An Exploratory Study into the Reported Levels and Causes of Burnout in NCAA Division II College Softball, Baseball, and Soccer Athletes

Robert W. Thompson

Adams State University

Adams State University
Human Performance and Physical Education
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A thesis presented by Robert Thompson

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Dr. Frank Novotny, Director of the Graduate School

Beez Schell, Chairperson of Thesis Committee

Thesis Committee Members:

Peggy Johnson

Brian Zuleger

Beez Schell

ABSTRACT

This was a two-phase mixed methods research project that analyzed the level of burnout among 108 athletes at a small NCAA Division II university, as well as the causes that led an athlete to feeling burned out from his or her sport. The first phase of this study examined the extent to which NCAA Division II collegiate softball, baseball, and soccer athletes reported burnout using the Raedeke and Smith (2001) Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. This questionnaire measured the level of burnout the athletes felt based on either their feelings of reduced sense of accomplishment, devaluation of the sport, or physical and psychological exhaustion. The second phase of this study focused on exploring the possible primary causal factors for burnout within Division II college softball, baseball, and soccer athletes by using semi-structured interviews.

The study found an insignificant difference in burnout levels between in-season athletes and out-of-season athletes. This study did discover a difference in burnout levels when comparing male athletes versus female athletes. Female athletes reported higher scores of physical and psychological exhaustion based on the results of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire as compared to their male counterparts.

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CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

Background

Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) stated that the first systematic research into burnout was in the early 1970's. This was primarily applied to professions such as law enforcement, nursing, and teaching. According to Freudenberger (1974), in the 1970's, this syndrome was given an initial name "burnout" and stated that burnout does occur more commonly than most people believe, and not just a strange response by a few deviant people. According to Maslach and Jackson (1984) "Freundenberger coined the term burnout due to the phrase being a language of the people" (p.133). Maslach and Jackson (1984) explained this seemed to promote open discussion about burnout, rather than hinder it. In addition, burnout was a term that people could easily relate to, allowing them to talk about their experiences without feeling embarrassed or ashamed (Maslach & Jackson, 1984). Raedeke, Lunney, and Venables (2002) stated the term "burnout" is appealing because it conjures up a vivid image in one's head. The authors furthermore described burnout like a candle that once glowed brightly, began to flicker, and eventually extinguished. This analogy represents the image of bright, promising workers who begin to no longer care about a job they once loved (Raedeke et al., 2002). Maslach and Jackson (1984) reported the original definition of burnout excluded many professions, by stating that burnout was something that only occurred in individuals who did any type of "people work." This theory throughout the early research of burnout in the 1970's and early 1980's was the reason that athlete burnout was not discussed (Gustafsson, Kentta, Hassmen, & Lundqvist, 2007).

Pines (1993) widened the focus on burnout stating that any highly motivated individual is potentially at risk for this syndrome. According to Gould and Whitley (2009), Ron Smith was

the first to define burnout from an athletic perspective. Smith (1986) stated, "athlete's burnout in sport, is the result of chronic stress" (p. 5). By experiencing stress over time, the athlete no longer enjoys the sport and finds him or herself physically or psychologically withdrawing from their sport (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Early research in athlete burnout focused on elite athletes' negative sport experiences (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006). Goodger, Gorely, Lavallee, and Harwood (2007) stated burnout in athletics was in fact, first researched by Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) in a study on coaching burnout. Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) assessed the level of perceived burnout in college athletic coaches and investigated the differences between head male and female coaches using the Mashlach Burnout Inventory System. The researchers found that female coaches reported higher levels of burnout and in addition suggested that gender differences in burnout were due to female coaches feeling more stressed (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984). Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) suggested female coaches try much harder to prove female athletic teams can perform well and that the underlying factor is the lack of recognition given to the female coaches as compared to the male coaches. Raedeke, Lunney, and Venables (2002) stated burnout has become a significant area of focus in the athletic community. Athlete burnout has raised concerns from parents to sports psychologists.

Statement of the Problem

Athletics has become a significant part of American higher education (Vierthaler, 2008). According to Gould and Whitley (2009) sports have been incorporated throughout campuses across the country as an extracurricular activity, which claims to help contribute to the total development of students. In addition, researchers believe that participation in athletics provides a healthy and enjoyable release for students, along with developing knowledge on teamwork, leadership, and understanding roles (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Smith (1986) has pointed to the

danger presented by burnout and the implications for athletes and coaches. Many coaches and researchers have begun to discuss the dangers of burnout within their profession (Cureton, 2009). Elite athletes have dropped out of sports at the peak of their careers claiming that they are "burned out" and no longer have the drive to continue playing (Gustafsson, 2007). To restrict and better manage burnout, the NCAA has developed a range of regulations such as limiting the amount of hours an athlete can train and compete with his or her team (NCAA Division II Manual 2011). Despite this, researchers have found that burnout continues to be a major issue in collegiate athletics (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Weinberg and Gould (2003) stated that elite athletes are constantly training year round and have no offseason. Maslach and Jackson (1984) believe that even with the mass media and extensive coverage of this topic, the general consensus comes down to two major issues. The first, Raedeke (1997) stated burnout within athletics is a problem. Additionally, the researcher suggested more tools to must be developed to prevent burnout (Raedeke, 1997). Due to these issues, there have been training materials, workshops, and interventions to prevent burnout (Raedeke, 1997). However, burnout in sport has continued to increase (Maslach & Jackson, 1984). According to Goodger, Gorely, Lavalle, and Harwood (2007) even with the growth in the number of athletes with burnout, there are less than thirty investigated studies. Eklund and Cresswell (2007) believe that research in burnout in athletics is still in its infancy. Gustaffson (2007) stated that with the increased claims of burnout among collegiate athletes, further investigation is recommended.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first purpose was to report levels of burnout within Division II college soccer, softball, and baseball using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Raedeke & Smiths, 2001). The study was conducted when two teams (men's and women's

soccer) were in the off-season, and two teams (baseball and softball) were currently in season. The Raedeke and Smith (2001) Athlete Burnout Questionnaire categorizes the level of burnout in either a reduced sense of accomplishment, devaluation of sport, or physical or psychological exhaustion. With the results of the questionnaire the researcher can then determine the differences in reported level of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender. The second purpose of the study was to find the primary causal factors triggering burnout within these athletes using semi-structured interviews. Using the semi-structured interview, a determination can be made of the different causal factors of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of burnout reported by Division II college softball, baseball, and soccer athletes?
2. What are the differences in reported level of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender?
3. What factors reportedly trigger or cause burnout in Division II college softball, baseball, and soccer athletes?
4. What are the different causal factors of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender?

Delimitations

This study was delimited by the following factors. First, the participants came from one small Division II University in rural Colorado. This university was a Division II institution, and therefore athletes were eliminated from participation in this study from Division I or III level. The location of this university and financial resources limited travel to other institutions. Second, this research only consisted of team sports rather than individual sports. The researcher chose team sports since Smith (1986) stated that athletes in individual sports are more likely to burnout

than team-sport athletes due to higher demands of time and effort. The team sports in this study were two teams out of season (men's soccer and women's soccer) and two teams (softball and baseball) in season. These four teams were chosen in order to report and compare burnout rates in seasonality. The final contributing delimitation to this study was using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. This questionnaire only measures athletes' burnout in reduced sense of accomplishments, emotional and physical exhaustion, and devaluation. According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) there are over 100 symptoms and possible consequences that have been associated with burnout. Therefore other factors, which could be causing burnout such parental control, increased use of alcohol and drugs, and family problems will not be considered.

Limitations

This study had the following limitations. First the study was limited to due to lack of access to more teams within the university. Only four teams were available to participate in the study at the time of the research. Next, since the participants were from a small Division II University in rural Colorado the casual burnout factors can't be generalized to all college teams throughout the country. Another limitation was the time constraint, which is why only three athletes per team who scored the highest on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire were asked to participate in the semi-structured interview portion. The next limitation was overcoming specific team bias. The researcher previously worked within the athletic department, along with having attended graduate school at the university. To eliminate any potential bias, enough time had past where the researcher no longer had any connection to any of the teams or athletes. The final limitation was the lack of prior studies on burnout within college athletes. These limitations, however, do provide a catalyst for future studies to consider when examining the relationship between sport, gender, and seasonality in burnout within college athletes. There have been

studies within burnout for younger athletes, along with college coaching burnout, yet there has been a lack of research of athletes at the college level. This limitation serves as an important opportunity for more research to be conducted in the future.

Assumptions

This study will have the following assumptions:

1. It will be assumed that all participants in this study will answer the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire along with the interview honestly and accurately.

2. It will be assumed that coaches and athletes do not discuss this research with other participants.

Definitions

1. *Athlete Burnout:* While there is no one universally accepted definition of athlete burnout, Gould and Whitley (2009) identify athlete burnout as a physical, emotional, and social withdrawal from a formerly enjoyable sport activity. This withdrawal is characterized by emotional and physical exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation, often occurring as a result of chronic stress and motivational changes in the athlete.
2. *Athlete Burnout Questionnaire:* This questionnaire contains 15 questions that assess three areas of burnout. The areas contain reduced sense of accomplishment, emotional and physical exhaustion, and sport devaluation (Raedeke & Smith, 2001).
3. *Burnout:* A psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity (Maslach & Jackson, 2010).

4. *Cognitive Stress Model:* Athlete burnout model, which hypothesized burnout as a process involving four stages: situational demands, cognitive appraisal, physiological responses, and behavioral responses (Smith, 1986).
5. *Dropout:* Physically withdrawing from a sport (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006).
6. *Negative Training Stress Model:* Sport burnout model theorizes burnout focuses more on overtraining (Silva, 1990).
7. *Overtraining:* A syndrome that results when excessive—usually physical—overload on an athlete occurs without adequate rest (USOC Task Force, 2002).
8. *Recovery:* Amount of time passed in order for your body to heal and be ready for next workout (Goodger, Gorely, Lavallee, & Haywood, 2007).
9. *Self Determination Theory:* Based on ways one is motivated intrinsically to perform effectively (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006). Deci and Ryan (1985) stated this theory is based on different types of motivation based on the different goals or reasons that give rise to an action.
10. *Sport Entrapment:* When athletes do not really want to participate in a sport but feel they have to maintain their involvement for a variety of reasons (Raedeke, 1997).
11. *Staleness:* A significant and sustained performance decrement that is caused by too much physical training (Kentta, Hassmen & Raglin, 2001).
12. *Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model:* Athlete burnout model that believed stress was involved with burnout, but it was not the cause, only a symptom (Coakley, 1992).
13. *Withdrawal:* No longer participating in a sport, either dropping out during season or after season (Raedeke & Smith 2001).

CHAPTER 2—LITERATURE REVIEW

Burnout

The first study of burnout was by Herbert Freudenberger after he began to note significant changes in the mood and attitude of his volunteers working at the free clinic (Freudenberger, 1974). He observed that many of the volunteers experiencing loss of commitment, which was accompanied by a range of physical and mental symptoms (Freudenberger, 1974). According to Raedeke and Smith (2001) they agreed with Freudenberger, stating that human service providers who experienced burnout reported feeling emotionally exhausted from the intense demands of working with clients. Whereas, exhaustion was a traditional stress related variable, the other two issues were reduced sense of accomplishment and depersonalization (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). Reduced sense of accomplishment reflected negative attitudes toward one's ability to work effectively with their clients, while depersonalization reflected the development of negative attitudes and feeling toward their clients (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). .

In the early 1970's, around the same time as Freudenberger, Christina Maslach also began to use the term burnout to describe a gradual process of exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced commitment among poverty lawyers and human service providers (Goodger, et. al, 2007). Seeing the consequences of burnout leading to deterioration in quality of care or service provided by staff, and low staff morale, Maslach looked to create an instrument that could explore aspects of the burnout syndrome in the workplace (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which was a short and easy to administer questionnaire weighing the effects of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The Maslach Burnout Inventory was developed to achieve a better understanding of the personal,

social and institutional variables that either promote or reduce the occurrence of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). According to Schaufeli (2001), the MBI has become the most widely used tool to measure burnout as it has been used in over 90 % of journal articles and dissertations. Maslach and Jackson (2010) believed understanding the nature of burnout for developing effective interventions.

Athlete Burnout

Since Freudenberger (1984) the clinical study of burnout has been researched in many different ways. Pines (1993) widened the focus studying burnout differences in blue-collar workers and in human service professionals. The researchers results suggested further research on the applicability of burnout in different social groups would help develop a comprehensive theory of burnout, which opened the door for studying burnout in sports (Pines, 1993). According to Gould and Whitley (2009) psychologist Ron Smith was the first to examine burnout in sport. Smith (1986) stated athletes' burnout in sports was due to chronic stress. In addition the researcher stated when an athlete experiences stress over time, they will consider a sport that was once deemed enjoyable no longer enjoyable (Smith, 1986). Gould and Whitley (2009) agreed that Smith's cognitive stress model lead to physical, psychological, and social withdrawal from the sport. Creswell and Eklund (2006) suggested once athlete's experiences consequences of chronic stress to a point where an unfavorable cost-benefit ratio is perceived the athlete becomes unengaged. In additionally the athlete may remain involved in the sport, due to lack of a more attractive alternative (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006.)

Gould and Whitley (2009) stated there currently is no one universally accepted definition of athlete burnout. The researchers stated athlete burnout involves a combination of definitions and is a process that will unfold over time (Gould & Whitley, 2009). According to Cresswell

and Eklund (2006) the advancement of athlete burnout research has been hindered due to the lack of a complete definition of the term burnout. Gould (1996) often became puzzled over characteristics and consequences of the experience and had loosely used the termed "burned out" and "drop out" as having the same meaning. Gustafsson, Kenttam Hassmen, and Lundqvist (2007) stated to enhance conceptual clarity; researchers must treat burnout and dropout as separate entities. In addition, overtraining, staleness, withdrawal, and burnout are related yet should not be used interchangeably (Gustafsson et al., 2007). Raglin and Wilson (2000) stated, when distinguishing between burnout and staleness, that burnout denoted a negative emotional reaction to sport participation, whereas staleness is a disorder combing affective and physiological maladaptive responses to intense training. A stale athlete can still be motivated, but an athlete suffering from burnout usually lacked motivation to continue participation (Raglin & Wilson, 2000). Goodger et. al., (2007) stated that there have been several advances in research on sport burnout, yet researchers must continue to develop more accurate burnout measurement tools for assessing athletes. Researchers, parents, athletes and coaches must continue to develop strategies to help prevent burnout (Goodger et. al., 2007).

Raedeke (1997) researched whether 236 male and female swimmers could be characterized based on theoretical determinants of commitment. In this study the researcher defined burnout as a withdrawal from a sport noted by a reduced sense of accomplishment, a devaluation of the sport, and physical or psychological exhaustion (Raedeke, 1997). Goodger, et. al, (2007) agreed, describing causes of burnout related to these three similar categories: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced performance accomplishments. Raedeke (1997) described physical/emotional exhaustion being associated with intense training and competition. Raedeke (1997) also described a reduced sense of accomplishment as being related

to skills and abilities and athletes are unable to achieve personal goals or they perform below expectation. Furthermore the researcher described sport devaluation to a loss of interest, or resentment toward performance and the sport (Raedeke, 1997). Hill, Hall, and Appleton (2010), agreed with Raedeke stating emotional exhaustion is characterized by the perceived reduction of emotional and physical resources beyond that associated with routine practice and competition. Reduced performance is characterized by an enduring sense of reduced personal accomplishment in terms of sports abilities and success (Hill et al., 2010). Depersonalization reflects the development of a cynical attitude towards sports and (Hill et al., 2010). According to Raedeke and Smith (2001) this definition is attractive because it is multidimensional, taps three key signs and symptoms of burnout, and can serve as the basis for scale development.

