



## **2013 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2013)**

This study is being conducted as an action research investigation, which emphasizes “the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it” (Elliott, 1991, p. 69). The realm of action research can trace its origins back to the work of Lewin (1946), and offers a methodological framework for generating theory through iterative practical interventions. According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), action research is a “self-reflective spiral” in which the researcher plans, acts, observes, and reflects on interventions designed to precipitate some type of incremental social change. Recently, sport management researchers have identified the potential relevance of incorporating action research methodologies into sport settings (Frisby, Reid, Miller, & Hoeber, 2005) - even youth sport settings (Green, 1997). In the present study, action research offers an appropriate framework to employ a qualitative investigation to understand and inform what is a complex social interdependence between coaches, parents, and children within youth sport settings. As a methodological lens, action research allows for a fluid and dynamic relationship between the participant input and the development of steps to create a more responsive and effective system for addressing organizational issues related to managing parent psychology. As a result, the data derived from the initial analyses will serve as a basis for “action” as the organization attempts to redress any disconnect between parent perceptions and the development of their children as athletes.

To accommodate deviations in responses and to analyze the data in a manner that reflects an appreciation for the usefulness of participant responses that fall outside of a semi-structured interview guide’s parameters, data analysis will be inductive in nature (cf. Munhall, 2007). Following transcription of the interviews and importing the resultant raw data into NVivo 9, the iterative data analysis will begin with line-by-line coding (cf. Saldaña, 2009). After the delineation of first-order constructs through the line-by-line coding, second-order constructs will be derived from the initial inductive coding, followed by the grouping of these constructs into sub-themes. These sub-themes will then be consolidated and compared across the coach sample; the sub-themes will be condensed into broader themes that capture the major findings to emerge from this component of the research project. The synthesized findings will be situated within the literature to determine opportunities for the organization to adopt relevant existing empirical approaches to their parent management strategy and to determine where new approaches may need to be developed. The overall findings and implications will then be discussed with the organization, with strategies being formulated to integrate new approaches to parent management. The researchers will also assist the organization with the implementation and evaluation of any adopted approaches. By actively ascertaining qualitative feedback from coaches, this research aims to identify the salient psychological aspects of the adult instructor experience in a youth sports setting. Moreover, this research also takes steps to assist the organization in developing and implementing tactics to ameliorate the barriers to acceptance and adoption that are identified by both the coach and parent study participants. Although the findings are particular to the present research context, they may provide an empirical basis upon which to develop actionable steps that youth sport organizations can take to train coaches to manage the psychology of parents whose children participate in their sport programs. This proactive management can, in turn, potentially foster a youth sport developmental model that better enables the creation of a mastery-oriented motivational climate for the child participants.