Sports are an important aspect of American culture (Davidson & Moran-Miller, 2005), and millions of youth participate in some form of organized youth sport program annually (Smoll, Cumming & Smith, 2011; Brinton, Hill, & Ward, 2017). Coaches of youth sport have self-identified their role as a significant contributor/facilitator to the ‘5Cs’ of positive youth development (Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan, Bloom, 2011; Lerner et al., 2005; Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2011). Lerner (2005) defined character as the athletes respect for rules, possessing standards for appropriate behaviors, having integrity and morality. Bolter and Weiss (2012) stated that an athlete’s character includes the athletes’ sportspersonlike and un-sportspersonlike actions. Previous research has suggested that parents and youth have similar preferences to youth sports (Martin, Dale, & Jackson, 2001), except for the importance of sportspersonship, in which parents place more importance than their kids (Swab, Wells, & Arthur-Banning, 2010). With parents controlling the purchasing decisions of programs for their children (Green, 1998), their views and opinions on coaching behaviors should be valued, as it relates to the psycho-social development of their child. Bolter and Weiss (2012) developed the Sportspersonship Coaching Behaviors Scale (SCBS), which looks at how youth coaches coach sportspersonship. Previous validation includes adolescent athletes, high school athletes, coaches and physical education teachers (Bolter & Kipp, 2018; Bolter, Kipp & Johnson, 2018; Bolter & Weiss, 2012, 2013). Our analysis attempts to validate the SCBS model as it relates to parental perceptions of coaching sportspersonship behaviors, thus creating a parental measurement of coaching sportspersonship to provide youth sport operators and practitioners a measurement tool for evaluating how parents perceive coaching behaviors.

Method

Upon receiving permission from IRB, parents that attended two youth sporting events (N= 1275) were approached prior to their child’s first game at the end-of-season tournament. The 303 participants (23.7%) completed a survey that contained a modified version of the 6 factor 24-item SCBS and demographic questions.

Results

In order to test for construct and factorial validity, a 2nd order factor of sportspersonship was ran towards the 6 components of the SCBS which were then ran towards each individual item on the survey, using IBM SPSS AMOS 25 software.

Our 6-factor model of the adapted SCBS indicates that the adapted 24-item SCBS instrument is a valid measurement tool in assessing parent’s perceptions of the coaching behaviors of coaching sportspersonship X2 (246)= 666.615, p<.001, CFI= .926, TLI=. 917, RMSEA= .075.

Discussion

This analysis provides further support for the usage of the SCBS instrument in all ages when measuring youth sport coaches and how their behaviors when coaching sportspersonship and provides a preliminary model for parental perceptions of sportspersonship characteristics. These results also provide a measurement tool for parental evaluation of the character development within the 5C's of the Positive Youth Development theory.