Cresswell and Eklund (2005) stated that some researchers view burnout from a motivational perspective where motivating factors cause athletes to loose passion for their once beloved sport. According to Smith (1986), "when an athlete suffers from burnout: he will experience chronic fatigue, poor sleep, depression, and a state of helplessness" (p.40). Due to these factors, Kellmann (2002) stated, when an athlete experiences burnout his/her performance becomes substantially impaired. Full recovery from burnout is a complex process that may require years of rest and removal from the sport (Kellmann, 2002).

Symptoms and Consequences

In addition to comprehending the term burnout, it is also equally important to have an understanding of key signs, symptoms, and consequences that come with burnout (Raedeke, Lunney, & Venables, 2002). Smith (1986) suggested that, over a period of time, burnout could lead to a perception of low accomplishments, low control, and possibly a state of learned helplessness. According to the researcher behavioral results of burnout would consist of reduced

productivity, and possibly physical or emotional withdrawal from the activity (Smith, 1986). Maslach (2003) stated once these behavioral symptoms were discovered an effective intervention must be put in place.

Pines (1993) suggested that all individuals that are highly motivated are at risk for burnout. The researcher explained that one has to be "on fire" to burnout, people who are not on fire (not highly motivated) will feel stressed and depressed but do not feel burnout (Pines, 1993). Gustafsson (2007) stated that this makes athletes with high ambitions extremely vulnerable to burnout, yet at the same time, pushing one's body to its physical limits is something that makes one an elite level athlete. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) described when someone is burned out this involvement and high motivation gradually develops into the opposite. Gould (1996) claimed once burnout occurs, an individual's motivation begins to decrease tremendously. What they once thought was an enjoyable physical activity no longer seems to be so. According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) although high ambitions and over commitment to ones sport is a desirable characteristic for athletic success at an elite level, the athletes with these traits can be the most vulnerable to burnout.

Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) researched burnout from it's earliest recorded occurrences to current experiential studies, they stated there are over 100 symptoms and possible consequences that have been associated with burnout. Burnout highly correlated with various self-reported indices of personal dysfunction, including physical exhaustion, insomnia, increased use of alcohol and drugs, and family problems (Maslach & Jackson, 1984). Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) placed the physical symptoms of burnout into three separate categories; indefinite physical distress, psychosomatic disorder, and psychosomatic disorder. According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) having indefinite physical distress one will have symptoms

consisting of headaches, dizziness, muscle pains, or even hyperventilation. This can lead to weight gain or loss, chronic fatigue, or possible sexual problems (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). The second category is psychosomatic disorders, which include ulcers, and heart disease (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). The third category is physiological reactions consisting of increased heart rate, hypertension, and increased perspiration (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Melamed, Shirom, Toker, Berliner, & Shapira, (2006) agreed that burnout leads to physiological results caused by the wear and tear of energetic resources. According to Melamed et al., (1998) there is evidence that burnout increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, which leads to impaired immunity functions and is related to chronic inflammation. Schaufeli and Buunk (2003) modified these symptoms into five separate sub categories rather than three. These categories consisted of the following:

1. Affective (e.g., gloomy, depressed and tearful).
2. Cognitive (e.g., feeling of powerlessness, helplessness and hopelessness)
3. Physical (e.g., exhaustion and somatic complaints);
4. Behavioral (e.g., smoking impaired performance and absenteeism);
5. Motivational (e.g., lack of interest, zeal and enthusiasm).

According to Schaufeli and Buunk (2003) the amount of physical symptoms does look high, but most of the symptoms are reported from uncontrolled clinical observations or interview studies with unspecified analysis of their data. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) agreed stating most symptoms result from uncontrolled observations rather than from careful empirical studies. Due to these facts, it may be unclear about the validity of some symptoms that have been mentioned (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

According to Gould (1997) in reviewing theories on burnout he stated, burned out

athletes become unable to concentrate, while constantly procrastinating about a task at hand. Athletes dealing with this syndrome have been observed as compulsive complainers and are frequently negative, often leading to a lack of appreciation for teammates, coaches, and the organization (Gould, 1997). Cresswelll and Eklund (2006) agreed stating these athletes start becoming distrusting of fans, coaches and peers. Due to frustration and a negative attitude, the athlete might not realize he/she is burned out (Cresswelll & Eklund, 2006). Schaufeli and Enzmann, (1998) stated burnout within individuals feel extremely emotional and physically exhausted which can lead to affective, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral consequences. A person who is burned out often experiences a depressed mood, feelings of helplessness, and withdraws from friends, teammates, and coaches (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Smith (1986) stated that over time, nonstop demand and inability to balance one's life style with other activities can lead to a low perception of one's accomplishments, control, and may then lead to a state of helplessness. These states consequently may lead to decreased effort and motivation along with the possibility of psychologically (if not physically) withdrawing from the activity (Cresswell & Eklund 2007).

According to Raedeke et al., (2002) in early research on burnout, the general aim was to focus on the characteristic signs and symptoms of burnout without truly understanding the cause of the syndrome. Therefore, once the knowledge base refining burnout increased, the signs and symptoms were practically ignored (Raedeke et al., 2002). According to Gustaffson (2007) finding symptoms and consequences were also ignored due to the inability to study participants. Gustaffson (2007) stated that the number of studies conducted to research factors which cause burnout is low due to ethical considerations. It can be extremely difficult in researching burnout, since athletes feel the consequences of admitting burnout could negatively influence their future

(Gustaffson, 2007). According to Cresswell and Eklund (2006) athletes fear reduced playing time, possible losing scholarship, or even losing money on a contract. Gould and Whitley (2009) stated that due to this fear, even fewer studies have examined the long-term effect of burnout however; these studies may have the most important implications for all athletes. According to Gould and Whitley (2009), it is somewhat surprising that researchers have paid so much attention to burnout, yet still have failed to identify the long-term consequences for the athlete. Lonsdale, Hodge, and Rose (2009) stated understanding burnout might be the most important factor in preventing athlete burnout, and help correct intervention burnout techniques.

Athletes and Burnout

Becoming a college athlete he/she must give an extraordinary amount of time and sacrifice throughout his or her life (Gould & Whitley, 2009). According to Gould and Diffenbach (2002), hypothesized that burnout is on the rise due to increasing training loads and many athletes seasons have turned into year-round competitions or training sessions. Weinberg and Gould (2003) agreed stating even in sports with short competitive seasons, the most committed train all year long. Sports have evolved into a never-ending endeavor with participating within his/her sport year round in order to compete at a high level (Weinberg & Gould, 2003).

According to Taylor, Ogilvie, and Lavalle (2006), because athletes are involved in sport at such a young age they often become immersed in it. They are less likely to explore other career, education, and lifestyle options because of their commitment to a sport (Taylor et al., 2006). Raedeke (1997) stated that many athletes are involved in sports for a variety of reasons related to attractions or entrapment. Raedeke (1997) tested 236 female and male 13–18 year old age-group swimmers, having each swimmer complete a questionnaire that assessed theoretical

determinants of commitment and burnout (emotional/physical exhaustion, swim devaluation, and reduced swim accomplishment). Results revealed that athletes who exhibited characteristics reflecting sport entrapment generally demonstrated higher burnout scores than athletes who were primarily involved in sport for attraction-related reasons (Raedeke, 1997). According to Raedeke (1997) the athletes who demonstrating higher scores of burnout continued to swim because they felt they have invested too much in the sport, didn't want to disappoint coaches, or because other people made them feel that they must. Cresswell and Eklund (2006) agreed with Raedeke, stating that many athletes felt this entrapment for good reason. Cresswell and Eklund (2006) explained athletes on a scholarship experience entrapment since even if they are burnout, they must continue to play at a high level. If they leave their sport, they could lose their scholarship possibly making them unable to financially attend their current institution (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006).

Harlick and McKenzie (2000) administrated burnout questionnaires to 37 junior tennis players. The two players who were identified as having the highest levels of burnout, and the two players with the lowest levels of burnout were selected to participate in an interview. According to Harlick and McKenzie (2000) the theme identified in the individual interviews was that burnout increased within the players who participated in just one sport year round. Athletes able to play multiple sports would have the opportunity to develop multiple identities, and develop a peer group of friends within those sports to help minimize the stress associated with the sport (Harlick & McKenzie, 2000). According to Strachan, Cote, and Deakin (2009) 123 male and female athletes involved in a sport for at least three years take the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire along with the Developmental Assets Profile. Results showed developing the presence of a strong social network (friends, parents, or teammates) would lessen stress and reduce the

likelihood of burnout. Additionally the researches stated athletes with low social support are more likely to experience high levels of burnout in response to increased stress levels (Strachan et al., 2001). Coakley (1992) assessed the psychometric properties for modified burnout, motivation, and athletic identity inventories for a youth athlete sample. Participants included 88 youth swimmers ranging in age from 7 to 12 years, who completed measures assessing burnout, motivation, and athletic identity. The results of the study although at a youth level showed social support and relationships in team sports can serve as a buffer to help reduce a chance for burnout (Coakley, 1992).

Researchers continue to investigate the degree to which personal and situational factors contribute to the development of stress in sports (Cohn, 1990). Gustafsson, et al., (2007) stated, with the vigorous training schedules college athletes have, it puts a major limit on the amount of free time the athlete has for activities and relationships off the field to release stress. Cohn (1990) conducted one of the first studies on athlete burnout interviewing 10 high school male golfers. Cohn (1990) determined the most frequent sources of stress reported by high school golfers and also to establish the perceived causes of athlete burnout in golf using a guided interview approach. This approach consisting of both open-ended and specific questions related to golfing experience was used to collect data. A typological analysis of the interviews identified a number of sources of stress. According to Cohn (1990) each golfer reported at least a short amount of burnout at some point in his career, which resulted in discontinued play from five to fourteen days. Too much practice or playing, no new goals, playing badly, lack of enjoyment, and pressure from self and outside influences were all identified as stress factors relating to burnout. Since these athletes only stopped playing for a relatively short period of time, they may not have experienced true burnout, only initial stages of staleness and overtraining (Cohn, 1998).

Another study related to burnout and stress, Gould, Horn, and Spreemann (1983) studied 458 junior elite wrestlers. The wrestlers were asked to rate 33 sources of stress on a 7-point Likert scale the stress they experienced prior to competition. Out of the 33 sources of stress presented the most frequently cited included not performing up to a level of ability, not wrestling well, and not being able to get mentally ready. The results also showed, 53% of the wrestlers experienced some source of stress. This study concluded there were major individual differences in relation to the frequency of sources of stress (Gould et al., 1983). Scanlan, Stein, and Ravizza (1998) explored the stress levels within former elite figure skaters after participating at the national level. The researcher used a retrospective interview technique in which they found five categories of stress for the skater: negative aspects of competition, negative aspects of competition, negative significant other relationships, demand/cost of skating, personal struggles, and traumatic experiences (Scanlan et al., 1998). The researchers concluded that elite skaters had to cope with diverse sources of stress that corresponded to the various aspects within their sport (Scanlan et al., 1998).

Models and Theories of Burnout

According to Gould (1996) although the literature on athlete burnout is limited, several sports scientists have developed theories and models studying athlete burnout. These include Smith's (1986) Cognitive-Affective Stress Model, Silva's (1990) Negative Training Stress Response Model, Schmidt and Stein's (1991) Commitment-Based Model, Coakley's (1992) Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model, and Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory. According to Goodger et al., (2007) with the exception of the commitment-based model, each of these theories incorporate burnout as an extreme end state resulting from too much training, or insufficient recovery.

Self Determination Theory

According to Deci and Ryan (1985) self-determination theory states that individuals have three basic psychological needs in order to obtain optimal well being: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are met, an individual's motivation and psychological well being are optimized (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Deci and Ryan (2000) stated that autonomy, competence, and relatedness provide the basis for human well being; whereas, the chronic failure to meet these can result in ill being and possibly burnout. Lonsdale, Hodge, and Rose (2009) studied athlete burnout in 201 elite Canadian athletes (121 females, 80 males) using the framework of the self-determination theory. The primary aim was to investigate the relationships between behavioral regulations and athlete burnout and to examine whether self-determined motivation mediated relationships between basic needs satisfaction and athlete burnout (Lonsdale et al., 2009). According to Lonsdale et al., (2009) the self-determination theory-derived hypothesis was supported. Relationships among athlete burnout and behavioral regulations mostly varied according to their rank on the self-determination continuum, with less self-determined motives showing positive associations and more self-determined motives showing negative correlations with burnout (Lonsdale et al., 2009).

Hodge, Londsdale, and Johan (2008) stated competence refers to a feeling that one has the ability to be successful in ones sport. The feeling of autonomy is the feeling of having choice, and relatedness can be defined as a sense of mutual caring and connectedness with teammates or coaches (Hodge et al., 2008). Hodge et al., (2008) stated that given the links between fulfillment and positive consequences, it should be expected that athlete burnout should show negative relationships with fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. Hodge et al., (2008) stated that players who have high burnout rates would report lower need

fulfillment than players with low burnout rates. Gould and Whitley (2009) agreed by stating athletes who feel competent and independent may experience lower levels of burnout. Cresswell and Eklund (2006) supported this with a study by interviewing fifteen purposefully sampled professional (players ages 21-31) about their rugby-related experiences over a 12-month period. Cresswell and Eklund (2006) found that satisfaction of the basic needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) was associated with lower levels of athlete burnout. Hodge et al., (2008) stated that currently with the limited research on self-determination theory of burnout in athletics the relative importance of satisfying each of these three needs is still not clear with the respect to their influence on athlete burnout.

Cognitive-Affective Stress Model

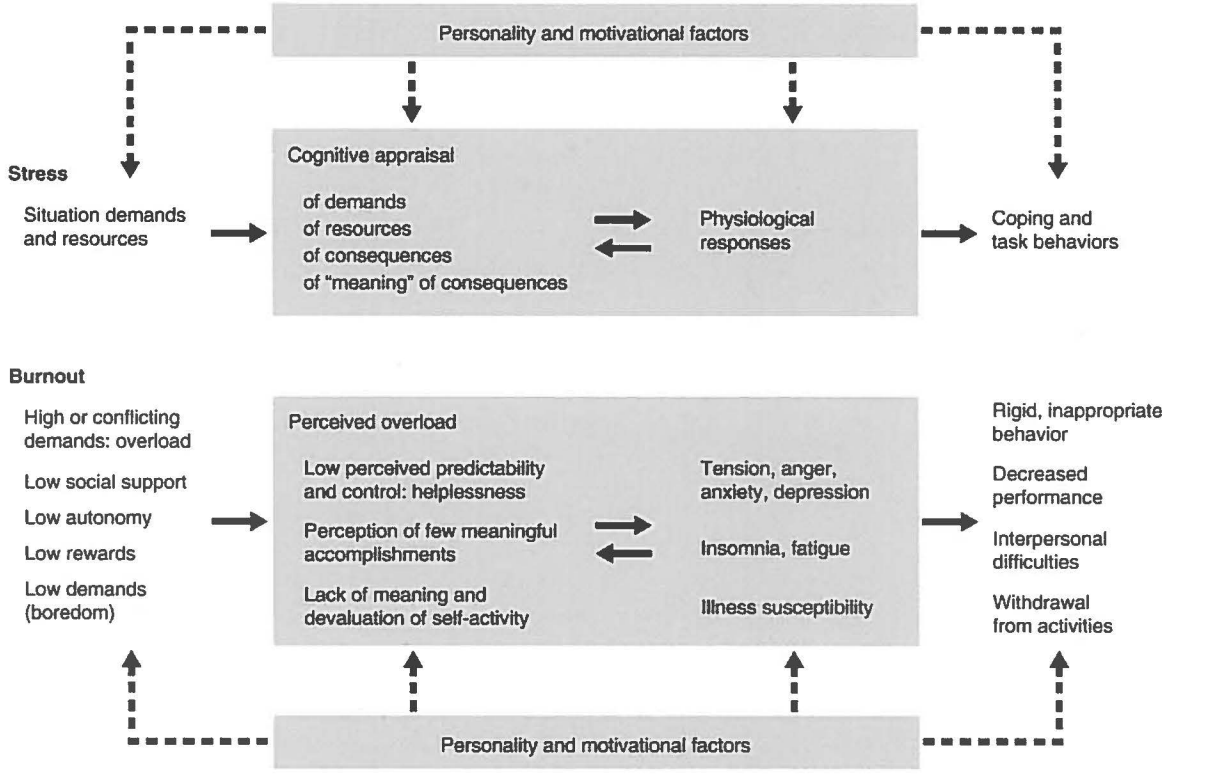
Smith (1986) discovered the cognitive-affective stress model when he stated the topic of athlete burnout needed more empirical attention. It was his hope that this conceptual model would help stimulate further thinking and more research on the topic (Smith, 1986). According to Schmidt and Stein (1991) Smith's cognitive-affective stress model has been one of the most commonly used model in athlete burnout, and the most important aspect in this model is how an athlete reacts on stressors or setbacks. Smith (1986) stated what may affect an athlete interpretation is not only their personality, but also the way of thinking and motivating. Dale and Weinberg (1990) stated Smith's model suggested that burnout is the product of chronic stress and parallels the stress process. The stress establishes itself through the relationship between cognitive appraisal of the interaction between the person and situation, situational factors, physiological responses, and behavioral responses (Dale & Weinberg, 1990). These components are then influenced by motivation and personality factors (Dale & Weinberg, 1990).

