

INFLUENCE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SOCIAL CAPITAL
ON AGGRESSIVE PARENTAL BEHAVIORS AT
HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER GAMES

By

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by

Donna Z. Davis

This document is dedicated to my wonderful family who has provided me with extraordinary inspiration, love and support. This is also dedicated to all the sports parents today who exhibit good sportsmanship on the sidelines and to the coaches, officials and athletes who work hard, play hard and who also honor their athletes, fans and chosen sport with good sportsmanship.

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Aggressive fan behavior during sports events has become an issue that is at the center of the media spotlight, not only in the NBA or college football, but also in the stands of youth and high school sports events where those fans are parents. Some communities are creating policies and laws that issue sanctions against parents who commit aggressive or violent acts, or even prohibit parents from attending their children's games. This research uses social capital theory and family ecological theory to guide the research and explores the influence that family ties and community networks have on aggressive parental behavior at high school soccer games.

A self-completion questionnaire, the Index of Parental Attitudes (Hudson, 1992), and The Aggression Questionnaire (Buss, 2000) were distributed to 15 fathers and 25 mothers during their son's or daughter's high school soccer games. Sets of predictor variables were grouped by SES, self-reported competitiveness, aggression levels, family

capital and community capital as defined in the General Social Survey (NORC, 2003). A stepwise regression analysis was conducted using the groups of predictors and “reaction to other parents” and “crowd behavior” as the response variables. Parental attitudes and parental friendships were the most important predictors of parental aggression during high school soccer games.

Results were limited to a sample community that is rich in family and community capital. However, findings suggest that measures of social capital including parent/child relationships and friendships play a greater role in predicting aggressive parental fan behavior than do gender, income, or even a person’s level of psychological aggression. These findings contradict social capital theory. Social capital has been seen as the strength of relationships within an individual’s sphere of influence that provides order and opportunities that those without those relationships may not have. Social capital proposes features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for benefit.

In the high school soccer environment, the strength of relationships fosters negative behaviors. These results may be better explained using ecological theory and the influence the macrosystem (sports culture) has on the exosystem (high school soccer community) and the family unit (mesosystem). Close relationships between parents and their children or their friendship networks create a greater likelihood of negative or antisocial response in the soccer environment. These responses are usually a result of seeking justice or out of defense of their child, a very different reaction than in typical sports settings where convergence, mob behaviors or alcohol will have greater influence.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Headlines tell the stories of parents involved in sports-related fights, deaths and child abuse incidents. News stories during the past several years report an incident at an American Youth Soccer Organization soccer game of 14-year-olds where violence broke out. Parents rushed the field after a coach allegedly picked a fight with a player from the opposing team (*Los Angeles Times*, 2001). Another incident resulted in the beating death of a parent during a youth hockey game (*Fox News*, 2003), while yet another led to the suit of a coach for not giving adequate playing time to the plaintiff's son. (*Sports Illustrated*, 2002).

Millions of children in the United States are involved in sports activities and are increasingly more exposed to angry and aggressive parents. To better understand the scope of the issue, consider the following as reported by the National Alliance of Youth Sports (NAYS):

- Last year, an estimated 30 million children played on youth league teams, and 6.5 million teens competed in high school sports. Reports from the 2,200 chapters of the National Alliance for Youth Sports show that about 15% of youth games involved some sort of verbal or physical abuse from parents or coaches, compared with 5% just five years ago.
- The most common reason given by referees for quitting is antagonism from coaches and parents (Survey by the National Association of Sports Officials, March 2002). As the issue gains media attention, communities are taking political action to

address the problem, such as the development of the New Jersey sports violence act which calls for stiff sentences for those convicted of violent offenses at youth sports events (New York WABC, 2003). But are the proposed solutions appropriate? Although

researchers have identified individual psychological factors that trigger parental rage behaviors, little has been done to identify the social pressures that may provoke aggressive behavior.

To explore influencing factors of parental aggressive behaviors at high school sports events, this research explores community and family social capital. A great deal of research and debate on the positive and negative roles of social capital in American society provides potential insights on the perceived decline of prosocial behaviors.

Social Capital Theory

During the past fifteen years, theorists and researchers have spent tremendous effort studying the concept of social capital and its role in the ways communities and families interact (Coleman, 1988 & Putnam, 2000). Historically, social capital was perceived as a positive influence, providing individuals with the social resources that would enhance their life experience.

Social capital, as defined by Coleman (1988), is a “resource embodied in the relations among persons and positions that facilitates action.” Coleman identified three forms of social capital, including the obligations, expectations and trustworthiness of structures; information channels; and social norms. In other words, social capital is the strength of relationships within an individual’s sphere of influence that provides order and opportunities that those without those relationships may not have. Social capital took on broader meaning when Putnam (2000) defined it as “features of social organization, such as networks, norms, trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for benefit” (p. 36).

Changes in U.S. society may actually have reduced the availability of social capital, with potentially negative consequences for families, communities and even individuals.

In *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam identified the erosion of social capital in American communities as a threat to civic as well as personal health. Without social capital, individuals may experience increased an emotional, physical, and/or financial burden that results from isolation. Social bonds are weakened, leading to additional changes in interpersonal behaviors.

The role of social capital in shaping community cultures has been researched extensively. For example, studies on the impact of social capital on violence and homicide (Galea, Karpati & Kennedy, 2002), on educational achievement (Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001), and on parental involvement and reduction in non-normative behavior (McNeal, 2001) have consistently shown that social capital plays a pivotal role in shaping families and communities.

The Influence of Sport on Social Capital

One of the institutions frequently referenced in the discussion of social capital is sport. Many communities have rallied around a “home team,” demonstrating pro-social capital. Sport can bring individuals and families together in an environment when ownership, obligation and stake-holding is high (Jarvie, 2003). School sports programs have been found to foster teamwork and cooperative norms, thereby improving social capital and social behaviors (McNeal, 2001). Other research has found that sport involvement in high schools increases the level of social capital, which in turn predicts pro-social, cooperative behavior (Langbein & Bess, 2001).

In contrast, some research has begun to point to a rise in anti-social behavior at youth sporting events that could be resulting in anti-social capital. A survey conducted in North Carolina by the National Alliance on Youth Sports (2002), found that more than 82% of parents had seen or otherwise become concerned about parental behavior at youth

sporting events. Fifty-five percent of parents indicated that they had personally seen behavior they considered inappropriate and an additional 27.3% reported that, while they had not personally seen inappropriate behavior, they were concerned with the issue. Similarly, some studies are concluding the informal rules of social interaction at sporting events are changing and that furthermore this lack of civility impacts social capital (Billante & Saunders, 2002).

More specifically, new research is beginning to explore the social impact of spectators and, specifically, parental rage behaviors at youth sporting events (Wann, et al., 2003). Wann identified two factors that define how and why parents lose control during their child's game. The first is the defining the power of the situation, such as alcohol influence, heat, overcrowding, or whether a parent had a bad day at work. The second is the level of identification parents have with their children. Parents who have high levels of identification feel that if their child is benched, they are benched. Or, if they believe their child was a victim of an unfair call, they feel that they were treated unfairly as well. Although Wann's research identified the physical conditions and psychological factors influencing parental rage behavior, there is a need for research that identifies the role of broader systems, particularly family and cultural influences on these behaviors. This research examines the impacts of family social capital on parental rage behavior. It is important to focus on capital per se because as communities attempt to identify consequences and sanctions on individuals for their rage behaviors, it may be more valuable to identify ways to strengthen community and family capital.

Family Capital – The Family's Role in Building Social Capital

Family social capital, includes the same elements as social capital -- the value of norms, social networks, and relationships between people. However, family social

capital is specifically concerned with the value of relationships as they exist between parents and children while they are growing up (Hogan, 2001). The role of family social capital can be further explained as the weaving of interpersonal relationships and values between families and their communities (Hogan, 2001). Hogan hypothesized that the quality of social capital within families positively influences families' relationships with external systems such as schools, work, and religious organizations within their social environments. Many scholars consider the family interdependent with community and societal ecosystems, functioning as a supplier and/or destroyer of social and human capital (Bubolz, 2001; Streeten, 2002). Thus, the family plays a central role in the effective functioning of many social systems.

Researchers are beginning to look at what creates positive and negative family social capital. Some family members can impede the development of social capital. Through physical abuse, oppressive authority, and drug or alcohol abuse, these behaviors can lead to negative, or anti-social capital. This form of capital has been related to anti-social behaviors, closed family systems and mistrust of institutions such as schools and religious congregations (Hogan, 2001). Other important factors in the development of family social capital are parenting styles and parent/child dynamics. As U.S. culture is changing, the roles and pressures on parents have begun to take on new meanings.

According to a number of researchers, the widespread overzealousness in the current generation of parents is not helping children, but is instead diminishing their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment. Parents too often project their own desires on their children rather than consider what is best for them (Weis, 1997, Rosenfeld & Wise, 2002). What has been referred to as "Achievement by Proxy Disorder" involves parents

who project their own needs and aspirations onto their offspring--sometimes at enormous costs to the children and family (Tofler & Foy DiGeronimo, 2002).

On a more positive note, parenting style has also been found to have significant impacts on goal orientation and adolescent self-esteem (Marjoribanks & Mboya, 2001). Likewise, parental involvement has been shown to positively influence cognitive and behavioral outcomes as well as improve their child's social capital in most socioeconomic levels (McNeal, 2001). However, families who suffer from weak or negative community capital remain at higher risks of negative family capital which can then also result in negative behavioral and social outcomes (Coleman, 1988; Teachman, 1997; McNulty & Bellair, 2003; Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001).

Community Capital – Community's Influence on Family Capital

Ecological theory is a useful framework to understand how family processes can be influenced by the different environmental settings within which family members function (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 as cited in White & Klein, 2002). Family theorists have used neighborhoods as a measure of what Bronfenbrenner called mesosystems in which families operate. Bronfenbrenner expanded the ecological model to encompass neighborhood both as subjectively experienced (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 as cited in White & Klein, 2002) and as objectively measured (Bronfenbrenner, 1988 as cited in White & Klein, 2002).

When a community is high in social capital, the effects on children, adolescents and families can be powerful (Booth, Crouter, Sampson, 2001). Sampson explains, "It follows that communities high in social capital are better able to realize common values and maintain social controls" (p. 9). For example, when parents build networks with their children's friend's parents, they have the opportunity to get different perspectives of

their children and establish norms. Parents are able to adjust their behaviors and parenting decisions based on a more broad and likely more realistic understanding of their children. Children experience a collective nature of social capital in these networks.

Likewise, research has shown that schools have powerful effects on community social capital (Coleman 1988; Israel & Beaulieu, 2001). Israel and Beaulieu wrote, “a caring community is essential to the successful development of children. So, if we ask, ‘For whom does the bell toll?’ it tolls for those students who have access to, and who actively engage in caring and guiding environments not only in the home, but also with other adults located with the school and broader community settings.”

And while community social capital can be fostered through parent peer networks and school involvement, historically these bonds were formed within neighborhoods. However, current research on family functions and bonds within neighborhoods is showing a changing role of the neighborhood in families’ lives (Putnam, 2001; Scanzoni, 2000; Subramanian, Lochner, & Kawachi, 2003). The popular ideology that “it takes a village to raise a child” has come up against difficult obstacles when adults no longer feel it’s either safe or appropriate to interfere with a child’s behavior if that child is not their own, neighborhood resources or safety are challenged, and resident mobility continues to diminish the solidarity of the community (Korbin, 2001). And, while studies have defined neighborhoods by geological boundaries and census tracts, researchers have found that the residents of those communities define their neighborhoods differently (Korbin, 2001; Warren, 1978). Dual-career households, school choice, religious diversity, the competitive nature of our culture and technological networks are among many factors redefining the roles and inclusiveness of neighborhoods.

In the school sport arena, if parents don't feel connected to their neighborhoods, how will this influence their behavior in the participation of their children's sport teams? Is their participation dependent on their personal goals for their children or on a sense of community pride? Likewise, if families feel isolated within their communities, can they share the trust, norms and reciprocity necessary to build social capital and thus maintain self control? These are the questions that direct this research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between community and family social capital and parental rage behaviors at high school sports events. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in reports of violent and socially destructive behaviors among parents on the sidelines. What has become known as "sideline rage" is called an epidemic in the media (*New York Times*, 2001). My research explores the influence of changes in family dynamics and changing social contracts, particularly in the social structure of organized youth sports, on aggressive, abusive public behaviors of parents.

The Research Question

This research examines the relations between social capital, family capital, and parental spectator behavior. More specifically, this research asks the following question and two sub questions: How does social capital influence parental spectator behaviors in high school sports?

- a. How does community social capital influence parental aggressive behavior at high school sports events?
- b. Does family social or antisocial capital influence the value placed on winning (competitiveness) and if so, is it related to aggressive parental spectator behavior?

Hypotheses

Question 1: How does community social capital influence parental aggressive behavior?

Two hypotheses are linked to this question.

1. The higher the individual's psychological aggression, the higher the parental aggressive behavior at high school sports events.
2. The higher the individual's community capital, the lower level of parental aggressive behavior at high school soccer games.

Question 2: Does family social or antisocial capital influence the value placed on winning and if so, is it related to aggressive parental spectator behavior? Family social capital is measured by the family life satisfaction measures used in the General Social Survey, measures from the Index of Parental Attitudes, as well as marital status, and dual/single income status.

Several hypotheses are linked to this question.

1. Parents with positive attitudes toward their children will be less likely to exhibit parental aggressive behavior at high school sports events.
2. There will be no relation between socioeconomic status and parental aggressive behavior at high school sports events.
3. Divorced parents will be more likely to exhibit parental aggressive behavior at high school soccer games
4. Parents who exhibit a high level of family satisfaction and parental involvement will be more likely to exhibit parental aggressive behavior at high school sports events.
5. There will be no difference in aggressive behavior between mothers and fathers, nor will there be a difference in aggressive behavior between girl's and boy's games.

