896-905; Sean SCRIPT 1, 929-932; Trevor SCRIPT 2, 512-541), (b) knowledge of the game(s) (Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 154-185), (c) display of physical capabilities (abilities such as running, throwing and body strength) (Heather SCRIPT 2, 224-225; Sean SCRIPT 2, 263-272; Trevor SCRIPT 1/2, 116-150 SCRIPT 2, 69-129, 351-366; Wendy SCRIPT 2/1, 154-185, SCRIPT 3, 470-474), (d) overall game performance (Taylor SCRIPT 1/1, 889-893), (e) ability to achieve favourable sport outcome (such as kick a goal, shoot a goal, hit a home run) (Sean SCRIPT 1, 935-938) and, (f) motivation to be physically involved in the game (Sean SCRIPT 2, 226-236).
By far the most common reported element of sports competence was students' physical capabilities, followed by demonstration of essential team game sport skills. Males' reports of these items were more common than females, thus they were considered salient features of males' self-esteem in school sport.

Social Competence. Social competence refers to cooperation and sharing with team mates whilst participating on the sport field. Only highly sport competent students reported sharing and cooperation as sources of esteem in school sport (Chris SCRIPT 2, 338-361; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 437-444).

Affective Responses

The feelings experienced when participating in sport are also termed affect. In short, it was found that mostly positive or favourable affective responses were experienced by Aboriginal students when participating in school sports. Specifically, sport provided an avenue for students to experience enjoyment, but more importantly, feel good and worthy about themselves including pride as an Aboriginal person.

A range of negative or unfavourable affective responses were found. This was more so for males, since they experienced "shame", self-dislike, anger and sadness. Females' negative responses however, were limited to "shame". Table 10.1 (page 305) illustrates students' affective responses to items they utilised to evaluate themselves in school sport.

Positive and Favourable Affective Responses. It seemed that being out of the classroom and on the sport field was beneficial to
Aboriginal students' sense of well being. Miss Quill put it best:

I think they [Aboriginal students] sort of feel repressed in the classroom they just, it's boring and it's heavy and it's just there. And they really struggle they're very very weak most of them. And I think they just love coming out I mean and playing sport. And it's a social thing and interacting with other kids. Run around and scream and yell and release all that yeah. And you forget about all the other stresses of the world (Miss Quill SCRIPT 2, 1125-1161).

Table 10.1
Affective Responses in Relation to Sources of Self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of esteem</th>
<th>Positive/Favourable</th>
<th>Negative/Unfavourable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-like</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
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<td>Rewards/Roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
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<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes Location of self-esteem sources
The types of positive feelings generated from sport was an outcome of mere participation which was experienced by all students regardless of their level of sport and/or physical competence. The types of positive affect experienced consisted of self-like, pride and enjoyment. Although three types of positive responses were experienced, Aboriginal students revealed that they felt more positive affect than negative and/or unfavourable affect when participating in school sport.

Self-like. Self-like refers to the feelings generated from school sport participation which are solely directed at the individual's notion of self. Affective responses related to the self consisted of feeling good, liking and being happy about one's self.

For Aboriginal students, self-like does not refer in any way to self-love or loving one's self. Aboriginal students strongly and publicly refuted any claims that they loved themselves. This was considered an unfavourable affective response, whereas self-like was viewed as positive and favourable (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1151-1154).

The following elements had some influence upon how sport participation affected Aboriginal students' feelings about themselves: (a) nature of sport, (b) display of sport and/or physical competence, (c) sport outcome and, (d) extrinsic rewards. These will now be described.

The mere participation in sport itself was highlighted as the main reason Aboriginal students felt good about themselves and liked themselves more than when participating in any other school activity (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1191-1201, SCRIPT 2, 943-963; Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-821; Heather SCRIPT 1, 1226-1242; Kellie SCRIPT 2, 824-832, SCRIPT
Student responses to the question of "What do you do that makes you feel good about yourself?" were "oh go and play with my friends. Play games. Oh just basket run and dunk. And run and gun" (Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-821), "basketball. Cause like I like to do a lot of running. And you can like play as a team. And you that’s like you can make more friends" (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 184-197), "and she’s [Taylor] happy. And when she do good at sports that’s when she’s really happy. She come home so proud of herself telling us everything" (Ms R & Ms Eaton SCRIPT 1, 19-23) and "when I play games and I. Footy and I kick a goal, or I get best player or, play tee ball and get a home run, or play soccer or we win, play footy when we win, play tee ball when we win, play soccer when we win" (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1226-1229).

For Sean, the importance of sport participation for his well being was accounted for by Mr Trevin, Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker:

He [Sean] creates a lot of, quiet disruption in class too. He starts, "Sean's teasing me", he he'll just sit there you know? And he'll just say, he'll just talk like this here [quietly]. And nobody will hear him except the person he wants to hear it. And he and you say, "Sean, are you speaking?" "Nah not me". "Well I think it was you so I suggest you be quiet." "You always gotta pick on me". "Was that you Sean?" "No”. You know? But he's doing it all the time, I know I was working with him last year all year. And, and when he caught out like that, I mean he was really angry outside. You know, and he'll just he just gets angry I mean. There's no great outbursts [on the sport field]. He's just not a, he's just not interested in being in the classroom, that's all there is to it. I think if he can just, run around playing football all day, or pinball machines he'd be happy (Trevin SCRIPT 1/2, 537-568).
Wendy (who possessed average to below average sport skills) was the only student who suggested that playing sport made her feel "a little bit" good about herself (Wendy SCRIPT 3, 332-336).

Team sports such as netball, tee ball, basketball and football were nominated as a means to like one's self. The opportunity to play sport in a team with friends, or to make new friends enabled Aboriginal students to like themselves more (Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-821; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 177-200).

Students who possessed above average sport skills suggested that when they displayed their competence in sport, it was an opportunity to feel happy about themselves. Chris, for instance (SCRIPT 1, 764-768, SCRIPT 2, 199-204), stated that running fast and playing well (in football) made him happy about himself and Trevor (SCRIPT 1, 1222-1231, SCRIPT 2, 762-783) said that kicking goals (in football) made him happy.

Heather was the only female to report that she felt good about herself when she used opportunities in sport to show her dominance (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1227-1230). Sometimes, Heather utilised sport as a negative means to 'get back' at peers whom she disliked or whom she thought were "so good":

I: Or what's some of the things about you you that makes you happy about yourself?
Heather: When when I beat Lena [Heather loathes Lena] in tee ball.
I: Yes.
Heather: And when I beat Victor. Cause he think he so good
(Heather SCRIPT 1, 1308-1313).

There were two responses which suggested that a positive sport
outcome produced positive feelings of self-like. Responses were made by male students, Sean (SCRIPT 2, 178-189) and Trevor (SCRIPT 1, 1230-1231, 1284-1284), who possessed above average sport skills. They stated that they were happy with themselves when they won a sport competition (and most likely a team sport competition). For example, Sean stated that he liked himself "when we win [in football]" (Sean SCRIPT 2, 178-189) and Trevor said when he plays "footy when we win, play tee ball when we win, play soccer when we win. When I score [a goal or basket]" (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1230-1231, 1284-1284).

Extrinsic rewards refers to material awards given to students based on their demonstrated sport competence. Trophies and ribbons were suggested as a means of positively influencing affective responses to one's self (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1191-1202, 1210-1250; Chris SCRIPT 1, 1001-1052; Heather SCRIPT 1, 257-274, 1680-1598), although only Heather (SCRIPT 1, 1226-1242) reported that extrinsic rewards gained in sport enabled her to like herself.

Wendy (SCRIPT 3, 820-851) reported that she had not received an award for her sporting achievements but stated that mere participation in sport was the main element that contributed to positive feelings about herself. She went on to suggest that getting trophies (as in club sports competitions) should be encouraged at school sports since she perceived that receiving trophies would enable her to be pleased with herself and thus like herself more.

Pride. The second most reported positive affective response to school sport participation was pride. The pride experienced by Aboriginal
students was mostly directed at their identity as Aboriginals. Some students also reported pride in themselves (as individuals).

The mere participation in sport as well as gaining extrinsic rewards were the major contributors of pride in sport. Other elements which influenced students' experiences of pride were demonstrated competence and sport outcomes.

Sean and Kellie (who both possessed above average sport skills) were the only students who did not report pride as an affective response to sport participation. Others revealed that playing sport allowed them to feel pride as an Aboriginal person (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1207-1209; Chris SCRIPT 2, 199-204; Heather SCRIPT 1, 206-214; Taylor SCRIPT 1, 857-860; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1429-1455; Wendy SCRIPT 3, 374-383). Although Wendy felt pride in sport as an Aboriginal person, she did not experience it as a result of her own participation or competence. Rather, she felt proud to be an Aboriginal person because she acknowledged that public sport (that is, not school sport) was an avenue for Aboriginal people to feel proud, especially when Aborigines were selected for events such as the Olympics. In such situations, Wendy expressed her pride as an Aborigine (Wendy SCRIPT 3, 374-383).

Heather was the only student to reveal that when she played sport, she felt proud to be an Aboriginal person when she performed well (SCRIPT 1, 206-214), or when she won a sport competition and when she received an extrinsic reward for her sports achievements (SCRIPT 1, 1580-1598).

Taylor's grandmother and mother stated that Taylor felt pride in
herself when she performed well at sport (Ms R & Ms Eaton SCRIPT 1, 19-26). Chris's grandmother reported that Chris was proud of his sports trophies and regularly showed them to children who visited his home (Ms Tate SCRIPT 1, 750-757).

**Enjoyment.** All Aboriginal students experienced happiness and enjoyment when playing sport. Again, team sports were cited which included football, basketball and tee ball. The only difference in responses from students was that from Wendy, who stated that she only felt happy a "little bit" after playing school sport (Wendy SCRIPT 3, 852-861).

The most popular response revealed that those Aboriginal students who possessed average to above average sport skills (Heather, Taylor and Trevor) were given an opportunity to display their competence on the sport field and this made them happy and produced feelings of enjoyment (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1300-1339; Ms R & Ms Eaton SCRIPT 1, 19-26; Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1280-1286).

The remaining Aboriginal students who also possessed average to above average sport skills (Carl, Chris, Kellie and Sean) reported that pleasure was derived from the very nature of being active and participating in sport (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1314-1316; Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-821; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 561-571; Trevin SCRIPT 1/1, 537-568).

Team sports seemed to facilitate social interactions among Aboriginal students and others (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students). Chris, Kellie and Trevor (with above average skills) for instance, expressed their enjoyment in playing sport in a team (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2,
186-197; Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 647-676) and playing with friends (Chris SCRIPT 1, 797-821). Kellie said playing basketball made her happy since "you can like play as a team. And you that's like you can make more friends" (SCRIPT 1/2, 195-197).

Trevor’s situation was a little different in that a team environment made him happy because his team mates rallied together and lent him football gear so that he could compete in an inter school game. This made Trevor very happy (Mr Davin SCRIPT 1, 647-676).

Heather (SCRIPT 1, 1226-1242, 1580-1598) and Taylor (Ms R & Ms Eaton SCRIPT 1, 802-816) reported that receiving awards for their sporting efforts made them very happy. Furthermore, Heather stated that winning in team sport competitions contributed to her enjoyment.

**Negative and Unfavourable Affective Responses.** A comparison of negative and positive affective responses was generated from the data. Analysis of themes revealed that Aboriginal students experienced and reported a larger range of negative and/or unfavourable responses to school sport than positive and/or favourable affective responses but, the negative responses were not expressed or reported as consistently.

Aboriginal females tended to feel "shame" and disappointment. Males, however, experienced anger, sadness, "shame" and self-dislike.

"Shame". It was found that Aboriginal students experienced "shame" in two situations which occurred during school sport: (a) When they made a mistake or error (Heather SCRIT T 1, 1424-1440; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 694-614), and (b) when ‘others’ were present when Aboriginal
students were performing at sport (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 357-372; Sean SCRIPT 1, 1098-1114; Wendy SCRIPT 2/0, 875-881).

Heather reported that she experienced "shame" when she knocked the tee over in the game of tee ball. Furthermore, she stated that she was "shame" particularly as non-Aboriginal students were watching the incident (Heather SCRIPT 1, 1424-1440).

Kellie was not worried about Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal students' reactions to the mistakes she made in sport, but rather felt "shame" when she fell over during an intra school tee ball game (Kellie SCRIPT 1, 594-614). Kellie continued to justify her mistake by targeting Heather. She said, "I was playing tee ball and I was running really fast. And Heather instead of staying on the base. She moved off and as I was running over it to turn, I fell. I slipped over" (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 600-612).

The findings revealed that Kellie, Sean and Wendy were concerned with the presence of others when they were performing sports. In Kellie's case, Miss Quill reported that Kellie seemed to be reluctant and embarrassed to display her full sport potential, although this was dependent on the presence of "certain peers." In particular, Heather was noted as one of the "certain peers" along with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal male students (Miss Quill SCRIPT 1, 357-372).

Sean revealed that the sheer number of students participating at school sports was too much for him to handle in some cases. Sometimes, he felt overwhelmed which caused him to feel "shame" (Sean SCRIPT 1, 1098-1114). Wendy expressed her "shame" when her Mother and Father visited the school to watch her play sport (Wendy SCRIPT 2/0, 875-881).
Self-Dislike, Anger and Sadness. A comparison of negative and positive feeling show that students experienced more positive feelings than negative ones. Analysis of the respective data nodes confirm this. In regards to negative experiences, Carl reported that he disliked himself when he made a mistake in sport such as passing the ball to the opponent in basketball (Carl SCRIPT 1, 888-900). He also reported that he felt angry when umpires made incorrect decisions or made no decisions at all. Carl perceived that the umpiring calls were often made against him, thus making him angry toward the umpire. This anger was expressed during basketball and football team sports (Carl SCRIPT 1, 1398-1413).

Trevor stated that he felt sad when he injured another child in sport by accident (such as hitting them in the face with a ball) (Trevor SCRIPT 1, 1287-1291).

Influence of Others

The aim of this section is to acknowledge those individuals who were considered “significant” to Aboriginal students in the school sport context and who bore influence upon how students perceived themselves (self-perceptions) and how students evaluated themselves (self-esteem).

It was revealed that peers and friends contributed significantly to Aboriginal students’ self-concepts in school sport, while adult significant others such as sport teachers and coaches contributed mostly to Aboriginal students’ self-esteem. Table 10.2 (page 315) details perceived significant others and the sources they provided for Aboriginal students’ self-description and self-esteem.
### Table 10.2

**Perceived Significant Others and Location of Influence Upon School Sport Self-concepts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-concept</th>
<th>Perceived Significant Other(s)</th>
<th>Common Sources of esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceptions</td>
<td>Aboriginal(^{19}) and non-Aboriginal friends</td>
<td>Social interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical education/sport teacher</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Sports coach/teacher(^{20})</td>
<td>Appraisals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal friends</td>
<td>Teasing, appraisals, social interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Aboriginal peers(^{21})</td>
<td>Appraisals, social interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{19}\) Relatives are included as friends, since the Aboriginal students of this study mostly referred to them as friends rather than relatives.

\(^{20}\) Sports coach refers to Mr Davin (inter school football) and sports teacher refers to Ms Miller (intra school tee ball).

\(^{21}\) Peers refer to those students in the school population that are not reported nor considered friends by study participants.
Self-perceptions

Friends included both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students as well as the relatives of Aboriginal students. Social interactions (sharing, cooperation) and participation in sport provided sources for Aboriginal students' perceptions of themselves.

The physical education/sport teacher, Miss Quill, possessed direct control over the school sport environment and in particular the types of sports made available to students. Aboriginal students' self-perceptions were dependent on the sports in which they participated at school.

Self-esteem

Adult significant others (sports coaches/teachers) were the main contributors of sources of self-esteem for Aboriginal students (Carl SCRIPT 1, 863-867, SCRIPT 2, 485-515; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1122-1134), Aboriginal friends (Carl SCRIPT 2, 485-515; Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 445-448, 478-494) and non-Aboriginal peers (Kellie SCRIPT 2, 513-518).

It was reported by Aboriginal students that Mr Davin (inter school football coach) (Carl SCRIPT 1, 863-867, SCRIPT 2, 485-515) and Ms Miller (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 1122-1134) intra school tee ball sport teacher) provided positive appraisals to them in school sport. It is noted that Aboriginal students did not report consistent appraisals when participating in physical education activities.

Aboriginal friends provided appraisals and positive social interactions to the Aboriginal students of this study (Kellie SCRIPT 1/2, 445-448, 478-494). Other Aboriginal peers teased one another in
response to unfavourable sport outcomes. Teasing was often initiated by Aboriginal students who possessed above average sport skills.

Non-Aboriginal peers (that is, those students who were not considered by Aboriginal students as their friends) provided a major source of esteem in the form of positive appraisals and social interactions.

Summary

Regardless of sport competence, Aboriginal students’ perceptions of themselves in school sport were described in positive terms and remained stable over the school year. They were however, dependent on the types of sports they played at school. Team sports (such as football, basketball and netball) were nominated by Aboriginal students to have the most positive influence upon their self-perceptions and self-esteem.

Basketball was selected by both males and females as the primary sport that assisted in the development of positive self-perceptions and favourable self-esteem.

Self-perceptions were often described in broad and general terms, although male students utilised sport skills in their self-descriptions to define themselves, whereas females did not. Furthermore, males reported more detail in their self-perceptions than females.