According to Smith (1986) the cognitive-affective stress model involved four stages:

situational demand, cognitive appraisal, physiological response, and behavioral response. According to Dale and Weinberg (1990) table 2.1 demonstrates the parallel relationships assumed with each stage. Smith (1986) stated the first stage of this model is "situational demands" such as high training volume or high expectation for success on an athlete. Gould and Whitley (2009) found this usually happens when demands exceeded ones possibilities and resources. The second stage is "cognitive appraisal" which supports the notion that nothing is either good or bad, but it is our thinking that makes it so (Smith, 1986). Gould and Whitley (2009) stated people differ in how they respond to prolonged stress and setbacks in sport. This phase can be influenced by personality and motivational factors such as goal setting, and perfectionism (Gustafsson, 2007). Next the athlete may experience "physiological responses" such as insomnia, fatigue, and anxiety (Smith, 1986). According to Smith (1986) if the anxiety is not solved then the final phase of "behavioral response" happens. This consists of ones behaviors and coping responses, including lower performance level and possible withdrawal from sport (Gustafsson, 2007).

Table 2.1

Cognitive-Affective Stress Model



Adapted by permission from Smith 1986.

Note. *Cognitive-Affective Stress Model* (Smith, 1986).

Negative Training Stress Model

Negative training stress model was one of the earliest models of athlete burnout created by John Silva III (Silva, 1990). Silva (1990) originally developed this model to explain that burnout focuses more on overtraining. His model was originally inspired off a child prodigy tennis player, Andrea Jaeger, who turned professional at the age of 14 (Silva, 1990). Silva (1990) examined exploratory data from an intercollegiate sample of athletes that described their

perceptions of staleness, overtraining and burnout. According to Silva (1990) the purpose of the study was to present conceptual models that would define the nature of positive and negative adaptations to training stress. Silva (1990) found physical training causes stress for the athlete on a physical and psychological level. When the athlete becomes negatively over trained (see Table 2.2) he/she begins to face staleness in the sport (Silva, 1990). Gould (1996) agreed stating that overtraining can have both negative and positive effects and unfortunately, staleness for a sport is a major negative component.

Negative training stress model focuses on physical training, while recognizing psychological factors can come into play and can lead to a physical training process gone wrong (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Kentta (2001) stated that as a normal part of physical training athletes over train themselves, which can lead to an emotionally overwhelmed, exhausted state. According to Kentta (2001) the process of overtraining varies by individual, if an athlete reaches this state, it is not necessarily a negative. Kenntta (2001) found with proper rest the body would compensate and physically improve. Although, negative overtraining occurs when the physical demands are excessive and the body does not react properly (Silva, 1990). Gould and Whitley (2009) stated if rest and recovery does not occur, the athlete will experience staleness within the sport that will then develop into athlete burnout. Unfortunately, very few tests of this model have been conducted (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Although this negative stress model provides an appealing explanation of burnout resulting from physical training, more research from this model is needed (Gould, 1996).

Table 2.2

Cognitive-Affective Stress Model

Note. Negative Training Stress Model Table (Silva, 1990).

Commitment-Based Model

Schmidt and Stein's (1991) commitment-based model is based on a balance between positive and negative factors acting on the athlete over time. This balance will determine commitment to the sport practiced and the kind of commitment that participants develop toward the world in which they compete will determine their level of continuity in the activity (Schmidt & Stein, 1991). Schmidt and Stein (1991) proposed that this commitment-based model suggested that burnout is more than a reaction to stress but is related to the athlete's commitment to his/her sport. Athletes who experience burnout are typically involved in their sports due to entrapment and feeling of "they have to be at training" rather than "they want to be training" (Goodger, et. al, 2007). Schmidt and Stein (1991) stated that athletes commit to sports for three reasons:

1. The athlete wants to participate
2. The athlete believes he/she has to participate
3. For both reasons

Schmidt and Stein's (1991) stated the commitment-based model (see Table 2.3) is based on five factors: rewards, costs, satisfaction, alternatives, and investment. If the rewards obtained are high and costs involved are low; if the level of satisfaction is high and alternatives other than

sports are low; and if the investment is increasingly high, then commitment based on activity enjoyment is assured (Schmidt & Stein, 1991). However Schmidt and Stein (1991) found the athlete might perceive that the costs involved are high and the rewards are low. He/she may feel the possible alternatives in daily life are limited or non-existent or the investment is high (Schmidt & Stein, 1991). According to Schmidt and Stein (1991) he/she will then become a person who is very vulnerable to burnout.

Table 2.3

Sports Commitment Model Table

	Commitment (enjoyment-based)	Commitment (burnout)	Dropout
Reward	Increasing	Decreasing	Decreasing
Cost	Low	Increasing	Increasing
Satisfaction	High	Decreasing	Decreasing
Alternatives	Low	Low	Increasing
Investments	High	High	Decreasing

Note. Sport Commitment Model (Schmidt & Stein, 1991).

Raedeke (1997) stated athletes initially join a sport because they enjoy it along with the opportunities associated with it. A shift may occur where a sport is no longer as attractive as it once was because of sacrificing too much for a sport and the lack of benefits of sports success (Raedeke, 1997). The athletes continue to stay in a sport for entrapped reasons and the lack of personal control or identity outside of their sport (Raedeke, 1997). According to Kelley (1983) this model can be separated into three subcategories:

1. How enjoyable the activity is by the athlete.
2. Alternatives the athlete could be doing instead of playing that specific sport.

3. Restrictions that prevent the athletes from withdrawing from that sport.

Using the commitment-based model Raedeke (1997) conducted a study with 236 female and male swimmers. The swimmers completed a questionnaire that assessed theoretical determinants of commitment (i.e., enjoyment, benefits, costs, alternative attractiveness, investments, sport identity, social constraints, perceived control), burnout, and attraction-based commitment (Raedeke, 1997). According to Raedeke (1997) analysis from this study revealed four subgroups of swimmers that were labeled malcontented, enthusiastic, obligated, and indifferent swimmers. Malcontented swimmers exhibited characteristics of sport entrapment in terms of low perceived control and high social constraints and generally had a negative outlook on swimming (Raedeke, 1997). These swimmers demonstrated the highest burnout and lowest attraction-based commitment scores. Conversely, swimmers in the enthusiastic cluster perceived swimming the most favorable (Raedeke, 1997).

Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model

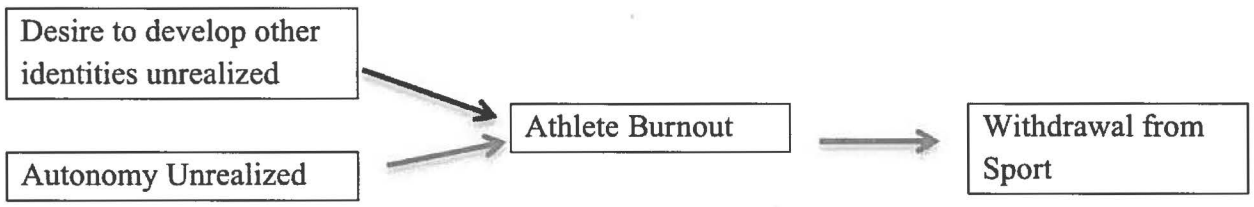
In 1992, the unidimensional identity development and external control model, was created as an alternative to the to the more widely used stress-based models of burnout (Coakley, 1992). Coakley (1992) stated that stress was involved with burnout, but it was not the cause, only a symptom. After semi structured interviews with 15 athletes all that played individual sports, as opposed to playing a team sport, the researcher stated the real cause of burnout involved high performing sport organizations. According to Coakley (1992) burnout occurs because of the way sport is structured in today's society and athletic organizations do not allow young athletes to develop a normal identity. Coaches and parents make most of the decisions, leaving athletes powerless to control events and make decisions that could improve their own personal development (Coakley, 1992). Gould and Whitley (2009) agreed stating organized

sport is structured in a way that minimizes the personal control that young people have in decision-making.

According to Gould and Whitley (2009) in this model, stress is not the cause of burnout in athletes; rather it is the social environment of high performance sport in society that is the primary cause. Coakley (1992) stated his model offers a sociological explanation in which burnout is the product of sport organizations. Athletes in these organizations experience identity foreclosure, which results in a unidimensional identity and a feeling of loss of independence (Coakley, 1992). Coakley (1992) stated once the athlete desires to develop other identities it leads to burnout and possibly withdrawal from the sport. Many athletes are socialized to focus on success in their sport, leading to a sport-centered identity that minimizes opportunity to develop other social skills and other sources of one's identity (Coakley, 1992). With this mindset, the inability to reach one's athletic goals can lead to increased stress and eventually burnout (Gould & Whitley, 2009).

Table 2.4

Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model Table



Note. Unidimensional Identity Development and External Control Model (Coakley, 1992).

Coakley's (1992) unidimensional identity development and external control model states that burnout occurs because of the time demands on elite level athletics. The demands do not allow the athletes to spend time with peers or in non-sport activities instead, athletes solely think

about gaining success in their own sports (Coakley, 1992). In many cases, when an injury or performance issues occur, the sole identity of being an athlete causes stress than can lead to burnout (Gould, 1996). According to Gould (1996) this model also gives recommendations for preventing burnout by suggesting changing the social structure of high performance sports. It is built to help prevent burnout by changing the manner in which the experience is integrated into the athletes' lives (Gould, 1996).

Support and Coaching Effects

According to Gould (1996) people usually join athletics for social acceptance, physical competence, and enjoyment. If burnout occurs, the athlete's personal motivation disappears, and what was once seen as an enjoyable and personally satisfying physical activity no longer seems that way (Gould, 1996). Smith (1989) stated that in most cases of burnout, the individual feels overwhelmed by the demands of the situation. Fraser-Thomas et al., (2008) explained that the most common reasons for burnout include conflict of interest, negative experiences such as lack of playing time, lack of fun, and coaching conflicts. Butcher et al., (2002) stressed that coaches and parents should be aware that enjoyment is more important for younger athletes and should make their programs fun in order to enhance long-term retention in a sport.

According to Butcher et al., (2002) the first step in making athletic programs more enjoyable to athletes is to reach out to their parents. Parent and coach influences are major issues in American sport, especially when dealing with sport burnout (Butcher et al., 2002). Raedke (1997) stated burnout is a buzzword in the athletic community that has raised considerable concern among coaches, athletes and parents. Unfortunately, coach and parental involvement in sports can limit children's athletic enjoyment levels (Raedke, 1997). Lumpkin, Stoll, and Beller (2003) stated that backyard and playground games, where athletes make up the rules as they

play, have become increasingly hard to find. Wiersma (2000) stated that in order to avoid burnout, parents must take initiative in their children's healthy sport development by providing unstructured play, and being aware of any unintentional pressure that they may demonstrate given their past sports involvement. Parents have become increasingly more involved in their children's activity and have imposed their rules, which means that spontaneous pastimes such as pickup games have ceased (Raedke, 1997). Thomas, Cote and Deakin (2008) found that in order to keep sports fun, the focus for coaches and parents should be placed on developing personal competencies in both physical and social skills. Athletes should have time to enjoy their chosen sports and discover their roles within the sport (Thomas et al., 2008). These discoveries may not only help athletes in their current state, but also help them in roles as future coaches, officials, or volunteers by learning different roles within the sport (Thomas et al., 2008).

Harlick and McKenzi (2000) stated parents are one of the most important aspects in a child's sport experience. Harlick and McKenzi (2000) gave 37 elite junior male and female tennis players a Maslach Burnout Inventory questionnaire to examine their burnout rates. The researchers then examined four competitive junior tennis players who had the two highest and two lowest MBI score and the four tennis players were privately interviewed (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000). Harlick and McKenzi (2000) found high levels of perfectionism and overtraining characterized one player having the highest burnout score, while another player experienced pressure from others and a need for a social life. After interviews with each participant, researchers found that players who perceived that their parents had a positive influence on their sports involvement experienced lower levels of burnout (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000). On the other hand, players who experienced negative behavior from their parents such as expecting high levels of play, vocal abuse from the sidelines, and receiving tangible rewards

from their parents for participating, experienced high levels of burnout (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000). Strachan, Cote, and Deakin (2009) suggested that coaches and parents must recognize burnout, and efforts must be made to stop this progression. By recognizing burnout, the athletes will have a chance to excel at their sport and prolong their participation (Strachan et al., 2009).

Strachan et al., (2009) stated parents and coaches should help to empower young athletes by allowing opportunities for interaction not only through competitive games, but also through play. Furthermore, creating a supportive environment by providing encouragement and a positive atmosphere will enable athletes to enjoy their experience where they can decrease the chance of burnout (Strachan et al., 2009). According to Strachan et al., (2009) while being supportive on the sidelines, parents and coaches should encourage players and focus on aspects of their performance and process rather than winning or losing. By incorporating measures of success such as these, the coach or parent will likely increase the player's enjoyment experience eliminating possible burnout and enhancing the athlete's chances of continuation in the sport (Strachan, et al., 2009).

Overtraining

Gould and Whitley (2009) stated that when people often think about athlete burnout, they think of athletes having an excessive training load. Gustafsson (2007) stated that high levels of training and stress are a must for becoming an elite athlete in most sports. According to Gustafsson (2007) the higher level of competition seems to push athletes and coaches to increase training loads. Gould and Whitley (2009) stated that it is not the amount of training that is the major concern but the intensity of the training, paired with a lack of recovery. In addition, this recovery may need to take several forms such as emotional, social, and physical (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Lonsdale et al., (2009) conducted a study on 201 elite Canadian athletes (121

females, 80 males; mean age 22.9 years) from 51 different sports, examining whether self-determined motivation mediated relationships between basic needs satisfaction and burnout. Lonsdale et al., (2009) found that exhaustion and cynicism are considered the core burnout symptoms.

Lumpkin et al., (2003) stated that overtraining occurs when athletes fail to listen to their bodies and coaches demand too much physical training. Many coaches lack the knowledge to teach sport skills or to pace them properly which results in expecting too much of their athletes (Lumpkin et al., 2003). According to Wiersma (2001) sport organizations might soon need to restrict hours of training in a specific sport based on age. Gould and Whitley (2009) stated the NCAA already limits the amount of hours a player can practice; this varies upon division level and seasonality.