Definitions

Darling & Steinberg (2001) posit that family social capital is defined by the dimensions of family human capital and parenting style. Antisocial capital is social capital where the goals or intended effects are negative or undesirable. Community

social capital is defined by the resources provided by the community as well as the levels of trust and connectedness among members of the community. Parental aggressive behaviors are public acts of aggression including yelling, inappropriate gestures, and physical violence. Competitiveness is measured by value placed on winning. Youth and high school sporting events are high school boys basketball games and girls volleyball games. Socioeconomic status will measure income level and education levels including no high school/ some high school/ high school graduate/ some college/ college graduate/ some graduate school/ completed advanced degree. Single career households are those with only one wage earner (either male or female). Dual-career households are those where both resident parents are wage earners.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the findings of this research are specific to north central Florida high schools in a university-dominated county and may not be generalized beyond this community. Additionally, because public display of parental aggression is a sensitive subject and respondents will be self-reporting, some data may be also be manipulated to project what those parents may want people to think of their behavior, rather than how they actually behave.

Significance of the Study

This research advances our understanding of social processes, social structures, and the current disconnect from traditionally socially acceptable behaviors. Family and community processes and structures, along with social contracts, have been changing in unprecedented ways during the past thirty years. A great deal of research on social capital and civility has shown dramatic declines in the way humans treat one another (Putnam, 2000; Coleman, et al., 1988). This research focuses specifically on the context

of high school athletic competitions and provides new clues as to why incidents of parental rage at those sports events have increased.

It is important to understand the causes of this behavior as an indicator of the decline of social capital for many reasons. For example, in their Report to the Nation from the Commission on Children at Risk (CCR) (2002), 33 children's doctors, research scientists, and mental health and youth service professionals identified that children are "hardwired to connect" (Kovner Kline, 2002). According to the Report, escalation of serious mental, emotional, and behavioral problems among U.S. children and adolescents is reaching crisis levels. The Commission on Children at Risk has identified the cause of this crisis as the result of "a lack of connectedness". They claim, "in recent decades, the U.S. social institutions that foster these forms of connectedness for children have gotten significantly weaker" (CCR, 2002). High school sports have long represented a key social institution for U.S. adolescents. Further study of the positive and negative outcomes of the adolescent's involvement in their sport, as impacted by their parent's behaviors may assist school and community administrators as well as parents in developing strategies to modify bad parental behavior.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This research examines the influences of family and community social capital on parental rage behaviors at youth sports. Although previous research has looked at fan behaviors (Dietz-Uhler, et al, 2000; Laverie & Arnett, 2000; Back, Crabbe & Solomos, 1999; Giulianotti, 1991, Russel, Arms & Mustonen, 1999), it has seldom focused on the parent spectator. Current news reports and national youth sports organization leaders have indicated an increase in parental misbehavior at children's sporting events (NAYS, 2003). Why do parents become uncontrollably angry at sports events? Is it that parents are becoming more competitive? Has there been a loss of accountability for public rage behaviors? Are parents becoming overprotective of their children? Specifically, this study looks at the role of community and family social capital and how it influences bad parental behavior on sports sidelines.

Prior research has identified several psychological and physical factors that trigger individual parental rage behaviors, such as alcohol, heat, overcrowding, and how a parent identifies with their child (Wann, et al., 2001), yet little has been done to study the broader cultural picture to identify the societal pressures that may prompt this behavior. This study provides some clues as to why incidents of parental rage at sports events have increased. Exploring parental rage behavior at youth sporting events may also shed light on commonalities with other rage behaviors (e.g. road rage, workplace anger, domestic violence).

To better understand the current disconnect from traditionally socially acceptable behaviors and these public outbursts of parental rage, one must explore changing social processes and social structures. Dramatic shifts in economics, the labor markets, urbanization, technology and communications during the past 50 years have changed the way families and communities operate. In response, a great deal of research on family development, social capital and civility has shown dramatic declines in the way humans treat one another (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000, et al). Likewise, social capital has been found to be an independent predictor of rates of violence (Galea, Karpati, & Kennedy, 2002).

This literature review provides greater insight on the incidence of parental outbursts at youth sports events and the impact this behavior can have on children and on community. It also provides a review of social capital theory including family and community social capital.

The Problem of Parental Misbehavior as Youth Sport Spectators

While headlines and youth sports organizations report increased incidence of inappropriate public behavior by parents (NAYS; Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission, 1993; Survey USA, 2000) communities are responding to parental rage incidents in a variety of ways. One proposed solution to what some are now calling an epidemic of pushy sport parents (*New York Times*, 2001), is to minimize or eliminate all parental involvement in children's sport participation. This approach assumes that any parental involvement is detrimental and that all parents will go over the edge when attending their child's event. Furthermore, such a solution is without regard to understanding of who will or won't be violent. On a larger scale, many communities are implementing social marketing campaigns designed to educate parents about the impacts

of negative adult behaviors. These programs target the self-interest of parents (Rothschild, 1999), assuming that parent behaviors are narcissistic rather than motivated by the child's interests. In contrast to the strategy that would prohibit parents involvement in children's sports events for the benefit of the children, numerous studies strongly suggest that parents and parenting style play the largest roles in influencing the healthy development of children (Freud, 1921; Bronfenbrenner, 1985; Baumrind, 1991; Belsky, 1990; McNeal, 2001; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Hudson & Rapee, 2001; Weis, Rosenfeld, Wise, 2002; Marjoribanks, Mboya, 2001). There has also been a substantial body of research directed toward enhancing the quality of children's sport experiences, effective parenting, and parental influence (Engh, 1999). For example, Engh cites a questionnaire conducted by the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission, which reported 45.3 % of the youngsters surveyed in Minnesota said they had been called names, yelled at or insulted during sporting events (MASC, 1993). In a poll conducted in 5 South Florida counties by Survey USA, 82% of the parents surveyed reported that they felt parents are too aggressive in youth sports (Survey USA, 1999).

Changing Parental Roles and Their Influence on Children

One of the questions that must be asked is how are parents and parenting changing? Parenting has been studied for decades. Belsky (1990) found that parents' values and the goals they have for their children, in addition to parents' emotional and material resources and family personalities, can strongly influence parenting styles. However, little is known about the processes through which parenting behavior influences the development of children's competence, although parents' nurturing activities that build social capital within a family have been shown to improve children's academic achievement and behavioral outcomes (Coleman, 1988; Teachman, 1997; Israel, Beaulieu

& Hartless, 2001; McNeal, 2001). Parental behavior has also been found to have significant impact on goal orientation and adolescent self-esteem (Marjoribanks, Mboya, 2001). Likewise, Baumrind's (1966) work revealed that authoritative parenting, including emotional support, establishing high standards, granting appropriate autonomy and providing clear communication was the most effective approach to teaching children and adolescents how to effectively function in society. She also expanded parental control to refer to parent's attempt to socialize their children to conform to the family and societal norms. The most successful models of parental involvement for positive outcomes for adolescents are those that combine the dimensions of support and control (Maccoby and Martin, 1983; Peterson and Rollins, 1987; Rollins and Thomas, 1979; Thomas et al., 1974 as cited in Booth, 1991). According to Peterson, Rollins and Thomas (1985), parents are the most effective as agents of socialization when they provide high levels of support and exercise inductive control (as cited in Booth, 1991).

Current research is exploring the issue of "hyper-parenting" (Rosenfeld & Wise, 2001). Hyper-parenting refers to the middle- and upper-middleclass parents who are involved in every detail of their children's lives, who over-enrich their children's environments and over-schedule their kids. Rosenfeld and Wise argue, "A child's success—quantified by 'achievements' like speaking early, qualifying for a gifted and talented program or earning admission to an elite university – has become the measure of parental accomplishment. The most competitive adult sport is no longer golf, it is parenting" (p. 1).

Using Theory to Better Understand Parental Behaviors and the Outcomes of Those Behaviors

Social Learning Theory

If parental involvement has been found to be such a positive influence on children, when does it go beyond productive and become destructive, as indicated by Rosenfeld and Wise (2001)? Empirical studies have shown that parental influence is most significant when children are young. Social learning researchers agree that by adolescence, most of the groundwork of parental socialization has been laid. Bandura's social learning theory (as cited in Crain, 2000), defines the power of observational learning and modeling. Children first imitate their parents' behavior, assuming their parent is their primary model. As more women have entered the workforce and childcare has become more prevalent, children can model their substitute caregivers in addition to their parents. Media, community organizations and institutions, and peers emerge later as powerful models as well, as they attract attention with engaging characteristics (Bandura, 1977, p. 25 as cited in Crain, 2000). As organizations such as NAYS consider parental influence in child development it will be important to consider what appears to be an increasing power of the media and community effects (Hampl, J. S., Wharton, C.M., Taylor, C., Winham, D.M., Block, J.L., Hall, R., 2004; Keum, H., Devanathan, N., Deshpande, S., Nelson, M., Shah, 2004).

Observational learning has had a significant impact on sport fans. According to Bandura's theory, sport heroes, for example, can have considerable influence on their admirers without meaningful interaction. Simply watching a sport hero's behavior and the consequences of that behavior can influence a fan's emotional connection with the hero. In *Sport Fans, The Psychology and Social Impact of Spectators*, Wann et al (2001)

explain, fans may acquire “the aggressive behaviors displayed by some sport personalities” by observing their hero’s aggression (p. 79). When aggressive behaviors pay off, i.e. are rewarded in some way, the fan will be more likely to take on aggressive behavior.

Sport heroes aren’t the only significant psychological factor influencing sport fans. Prior research has explored psychological theories, including the frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory, self-esteem maintenance, and the need for excitement as psychological triggers to sport fan violence (Wann, Melnick, Russell & Peace, 2001). Environmental influences such as heat, crowding, and noise have also been identified as contributing factors to fan aggression. Sociological perspectives of fan aggression consider crowd misbehavior and other factors including failure of negative sanctions, incivility, absence of fathers and violent society as causes of spectator aggression (Wann, et al, 2001). Other sociologists consider the very nature of sport events conducive to aggression (Eitzen, 1999). A final and significant contributor to fan violence at sport events is alcohol consumption (Wann, et al., 2001).

While these proposed psychological, sociological and environmental factors are identified as causes of fan aggression and spectator violence, there is limited research that specifically looks at the parent as a spectator. The parent-child relationship creates a different dynamic, with different sets of social norms, expectations, and motivations.

Social Capital Theory

Fundamental to this research is the understanding and exploration of social contract and social control theory. Thomas Hobb’s *Leviathan* (1651), discussed the early concept of social contract in “The State of Nature.” He noted that humans, in nature, are naturally prone to quarrel. The second Law of Nature states that a person be willing to “lay down

this right to all things; and be contented with so much liberty against other people, as he would allow other people against himself.” (*Leviathan*, xiv.5 as cited in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). The mutual transferring of these rights is called the contract and is the basis of the notion of moral obligation and duty. Hobbs’ Law of Nature states that morality consists entirely of these Laws of Nature, which are arrived at through social contract. Contrary to Aristotle’s account of virtue ethics, Hobbs adds that moral virtues are relevant to ethical theory only insofar as they promote peace. Outside of this function, virtues have no moral significance. (as cited in Warren, 1978).

In “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,” Freud (1921) wrote, “Thus the group appears to us as a revival of the primal horde. Just as primitive man survives potentially in every individual, so the primal horde may arise once more out of any random collection...” (p. 102 as cited in Library of Congress Website). Freud argued that the uncontrollable violence characteristic of early humans (the primal horde) is likely to emerge when people collect in crowds. (Library of Congress, 2001) Additionally, more contemporary theorists such as Cooley, Mead, Faris, Park and Burgess argued that personality is acquired in group contexts, particularly in family groups and that the abstract dichotomy between individual and society, on which earlier social contract theory was based was deceptive (Warren, p 176).

There is growing recognition that socialization is not simply a process exclusive to childhood and adolescence, but rather a continuing process through which the individual maintains relationships of reciprocity with others within the framework of the many social roles patterning social behavior. When this process is not sustained, there is a

deterioration of culturally sanctioned participation in the functioning of the society (Warren, 1978).

Social contracts and socialization provide the basis for social control. Social control is the process through which a group influences the behavior of its members toward conformity with its norms. Cooley (1902) described the internalized social controls as “conscience.” His “looking-glass self” was an early formulation of the process through which individuals come to assess their own anticipated actions according to the imagined judgment that others will make of that conduct. Likewise, Mead (1937) formulated his concept of the “generalized other” to help explain how, in a sense, the internalization of controls earlier imposed by others is part of what might be called the individual’s self-image. Individuals then identify themselves with a group and care about what the group may think. Sanctions by the group called “primary-group controls” have functioned to effectively provide social control. Homans (1950) then developed a theory of group process in which the concept of equilibrium and the concept of social control are intimately intertwined (as cited in Warren, 1978).

Hollingshead (1941) offered an alternative to the equilibrium theory of social control. He noted the purported inadequacies of the social-psychological approach advanced by Cooley and the early formulation of the social control concept that was presented by Ross in 1901. Ross had approached social control from the standpoint of the restraints that society needed to enforce as social life became more impersonal. Hollingshead advanced the viewpoint that social control is to be found in the relations among the organized structures and processes of social life.

In recent years, the relations among organized structures and processes of social life have been also referred to as social capital. Social capital, as defined by Coleman (1988), is a “resource embodied in the relations among persons and positions that facilitates action.” Coleman identified three forms of social capital, including the obligations, expectations and trustworthiness of structures, information channels, and social norms. Coleman identified that social capital is dependent on trustworthiness of the social environment and the actual extent of obligations held. Information channels provide the basis for action. These channels keep communities connected. Information sharing and trust provide the base within a community for social capital. However, individuals must also develop and meet the expectations of one another or they are not as likely to develop behavioral norms which can also result in a lack of closure of a social structure and a lack of social capital.

More recently Robert D. Putnam further applied social capital theory to contemporary community as he explained, “the central premise of social capital is that social networks have value. Social capital refers to the collective value of all “social networks” [who people know] and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other [‘norms of reciprocity’]” (p.20, 135). Putnam identified examples of social capital as reducing crime in a neighborhood because a group of neighbors informally keeps an eye on one another’s homes or as social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity that result from participation or belonging to churches, schools, clubs, civic associations, and even bars (p. 20-21). Putnam utilized the Roper Social and Political Trends and the DDB Needham Life Style surveys to develop his data. His research has recognized the decline of social capital in American communities and

identified changes in work, family structure, age, suburban life, television, computers, women's roles and other factors as those which have contributed to the decline in social capital.

