# AN EXPLORATION OF MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY AS INFLUENCE ON PARTICIPATION IN EQUESTRIAN SPORT

by

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APPENDIX A-PARTICIPANT LETTER

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# SUMMARY OF STUDY

Equestrian sport has a long history, with its origins in the military and farming communities, both strongly masculine locations. However, equestrianism is highly unusual within competitive sport as it is the only Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other on equal terms. Although equestrian sport is seen as an area of gender equality, there has been a decrease in male participants both internationally and in South Africa. This difference is most noticeable at the entry levels of the sport where women dominate, but is less noticeable at the upper levels where men and women are almost equal in numbers. This study aimed to identify the motivational differences between males and females in equestrian sport and how this influences the rate of participation in equestrian sport. It asks the question *"How does equestrian sport construct gender identities?"*, and *"What can be done to keep male participants in equestrian sport to enable them to reap the benefits inherent in the sport?"* Although the gender role of the athlete may be an important reason for young males dropping out of the sport other motivations may play a role and should be researched. Motivation in popular sports have been researched extensively, however, little research has been done into the motivation to participate in equestrian sport. Specifically there has been little research into the gender differences in motivation for participation.

The research was qualitative with data obtained from semi-structured interviews with both male and female equestrian participants. The interviews focused on the gender role identities in equestrian sport, motivation for participation as well as the participant's perceptions of the sport as either a male or female sport.

The research found that apart from expected findings regarding gender roles there also seems to be a difference between the way gender roles are perceived between different cultural groups, for example the sub-discipline of dressage is perceived amongst Afrikaans speaking athletes as more feminine whereas English speaking athletes view this as an example of good discipline in sport. It also was found that the relative "dirtiness" of equestrian sport (for example dust and mud) not only attracts male athletes but also female athletes who see themselves as "more masculine".

Keywords: Equestrian Sport, Motivation, Masculinity, Femininity

# OPSOMMING VAN STUDIE

Ruiter sport het 'n lang geskiedenis, met sy oorsprong in militêre en landbou gemeenskappe, beide ook dan met 'n sterk manlike inslag. Boonop is ruiter sport uniek aangesien dit die enigste olimpiese sportsoort is waarbeide mans en vroue teen mekaar meeding op gelyke voet. Dit laat die verwagting dat hierdie sport soort 'n voorbeeld behoort te wees van geslags gelykheid.

Nadere ondersoek toon egter dat, op beide 'n Suid Afrikaanse en internasionale vlak, daar 'n beduidende afname is in die aantal manlike deelnemers wat veral sigbaar is by die sportsoort se intree vlak waar vroulike deelnemers oorheers, maar interessant genoeg nie op gevorderde vlakke waar manlike en vroulike deelnemers ongeveer dieselfde verteenwoordiging toon nie. Hierdie studie poog om die motiverings verskille tussen manlike en vroulike deelnemers aan ruiter sport te identifiseer asook hoe hierdie verskille deelname beïnvloed. Die studie poog om die vrae *"Hoe impakteer ruiter sport deelnemers se geslagsidentiteit op deelnamet"*, en*"Hoe kan manlike deelnemers behoue bly vir die sportsoort ten einde hulle in staat te stel om voordeel te trek uit die sportsoort se inherente voordele?"* te beantwoord. Alhoewel die geslagsrol van die ruiteratleet 'n belangrike rede mag wees vir jonger mans om die sportsoort te verlaat, speel ander motiverings faktore moontlik ook 'n rol. Sodanige faktore behoort beter nagevors te word. In teenstelling bestaan daar heelwat navorsing wat die rol van motiverings faktore aanspreek wanneer dit by meer populêre sportsoorte kom. Ongelukkig bestaan daar weinig navorsing wat spesifiek op ruiter sport fokus, veral as dit kom by motiverings verskille tussen geslagte van deelnemers.

Hierdie navorsing was kwalititatief van aard met data wat verkry is uit semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met beide manlike en vroulike deelnemers. Sodanige onderhoude het spesifiek gefokus op die rol wat geslag speel in deelname aan ruiter sport, ander moontlike motiverings vir deelname sowel as die ruiteratleet se persepsies van die sportsoort as  manlik of vroulik georienteerd.