Aboriginal students’ evaluations of their self-perceptions were also positive. The main source of self-esteem in school sport environment were appraisals, although other sources included sport and social competence. Non-Aboriginal students and sport coaches/teachers were the main contributors of appraisals for Aboriginal students.
Aboriginal students reported positive affective responses to their self-esteem in school sport. By far the most important source of esteem was sport competence, which produced positive feelings such as self-like, pride, enjoyment as well as negative/unfavourable feelings consisting of sadness, "shame" and self-dislike.

In sum, it was revealed that the self-concepts produced as a result of school sport contributed positively and favourably to Aboriginal students' perceptions and feelings toward their Aboriginal identity and Aboriginality.
CHAPTER 11
DISCUSSION

A review of the existing literature revealed a gap in knowledge about urban Aboriginal children's school sports experiences and perceptions. In particular, Aboriginal children's perceptions of themselves in the school sport setting is lacking. This type of information is warranted because Aboriginal children tend to be identified as having low or unfavourable self-esteem (Chadbourne, 1984; Forrest, n.d.; Malin, 1989, 1990). A number of sources support the notion that sport is an important catalyst for positive changes to self-esteem particularly for children (Australian Sports Commission, 1991; Brandl-Bredenbeck & Brettschneider, 1997; Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Mason & Wilson, 1988; Pillai, 1996; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988; Simpson, 1996; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.; Sweeney, 1999; Tatz, Ramsey, Stocks, Bass, Winkler, Eva, Quayle & Blake, 1998; Temple, 1995). Evidence to support the influences of sport upon the self-esteem of urban Aboriginal children is lacking. Furthermore, Aboriginal children's self-esteem has mostly been studied within the educational context, however sport has mostly been studied outside of the school environment (often referred to as club sport). Thus, research of Aboriginal children's self-perceptions in the school sport environment is required.

The purposes of this study were firstly, to provide detailed descriptions of the experiences and perceptions of school sport from the perspective of urban, Western Australian Aboriginal school children. A
second purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions urban Aboriginal children possessed of themselves whilst participating in school sport. In this chapter, the common themes of Aboriginal children's experiences and perceptions of sport, including their self-perceptions, are presented. The investigator's interpretations of the themes are provided in light of the existing literature.

Experiences in School Sport

The experiences urban Aboriginal children had in the school environment are reported. These included both positive (or favourable) and negative (or unfavourable) interactions and achievements.

Favourable Sport Experiences

Urban Aboriginal children mostly had positive experiences in school sport. The main sources of positive experiences were derived from the social interactions with peers and from Aboriginal students' demonstrated sport performances. These experiences were fairly consistent over time.

Social interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students produced the main source of positive experiences in the school sport setting. Interactions among Aboriginal students comprised teasing each other in order to challenge each others' social positions. Limited social interactions were experienced among Aboriginal students and adult significant others (teachers and coaches) in the school sport setting. Few negative school sport experiences were observed during the study but they
are important to the discussion and will therefore be presented here.

Social Interactions. By far the most common source of positive experiences in school sport for Aboriginal students were the social interactions they had with non-Aboriginal peers. For Aboriginal students, the main purposes of social interactions in school sport with non-Aboriginal students were to make friends, gain popularity and acceptance. This was shown by: (a) the attempts made by non-Aboriginal students to praise Aboriginal students' sport performances, (b) Aboriginal students assistance to others, (c) Aboriginal students' demonstration of their sport competence, (d) the leadership qualities shown and the roles of authority bestowed upon Aboriginal students and, (e) the enjoyment sought by both Aboriginal (and non-Aboriginal students) whilst at play in sport.

Aboriginal students were the recipients of verbal feedback in the school sport setting. This was supplied in the form of praise and encouragement and was directed at Aboriginal students' individual sport performances. What this means is that non-Aboriginal students acknowledged Aboriginal sport performances in the public domain and in doing so, provided a significant source of information for Aboriginal students to evaluate themselves and thus affirm and/or reaffirm their self-esteem in sport. This form of feedback was often made in the presence of others (peers and teachers) and thereby informed others (by indirect means) of Aboriginal students' performances. This may be seen to be a positive secondary source of information for Aboriginal students' self-esteem, since Aboriginal students were aware that others in the external environment were also knowledgeable of their sport.
performances.

Praise and encouragement were constantly supplied by non-Aboriginal students to those Aboriginal students who displayed average to above average levels of sport skills and overall performances. Aboriginal students who possessed average to below average sport skills only received positive verbal feedback from their friends. Often their experiences at school sport were directed at their mere involvement and participation rather than at their skill level or state of their performance (as observed with Aboriginal students with average to above average skill). Thus, this study revealed that non-Aboriginal students were important contributors of information relating to Aboriginal students' self-esteem in school sport.

In return, Aboriginal students often provided verbal instructions to non-Aboriginal peers. In most cases, Aboriginal students physically positioned or located a non-Aboriginal peer (during a game) if the verbal instructions were difficult to follow. Regardless of skill level, all Aboriginal students assisted (by physical or verbal means) non-Aboriginal peers in school sport. Aboriginal students who possessed average to above average skill levels assisted others more often than those students who had average to below average skills. What this means is that irrespective of skill level Aboriginal students valued their self-perceptions in the school sport context and thus possessed the confidence to assist others in sport.

It is important to note that most of the positive interactions that occurred in the school sport setting were experienced with the same
gender. In other words, Aboriginal females interacted mostly with other females (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), whilst Aboriginal males interacted mostly with other males (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal). A reason for this finding is that most of the interactions took place during intra and inter school sport sessions, where the sports played were single sex.

When Aboriginal students displayed their competence in sport, non-Aboriginal students wanted to make friends and have them included in their teams. It seemed that the currency to make friends was a display of average to above average sport competence. This was particularly more evident for sport competent Aboriginal students whose interactions extended to members outside their own peer group to that of the larger class population. Aboriginal students who possessed average to below average sport skills were often included and accepted as a team member among their group of friends. Their levels of displayed sport competence do not entice friendship or acceptance from the larger class population, but were limited to those students with whom they were already familiar and who were originally friends. This finding revealed that the more actual demonstrated competence in sport, the greater attraction to others for social interactions and friendships.

Sport competent Aboriginal students were often selected in roles of authority in the sport setting. For instance, this study shows that they occupied several captain roles whereby peers selected each other to fulfil the duties. Aboriginal sport captains were known for their sport competence and popularity. Furthermore, they were also known to
demonstrate leadership qualities and skills such as sharing the ball, encouraging all peers to actively participate in the game at hand, assisting and motivating other peers to perform and displaying sportsmanship at all times (both on and off the sports field). By selecting the appropriate peer for such a role meant that sport was more enjoyable and thus encouraged others to participate and perform to the best of their ability. In return, all students had an enjoyable school sport experience.

Irrespective of skill level, all Aboriginal students reported that sport was an enjoyable experience. As mentioned earlier, sport competent Aboriginal students revealed that by displaying their competence they often received praise and encouragement from non-Aboriginal students. This form of feedback was often the currency for making friends and thus substantially contributed to their social interactions. For less sport competent Aboriginal students, the currency for positive interactions with non-Aboriginal students was their mere participation and active involvement in sport. The reason for this finding is that "friends" comprised a group of non-Aboriginal peers who interacted with the less sport competent Aboriginal students. It seemed that positive affect, in the form of fun and enjoyment, were attractions of school sport for Aboriginal students. The existing literature shows support for the findings of this study such that mere participation in sport provided the opportunities to make friends (Australian Sports Commission, 1991; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997; McGregor, 1998) and produced fun and enjoyment (Roberts & Rijavec, 1988). More specifically, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Affairs (HRSCATSIA, 1992) report that there were increased opportunities for social interaction in physical activities and thereby assisted in making friends and breaking down Aboriginal stereotypes. The report made the claim that "the most positive interactions between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community are often seen to take place through sport" (HRSCATSIA, 1992, p. 175). However, the report does not identify the forum in which sport is delivered (that is, club, professional, school, amateur) and whether or not the interactions occurred between adults, youth or children. It is interesting to note that outside of the school sport context, the situation for Aboriginal sports persons may be the opposite. Ernie Dingo (a former state representative for basketball) made the following observation at an Australian Rules football game in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal players were team members:

It's so funny to go to a football game and watch my brothers get out of their car and the white fellas get out of theirs, and no one says anything to each other until they walk into the same club room, and put the same jumper on. When they're out on the field they pat each other, and back one another up all the time! But as soon as the match is finished, and they've showered and put their civvies back on, they go in two separate directions, whether they win, lose or draw. And that's sad. It's sad that people should have those ideas about life (Coolwell, 1993, p. 86).

Although the results of this study showed that positive social interactions occur between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, it must be stated that the context in which these interactions occur should not be overlooked. In this study, it was shown that the primary school environment was conducive to encouraging positive social interactions.
between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the school sport setting. The elements of the environment that assisted in encouraging such positive interactions included: (a) school policies that discouraged racism and prejudice, (b) the level of sport competence displayed among Aboriginal students, (c) the use of Aboriginal sports role models at various school activities and events (such as National Aboriginal Week) and, (d) team sports (such as basketball) which were conducive to promoting close, personal contact among all students and encouraged sharing, cooperation and active participation.

The interactions that Aboriginal students experienced with other Aboriginal students were sometimes used to challenge one another's social standing within the school setting. Challenges were made by verbal teasing and were constant and directed at their actual and demonstrated competence. Unlike the social relations developed with non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students constantly provoked each other and in the process, they challenged their social relations.

It seemed that within the social structures at school, sport was an integral part in determining the social positions and the students who occupied the positions. Demonstration of sport and/or physical competence was a significant contributor for students in determining such positions. It seemed that Aboriginal students had to prove their competence to other Aboriginal students. They possessed their own social rules and standards in which students were constantly challenged.

The interactions that Aboriginal students experienced with non-Aboriginal students showed that a demonstration of sport and/or physical
competence provided the opportunity to prove themselves as individuals, gain recognition for their efforts and ultimately acceptance among the whole school population. Interactions among Aboriginal students however, revealed that sport provided opportunities in which they could display their competence and thus be considered for a position of equal or higher social standing.

The function of sport as an avenue of opportunity for positive feelings of acceptance, respect (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995; Tatz & Tatz, 1996; Tatz et al, 1998) and equality (Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; Perkins, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988) is supported. The existing literature revealed that sport in the club context (professional and amateur levels) was recognised as a means for Indigenous Australians to gain acceptance and equality with the wider society. In the present study, it was also found that sport was a means for acceptance and equality and this occurred in the school sport setting.

Although the interactions among Aboriginal students were challenging, they were also purposeful for generating positive feelings relating to their Aboriginality and Aboriginal identity. For instance, sport provided the opportunity for Aboriginal students to express themselves in 'their own ways' when they communicated among one another. In this sense, 'their own ways' refer to the methods of communication that were preferred and consisted of commonly used phrases and words of the Nyoongar language as well as the Aboriginal-English vocabulary. With
the focus of social interactions in sport, the way in which Aboriginal students communicated with each other provided opportunities to experience positive feelings toward their Aboriginality and Aboriginal identity. For instance, when groups of Aboriginal students interacted, they felt proud to be Aboriginal and experienced the need to demonstrate their Aboriginality by talking in 'their own lingo' with fellow Aboriginal students. They made the point that they enjoyed talking their language, because they were aware that non-Aboriginal students did not know what they were talking about. It seemed that the use of language in this way showed that Aboriginal students were attempting to actively demonstrate their Aboriginality and Aboriginal identity in front of non-Aboriginal students. The purpose of doing this is perhaps to celebrate (as a group) their Aboriginality and identity in the public face and in doing so, made them feel confident of themselves.

The literature supports the purpose of sport as a means to identify as an Aboriginal (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992; McGregor, 1998; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995; Tatz & Tatz, 1996; Tatz et al., 1998). More specifically, Australian track athlete Cathy Freeman pointed out that when Aboriginal children are together as a group, it allowed them to feel proud, have control and experience confidence and positive influences toward their self-esteem (McGregor, 1998). Aborigines portray strength and unity when they are communal (Health Promotions Services Branch, 1989). For instance, after her gold medal performance at the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Vancouver (Canada), track athlete Cathy Freeman paraded the stadium
wrapped in the Aboriginal flag and the Australian flag. From anecdotal
discussion with adult Aborigines, it was generally felt that Freeman
acknowledged her Aboriginality by raising the Aboriginal flag and
therefore allowed Aborigines throughout Australia to celebrate her
achievement. Aboriginal people felt proud that she shared to the rest of
the world her Aboriginal heritage.

When Cathy Freeman acknowledged her heritage, she defined in
public splendour her identity as an Aboriginal Australian. Tatz
highlighted in his review the concepts of identity and sport and stated
that sport is used as a method of defining and developing a "national
identity." Furthermore "many nations have underestimated or
misunderstood the racial factor in sport, the brotherhood and sisterhood
of black identity that crosses national boundaries and ideological
systems" (Tatz, 1984, p. 31)

For Australian Aboriginal people, the influence of sport is a means
to bring together families from many communities and districts from all
over the state and sometimes interstate. In this tradition, sporting
carnivals, particularly basketball and football are important calender
events that not only serve as reunions, but also define
a collective identity of the many groups of Aboriginal people that exist in
Australia. Sport brings them together as one (Health Promotions
Services Branch, 1989).

A study by Wright (1985) of American black youth support the
present finding such that it was revealed that youth with high regard of
their race (termed racial self-esteem), possessed higher levels of self-
regard (personal self-esteem) than youth with low racial self-esteem.

In the present study, Aboriginal students experienced few social interactions with adult significant others (such as teachers, coaches and their assistants) in the school sport setting. The few social interactions that did occur were with adults who had previous experience and contact with Aboriginal people. For instance, the social interactions that occurred in the school sport setting involved male, adult significant others and mostly Aboriginal male students. The adult males possessed previous contact and experience with Aboriginal children and possessed some knowledge of the rules of their social world and the preferred ways in which Aboriginal children communicate. In other words, they possessed prior knowledge of the students with whom they interacted. Perhaps the most important finding was that the adult males were open to learning from Aboriginal children and they did not force social interactions, but waited patiently to be invited among them. In one situation, a class teacher spent most of his recess and lunch periods playing basketball with Aboriginal students. He believes that the social interactions shared in sport with students assisted the development of the relationship in the classroom and hence Aboriginal students’ motivation, learning and attendance. This perception was supported by the students who reported that they enjoyed playing basketball with the class teacher and that it provided opportunities to get to know the teacher on a personal basis. Sport in this sense allowed them to laugh, tell jokes and have fun together. Furthermore, the students stated that they preferred teachers who shared jokes and laughed with them.
For female Aboriginal students, social interactions with adult significant others (coaches, teachers, sport assistants) were negligible. Analysis revealed that the adults who were involved in sport and physical education possessed little or no experience with Aboriginal children. This is not to say that this was the only contributor to the lack of social interaction between female Aboriginal students and adults in the school sport setting, but it must be taken into account especially in light of the male students' explanation reported above.

These findings revealed the importance of teachers' experiences and willingness to get to know Aboriginal children on a personal basis. Their willingness to step back from their roles as teachers in order to socially interact with Aboriginal children in their world (on a basketball court for instance) and in their terms (such as use of language and methods of interaction) was a crucial factor to establishing rapport and developing a good working relationship between teaching and child in the classroom. In this study, it had been shown that sport (particularly basketball) was a useful and meaningful tool that encourages such interaction.

Unfavourable Sport Experiences

Aboriginal students experienced some unfavourable encounters in the school sport setting. The majority of experiences were linked to the nature of the activities and sports offered and the method in which they were delivered and organised.

Nature of Sports and Activities Offered at School. The types of activities and sports offered for school sport and the way in which these
were delivered and organised contributed significantly to unfavourable sport experiences for Aboriginal children. For instance, during physical education sessions, Aboriginal children reported that the activities were boring and simplistic and thus did not provide a challenge to them. Many of the activities conducted during physical education consisted of individual activities such as throwing a tee ball or running. Aboriginal children stated that such activities were simple to perform.

A similar situation was found for the sports offered for intra and inter school sports. Aboriginal students reported that the sports offered with which they were familiar did not pose a challenge to their already demonstrated competence. Aboriginal students stated that they want to learn new sports to challenge themselves and also test themselves against other students. Others support the notion that schools should offer a range of sports (Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997) and not be limited to high profiled team sports (JSDU, 1996). A variety of sports is essential to ensure the development of a range of sport skills and availability of opportunities for students to determine their future club sport preferences.

It seemed that Aboriginal students craved activities and sports that provided a constant challenge to their own competencies. They actively sought such challenges and when challenges were not present, students had unfavourable sport experiences in the form of boring, simplistic and non challenging activities. Challenges were required for Aboriginal students to test their own sport competence and that of their peers.
The sports offered for intra and inter school sessions were also reported by Aboriginal students as 'familiar'. In other words, Aboriginal students possessed prior and/or developed knowledge of the game and rules. They indicated that they want to learn new sports and preferred to learn the tactics of sports during physical education sessions. Aboriginal students displayed an eagerness to learn more than what was offered to them. Their appetites for new and exciting sports was not fulfilled in the school sport setting. Specifically, they expressed their desires to participate in an intra or inter school basketball competition. The Naples primary school deputy took it upon himself to organise an intra school basketball competition with games being conducted during lunch breaks. Aboriginal students participated, though they consistently requested an inter school basketball competition in which they could test their skills against opponents unknown to them. Unfamiliar opponents represented a challenge to Aboriginal students who were eager to test themselves in such a context.