Grobbelaar, Malan, Stein, and Ellis (2010) had 41 male rugby players (average age 21 years old) take the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire repeatedly over a five-month period and compared burnout levels with starters and bench players. Grobbelaar et al., (2010) found significant differences with higher burnout levels of the starting players. Grobbelaar et al., (2010) stated that playing position, experience level and starting status should be considered in player management strategies to prevent overtraining. According to Gould and Whitley (2009) athletes and coaches should attend education classes with topics such as training, stress management, recovery, nutrition, and the importance of balance in life. This could be offered under a science of winning label, which would appeal to most athletes and coaches giving information about enhancing athlete's performance (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Wu and Huang (2005) suggested schools should convey information aimed at teaching health-related behaviors that effect burnout such as the importance of recovery. Cureton (2009) stated that coaches and

players must become more knowledgeable in creating ways to prevent burnout. Cureton (2009) stated coaches keeping accurate records of performance during training and competition, and adjusting daily training intensity and volume. Coaches should have athletes keep a log of subjective ratings on quality of sleep, fatigue, muscle soreness, body weight, early morning heart rate, illness, and causes of stress other than training (Cureton, 2009). According to Gould and Whitley (2009) developing these programs for burnout prevention and other sport science-related information, could close the athletic-academic gap. Teachers and coaches will then have a better understanding of burnout and have preventative techniques to prolong the student athlete's career.

Coaching Motivation & Gender Differences

According to Lumpkin et al., (2003) emphasis on self-motivation may have a direct impact on the enjoyment and satisfaction gained from participating, thus avoiding possible burnout. As the intrinsic motivation of players increases, these players may enjoy the experience more, and thus lower the possibility of burnout (Lumpkin et al., 2003). Lumpkin et al., (2003) stated that people begin to pursue activities that provide them with the feeling of accomplishment. Learning new skills, playing a preferred position, earning playing time, or avoiding negative feedback from coaches can characterize being successful (Lumpkin et al., 2003). However, Lumpkin, et. al, (2003) stated a lack of positive feedback is one of the major contributing factors to sport burnout.

Harlick and McKenzi (2000) also suggested coaches and parents tend to emphasize success in terms of winning. Harlick and McKenzi (2000) assessed the levels of burnout occurring within 37 male junior tennis in New Zealand. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to assess the levels of burnout in order to identify the situational factors contributing

to these levels of burnout and to contextualize the role of parents and coaches within individual experiences (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000). Harlick and McKenzi (2000) found that using winning as motivation is often linked to increased stress due to decreased opportunities to experience success. In turn, this increased stress was implicated in the vulnerability of an athlete to experience higher levels of burnout (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000). In preventing burnout, coaches must be aware of the impact that they potentially have on sport motivation, enjoyment and continued participation (Harlick & McKenzi, 2000).

According to Lai and Wiggins (2003) since burnout within sports is still relatively at its infant stage, there has been very little study on gender differences in athlete burnout. Most research focuses on gender differences with college coaches, referees, and training staff (Lai & Wiggins, 2003). For example Kelley (1994) studied the burnout differences between 131 male baseball coaches and 118 female softball coaches throughout a season. The researcher found female coaches to reporting burnout symptoms at a higher rate than male coaches (Kelley, 1994). Kelley (1994) stated that perceived stress and emotional exhaustion were the significant components for female coaches experiencing burnout. Kelley (1994) hypothesized female coaches demonstrated higher scores of burnout because women feel pressure to continually prove the worth of woman sports. Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) had a similar study of 231 male and female coaches in which they administered the Maslach Burnout Inventory test during the participant's respective season. The results showed female coaches reported significant higher levels of emotional exhaustion and significantly lower levels of personal accomplishment than male coaches (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984).

Summary

Gould and Whitley (2009) identify athlete burnout as a physical, emotional, and social

withdrawal from a formerly enjoyable sport activity. This withdrawal is characterized by emotional and physical exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation, often occurring as a result of chronic stress and motivational changes in the athlete (Raedeke, 1997). Participation in sports should be an enjoyable experience for anyone with many potential benefits such as opportunities for peer socialization, the development of self-esteem and leadership qualities, and also promotes health and fitness (Gould & Whitley, 2009). According to Gould and Whitley (2009) as sport continues to grow in population, unfortunately burnout in athletes is becoming more prevalent everyday. Athlete burnout studies have ranged from personality traits to other demographic factors (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993). Each case of burnout has its own characteristics and also the individual differences may have been found due to the different instruments used (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Lonsdale, Hodge, and Rose (2009) stated with more research on athlete burnout and understanding burnout prevention, thousands of athlete's careers could be saved.

CHAPTER 3—METHODS

Burnout

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first purpose was to report levels of burnout of Division II University athletes using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). The second purpose of the study was to find the primary causal factors generating burnout within these athletes. The participants in this study were 108 varsity athletes from a Division II University in rural Colorado (see Table 3.1). The athletes' ages ranged from 18 to 23 years old. After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher secured support from four athletic teams (men's soccer, women's soccer, women's softball, and men's baseball). This study took place in April when two of the four teams (men's and women's soccer) were out of season. These teams were selected because of a continued interest in exploring the relation between in season and out of season sports and the influence seasonality may have on burnout (Gould & Whitley, 2009). Following completion of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire three participants with the highest burnout scores were selected from each team, for a total of six in season and six out of season athletes. These six in season and six out of season athletes then participated in a semi-structured interview in order to explore the possible casual factors of burnout based by sport, gender, and seasonality.

Table 3.1

Participants Per Program

Sport	Seasonality	Participants	Percentage
Men's Soccer	Out of Season	26	28.08 %
Women's Soccer	Out of Season	23	24.84 %
Men's Soccer	In Season	40	43.2 %
Women's Softball	In Season	19	20.52 %

Notes. Study took place in April 2013.

Instruments

Informed consent. Participants were first asked to sign an informed consent form that explained the focus of the study. This form assured them that their answers to the Athlete Burnout Questionnaires along with answers in the semi-structured interview were completely confidential.

Demographic survey. Once participants were selected for this study they completed a demographic survey (Appendix A). In the questionnaire, athletes identified him/herself by printing his/her name. This information remained in the researcher's possession and was not shared with any other individual. This allowed for efficient follow-up with any individuals invited for a semi-structured interview. At the data analysis and write-up stages, names were replaced with codes so that no data could be attributed to a specific athlete. This survey consisted of seven questions and took no longer than three minutes to finish. The survey asked the participant's contact information (name, phone number, and email) in order to contact the participant if he/she was chosen for the qualitative section of the study. The remainder of this survey consisted of the participant's gender, age, grade, and sport. Each participant circled each answer, and wrote in his/her current age along with contact information.

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). The participants were then asked to complete the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire in order to assess the level of burnout. This fifteen-question paper survey measured three subscales of burnout: emotional and physical exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation. All questions were measured on a Likert 5 point scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 "almost never" and 5 "almost always." The 1st and 14th questions were reversed scored. High scores indicated the participant was feeling more burned out, as opposed to low scores. Through demonstrated reliability and validity, the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire is a psychometrically sound instrument, measuring burnout in athletes (Raedeke & Smith, 2001).

Semi-Structured Interview. The final instrument was a qualitative semi-structured interview. The purpose of this interview was to discover the causal factors to why the athlete was experiencing burnout. Three participants per team who had the highest Athletes Burnout Question score then had a face-to-face semi-structured interview with the researcher.

Procedure

After receiving approval from the IRB, the researcher secured support from four athletic programs (men's soccer, women's soccer, women's softball, and men's baseball) at the Division II university. This study took place when both men's and women's soccer were out of season, while baseball and softball were still in season.

Once support was secured by the IRB, the researcher contacted the head coaches of the four programs by phone or email to gain permission for their players to participate in the research study. Once the coaches agreed to have their programs participate, the researcher set up a time with each program to attend a team practice in April for 25 minutes when the coaching staff was not present.

At each practice the researcher briefly introduced himself and distributed the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire to all team members. The time allotted was: introducing the research—5 minutes, allowing for questions—5 minutes, and providing ample time for the athletes to complete the informed consent and Athlete Burnout Questionnaire—15 minutes. In the introduction, the importance of informed consent was verbally stressed and the researcher provided the opportunity for students who did not wish to participate to leave without reason. Again, no members of the coaching staff (head coaches, assistant coaches, strength coaches, and trainers) were present during this period. While introducing the research, there was no mention of the term "burnout" and no specific reference to burnout appeared in the title or introductory wording of the questionnaire. Cresswell (2007) had discovered that the mention of the word "burnout" could lead, or direct the response of the athlete, thus making the results of the study invalid. The purpose of the first phase of research was to assess different levels of reported burnout.

In the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire, athletes identified themselves by printing his/her name. This information remained in the researcher's possession and was not shared with any other individual for privacy purposes. Also, it allowed for efficient follow-up with any individuals invited for an interview. At the data analysis and write-up stages, names were replaced with codes so that no data could be attributed to a specific athlete. While in the researcher's possession, the completed questionnaires were securely stored in a locked cabinet of universities Human Performance and Physical Education office. All surveys will be shredded upon conferment of the researcher's degree. Once all questionnaires were completed, they were coded and analyzed using the IMB SPSS package on the researcher's password protected laptop. The athletes recording the highest levels of burnout were invited to take part in a follow-up

interview.

Next, the researcher identified and selected three athletes per program who scored the highest on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire for a follow-up semi-structured interview. If any athlete refused to take part in the interviews, the researcher selected the athlete who scored the next highest score of burnout within the same program. The interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes per session and were conducted using the HPPE conference room. The semi-structured interview was developed on the basis of a list of topics and questions generated from the research questions. Not all of the questions were asked in every interview and the question sequence and order also varied. Only the researcher and the athlete were present in the room. All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. At the beginning of each interview the athlete was identified by name and sport.

The digital voice files were downloaded and transcribed using full-note transcription. All digital electronic data with subject personal information in this study was password protected. Once downloaded and transcribed, all digital voice files were deleted. Transcripts were kept on a password protected USB thumb drive. All transcripts will be maintained until the researcher's degree has been completed, at which point they were to be permanently deleted by using Remo Drive Wipe Software.

Transcripts were analyzed using the principles of open and axial coding from the grounded theory approach to qualitative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the basic idea of open and axial coding approach is to read (and re-read) a textual database and label variables (called categories, concepts and properties) and their interrelationships. Strauss and Corbin (1990) described open coding as the part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found within the

text. Using open coding throughout the transcript from the semi structured interview, each answer the athlete gave was read in search of the answer to the repeated question "what is being referenced here?" In order to simplify this process and place a basic frame of generic relationships, the researcher then used axial coding to relate categories and properties in the transcript to each other using the researchers inductive and deductive thinking. Using Glaser and Strauss (1967) coding approach helped the researcher to identify the most common themes in the data (open codes) as well as highlight relationships in the data (axial codes). This method determined the athletes' possible causal factors associated with burnout throughout the study.

Research Design

This was a mixed methods approach used qualitative and quantitative analysis based off of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaires and a qualitative one on one interview with a selected group of participants. In order to measure burnout levels with 108 athletes at a small Division II university the researcher used the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire to measure physical and emotional exhaustion, reduced athlete accomplishment, and sport devaluation (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). Survey research is the best method available to researchers interested in collecting original data for describing a large population (Babbie, 1998). The use of questionnaires requires less time, less money, and permits collection of data from a much larger sample (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Since the nature of this study included a large sample size from athletes throughout campus, the availability of funds, and time constraints supported using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. Based on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire results the researcher used SPSS v. 20 (IBM, Inc., New York, NY) software to identify relationships between sport, seasonality, and gender. Due to time constraints 12 athletes were chosen for the semi-structured interview based on results from the Athletic Burnout Questionnaire. The semi-structured

interview in the qualitative section consisted of open-ended questions that were structured from the results of the Athletes Burnout Questionnaire. Analyzing the semi-structured interviews using coding which helped identify the most common themes in the data (open codes) as well as highlighting relationships in the data (axial codes) (Patton, 1990). This method identified the athletes possible causal factors associated with burnout.

Reliability and validity of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire

According to Raedeke and Smith (2001), in order to reach good reliability and validity, the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire went through three different phases in development. After the three phases, the psychometric properties of this instrument were deemed adequate, as construct validity and test-retest reliability were established for an adult population during the inventory's construction (Smith & Raedke, 2001). According to Raedeke (1997) the first stage was administered to USA swimmers and consisted of 21 questions that measured reduced sense of accomplishment, emotional and physical exhaustion, and devaluation. The results showed consistent alpha levels of .70 along with a variance of 60% (Raedeke, 1997). Raedeke and Smith (2001) attempted to assess the psychometric properties of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. The researchers attempted to establish validity by examining correlation coefficients with related burnout constructs such as stress and motivation (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). Five additional questions were added, while the researcher continued to use USA swimmers (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). According to Raedeke and Smith (2001), factor analysis showed that the revised questions added were deemed a good fit for that data with alpha levels above .80. Construct validity was demonstrated as burnout scores showed a positive and moderate relationship with stress and motivation measures (Raedeke & Smith, 2001).

Raedeke and Smith's (2001) final stage of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire found the following:

> The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire consisted of generalizing the 15-item questionnaire and instead of using the term "swimming" it was replaced with "my sport." Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the questions were found to be a good fit with the data. Construct validity was established through correlations between burnout scores and related constructs. Correlation coefficients between burnout scores and motivation were similar to that of the second stage and positive, low to moderate relationships were found between burnout scores and competitive trait anxiety. Enjoyment and commitment coefficients were negatively related to burnout scores and were high or moderate in degree. The questionnaire was re-administered seven to nine days following the first assessment in this stage. The test-retest reliability was demonstrated for emotional/physical exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation with coefficients of .92, .86, and .92, respectively. (p.285)

Cresswell and Eklund (2006) stated that the validation shows good convergent and validity of the subscale. This questionnaire appears to be a promising tool for measuring burnout (Gustafsson, 2007). Raedeke and Smith (2001) stated that through demonstrated reliability and validity, the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire is a psychometrically sound instrument and available for use in measuring burnout in athletes.

Treatment of Data/Statistics

The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was chosen for this study that allowed the researcher to examine a relationship between the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire's three subsets reduced sense of accomplishment, devaluation, and physical exhaustion within

each independent variable (gender, sports, and seasonality). All quantitative data analysis was conducted in SPSS v. 20 (IBM, Inc., New York, NY) software and presented all data as means and standard deviation. The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using coding which helped identify the most common themes in the data (open codes) as well as highlighting relationships in the data (axial codes) (Patton, 1990). This method identified the athletes possible causal factors associated with burnout, and then determined the different causal factors of burnout were by sport, seasonality, and gender.

CHAPTER 4—RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first purpose was to report levels of burnout of Division II college athletes using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). The second purpose of the study was to find the primary causal factors generating burnout within these athletes. The participants in this study were 108 varsity athletes from a Division II University in rural Colorado. Next the researcher identified and secured three athletes per program who scored the highest on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire for a follow-up semi-structured interview. Using the Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory approach the researcher identified the most common themes in the data (open codes) as well as highlighting relationships in the data (axial codes). This method determined the athletes causal factors associated with burnout.

The purpose of this chapter was to report the findings from the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire as well as present the key themes emerging from the semi-structured interviews. The sample used was organized around four sports (see Table 4.1). Two of these sports were out of season, two were in season sports. The results were structured to provide the quantitative results first. The overall quantitative results will be presented followed by data organized by seasonality, sport, and gender. The descriptive statistics will be presented (mean and standard deviation), followed by the inferential statistics (correlations and significant differences). The qualitative data will be organized around two categories, namely the manifestations of burnout, in other words, to specific issues that athletes attribute to the feeling of being burnt out and the causal factors that appeared to drive their burnout.