Family Social Capital and Family Theory

The same factors Putnam attributed to the decline of social capital can also be related to changes in family functioning and family social capital. Changing family structure, television, suburbs, computers and women's roles have all dramatically influenced the key elements of family social capital. As mentioned in the introduction, Coleman defined family social capital as the value of norms, social networks, and relationships, but as they exist between adults and children while they are growing up. Different measures of family social capital have included parents networking with their children's friends parents, parent interaction at school, adolescent interaction with adults (McNulty & Bellair, 2003); residential stability (Coleman, 1988); parental involvement (Isreal, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001; McNeal, 2001); and having two-biological-parent families with higher incomes and levels of parental education (Isreal, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001). McNulty and Bellair report,

Greater stocks of social capital have been shown to have a positive effect on children's performance in school (Carbonaro, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Israel et al., 2001; Morgan & Sorensen, 1999; Sun, 1999) and the acquisition of conventional norms and bonds (Amato & Booth, 1997) and to divert youths from delinquent involvement (J.P. Wright et al., 2001; see also Rosenfeld, Messner, & Baumer, 2001).

Hogan hypothesized that the quality of social capital within families positively influences families' relationships with external systems such as schools, work, and religious organizations within their social environment. Other scholars consider the family interdependent with community and societal ecosystems, functioning as a supplier

and/or destroyer of social and human capital (Bubolz, 2001; Streeten, 2002). Television, computers, family structures, and women's roles have all changed the way families function within their social environments.

To better understand family dynamics and its relationship with the community, family ecological theory is also discussed. Although originally conceived by Bronfenbrenner (1979) to account for variations in child development, ecological theory is a useful framework to understand how family processes can be influenced by the different environmental settings within which family members function. The family ecological model's most basic unit of analysis is the microsystem, which refers to the immediate, perceived environment of the person, such as how one's personality affects the family's interactions. The next level of the model is the mesosystem, referring to the connections that exist between multiple microsystems, including how a parent-child relationship can influence marital relations. Microsystems and mesosystems are embedded within exosystems -- the settings that have indirect effects on family interactions. This might include the effects of a parent's work patterns on relationships among family members. Finally, the macrosystem refers to the overarching economic, political, cultural, and social forces that influence individuals. Ecological theory has guided empirical investigations that explore how multiple psychosocial variables affect child development and parenting (e.g., Belsky, 1990; Woodworth, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996).

It is important to consider the mesosystems, exosystems and the macrosystem in attempting to understand the role that family social capital plays in the display of parental rage behaviors during their children's sports events. For example, prior research has

shown that the parent-child relationship (the mesosystem), their open channels of communication, and their mutual trust is a strong predictor of family capital.

Families often interact with their community (the exosystem) through sports involvement. Many scholars believe sports programs foster teamwork and cooperative norms, thus building social capital and sociable behaviors (McNeal, 2001). However, others argue that school sports are competitive, physically violent, and occasionally alienating (Langbein & Bess, 2002). Andrew Kamarck wrote (as cited by Streeten, 2002), “Social capital consists of: the pattern of perception and thought that children acquire while growing up; the habits and human relationships that the people regard as natural and given. It is the accepted knowledge – the whole complex of shared assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, morals, customs, traditions that characterize a society or social group.” The society as a whole (the macrosystem) can have a significant impact on how the family operates within the sport arena. For example, some cultures advocate aggressive behaviors at sport events, while others condemn such behavior.

Ecological theory can help identify whether men feel more compelled to exert their “power” on the field as a result of loss of “authority” in the workplace or out of a sense of inferiority due to a perceived lack of economic security. It may also help identify the roles of mothers and whether their identity as stay-at-home mother or working-mother influences their aggressive tendencies when watching their children compete. Similarly, through the use of ecological theory, single-parent families and their changing parent relationships both within the microsystem and exosystem may reveal tendencies toward parental protective or aggressive behaviors in competitive situations such as their

children's sport events. Likewise, ecological theory can help understand the role of family as it interacts or competes with its neighbors.

Community Social Capital

While ecological theory looks at families and how they interact within their communities, definitions of community are very complex and diverse (Warren, 1978; Etzioni, et al). Amitai Etzioni identifies the community as a system with two characteristics: "first, a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals, relationships that often crisscross and reinforce one another (as opposed to one-on one or chain-like individual relationship); and second, a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity – in short, a particular culture" (Christensen and David Levinson, 2003). Etzioni believes these values can create both positive and negative outcomes, such as through the shared values of churches or schools, or the shared values of gangs or the mafia.

Etzioni, founder of the Communitarian Network, revitalized the communitarian movement, currently comprised of citizens who refer to themselves as "responsive communitarians." Communitarians examine the ways shared conceptions of the good (values) are formed, transmitted, justified, and enforced. They study the moral dialogues within communities, historically transmitted values and mores, and the societal units that transmit and enforce values such the family, schools, and voluntary associations such as churches and social organizations.

Also considering the influence of social capital, family social capital, and parenting styles on parental rage behavior at their children's sport events, one must also explore the role of the neighborhood. As previously mentioned, the definition of neighborhood has different meanings to different people. Statisticians look at census tracts while people

define their neighborhoods by their relations to their social systems. According to Korbin (as cited in Booth & Crouter, 1999), research on the role of the neighborhood as context for child development and well-being is lacking. There is limited research identifying precise mechanisms and processes by which the neighborhood impacts on children and families. But the evidence that is available offers little in regard to understanding the interrelationships among individual, family, neighborhood and larger sociocultural influences (Korbin, 2001; Furstenberg et al, 2000).

Small and Supple (as cited by Booth and Crouter, 2001, p. 107) define the *neighborhood* as “a physical place, defined by socially shared boundaries, that include a population of people who usually share similar life chances, socioeconomic status, and physical proximity.” They further define *community* with similar characteristics of Etzioni’s definition as “social relationships that individuals have based on group consensus, shared norms and values, common goals, and feelings of identification, belonging and trust.” Their community definition includes the fundamental elements of social capital – norms and values and belonging and trust. Small and Supple developed a diagram of first, second and third order community effects using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory in an attempt to create a framework that outlines the mechanisms and processes by which communities affect human development.

Using Small and Supple’s diagram as a guide, it is possible to see the child at the center, the family’s influence as a first order effect, their sport team as a mesosystem linkage, and the community identity, common goals and values, collective efficacy and social cohesion as third order effects. Another case that can be applied to this framework could be the research of McNulty and Bellair (2003) who found that white-black and

white-Latino differences in violent behavior are explained by community and family disadvantages, respectively. They found socialization/control processes that are rooted in a youth's community of residence foster variation in predispositions in violence.

Similarly, Teachman (1997) found that the financial and human capital of parents are necessary to the development of human capital in their children but by themselves are not sufficient. Teachman found, "In order to create well-being in children, financial and human capital must be accompanied by social relationships that allow resources to be transmitted to and used by children." (p. 1352)

In other words, while some families can be rich in social capital, if their community is not, there could be a deficiency in the social capital of their child. Likewise, if a family is rich in family, financial and human capital, it does not preclude a break in the family's link to community capital. If a family is lacking in a sense of connectivity to their community, if they have no ownership of their child's sport team, if they feel isolated from their neighbors, or do not trust their social networks, they are lacking in community social capital.

Summary

Public display of abusive/aggressive behavior is evidence of a breakdown of social contracts, social control and social capital. Historically, these breakdowns are what lead to increased sanctions imposed by the government. This research seeks to fill the gaps in current research in social capital and family theory as it relates to parental public rage behaviors. It explores what societal changes are causing parents to break those contracts.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Design

This research explored community and family social capital and its influence on parental rage behavior in youth sports. I used a cross-sectional design because I wanted to examine how several existing characteristics among the theoretical population of high school soccer parents produce aggressive public behavior.

Data Collection

The Population and Sampling Procedure

The population included parents of male and female high school student-athletes. The high school age group was identified for study because the potential motivations of high school sports are more intense. For many of these athletes, high school performance can lead to college and professional sports opportunities. High school athletics also is more widely recognized in the media than youth sports, creating an increased sense of community status for both athletes and their parents.

Soccer was chosen as one of the sports that has gained recognition for obsessive and violent sport fans. It also provided for both male and female events and represented a sport that has strong collegiate opportunities for both men and woman as well as professional or Olympic level competition

A sample of 44 parents of varsity high school athletes was selected from three urban public schools (approximately 8 per game) from parents attending one of six games over a period of three weeks. Parents were selected by rows beginning from the bottom

and working up. No more than four parents were selected from each row. Questionnaire packets were given alternately to men and women with at least one additional woman per game to reflect the male/female ratio in the stands. The schools represented the three urban, public schools in the city. Of the 45 parents, 40 packets were returned for an 89% response rate.

Procedure

Parents were approached in the stands during boys and girls soccer games from three high schools to request their participation. Packets containing the questionnaires and Index of Parental Attitudes were distributed to mothers and fathers in numbers proportionate to gender representation overall.

Following the selection, the researcher applied a screening criterion. The criterion for selecting the sample included: asking questions that determined parental or custodial status; attendance at their children's sport events at least two times; and experience through personal act or observation of physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger or hostility during their child's high school sport event. These parents did not necessarily have to believe that they had exhibited rage behaviors, but must have had some experience with or awareness of it, such as witnessing rage behaviors.

Instrumentation

My research featured a self-completed survey instrument. Informal pilot testing of the instrument provided excellent indication of the construct and face validity of these measures. Specifically, I used the Index of Parental Attitudes (Hudson, 1993) to determine how parents feel about their children. The Index measures a parent's perception of reciprocity between them and their child. The Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) was also used to identify individual predisposition to aggression,

and a measure I designed to collect information more reflective of the social capital and competitive attitudes of these parents (Appendix A). In addition to questions regarding their specific sports experience, this questionnaire incorporated questions used in the General Social Survey to measure family and community social capital.

The predictor variables included: parenting attitudes and expectations, competitive level, perceived measures of social capital, and aggression levels during youth sports events.

Parental attitudes were measured using the Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA) (Appendix B), with a reliability of .90 (Hudson, 1993). Aggression levels were measured using the Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) (Appendix C), which has a reliability of .80 (Buss and Perry, 1992). Competitive level was measured using answers to additional questions included in the survey.

Additional questions also measure predictor variables related to social capital, including community and family satisfaction, trust, and involvement. Measures of social capital were collected using selected questions from the General Social Survey (GSS) (NORC, 2003) that reflect feelings and behaviors defined as functions of social capital, including human nature, personal satisfaction, family life and community life.

Community social capital was measured from responses to General Social Survey questions identified as measures of social capital, including education, socioeconomic status, non-work activities, perception of trust and human nature, and levels of satisfaction with place of residence (GSS, 2003).

Outcome variables were measured through answers reported in the questionnaire included parental behaviors such responding to other belligerent parents and getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior at their children's sporting events. The

combination of these measures was designed to identify the influences of aggression, competitiveness and parental attitudes as well as measures of family and community social capital on parental behaviors.

Face validity of this instrument was generally strong. Informal pre-test respondents indicated that the survey was very easy to understand and results provided clear indications of triggers of parental rage behaviors. The questions generated strong data regarding participants' attitudes toward parenting, aggressiveness and competitiveness. I also developed a number of questions that required an "if yes; please explain" or, if they responded "other," I also requested they "please explain" to improve concurrent validity. This format also generates the type of complex responses I am looking for when dealing with coaching decisions, referee calls, and crowd behavior. Pre-test respondents provided excellent examples.

Construct validity is reinforced using the Aggression Questionnaire and the Index of Parental Attitudes. Aggression, competitiveness and parental attitudes are highly correlated to the triggers of parental rage. This study explored the possible link that social capital has on the incidence of those variables that lead to public displays of parental rage.

Data Analysis

In order to examine the strength of the relationships between parental attitudes, competitiveness, social capital and aggression of parents of high school athletes, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and stepwise regression were utilized. Computations were performed using Minitab, Release 14.

The ordinal data collected from the questionnaires were on a low-medium-high scale. Ordinal data were also collected from the questionnaire with limited qualitative supplemental data provided for “if other, please explain” responses.

Limitations

Using instruments that have been proven effective in previous studies reduces threats to instrumentation (i.e. The Index of Parental Attitudes and the Aggression Questionnaire). However, because parents may provide information that puts them in the best light, the external threat of reactive arrangements could be an issue. To address this threat, all questionnaires and Index packets were returned in a sealed envelope with no request for name or signature to insure anonymity. Random sampling of participants also reduced threats to internal and external validity. Finally, results are carefully gauged following the completion of the first sample and adjusted as necessary to combat the threat to instrumentation.

Another possible weakness is internal consistency, particularly with the scale answers. To address this weakness, several questions were asked regarding the “value of winning.” For example, many of the questions provided an answer option that identified aggression triggers (coaching or referee calls) that caused a loss. Another possible threat to internal consistency is that respondents can perceive this as a “loaded” question if they are concerned about being politically correct, and may respond in a fashion they consider to be politically correct. To address this issue, the biographical information at the end of the questionnaire did not include any identification by name. I insure anonymity in the introduction as well.

Inter-observer consistency is not a significant issue with a self-completion questionnaire, as there are no observers involved in the actual completion of the

questionnaire. The only threat for this study may have been if multiple researchers were to analyze the “other” responses with different interpretations. However, multiple researchers were not used.

A primary limitation of the study was the socioeconomic data. The accessible population of soccer parents resided in a university-dominated urban community in a Southern state. They represented a very white (99%), affluent (average \$75,000+ annual income), highly educated (average college graduates or higher), and married (90%) population. The three schools represent the urban population of a county where reputable government sources indicate that 57% of the population has a bachelor’s or graduate degree and almost 50% earn an annual household income of \$50,000 or more (U.S. Census, 2000). Rural schools and schools from communities with more economic and racial diversity may provide greater comparative evidence of aggressive behavior.

Another significant limitation of the study was the number of respondents and the deviant nature of behavior being studied. While anecdotal reports in the media might have the public believe that parents are going crazy on the sidelines everywhere, I neither saw nor heard of any particularly aggressive parental actions from these three schools. The questionnaires were distributed while games were in play and during these competitions parents did not display overly aggressive behavior. Although they responded as many sports fans with cheers and expressions of dissatisfaction with referee calls or disappointment over a close shot that missed the goal, none of those expressions were threatening, obscene or physically violent. Likewise, when talking to parents informally during the games, no one reported experiencing threatening, obscene or violent parental behavior.