Support for the use of basketball as a medium for encouraging positive sport experiences is highlighted in the Sports Challenge programme (Pillai, 1996; Sports Challenge, 1997b). Basketball is used in the programme to “teach teamwork, communication and help students overcome their fear of making mistakes” (Pillai, 1996, p. 1). More specifically, the concept of the Sports Challenge programme is to encourage the development and enhancement of students' self-concepts through the notion of taking on a challenge. In this case, the challenge is sport and the medium used to influence self-concept is basketball (Pillai,
1996; Sports Challenge, 1997ab). It must be noted that those students who were involved in the Sports Challenge programme were diagnosed with low or unfavourable levels of self-esteem and were considered 'at risk' of displaying problem behaviours.

Coakley (1987) supports the finding that Aboriginal children seek a greater active involvement in sport and more challenges to their competence in sport. In a review of the socialisation factors upon childrens' participation in sport, Coakley (1987) reported that the four main elements children sought from sport were increased action on the sport field, greater active involvement, more opportunities to challenge sport competence and more social interaction with friends.

In the context of this study, basketball was preferred by Aboriginal students because it provided opportunities for greater active participation as well as more opportunities to experience a range of playing positions in comparison to the other team sports offered at school. Furthermore, Aboriginal students were competent at basketball which resulted in direct, visible outcomes. For instance, shooting a basket was a visible outcome and was used as a means to demonstrate competence to one's self and to others. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, Aboriginal students sought challenges in sport that assisted them in evaluating their competence and that of their peers.

Organisation of School Sport. For female Aboriginal students, participation in mixed gender sports and activities at school provided unfavourable experiences. Females said that they fear being injured, or perceived that male students were too rough and were reluctant to share
and cooperate with females when playing together in a mixed gender activity or team sport.

The existing literature reports conflicting findings. For instance, the study by Macdonald (1989) does not support the findings of the present study whereas the study by Curnow and Macdonald (1995) is supportive.

Macdonald (1989) revealed that most high school students perceived coeducational physical education classes to be acceptable and provided an enjoyable experience, compared to single gender physical education classes. Even females in a single gender class agreed. Females also reported that they preferred to play sport with males in many team sports including basketball and football.

In their research of year 6 and 7 Australian students, Curnow and Macdonald (1995), however, found coeducational sport classes were not beneficial for females. For instance, males did not pass the ball to female team members in a game of touch football and females were well aware of the inequalities on the playing field. Furthermore, males often occupied playing positions that enabled them to control the movement and direction of play and thus limited females' participation in the game at hand.

Delivery of School Sports. The practices employed by school staff in delivering sport were greatly responsible for the unfavourable experiences for students. For instance, teachers, assistants and coaches lack formal training, qualification and experience in teaching and coaching children in sport. Mr Davin was perhaps the most credible coach, since he
possessed over 30 years experience as a children's coach. He was also a life member of several sports in the school's region. Miss Quill was the physical education specialist, yet her formal training was that of a drama teacher. She was a karate enthusiast and only participated in recreational sports. Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker, Matthew, was employed on a part time basis and his role was to assist Miss Quill in the preparation and delivery of school sport, yet he was not trained or qualified in coaching or teaching sport to children. He did however, have some experience as a competitor of the local football club where he competed in the senior league team. Others who regularly assisted in the delivery of school sport were special needs' teachers, Ms Quance and Ms Cutters and class teachers Ms Zenith, Ms Miller and Mr Crisp. Ms Cutters and Ms Zenith possessed no formal training or qualification in coaching children in sport, nor did they possess any previous experience. Ms Quance, Mr Crisp and Ms Miller however, possessed some prior experience coaching children in sport, yet only Ms Miller was an accredited netball coach. This was a significant finding, since Aboriginal children's experiences of school sport depended on the methods and practices of those persons responsible in delivering sport to them. Aboriginal students were eager to learn new sports, rules and game tactics, but it seemed that the teaching staff lacked the experiences and training to cater to the students' needs. Furthermore, this lack of experience and qualification may add to the lack of interaction between Aboriginal students and adult significant others in the school sport setting as well as impacting on the degree and content of feedback to
students. The implications for Aboriginal students is highlighted, since interactions and feedback from others were major sources of esteem.

It was evident that the teaching staff lacked control over students since they had many roles to fulfil. For instance, teaching staff often found themselves juggling the roles of coach, teacher, umpire, scorer and timekeeper in one single sport session. This was more the case for the physical education teacher, Miss Quill. In this situation, the time allocated for teaching and coaching was occupied with other tasks (as mentioned above) and thereby Aboriginal students did not receive the type of coaching and teaching they desired.

Furthermore, sport competent Aboriginal female students reported that they rarely received positive feedback from Miss Quill and also reported that female teachers did not actively get involved in the sport sessions. In other words, Aboriginal female students' experiences of female teachers were that they did not cheer, were non motivating, remained stationary and displayed little knowledge of the game rules. Aboriginal male students (regardless of sport competence) however, reported that male teachers actively participated in the activities and games and that they provided positive and corrective feedback on a constant basis. These findings revealed that male students experienced more interactions with adult significant others and more positive feedback than that experienced by female students. Findings from Macdonald's (1989) study do not support the results of the present study. For instance, in Macdonald's study, students (especially females) reported that female physical education teachers were more supportive than male
teachers, particularly when students were not very good at sport.

Aboriginal students' experiences revealed that the majority of staff were not familiar with the rules of the sports. Aboriginal students contend that they were well aware that some teachers did not know the rules of games and thereby took advantage of them during games. For example, during an intra school netball game, a female Aboriginal student committed a violation (stepping). In this instance, the umpire was the physical education teacher. She did not blow the whistle to call the violation and the female Aboriginal student continued with the ball and scored a goal. The umpire then acknowledged the goal to the scorer. In this example, observations revealed that the umpire was watching the game, but lacked knowledge of the rules, or motivation (or perhaps confidence) to make an umpiring decision. Observations revealed that occurrences similar to this were frequent. Again, this finding revealed that female students were not receiving correct instruction when playing sports. Female students' opportunities and desires to develop sport skills and learn sport tactics were tempered by the level of training and qualification (and perhaps confidence) of female sport teachers. In contrast, male students enjoyed the coaching skills of Mr Davin (for inter school sports) and Mr Crisp and Matthew. Although they may have lacked some formal training and experience, together they provided a more formidable approach than the female teaching and coaching staff.
Perceptions of and Attitudes to School Sport

Aboriginal students perceived that sport in general was valuable to experiencing positive affect in regards to their Aboriginal identity. The main contributors to positive affect were learning new skills and demonstration of sport competence. Sport delivered in the school setting however, was perceived by Aboriginal students as a minor contributor to learning new skills and to the development of social and sport competence.

Aboriginal students' attitudes revealed that Aboriginal role models and extrinsic rewards were important because they made Aboriginal students feel good about identifying as an Aboriginal. They felt proud to be Aboriginal and were able to prove their self-worth and dispel negative Aboriginal stereotypes. Also, active sport participation was more important than sport outcomes (in particular winning) for Aboriginal students.

Sport competent Aboriginal students preferred club sports to school sports because of the increased opportunities to make friends, learn new skills, seek challenges and display competence. These items are now presented for discussion.

Purpose of Sport

Aboriginal students valued sport highly and perceived that it was an important tool for Aboriginal people to develop a sense of purpose and pride as an Aboriginal. In the wider community, Aboriginal students believed that Aboriginal people were more competent at sport than non-
Aboriginal people. Additionally, in the school setting Aboriginal students possessed a similar perception of non-Aboriginal students. They believed that by capitalising on their dominance in school sport, they too possessed the opportunity to gain a sense of equality in the school environment.

This finding is supported by others (Broome, 1980; Cadigan, 1989; Coolwell, 1993; Goolagong-Cawley & Jarratt, 1993; Hawke, 1994; HRSCATSIA, 1992; Perkins, 1993; Roberts & Rijavec, 1988; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995; Tatz & Tatz, 1996; Tatz et al., 1998) who stated that sport was also a tool for elite Aboriginal and Islander athletes to gain a sense of equality and acceptance from members of the wider community.

Collectively, the literature cited above and the findings of this study speculate that success in sport provides an avenue for Aboriginal people to feel accepted and gain equality with others. This is a disturbing finding for Aboriginal children since not all of them were exceptionally gifted at sport. As a consequence, those who were not talented in sport may have less opportunity to feel accepted and equal.

Encourage Life Skills. It is perceived that sport encouraged and assisted in the development of goal setting and visualisation skills. Highly competent Aboriginal students perceived that the skills learned in sport assisted them to develop goals, particularly in the achievement domain of sport. Aboriginal students who were less competent at sport however, perceived that the goal setting skills learned in sport were useful for setting goals for life and not just for the achievement domain of sport.

It seemed that students with highly developed sport skills were
aware that they were good at sports and thus perceived that they can achieve further in the sport domain. They possessed an air of certainty regarding their ambitions and thus utilised the skills learned in sport (that is, goal setting and visualisation skills) to further themselves in sport. Less sport competent students however, perhaps did not possess the same conviction toward sport as did the highly competent students. Rather, the skills learned via participation in sport allowed them to explore a range of domains in which they could set goals and visualise achievement. It could be said that they were not as motivated toward any single achievement domain. Again, perhaps they did not possess enough information about their competence and thus were not capable (or confident) of realising their abilities.

**Develop Appropriate Behaviours.** For urban Aboriginal children, sport in general was perceived as a mechanism that occupied the leisure time of Aboriginal youths and children and thus discouraged anti-social behaviours such as sniffing glue and other substances, drinking alcohol, taking drugs and fighting. Evidence from the Sports Challenge Australia programme (1997a) supported the notion that sport was beneficial for children. More specifically sport assisted in decreasing levels of physically and socially destructive behaviours, whilst encouraging positive behaviours.

**Develop Social Competence.** Team sports in the school environment were perceived to accentuate social interactions among peers. In particular, basketball and football were nominated as the most significant sports which contributed to increased social interactions.
Team sports developed social skills such as cooperation, communication, respect and sharing.

Sport in general was perceived as an important tool in making new friends. School sport, however, presented an environment in which to socialise with existing friends and develop popularity (especially among non-Aboriginal students).


In this present study, females stated that their motivation for school sport was based not only on social reasons, but also on the desire to develop and demonstrate sport competence. Only the study by Longhurst & Spink (1987) partially supported the results of the present study. For example, they found that regardless of gender, sport motivation did not differ for Australian children and youth. Females however, ranked skill development as more important than males. Others (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983; Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985) do not support the results of this current study. In fact, a distinct difference in relation to gender and reasons for sport participation was found. For instance, females reported that they participated in sport for social reasons more so than for skill development. Young females viewed sport as a means to make friends and to experience a team feeling. Males however, reported that
they were motivated to display and learn new skills (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983; Gould, Feltz & Weiss, 1985).

Develop Sport Competence. School sport was perceived to be a minor contributor to the development of sport competence. In the school sport setting, Aboriginal students reported that new sport skills were not developed. Instead, school sport focussed on the development of existing skills. This is partially supported by Portman (1995) who found that school children do not perceive physical education as a learning environment.

Promote Healthy Lifestyle. Sport was perceived by Aboriginal students to contribute to developing fitness, reducing sedentary habits, alleviating boredom and discouraging the intake of drugs and smokes. Others support Aboriginal students' perceptions that sport was a way to stay healthy and keep fit (Australian Sports Commission, 1991; EDWA, 1996; Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997).

Develop Leadership Skills. Sport competent Aboriginal students perceived that school sport provided ample opportunities to gain selection in leadership roles which in turn encouraged and developed leadership skills through sport.

Sport Preferences

Aboriginal students reported that they preferred club sports to school sport because of the increased number of people participating. They believed that club sports offer more opportunities than school sport for the development of social and sport competence. In particular,
Aboriginal students reported that they sought challenges in order to develop their sport competence. Additionally, they reported that they preferred competition against opponents with whom they were unfamiliar. Aboriginal students stated that the challenge in club sports was not knowing their opponents. In contrast, the Australian Sports Commission [ASC] (1991) reported that high school students with high self-esteem found that the school sport setting was a comfortable environment to demonstrate their physical competence. A reason for this discrepancy may lie with the age of the students, their skill levels or length of time involved in club sport. The ASC (1991) compiled a study of high school students aged 13 to 18 years, whereas the current study examined the perceptions of children aged 11 to 12 years. The ASC did not report the current skill levels of students, nor their club sport experience.

When speaking of school sport, Aboriginal students preferred inter school sport to intra school sport and physical education. Similar reasons for their choice of inter school sport were comparable to club sports. A challenge in sport was sought by Aboriginal students. Inter school sports offered a "game situation", rather than just sport activities such as drills and practices as offered in physical education.

Physical education was the least enjoyed and least preferred school sport session. Students reported that the activities were too simplistic, lack variety, were boring and were often repeated several times. Students wanted to learn new games, develop new skills and learn sport tactics. They also wanted their preferences known to the teaching staff and wanted a choice in the sports and activities played.
The existing literature shows varying results of students' perceptions and experiences of physical education. First, EDWA (1996) found that Aboriginal students in years 3, 7 and 10 enjoyed physical education, particularly its game related activities. They perceived that the skills learned in physical education assisted them when playing club sport. An explanation of this finding in relation to the present study may be that students may not have identified the features between physical education and sport and were therefore unable to determine any differences. Alternatively, the activities and nature of physical education delivery may have favoured students in the EDWA (1996) study. In contrast, JSDU (1996) and Carlson (1995b) found that for students (other than Aboriginal), physical education was too competitive and winning was often emphasised. An explanation of these contrasting findings may be that students in the JSDU (1996) and Carlson (1995b) studies reflected upon physical education at the high school setting, whereas Aboriginal students of the present study expressed their opinions and shared their experiences of primary school physical education. This suggested that the school setting in which physical education was delivered provided different experiences and perceptions for children and for youths.

Team Sport Preferences. Aboriginal students preferred team sports due to the increased opportunities to: (a) experience a variety of positions, (b) display a range of sport skills (such as offensive and defensive skills) and, (c) be actively involved in the play. Basketball was the most preferred team sport for both male and female Aboriginal
students because it enabled them to develop social competence, demonstrate sport and physical competence, experience a fast paced game and be actively involved. Pillai (1996) agreed that basketball was the most preferred sport for children since it assisted in developing skills for teamwork and communication. Mostly importantly though, basketball was the medium to instil confidence in children to take a challenge and overcome their fears of making mistakes.

In the study of Aboriginal children, differences in gender were revealed in relation to the reasons given for the preferences of team sports. For instance, males preferred baseball, football and tee ball because these sports allowed them to display competence and challenge peers. Females however, reported that they liked volleyball, netball, basketball and tee ball because they too wanted to displayed competence and socialise.

Rewards

All Aboriginal students enjoyed receiving rewards for their efforts in sport. Rewards provided valuable evidence of students' sporting achievements and were physical proof that Aboriginal students were worthy. More specifically, sport rewards provided the opportunities for Aboriginal students to prove themselves, feel good about being Aboriginal and assisted in promoting a good image of Aboriginales to non-Aboriginals.

Sport competent Aboriginal students perceived that sport rewards were important for proving their self-worth and affirming their sport competence. Less sport competent Aboriginal students perceived that
rewards were important for dispelling negative Aboriginal stereotypes and for experiencing pride, 'goodness' and joy of identifying as an Aboriginal person.

Role Models

All Aboriginal students perceived that role models were important in their lives, simply because they provided encouragement, support and proof that they too can achieve. Aboriginal students reported that their role models did not have to be Aboriginal, yet most of them reported Aboriginal sports people as their role models. Students perceived that role models presented an image to them that it was good to be Aboriginal. They also provided incentives for students to motivate themselves and set goals for life, rather than just for sport. Furthermore, Aboriginal students felt a sense of pride and equality from the successes of Aboriginal sports people.

Others agree that role models play an integral part in the lives of Aboriginal people (Day 1994; Dudgeon, Lazaroo & Pickett, 1990; Issacs, 1988; Kickett 1993). Kickett (1993, p. 6) puts it best:

In our culture, we learn by observing our elders. Our parents and extended kin provide a feedback system from which attitudes, actions and behaviours are modelled. Because we already have a role model system "in built" in our learning patterns, the concept of utilising role models in sport is advantageous to the overall development of a person's self. Sporting models can show Aboriginal people that they can achieve in any facet of their lives. Sport is so much a part of the lives of Aboriginal people that it becomes a vehicle for increasing self-esteem and confidence.
Sense of Self and School Sport

The central focus of this study was the relationship between sport and sense of self. It is clear that sport contributed positively to the sense of self of Aboriginal students. More specifically, Aboriginal students described their self-concepts in school sport in positive terms. Their evaluations of their self-concepts reflected their self-esteem and it too was reported in favourable and positive terms.

Aboriginal students reported that sport had a positive influence upon concepts and evaluations of their identity as Aborigines. In fact, this study has shown a link between sport participation and Aboriginal identity. This will be explained in detail later. The remainder of this chapter will present the nature of the self-descriptions and self-evaluations of Aboriginal students in school sport. Then a discussion of the main contributors to self-esteem and self-perceptions of sport in the school context are presented. Finally, the impact of significant others upon Aboriginal students' sense of self is discussed.