Table 4.1

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Population

Sport	Seasonality	Participants	Total %
Men's Soccer	Out of Season	26	28.08 %
Women's Soccer	Out of Season	23	24.84 %
Men's Baseball	In Season	40	43.2 %
Women's Softball	In Season	19	20.52 %

Note. 108 Total Participants

Quantitative Results

The first step of the quantitative research involved athletes completing the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire is divided into three subsets (dependent variables): (i.) a reduced sense of accomplishment; (ii.) emotional/physical exhaustion; and (iii.) sport devaluation. Each subsection is worth a total of 25 points, the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire is positively scored meaning that the higher the score, the higher the level of reported burnout. The range of possible scores on each of the three dependent variables from 5-25. According to Hodge et al., (2008) if one were to consider an average level of burnout to be the halfway point on each subscale (12.5), the collegiate athletes in the present study could be considered to have reported relatively average levels of burnout. Eklund and Cresswell (2007) stated that athletes with subscale scores of 15 or above could be classified as experiencing high burnout, while scores 10 or below would be considered low burnout. Across all three subsets of

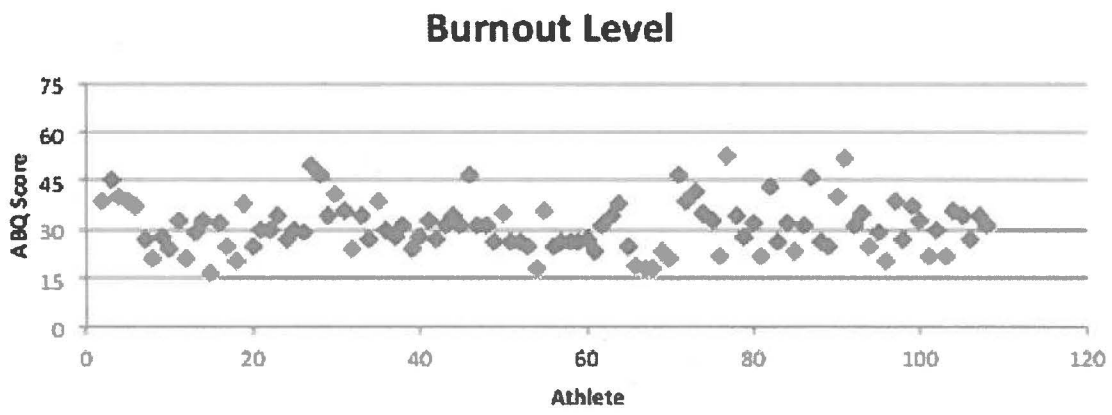
the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire 75 represents the highest possible score of burnout and 15 represents the lowest possible score.

Burnout Overall Population

The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire represents all three subsets of the dependent variables that make 75 represent the highest possible score of burnout and 15 represent the lowest possible score (see Table 4.2). The results showed the range of burnout for the research population at 17 (lowest reported burnout) and 53 (highest reported burnout). The overall mean for burnout (see Table 4.3) within each subset was (10.32). The highest mean data was reported in emotional and physical exhaustion (11.68), followed by a reduced sense of accomplishment (10.55), and sport devaluation (8.75).

Table 4.2

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Population



Note. ABQ = Athlete Burnout Questionnaire
30 or lower = Low risk of burnout
37.5 Average risk of burnout
45 or higher = High risk of burnout
(Eklund & Cresswell, 2007).

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics

Description	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	108	10.5463	3.20159	5.0	22.00
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	108	11.6759	3.41473	5.0	20.00
Devaluation	108	8.7500	3.42374	5.0	18.00
Total Means		10.32			

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Pearson's Correlation analysis had been undertaken to examine the extent to which relationships exist between subsets. Therefore this deduced if burnout contained one particular dimension (i.e., emotional and physical exhaustion) or whether it was multifaceted across subsets. Pearson's Correlations results revealed a statistically significant relationship between devaluation with both reduced sense of accomplishment r 106 =.517, P =.000 and emotional/physical exhaustion r 106 =.400, p =.000. In addition, there was a significant correlation between emotional/physical exhaustion and reduced sense of accomplishment r 106 = .184, P =.057 (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Correlations Table

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.184	.517**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.057	.000
	N	108	108	108
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.184	1	.400**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.057		.000
	N	108	108	108
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.517**	.400**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	108	108	108

Note.
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
P-value = significant
R – (correlation coefficient)

Burnout by Seasonality

The overall mean for 49 in season athletes taking the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire was 10.30 (see Table 4.5). The highest mean data was reported in physical and emotional exhaustion with a score of (11.61), followed by reduced sense of accomplishment scored (10.65), and sport

devaluation (8.63). According to Pearson's Correlation, results revealed reduced sense of accomplishment and devaluation were the significant correlated subcategories r 47 =.594, P =.000 of in season athletes (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.5

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire In Season Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	49	10.6531	3.11282
Emotional & Physical Exhuastion	49	11.6122	3.12794
Devaluation	49	8.6327	3.42374
Total Means		10.30	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.6

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire In Season Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.243	. .594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.093	.000
	N	49	49	49
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.243	1	.235
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.093		.104
	N	49	49	49
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.594**	.235	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.104	
	N	49	49	49

Note.
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The mean for 59 out of season athletes Athlete Burnout Questionnaire score was 10.34 (see Table 4.7). The highest mean data reported was emotional and physical exhaustion (11.73), followed by reduced sense of accomplishment (10.46), and sport devaluation (8.84). Pearson's Correlation results (see Table 4.8) revealed significant correlation between reduced sense of

accomplishment and devaluation r 57 =.463,P = 0. A significant relationship was also revealed between devaluation and emotional and physical exhaustion r57 =.511, P =.000.

Table 4.7

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Out of Season Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	59	10.4576	3.29745
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	59	11.7288	3.66169
Devaluation	59	8.8475	3.51261
Total Means		10.34	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.8

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Out of Season Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.146	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.269	.000
	N	59	59	59
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.146	1	.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.269		.00
	N	59	59	59
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.463**	.511**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.00	
	N	59	59	59

Note.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Burnout by Sport

Results from the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire of 26 male soccer players showed overall mean of 10.03 (see Table 4.9). The highest mean data was reported in reduced sense of accomplishment (10.59), followed by emotional and physical exhaustion (10.42), and sport devaluation (9.08). Pearson's Correlation analysis indicated that reduced sense of

accomplishment and devaluation was significant and correlated r 24 = .549, p =.006 (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.9

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Men's Soccer Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	26	10.5769	2.41947
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	26	10.4231	3.07471
Devaluation	26	9.0769	3.61024
Total Means		10.03	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.10

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Men's Soccer Out of Season Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.052	.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.801	.004
	N	26	26	26
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.052	1	.3.83
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.801		.054
	N	26	26	26
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.549**	.3.83	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.054	
	N	26	26	26

Note.
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The overall mean for burnout by 19 women's softball players was 11.04 (see Table 4.11). The highest mean data reported emotional and physical exhaustion (13.11), followed by reduced sense of accomplishment (10.58), and sport devaluation (9.42). Pearson's Correlation results revealed that there were no significant correlations with this sample population (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.11

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Softball Descriptive Statistics

Description	N	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	19	10.5789	3.18531
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	19	13.1053	3.99854
Devaluation	19	9.4211	3.57951
Total Means		11.04	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.12

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Softball In Season Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.289	.416
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.2.31	.077
	N	19	19	19
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	-.289	1	.315
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.2.31		.189
	N	19	19	19
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.416	.315	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.077	.189	
	N	19	19	19

Note.
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results from the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire revealed the overall mean for 23 women's soccer players was 10.61 (see Table 4.13). The highest mean data reported emotional and physical exhaustion (12.96) followed by reduced sense of accomplishment (10.74), and sport devaluation (8.13). Pearson's Correlation results revealed reduced sense of accomplishment and

emotional exhaustion was significantly correlated r 21 = .445. P =.034. Reduced sense of accomplishment and sport devaluation were also significantly correlated r 21 =.707, P =.000 (see Table 4.14).

Table 4.13

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire W. Soccer Out of Season Descriptive Statistics

Description	N	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	23	10.7391	3.80451
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	23	12.9565	2.65396
Devaluation	23	8.1304	3. 01970
Total Means		10.61	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.14

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire W. Soccer Out of Season Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.445*	.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.034	.000
	N	23	23	23
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.445*	1	.233
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034		.284
	N	23	23	23
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.707**	.233	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.284	
	N	23	23	23

Note.
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The overall mean for burnout scores for the 40 baseball players was 10.02 (see Table 4.15). The highest mean data was reported in emotional and physical exhaustion (11.08), followed by reduced sense of accomplishment (10.40) and sport devaluation (8.58). Pearson's

Correlation results revealed a statistically significant relationship between reduced sense of accomplishment and emotional exhaustion was significantly correlated r 38 = .370, P,=.019 Reduced sense of accomplishment and devaluation was significantly correlated r 38 =.485, P,=.002. Emotional and physical exhaustion and devaluation was also significantly correlated r 38 =.610, P=.000 (see Table 4.16).

Table 4.15

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire In-Season Baseball Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	40	10.4000	3.38776
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	40	11.0750	3.34654
Devaluation	40	8.5750	3. 49276
Total Means		10.02	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.16

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire In Season Baseball Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.370*	.485**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019	.002
	N	40	40	40
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.370*	1	.610**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019		.000
	N	40	40	40
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.610**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	
	N	40	40	40

Note.
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Burnout by Gender

The overall mean for the 66 male athletes score on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire was 10.02 (see Table 4.17). The highest mean was reported in emotional and physical exhaustion (10.82) followed by reduced sense of accomplishment (10.47), and sport devaluation (8.77). The

overall mean for 42 women athletes score on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire was 9.80 (see Table 4.18). The highest mean data reported in emotional and physical exhaustion (13.02), followed by a reduced sense of accomplishment (10.67), and sport devaluation (8.71). Pearson's Correlation results within males revealed a statistically significant correlation relationship between reduced sense of accomplishment and emotional and physical exhaustion r 64 = .270, P =.020. Pearson's Correlation results also revealed a significant correlation within males between reduced sense of accomplishment and sport devaluation r 64 =.499, P =.000. Emotional and physical exhaustion and sport devaluation within males was statistically significantly correlated r 64 =.513, P=.000 (see Table 4.19). Pearson's Correlation results revealed a statistically significant relationship within females between reduced sense of accomplishment and devaluation r 40 = .552, P =.000 (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.17

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Male Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	Mean	SD
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	66	10.4697	3.02411
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	66	10.8182	3. 23400
Devaluation	66	8.7727	3. 52047
Total Means		10.02	

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.18

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Female Descriptive Statistics

Description	n	SD	Means
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	42	3.49680	10. 6667
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	42	3.28699	13. 0238
Devaluation	42	3.30768	8. 7143
Total Means			9.80

Note. SD = Stand Deviation. n = participants.

Table 4.19

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Male Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.270*	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028	.000
	N	66	66	66
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.270*	1	.513**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028		.000
	N	66	66	66
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.499**	.513**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	66	66	66

Note.

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.20

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Female Correlations

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Devaluation
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	1	.069	. .552**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.666	.000
	N	42	42	42
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	.069	1	.279
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.666		.074
	N	42	42	42
Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.279	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.074	
	N	42	42	42

Note.
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Qualitative Results

This section reports the key themes from the qualitative research. To briefly recap, a total of 12 athletes (three athletes per sport with the highest three Athlete Burnout Questionnaire scores) were invited to take part in the interviews. Each semi-structured interview lasted a total of twenty minutes and was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using open and axial coding

techniques (see Table 4.21). The themes were allocated to two categories: (i) the manifestations of burnout, and (ii) the primary causes of burnout (see Table 4.22).

Table 4.21

Burnout Coding Framework

Codes / Athlete States	Category	Theme
• Constantly Tired • Body Needs a Break • Body Shutting Down	Physical exhaustion	Burnout
• Feeling of emotionally imbalanced • Not paying attention in class • Mentally exhausted • Feeling of being emotionally overexerted	Emotional exhaustion	Burnout
• Eating disorders • Exaggerating physical symptoms	Behavior coping	Burnout
• No results • Never succeeding despite training hard • Always a losing battle • No longer being able to prove self on field	Reduced sense of accomplishment	Burnout
• Lack of motivation • No enjoyment in sport • No longer feeling productive on the field	Devaluation of sport	Burnout
• Feeling of rather being elsewhere • Feeling entrapped • Time management issues	Competing Demands	Burnout
• Feeling ignored by coach • Constantly feeling overlooked • Fear of communicating with coach	Coach Behavior	Burnout
• Lack of communication to teammates • Teammate on/off field drama • Cliques formed within team • Fearing teammates	Lack of Team Relatedness	Burnout

Table 4.22

Burnout Themes

Manifestations	Primary Causes of Burnout
Physical Exhaustion	Coach Behavior
Mental Exhaustion	Playing Time
Sport Devaluation	Control
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Lack of Team & Coach Relatedness
	Competing Demands

Manifestations of Burnout

Physical exhaustion. The researcher analyzed the semi-structured interview using open and axial coding and revealed physical exhaustion as one of four manifestations of burnout. A minimum of one athlete from each sport mentioned physically exhausted, during the semi-structured interviews. For example, one male soccer player stated:

> It's a lot. A lot of demand for class and then throw sports on top of that it just lengthens my days, and I'm just starting to get tired, I feel like some days I can barely keep my eyes open (OS-MS-02, personal communication, April 2013).

A 1st year women's soccer player echoed that statement as she described the offseason as:

> Tired… in the fall we didn't condition as much since we played games so often. In the spring we have once a week conditioning, and we also lift twice a week in the morning along with individual training, so that's harder to do (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Multiple in season athletes described both softball and baseball season as a 'grind' with the struggle of staying focused. One baseball player stated, "It's a grind it's so hard physically mentally and some days it's just not worth it" (IS-MB-02, personal communication, April 2013). A 1st year softball player described her adjustment physically from playing her first year of college softball as, "Physically I'm just working out so much more than I have before so it's something my body has yet to adapt to" (IS-SB-01, personal communication, April 2013). Table 4.23 provides a more detailed summary of the specific data as it relates to physical exhaustion.

Table 4.23

Manifestation of Burnout: Physical Exhaustion

- It's a lot, a lot of demand for class and then throw sports on top of that it just lengthens my days, and I'm just starting to get tired, I feel like some days I can barely keep my eyes open. OS-MS-02
- Right now I'm pretty burned out. I'm ready for a break for a little bit. Just a break from team organized practices, I feel like my body is getting beat up and just needs a break. OS-MS-02
- These early morning practices and late night practices on same day. I feel like my body is literally starting to shut down. OS-MS-02
- My body is beat up and worn down. It makes me feel tired. OS-MS-03
- I think the hardest part is actually when you are getting up in the morning and just going there. Once you get to practice it is better and you just do it. I think the hardest part is just thinking about it and having to get up and go do it. OS-MS-03
- It's a grind it's so hard physically mentally and some days it's just not worth it. IS-MB-02
- Start with baseball performance wise just a daily grind and having to compete every day. IS-MB-03
- During class I just kept thinking of what I was going to be doing during practice instead of paying attention. None of us would eat anything throughout the day until after practice. It just wasn't fun, it was horrible. OS-WS-01
- Tired… in the fall we didn't condition as much since we played games so often. In the spring we have once a week conditioning, and we also lift twice a week in the morning along with individual training, so that's harder to do OS-WS-01
- I think I'm both physically exhausted IS-SB-01
- Physically I'm just working out so much more than I have before so it's something my body has yet to adapt too. IS-SB-01

Emotional exhaustion. Another theme of manifestation of burnout the athletes (specifically the in season athletes) was emotional exhaustion. One softball player stated:

> I mean we can take naps but they are like 30 minutes and I just never feel rejuvenated for anything. I think it's both mentally and physically sometimes we are tempted to sleep through class and skip class because we don't have anything in us to get through it (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

This same player went on to say she even skips class out of necessity to keep up with the grueling in season pace as she said, "Obviously class is more important, that's why we are here in college but class we have that option to skip we don't have that option to skip practice when we are drained" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). A 1st year men's baseball player discussed the demanding pace of the season especially battling with the rough Colorado weather stating, "It's been a long season, we've played 30 games it's windy and cold. Mentally it's a little difficult to go out there every day and go 100 %" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). Table 4:24 highlights comments on emotional exhaustion from the semi-structured interviews.