Finally, the measure of parental response of aggressive behavior was somewhat vague. Parents were asked if they “reacted” to other parents “such as shouting back” or if they “got caught up in crowd behavior.” The instrument did not ask them to specifically detail if they had ever thrown objects; verbally abused a player, referee or coach; or if they’d become physically violent. This population did not appear to exhibit those types of behaviors and that type of extreme behavior could take weeks, months or even years of attending numerous different sports events to witness in this community.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine how community and family social capital influenced parental rage behavior at high school soccer matches. It explored how they react to different stimuli during games and how their psychological aggression, socioeconomic status and perceived importance of winning might also influence their reactions. Finally, this study observed differences in parental attitudes, family and community satisfaction, marital status and gender and how they relate to public displays of aggressive behavior at high school soccer games. Results for these questions will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter concludes with additional significant results that were not directly related to primary or secondary research questions, but that are important to understanding the phenomenon of parental behavior at youth sports events.

Descriptive Statistics

Parents were randomly selected at six different high school soccer games during regular season, three boys' games and three girls' games. Packets containing the instruments were provided to 44 total participants. Two of these were not completed and were therefore omitted from data analysis, and two were not returned. This resulted in a final sample of 40 participants. A complete description of the demographic characteristics of the study participants is found in Tables 4.1 through 4.3 presented in this chapter.

Gender

Women made up over 60% of the population (62.5%), and males composed almost 40% (37.50%) of the sample. The gender breakdown of this study was consistent

with the male/female ratio in the stands at their respective games when based on a count of male and female adults.

Table 4-1. Gender of respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Gender	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	15	37.5
Female	25	62.5
Total	40	100.0

Income

Three participants did not provide income data. Of the 37 responses, nearly 70% reported an annual household income level of \$75,000 or more.

Table 4-2. Annual household income of respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1-<\$30,000	0	0.00
2-\$30-50,000	5	13.5
3-\$50-75,000	7	18.9
4-\$75-100,000	8	21.6
5 - >\$100,000	17	46.0
TOTAL	37	100

Education

The city where data were collected is home of a major land grant university and has a high level of education per capita: this was reflected in the education levels of the soccer parents sampled. Nearly all of the participants were college graduates (47.5%) or had advanced degrees (42.5%). No parents had less than some college education.

Table 4-3. Education level of respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- High school	0	0.00
2- Some college	4	10
3- College grad	19	47.5
4- Advanced degree	17	42.5
TOTAL	40	100

Marital Status

Surprisingly, 87% of the participants were married while only 7% were divorced; 2.5% were widowed and 2.5% represented a blended family (each of these represented only one person).

Parent Involvement in Children's Sports

In addition to gender and socioeconomic and marital status, the questionnaire asked parents to report on their involvement in their children's high school athletic experience. More than half (52%) indicated that they attended all of their children's games: 40% said they attended most of the time, and only 5% reported attending sometimes. No parents reported that they rarely attended.

Parent Competitive Levels

Participants were asked several questions to measure their competitiveness. Parents identified how important winning was to them (Table 4-4), their level of expectation of their student athlete to compete at the collegiate or professional level (Table 4-5), how competitive their communities were (Table 4-6), and if rivalries or championship games escalate the tension they feel during games (Table 4-7). While almost two-thirds (63%) reported moderate to no importance of winning, well over one-third (approximately 38%) reported high to extremely high importance.

Table 4-4. Importance of winning to respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- extremely high	4	10
2- high	11	27.5
3- moderate	19	47.5
4- little	5	12.5
5 – none	1	2.5
TOTAL	40	100

Almost half of all parents (49%) had a moderate level of desire that their child will compete in collegiate or professional sports; however, 35% reported high to extremely high expectations that their children will compete as college or professional athletes.

Table 4-5. Desire that child compete in college/pros among respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- extremely high	2	5
2- high	11	30
3- moderate	18	49
4- little	2	5
5 – none	4	11
TOTAL	37	100

Participants were asked to rate their community's level of competitiveness. Seventy-seven percent rated their sports community as high to extremely highly competitive.

Table 4-6. Perception of their community's level of competitiveness among a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- extremely high	6	15
2- high	24	62
3- moderate	8	21
4- little	1	2
5 – none	0	0
TOTAL	39	100

Aggression Levels

To appropriately measure parental aggressive behavior, it was important to compare sideline aggressive behavior to natural social aggression. Aggression was measured using the Aggression Questionnaire (Buss, 2000)(Appendix B). The Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) is an updated version of the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (Buss & Durkee, 1957), used for measurement of anger and aggression. Thirty-four items are scored on five scales: Physical Aggression (PHY), Verbal Aggression (VER), Anger (ANG), Hostility (HOS), and Indirect Aggression (IND). The instrument asks participants to answer on a scale from 1= “Not at all like me,” to 5= “Completely like me.” This tool was ideal as it provided a brief measure for making group comparisons of aggressive characteristics. The aggression questionnaire scores are based on percentiles with rankings of <2= very low; 2-14= low; 15-81= average; 82-97= high; >97= very high. For measurement purposes each score was measured as 1= very high, 2= high, 3= average, 4= low and 5= very low.

The AQ Total score is based on the responses to all 34 AQ items. As shown in table 4-7, over two-thirds (67.5%) of the study sample scored in the average range on the aggression questionnaire. Only 15% scored high in total aggression scores and typical scores were in the low average to average range of aggression. In addition, 17.5% scored in the low and very low categories.

Table 4-7. Aggression Questionnaire Total Scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	0	0
2- high	6	15
3- average	27	67.5
4 – low	6	15
5 – very low	1	2.5
TOTAL	40	100

The Physical Aggression (PHY) subscale presented in Table 4-8 includes 8 items that focused on the use of physical force when expressing anger or aggression including, “At times I can’t control the urge to hit someone,” and “I get into fights more than most people.” Adults who score high in physical aggression may have histories of physical violence or sadistic or antisocial personality characteristics. Over three-fourths of the sample (77.5%) scored in the average range. A total of 10% scored in the high or very high classification, with three parents (two men and one woman) scoring high and one parent (male) scoring in the very high category. Another 12.5% scored low; no parents fell into the very low category. Low scores may indicate a relative absence of physically aggressive behavior but may also indicate reticence toward engaging in physically aggressive behavior.

Table 4-8. AQ - Physical aggression scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	1	2.5
2- high	3	7.5
3- average	31	77.5
4 – low	5	12.5
5 – very low	0	0
TOTAL	40	100

The Verbal Aggression (VER) subscale pertains to quarrelsome and hostile speech. Individuals with high scores on the verbal aggression subscale commonly become angry because of situations they perceive to be unfair. They have indicated that they are more aware of a tendency to be more argumentative than most people. High scores are often a result of frustration or being under stress. As shown in Table 4-9, the overwhelming majority (67.5%) ranked average in verbal aggression. Another 17.5% scored high or very high in verbal aggression. In addition, 15% of the parents scored low; none scored very low.

Table 4-9. AQ - Verbal aggression scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	2	5
2- high	5	12.5
3- average	27	67.5
4 – low	6	15
5 – very low	0	0
TOTAL	40	100

The Anger (ANG) subscale of the AQ includes 7 items describing aspects of arousal and sense of control such as, “I let my anger show when I do not get what I want.” High scores on this scale are typically associated with temperamental gesturing, irritability and frustration. As shown in Table 4-10, anger levels were consistent with the previous AQ subscales with 57.5% scoring average. Only 10% scored in the high range and no one scored very high on anger. In addition, 32.5% scored low on the anger subscale, no one scored very low.

Table 4-10. AQ – Anger scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	0	0
2- high	4	10
3- average	23	57.5
4 – low	13	32.5
5 – very low	0	0
TOTAL	40	100

The Hostility (HOS) subscale of the AQ represent attitudes of bitterness, social alienation and paranoia, such as “I know that ‘friends’ talk about me behind my back.” A high score on this scale indicates that the individual is in a state of social alienation and may lead to magnified evaluations on other scales. Table 4-11 shows that 75% of participants reported average hostility levels. Another 17.5% reported low levels; no one reported very low levels. Also, 7.5%, or three individuals, reported high or very high levels of hostility.

Table 4-11. AQ – Hostility scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	2	5
2- high	1	2.5
3- average	30	75
4 – low	7	17.5
5 – very low	0	0
TOTAL	40	100

Indirect Aggression (IND) represents the tendency to express anger in actions that avoid direct confrontation. For example, people who may express their anger by giving someone the “silent treatment” or, “if angry enough, may mess up someone’s work.” Adults scoring low in IND scores are likely to be willing to use direct confrontation to resolve their conflicts. Table 4-12 shows that 75% of participants scored in the average

range while 15% scored in the high or very high range. Ten percent scored low; no one scored very low. Once again, this scale mirrors the tendency of these study participants to score in the average range.

Table 4-12. AQ – Indirect aggression scores for respondents of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very high	1	2.5
2- high	5	12.5
3- average	30	75
4 – low	4	10
5 – very low	0	0
TOTAL	40	40

Family Capital

Measures of family capital included the measure used in the General Social Survey (GSS) (NORC, 2003) and the Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA)(Hudson, 1992).

Socioeconomic status is also often considered a measure of family social capital.

However, since 90% of the parents were married, marriage cannot be a significant distinguishing variable of family social capital. Additionally, as previously reported, these parents also reported high levels of education and income. Without variability among these family social capital predictor variables, measures from the GSS and IPA were used to determine the influence of family social capital on aggressive parental behavior.

Parents were asked to score their level of satisfaction with their family life from the GSS scale of 9 responses, ranging from 9=“not applicable” to 1=“very great deal.” Seventy percent reported a “very great deal” of satisfaction in their family life and an additional 20% reported a “great deal” of satisfaction. The lowest score was from one person (a married female) who reported “a fair amount,” or a ranking of 4 on the scale.

The IPA was also used for measurement of family social capital. The index measures the degree of contentment a parent has in their relationships with their children. The index includes 25 responses about parental attitudes including such statements as, “I really enjoy my child,” “I wish my child was more like others I know,” or, “I feel violent toward my child.” Parents are asked to respond on a scale of 1 to 7 ranging from “none of the time” to “all of the time,” respectively. Specific scoring instructions were provided with the scale (Appendix D). Final scores of greater than 30 indicate a problem of potential clinical significance while scores less than 30 are in the acceptable range. Two parents reported scores indicating problems (one at 40 and another at 60). All other parents’ scores were 17 or less, indicating a very favorable rating or high level of family capital on this measure.

Community Capital

Measures of community capital included measures used in the General Social Survey (GSS) (NORC, 2003). Three key components to this measure were reports of level of satisfaction with the city in which they live, their non-work activities, and their friendships. Table 4-13 shows that forty two percent reported a “great deal” of satisfaction, 20% reported “a very great deal” of satisfaction and 20% reported “quite a bit” of satisfaction with their community. Seven percent of the parents reported a rank of 5 or “some” satisfaction in their city while 10% reported a rank of 4 or “a fair amount”. No one scored less than some satisfaction.

Table 4-13. Level of satisfaction with the community in which they reside for a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very great deal	8	20
2- great deal	17	42
3- quite a bit	8	20
4 – a fair amount	4	10
5 – some	3	7
6 – a little		
7 - none		
8 – don’t know		
9 – not applicable		
TOTAL	40	40

As shown in Table 4-14, participants appeared to be satisfied with their activities away from work: 27% reported a “very great deal” of satisfaction in their activities, 42% reported a “great deal” of satisfaction and 12% reported “quite a bit,” for a total of 81% satisfied. Another 12% reported a “fair amount of satisfaction with their non-work activities with only one parent each reporting “some” or “a little” for a total of 5%.

Table 4-14. Level of satisfaction with non-work related activities of a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very great deal	11	27.5
2- great deal	17	42.5
3- quite a bit	5	12.5
4 – a fair amount	5	12.5
5 – some	1	2.5
6 – a little	1	2.5
7 - none		
8 – don’t know		
9 – not applicable		
TOTAL	40	40

The final measure of community capital was friendship. As shown in Table 4-15, seventy five percent of parents reported very high levels of satisfaction in their friendships: 37.5% of parents responding reported “a very great deal” of friendship

satisfaction and an identical 37.5% reported a “great deal” of satisfaction. Ten percent were “quite a bit” satisfied and only 5% (two parents) reported moderate to little satisfaction.

Table 4-15. Level of satisfaction with friendship for a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Classification	Frequency	Valid Percent
1- very great deal	15	37.5
2- great deal	15	37.5
3- quite a bit	4	10
4 – a fair amount	1	2.5
5 – some		
6 – a little	1	2.5
7 - none		
8 – don’t know		
9 – not applicable		
TOTAL	40	40

Analyses

Research Question One

How does community social capital influence parental aggressive behavior? The purpose of this question was to explore and compare the relationships between psychological aggression and community satisfaction and parental aggressive behavior at high school soccer games.

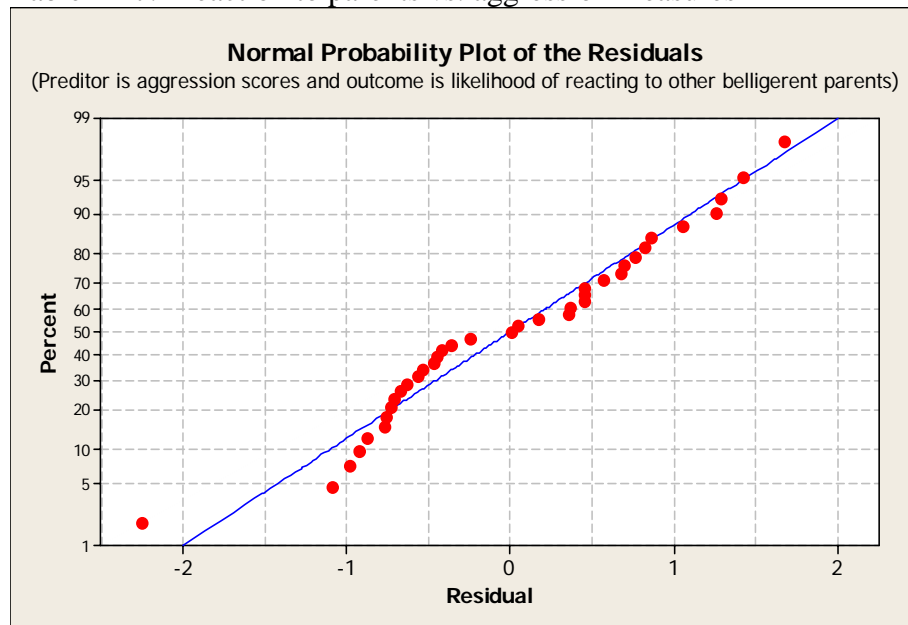
The first hypothesis predicted that social aggression would be associated with increased parental aggressive behavior during games. As reported previously, participants consistently scored in the average range on social aggression and community satisfaction measures. To determine any variance in the aggression scales in their relation to the outcome of reacting to parents, an analysis of variance test (ANOVA) was performed. As shown in Table 4-16 and

4-17, when all aggression scales were used as predictors of parents reacting to other belligerent parents, there was very little variability ($f=.84$ and $p=.533$). The lack of variability among aggression measures provides no clear distinction between Aggression Questionnaire Total, Verbal, Physical, Hostility, Anger or Indirect aggression and their correlation with aggressively responding to belligerent parents.