Characteristics of Aboriginal Self-concepts

Regardless of the levels of students' sport skills, the concepts that Aboriginal students possessed of themselves in the school sport setting were positive. Self-descriptions of students' attributes, qualities and skills contributed greatly to the positive self-concepts in school sport. Skills were defined in terms of perceived and demonstrated sport competence. Again, Aboriginal students described themselves in favourable terms in relation to their skills, since they believed that their
competence (both actual and perceived) was better than most of their peers.

Another distinguishing characteristic of students' self-concepts was that they remained fairly stable over the school year. A possible reason for this finding was that the school sport environment remained fairly stable such that the sports offered at school were relatively unchanged and thereby lacked variety. Thus, the information made available for Aboriginal students to establish their self-concepts in the school sport setting remained the same over the school year.

A final feature of Aboriginal self-concepts was that they were mostly described utilising generic definitions. For instance, students used broad and general terms to describe themselves in the school sport setting. There were no abstract descriptors of themselves. It was difficult to compare the characteristics of Aboriginal childrens' self-concepts with other populations since the literature is severely limited to mostly comparative studies.

**Contributors to Self-concepts**

The elements of school sport which were featured in the self-descriptions of Aboriginal students included skills, qualities and attributes. Students' motives in sport which enticed their participation will be discussed in detail since skills and qualities were mentioned as motives for participation.
Motivational attributes of sport

Children usually have a combination of reasons for playing sport or engaging in physical activity. One motive however, is generally defined as the prime motive and this generates the greatest amount of motivation for participation. This motive is distinct from the other incentives due to the personal significance that is attached to it. Aboriginal students in this study wanted to experience mere participation in sport because it was fun, it provided the opportunities to demonstrate their competence, interact with peers and promote and encourage their Aboriginal identity.

The motives for sport participation of children in general has been researched well in the existing literature (Gill, Gross and Huddleston, 1983; Gould, Feltz and Weiss, 1985; Klint and Weiss, 1986; Longhurst & Spink, 1987; Passer, 1982; Spink and Longhurst, 1990; Weiss & Petlichkoff, 1989). These studies replicated the findings of the present study, although a significant difference between the present study and the others is that Aboriginal students reported a positive Aboriginal identity was a significant motivation for sport participation.

Also, a comparison of results showed that for previous studies of the general population, differences in motivations for males and females were revealed. In other words for the general population, female children tended to participate in sport for social reasons more so than for skill development. Young females perhaps tended to view sport as a means to make friends and to experience a team feeling. Males were generally motivated to display their skill and to learn new skills. In the present study of Aboriginal children, both males and females preferred to play
sport for both social and skill reasons. There were no differences in participation motivation in relation to gender.

It seemed that sport was an integral part of Aboriginal students' lives since it was found that many extended family members were involved in some form of sport and that Aboriginal students were aware of the impact of sport upon Aboriginal peoples' lives. They resided in an environment in which sport was important and valuable to Aboriginal people and were reminded in many ways such as personal contact with sport role models who visit the school, observation of sport which were publicised on television, regular and constant participation in play and games with extended family at home, involvement (for some students) in club sports and involvement of a close family member who was also a participant of club sport. It could be said that Aboriginal students were familiar with the notion of sport in their lives and perhaps it was already a part of their global sense of self. It was found that students viewed sport favourably for Aboriginal people and thus were motivated to participate in a domain in which they were confident to experience something positive.

Perceived competence. Aboriginal students described themselves in relation to their perceptions of their sport competence. Descriptions of their actual demonstrated competence and their potential future competence were revealed. Students mostly conveyed positive and favourable images of their competence at school sport, which were reported to contribute highly to their self-descriptions in school sport. This finding demonstrated that since Aboriginal children valued sport,
their perceived competence gained significance as a vital element of their self-concepts in school sport. Brandl-Bredenbeck and Brettschneider (1997) supported this finding with North American and German adolescents. They found that the greater the perceived importance of sport, the greater the positive influences upon self-concept.

In terms of perceived competence Leonardson, (1977) and Leonardson and Gargiulo, (1978) found that perceived competence was an important construct of the self-concepts of North America high school and college students. A study by Roberts, Kleiber and Duda (1981) partially supported this current finding that perceived competence was an important indicator of 11-12 year old Aboriginal students' sport participation. Other studies reported varied findings regarding contributions of sport toward self-concept (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity, 1994; Guyot, Fairchild & Hill, 1981; Sberill, Holguin and Caywood, 1989). These previous studies showed that fitness, motor ability and body appearance were important contributors to the self-concepts of the general population. For Aboriginal children in the present study, however, perceived competence was a valued attribute of their self-concepts in the school sport setting. A reason for this is that Aboriginal students perceived their demonstrated competence positively influenced relations with peers and also impacted favourably on their Aboriginal identity. It is argued therefore, that a direct relation between perceived competence, social interactions with peers and Aboriginal identity exists in the school sport setting. Weiss and Chaumeton (1992) agreed that culture was a
A pertinent construct which is said to have a relation with perceived competence was the notion of an optimal challenge (Harter, 1978, 1980, 1985). According to Harter (1978, 1980, 1985), if the task is perceived as an optimal challenge by the individual and success results, then the individual's perceptions of competence for that particular achievement domain is positively influenced and thus the individual is assured to experience positive affect and is stimulated to achieve in that domain again. In this study, Aboriginal students' perceptions of their competence in sport were favourable. It can be said that those students who possessed high levels of actual demonstrated competence in sport, also possessed higher perceptions of their competence than Aboriginal students who were low in demonstrated sport competence. This statement must be read with caution since it was revealed in this study that Aboriginal students consistently expressed their desires for challenging tasks in school sport. They reported they did not experience the challenges that they sought. Harter's (1978, 1980) theory stated that success with challenging tasks in sport has some influence upon perceived sport competence. Moreover, Brustad (1988) found that challenges in sport influence the amount of positive affective experiences (such as pride, joy and happiness) for children. Thus, it could be said that in this study, school sport did not contribute as well as it could in providing vital information for the self-concepts and self-esteem of Aboriginal students. In other words, although Aboriginal students perceived and evaluated themselves favourably in the school sport setting, school sport failed in
other ways to provide sufficient sources for the enrichment of a positive sense of self.

Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal students consistently described themselves in sport in relation to their Aboriginal identity. It was found that sport impacted positively and favourably upon students' identities as Aborigines. Often, students reported that sport participation (not necessarily the demonstration of sport competence) allowed them to express their Aboriginal identity in positive terms. For instance, sport participation provided the opportunities for some Aboriginal students to prove their worth by mere participation, and for other Aboriginal students, sport allowed them to display their competence. For each situation, Aboriginal students demonstrated their worth to their peers (via sport) and thus sought equality and acceptance from significant others in the school sport setting. Interactions with non-Aboriginal students provided positive feedback, which in turn was utilised by Aboriginal students as a favourable source of information for the development of their self-descriptions.

Pedersen et al. (1997) however reported that Aboriginal students do not favour their Aboriginal identity when compared to non-Aboriginal students in the classroom setting. In contrast, Pedersen et al. found that sport was the sixth most valued element of their self-concepts. These findings strengthen the notion that sport was an important element of Aboriginal children's self-concepts and was a positive contributor to the affective responses in relation to their Aboriginal identity.
Elite Aboriginal athletes also desire to identify as an Aborigine and seek acceptance and equality from non-Aboriginal people (Cadigan, 1989; HRSCATSIA, 1992; McGregor, 1998; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.; Tatz, 1984, 1987, 1994, 1995; Tatz & Tatz, 1996; Tatz et al., 1998). However, there appears to be no empirical research to refute or support these claims.

Social interactions. Aboriginal students desire social interactions with their peers in the school sport setting. Interactions among Aboriginal students were purposeful in challenging one another's social position at school. Sport was perceived and recognised by Aboriginal students as the medium to test each other and vie for leadership positions that existed in the social world of the school environment. The purposes of Aboriginal students' interactions with non-Aboriginal students however, were to seek friends, gain popularity and receive positive information which was utilised in the formation of healthy and favourable self-descriptions.

This study has revealed that despite students' levels of demonstrated or perceived sport competence, they sought sports and physical activities that encouraged close social interaction with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peers. More specifically, Aboriginal students consistently expressed their desires to experience a team environment so they can share and cooperate with team members. For instance, Aboriginal students reported that they enjoy basketball because of the increased opportunities to demonstrate their sport competence and to experience cooperation, team work and sharing with peers on the court.
Basketball provided positive experiences for the demonstration and development of social and sport competence. Furthermore, it contributed greatly to positive affective responses.

Cooperative social skills were consistently featured in the self-descriptions of both male and female Aboriginal students. The assumption that cooperative social skills are pertinent elements of students’ self-concepts is supported by Pedersen et al. (1997) and partially supported by Marsh and Peart (1988). Pedersen et al. (1997) reported that cooperation was the most valued element of Aboriginal students’ self-concepts. Marsh and Peart (1988) found that the cooperative physical education programmes positively enhanced adolescent Australian females’ concepts of their physical abilities, whereas competitive programmes lowered them. In another study however, Klint and Weiss (1987) found that only children high in perceived sport competence and who were competing in club sports rated team atmosphere as an important reason for their participation. The findings from these studies and the present one do not provide any conclusive evidence of students’ motivation for team sports which encourage cooperative social skills. In the present study however, Aboriginal students valued the social interactions with non-Aboriginal peers because it assisted in breaking down stereotypes that exist of Aboriginal people in general. Furthermore, non-Aboriginal students provided feedback that was considered essential to Aboriginal students’ self-esteem in school sport.
Characteristics of Aboriginal Self-esteem

The evaluations students made of their self-descriptions in sport featured several characteristics. For instance, self-evaluations were positive in nature and were described with accuracy. Finally, gender differences were found in terms of the specificity of the self-evaluations.

Positive Self-esteem. Self-evaluations reflected the judgments that were made of the self-descriptions. Since Aboriginal students' self-descriptions were positive, then so too were their evaluations of themselves.

Team sports featured well in the positive self-evaluations of Aboriginal students. Females evaluated themselves highly in netball and basketball, while males reported positive self-evaluations when participating in football and basketball.

Team sports were highly regarded since they provided more opportunities for active participation and demonstration of sport competence. They were a source of positive affect, particularly in regards to students' Aboriginal identity. Team sports also allowed students to socially interact with peers. Pedersen et al. (1997) supported these findings since they found that cooperativeness and friends were featured highly in Aboriginal childrens' self-concepts.

The benefits of sport upon self-esteem has not been adequately researched in the existing literature. In particular, empirical knowledge of childrens' achievement in sport and self-esteem is limiting and thus conclusions are difficult to draw upon. The existing literature however, proposed that the elements of sport such as a demonstration of
competence and feedback from significant others provide valuable sources of information for individuals to determine their self-esteem in sport (Horn, 1985; Horn & Hasbrook, 1987; Weiss, 1987).

Sport has been advocated as a tool for improving the self-esteem of Aboriginal children and youth by occupying their time and alleviating boredom. Aboriginal sports role models are often used as physical proof of achievement and are utilized as motivators to encourage goal setting and commitment (HRSCATSIA, 1992; Mason & Wilson, 1988; Sport in Aboriginal Society, n.d.). Atkinson (1991) however, strongly warns against using sport as a cure-all for social and psychological issues among Aboriginal people. For the non-Aboriginal population, a lack of self-esteem was perceived as a barrier to school sport participation (ASC, 1991) and sport was perceived as a valuable element to the development of self-worth of children and youth (ASC, 1991).

Accurate Self-esteem. It is surprising to find that regardless of students' level of perceived or demonstrated sport competence, all students evaluated themselves accurately. This was an important finding, since there were no differences among students with high competence and low competence. Although in this present study of Aboriginal students, global self-esteem was not the focus, it is interesting to note that research with other populations did report differences. Campbell and Fehr (1990) for instance, examined the differences between individuals who possessed low self-esteem (LSE) and those with high self-esteem (HSE). The findings showed that LSE subjects provided more accurate descriptions of themselves when compared to those descriptions.
provided by their observers. The opposite result was true for HSE subjects. In fact, HSE subjects overestimated their perceptions of their observers' evaluations. LSE subjects, however, were less accurate when rating their partners' evaluations. In sum, the results showed that the perceptions LSE subjects have of their self-concepts were negative, but were relatively precise. In contrast, HSE subjects possessed positive self-concepts, but were less stable.

In another study, Campbell (1990) compiled a study that explored the differences in descriptions that LSE and HSE individuals made of their self-concepts and the consequent influence on their esteem. Results showed that LSE individuals were not clear or certain of their self-concepts compared with HSE individuals. Hence, LSE individuals displayed less confidence when describing themselves, were less stable in their self descriptions and were less consistent and indecisive about themselves. These findings were not replicated in this current study of Aboriginal students, since it was found that despite the level of perceived competence in the sport domain, Aboriginal students were accurate and consistent in their self-concepts. The importance of an accurate self-esteem in sport is provided by Weiss and Horn (1990) who stated that children who underestimate their self-esteem may be more likely than others to display low levels of achievement or may withdraw from sport.

Specific Self-esteem. The descriptions used by Aboriginal students to evaluate themselves were mostly broad, general and specific to sport. Males however, used more detail in their self-evaluations than females as they judged themselves in terms of the requirements of
individual sport specific skills required for a number of sports. Females on the other hand, tended to evaluate their performances based on gross motor ability or simple sport skills. A possible reason for this difference may lie in the quality of instruction and feedback provided by teachers and coaches, since it was revealed that Aboriginal males were taught by teachers and coaches who possessed more experience and qualification that did the teachers and coaches of the female students. The notion of feedback is discussed in the next section.

Contributors to Self-esteem

It was found that there were several elements that contributed to Aboriginal students' self-evaluation in school sport. These included: (a) feedback, (b) affect, (c) extrinsic rewards, (d) social competence and (e) sport competence.

Feedback and affect were the most immediate sources of information Aboriginal students used to evaluate themselves, since these were often experienced directly after a performance. Social and sport competence were sources of information that were not always determined immediately following a performance, but rather students arrived at a decision of their competence after a collection of experiences. Extrinsic rewards were reported as a means to evaluate the self in sport however, it was not reported as consistently as the other sources.

Feedback. Perhaps the most consistently reported sources of self-esteem were the appraisals received from significant others. In the school sport setting, non-Aboriginal students, followed by teaching staff,
provided the most consistent and positive feedback to Aboriginal students. Appraisals often contained praise and encouragement which were directed at students immediately following performances.

Both males and females reported that they were recipients of praise and encouragement from other students. More specifically, it was found that only those Aboriginal students who displayed average to above average performances received positive appraisals not only from friends but also from the wider peer body.

Only males however, reported that they were recipients of feedback (from teaching staff) which contained critical information about their sport skills and consequent performances. In turn, it was found that only competent males engaged in self-referent comparisons. In other words, Aboriginal males mostly received information from their coach which were used to evaluate themselves based on their own past and present performances.

According to Harter (1978, 1980, 1985), the feedback provided by significant others is utilised specifically by children and youth as a means of judging their competence in sport (often termed perceived competence). The notion of perceived competence is important to this discussion because according to Horn and Haebrock (1987) perceived competence was the main contributor of sport self-esteem for 10 to 12 year old children. The influence of coaches' feedback upon perceived competence and self-esteem is reported by Black and Weiss (1992), Horn (1985), Smith, Smoll and Curtis (1979).
Black and Weiss (1992), Horn (1985) and Smith, Smoll and Curtis (1979) pointed out that coaches possessed the potential to influence children's self-esteem by the type of feedback supplied to them. Smith et al. reported that appropriate and effective types of feedback can positively contribute to children's self-esteem. More specifically, according to Horn (1985) feedback that contained constructive criticism was important to developing positive self-esteem. Black and Weiss (1992) stated that despite the outcome of a performance (win or lose and success or failure), feedback that contained praise and constructive criticism will positively influence children and youth's perceived competence and self-esteem. The results of these studies were replicated in the study of Aboriginal children since it was found that teachers who possessed some coaching experience provided effective and appropriate feedback containing constructive criticism than those teachers with little or no coaching experience. In turn students who received feedback from experienced teachers, utilised the information to accurately determine their competence and thus their self-esteem. For example, male Aboriginal students received more information than females about their performances and thus were able to critically judge themselves accordingly. Students who received feedback from those teachers who lacked coaching experience, however, were hampered in their efforts to accurately determine their self-esteem. For example, female Aboriginal students received more praise than constructive feedback and thus were not presented with as much information about their performances as male students. Their perceived competence was not as positive when compared to male students'
perceptions of competence.

Affect. Aboriginal students often evaluated themselves according to the experiences shared in sport. In this study, mostly positive affective responses to school sport participation were experienced. These included enjoyment, self-like and pride.

Team sports were perceived as a major source of enjoyment and thus contributed significantly to students' self-esteem. For instance, team sports, especially basketball served to provide more opportunities (than any other school sports) for Aboriginal students to: (a) demonstrate their competence, (b) be actively involved, (c) interact with friends and other peers and (d) receive rewards. These elements of team sport participation influenced students' enjoyment and thus provided a valuable contribution of information in which to evaluate themselves.

Students often stated that they like themselves more when they were participating in sport because they valued it and therefore mere participation made them feel good. Again, sport provided the opportunities for students to display their competence and seek rewards.