Table 4.24

Manifestation of Burnout: Emotional Exhaustion

- Your mind is always thinking about practice, you wish you could just be sleeping or doing something else. OS-MS-03
- I feel like there is always pressure on me to always do that right thing to always perform because you want to be that rock, you want to be that role model the younger guys can count on. IS-MB-02
- My roller coaster is I don't have the highs but I do have the lows. IS-MB-02
- It's hard to stay positive but if you let that negative attitude enter your mind it definitely snowballs IS-MB-03
- When I succeed that's what I expect out of myself but in turn when I fail it's so much less than what I expect so I feel the negative without ever feeling the positive. IS-MB-02
- Now currently it's been a long season, we've played 30 games it's windy and cold. Mentally it's a little difficult to go out there every day and go 100%. IS-MB-03
- I'm mentally exhausted IS-SB-01
- I mean we can take naps but they are like 30 minutes and I just never feel rejuvenated for anything. I think it's both mentally and physically sometimes we are tempted to sleep through class and skip class because we don't have anything in us to get through it. IS-SB-03
- Obviously class is more important, that's why we are here in college but class we have that option to skip we don't have that option to skip practice when we are drained. IS-SB-03

Reduced sense of accomplishment. Another theme of in-season athletes' manifestation of burnout, during the semi-structured interview both the softball and baseball players demonstrated greater amount of reduced sense of accomplishment as opposed to the out-of-season sports (see Table 4.25). Only one men's soccer player that in the previous season played a key role within the team commented feeling of reduced sense of accomplishment stating, "I'm almost just a practice player now. I'm used to being a bench man and coming off the bench but now I feel like a ball boy since I never even get off the bench, which is pretty frustrating" (OS-MS-02, personal communication, April 2013). A 2nd year baseball player described why he believed he and several of his teammates no longer enjoyed going to practice as 'The excitement is still there of a first year program, but not with the enthusiasm as a team, and personally I don't think I'm living up to the expectations' (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). When a softball player described how she was losing her passion in softball as "my personal performance, I think I can do a lot better. I think this season I haven't done as well as I'd hoped and I'm losing passion because of it" (IS-SB-02, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.25

Manifestation of Burnout: Reduced Sense of Accomplishment

- I'm almost just a practice player now. I'm used to being a bench man and coming off the bench but now I feel like a ball boy since I never even get off the bench, which is pretty frustrating. OS-MS-02
- That excitement has been taken out of me and I just feel like I'm not supposed to be here. IS-MB-01
- I don't ever give myself credit like great at bat or great play, it's good that I did my job that's what I'm expected to do that's why I'm on scholarship to make that play to get that hit. IS-MB-02
- I've had days where I go 2-2 and then get pulled because of a defensive switch and instead of thinking good job on the two hits I think damn what I did I do to get pulled. I feel like I'm always critiquing my performance. . IS-MB-02
- The excitement is still there of a first year program but not with the enthusiasm as a team, and personally I don't think I'm living up to the expectations. IS-MB-03
- My personal performance, I think I can do a lot better. I think this season I haven't done as well as I'd hoped and I'm losing passion because of it. IS-SB-01

Devaluation. A common theme, for one team specifically, that was worth noting within devaluation of the sport was for the men's soccer team (see Table 4.26). The quantitative data showed devaluation had the lowest mean at (8.63) between reduced sense of accomplishment (10.65) and physical and emotional exhaustion (11.61) on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. Two of the men's soccer players who were in their third season specifically felt devalued. One player who was not looking to continue playing soccer at any level after the school year stated:

> It's kind of like, what am I doing here now? I don't play? Does coach care about me? Now I'm doing it to put it on a resume, while when I was a freshman I was doing it to hopefully make it to the next level (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

One softball player echoed a similar statement after stating she no longer enjoyed softball and it was affecting her performance stating:

I kind of then looked at myself and realized do I need to really work hard to be a player, when I'm not seeing the field, coach isn't looking at me, and I'm not going to be playing soccer after I graduate or anything' (OS-MS-02, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.26

Manifestation of Burnout: Devaluation

• Sometimes the chatter on the bench is "why are we here? We are wasting our time we could be studying or working or something OS-MS-01
• it's kind of like what am I doing here now? I don't play? Does coach care about me? Now I'm doing it to put it on a resume while when I was a freshmen year I was doing it to hopefully make it to the next level. OS-MS-01
• It's not a huge deal but there is definitely other stuff I could be doing more with my time such as putting in an extra effort towards school, putting an extra five hours a week to it but since I have that commitment to soccer I can't do anything else OS-MS-01
• I am probably not going to see the field here so why am I here? OS-MS-01
• I feel like I then began to not work as hard because I felt "what's the point, I'm not going to get a chance to prove myself". OS-MS-02
• I kind of then looked at myself and realized do I need to really work hard to be a player, when I'm not seeing the field, coach isn't looking at me, and I'm not going to be playing soccer after I graduate or anything. OS-MS-02
• Feeling like coach isn't looking at me, and the assistant and I were not getting along at all. OS-MS-02
• And I kind of had an argument with myself like, what am I doing? Why am I playing still? Is my heart still in it still? I feel like I don't have the same motivation I once had IS-SB-01
• It feels like a job because I have a to do list. Instead of going out and playing and having fun now there is so many expectations of me. IS-SB-02

Causes of Burnout

Coach behavior. The semi-structured interviews results suggested coach behavior as one of the six causes of burnout (see Table 4.27). Athletes from each of the four teams stated coaches played a major role in burnout. A 3rd year player on the soccer team felt his coach didn't give him a fair shot at on field success, "Coach kind of just overlooks us, and I'm not trying to have a pity party but he definitely overlooks us. Like a bench player is playing lights out lately

and coach doesn't even notice" (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013). The same player went on to describe how he believed his effort level played no effect into the coaches thought process on him stating, "I mean I try my hardest that's all that matters, but coach will do what he wants to do in regard to playing time" (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013). Another men's soccer player echoed the same statement as his teammate even discussing coaching favoritism toward certain players, "I feel like he more supports his favorites. Or the ones he feels are going to lead this team. I think he really focuses on them and throws other guys like myself to the wayside" (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

One baseball player also expressed how he felt the coaching staff wasn't helping him while he was struggling with his swing stating, "They can tell I'm struggling but they won't help me or video tape me. It just feels like the coaching staff has quit on me pretty much and it's an awful feeling" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). A 1st year player on the softball team thought that since she was a 1st year player, she wasn't getting a fair look stating, "I feel like freshmen are kind of there to make sure the team has everything they need. Like setting up the field for game day, just feels like I am not even there" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Not only did that softball player feel she wasn't getting looked at, she also felt the relationship with the coach was struggling stating, "If I had a problem like coach should be like my mom basically down here, and I don't feel comfortable being able to go to him with any problems" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). A woman's freshmen soccer player felt the same issue regarding a struggle to even communicate with her coach. She stated:

Our head coach everyone is kind of afraid of her. So no one really talks to her, and it's kind of hard to get support from a coach you can't talk with or have a conversation with because you're afraid of her (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.27

Causes of Burnout: Coach Behavior

- Coach kind of just overlooks us, and I'm not trying to have a pity party but he definitely overlooks us. Like a bench player is playing lights out lately and coach doesn't even noticed. OS-MS-01
- It's my way or the highway with coach. OS-MS-01
- A teammate and I were talking about practice this morning and goes "honestly you don't even have to go, coach doesn't even look at you. He just over looks all the guys who haven't gotten much playing time and have been here for a while" OS-MS-01
- He expects us to keep working but he doesn't really check in with us that much. I feel like it affects my mindset negatively. OS-MS-02
- It feels like the coaches have given up on me. IS-MB-01
- I played really well, then I looked at the travel roster and my names not on it. I just don't get an explanation why, and coach just said we are giving other guys opportunities keep working hard. IS-MB-01
- They can tell I'm struggling but they won't help me or video tape me it just feels like the coaching staff has quit on me pretty much and it's an awful feeling. IS-MB-01
- Playing time doesn't really hurt me it's just getting past that feeling of the coaches giving up on me; I just really can't get past that. IS-MB-01
- Our head coach everyone is kind of afraid of her. So no one really talks to her, and it's kind of hard to get support from a coach you can't talk with or have a conversation with because you're afraid of her. OS-WS-01
- I feel like freshmen are kind of there to make sure the team has everything they need. Like setting up the field for game day, just feels like I am not even there IS-SB-03
- Feel like if I had a problem like coach should be like my mom basically down here, and I don't feel comfortable being able to go to him with any problems IS-SB-03
- Being a freshman I haven't had a chance to really prove myself on the field which is tough. Days that the team is struggling are hard when coach doesn't give the freshmen a shot. IS-SB-03
- I've never gotten a chance to prove myself on the field. IS-SB-03

Team Selection. Another theme related to casual factors of burnout in, specifically in the male athletes, was the lack of playing time the athletes were experiencing (see Table 4.28). A 3rd year goalkeeper for the men's soccer team was frustrated with the teams losing record and could not believe he could not get a shot to see the field. This player stated, "Record wise pisses me off when you lose that many games and there are zero changes in the starting lineup. I mean even the pros make changes during a couple games losing streak" (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013). The same player described how not getting a chance to play has affected his and his teammates morality level stating "I feel like where you are on the depth chart shows your morality level" (OS-MS-01, personal communication, April 2013). A baseball player struggling with receiving playing time had similar feelings stating, "It's selfish but not getting playing time made me feel depressed, it's something I want to succeed at so much I've wanted to play college baseball since I was a kid" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). Another baseball player expressed the feeling of rethinking his college baseball career after not being picked to travel with the team for the first time this season. This baseball player stated, "When he didn't put me on the travel roster and taking freshmen over me, it's like what am I doing? It made me step back and take a look at what I want to do with life; do I want to keep playing" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.28

Causes of Burnout: Team Selection

- I've been here for three years and I feel like I've proved to coach I can play the role of a starting goalkeeper but obviously his views a little different OS-MS-01
- Record wise pisses me off when you lose that many games and there are zero changes in the starting lineup. I mean even the pro's make changes during a couple games losing streak. OS-MS-01
- I feel like where you are on the depth chart shows your morality level OS-MS-01
- I'm not too impressed with my performance I came from a junior college that was ranked nationally and I was a starter on that team and I don't play much on this team. It's been a really frustrating year for me. IS-MB-01
- I haven't gotten consecutive reps in a game which is what I think kind of put me in my slump. IS-MB-01
- I feel down all the time, with lack of playing time and just lost a lot of that love for the sport. IS-MB-01
- Then it became a battle of "oh man what am I doing" and then I started pressing and then I didn't make the travel roster last week I almost quit. IS-MB-03
- It's selfish but not getting playing time made me feel depressed, it's something I want to succeed at so much I've wanted to play college baseball since I was a kid IS-MB-03
- When he didn't put me on the travel roster and taking freshmen over me, it's like what am I doing? It made me step back and take a look at what I want to do with life; do I want to keep playing? IS-MB-03
- I just don't have motivation right now at all… I think part of that is not starting I mean it's selfish to say but I just think I don't have the motivation I originally had. IS-SB-01
- During practice I'm not really even motivated to get my work done. It's a constant drag like how much longer do we have? How much longer do we have? Hopefully that will change maybe next year if I start getting more playing time, and obviously it is tough going from starting to riding the bench. IS-SB-03

Control. Athletes from each team showed signs of not feeling in control, or losing confidence in their own performance (see Table 4.29). One baseball player who was struggling with his swing stated, "I don't know how to fix my swing and no one's helped me, I feel helpless" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). The same baseball player who was struggling and questioned his place within the teams stated, "I don't really know what my role is with the team and I feel helpless because of this" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April

2013). A women's softball player who was losing interest in the sport due to not having a role within the team stated, "I just want to feel part of the team, and just have a clearer role and am able to contribute" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). A member of the men's soccer team discussed how his confidence had been an ongoing problem, which he believed is why he was no longer enjoyed soccer stating, "I just have no confidence and try to get that back, but I just don't have control of it" (OS-MS-03, personal communication, April 2013). A women's soccer player whose mindset was effecting her confidence on the field stated, "There are times when I get put down and I just feel like I can't make another mistake and my mind just goes wild. When that is the situation, I just don't feel in control on the field" (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.29

Causes of Burnout: Control

- Sport is definitely frustrating when you're not where you want to be OS-MS-01
- Sometimes I just have no confidence and try to get that back but I just don't have control of it. OS-MS-03
- Offseason you kind of stand out when you are playing those spring games. It's harder to stand out at practice rather than games. Offseason we lift weights and do more technical skills in-season we focus more on the games. OS-MS-03
- I don't really know what my role is with the team and I feel helpless because of this. IS-MB-01
- I don't know how to fix my swing and no one's helped me I feel helpless, IS-MB-01
- When I see coach's decisions that I don't agree with, it's a helpless feeling. IS-MB-03
- There are times when I get put down and I just feel like I can't make another mistake and my mind just goes wild. When that is the situation, I just don't feel in control on the field. OS-WS-01
- I just want to feel part of the team, and just have a clearer role and am able to contribute. IS-SB-03

Self-doubt. All of the in-season sport athletes showed signs of self-doubt in the semi-

structured interview (see Table 4.30). One baseball player stated "I feel like I belong at the school but I don't know if I belong playing baseball" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). Another baseball player did not even want the ball to come in his direction during play, he stated:

> I feel like sometimes lately when I make an error it turns into a snowball effect. Then the ball always seems to find you when you don't want it. Then I think what am I doing out here? Am I wasting my time? Am I good enough to play at this level? All these negative questions pop up (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

A softball player expressed doubt and discussed how one at-bat could make or break her season. She stated, "One at-bat could mean I could play or could mean I could never play again. So that much stress on three strikes is really stressful, I keep working and working but like it has started to become like work" (IS-SB-02, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.30

Causes of Burnout: Self-Doubt

- I honestly don't know what my role is with this team. And that's something that bothers me because I've always been kind of a leader on teams. IS-MB-01
- I feel like I belong at the school but I don't know if I belong playing baseball. IS-MB-01
- Some days I get frustrated because I expect so much out of myself, and some days I'm not as good as I want to be. I think why I am wasting so much time when I'm not as good as I'd like to be. IS-MB-02
- Not succeeding in that opportunity that I had I thought oh man I'm not going to play next game. IS-MB-03
- Last week I had a couple errors it almost feels like I was in quicksand. No matter how much I fought or battled I couldn't get on stable ground. It got to a point where I was like man what am I doing? IS-MB-03
- I feel like when I succeed and I do things well that's my job and that's like the minimum. IS-MB-02
- I feel like sometimes lately when I make an error it turns into a snowball effect. Then the ball always seems to find you when you don't want it. Then I think what am I doing out here? Am I wasting my time? Am I good enough to play at this level? All these negative questions pop up. IS-MB-03

Coaching Standard. One major theme for causes of burnout, specifically with both women's teams, was coaching standard (see Table 4.31). Some on the women's softball and women's soccer felt the coaching staff didn't have the proper motivational techniques. One 1st year women's soccer player felt she struggled on the field due to her coaches' feedback stated, "Sometimes she just says things and I'm not sure if she just wants to get emotion out of us, and some people just don't react to it well and I'm one of those people" (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013). Another women's soccer player spoke her opinion, about how her coaches' motivation would bring out the worst in players. She stated, "coach would pick on certain people and pretty much say you aren't good so it just starts to get in your head" (OS-WS-02, personal communication, April 2013). That same player could not practice basic soccer skills because the coach had broken her confidence, she stated:

> He was all about just running. We didn't even play, it wasn't even soccer. I felt like freshmen had to do everything and I get that but this was taken to a whole other level. I hadn't ever talked to coach he broke my confidence. I couldn't even trap the ball, I was so nervous to do anything when he was coaching (OS-WS-02, personal communication, April 2013).