Bevindings van hierdie navorsing het gevind dat, behalwe oorkoepelende bevindings ten opsigte van geslag, daar ook verskille is tussen kulture se geslags persepsies, so byvoorbeeld is bevind dat die sub-tipe ruitersport dresseer onder Afrikaanse ruiters as vroulik getipeer word, terwyl Engels sprekende ruiters dit weer tipeer as 'n

toonbeeld van dissipline deur die atleet. Ander bevindings dui daarop dat die betreklike "vuilheid" (stof, modder, ensovoorts) nie net manlike ruiters aantrek nie maar ook sekere vroulike ruiters.

Sleutelwoorde: ruiter sport, motivering, manlikheid, vroulikheid

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## LIST OF DIAGRAMS

# LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

BHS- British Horse Society

SDT- Self-Determination Theory

CET- Cognitive Evaluation Theory

SEP- Socio-economic position

FEI- Fédération Équestre Internationale/ International Federation for Equestrian Sports

SAEF- South African Equestrian Federation

SANESA- South African National Equestrian Schools Association

# CHAPTER 1
# INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALISATION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Motivation to participate in sport is a multi-faceted phenomenon. It has been researched extensively and theories such as the *Achievement Goal Theory* (Brunel, 1999), the *Self-determination Theory* (Mallet, Kawabata, Newcombe, Otero-Forero, &Jackson, 2007) and the *Cognitive Evaluation Theory* (Frederick-Recascino, &Schuster-Smith, 2003) provide a partial explanation of what motivates a person to participate in a specific sport. An important aspect that tends to get overlooked when exploring an individual's decision to participate, or to continue participation in a specific sport, is whether a sport is perceived as masculine or feminine within a given society.

Sport is a good example of how masculinity is valued and reinforced within society (Blackshaw & Crawford, 2009). Horrocks (1995: 4) argues that "*sport reinforces masculine images and lifestyles*" thereby suggesting that sport is an ideal site from which to explore how gender order is produced, maintained and challenged within our society (Blackshaw & Crawford, 2009). It has, however, been argued that social changes through the twentieth century has challenged this gender hierarchy and sexual and gender roles have become much more questioned in some areas (Blackshaw & Crawford, 2009).

Equestrian sport is the only example of an Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other on equal terms, thereby promoting gender equality. Over the past fifty years the number of men participating has dramatically decreased, while the number of women participating has skyrocketed. In Britain it is estimated that 75% of British Horse Society (BHS) members are now women, while 85% of the Swedish Equestrian Federation members are now female (Hedenborg & Hedenborg-White, 2012). This was not always the case. This feminisation of equestrian sport is estimated to have begun in the 1950s when women were allowed to participate for the first time in equestrian sport during the Helsinki Olympics of 1952. According to the British Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (2011) it is estimated that for every eight women taking part in equestrian sport there is one man

taking part. The Foundation also found that equestrian sport is now one of just seven sporting codes that have more female than male participants.

Equestrian sport has gone through both a gender and class transformation during the 20th century. Generally in all sporting codes much of the public's views on how male and female athletes are perceived are created by the way the media portrays this. This portrayal may have consequences on the social construction of gender and gender difference. Of course this also holds for equestrian sport. Sanchez (2011: 36) stated on dressage with dressage being one of the more popular sub-codes of equestrian sport:

> "*Men certainly have their place in the upper echelons of dressage, but for every .....(male).....at the top of the sport, there are thousands of women in the United States competing at training level through Grand Prix*"

In South Africa there is also a definite difference between the number of women and number of men participating in equestrian sport. This difference is most noticeable at the entry levels of the sport where women dominate, but is less noticeable at the upper levels where men and women are almost equal in numbers. It is important to note, however, that generally within the wider sporting community sports are divided traditionally into feminine sports which are defined as sports traditionally considered appropriate for females, for example netball, and masculine sports which are sports traditionally considered appropriate for males, for example rugby (Guillet, Sarrazin, & Fontayne, 2000). As it would appear that equestrian sport is considered more appealing for females, a possible reason for males either not participating in, or dropping out of, equestrian sport maybe the fear of being judged or mocked by other males. The gender role of the athlete may however not be the only reason for dropping out of the sport, but it should not be ignored (Guillet, Sarrazin, & Fontayne, 2000).