By far the most important affective response was the pride experienced in relation to identifying as an Aboriginal person. Mere participation, extrinsic rewards and demonstration of sport competence contributed to students' experiences of pride.

Studies with other populations found that challenges in sport contributed to positive affective responses. More specifically, Brustad (1988) and Klint (1988) found that intrinsic motivation (that is, a preference for challenges) was the most important contributor of
experiences such as enjoyment, excitement, anxiety and pride.

In this current study of Aboriginal students, anxiety was not reported as a response to school sport participation. The only negative or unfavourable affective response to school sport participation experienced by Aboriginal students consisted of shame/embarrassment, anger, sadness and dislike for the self. It was found that the contributors to these affective responses were: (a) umpiring decisions that were perceived unfair to the student concerned, (b) mistakes made by the student concerned, (c) injuries caused by the student concerned to others and, (d) when others (peers, parents) watched the student concerned play sport. For others, negative affective sport experiences were attributed to "bad" interactions with the coach and/or parent (ASC, 1991), competitiveness (Carlson, 1995b), limited or no assistance from others when its required (Portman, 1995), verbal abuse and public ridicule (Portman, 1995) and too much emphasis upon winning (JSDU, 1996). These results showed that negative affective sport experiences were varied for both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. These experiences may be dependent on a number of contextual factors.

Extrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards were perceived by all Aboriginal students (regardless of gender or level of sport competence) as a source of information in which to evaluate themselves. It was perceived that receiving trophies and ribbons for instance, provided the physical proof to the wider school community that Aboriginal students were capable of achieving. Extrinsic rewards were perceived by Aboriginal students as a tool to be used to positively influence their feelings about
their Aboriginal identity, while at the same time inform others about Aboriginal achievement.

Social competence. The elements that comprised social competence and which Aboriginal students valued highly for their self-esteem included cooperation and sharing with peers and friends during activities on the sport field. Pedersen et al. (1997) supported this finding since they found that Aboriginal children identified cooperation as the most important element of their self-concepts in the academic setting. In the present study, it is interesting to note that those students with average to above average demonstrated sport skills reported these findings. The reasoning for this finding was that these students were already competent at interacting with others, whereas students with average to below average skills were not and thereby did not utilise this information as part of the self-evaluations in sport. Furthermore, highly sport competent Aboriginal students more often held leadership roles than their Aboriginal peers and thereby viewed these social skills as valuable components of their roles.

Influence of Others Upon Aboriginal Sense of Self

Aboriginal students' sense of self in the school sport environment were very much influenced by those they reported as their significant others. It was found that the majority of information made available for students' self-descriptions was dependent upon the sports and activities provided by the school. Thus, those who possessed control of the school sport environment played a significant role in the development of
Aboriginal students' self-concepts since they were usually the decision makers. It was found that the activities and sports offered lack variety and as a consequence, the information made available for students to form their self-concepts in school sport reflected this. In other words, the descriptions that students' made of their self-concepts remained stable since the information provided was stagnant. This was an important finding since Aboriginal students reported a genuine desire for challenges in sport. In other words, they wanted to learn and experience more than what was provided.

As mentioned earlier, the notion of optimally challenging sport experiences was reported as a significant element of Aboriginal students' self-esteem. In this study however, school sport did not live up to the expectations of students and thus did not allow them to experience their sports potential. The consequences for Aboriginal students' self-concepts and particularly self-esteem are overwhelming.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29 (United Nations, 1997, p. 1) stipulated that “parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential” [italics added]. This study has shown that sport delivered at the research school did not develop Aboriginal students' potential to their fullest and thus according to the United Nations Convention, the school contravened the rights of Aboriginal children.

The general sense of self for Aborigines is comprised of: (a) several secondary sources, of which sport is recognised and, (b) the primary source
which is encompassed in the Aboriginal culture. Article 29 (United Nations, 1997, p. 1) states that education should ensure "the development of respect for the child's own cultural identity, language and values" is provided for. It is argued that Aborigines are minorities who live in two worlds and who are subjected to a number of secondary sources that impact on their notions of their Aboriginality and general sense of self. These sources expose the values, attitudes, judgments and behaviours of mainstream society upon Aborigines' ideas of their culture and identity. An identity conflict arises and thus confusion sets in about one's sense of self and sense of belonging (Dudgeon and Oxenham, 1989). For Aboriginal children, Partington and McCudden (1992) made the point that mainstream schooling also exposes secondary influences upon students' notions of their Aboriginal identity and thus an identity crisis may result.

In this study, the importance of school sport upon Aboriginal identity was revealed. For instance, it was found that 11-12 year old Aboriginal students valued sport highly and that participation positively influenced their notions and feelings toward their Aboriginal identity. More specifically, Aboriginal students perceived that sport participation assisted them to dispel negative Aboriginal stereotypes, develop a strong and favourable concept of their Aboriginality and seek positive feelings of pride, acceptance and equality in the school environment. It is therefore imperative that school sport offers appropriate activities and sports and provides a culturally sensitive environment. Such an environment is necessary to minimise an identity crisis and encourage Aboriginal
students to explore their Aboriginality in an achievement domain that is recognised and accepted by them as a favourable source of secondary information for their general sense of self.

Sources of self-esteem were provided in the form of praise and encouragement and were supplied by teachers, coaches, Aboriginal friends and non-Aboriginal peers and friends. By far the most reported source of feedback was from other students who provided feedback which reflected Aboriginal students’ sports performances and sport outcomes. Positive feedback was mostly provided by non-Aboriginal peers and friends. It consisted mostly of praise and was provided immediately after a performance and given on a consistent basis. This means that non-Aboriginal students were valuable in providing information to Aboriginal students so that they can form evaluations of themselves. Additionally, this form of feedback may have been viewed as a reliable source of information since it was provided regularly.

Feedback from Aboriginal peers was mostly received from their relatives or friends and was supplied to highly sport competent Aboriginal students only. This form of feedback was made in relation to a sport outcome, rather than the students’ performances. It consisted mostly of teasing and mocking and was an accepted form of feedback among sport competent Aboriginal students. It seemed that this form of feedback was utilised as an indicator of students’ social standing within their own Aboriginal social structure. Since students were often recipients of teases and mocks, their social positions were constantly tested and challenged within their own social circles.
Teasing and mocking embraced a jovial and humorous characteristic of the interactions among sport competent Aboriginal students. It was revealed earlier in this thesis that giggling, laughing and telling jokes were the communication tools commonly used among Aboriginal students in the school sport setting. Regardless of the level of sport competence, teasing and mocking is their preferred and accepted style of communication among all Aboriginal students. Malin (1989) also found teasing (both physical and verbal) to be a characteristic of the interactions among urban Aboriginal children. She reported that Aboriginal children mostly engaged in verbal teasing episodes for fun, since it was most common during their daily social interactions. Teasing was also used to remind other Aboriginal children to "not take themselves too seriously" (Malin, 1989, p. 495) and was purposeful to controlling others (usually younger children) during issues regarding safety.

In the present study, phrases from the Aboriginal-English vocabulary and the Aboriginal language were often used. What this means is that Aboriginal students felt very comfortable and confident to speak their own lingo in front of all their peers (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) in the school sport setting. Furthermore, they reported that they enjoyed talking their own language since it empowered them and made them feel confident about their Aboriginal identity in the 'public domain' and thus provided the opportunity to experience pride. Aboriginal students' methods of communication may vary from the majority students' communication styles and, since it was important to their Aboriginal identity and to the expression of their language, it is desirable.
that teachers encourage its expression. Others (Farrell, 1997; Harris, 1987, 1994; Malcolm, 1998; Malin, 1998; Partington & McCuddan, 1992) supported the notion that Aboriginal students should be encouraged to speak their language since its use "reflects cultural values and priorities" (Harris, 1994, p. 125). The importance of language upon Aboriginal sense of self, particularly identity is reported by Malcolm (1998, p. 131),

The exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Aboriginal English...is a symbolic exclusion of the identity and perceptions of those who speak them. It forces a choice upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, either to suspend or deny their identity, or to accept the status of "outsiders" in the education system.

Positive feedback from other sources mostly consisted of praise and encouragement and was provided by adult significant others such as the sports teachers and coaches. It was found that those teaching staff with limited coaching experience and sports qualifications mostly supply positive appraisals. In contrast, teaching staff who possessed prior coaching experience and some sports qualifications, provided instruction and constructive criticism in relation to Aboriginal students' performances. The importance of this finding was that those students who received feedback containing information about their sport performances, also received detailed information in which to assess their sport competence and thus their self-esteem. Students who received praise and encouragement (with no or little information) also received limited information in which to evaluated themselves in school sport. It was revealed that Aboriginal males were often the recipients of feedback which contained information, whereas females were not.
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study had two purposes. The first was to detail an holistic perspective of urban Aboriginal sense of self. The second purpose was to examine the influences of the social interactions with significant and generalised others in the school sport setting that impact upon 11-12 year old Aboriginal childrens’ sense of self.

Firstly, the results of this study confirm that the sense of self of urban Aboriginal children was comprised of both primary and secondary sources as depicted in the conceptual framework (see figure 3.2 on page 97) however, there is dispute over the degree of influence the secondary sources have upon sense of self compared to the primary sources. In other words, the results of this study argue that the degree of influence secondary sources impart upon sense of self is questionable in regards to urban Aboriginal children aged 11-12 years. More specifically, the conceptual framework requires alteration to reflect the findings of this study.

The findings show that regardless of the influence significant and generalised others in the school sport setting have upon sense of self, Aboriginal students’ perceptions of their identity provided the most significant and favourable influence upon their sense of self in the school sport setting. The conceptual framework should reflect that Aboriginal identity was a powerful source of esteem for urban Aboriginal childrens’ sense of self in the school sport setting. Thus, the arrow depicting Aboriginal identity should be shaded darker.
Summary

Sport was perceived by Aboriginal students as an achievement domain in which they can display their competence and consequently experience positive affective responses to their sport participation. The sports offered and the nature in which they were delivered impacted heavily upon students' construction of their self-concepts in the school sport setting. It was revealed that a lack of variety in the sports offered was reflected in students' self-descriptions.

The information students used to evaluate themselves in sport was mostly provided by significant others. Positive feedback in the form of praise and encouragement was mostly provided by non-Aboriginal peers and teaching staff. The feedback received from other Aboriginal students comprised mostly teasing and mocking and was used to challenge sport competence and thus students' social standing in the school environment.

In comparison to the limited existing literature, the findings in this study were varied such that they were sometimes supported, partially supported or contradictory of others. This means that the facts uncovered by the present research cannot be compared in any significant terms and that generalisations should not be encouraged. On the other hand, the findings showed that more research is needed of Aboriginal childrens' sense of self in the sport domain so that a holistic picture may be developed.

The findings expressed in this discussion chapter must be considered in light of all the discoveries of this study. Further, this study explored phenomena at one research site. Additionally, the findings of
this study need to be understood in relation to the context and contents of school sport at the research site. Although school sport provides the opportunities to experience positive affect, it did not however entirely cater to the needs of the Aboriginal students. It seemed that Aboriginal students merely accepted what was offered to them. This study has shown that school sport had the potential to impact greatly upon Aboriginal students' Aboriginal identity, social skills and sport competence. It is however, unfortunate that in this study, school sport did not actually deliver an optimum environment and activities that best fostered the growth of these valued elements of Aboriginal students' self-concepts.
CHAPTER 12
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Urban Aboriginal children live in two worlds where they are subjected to many forces that shape their behaviours, values and attitudes (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989; Haralambos & Heald, 1984; Hughes, 1987). They may develop two separate identities which are portrayed for both the Aboriginal and wider societies (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989). In other words, life is like a swinging door, where each society is separated and its members possess expectations and judgments about the child. It has then been argued that a conflict develops and the child is unsure of his/her identity and where they belong (Dudgeon & Oxenham, 1989; Partington & McCudden, 1992). The information that is presented to the child about his/her sense of self is besieged by confusion and ambiguity, thus resulting in unfavourable levels of self-esteem. It has also been argued that those Aboriginal children who are considered at risk or who demonstrate inappropriate or deviant behaviours possess low self-esteem (HRSCATSIA, 1992; Mason & Wilson, 1988). Organised sport has been advocated as a possible catalyst for favourable alterations to Aboriginal childrens' and youths' self-esteem (HRSCATSIA, 1992). The problem however is, that limited empirical research exists. The purpose of this study was to present the perspectives of 11-12 year old urban Aboriginal children in relation to their experiences, perceptions and sense of self in the school sport setting.

This study utilised qualitative research methods which were conducted over an entire school year. Knowledge about Aboriginal sense of
self in the school sport setting were accessed by inquiring about students' perceptions and experiences. Close interactions with the students were conducted in their naturalistic context in the school sport setting. Semi-structured conversational interviews and non-participant observations were employed in order to capture urban Aboriginal children's perspectives of school sport, including their sense of self. Interviews were conducted with students and significant others. Non-participant observations were made of the students in the school sport setting and were preceded and followed by the personal interviews. Knowledge about a phenomenon was gained when commonalities were presented in several of the student's perceptions.

In sum, it was found that in the school sport context, Aboriginal students described and evaluated themselves in favourable terms. This means that in the school sport setting, Aboriginal students possessed favourable self-concepts and equally favourable levels of self-esteem. A vital finding was that sport conducted in the school environment possessed the potential to greatly influence Aboriginal student's self-concepts and self-esteem, although it was found the actual influence demonstrated was less. In particular, physical education did not impact upon students' self-concepts as favourably as did the sport components of intra and inter school competitions.

Aboriginal Students' Perceptions of School Sport

Aboriginal students valued sport highly since it was important in learning some essential life skills, developing leadership skills,
developing sport and social competence, experiencing positive affect, encouraging appropriate behaviours and promoting their Aboriginal identity.

A preference for club sports existed due to the greater opportunities compared with school sport. In comparison to inter and intra school sport, physical education was the least preferred school sport session because the activities were considered boring, simplistic and offered limited or no challenges to their already demonstrated sport competence. Aboriginal students held the perception that physical education was an introduction to learning new skills and training and developing existing skills in readiness for participation in competition for intra and inter school sport. Similarly, intra school sport was viewed purely for practising in real life game situations the skills learned and developed in physical education. Inter school sport was then perceived as the pinnacle of school sport since students competed against 'real' opponents and in a 'real' competition. Inter school sport was the most preferred session since challenges were present by the opportunities for competition against opponents from other schools.

Team sports were popular among Aboriginal students. In particular basketball was a favourite sport as it provided opportunities: (a) for all team members to be actively involved in the game, (b) for all team members to experience several playing positions, (c) for team work and close social interactions, (d) for fun and enjoyment and, (e) for students to demonstrate their competence.
Most importantly, Aboriginal students perceived that sport provided the opportunities for them to identify positively with their Aboriginality and to demonstrate their worthiness to others. Elements of sport that accentuated these opportunities were rewards, role models and demonstration of sport competence. In particular, it was perceived by Aboriginal students that rewards and role models provided physical proof to others that they were capable and worthy. Sport was perceived as a way to gain acceptance and equality from non-Aboriginal significant others in the school setting.

Students' perceptions of their teachers revealed that they preferred the previous physical education teacher or the relief physical education teacher to the current teacher. The reasons for their preferences were that the current teacher lacked knowledge of games and sports and did not teach new skills. There was also a lack of variety in the games and sport made available to students. Others stated that she did not “look like a sport teacher”. Furthermore, they indicated that they preferred teachers who socially interacted with them, told jokes and who actively participated with students in the sports games. In this case, the teachers who socially interacted with students were often male.

Aboriginal Students' School Sport Experiences

Aboriginal students experienced mostly positive encounters in school sport. The main source of these experiences were the social interactions they had with fellow peers and friends. More specifically, interactions with non-Aboriginal students were beneficial in the
promotion of their Aboriginal identity. Consequently, Aboriginal students experienced feelings of pride associated with their identity.

Furthermore, the interactions Aboriginal students had with non-Aboriginal students were also important in promoting their worthiness as Aboriginals and gaining acceptance and equality from other students. Social interactions with non-Aboriginal students were also important in the development of friendships.

Interactions among sport competent Aboriginal students consisted of teases and mocks. For instance, when a sport outcome was reached, students teased each other in order to challenge their social positions at school. Their sense of place in the school sport setting was regularly contested.

Limited social interactions with adult significant others in the school sport setting occurred. It was reported however, that those teachers who possessed prior experience and knowledge of Aboriginal students' social world at school also experienced more social interactions with Aboriginal students than did teachers with little or no prior experiences. It was found that only three teaching staff, all of whom were male, engaged in social interactions with Aboriginal students in the school sport setting.

Although, few negative or unfavourable experiences in sport were reported by Aboriginal students, these impacted greatly upon their school sport experiences. These experiences were linked to the nature of the games and activities offered to students, the types of sports available, the organisation of school sport and the methods in which school sports
were delivered.

Firstly, some of the activities, especially those conducted during physical education sessions were simplistic, familiar, lacked variety, encouraged inactive participation and did not pose a challenge to some students' competence. For intra and inter school sports, the choice of games was limited, students preferences were not acknowledged and teachers did not coach team tactics and full game rules. For females, coeducational physical education and intra school sport sessions reduced their active participation and made them feel uncomfortable and fear injury.