One softball player felt the head coach would run such an uptight practice session, that the team is no longer enjoyed the sport stating:

> The coach needs to be intense, but I feel like they are too intense sometimes. We are doing well we are playing well, I feel like we need to have fun sometimes and let everyone relax sometime because we are all so tense out there' (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

This same player expressed concern with understanding the coaching staff and felt there was a lack of communication she stated, "I thought I had proved myself but midway through season he cut us off, he never even talks to us anymore. I don't understand why, our coach is hard to understand" *(IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).*

Table 4.31

Causes of Burnout: Coaching Standard

- I don't know if they are the best coaches in terms of baseball ability IS-MB-02
- Coaching staff…Is a little below the level it should be. IS-MB-03
- As of now it feels like our coach is beating it in on us, like we need to learn this for the fall. We need to know this for when we come back. It's been a lot more stressful, if you make a mistake it's like oh I really messed up…OS-WS-01
- Sometimes she just says things and I'm not sure if she just wants to get emotion out of us, and some people just don't react to it well and I'm one of those people. OS-WS-01
- He was all about just running. We didn't even play, it wasn't even soccer. I felt like freshmen had to do everything and I get that but this was taken to a whole other level. I hadn't ever talked to coach he broke my confidence. I couldn't even trap the ball, I was so nervous to do anything when he was coaching. OS-WS-02
- Coach would pick on certain people and pretty much say you aren't good so it just starts to get in your head. OS-WS-02
- We don't do enough team bonding. Even when we do, you still see the groups separate. Coach needs to force us all to hangout, it has to be forced at this point. OS-WS-03
- Honestly I feel like our coaching staff doesn't have enough hitting lessons, so I think that my hitting has definitely struggled this year more than usual since I did have a hitting coach back home, so I struggled. IS-SB-01
- Feels like practice is so uptight. They need to be intense but I feel like they are too intense sometimes. We are doing well we are playing well, I feel like we need to have fun sometimes and let everyone relax sometime because we are all so tense out there. IS-SB-03
- I thought I had proved myself but midway through season he cut us off, he never even talks to us anymore. I don't understand why, our coach is hard to understand IS-SB-03

Team relatedness. Another theme for both women's teams in the semi-structured interviews was team relatedness (see Table 4.32). One major issue was the segregation players felt between class levels. One women's 1st year soccer player felt that she wouldn't feel part of the team until after her second year with the program. She stated:

> I don't think any freshmen will be part of the team until their sophomore year. The upperclassmen see it as an initiation and so they want to see if you are going to stick

around or not. They don't want to get too close because they don't want to get hurt if you do end up leaving. If you stay then they know you are committed to the program (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

A 2nd year women's soccer player had a similar feeling stating, "Upperclassmen didn't really talk to the freshmen. I just didn't feel welcome. My confidence was broken down a lot' (OS-WS-02, personal communication, April 2013). A 3rd year player and captain of the team described the atmosphere and team chemistry as being "very bleak we don't know each other. It's bad" (OS-WS-03, personal communication, April 2013). This three-year captain realized this would be a challenge for next year's team she stated, "This is my biggest stress on the team, how are we going to get along and how long will it last? I feel like by midseason there is always a breaking point" (OS-WS-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Some of the women's softball team experienced lack of team relatedness. One softball player stated, "the seniors really call us out, I feel like they never want to help out. I feel like this team is segregated on what class you are, it's ruining the experience" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). One player who no longer enjoyed playing stated, "I don't know I dread coming to practice and it's not fun anymore. That's mainly because I feel like we don't get along as a team. We just don't click; we don't get along that well" *(IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).* A walk-on non-scholarship softball player couldn't believe the issues within the team as she stated, "I joined the team to make more female friends, but there is a lot of drama. Like never experienced so much in my life" (IS-SB-02, personal communication, April 2013). One softball player expressed her desire to get more time and have more success in order to continue to be around teammates as she stated, "I just need more innings to be spending

every day out here, every morning and every night with these girls" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.32

Causes of Burnout: Lack of Team Relatedness

- As a freshman you can't say anything you just kind of take it. I would say freshmen you really have to prove yourself and earn your respect with your teammates because that's how this team views freshmen. OS-WS-01
- I don't think any freshmen will be part of the team until their sophomore year. The upperclassmen see it as an initiation and so they want to see if you are going to stick around or not. They don't want to get too close because they don't want to get hurt if you do end up leaving. If you stay then they know you are committed to the program. OS-WS-01
- Before our seniors wouldn't communicate with the freshmen at all... OS-WS-02
- Seniors didn't really talk to the freshmen I just didn't feel welcome. My confidence was broken down a lot OS-WS-02
- The atmosphere of our team is very bleak we don't know each other...its bad... OS-WS-03
- This is my biggest stress on the team, how are we going to get along and how long will it last? I feel like by midseason there is always a breaking point. OS-WS-03
- I joined the team to make more female friends…but… There is a lot of drama…like never experienced so much in my life. IS-SB-02
- The seniors really call us out, I feel like they never want to help out. I feel like this team is segregated on what class you are, it's running the experience. IS-SB-03
- I don't know I dread coming to practice and it's not fun anymore. That's mainly because I feel like we don't get along as a team. We just don't click; we don't get along that well. IS-SB-03
- Even our team slogan is hold the rope which is like be there no matter what for your teammate good or bad and I don't feel like we practice that very well. IS-SB-03
- I just need more innings to be spending every day out here, every morning and every night with these girls. IS-SB-03

Competing demands. One final theme for the driving causal factors of burnout was competing demands (see Table 4.33). One men's soccer player, who was balancing a full class load and soccer, described his current workload by stating, "It's pretty maxed out with school and soccer" (OS-MS-03, personal communication, April 2013). A baseball player described the

difficulty of balancing his athletic performance and keeping up with school as, "There are times when I show up to practice or lifting and I don't want to do anything. I just am kind of over it at times because I was up late doing schoolwork" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). Some members of the softball team have taken a different approach to balancing school and sport. This 1st year player stated "A lot of us claim that we have appointments with professors to get out of practice and go do our homework. We don't have enough time to get everything done in the day" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

One baseball player wondered what he could be doing if he wasn't an athlete, "If I wasn't playing baseball what could I be doing? Would I be happier? Could I be closer to my girlfriend? Could I spend more time with my family? Could I be on a beach somewhere?" (IS-MB-02, personal communication, April 2013). Another baseball player stated, "It would be nice to be a normal college kid and have time to study. It would be nice to just sit back watch television and do homework" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). A softball player discussed how being an athlete is challenging since you have no time for basic tasks outside of sport. She stated, "I feel like I don't have options to go to the store or anything because I'm so busy. It's like the same schedule every day, and it sucks I don't have time to do anything" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). Another softball player had a similar feeling by stating; "Sometimes I think I could be closer to my family, closer to my boyfriend. There would be more time to focus on school instead of just softball. Just other things I could do, if I wasn't playing softball" (IS-SB-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Table 4.33

Causes of Burnout: Competing Demands

- With other factors like finances, social life, working, stress of finals everything tied into it. Sometimes I think I should maybe put soccer on the side burner and not even stress about it. OS-MS-01
- I guess it's just what ifs. If I wasn't playing baseball what could I be doing? Would I be happier? Could I be closer to my girlfriend? Could I spend more time with my family? Could I be on a beach somewhere? IS-MB-02
- It feels like a job instead of something I go out and do for fun. It just puts so much stress on me that it just becomes a job. IS-SB-02
- My plate is pretty maxed out with school and soccer. OS-MS-03
- There are times when I show up to practice or lifting and I don't want to do anything. I just am kind of over it at times because I was up late doing school work. IS-MB-01
- So yeah would be nice to be a normal college kid and have time to study. It would be nice to just sit back watch television and do homework. IS-MB-01
- Obviously with softball it's hard for group projects due to limited time to meet with group members. IS-SB-03
- I know that I don't speak for only myself on this one but a lot of us claim that we have appointments with professors in order to get out of practice and don't do our homework because we don't have enough time to get everything done in the day. IS-SB-03
- I feel like I don't have options to go to the store or anything because I'm so busy. It's like the same schedule every day, and it sucks I don't have time to do anything. IS-SB-03
- Sometimes I think I could be closer to my family, closer to my boyfriend. There would be more time to focus on schooling instead of just softball. Just other things I could do, if I wasn't playing softball. IS-SB-01
- I was just so tired I couldn't get my work done, I couldn't even study. I was just tired. We used to practice from 10-midnight how am I supposed to get my homework done? It's tough to do before then and even tougher to do after. OS-WS-03

Results Summary

Quantitative results using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire revealed females reported higher means of burnout than males (see Table 4.34). Specifically, scoring the highest means on emotional and physical exhaustion as opposed to the male athletes. The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire revealed the means of out of season athletes scored higher than the means of in

season athletes (see Table 4.35). Emotional and physical exhaustion for both in season, and out of season athletes demonstrated the highest means within the subsets. Comparing the According to the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire based on sports (see Table 4.35), women's softball had the highest burnout mean and men's baseball recorded the lowest mean. Sport devaluation scored the lowest mean throughout each sport, and emotional and physical exhaustion scored the highest in the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. The quantitative research also revealed reduced sense of accomplishment and physical and mental exhaustion consistently being the top two reasons for burnout within each program, with sport devaluation consistently being the least. Using the Glaser and Strauss (1967) axial and open coding approach the researcher identified the follow most nine common themes which highlight the relationship with burnout:

- Physical exhaustion
- Emotional exhaustion
- Behavior coping
- Reduced sense of accomplishment
- Devaluation of sport
- Competing demands
- Coach behavior
- Lack of team relatedness
- Self doubt

Table 4.34

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire by Gender

	Male	Female	Total Burnout Mean
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	10.49	10.66	10.57
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	10.75	13.03	11.89
Devaluation	8.83	8.77	8.8
Burnout Means	10.02	10.82	10.42

Note. 10 or lower = Low Risk of Burnout
12.5 = Average Risk of Burnout
15 or higher = High Risk of Burnout
(Eklund & Cresswell, 2007)

Table 4.35

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire by Seasonality Comparison

	In Season Mean	Out of Season Mean
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	10.6531	10.4576
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	11.6122	11.72
Devaluation	8.6327	8.8475
Burnout Means	10.03	10.34

Note. 10 or lower = Low Risk of Burnout
12.5 = Average Risk of Burnout
15 or higher = High Risk of Burnout
(Eklund & Cresswell, 2007)

Table 4.36

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire by Sport Comparison

	Baseball	W. Soccer	Softball	M. Soccer	Burnout mean
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	10.4	10.7391	10.5789	10.5769	10.57
Emotional & Physical Exhaustion	11.075	12.9565	13.1053	10.4231	11.90
Devaluation	8.575	8.1304	9.4211	9.0769	8.80
Total Means Per Sport	10.02	10.61	11.04	10.03	10.42

Note. 10 or lower = Low Risk of Burnout
12.5 = Average Risk of Burnout
15 or higher = High Risk of Burnout
(Eklund & Cresswell, 2007)

CHAPTER 5—DISCUSSION

Summary

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first purpose was to report levels of burnout of Division II college athletes using the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). The second purpose of the study was to find the primary causal factors generating burnout within these athletes. The participants in this study were 108 varsity athletes from a Division II college in rural Colorado. Next the researcher identified and secured three athletes per program who scored the highest on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire for a follow-up semi-structured interview. Using the Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory approach the researcher identified the most common themes in the data (open codes) as well as highlighting relationships in the data (axial codes). This method determined the athletes causal factors associated with burnout. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of burnout reported by Division II college softball, baseball, and soccer athletes?
2. What are the differences in reported level of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender?
3. What factors reportedly trigger or cause burnout in Division II college softball, baseball, and soccer athletes?
4. What are the different causal factors of burnout by sport, seasonality and gender?

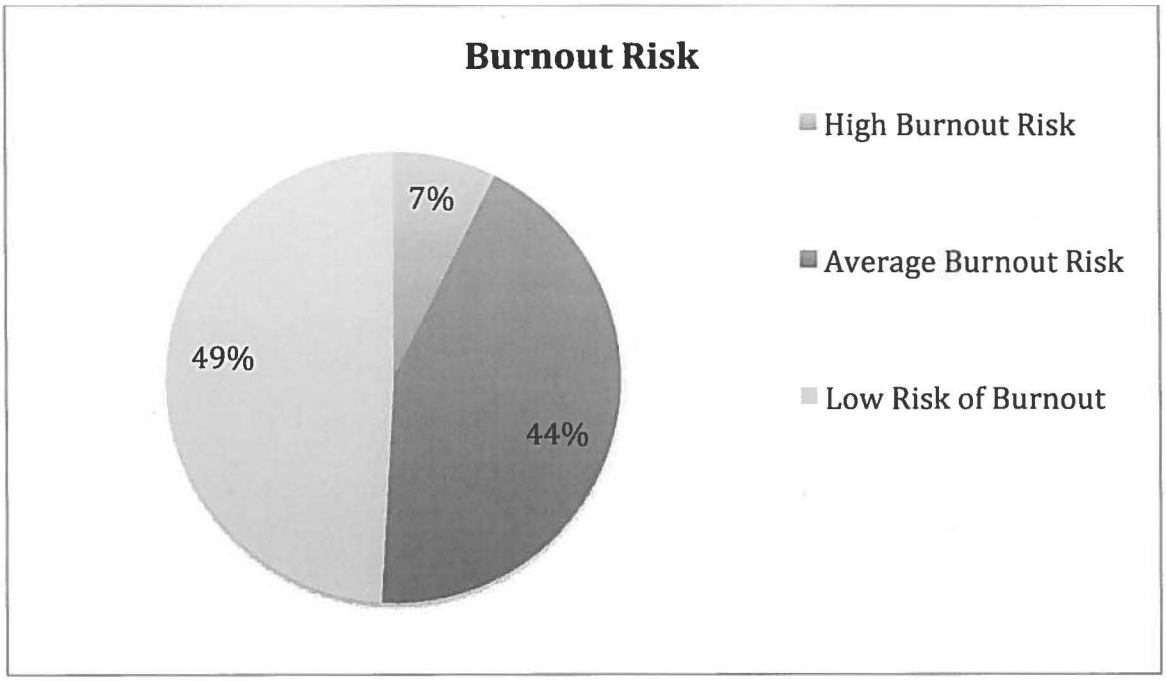
What is the Level of Burnout Reported by Division II College Softball, Baseball, and Soccer Athletes?

Eklund and Cresswell (2007) stated that athletes with Athlete Burnout Questionnaire scores of 45 or above, could be classified as experiencing high burnout, while scores 30 or below

would be considered low risk of burnout. Results from the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire suggest 7% of the participants were at risk of high levels of burnout, while 44% were at an average risk for burnout (see Table 5.1). Results from the 108 participants in this study revealed the subset of emotional and physical exhaustion scoring the highest mean in the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire with 11.67. Reduced sense of accomplishment finished scored a means of 10.54 for reduced sense of accomplishment, while scoring with a mean of 8.75 for devaluation in the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire.

Table 5.1

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire Results Level



Note. 108 Participants
Athlete Burnout Score 30 or lower = Low risk of burnout
Athlete Burnout Score 31-44 = Average risk of burnout
Athlete Burnout Score 45 or higher = High risk of burnout
(Eklund & Cresswell, 2007).

What are the Differences in Reported Level of Burnout by Sport, Seasonality, and Gender?

Sport. This data presents that 51% of the athletes have an average or high risk of burnout. Athletes scored physical and mental exhaustion on the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire as the highest reason of burnout. These results reveal coaches should consider offering athletes counseling for avoiding physical and emotional stress when training. Secondly, the coaches should evaluate their training session methods. It is important for coaches to arrange training that is suitable, and will enhance the performance of the athlete on the field without physically and mentally exhausting them. Since colleges are the training center for these athletes they should also use available resources within the university to better understand the psychological experience and make strategies will be good and important issues for physical education development.

Seasonality. This study showed that researchers should understand that different sports type, seasonality, and gender would influence the coping strategies to stress. Reduced sense of accomplishment accompanying devaluation and burnout in athletes can be viewed as negative event, thus possibly leading to a depressive reactions and burnout. This can certainly be demonstrated within the results from this study, when examining levels of reported burnout by sport. Pearson's Correlation analysis indicated that reduced sense of accomplishment and devaluation were significant and correlated within each team except women's soccer. Pearson's Correlation results revealed emotional and physical exhaustion and devaluation was also significantly correlated within women's soccer and baseball. Baseball was the only team that reported emotional and physical exhaustion and devaluation to be significantly correlated.