Table 4-16. Analysis of Variance of the relationship between total aggression, physical, verbal, anger, hostility scores and reaction to belligerent parents scores for a sample of parents attending high school soccer games in north central Florida, 2005.

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	5	3.8427	0.7685	0.84	0.533
Residual Error	31	28.42	0.917		
Total	36	32.27			

Table 4-17. Reaction to parents vs. aggression measures



The Significance of Aggression Predictor Variables

Further analysis of the data, as shown in Table 4-18, was conducted using forward and backward stepwise regression with alpha values of .01. Using predictor aggression variables including aggression scores and likelihood of getting upset over coaching

decisions, referee calls, and other belligerent parents, and reacting to belligerent parents was the outcome variable, the model did reveal some significant correlations with parents reacting to other belligerent parents. Using AQ Total as the predictor in every model and parents' likelihood to react as the outcome, results showed that AQ was significantly correlated with parents reacting aggressively in response to other belligerent parents ($p=.008$); there was no significant association between getting upset over a referee call or getting upset over a coach's call and the outcome variable of reacting to belligerent parents.

Table 4-18. Stepwise Regression: AQ Total, AQ PHY, VER, getting upset over coach call, ref call or other parents predicting reaction to belligerent parents

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Reaction to parents on 6 predictors, with N = 36
N(cases with missing observations) = 4 N(all cases) = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Total	0.74	0.82	0.73	0.79	0.95
T-Value	2.85	3.47	4.03	4.99	8.77
P-Value	0.008	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000
AQ Physical	0.19				
T-Value	0.72				
P-Value	0.475				
AQ Verbal	-0.21	-0.15			
T-Value	-0.82	-0.62			
P-Value	0.421	0.541			
Upset over coach call	0.25	0.29	0.23		
T-Value	0.76	0.89	0.75		
P-Value	0.454	0.378	0.458		
Upset over referee call	0.50	0.52	0.46	0.61	
T-Value	1.01	1.05	0.96	1.38	
P-Value	0.319	0.304	0.343	0.177	
Upset over parents	0.32	0.37	0.36	0.35	0.42
T-Value	1.88	2.32	2.31	2.25	2.82
P-Value	0.070	0.027	0.028	0.031	0.008
S	0.915	0.908	0.899	0.893	0.905
Mallows C-p	6.0	4.5	2.9	1.4	1.3

Community capital predictors

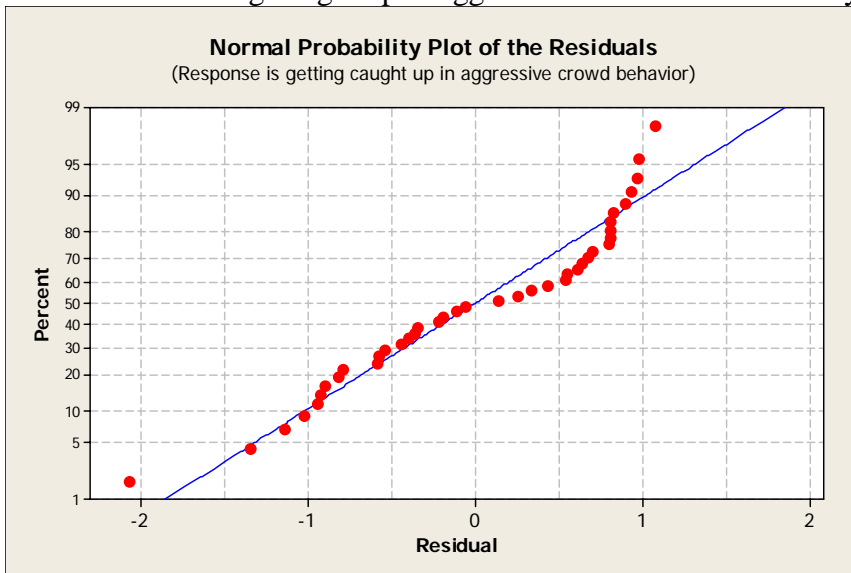
The second hypothesis predicted that higher levels of community capital would predict lower levels of aggressive behavior. Predictors for community capital included questions regarding satisfaction with the community in which they live, their non-work

activities and their friendships. Conducting analysis of variance (ANOVA) on each of these sets of predictor/outcome variables revealed that parental aggression did not vary significantly with community capital. (Table 4-19 and 4-20).

Table 4-19. Analysis of variance of the relationship between community capital predictor variables and getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	5	4.4355	.8871	1.22	.320
Residual Error	34	24.66	.7254		
Total	39	29.1000			

Table 4-20. Getting caught up in aggressive crowd vs. community capital measures

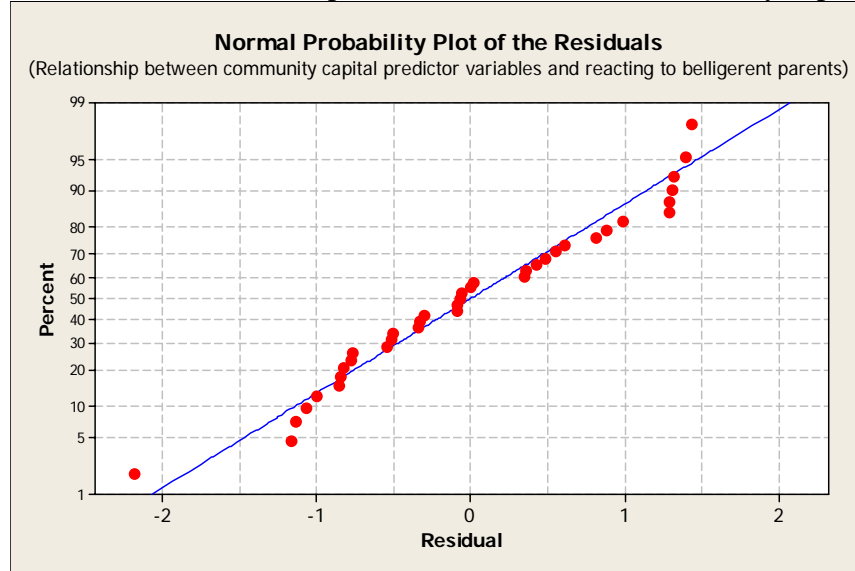


Another ANOVA was run for community capital predictor variables with the outcome of reacting to parents (Table 4 –21 and 4-22).

Table 4-21. Analysis of variance of the relationships between reacting to belligerent parents and community, non-work related activities, level of satisfaction with friendships, level of satisfaction with family, and the Index of Parental Attitudes

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	5	5.6	1.1206	1.3	0.288
Residual Error	31	26.6	0.8602		
Total	36	32.27			

Table 4-22. Reaction to parents vs. measures of community capital



Further analysis of the data, as shown in Table 4-23, was conducted using forward and backward Stepwise Regression with alpha values of .01. Community capital predictor variables included level of satisfaction with community, non-work related activities, and value of friendships. The outcome variable measured was a parent's likelihood to get caught up in aggressive crowd behavior. The regression was run a second time including AQ Verbal as a test to determine if verbal aggression increased the likelihood of response (Table 4-24). When comparing crowd behavior, AQ Total and community capital, activities, and friendships, friendship was the most important predictor of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior (Table 4-23). When testing

for verbal aggression in every model of crowd response, friendship was again significant (Table 4-24).

Table 4-23. Stepwise Regression: AQ Total, community social capital variables (community satisfaction, activities, friendships, IPA) as predictors of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01
Response is Crowd on 5 predictors, with N = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Total	1.217	1.233	1.327	1.193	1.322
T-Value	9.20	9.53	10.99	11.27	25.80
P-Value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Satisfaction with community					
	0.22	0.24			
T-Value	1.58	1.74			
P-Value	0.122	0.091			
Satisfaction in non-work activities					
	-0.35	-0.38	-0.29		
T-Value	-2.26	-2.57	-2.06		
P-Value	0.030	0.015	0.046		
Satisfaction with friendships					
	0.24	0.29	0.34	0.21	
T-Value	1.47	1.88	2.17	1.40	
P-Value	0.150	0.068	0.037	0.171	
IPA					
	0.010				
T-Value	0.71				
P-Value	0.480				
S	0.938	0.932	0.957	0.997	1.01
Mallows C-p	5.0	3.5	4.5	6.9	7.1

Table 4-24. Stepwise Regression: AQ Verbal, community social capital variables (community satisfaction, activities, friendships, IPA) as predictors of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Crowd on 5 predictors, with N = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Verbal	1.154	1.169	1.255	1.137	1.352
T-Value	6.36	6.70	8.32	8.91	21.00
P-Value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Satisfaction with community	0.17	0.18			
T-Value	0.93	0.99			
P-Value	0.359	0.330			
Satisfaction with non-work activities					
	-0.28	-0.30	-0.25		
T-Value	-1.45	-1.64	-1.42		
P-Value	0.155	0.109	0.163		
Satisfaction with friendships	0.38	0.41	0.44	0.33	
T-Value	1.86	2.18	2.37	1.93	
P-Value	0.071	0.036	0.023	0.061	
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.007				
T-Value	0.36				
P-Value	0.724				
S	1.18	1.17	1.17	1.18	1.22
Mallows C-p	5.0	3.1	2.1	2.1	3.8

Research Question Two

How does family social or antisocial capital influence the value placed on winning and if so, is it related to aggressive parental spectator behavior? The purpose of this question was to explore and compare the influence of competitiveness, parental attitudes, socioeconomic status, and levels of family satisfaction on aggressive parental behavior.

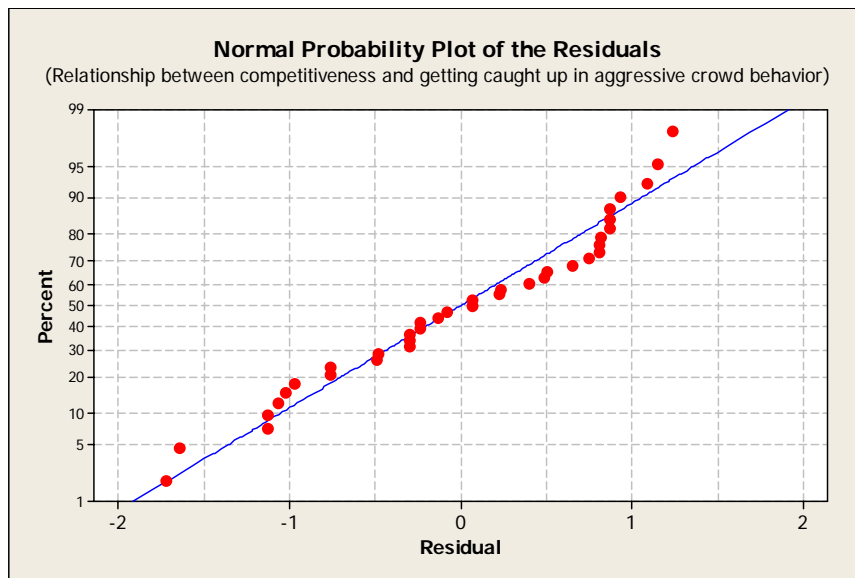
Competitiveness Predictors

First, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests were run on measures of competitiveness to determine if the value parents placed on winning, desire to have their children excel to collegiate or professional levels, or degree of contentment with their child predicted their aggressive behavior. When predicting reaction to belligerent parents, little variability was shown between the competitiveness variables (f-value= 1.47 and p-value= .24) (Table 4-25 and 4-26).

Table 4-25. Analysis of Variance of the relationship between getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior and competitive values

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	3	3.2403	1.0801	1.47	0.242
Residual Error	33	24.3273	0.7372		
Total	36	27.5676			

Table 4-26. Getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior vs. competitive values



Stepwise regression analysis provided a more accurate prediction of a parent's competitiveness and their likelihood to react to other parents during their children's games. Level of desire of participation in collegiate or professional sports and family

satisfaction significantly predicted parental reaction at games. Parents who had higher hopes of their children competing at collegiate or professional levels and reported high levels of family satisfaction were significantly more likely to react to other parents during soccer games ($p < 0.001$) (Table 4-27).