Aboriginal students constantly reported the need to play team sports, especially basketball. Students preferred to compete against opponents who were unfamiliar to them. They wanted to test their skills. The school was located less than one kilometre from the districts' state basketball league club. The school however, did not utilise the club's facilities, programmes or personnel during the entire research year. For year 6 and 7 students, the school organised a basketball competition which was conducted during lunch periods. The competition was held for one school term and both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal students played in teams which were organised by the students themselves. The competition was favoured by the Aboriginal students, yet the opportunities for challenges were lacking since the opposing teams were known.

In the study a school physical education specialist was appointed. She was not trained in physical education however. Furthermore, her
experiences in coaching and teaching sport to children were extremely limited. Other teaching staff who assisted the physical education specialist also possessed limited experience and formal qualifications in coaching sport and conducting physical education sessions with children. Only the gardener/handyman possessed suitable coaching experience. He had over 20 years experience as a childrens' coach of basketball, football and cricket and held life memberships in clubs representing these sports.

Aboriginal Sense of Self in the School Sport Context

Aboriginal students' descriptions of their self-concepts in the school sport setting were portrayed in positive terms. Their self-descriptions were also stable over the school year and were often defined in broad and general terms. Items that contributed to students' concepts of themselves in the school sport setting included positive affect, demonstration of competence, social interaction with peers and encouragement of Aboriginal identity.

A direct relationship was found between experiences and perceptions of school sport and students' Aboriginal identity. Irrespective of the levels of demonstrated sport competence, all Aboriginal students reported that school sport was a suitable place for them to experience positive feelings regarding their Aboriginal identity.

Since students described themselves in positive terms, then so too were their judgments of themselves in sport. Interestingly, it was revealed that despite students' levels of demonstrated sport competence, their evaluations of their sport competence were accurate in relation to
the researcher and sports teachers' judgments. Overall, the common contributors to students' self-esteem in sport consisted of positive feedback, positive affect, intrinsic motivation (such as challenges), social competence and sport competence.

The power of the influence of others in the school sport setting was highlighted. Non-Aboriginal students for instance, mostly provided essential information about Aboriginal students' sport performances, who in turn utilised this in the formation of their self-evaluations. Additionally, teachers and other sports staff provided general, positive feedback. Interactions and feedback among Aboriginal students however, were critical to the development and maintenance of the social structure and its organisation in the school environment. More specifically, the social positions held by highly sport competent Aboriginal students were constantly challenged.

In sum, it was revealed that Aboriginal children sought fun, challenges and social interactions with peers. These items contributed greatly to their notions of their self-concepts and consequently their self-esteem, yet it can be said that students' needs were perhaps overlooked in this study. It was found that the majority of the sport teaching staff, and in particular the physical education specialist possessed little or no experience or qualification in teaching and coaching sport to children, let alone Aboriginal children.
Practical Implications and Recommendations

In order to ensure that school sport addresses the needs and preferences of Aboriginal students, several implications and recommendations have evolved from this study and are applicable to schools, teachers, education authorities and institutions who are responsible for qualifying and training sport and physical educators.

Education Department of WA

Although the school in this study enforced appropriate anti-racist policies in the classroom and school grounds, it did not possess an appropriate policy for student conduct (such as good sporting behaviour) and the development and delivery of sport and physical education in the school setting. Furthermore, guidelines for a culturally sensitive sport and physical education environment for Aboriginal students were not available. In fact in this study, the school policy for physical education can be located as part of the school's Health Education policy. It is quite clear that from this policy, physical education only encompassed a component of physical fitness. For instance, students were required to partake in a morning fitness programme. After consultation with the Principal and through observations, it was found that the school did not participate in any "whole school morning fitness programme" from the time when data collection for this study was collected at the school in 1997 to the present.

Furthermore in the school policy, there is no mention of sport and how it is to be developed and delivered. It is important to note that
students in this study did not differentiate between physical education and sport. They perceived that any physical activity was considered sport. Findings of this study revealed that organised sport was a central component of Aboriginal students' sense of self and that participation enabled them to develop some life skills and provided opportunities to develop their social and physical competence. A policy entailing the delivery and development of sport for the school was lacking. Further, objectives of sport for a unique Aboriginal student population was also lacking. These details are particularly relevant and critical when there is a lack of sport knowledge and coaching experience on the part of the physical and sport educators in the school. A policy therefore, needs to be developed based on the needs of all students at the school and which includes all components of physical education as well as sport. More specifically, the content of the policy should address issues relating to the school sport teaching environment, content of activities and games, sport delivery and staff. In particular, the policy should highlight: (a) culturally appropriate methods by which to deliver school sport, (b) the use of qualified and accredited staff as teachers and coaches of school sport, (c) the development of games, sports and activities appropriate to the existing skill levels of students, (d) the need to develop new sports skills, (e) the need for maximum opportunities for social interactions with peers and teachers, (f) the need for positive affective outcomes, (g) the need for Aboriginal sport and physical educators, (h) the use of Aboriginal sports role models and, (i) the need for schools and clubs to work together in the provision of sport to school children and (j) the need for educators of sport
and physical education teachers to provide adequate knowledge of Aboriginal people and contemporary issues. These items will now be addressed in detail.

Educators of Physical Education and Sport Teachers

Teacher education providers should ensure that units in Aboriginal Cultural Studies are a compulsory component of courses in Physical Education. It is hoped that the Aboriginal Cultural Studies are taught by indigenous peoples using indigenous resources.

Secondly, national accreditation for coaching children in sport is recommended, so that the physical educators' and class teachers' skills can be kept current.

Finally, Aboriginal tertiary students should be encouraged to undertake a degree in primary teacher education, majoring in physical education. Incentives such as scholarships during their degree course would be appropriate.

Primary Schools

The following objectives should be accommodated by schools and sport teaching staff to ensure that: (a) schools acknowledge the importance and value that Aboriginal students place upon sport, (b) there is a coaching manual for coaching sport to Aboriginal students, (c) school sport is delivered in an appropriate environment, (d) the activities and games appeal to students and, (e) school staff are adequately trained.

School Sport Environment. The environment in which school
sport is delivered should be controlled and manipulated to ensure: (a) provisions for active participation of all students, including experiencing a number of playing positions, (b) offerings of several team sports, including unfamiliar sports and an inter-school basketball competition, (c) accredited and qualified teaching staff, (d) outcomes such as increased social interaction among staff and peers, opportunities for sharing and cooperation, especially during coeducational games and activities, and feedback to students that contains encouragement, praise and constructive criticism.

It is recommended that existing sports organisations external to the school be utilised as much as possible. For instance, there are a number of organisations and resources that assist schools in accessing information, materials and developing teachers’ skills as well as accessing sports role models, coaching clinics for specific sports, training and accreditation for teachers. These organisations include the Aboriginal Sport Unit of the Ministry of Sport and Recreation, State Sport Associations, Indigenous Sport Programme of the Australian Sport Commission, Coaching Foundation of WA, Aboriginal Development Foundation for Sport and Recreation (WA), Womensport West and various National League Sport Clubs such as the Women’s National Basketball League team the Perth Breakers and the Australian Football League team the West Coast Eagles.

Furthermore, schools should make use of the existing club sport and recreational facilities and services in close proximity to the school. In this study, the school was within walking distance of a state basketball
league club headquarters. They did not play any basketball matches at
the club, nor did the school utilise the club's development officer in any
capacity. Knowing that Aboriginal students enjoy basketball and that it
possessed some influence upon their self-esteem, it seemed that the
opportunity to play basketball on an indoor regulation sized court was
wasted.

It was made apparent that Aboriginal students valued basketball
and that it was a major source of esteem, favourable affect and a positive
influence upon their Aboriginal identity. It is important then, that
basketball is incorporated as an inter school sport competition.

Since students valued competitions they organised themselves or
those competitions in which they assisted teachers, then it is
recommended that the Sport Education in Physical Education Project
(SEPEP) be implemented as part of the sport and physical education
program. SEPEP is a popular teaching model that encourages children to
take the role of coach, organiser (for fixtures), scorer and umpire. SEPEP
is typically made available to primary students in years 5 to 7 as well as
high school students (Edith Cowan University, 1999). Students have the
opportunities to independently organise, staff and control sport and
physical education activities. Most importantly, it provides opportunities
for developing skills in leadership, planning and responsibility. SEPEP is
also advantageous for the sport and physical education teaching staff. For
example, while students are conducting class sessions, teachers can
develop future sport sessions, teach tactics or conduct individual coaching
sessions at the same time. Resources are utilised much more effectively
and efficiently.

A concentration of team sports should be encouraged at school. Sports camps could be organised so that students are exposed to a range of sports for a short term period. Also, sport competitions should be conducted with surrounding schools or a full day team sports carnival be held several times during the year. These carnivals and camps can be organised in conjunction with other schools, local sport centres, local club sports and state sport associations.

Finally, Aboriginal students should be encouraged to speak their own language of Aboriginal-English or a form of Aboriginal language in the school sport setting, since there are positive repercussions upon their Aboriginal identity, motivation and learning.

Content of School Sport Activities. The activities and games must contain elements that assist in providing valuable and positive information for students' self-concepts and self-esteem. Content of sport activities should include: (a) challenges to students' existing sport skills, (b) a variety of games and team sports, (c) opportunities to experience positive affect, (d) innovation and novelty, (e) development of new skills, (f) encouragement of game tactics and strategical thinking, (g) appreciation and knowledge of game rules and, (h) continual fast action. The need for a variety of sports offered for inter school sports was a feature of students' responses. In this school, female students had only one choice of inter school sport (netball) and the male students had two choices (football and netball). It is recommended that basketball be provided as an additional option for inter school sport competition.
School Sport Teaching Staff. In this study, Aboriginal students reported that they valued the social interactions they experienced with others in sport. In contrast, they also reported that they experienced limited social interactions with teachers of school sport (namely the physical education teacher and two class teachers). Interactions in school sport with Mr Crisp were viewed favourably by both students and Mr Crisp since the interactions assisted in the development of a personal relationship on the sport field, which in turn progressed into a working relationship in the classroom. Furthermore, Aboriginal students reported that they preferred teachers who socially interacted with them, told jokes and presented themselves in a jovial fashion. With this in mind, teaching staff who are responsible for delivering sport should engage in social interactions with their students so that they can get to know each other on a personal basis. The importance of this relationship has repercussions beyond the sport field (as in Mr Crisp's case). It is imperative that class teachers take advantage of the possible exchange of positive interactions from the sport field to the classroom. It is recommended therefore that they are trained and accredited with sports coaching, in order to facilitate the progression of the relationships from sport achievement domain to the academic domain.

It is critical that physical education teachers negotiate the school sport programme with the students for whom it is intended. Consultation with students is a necessity. Teachers should aim to examine students' needs, preferences, likes and dislikes. It is not
constructive to force them to play games and sports in which they have little or no interest. They are more likely to limit their active participation or withdraw from the activity altogether when they perceive there is no purpose for them, or when they do not experience positive affect or challenges.

This study revealed that teaching staff (including Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers, Special Needs Teachers, class teachers and the physical education specialist) possessed inadequate experience and qualification for delivering school sport to students. In particular, prior experiences with Aboriginal students were limited to one teacher. It is therefore recommended that teachers engage in professional development courses: (a) developing their knowledge of sport, its impact on children and the importance of sport for Aboriginal children's self-concepts and self-esteem and, (b) developing their knowledge about Aboriginal children including their communication styles, social networks, values, beliefs, culture, history, importance of sport and contemporary issues that affect them daily.

In order to develop skills and knowledge of basic coaching techniques as well as learning rules, tactics, games and drills for a variety of sports, teachers should be encouraged to attend the Level 1 Coaching Principles course by the Coaching Foundation of WA and Levels 1 and 2 Sport Specific Coaching Accreditation courses provided by various state sport associations. Perhaps all teaching staff who deliver sport to students should attend the General Principles course and then each staff member attend one or two sport specific courses so that staff will have
possessed the Coaching Principles accreditation and Sport Specific accreditation to teach and coach one or two sports. It must be noted that individuals who pass the courses are nationally accredited for a period of four years. Mini courses are provided for updating knowledge in the meantime. Since courses are mostly conducted after school hours and incur fees, it is imperative that staff and school decision makers meet early in the school year to discuss how to finance the courses as well as how to manage staff attendance at the course and at school.

In this study, it was found that during sport and physical education sessions, class teachers were allocated time for duties other than teaching (DOTT time). The physical educator therefore, possessed the perception that she was the 'babysitter' of the students. She also believed that class teachers possessed a similar perception of sport and physical education. Little importance was given to the notion of quality of sport and physical education for all students. Staff perceptions of sport and physical education impacted upon the types of activities made available, the methods of delivery, and motivation of the staff. Staff therefore, acted upon their perceptions of sport and physical education when teaching and delivering sport and physical education to students. There are no formal mechanisms at school in which to ensure that students are developing their skills and knowledge to their fullest potential.

Similarly, in another case, a class teacher was umpiring and coaching a game of intra school tee ball. Observations revealed that for the whole of the game, the teacher remained seated on a chair, some 6 metres from the game action. Aboriginal students noted that some
teachers lacked the motivation to get involved in the game and to socially interact with students. In addition, students stated that they wanted teachers to be interested in the games and engage in social dialogue with them. These elements were noted as particularly vital in the development of a good personal relationships which were perceived by Aboriginal students to influence their working relationship in the classroom. Aboriginal students reported that social interactions played a significant importance upon their ability to demonstrate their competence socially, academically and physically.

Keeping these points in mind, it is recommended that school staff who assist in the delivery of physical education and sport are independently observed, evaluated, supported and encouraged to ensure students' potential in sport and physical education are developed to their fullest capacity. Evaluation should be made on a regular basis consisting of both written and observational (such as video) records. Evaluations should be conducted with the intention to: (a) improve the provision of sport and physical education for students, (b) keep staff informed of new practices, (c) update knowledge in sport and physical education and, (d) provide opportunities for reaccreditation. The content of the evaluations should comprise an appraisal of the: (a) content of the activities, (b) methods of delivery, (c) appropriateness of the teaching environment, (d) demonstrated skill and knowledge of sport and physical education staff and, (e) student satisfaction.

For a detailed representation of the above mentioned practical implications and recommendations refer to Appendix L.
Limitations

There are a number of issues which may limit the usefulness of the findings of this study. These arise from the researcher's prior experiences and philosophy as well as choices relating to the theoretical framework and the methodology.

Researcher's Potential for Bias

The researcher is an urban Western Australian Aborigine, who identifies as a Nyoongar. In this study, these were also the criteria of the students who participated in the study. Although the similarity of characteristics of the researcher and participants may have been advantageous (especially during data collection), it should also be viewed with caution as the findings may have been biased by this similarity. Additionally, since the researcher played an interactive role in the data collection and analyses of this study, there were opportunities to further influence the inquiry and its outcomes (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Rew, Bechtel & Sapp, 1993).

Furthermore, because of the researcher's background and success in sport, her philosophy may have influenced the interpretation of the findings. Every effort therefore was made (as discussed in Chapter 4) to ensure readers understood the researcher's personal significance and reasons for conducting the study as well as an understanding of her background and values.
Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework may also limit the usefulness of the study since symbolic interactionists do not present any grand theories to account for behaviour since the social scene is always changing (Denzin, 1992).

Furthermore, symbolic interactionism assumes that individuals may act and behave freely, despite the influence of the social structures and institutions which are present in society. In other words, symbolic interactionism may disregard how social structures impact upon the individual (Hewitt, Livingston Hewitt, 1986).

Methodology

Firstly, this study was conducted at one school with eight students and thereby limiting the generalisability of the findings. Other methodological limitations include issues relating to the uniqueness of the target group and their gender as well as physical education and sport teaching plans and student reports.

Gender Issues. Since the researcher is female, male students may have not opened up to the researcher as much as the female students. On average, the amount of information received from males was not as detailed as that received from females. Although rapport was established over time and additional probing of responses from male students were completed, it may be that some detail was not extracted. Males' interview responses therefore must be considered in light of this concern.
Aboriginal social practices. Some limitations may exist in relation to the depth of information received from the Aboriginal participants of this study, especially the care givers. It is necessary to inform readers of these concerns, so that in light of these concerns, readers may make the appropriate judgments regarding the findings of this study.

Firstly, Aboriginal people in general have particular customs that relate to communication with others external to their social networks. Firstly, they may exhibit a tendency to suppress information from those people considered insignificant. In regards to this study although, every consideration and attempt was made to develop rapport over a lengthy period of time, Aboriginal people, especially the care givers who participated in this study had a right and an opportunity to communicate as much or as little information as they saw fit.

Secondly, care givers may have assumed that the research study pried into their personal life and they were perhaps not willing to share. Again, the flow of information may have been limited.

Thirdly, Aboriginal people may tend to exhibit shame or feel threatened when communicating with an individual who was external to their social network. Again, the flow and depth of information may have been negatively influenced.

Other concerns. The administrators and teachers of the school may have assumed that they were under investigation and evaluation and therefore, this may have limited the flow of information. Finally, physical education and sport teaching plans as well as student reports were not accessed and thus have not been used to confirm observations of students'
performances, including method and content of sport and physical education sessions. This information may have been useful for Chapter 7.

Future Directions

In this study, Aboriginal students' perceptions, experiences and sense of self in the school sport setting were explored. The findings revealed only a small perspective of school sport from Aboriginal childrens' perspectives thus, in order to capture the full picture, the following directions must be encouraged for future research.