Gender. Results from this study revealed seasonality in sports seems to be an important

precursor of burnout, and too much sport could lead to athlete burnout. While one would expect there to be differences within in season and out of season athlete's results revealed many similarities. According to Pearson's Correlation analysis both male and female teams indicated that reduced sense of accomplishment and devaluation were significantly correlated. Pearson's Correlation analysis indicated emotional and physical exhaustion and reduced sense of accomplishment were significantly correlated within males and not females. Results from this study suggest coaches continue to monitor athletes in the offseason for player burnout. The results also suggest the NCAA should monitor their offseason training requirements which states, teams can train up to eight hours per week and up to five days per week during offseason (National College Athlete Association, 2012).

What Factors Reportedly Trigger or Cause Burnout in Division II College Softball, Baseball, and Soccer Athletes?

Using Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory and developing an open coding approach the researcher identified the most common themes in the data. This method determined the athletes' possible causal factors associated with burnout throughout the study. The following factors were determined to be the primary causes of burnout within the 12 athletes that participated in the semi-structured interview:

1. Coach behavior
2. Playing time
3. Control
4. Lack of team & coach relatedness
5. Competing demands

What are the Different Causal Factors of Burnout by Sport, Seasonality, and Gender?

Sport. Comparing the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire based on sports, results revealed women's softball had the highest burnout mean (11.04). Men's baseball recorded the lowest mean (10.02). Sport devaluation continued to have the lowest mean throughout each sport, and emotional and physical exhaustion continued to score the highest in the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire with an overall mean of 11.88. Results also revealed devaluation and reduced sense of accomplishment were significantly correlated with men's soccer, women's soccer, and baseball. Results from the semi-structured interview showed many of the athletes experiencing burnout based on the commitment based burnout model. Athletes had initially joined the team because they enjoyed it along with the opportunities associated with it. Yet at a shift had occurred where the sport is no longer as attractive as it once was because of sacrificing too much for a sport and the lack of benefits of sports success. Here are some examples of players from suffering burnout based on the burnout commitment model by sport.

At the end of a losing season when the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire and semi-structured interviews took place, the men's baseball team had a common theme of coach behavior and reduced sense of accomplishment. The players disagreed with the coaching staff or players felt as if the coaching staff had given up on them. One player described the coaching staff stating, "they can tell I'm struggling but they won't help me or video tape me it just feels like the coaching staff has quit on me pretty much and it's an awful feeling" (IS-MB-01, personal communication, April 2013). Another mentioned a similar statement, "playing time doesn't really hurt me it's just getting past that feeling of the coaches giving up on me; I just really can't get past that" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). The same player discussed leaving the sport completely after the season. He stated, "Its kind of like why am I

doing this? What is the point of continuing to put in this type of effort when no matter how I perform coach goes elsewhere" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

The men's soccer team had a similar theme with players upset over coaching behavior and devalued. The team had come off its third straight losing season, and each player interviewed stated the feeling of being overlooked from the coach. One player stated, "It's my way or the highway with coach. A teammate and I were talking this morning and we feel he just over looks a lot of the upperclassmen who really have helped build the program" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). Each of the male soccer athletes who participated in the semi-structured interview consistently felt undervalued by the coach, one stated "He expects us to keep working, but he doesn't really check in with us that much if your not a starter. I feel like it's affected my mindset negatively" (OS-MS-02, personal communication, April 2013).

Women's softball was in the midst of a winning season. However, the three athletes who participated in the semi-structured interview had a theme of physical exhaustion and problems with team relatedness. One player stated "Obviously class is more important, that's why we are here in college but class we have that option to skip we don't have that option to skip practice when we are drained" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013). Another player stated, "Most of the upperclassmen know ways to get out of practice such as making up doctors appointments. Softball just has so many games sometimes we just need a break" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Women's soccer was at the end of the off-season when the semi-structure interview took place. They were coming off a losing season with a new head coach running the team. Players were still trying to learn the coaching style, yet some players seem to be emotionally exhausted. One player talked about how stressed she's becoming this offseason stating:

> As of now it feels like our coach is beating it in on us this off-season, like we need to learn this for the fall. We need to know this for when we come back. It's been a lot more stressful, if you make a mistake it's like oh I really messed up (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

The same player talked about the coaches' style effecting her mental state by stating, "sometimes she just says things and I'm not sure if she just wants to get emotion out of us, and some people just don't react to it well and I'm one of those people" (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Seasonality. Results with in season athletes vs. out of season athletes, revealed means of the out of season athletes were higher on their Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. Emotional and physical exhaustion scored the highest mean for both in season (11.61) and out of season (11.72). One reason for the lack of difference between in season and out of season scores is maybe due to NCAA rules, which allows practice time and competition during the off-season. According to the National College Athlete Association (2012), teams can train up to eight hours per week and up to five days per week during offseason. One athlete declared, 'there really isn't an offseason we are constantly training even during fall ball" (IS-SB-01, personal communication, April 2013). This comment supports Weinberg and Gould (2003) who stated that athletes are constantly training year round and simply have no real offseason. One out-of-season athlete described why he felt more emotionally and physically exhausted than during season by saying, "It's just a drain. Coach pushes us more physically in the offseason to above your limits since we don't have real competition, and it just gets boring when in the few games you are just scrimmaging" (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Silva's (1990) negative training stress model states that burnout is a product of excessive

training and that the training load can have both positive and negative effects. However, qualitative results from numerous players stated that training is exhausting them both mentally and physically. If these athletes are not already experiencing burnout yet, then according to the negative training stress model if rest and recovery does not occur, the athlete will experience staleness within the sport that will then develop into athlete burnout. Results from this study reveal coaches need to continue to monitor their athletes in season and out of season. With training in season and out of season, providing athletes with proper rest their bodies would compensate and physically and mentally improve.

Gender. There has yet to be burnout research on gender and burnout within college athletes. There have been studies comparing gender within athletic administrators and coaches. Results from previous studies showed females experienced burnout more than males within coaching (Kelley, 1994). Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) found that female coaches tended to feel more frustrated and emotionally drained from their job. They also found that female coaches had a lower sense of personal accomplishment (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984). This study correlated with past literature showing females scored a much higher score in emotional and physical exhaustion than males with mean scores of 13.02 to 10.81. Another difference between male and female sports during the semi-structured interviews was the theme of lack of team relatedness. Despite the team winning or losing, the female players did not get along with each other on and off the field. Players did not want to be around their teammates and felt there were too many cliques within the team. On the other hand, the male athletes relied on their teammates to help avoid burnout and withdrawal from the sport. Male athletes were becoming more burned out due to feeling they were receiving little attention or help from the coaching staff. The problem stated was the feeling of just being a practice body without having any role

within the team other than filling a roster number.

Smith's (1986) cognitive-affective stress model discussed how inappropriate stress responses could result in burnout. Not one male athlete mentioned issues with lack of team relatedness, yet all six female athletes interviewed mentioned the theme at least once during the semi-structured interviews. One male described the only reason he continued to play his sport was because of his teammates stating, "my teammates are like my brothers, they are the main reason I am still here" (IS-MB-03, personal communication, April 2013). This supported with past literature as Coakley (1992) stated when he stated that social support and relationships in team sports can serve as a buffer, thus reducing a chance for burnout. A woman's soccer player discussed the differences within her team by stating;

> I don't think any freshmen will be part of the team until their sophomore year. The upperclassmen see it as an initiation and so they want to see if you are going to stick around or not. They don't want to get too close because they don't want to get hurt if you do end up leaving. If you stay then they know you are committed to the program (OS-WS-01, personal communication, April 2013).

Another women's soccer player agreed stating, "seniors didn't really talk to the freshmen I just didn't feel welcome. My confidence was broken down a lot" (OS-WS-02, personal communication, April 2013). A 4th year women's soccer player described the fear of terrible team relatedness stating, "This is my biggest stress on the team, how are we going to get along and how long will it last? I feel like by midseason there is always a breaking point" (OS-WS-03, personal communication, April 2013).

The women's softball players stated numerous team relatedness issues, which correlated with the team scoring the highest mean with emotional and physical exhaustion among the four

sports. One 1st year player described her experience within the team as, "I joined the team to make more female friends, but there is a lot of drama I've never experienced so much in my life" (IS-SB-02, personal communication, April 2013). Despite even being in the midst of a winning season another player was on the verge of withdrawing from softball stating, "I dread coming to practice and it's not fun anymore. That's mainly because I feel like we don't get along as a team. We just don't click; we don't get along that well" (IS-SB-03, personal communication, April 2013).

Recommendations

The findings of this study suggest that coaches should provide more training, instruction, and feedback on burnout. Coaches should be open to allow athletes to participate in the formulation of team goals, practice methods, and game strategies in order to increase the levels of satisfaction and decrease the levels of burnout. The results of this study indicate that the coach plays an important role in influencing the athlete and may be a cause of burnout. By recognizing the effects of the coach, athlete burnout strategies can be created, which may decrease negative outcomes such as stress, emotional and physical exhaustion. Positive outcomes such as satisfaction and enjoyment may be enhanced.

Female players in the semi-structured interview expressed how teammates were the cause of potentially becoming burned out. Coaches could possibly understand the importance of team chemistry. The results of this study revealed instead of practices, coaches could make more team building activities throughout the season. Coaches should also exhibit more democratic behavior and less autocratic behavior. The coaches should voice the importance of each player within the team. If a player is struggling, coaches should do a better job of helping that athlete get better.

Knowledge and education may help in the prevention of sport burnout. At this point in

time no intervention studies in athlete burnout have been conducted. According to Schaufeli (2003) interventions both at individual and group levels seem to be effective in reducing exhaustion. With more investigation of burnout, proper athlete intervention techniques could be developed. Knowledge of burnout may also assist coaches, parents, and athletic trainers. If coaches recognize the causal signs and symptoms early in athletes, they can help intervene before the athlete experiences burnout. Along with also recognizing symptoms athletic trainers could also ensure that the athlete's participation is both physically and mentally healthy. If parents were aware of what causes burnout, what signs to look for, they could help assist their child or notify the coaching and athletic training staff.

In this study the researcher used the three athletes from each team with the highest Athlete Burnout Questionnaire to take part in the semi-structured interview. With this approach, some athletes with the highest Athlete Burnout Questionnaire scores were not included in the semi-structured interview. In future studies, researcher should use the 12 athletes who scored the highest on Athlete Burnout Questionnaire regardless of the sport. This study also only concentrated on four team sports at one university, but future research in the area of burnout should be expanded to more universities and more sports. The potential of having sound information on burnout would be a great advancement for burnout prevention. More research and larger sample sizes are needed on athlete burnout, yet despite this growing problem more research may never happen. For example, in this study many teams were asked to participate, but coaches refused. There have been numerous studies on burnout, yet still very few on high-level athletes. In order to prevent future athlete burnout more research is needed.

Conclusions

There have been limited studies conducted on athlete burnout within gender, seasonality, and sport. Most research conducted on athletic burnout used coaches, athletic trainers, or referees (Kelley, 1994). Kelley (1994) used softball and baseball coaches (131 males, 118 females) as participants in comparing gender differences within burnout. Results showed female coaches experienced burnout more than male coaches (Kelley, 1994). Pastore and Judd (1993) conducted a study using college coaches taking the Maslach Burnout Inventory to measure burnout levels. Results found female coaches to have a higher burnout rate than males (Pastore & Judd, 1993). Results from this study were consistent with previous research revealing females displayed higher levels of burnout as opposed to males. In this study, female athletes reported greater levels of emotional/physical exhaustion and reduced sense of accomplishment than males. This suggests that burnout levels are greater among females than males in different positions within the sports realm. Based on the results of this research Athletes and coaches need to be aware of the different sports and gender that are more susceptible to experience burnout.

There have also been limited studies conducted on burnout differences by seasonality in athletes. Wiggins (2003) studied burnout perception over one second within 73 NCAA Division I soccer players over the course of one season. Wiggins (2003) reported participants to have the highest reported burnout levels at the end of the season. Results from this study revealed participants scored higher means within burnout during the offseason. Future research is needed to continue to monitor athlete's burnout levels after their seasons are complete.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A) Demographic Questionnaire

Please complete circle the following or write in appropriate responses

Name_____Email_____Phone_____

1	What is your gender?	Male	Female			
2	Age?					
3	What year are you in?	Freshmen	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Grad
4	Sport	Women's Soccer	Men's Soccer	Men's Baseball	W. Softball	

Appendix B) Athlete Burnout Questionnaire

Directions: A number of statements that athletes have used to describe their feelings about sport are given below. By circling a number on the scale below following each item, please indicate the degree to which you are experiencing each feeling now, at this point in time.

1	2	3	4	5
almost never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	almost always

_____ 1. I'm accomplishing many worthwhile things in my sport

_____ 2. I feel so tired from my training that I have trouble finding energy to do other things

_____ 3. The effort I spend in my sport would be better spent doing other things

_____ 4. I feel overly tired from my sport participation

_____ 5. I am not achieving much in my sport

_____ 6. I don't care as much about my sports performance as I used to

_____ 7. I am not performing up to my ability in my sport

_____ 8. I feel "wiped out" from my sport

_____ 9. I'm not into my sport like I used to be

_____ 10. I feel physically worn out from my sport

_____ 11. I feel less concerned about being successful in my sport than I used to

_____ 12. I am exhausted by the mental and physical demands of my sport

_____ 13. It seems that no matter what I do, I don't perform as well as I should

_____ 14. I feel successful at my sport

_____ 15. I have negative feelings toward my sport

Thank you for taking the survey.

Appendix C) Athlete Burnout Questionnaire – Description

Athlete Burnout Questionnaire – Description

For Researcher only

Directions: A number of statements that athletes have used to describe their feelings about sport are given below. By circling a number on the scale below following each item, athletes indicate the degree to which they are experiencing each feeling right now, at this point in time.

1	2	3	4	5
almost never	rarely	sometimes	frequently	almost always

RA	1.	I'm accomplishing many worthwhile things in my sport
E	2.	I feel so tired from my training that I have trouble finding energy to do other things
D	3.	The effort I spend in my sport would be better spent doing other things
E	4.	I feel overly tired from my sport participation
RA	5.	I am not achieving much in my sport
D	6.	I don't care as much about my sport performance as I used to
RA	7.	I am not performing up to my ability in my sport
E	8.	I feel "wiped out" from my sport
D	9.	I'm not into my sport like I used to be
E	10.	I feel physically worn out from my sport
D	11.	I feel less concerned about being successful in my sport than I used to
E	12.	I am exhausted by the mental and physical demands of my sport
RA	13.	It seems that no matter what I do, I don't perform as well as I should
RA	14.	I feel successful at my sport
D	15.	I have negative feelings toward my sport

RA = reduced sense of accomplishment

E = emotional/physical exhaustion

D = devaluation

Appendix D) Burnout Qualitative Interview

Semi-Structured Interview Questions- *Additional questions maybe asked pending results of answers*

Tell me what is going on in your life right now?

How do you feel about this workload right now?

Out of those causes: Is there one thing that causes more stress?

So that would be your main example of what's causing stress in your sport?

What's your place within the team?

How's your relationship with your teammate's what would your teammates perceive you as?

How's the team been doing this year?

How would you rate your performance?

Think of how you thought about your sport when you first came to school for a minute… When you are ready I want you to compare it to how you felt right now… Take your time and tell me the major differences.

Regards to your current lifestyle do you feel like you have choices to what you do?

Do you feel in control of your sport?

How confident are you with your skills and your placement within the team?

Do you feel like you have support in your sport?

Do you feel like you are missing out on other stuff when you're playing?

How likely will you remain committed to this sport here?

So you want to keep this sport in your life?