Table 4-27. Stepwise Regression: Value of winning, desire to have child compete in college/pros, IPA, and family satisfaction as predictors of reaction to belligerent parents

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Reaction to parents on 4 predictors, with $N = 34$
 $N(\text{cases with missing observations}) = 6$ $N(\text{all cases}) = 40$

Step	1	2	3
No constant			
Value placed on winning	0.42	0.42	
T-Value	2.22	2.24	
P-Value	0.034	0.032	
Desire to have child play college/pro	0.53	0.56	0.86
T-Value	2.83	3.13	6.87
P-Value	0.008	0.004	0.000
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.011		
T-Value	0.58		
P-Value	0.567		
Satisfaction with family	0.68	0.71	0.88
T-Value	2.77	3.03	3.73
P-Value	0.010	0.005	0.001
S	1.15	1.14	1.21
Mallows C-p	4.0	2.3	5.2

Family Social Capital Predictors

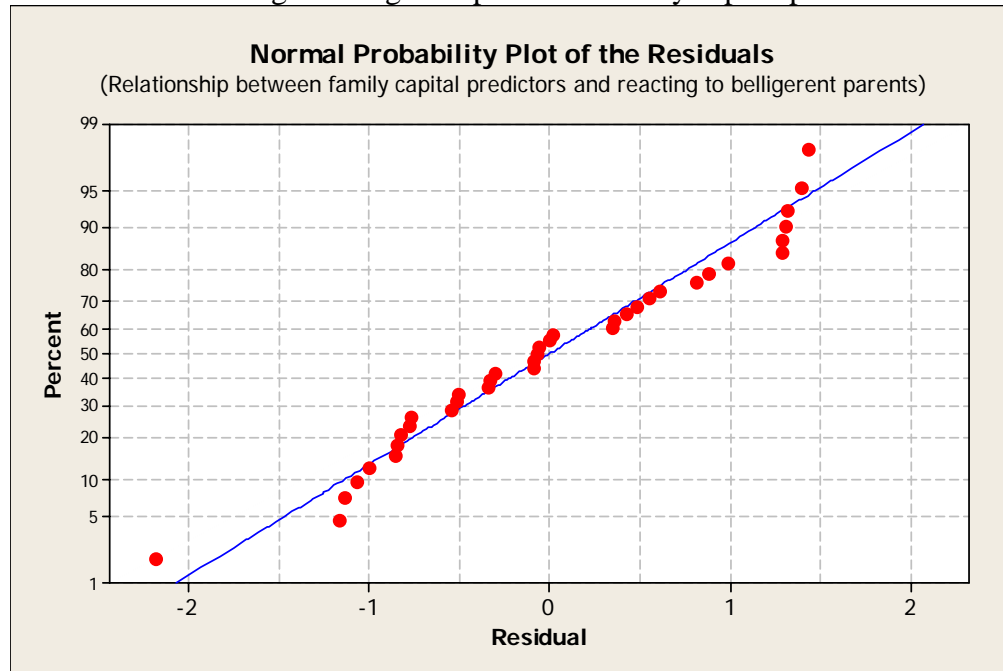
The study sample was fairly homogeneous on marital status, education and income levels. The majority (90%) of parents were married, nearly 70% earned \$75,000 annually, and 90% held a college degree or higher.

Lower incomes and educational levels were not associated with higher levels of aggression during soccer games. An ANOVA test showed little variance among measures of family capital when reacting to parents (Table 4-28 and 4-29).

Table 4-28. Analysis of Variance for the relationship between reacting to belligerent parents and family capital predictor variables

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	5	5.6582	1.1316	1.27	.306
Residual Error	29	25.9418	.8945		
Total	34	31.600			

Table 4-29. Reacting to belligerent parents – Family capital predictor variables



With little variability shown, stepwise regression analysis was used to determine which predictor variables were most important in determining the likelihood of reacting

to parents during soccer games. When testing for parental reactions during competition and using AQ Total in every model, as shown in Table 4-30, the measure of parental attitudes toward their children (IPA) was significant ($p < 0.002$). Education was also significant ($p = 0.057$). When using AQ Verbal in every model, education was the most significant predictor ($< .05$) although parental attitudes approached statistical significance ($p < .070$) (Table 4-31).

Table 4-30. Stepwise Regression: AQ Total, Family social capital predictors (Level of family satisfaction, IPA, education, income and marital status) as predictors of reacting to parents

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Reaction to parents on 6 predictors, with N = 35
N(cases with missing observations) = 5 N(all cases) = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Total	0.701	0.699	0.746	0.718	1.092
T-Value	3.15	3.34	3.68	3.60	16.86
P-Value	0.004	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.000
Satisfaction with family	0.19	0.18			
T-Value	0.86	0.93			
P-Value	0.399	0.362			
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.035	0.035	0.038	0.033	0.042
T-Value	2.40	2.47	2.74	2.61	3.33
P-Value	0.023	0.019	0.010	0.014	0.002
Education level	0.38	0.37	0.39	0.37	
T-Value	1.64	1.94	2.05	1.98	
P-Value	0.113	0.062	0.049	0.057	
Income level	-0.00				
T-Value	-0.03				
P-Value	0.975				
Marital Status	-0.16	-0.16	-0.15		
T-Value	-0.86	-0.94	-0.88		
P-Value	0.397	0.352	0.386		
S	0.855	0.841	0.839	0.836	0.872
Mallows C-p	6.0	4.0	2.8	1.6	3.3

Table 4-31. Stepwise Regression: AQ VER, Family social capital predictors (Level of family satisfaction, IPA, education, income and marital status as predictors of reacting to parents)

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Reaction to parents on 6 predictors, with N = 35
N(cases with missing observations) = 5 N(all cases) = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Verbal	-0.01	-0.02	0.06	0.13	0.11
T-Value	-0.05	-0.06	0.24	0.54	0.46
P-Value	0.964	0.950	0.816	0.591	0.649
Satisfaction with family	0.26	0.26	0.32		
T-Value	1.05	1.07	1.43		
P-Value	0.303	0.291	0.163		
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.027	0.027	0.023	0.028	
T-Value	1.65	1.70	1.51	1.88	
P-Value	0.110	0.100	0.140	0.070	
Education level	0.78	0.77	0.86	0.91	1.02
T-Value	3.00	3.22	3.96	4.18	4.66
P-Value	0.006	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000
Income level	0.13	0.14			
T-Value	0.75	0.87			
P-Value	0.462	0.391			
Marital status	-0.02				
T-Value	-0.10				
P-Value	0.922				
S	0.991	0.974	0.971	0.986	1.02
Mallows C-p	6.0	4.0	2.7	2.7	4.2

When testing for getting caught up in aggressive crowd behaviors and using AQ Total in every model, no variables were significantly associated with reacting to parents, including income, marital status, education or level of family satisfaction. However,

when using AQ Verbal in every model, education level was statistically significant (p=.008) (Table 4-33).

Table 4-32. Stepwise Regression: AQ Total, family social capital variables (Level of family satisfaction, IPA, education, income and marital status) as predictors of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Crowd on 6 predictors, with N = 37
N(cases with missing observations) = 3 N(all cases) = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5	6
No constant						
AQ Total	0.935	0.946	0.986	1.043	1.240	1.319
T-Value	3.61	3.76	4.81	5.91	17.76	24.85
P-Value	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Family	0.06					
T-Value	0.24					
P-Value	0.810					
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.018	0.019	0.020	0.024	0.023	
T-Value	1.05	1.17	1.32	1.73	1.69	
P-Value	0.300	0.249	0.197	0.093	0.100	
Education level	0.08	0.07				
T-Value	0.30	0.28				
P-Value	0.769	0.779				
Income level	0.14	0.15	0.17	0.15		
T-Value	0.83	0.95	1.30	1.22		
P-Value	0.413	0.348	0.201	0.232		
Marital status	0.09	0.10	0.11			
T-Value	0.42	0.46	0.57			
P-Value	0.678	0.647	0.575			
S	1.01	0.991	0.978	0.968	0.974	0.999
Mallows C-p	6.0	4.1	2.1	0.4	-0.2	0.5

Table 4-33. Stepwise Regression: AQ Verbal, family social capital variables (Level of family satisfaction, IPA, education, income and marital status) as predictors of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior

Alpha-to-Enter: 0.01 Alpha-to-Remove: 0.01

Response is Crowd on 6 predictors, with N = 37

N(cases with missing observations) = 3 N(all cases) = 40

Step	1	2	3	4	5
No constant					
AQ Verbal	0.41	0.41	0.43	0.49	0.58
T-Value	1.33	1.34	1.44	1.63	2.11
P-Value	0.192	0.190	0.159	0.111	0.042
Satisfaction with family	0.16	0.19			
T-Value	0.59	0.72			
P-Value	0.559	0.475			
Index of Parental Attitudes	0.008				
T-Value	0.42				
P-Value	0.679				
Education level	0.41	0.44	0.44	0.59	0.68
T-Value	1.36	1.50	1.51	2.23	2.82
P-Value	0.184	0.144	0.140	0.032	0.008
Income level	0.21	0.19	0.23	0.15	
T-Value	1.07	1.02	1.26	0.87	
P-Value	0.294	0.314	0.218	0.393	
Marital status	0.21	0.24	0.28		
T-Value	0.87	1.01	1.22		
P-Value	0.391	0.319	0.230		
S	1.17	1.15	1.14	1.15	1.15
Mallows C-p	6.0	4.2	2.7	2.1	0.8

Additional Points of Interest

Another question parents were asked was, “What upsets you most when watching your children compete? Please rank in order with 1 being the most upsetting and 6 being

the least.” Their choices were: Coaches’ call, referee call, other parents, bad performance by their child, bad sportsmanship from other team, and other. Bad sportsmanship from the other team was most likely to upset them with 55% ranking it first and an additional 32% ranking it second (Table 4-34). The next most likely reason parents got upset was over a referee call, with half of them considering the call biased and 25% considering the call bad due to indifference or incompetence. The least likely reason parents would get upset was their child’s performance.

Table 4-34. Reasons parents got upset during games (1=highest 6= lowest)

Reason	1	2	3	4	5	6
Coach’s call	1	4	5	15	6	2
Ref calls	8	9	15	3	2	
Parents	3	6	7	9	2	1
Child performance	1	2	2	6	14	6
Opponent	22	13	4		1	
Other	1-teammates 1-coach behavior	1 teammate				1 weather 1-teammates 1-not getting to play

Also, unusual observations were for parents who scored very high on the Aggression Questionnaire. One was a father of a female athlete who scored in the 93rd percentile in aggression with scores in the 90th percentile in physical aggression and in the 98th percentile in verbal aggression. His Parental Attitude Index score was very low (very high degree of contentment with his child) and his social capital measures were very high. He considered it very important that his daughter’s team wins and he had high expectations of her playing in college. This father earned \$30-50,000 and had some college education, making him an outlier on three of the measures of SES and aggression. Yet, he reported that he only sometimes shouts back at belligerent parents, and that he rarely gets caught up in aggressive crowd behavior.

The other parent who scored exceedingly high in aggression (97th percentile) also scored a 60 on the Index of Parental Attitudes. Any score above 30 is considered a sign of severe problems between parent and child. Her athlete was female. This mother indicated that she rarely reacts to other parents and that she also rarely gets caught up in crowd behavior. She did not expect her daughter to compete in college and did not consider winning very important, but considered her athletic community to be very competitive. She had some college and earned \$30-50,000 per year.

Summary

This research examined the factors associated with parental aggression at sporting events. In particular, the study explored the role that social capital might play in predicting aggressive behavior, speculating that parents in communities high in social capital would be less likely to publicly exhibit aggressive behavior, while parents who were high in social capital would be more likely to exhibit such behavior. This research also speculated that SES and gender would have no influence on a parents' likelihood of getting "ugly" on the sidelines.

During the past fifteen years, theorists and researchers have built a considerable literature on social capital and its role in the ways communities and families interact (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, et al., 1993). Social capital was seen as the strength of relationships within an individual's sphere of influence that provides order and opportunities that those without those relationships may not have. Putnam (1993) defined it as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms, trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for benefit" (p. 36). Early on, social capital was conceptualized as having a positive influence, providing individuals with the social resources that would enhance their life experience. This assumption about the influence

of social capital has begun to change in recent years. For example, where social networks are only available in high-risk communities (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Brodsky, 1996; Caughy et al, 2003), being alone may be better. To further understand what can be considered the negative side of social capital, looking at sports communities that have become highly competitive and aggressive could be revealing. To examine the relationship between social capital and aggression, this study looked at parental behavior and attitudes at high school soccer games.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study sample was composed of parents of public high school students on soccer teams in a metro area in a southern state. Parents were randomly selected from the crowd at six different soccer games during the regular season, three boys' games and three girls' games. The research questionnaire was distributed to parents at the sporting event, and they were given the option to complete the survey in the stands or at home. A pre-addressed and stamped envelope was provided for those who wanted to mail back the survey.

The predictor variables were: Parenting attitudes, level of competitiveness, perceived measures of family and community social capital, and social aggression levels during youth sports events. Outcome variables included parental response to belligerent parents and getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior, such as yelling at a referee or at perceived bad sportsmanship on the field.

Two standardized instruments were used, the Aggression Questionnaire (Buss, 2000), which measured levels of social aggression including verbal aggression, physical aggression, hostility, anger and indirect aggression and the Index of Parental Attitudes, which measured the degree of contentment a parent had in his or her relationship with

their child (Hudson, 1992). Questions asked in the General Social Survey (NORC, 2003) to measure family and community capital were included in the self-completion questionnaire. Additional questions tapped responses to coach and referee calls and belligerent parents.

As shown in this section, the data analyses produced some unexpected results. The demographic characteristics described below indicate that the sample was rich in social capital. For the most part, these parents did not display unusually aggressive behaviors, and generally had very positive relationships with their children.

Parental Aggression Levels and Public Aggressive Behavior

This study predicted that the higher the individual's social aggression, the higher the parental aggressive behavior at high school soccer games, specifically the higher their reaction to other parents and the higher their involvement in crowd behavior. However, the study sample was generally not particularly aggressive. Using the Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) scale to measure aggression, the study found that 67.5% (n=27) reported "average" levels of aggression, 15% (n=6) scored "high" and 15% scored "low" in aggression, and 2.5 (n=1) parent scored "very low." All subscales of aggression showed very little variability from the overall aggression score, although participants scored slightly higher in verbal aggression. It was also predicted that verbal aggression was important because the most likely act of aggression during a high school soccer game was verbal, consistent with typical sport fan behavior (Wann, 2001). Verbal aggression, according to the Aggression Questionnaire, pertains to quarrelsome or hostile speech. Individuals who score high on the verbal aggression scale usually become angered by situations they perceive to be unfair.

Community Social Capital and Public Aggressive Behavior

Second, it was predicted that the higher the participant's community capital, the lower the level of parental aggressive behavior at their children's high school soccer games. The community social capital predictor variables selected from the General Social Survey (GSS) included, "community satisfaction," "non-working activities," and "friendships." The study participants generally reported high levels of satisfaction in their community, with 82% reporting "quite a bit" to "a very great deal" of satisfaction. An almost identical 81% reported the same levels of satisfaction in their non-work activities. Friendship was also important to these parents, with 75% reporting "a great deal" or "a very great deal" of satisfaction in their friendships.