First, little information exists of school sport and physical education that details children's own thoughts, perceptions, experiences, opinions and attitudes. Smith (1991) stated that there is a lack of information in the physical education research that provides children's perspectives from their very own mouths.

Second, there exists much diversity among Aboriginal groups in Australia (Dudgeon et al., 1988) and this needs to be accounted for and demonstrated in future research. Other Aboriginal populations in a variety of geographical locations must be researched. The findings of this study are applicable to Nyoongar children who reside in the Perth metropolitan area and the perceptions, experiences and sense of self for other Aboriginal peoples require insight. Possible differences and commonalities for a collective group of people can therefore be investigated on a local, state or national basis.

Third, this present study examined 11-12 year old students. Further research to investigate the developmental nature of perceptions,
specifically sense of self and the impact of sport is encouraged. Research into adolescents and junior primary students is needed.

Fourth, in this study, students reported a preference for club sports in comparison to school sport. Research of club sport and Aboriginal children and youths' perceptions, experiences and sense of self is warranted.

Fifth, it was also found in this present study that team sports, particularly basketball, was the most preferred sport at school. Perhaps an extensive study of basketball and its influence upon Aboriginal students' sense of self is warranted.

Finally, it is warranted to follow up this study of 11-12 year old urban Aboriginal children as they proceed to secondary school. Again, this study revealed that the social structures in the sport setting at primary school were very active in providing favourable images of Aboriginality. It may be that the social structures in a different social context such as the secondary school may reveal a completely different perspective of Aboriginal sense of self in school sport.

A Final Word

It has been demonstrated that school sport provides favourable images of Aboriginal students' sense of self. They perceived that sport was an important element of their Aboriginal identity and enabled them to feel proud of their Aboriginality, gain acceptance and feel a sense of equality from non-Aboriginal peers. In particular although Aboriginal students reported a favourable sense of self, it must be recognised that
this was confined to the school sport setting. Furthermore, the unique qualities and characteristics of the Aboriginal student group also needs to be recognised when taking the findings of this study into consideration. It is recommended that readers acknowledge the criterion of the students and the context in which this study was completed before generalising or transferring the findings to other populations and other settings.

It is hoped that the information presented in this thesis, particularly the practical implications and recommendations are seriously considered by the various organisations responsible for the delivery, development and implementation of school sport and physical education. In particular, it is hoped that physical educators and other staff who assist in the delivery of school sport acknowledge the importance of sport for Aboriginal students, particularly with regard to the capacity of sport to positively influence students' academic potential. Hence, an appropriate physical education and sport teaching environment coupled with challenging activities will go a long way to encouraging and developing the fullest potential of Aboriginal students.
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## APPENDIX A
### Sample of Recorded Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Participants</strong></th>
<th><strong>Social interactions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-appearance</td>
<td>-list of who participants interact with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-roles and positions</td>
<td>-body language/facial gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-entry/exits</td>
<td>-overt physical actions/behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-player movement on field</td>
<td>-any communications related to judgments, expectations, values and attitudes from others about the participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-degree of involvement on field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-standard of play</td>
<td>-affiliation with others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Routine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-game outcome</th>
<th><strong>Social organisation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-participants' reactions to rules/opposition/officials</td>
<td>-participants' affiliation with others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unusual occurrences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-injuries</th>
<th><strong>Interpretation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-reprimands by coach/teacher/official</td>
<td>-any interpretations or speculations made of the observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant Observation Record Sheet

Pseudonym name: Heather
Age: 12
Sex: Female
School: MPS
Date of observation: 10/15/97

Observation No.: 2 (SPORT)

Descriptive field notes during observation

Participant Appearance

- Shoes - running shoes
- Blue shirt
- Yellow top and hat!

Roles and positions

- Leader of her team
- Warming up activities
- Game situation 1: G5,
  2 - G5

Entry and exists

Organized into teams + sit behind one another

Movement on field

- Warm up: 2 laps of 2 counts
  - Skip jums
  - Running stretch (sit down, handle)
  - Static stretch (sit down)

- Running Act: [team of 4, run and tag]
- Running Act: white van then stop, constructively
  one-foot stop

Communication with Teacher: I suggest a warm up

- Teacher (Mr. Miller) leading as daily last stretching exercise

Accession No.: 07-02
Observation No.: 2 (SPORT)
Date: 10/15/97
Page No.: 1

Form 5.6/96

419
Degree of involvement on field

Fairy involved, moves out over the court for her 
Scoot.

Standard of play

Fairy not physically strong. Missed 70% of her shots.

Form 5,696
**Routine**

**Reaction to rules**

Knows the rules, but perhaps takes them to regularly 3 or 5 to shoot the ball.

**Reaction to opposition**

Teacher had to get the ball out of the opposite.

**Reaction to official**

Respects umpires decries.

**Reaction to coach/sports teacher**

Teacher pulled me up about stepping — Q.

**Game outcome and reaction**

No reaction.
Social interactions

Affiliation with others on field

Talks with her opposite, plays alone. The bell is at one end.

Affiliation with others off field

Walks with Kellie.

Body language/facial gestures

Overt physical actions and behaviours
Communication with others (expectations, judgments, attitudes)

Tells 'O' player when she gets close to the goal.

Social organisation

Team organisation

Lack of organisational support (Ms O + M) due to lack of verbal direct instruction when trying to put girls in teams.

Unusual occurrences

Injuries

Reprimands

Others
Interpretation

Any interpretations or speculations made of the observations

Lack of correct instruction given by Mrs. Muller in regards to bounce paper.

Drills lack in innovation – very boring!

(teacher stood in (Mrs. Muller))

X teach
no movement
no corrections filb
no enemy
ago filb

12 cor.

Teacher, Mrs. Muller - pulled group together, explained drill, did a demo then they worked in pairs – Visual and teacher instruction.

Mrs. Muller uses the same girl as the model for each drill.
Seems that Kevin and Heather don’t mind to try any drill first. My last seem very capable of doing all the drills until ease

Ms. Grace supplies quick feedback to the whole team at sometimes. Seems she was knowledgeable of the rules and this is well studied the rules.
Communication during observations between researcher and participant

Usual way Amanda

Teacher said she would vote play with Amanda as long as she's tried to get responses.
Heather is a great netball player. She performs above average of the other players on the court, perhaps even the best. She plays well with Kelly. She receives most of her passes (80%) from Kelly.

She seems to enjoy the game.

This observation was during a training game for interschool sports. They played against each other.
APPENDIX B
Letter Requesting School Permission

date

Mr/Ms
Principal
School

Dear

I am a PhD student in the Department of Teaching and Curriculum Studies at Edith Cowan University and I am conducting a study about Aboriginal children in sport at school. The official title of the study is "Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self."

At this stage, it is anticipated that a pilot study will be conducted early in the year of 1997 in order to fine tune an interview guide in preparation for the main study to be undertaken early to late 1997. Personal interviews and observations will be conducted to elicit information from eight urban Aboriginal children's' perspectives relating to: (a) their experiences in sport, (b) their perceptions of sport, and (c) how they perceive themselves in the context of sport. Interviews will take approximately 45 minutes per participant and I hope to interview each participant three times throughout the year. Furthermore, three observations of the participant will be conducted in the sport practice and competition settings. The study is planned to be conducted during school hours and in the school environment.

Interviews will also be conducted with those whom the participants report as their significant others. I anticipate two interviews per significant other lasting approximately 45 minutes each.
The findings will be useful to sports teachers and coaches as well as Aboriginal children, since it may provide some knowledge about culturally appropriate sport programs and culturally sensitive teaching/coaching environments suitable for Aboriginal children.

Since I am dealing with Aboriginal children, it is vital that I ensure there is Aboriginal input into this project therefore, I am seeking support from the Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker (AIEW) of your school in terms of accessing potential participants for the study. Furthermore, I invite the AIEW's input and feedback regarding the structure and organisation of the study.

Parents, participants and significant others will be made fully aware of the following: (a) they can withdraw from the study at any time, (b) involvement in the study will not affect their school performance and assessment in any way, and (c) any reports made from the findings of the study will not identify the participants or school. Confidentiality and culturally sensitivity will be assured at all times.

I am formally requesting your permission to conduct the study at your school. You are not obliged to partake in the study however, if you would like to assist in this invaluable study or require further information regarding the procedures, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Gary Partington, Teaching and Curriculum Studies Department, Edith Cowan University on 9370 6571. Alternatively, if you would like to discuss this study in person, I am available for a meeting. You may call me at home on 9279 3493. Thanking you for your time.

Yours sincerely

CHERYL S KICKEIT-TUCKER
Researcher
Aboriginal Kids in Sport Project
APPENDIX C

Form of Disclosure and Informed Consent (Significant other)

Aboriginal kids in sport

Hi! My name is Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and I'm a Nyoongar student at Edith Cowan University. I'm doing a project about Aboriginal kids in sport. The official title of the project is “Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self.”

The reason I am doing this project is so that urban Aboriginal kids can describe their experiences in sport and tell how they feel about themselves in their own words. It is important to conduct this project so as that physical education teachers and sport coaches can make sport better for Aboriginal children.

About 8 Aboriginal kids will participate in the project. In order for me to obtain a big picture of what sport is like for Aboriginal kids, I need to speak with the kids themselves as well as observing them on the sport field, but I also need to speak with you. You have been identified by ______________________(participant) that you are an important person in his/her life. I am inviting you to be a part of this project and help with gathering the right information about the experiences and feelings __________________(participant) has about sport and about him/her self. If you agree to be involved, I will only need to speak with you and ask some questions. It should only take about 45 minutes and I only need to speak with you about 2 times over the school year. A tape recorder will be used to record your answers. No-one will listen to the tape, other than the project team. Also, you name will not be printed on any project material.

The possible benefits of your participation in this project are: (a) having a say about what you think sport is like for ____________, (b) having an input in school sport curriculum and teaching environment, and (c) listing any possible trouble spots of sport as well as future goals and necessities for Aboriginal children.

Aboriginal kids, sports teachers and coaches can benefit from this project since it may provide some knowledge about culturally appropriate sport programs and culturally sensitive teaching/coaching environments suitable for Aboriginal children.
The results of the project may be published, but your name or identity will not be revealed. In order to maintain confidentiality of your information, I will keep all records locked in a filing cabinet for a period of five years after information have been collected. Written materials will then be shredded and computer disks erased.

It's okay if you do not wish to participate in this study. You will not be disadvantaged in any way. However, if you would like to be a part of this project, please complete the authorisation form below.

If you have any questions about this project called "Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self" you may call Dr Gary Partington of the Teaching and Curriculum Studies Department, Edith Cowan University on 9370 6571.

Please sign this authorisation and return

Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport:
Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self

I________________________ (significant other) have read the above information and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to myself.

I agree that the information gathered for this project may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Significant other's signature________________________ Date__________

Researcher's signature________________________ Date__________
Hi! Did you know that for some Aboriginal kids, sport might be fun, but for others it might make them feel shame. What about you? How do you feel about sport and what types of things have happened to you in sport? I would love to hear about you and the sport you are involved in at school. My name is Cheryl Kickett-Tucker. I am an Aboriginal student at university and I am doing a project about Aboriginal kids and sport and I am inviting you to tell me about you and sport. The reason I am doing this project is, so that you can tell your sport teachers and coaches what you feel and think about sport, so that they may make sport better for you and for other Aboriginal kids at school.

To make sure I get your thoughts about sport, I need to ask you some questions, which will take about 45 minutes. I will probably need to talk with you about three times during the school year. A tape recorder will be used to record your information. No one, other than the project team will listen to them. Also, your name will not be used in the project, so no one will know who you are. Also, since the project is about sport, I will need to go along to your sport and physical education classes about three times during the school year to see you and your team/school play.

When I have finished getting your information about sport, I will put it together with other Aboriginal kids' information and write it up for your teachers and coaches so that they may make sport better for you and for other Aboriginal kids.

You don't have to be involved in the project and it's okay if you don't want to. You will not get into trouble. If you would like to help me with this project, then just fill in the form below and give it to your class teacher.

If you have any questions about my project, you and your parent(s) may call Dr Gary Partington of the Teaching and Curriculum Studies Department at Edith Cowan University on 370 6571.
Please complete this form and give it to your class teacher.

**Project about Aboriginal kids in sport**

I, __________________________, understand that my parents (mum and dad) have said it's okay for me to take part in a project about Aboriginal kids and sport done by Cheryl Kickett-Tucker.

I am taking part because I want to, and I have been told that I can stop at any time I want to and I won't get into trouble.

I have read the above information sheet and any questions I have asked have been answered.

I know that the information I may give Cheryl Kickett-Tucker may be published, but my name will not be used.

( )

Participant __________________________ Date __________

Researcher __________________________ Date __________
APPENDIX E
Form of Disclosure and Informed Consent (Parent/Guardian)

Aboriginal Kids in Sport

Hi! What do you think about sport for your child ________? What types of experiences does your child have? How does your child feel about sport? My name is Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and I’m a Nyoongar student at Edith Cowan University. I’m doing a project about Aboriginal kids in sport and I am inviting your child __________ to be a part of it. The official title of the project is “Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self.”

The reason I am doing this project is so that Aboriginal kids can describe their experiences in sport and tell how they feel about themselves in their own words. It is important to conduct this project so as that physical education teachers and sport coaches can make sport better for your child and for all Aboriginal children.

About 8 Aboriginal kids will participate in the project and they will all come from the same school as your child. In order for me to understand your child’s feelings and experiences about sport, I will need to ask questions and conduct some observations. A minimum of 3 observations will be made of your child as he/she interacts during the Friday afternoon sport classes and during physical education. The interview questions may last about 45 minutes and I may need to talk with your child about 3 times during the year. A tape recorder will be used to record the answers. No-one will listen to the tape, other than the project team. Also, your child’s name will not be printed on any project material.

The possible benefits of your child’s participation in this project are: (a) involvement with other Aboriginal children, (b) having a say in what matters to him/her in his/her own world, and (c) relaying any problems and preferences sport. Aboriginal kids, sports teachers and coaches can benefit from this project since it may provide some knowledge about culturally appropriate sport programs and culturally sensitive teaching/coaching environments suitable for Aboriginal children.
The results of the project may be published, but your child’s name or identity will not be revealed. In order to maintain confidentiality of your child’s records, I will keep all records locked in a filing cabinet for a period of five years after information have been collected. Written materials will then be shredded and computer disks erased.

It's okay if you do not wish your child to participate in this study. They will not be disadvantaged in any way. However, if you would like your child to be a part of this project, please complete the authorisation form below.

If you have any questions about this project called "Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self" you may call Dr. Gary Partington of the Teaching and Curriculum Studies Department, Edith Cowan University on 370 6571.

Please sign this authorisation and return to your child’s teacher

Urban Aboriginal Children in Sport
Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self

I __________________________ (parent/guardian) have read the above information and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I give my permission for my child __________________________ to participate in this project and understand that I may withdraw my consent and my child may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to myself or my child.

I agree that the information gathered for this project may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature_________________________________________ Date__________

(parnt, legal guardian, or legally authorised official)

Investigator’s signature_________________________ Date__________
APPENDIX F
Student Interview Guide

FAMILY
Description of the family
Where do you live?
Who do you live with?
Are they your family?
Do you have any brothers? Who are they?
How old are they?
Do you have any sisters? Who are they?
How old are they?
Do you share a room with anyone?
Who?
Do you have anyone else living at home with your family? (cousins, grannies, etc)
Does your Mum and Dad have a car?
Do they work? If so, what do they do?
(Also ask about others in the household in terms of whether or not they work)

Expectations of the family
When you have interschool sports days, do you hope that your family (probe individually - Mum/Dad/Grannies/cousins/brothers/sisters/etc) go to school and see you (run/play) at the sports day?
Have they (probe individually) been to the sports days?
When you have a school assembly, do you hope that your family (probe individually) goes?
Have they (probe individually) been to the assembly?

Values about the family
Is it important to have a family (probe ind.)?
Is your family (probe ind.) important to you?
Why do you think a family (probe ind.) is important?
Do you need your family (probe ind.)?
When do you need your family (probe ind.) the most?
Are there any times when you think that you don’t need your family (probe ind.)?

Comparisons
Are they any differences between your family and Wadjullah families? (If yes, probe further).
Are there any differences between your family and Aboriginal families? (If yes, probe further).

Feelings
Does it feel good or not so good to be part of your family?
(If yes) Tell me about the best times you have had together as a family.
(If no) Tell me about the times when it doesn’t feel good to be part of your family?

YOU
Description
If I was your new class teacher and I asked the whole class to write a story about themselves what are some of the things that you would write about yourself?
(Probes - Name, age, favourite things to do, likes, dislikes, friends, best friends, pets, hobbies, fav teacher/subject/food/drink/movie/cartoon/book/band, heroes/role models)

Expectations
What do you hope you will do when you finish year 7 at primary school? Or finish high school?
What do you think you would like to be/or like to do in the future/or when you are older?
Do you set goals for yourself/your work?
Do your parents (Mum/Dad) have any wishes for you? Do they set goals for you?
Does your class teacher (name him/her) have any wishes for you? Does he/she set goals for you?
Are there any others (sig others) that have any wishes for you? Do they set goals for you?

Values
Do you think you are a good person?
What are some of the things that make you a good person?
Who else do you think says you are a good person? What do they say?
Do you think that it is important to be a good person? Why is it important to be a good person?