When entering AQ total and AQ verbal scores into the equations with the community social capital predictors to determine which would be the most important predictor of the outcome of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior, in both cases the most important predictor was "friendship." This showed up in all four models in the stepwise regression. Parents who scored highest on friendship levels were more likely to indicate they would "sometimes" get caught up in crowd behavior.

Family Social Capital and Public Aggressive Behavior

The second research question asked if family social capital influences the value placed on winning and if so, is it related to aggressive public behavior (i.e., reacting to referees and crowd behavior). To determine the relationship between family social capital and competitiveness on the outcome of reacting to parents, predictor variables for competitiveness included a parent's desire to have their child compete at collegiate or professional levels, the importance of winning, and their IPA scores. Level of family satisfaction was also entered in the stepwise regression equation. The desire to have their

child compete beyond high school and high levels of family satisfaction were equally strong predictors of aggressively reacting to other parents ($p < 0.01$, C-p 5.2).

Additional measures of family social capital proved to predict public aggressive behavior. The study sample was high in family social capital. Family social capital was measured using income, marital status, education, IPA scores, and levels of family satisfaction. Each of these is discussed below.

Income and marital status. Because the income and marital status of this population was so homogenous, they played virtually no role in predicting aggressive behavior. Of the five parents who were not married to their original partner, their likelihood to respond to belligerent parents represented three of the five possible answers, providing no clear relationship. Four of the five indicated that they never got caught up in crowd behavior; thus there was clearly no relationship between not being married and aggressive crowd behavior.

Similarly, only four parents indicated that they earned less than \$50,000 annually. They consistently reported average responses to aggressively reacting to parents (“sometimes” or “rarely”) and all of them rarely or never got involved in aggressive crowd behavior. The high incomes of this population were most directly associated with “never” getting involved in aggressive crowd behavior and “sometimes” or “rarely” responding to belligerent parents.

Education. Education as a measure of family capital was the most significant predictor of reacting to parents sometimes or rarely ($p < 0.01$; C-p = 4.2) when verbal aggression was entered into every equation. As mentioned previously, 90% of participants had college educations or advanced degrees.

Index of Parental Attitudes. The Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA) revealed a community composed of very healthy parent/child relationships. Thirty six of the forty parents had very low scores (any score under 30 was considered “acceptable”). When entering AQ Total scores into the stepwise regression equation with all family capital predictor variables, IPA scores were most likely to predict that parents would react “sometimes” compared to “rarely” or “never.”

Levels of Family Satisfaction. Additionally, 70% of all parents reporting levels of family satisfaction scored the highest level satisfaction, “very great deal” with an additional 20% reporting a “great deal.” Only one parent scored less with “a fair amount” of satisfaction. Of the three parents who did not report high levels of family satisfaction, there was no consistent response to their reactions to other parents or getting caught up on aggressive crowd behavior.

Gender and Public Aggressive Behavior

As predicted, men and women scored at similar levels of aggression and exhibition of that aggression at both boys and girls games. In addition, there was no significant difference between them on the outcome variables. In general, mothers and fathers in this community were relatively civil, exhibiting aggressive behaviors only occasionally or not at all. In this community men and women shouted equally, whether at their daughter’s games or their son’s games.

In summary, these results indicated that family and community social capital have some influence over parents’ public displays of aggression at high school soccer games. Stepwise regression was used to determine that parents with positive attitudes towards their children and who placed higher value on their friendships, both measures of social

capital, were the most important predictors of higher levels of parental aggression during high school soccer games.

Although the study was drawn from a community rich in family and community capital, findings suggest that *relationships* in the community play a greater role in predicting aggressive parental fan behavior than do demographic characteristics such as gender and income, or even an individual's level of social aggression. Strong and supportive relationships between parents and their children and their relationships with their friends predicted higher levels of public aggressive parental behavior. Participants in this study provided evidence that positive family and community social capital produced what is perceived to be negative public behavior.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings

Aggressive fan behavior has become an issue that is front and center in the media spotlight. During an NBA game in December 2004, a player vaulted into the stands and assaulted a fan he thought had thrown a cup at him. Yet aggression—in the stands and on the field—is not confined to professional sports, but is also reported at college and high school athletic events. In December 2004, the South Carolina-Clemson college football game concluded when the players started swinging at one another, resulting in chaos on the field. Also in December, the Ohio High School Athletic Association instituted a new policy of strict penalties for players who initiate fights, after an incident led to a melee of fan violence on the courts of a high school girls basketball game (The Associated Press, 2004). In Michigan in January, 2004, a public school district sought a permanent injunction to keep a couple away from a sporting event at their child's school, after they threatened parents of opposing athletes and exhibited other intimidation (Ann Arbor News, 2004). Parental aggression is prevalent not only in the increasingly competitive high school sports arena but also in youth athletic leagues (Engh, 1999; Wann et al.2001,).

This study explored the relationship between family and community social capital and public aggressive behaviors of high school soccer parents during their children's games. It was hypothesized that psychological aggression would predict public aggressive behaviors and that community and family social capital would work as

deterrents to aggressive behavior. As previously discussed, neither of these hypotheses were confirmed.

Aggression

In general, participants who scored highest (top 15%) in the total level of aggression (i.e., the Aggression Questionnaire or AQ total) tended not to show public aggressive behavior. These parents indicated that they “sometimes” responded to belligerent parents; and that they rarely, if ever, got caught up in crowd behavior. These findings indicated that individual parental aggression was not a predictor of public aggressive behavior at high school soccer games. In this study, individual psychological aggression was not triggered by their children’s actions or by the sport environment. Further study of the public behavior of individuals with high levels of aggression may reveal that their aggression may be more likely expressed in a private environment, similar to those who are abusive in private.

Aggression in the sports environment has been studied extensively (Arms, Russell, & Sandilands, 1979; Wann, 2001) and this previous research showed that public displays of aggression during sports events are typically triggered by alcohol, heat, or highly charged combative sports events. In this study, aggressive parents attending high school soccer games appeared to be reacting defensively. It appears that if they felt their child, or their child’s team was not being treated fairly (bad call by a referee, bad sportsmanship of the other team, or a coach’s decision), they were more likely to get upset. Responding to belligerent parents is also a defensive reaction. Anecdotal responses from several parents also acknowledged what they considered curious but true that the “nicest people” were the ones they see expressing verbal dissatisfaction during games. Aggressive

behavior may not be typical for many of these parents, but is triggered by motivations unique to parents in a competitive setting.

The Role of Community Social Capital

Another interesting finding revealed that when using verbal aggression as a variable in every step and predictor variables of community social capital in the stepwise regression, friendship and non-work activities were also determined to be the most important predictors of aggressive crowd behavior, with friendship approaching significance. If the parents consider their soccer network as a source of friendship and non-work activity, this finding supports research from Green and Chalip (1997) that found that “parental socialization into youth sport may not be due to the direct influence of the child per se, but, rather to the child’s sport organization” (p.71). The parent peer networks that develop among sports organizations are an excellent example of community social capital. These parents may spend years together, sitting on sidelines together for hours each week, carpooling, and socializing. In this study, GSS measures of community social capital included the level of satisfaction in friendships. Parents who reported higher levels of satisfaction in friendships proved to have an increased likelihood of verbal aggressive parental behavior. These results conflict with traditional social capital theory as instead of reducing aggression, a positive support structure created a negative public reaction.

It is important to recognize that parents were not asked to specify whether they identified their sport community, work community, spiritual community or residential community as the source of their friendship networks. It cannot be assumed that they were thinking of their fellow sports parents as their friends, so it cannot be assumed that the sport team parent peer network was specific to their aggressive behaviors.

However, I believe that further study of sport parent peer networks may reveal community behaviors different from other forms of community. The parent's connection to their child's sport community combines their emotions as a parent, as a sports spectator, and as a peer among other sport parents. The combination of these roles may create reactions that would not be expressed under any other circumstance.

The connection parents make to their sport community challenges assumptions about community social capital in some aspects. While Bubolz (2001) found family as a source and builder of social capital, Subramanian and colleagues (2003) found that in some high-risk neighborhoods, social capital was found to have a negative influence on families. For example, close-knit social networks in a community high in poverty may be in the form of street gangs. Their shared norms and values as well as their norms of reciprocity may be manifested as acts of crime. As Streeten (2002, p.11) explained, "Networks and social interaction can cause illegitimacy, bribery, corruption, nepotism, cronyism and crime." Sports communities high in social capital may also provide both positive and negative outcomes. Sports fans in collegiate and professional levels have displayed negative outcomes in aggressive, even violent, mob behaviors similar to Freud's definition of the primal horde. Negative outcomes may be the case in the family/sport environment, where higher levels of social capital can result in aggression because the shared norms and values placed on winning override abiding by the norms of civility or social contracts set by current culture. As a community, these parents bond in a desire to have their children succeed.

The Role of Family Social Capital

The parents included in this study unquestionably fit the measures of family social capital defined by Coleman, McNulty, Bellair, and Isreal: they networked with their

children's friends parents, interacted with their children's school, and were involved in their children's sport. The parents were involved and were networking with their children's teammates parents. Although there is still some question as to whether these parents defined their children's teammates' parents as friends, recall that those who found friendship more satisfying expressed greater likelihood of aggressive public behavior. Family social capital, as measured by the Index of Parental Attitudes, also revealed interesting results. Parents who scored extremely high in their parent/child relationship were more likely to express aggressive public behavior. Parents who did not share such close bonds with their children did not report participating in aggressive public behavior.

Ecological Theory

The relationships within families, between parents and their children, and among families, within their communities, can be further explained by Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. In the high school sport environment, the exosystem of the sports culture appears to influence the relationship between the family and its community. Parents adopt behaviors fitting to their sport community, to become an integral and accepted part of that community. Parents' closer ties with friends may be more likely to elicit aggressive responses from parents during soccer games. This study also revealed that the closer the ties within the mesosystem, or parent/child relationship, the more likely the public display of parental aggressive behavior. Parents who felt extremely close to their children were more aggressive than those who were not so close. The parent, or the microsystem, was influenced by their personal attitudes toward their child as well as their socioeconomic status. Also surprisingly, parents who were highly educated, married and who enjoyed a comfortable economic status were also more likely to express aggressive public behavior.

A word of caution is in order regarding this community characterized by high levels of income and education. This unexpected demographic profile may have impacted the results. Exploring more diverse communities may yield very different findings. For example, rural communities that place much greater value on their high school sports may reveal more extreme parental responses like those suggested by other studies of sport fan behavior. In these cases, community can play a dramatic role on family behaviors.

The Question of Competitiveness

Also, further study of the role of competition, whether in sports, arts or academia, and its influence on communities and on community social capital may also reveal trends that break from original social capital theory. Because the sample of parents in this study were “rich” in family, community and financial capital, it may be possible that their expectations and drive for success is also reflected in a more aggressive sport fan behavior as well as on their desires for children’s successful outcomes. This conclusion is consistent with Rosenfeld and Wise’s (2001) concept of “hyper-parenting,” where, as they reported, “the most competitive adult sport is no longer golf, it is parenting” (p.1).

Finally, it is also important to recognize that the sample studied lacked variability in socioeconomic status. The parents in this sport community were all white, and had high levels of education and income, and for the most part were married to their original spouse. They also did not express high levels of aggression. Thus, while there is a link between family and community social capital and aggressive parental behavior, the link does not connect to deviant or highly aggressive behaviors. Additionally, for the purposes of this study, measures of social capital were defined from GSS community and family social capital measures and from the Index of Parental Attitudes. Thus, the

conclusions made in this research are based on agreement of the validity and accuracy of “satisfaction with community,” “satisfaction with friendships,” “satisfaction with family,” “satisfaction with non-work activities,” and “parental attitudes” as measures of social capital.

Implications

There is a growing perception that aggressive or “overzealous” parents are wreaking havoc on sports fields and in other areas of their children’s communities. Is it the parent who is so closely connected to his or her child that they’re willing to cross the line of “civil” behavior and if so, is this behavior a core contributor to the perceived decline of social capital in our communities? Does the sense of “justice” or “fairness” for themselves and their children overpower their sense of connectedness and civility within their social communities?

The Johns Hopkins Civility Project, now called the Civility Initiative (Forni, 1997), claims that civility is in steep decline and their research suggests there is a causal connection between incivility and violence. In addition to frequent reports of violent sport fan behavior, perhaps one of the most startling expressions of this behavior has been seen in the rise of what has become known as “road rage.” On the other hand, while anecdotal evidence of parents losing their cool on the sidelines is prevalent and the media represent it as “epidemic,” this research indicates that there are communities who enjoy watching their children, can get caught up in typical fan behavior, such as yelling, and still not escalate to violence. Is the issue over-rated or is it specific to certain communities or individuals?

It’s also important to remember that this sample was selected because they were parents of athletes, not just fans of the sports teams. Are parents different than other

sports fans? Wann and colleagues (2001) determined that alcohol and issue-relevant factors such as societal levels of violence contribute to the rise of spectator aggression. Alcohol was not sold at high school soccer games and did not appear to be present in this study. Wann also found contagion and convergence theories to be strong predictors of spectator violence. He explained, "Increases in crowd homogeneity (i.e., similarity in values, norms, motives, and interests) lead to lowered inhibitions and, ultimately, collective actions" (p.121).

The findings of this study are consistent with this theory when considering that reports of value placed on friendships are more closely aligned with likelihood of getting caught up in aggressive crowd behavior. However, contradictory to convergence theory is that this was also a very homogenous population who were more likely to respond to aggressive crowd behavior or to other belligerent parents because of their personal relationships with their children.

When asked to explain what upset parents most when watching their children play, these parents reported that witnessing unsportsmanlike conduct from opposing teams or what they considered unfair officiating was more upsetting than a bad performance by their child or coaching decision. Most parents only reported being upset by a coaching decision if it involved taking their child off the field.

As communities are establishing policies and states are looking at legislation to address the issue of parental sport fan behavior, it is important to consider the true causes of this behavior. The parents in this study got upset over "bad" referee calls, but got most upset over player sportsmanship. Sports organizers, whether in youth leagues, schools or in professional sports, are dealing with the issue of player/fan interaction and the conflict

it can cause. Perhaps stronger sanctions on bad player behavior, better training of officials calling the games, and parent sensitivity training should be considered before sanctioning parents.