Comparisons
How do you know if you are good looking?
How do you know if you are good at sports?
How do you know if you are a good person?

Feelings
Do you like yourself? What are some of the things about you that you like/dislike?
Are you a happy person? What are some of the things that make you happy/unhappy?
Are there any people who make you happy/unhappy?
Do you think you are a shy person?
Do you think you are an outgoing person?
Do you get shame sometimes, all the time or never? Are there any people that make you feel shame? Tell me about the times when you do get shame?
Do you think you are a confident person?
What do you do that makes you feel confident?
Are there any people who make you feel confident?

IDENTITY
Description
Are you Aboriginal?
Do you know which Aboriginal group you come from?
Do you know which Aboriginal group your parents come from?
Do you mind if others know that you are Aboriginal?
**Feelings**

What’s it like to be an Aboriginal kid in this school?
What’s good about being Aboriginal?
What’s not good about being Aboriginal?
Do the kids treat you any differently because you are Aboriginal? When (probe ind.)
Do the teachers treat you any different? (probe ind about sport context and class context)

**SPORT EXPERIENCES**

Tell me about the sports you play at school?
Who do you play with? When do you play? How often do you play? How did you get involved? Why do you play? (If you don’t play sport, why not?)
Tell me what it is like for you to play sport.
Tell me about some of the things that have happened to you when you are playing sport?
What do you like/dislike about sport at school?
Tell me about winning/losing.
Do you play hard at sports? Tell me what it is like to play hard? (or why don’t you play hard?) What happens when you don’t play hard?
Do you do other things in sport, other than playing? Tell me about them.
What perceptions do urban Nyoongar children have of sport?
Tell me what you think about playing sport?
What do you think about other kids playing sport?
What do you think about your teacher/coach?
What do you think about the games/events you play in?
What do you think of the rules/umpire?
What do you think about winning/losing/competitions?

**PERCEPTIONS OF SELF IN SPORT**

Do you think you are good or bad at sports? Why? How?
What do you think others (family/peers/teacher) think about you when you play sport?

Do you like yourself more when you are playing sport than when you are doing other activities? If yes, tell me about sport. If no tell me about the other activities.

Do you think sport is good or not so good for you? Why/why not?

Is sport a way to make you feel good or not so good or happy about yourself? Why/why not?
APPENDIX G
Interview Guide for Class Teachers

A. Background information about the teacher

- Years of teaching
- Philosophy
- Last graduated
- What schools taught in
- How many years at MPS
- Experience with Aboriginal kids
- Education of Aboriginal culture and people (traditional and contemporary)
- Family background
- Thoughts about Aboriginal people in general
- Contact with Aboriginal people (past and present)

B. Guide to questions

1. Perception of personality
   - What sort of personality does the student have
   - What are their attributes
   - Is he/she easy to get along with

2. Classroom behaviour
   - Tell me about the student's classroom behaviour at present/past
   - Any improvements over time or are there any problems
3. Academic standard and achievement

- What types of grades are typical for this student
- What is the lowest & highest grade attained
- On a scale, where would the student fit among the rest of the class
- What is the student's book work like. How does it compare with the class
- Is the student difficult to teach. If so why or why not?
- Is the student willing to learn

4. Perception of relation with student

- Can you sum up your relation with the student
- Have you had any tense experiences. Explain
- Have you had pleasant experiences. Explain

5. Perception of sense of self/identification

- In your opinion, tell me what you think of the student's sense of self, in terms of his/her identification as an Aboriginal
- Do you think that the student has a problem with being Aboriginal
- Do you think that the student is proud to be Aboriginal
- Do you partake in any activities in class that educates others about Aboriginal people

6. Perception of academic self-esteem
- What is your opinion of the student's self-esteem academically
- Do you perceive any problems with it
- How do you think it can be improved/developed/enhanced
- Do you think the school environment/classroom is suited to their academic self-esteem
- How can the school/classroom be changed to suit it

7. Perception of social self-esteem
- How does the child interact with classmates
- Who does she/she interact with the most
- Do you perceive any problems with their socialisation at school
- Are they able to make friends easily
- How would you sum up their social self-esteem?

8. Perception of physical self-esteem (sport)
- Is the student physically competent at sport and PE
- Describe their self-esteem in sport

9. Perception of general self-esteem
- How would you describe the overall (global) general self-esteem of the student
- How does it compare with the rest of the class
APPENDIX H

Interview Guide for Sport Teacher/Coach

A. Background information about the teacher

- Years of teaching
- Philosophy
- Last graduated
- What schools taught in
- Coaching experience
- Sports specialisation
- How many years at MPS
- Experience with Aboriginal kids
- Education of Aboriginal culture and people (traditional and contemporary)
- Family background
- Thoughts about Aboriginal people in general
- Contact with Aboriginal people (past and present)

B. Guide to questions

1. Perception of personality
   - What sort of personality does the student have
   - What are their attributes
   - Is he/she easy to get along with

2. Sports ground behaviour
   - Tell me about the student's sports ground behaviour at
present/past
-Any improvements over time or are there any problems
-Is the student difficult to coach/teach. If so why or why not?
-Is the student willing to learn

3. Sporting standard and achievement
-Can you tell me about the student's on court/field performance during interschool sport?
-Describe their standard of skill level/play
-How would it compare to the other students
-Are they team players or individuals
-Do they display sportsman like qualities
-Do they display knowledge of the rules
-Do they display tactical knowledge
-Are they dressed appropriately for competition against other schools (uniform and footwear)

4. Perception of relation with student
-Can you sum up your relation with the student
-Have you had any tense experiences. Explain
-Have you had pleasant experiences. Explain

5. Perception of sense of self/identification
-In your opinion, tell me what you think of the student's sense of self, in terms of his/her identification as an Aboriginal
-Do you think that the student has a problem with being Aboriginal
Do you think that the student is proud to be Aboriginal

6. Perception of social self-esteem
- How does the child interact with team mates
- Who does she/he interact with the most
- Do you perceive any problems with their socialisation during sport
- Are they able to make friends easily
- How would you sum up their social self-esteem

7. Perception of physical self-esteem (sport)
- Is the student physically competent at sport and PE
- Describe their self-esteem in sport

8. Perception of general self-esteem
- How would you describe the overall (global) general self-esteem of the student
- How does it compare with the rest of the team/class
APPENDIX I

Letter of Validation

28 October 1997

Dear

In order to finally complete my university study, I need for you to look over your interview transcript (enclosed) and see if it is a true account of what you said. If you think changes need to be made about what you said, then please call me on 041 990 3058 or 9370 6136 (Friday only) so that I can make the necessary alterations.

Please note that the only name that has already been changed is your name as the interviewee. All other names such as your child's name and the school etc have not been changed on your copy however, these have been changed already on my master copies.

If I don't hear from you by Friday 7th November, then I'll assume that there are no changes.

Once again, thank you for your participation in this study.

Sincerely

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker
Researcher
Aboriginal Kids in Sport Project

Encl.
APPENDIX J

Sample Transcripts

I: Yeah, yeah that's right she used to live there.
I: Yeah. Any way tell me about your Dad now you said that your Dad does stuff for you, as well. What sort of things does your Dad do?
CARL: He takes us up bush.
I: Which which bush do you go to?
CARL: Jengu.
I: Yeah?
CARL: And.
I: What do you do up there?
CARL: Chase Kangaroos or we go for a swim in the water.
I: Yeah who goes with you when you go there?
CARL: All my cousins, Eddy, Charlie, Sean.
I: That's, is that, are they all brothers?
CARL: Oh.
I: They're all different cousins?
CARL: All First cousins.
I: Can you tell me their last names so I know who you're talking about?
CARL: Bungarie, Laver, Lane.
I: Oh right okay.
CARL: And.
I: So you go and jump in the swimming holes and you go fishing, it's good fun isn't it?
CARL: Yeah.
I: Yeah, what else do you do?
CARL: Catch Jilligies.
I: Yeah? Do you eat 'em?
CARL: Yeah.
I: Yeah. Yeah anything else?
CARL: Not really.
I: Not really? Okay that's really good answers.
CARL: Oh and.
I: Oh yeah?
CARL: And he takes me to the basketball and footy.
I: Yeah I was gonna ask you that. I know we're not supposed to talk about sport just yet. But you've you know you've told me you've played basketball, football and do Boxing. I mean.
CARL: Yeah and he takes me to boxing too.
I: Your Dad takes you boxing? Your Dad takes you to football? Who takes you to basketball?
CARL: Dad.
I: He takes you to all these things?
CARL: Yeah.
I: Do any of your other brothers and sisters play sport as well?
CARL: Oh.
I: Like local club sports?
CARL: Yeah.
I: You're the only one?
I: Oh he’s really good isn’t he? Does it cost a lot of money to do these things?
CARL: Not really, just $40 for basketball, $45 for hockey, and $1 a night for boxing.
I: Boxing. Do you have to pay to go into basketball every Saturday?
CARL: Yeah.
I: How much is, how much is that?
CARL: $2.50.
I: And that’s not that’s not too expensive for your age and such?
CARL: Not really.
I: Okay. Good. What was I up to? Okay, when do you need your family the most? When are the certain times in your life, or something that’s happened, when you need him or her or your brothers or sisters the most?
CARL: When I’m gonna die.
I: Then you’re gonna die?
CARL: Nah, when I dreamed or something.
I: When you dream?
CARL: Yeah.
I: What can you explain to me who would rescue you and?
AL: Dad.
I: He would rescue you would he?
CARL: Yeah.
I: Yeah?
CARL: No, it’s done it before, when I.
I: Has he really?
CARL: Yeah when I was little.
I: When happened?
CARL: I jumped in this, I thought I could swim and I jumped in this, it was shallow up in the end and then it goes deep, and I was running and I jumped into the pool cause I seen these other little kids swimming and I couldn’t swim. And I wanted to swim, and ran and I jumped in this pool, and I thought it was shallow and it was deep, and I was going oops and there was this girl in a tube on the side of us, going past, just looking, and when I was just I kept going and my Dad was jumping off the board, somewhere.
I: Yeah.
CARL: And then his foot of seen me and then he run and grabbed me cut this the water.
I: How old were you then?
CARL: Probably about 3 or 4.
I: Oh my gosh and your Dad saved you did he?
CARL: Yeah.
I: Saved your life? Are other times when you need your Dad or brothers and sisters? Or even cousins or Uncles or Aunts or None?
CARL: No, not really.
I: Okay. Are there any times when you think you can’t need him or Dad or brothers and sisters?
CARL: None.
I: Okay. Do you think there are any differences between your family and Maqjullah families?
CARL: No.
I: Or do you think there are any differences between Aboriginal families and Maqjullah families?
CARL: No.
J: Tell you what stuff: What sort of stuff?
C: Oh, Dad takes me places and things.
J: Yeah! Like what places you just said before?
C: Yeah.
J: About going bush? Do you like going bush?
C: Yeah.
J: And doing like catching kangaroos and jiljilis and things?
C: Yeah, I love it.
J: You love it too? It's good fun. So wouldn't that was that would they tell us about the best times you had on the family farm?
C: When we all go out to Whitman's Park.
J: Yeah.
C: And we have barbecues.
J: Who goes with you, just your own family or do you have cousins go with you and?
C: Everyone.
J: Who's everyone?
C: My Kano and my Uncle, all my cousins and.
J: What sort of do you do at a barbecue? I mean, have a barbecue, take a funny man there and a baseball bat and a ball, and just play baseball, then we have a game of foosly, go on the train. And then we go out and chase kangaroos in the bush.
J: Do you? How important are these sort of things to you? You're a 12-year-old boy. How important is it to do these things with your family? How important do you think it is? To do do these things? If I gave you a scale, if I say to you No. 1 is not so important. No. 2 is a sort of important and No. 3 is very important. What would you say?
C: They're all important.
J: Very, they're all important, very important. Okay. Are there have there been any times in your life, in the 12 years of while you've been on this Earth, that it hasn't been good to be part of your family? Has there been some bad things that have happened or anything like that?
C: When you feel sad?
J: No.
C: Okay. Now, you speak about your family and you said some really really good things in particularly about your dad. Now I want to talk about, if you say your new class teacher, say like next year you're going go to high school and I wanted to keep some information, I wanted to know about you but I'd never met you before and I asked if the kids in the classroom to write an essay or a poem or an essay or a story about themselves, to describe themselves to us. What would you say about yourself? If I asked you to describe yourself to me?
C: Call, I don't know.
J: Okay, let me ask something else about you. If you're being interviewed on the radio, say you're a big time boss? Right, like your Dad? And they asked you, they wanted to know more about you who you, who is Carl Creations, and you had to tell people who you were, what would you say? So that either people around the world or whatever know who you were? Okay, let me think then. Let's do it again. I'll start again right? Say every morning you get up brush your hair, and you look in the mirror. When you look in the mirror, who do you see?
C: Who?
J: And who is you?
C: Don't.
that you're Carl Crothers can you describe Carl
Crothers?
I: Yeah. That's what I want to hear that's
right, aren't going.
CARL: I'm 12.
I: Yeah, good boy you.
CARL: I live in...
I: Yeah.
CARL: I was born in 1954, December the 25th.
I: Yeah, Christmas Day. Oh my god yeah.
CARL: I play footy for Wajullah.
I: Yeah, you.
CARL: I lived in Wajullah and then I moved to
and I played for Wajullah.
I: Yeah?
CARL: Then I played for the basketball team.
I: Yeah? Anything else you'd say about yourself?
CARL: I can't think of anything else. Oh.
I: Yeah okay yeah?
CARL: And Oh, that is.
I: Hi! Okay, well can I ask you a couple
of questions that are really good that are some of the
sort of stuff I wanted to hear. What are some of the favourite
things that you like to do?
I: To play spar.
CARL: In particular, do you like playing the
most?
I: Football and basketball.
CARL: What are some of the, what are some of the things
that you'd like? Just it can be anything, anything that
you like, something you'll like?
CARL: Music.
I: You like Music? Do you like an instrument in
particular or you just like?
CARL: A band.
I: A band?
CARL: And end drums.
I: So you'd like playing drums in a band? Oh really?
What are things you don't like? What is the biggest dis
things you dislike? Or people or things or whatever?
CARL: This boy.
I: Which boy?
CARL: Keeps of em, they're stupid.
I: They're stupid? Are these little Wajullah boys or
younger boys?
CARL: Badjullah.
I: They're all Wajullah boys. How many of them are
these?
CARL: About 10.
I: I? Are they all at this school?
CARL: Yeah.
I: And why don't you like them?
CARL: I don't know they don't, they don't want me to
play footy and all that they think I'm too rough.
I: They don't want you to play footy with 'em, is this
during recess?
CARL: Yeah.
I: They don't want you to play footy because you're
too rough?
CARL: No they think I'm.
I: They they think you're too rough, but do you think
you're rough?
APPENDIX K

Ethics Clearance Application and Acceptance

7 November 1996

Ms Cheryl Kickett-Tucker

Dear Ms Kickett-Tucker

CODS: 96-114

Project Title: Nyoongar Children in Sport: Experiences, Perceptions and Sense of Self

This project was reviewed by the Executive of the Committee for the Conduct of Ethical Research between meetings.

I am pleased to advise that the project complies with the provisions contained in the University's policy for the conduct of ethical research, and has been cleared for implementation.

Period of approval is from 31 January 1997 to 31 January 2000.

With best wishes for success in your work.

Yours sincerely

ROD CROTHERS
Executive Officer

Please note: Students conducting approved research are required to submit an ethics report as an addendum to that which they submit to their Faculty's Higher Degrees Committee.
## APPENDIX L

**Practical Implications**

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<th>Strategies</th>
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<td>Ensure Aboriginal community participation</td>
<td>• Use of Aboriginal role models</td>
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<td>• AEIW consultation</td>
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<td>Use of qualified staff and trained helpers</td>
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<td>• Days for current teaching staff</td>
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<td>• National Coaching Accreditation for physical education specialists</td>
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<td>• Appointment of Aboriginal physical education specialists</td>
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<td>Recognition and Acceptance of cultural differences and needs</td>
<td>Formal training of Aboriginal issues and culture</td>
<td>• Consistent evaluation and checks</td>
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<td>• Bachelor's degree for physical education teachers must contain units from Aboriginal Cultural Studies</td>
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<td>• Cultural training PD workshops</td>
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<td>• Close liaison and working relationship with Aboriginal community</td>
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<td>Positive Affect</td>
<td>Alter environment</td>
<td>- Use dynamic activities and skills that encourage active participation</td>
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<td>- Encourage active participation in a variety of playing positions</td>
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<td>- Teach skills in a developmentally sequential order, so that competence is</td>
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<td>maximised at each level</td>
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<td>- Provide positive praise with constructive criticism</td>
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<td>Challenging tasks present</td>
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<td>- Teach new skills that will challenge existing skills</td>
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<td>- Encourage individual goal setting</td>
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<td>- Encourage self-comparisons</td>
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<td>- Use novelty activities to develop skills</td>
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<td>Encourage social interactions</td>
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<td>- Use of club facilities and services by the school</td>
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<td>- Close consultation and liaison between schools and clubs</td>
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<td>- Combined organisation of lightning carnivals</td>
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<td>Notion of challenges</td>
<td>° Adopt game sense to application of sport and physical education</td>
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<td>Positive social interactions with significant others</td>
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<td>* School sport teams to participate in regular club competitions and leagues</td>
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<td>* Sport PD to include local club development officers</td>
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