Although it is important to understand the psychosocial causes of parental rage behaviors at sporting events, it is important to look beyond the field or gym. Are aggressive parent behaviors showing up in the classroom and if so, why? Are teachers leaving the profession due to over-reactive parents; for example, parents who yell at teachers who give their students grades they don't consider acceptable or who argue with teachers or administrators for correcting their child, even when their child broke the rules? According to preliminary results from the 2004 *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher*, as reported recently in *TIME* magazine, "parent management was a bigger struggle than finding enough funding or maintaining discipline or enduring the toils of testing. It's one reason, say the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, that 40% to 50% of new teachers leave the profession within five years" (Gibbs, 2005, para. 7).

Further research might examine how family social capital, particularly IPA scores, might relate to this classroom-based parental aggression. If parents could identify their actions as destructive to their child, the adverse of their intent, perhaps more productive relationships with the schools, could be developed.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although the results of this study are based on a very small population, additional research on this issue should be considered in other communities, particularly where a strong emphasis is placed on sports and where greater diversity in socioeconomic status exists. Future research should also explore those sports or teams that compete at elite

levels, where greater emphasis is placed on competitiveness and aggressive athletic performance.

Also, one of the limitations of this research was the inability to identify those parents who represent the most deviant behaviors reported in the media and anecdotally. Although there were no incidents of extreme aggressive behavior at the soccer games studied in this sample, outliers in the data provided interesting information that may reveal more evidence of an association between parental attitude and social aggression and public display of extremely aggressive behavior. For example, one parent with an IPA score of 1.50 (the third lowest score among all parents) also had one of the highest AQ total scores and indicated that he would always respond to parents but never get involved in aggressive crowd behavior. The parent with the highest IPA score (60) also had the highest AQ Total scores (103 or in the 98th percentile), and was a mother who indicated she would rarely respond to other parents or get involved in aggressive crowd behaviors. These data support the hypothesis that the lower the IPA scores (very strong parent/child relationship) the more likely parents are to express aggressive behavior. Further, in-depth qualitative research on the individuals who can be identified as the most publicly aggressive or violent parents would provide greater understanding of the problem.

Also, as communities are providing more opportunity for school choice, some state high school athletic associations have to answer to parents and coaches who claim that some schools are “recruiting” players and parents are finding ways to get their children into the schools with the most successful athletic programs. These parents are not unique to sports; magnet programs in academics, technology, and performing arts, for example,

may face similar problems with aggressive parents. Gaining entrance to many of these magnet programs is highly competitive and requires levels of performance that often far exceeds that of an average student. Parents often must be involved in their children's lives at very high levels for these children to have a chance of participating in these magnet programs. Does the very nature of these programs promote the parental behavior that some teachers are complaining about?

Research on highly competitive academic or athletic programs may also reveal further insight about the influence of family and community social capital on aggressive parents. Are social institutions such as sports and schools creating environments that foster greater levels of competitive and aggressive behaviors?

This study suggests that parents aren't that competitive and aggressive on the field. In general, parents are well behaved and very civil in public, even in a highly competitive and emotionally charged environment. They may yell, but they do not become violent. However, outliers of these data consistently indicate strong associations between IPA scores, aggression levels and more extreme behavior. Extreme behaviors are "newsworthy." These outliers may give the impression that all parents are aggressive and the media fuels that impression. Low IPA scores (great affection for their children) and a desire to see their child compete at the highest levels more directly correlate with a parent's likelihood to react in public. These parents may want to see their children succeed at the highest level on the field or in the classroom to insure peak opportunities for success in college or professional life and may be more willing to cross the line of acceptable civility to assure them that success.

APPENDIX A
SELF-COMPLETION QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE:

PART I:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of parental behaviors and attitudes about their children's involvement in youth sports. Your input as a parent of high school athletes is vital to the study. This questionnaire should only take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and will help us identify some of the causes of current trends in parental involvement and how to improve the experience for your children. Responses to this study will be provided to youth and high school sports administrators who are responsible for the sports experience of our state's youth. Thank you again for your valuable time, thoughts and feelings.

Please circle the most appropriate answer:

YOUR CHILDREN'S HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC EXPERIENCE:

1. How often do you attend your children's high school games?
a. always b. most of the time c. sometimes d. rarely e. never
2. Have you ever coached your child's team?
a. Yes b. No
3. How important is it to you that your child's team wins?
a. extremely high b. high c. moderate d. little e. none
4. How important do you believe winning is to your child?

- a. extremely high b. high c. moderate d. little e. none

5. How competitive would you consider the other parents from your athletic “community” (i.e. team or neighborhood) to be?

- a. extremely high b. high c. moderate d. little e. none

6. How much do you mind if the coach gives every child a chance to play, regardless of the outcome?

- a. extremely high b. high c. moderate d. little e. none

Please explain

7. Do you want your child to compete in college or in the pros?

- a. extremely high b. high c. moderate d. little e. none

8. How likely is it that your child will compete in college or in the pros?

- a. highly likely b. likely c. somewhat likely d. not likely e. no way

9. Have you witnessed other parents getting upset over coaches’ calls?

- a. yes b. no

9:1 If yes, what do you think is the most common reason they get upset?

- a. The coach has pulled their child out of a game
- b. The coach decided to put a “lesser” player in the game
- c. The coach made a call that resulted in a failed play
- d. Other (please explain)

10. Have you witnessed other parents who get upset over referees' calls?

- a. yes b. no

If yes, what do you think is the most common reason they get upset?

- a. The referee call resulted in a loss for the player b. considered the referee call biased
- c. The referee call resulted in a loss for the team
- d. Other (please explain)

11. What upsets you most when watching your children compete? Please rank in order with 1 being the most upsetting and 6 being the least:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ coaches' call | _____ bad performance by your child |
| _____ referee call | _____ bad sportsmanship from other team |
| _____ other parents | _____ other (please specify) |

12. Have **you** ever been upset over a coaches' call?

- a. yes b. no

If yes, what do you think is the most common reason you got upset?

- a. The coach has pulled my child out of a game
- b. The coach decided to put a "lesser" player in the game

- c. The coach made a call that resulted in a failed play
- d. Other (please explain)

13. Have **you** ever been upset over a referees' call?

- a. yes b. no

If yes, what do you think is the most common reason you got upset?

- a. The call resulted in a loss for my child b. considered the call biased
- c. The call resulted in a loss for the team d. other (please explain)

14. Do belligerent parents at sporting events (for example, those who shout at coaches, refs or players or who display aggressive behavior at sporting events) upset you?

- a. always b. most of the time c. sometimes d. rarely e. never

If yes, have their behaviors caused you to react (such as shout back)?

- a. always b. frequently c. sometimes d. rarely e. never

15. Do rivalries or championship games escalate the tension you feel?

- a. always b. frequently c. sometimes d. rarely e. never

16. Have you ever been caught up in aggressive crowd behavior?

- a. always b. frequently c. sometimes d. rarely e. never

YOUR COMMUNITY AND FAMILY:

17. Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?
 a. helpful b. lookout for self c. depends d. don't know e. not applicable
18. Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?
 a. take advantage b. fair c. depends d. don't know e. not applicable
19. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in life?
 a. can trust b. cannot trust c. depends d. don't know e. not applicable
20. For each area of life I am going to name, tell me that number that shows how much satisfaction you get from that area:
- a. The city or place you live in.
1. very great deal
 2. great deal
 3. quite a bit
 4. a fair amount
 5. some
 6. a little
 7. none
 8. don't know
 9. not applicable
- b. Your non-working activities – hobbies and so on:
1. very great deal
 2. great deal
 3. quite a bit

4. a fair amount

5. some

6. a little

7. none

8. don't know

9. not applicable

c. Your family life:

1. very great deal

2. great deal

3. quite a bit

4. a fair amount

5. some

6. a little

7. none

8. don't know

9. not applicable

e. Your friendships

1. very great deal

2. great deal

3. quite a bit

4. a fair amount

5. some

6. a little

- 7. none
- 8. don't know
- 9. not applicable

PART II: Biographical

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Marital status (circle all that apply):

- a. married
- b. single
- c. divorced
- d. widowed
- e. re-married

Number of children: _____

Ages of children: _____

Sports in which your children participate: _____

Education level (circle one):

- a. high school (including GED)
- b. some college
- c. college grad
- d. advanced degree

Combined household income level (circle one):

- a. below \$30,000
- b. \$30,000-\$50,000
- c. \$50,000-\$75,000
- d. \$75,000-\$100,000
- e. more than \$100,000

Thank you again for your participation. Your time is sincerely appreciated. If you'd like to receive a copy of the final study analysis, please provide your home or e-mail address below.

APPENDIX B
THE AGGRESSION QUESTIONNAIRE

Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992)

Instructions:

Using the 5 point scale shown below, indicate how uncharacteristic or characteristic each of the following statements is in describing you. Place your rating in the box to the right of the statement.

1 = extremely uncharacteristic of me

2 = somewhat uncharacteristic of me

3 = neither uncharacteristic nor characteristic of me

4 = somewhat characteristic of me

5 = extremely characteristic of me

- | | | |
|------|---|----|
| 1. | Some of my friends think I am a hothead | A |
| 2. | If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will. | PA |
| 3. | When people are especially nice to me, I wonder what they want. | H |
| 4. | I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them. | VA |
| 5. | I have become so mad that I have broken things. | PA |
| 6. | I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me. | VA |
| 7. | I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things. | H |
| 8. | Once in a while, I can't control the urge to strike another person. | PA |
| 9.* | I am an even-tempered person. | A |
| 10. | I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers. | H |
| 11. | I have threatened people I know. | PA |
| 12. | I flare up quickly but get over it quickly. | A |
| 13. | Given enough provocation, I may hit another person. | PA |
| 14. | When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them. | VA |
| 15. | I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy. | H |
| 16.* | I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person. | PA |
| 17. | At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life. | H |
| 18. | I have trouble controlling my temper. | A |
| 19. | When frustrated, I let my irritation show. | A |
| 20. | I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back. | H |
| 21. | I often find myself disagreeing with people. | VA |
| 22. | If somebody hits me, I hit back. | PA |
| 23. | I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode. | A |
| 24. | Other people always seem to get the breaks. | H |
| 25. | There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows. | PA |

- | | |
|--|----|
| 26. I know that “friends” talk about me behind my back. | H |
| 27. My friends say that I’m somewhat argumentative. | VA |
| 28. Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason. | A |
| 29. I get into fights a little more than the average person. | PA |

Scoring

The two questions with the asterisk are reverse scored.

The Aggression scale consists of 4 factors, Physical Aggression (PA), Verbal Aggression (VA), Anger (A) and Hostility (H). The total score for Aggression is the sum of the factor scores.

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APPENDIX C
INDEX OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES

INDEX OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES (IPA)

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2, 3, 5, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 24.

Name: _____ Today's Date:

Child's Name: _____

This questionnaire is designed to measure the degree of contentment you have in your relationship with your

child. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and as accurately as

you can by placing a number beside each one as follows.

1. ___ My child gets on my nerves.
2. ___ I get along well with my child.
3. ___ I feel that I can really trust my child.
4. ___ I dislike my child.
5. ___ My child is well behaved.
6. ___ My child is too demanding.
7. ___ I wish I did not have this child.
8. ___ I really enjoy my child.
9. ___ I have a hard time controlling my child.
10. ___ My child interferes with my activities.
11. ___ I resent my child.
12. ___ I think my child is terrific.
13. ___ I hate my child.
14. ___ I am very patient with my child.
15. ___ I really like my child.
16. ___ I like being with my child.
17. ___ I feel like I do not love my child.
18. ___ My child is irritating.
19. ___ I feel very angry toward my child.
20. ___ I feel violent toward my child.
21. ___ I feel very proud of my child.
22. ___ I wish my child was more like others I know.
23. ___ I just do not understand my child.
24. ___ My child is a real joy to me.
25. ___ I feel ashamed of my child.

1 = None of the time

2 = Very rarely

3 = A little of the time

4 = Some of the time

5 = A good part of the time

6 = Most of the time

7 = All of the time

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Donna Z. Davis holds a B.S. in Journalism from the University of Florida and will complete her M.S. in family, youth and community sciences at the University of Florida after successfully defending this thesis.

Raised as a daughter of a naval aviator who flew jets in Viet Nam, Donna grew up in a traditional family with two brothers and a loving active mother. She had the great fortune of graduating from high school in Naples, Italy, where her father was stationed in support of the Mediterranean fleet. Both of Donna's brothers wrestled through high school where she developed a love of the sport. She came to the University of Florida in 1977 and began her studies in journalism and public relations. While at the University, she applied for the position of wrestling manager for the UF wrestling program. After two years of working with the team, the program was dropped. The coach who hired her then began dating Donna. After three years they were married.

Jeff and Donna have three active children. Their sons are both All-American high school wrestlers and now compete at the collegiate level. Their daughter is also a talented athlete, competing on the soccer fields as a varsity player in her first two years of high school. Spending more than 15 years on the sidelines of football, soccer and wrestling has given Donna insights into youth, high school and college athletic programs from a mother and fan's perspective.

Professionally, Donna has been working for more than 20 years in the field of communications including teaching as an adjunct instructor in the College of Journalism

and Communications at UF since 1982. She was also the first working mother to serve as State President of the Florida Public Relations Association in the organization's 53-year history.

While working in a broad range of industries, Ms. Davis has also juggled the role of wife and mother of three wonderful children. Attempting to balance a successful career with motherhood, she took a step back from her full-time professional work while her children were teenagers and decided to pursue a graduate degree studying the dynamic changes in contemporary family life. She is now happily feathering her soon-to-be empty nest with work that combines her past and her passion on Family Album Radio as the voice and senior producer of the daily two-minute radio program addressing contemporary family issues.

Ms. Davis's voice is not new to public radio having worked with WUFT-TV/FM as the female voice talent for program promotion, underwriting credits and fund drives for several years. She also voices numerous commercial advertisements and her voice can be heard on the Microsoft® XP interactive training feature as well as on several other Microsoft® tutorials developed by LearnIt Corp. She and her wonderful husband have also co-hosted a weekly financial call-in radio program, *Dollars and Sense with Jeff and Donna Davis* on WKSJ-FM in Gainesville since 1999.