When appraising sport in general, the trend seems to be that there are a greater number of males participating in sport than females, yet equestrian sport exhibits an opposite trend. The nature of equestrian sport, where the athlete is expected to handle a powerful horse and is at a real risk of serious injury, makes this finding unexpected. The reason seems to be a impacted on motivational differences between male and female equestrian athletes. Research by Smith (2010) found a large body of

literature on the topic of gender issues when it comes to motivation in sport in general. Other researchers such as Kirkpatrick, Hebert & Bartholomew (2005) showed that men tended to be more motivated by endurance and strength, social recognition, challenge and competition, whereas women were more motivated by weight management. These researchers also found that men were furthermore motivated by personal ego whereas women seemed also to be motivated by enjoyment of participation. Recent research in India questions whether specific psychological attributes impact on the performance levels of athletes, in particular mental toughness is suggested as a key element in gender differences (Subramanyam, Singh &Yadav, 2012). Equestrian sport provides an ideal platform for exploring masculinity and femininity as influence on participation as it provides an equal opportunity for both genders to participate on the same level against each other.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research and observation supports the notion that there exists a gender-specific factor where it would appear that equestrian sport is being practiced overwhelmingly by female athletes, much against expectation. It is evident that equestrian sport promotes gender equity but ideological beliefs with regard to the gender role influence motivation to participate. Little published research appears to exist that explains the reasons for this. The rational of this study is to explore the motivational differences in participation between male and female equestrian athletes.

Research addressing gender issues in sport mostly indicate that since the early part of the 20th century participation by females in most sporting codes have increased. This appears to be also true for equestrian sport; however, in equestrian sport there is overwhelming participation by females and a trend of reduced male participation.

Equestrian sport is the only example of an Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other on equal terms. Over the past fifty years the number of men participating has dramatically decreased, while the number of women participating has skyrocketed. In Britain it is estimated that 75% of British Horse Society (BHS) members are women, while 85% of the Swedish Equestrian Federation members are female (Hedenborg & Hedenborg-White, 2012). This

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feminization of equestrian sport is estimated to have begun already in the 1950s when women were allowed to participate for the first time in equestrian sport during the Helsinki Olympics of 1952. According to the British Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (2011) it is estimated that for every eight women taking part in equestrian sport there is one man taking part. They also found that equestrian sport is now one of just seven sporting codes that have more female than male participants. Limited research on this was done in both Europe and North America with almost none done in South Africa. This is surprising as equestrian sport is one of few sport codes that offer the opportunity to study comparable motivational aspects of male and female athletes in the same competition (Whitaker, Hargreaves & Wolframm, 2012). In view of the economic value of equestrian sport and the lack of relevant research in South Africa it can be deemed important to understand which factors influences participation in equestrian sport and how they differ between males and females. This research would lead to a better understanding of the role of gender differences in motivational factors and barriers to participation in equestrian sport, specifically in the South African context. Secondary outcomes are valuable for other sporting codes too, particularly because, as mentioned earlier, equestrian sport is the only code where both males and females compete on equal terms.

Substantial research exists for most traditional sport codes focusing on the link between mental and physical abilities of the athlete. An athlete's mental dimension is, however, in many cases highly dependent on the motivational level of the athlete. One sporting code that seems to bring additional complexity into the question of motivation is that of equestrian sports. Equestrian sport is unique in that it is not only dependent on the athlete's mental and physical abilities, but also highly dependent on the "*athlete/ equine interaction and mutual collaboration*" (Meyers *et al*., 1999:1).

Understanding this phenomenon not only would be valuable to the equestrian sport society but also would contribute to the wider understanding of gender related motivation and barriers of other sporting codes. The proposed research aims to discover the differences and barriers to motivation and how gender differences influence participation in equestrian sport. The outcomes of this research will also provide administrators and coaches with enhanced understanding on how gender differences impact on participation.

Sanchez's (2011:36) statement that "*Men certainly have their place in the upper echelons of dressage, but for every .....(male).....at the top of the sport, there are thousands of women in the United States competing at training level through Grand Prix*" forms the foundation for the study and has informed the research question: *"How do masculinity and femininity influence motivation to participate in equestrian sport?"*

## 1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the study is to determine how masculinity and femininity influence motivation to participate in equestrian sport.

This aim will be supported by the following objectives:

> ➢ To identify factors influencing motivation to participate in equestrian sport in South Africa.
> ➢ To explore the gender role in relation to participation in equestrian sports.
> ➢ To determine aspects in equestrian sport that is perceived as feminine in nature.
> ➢ To identify the motivational differences between male and female participants that impact on participation in equestrian sport.

## 1.4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A variety of factors are at play in the decision to participate in any sport, including equestrian sport, one being motivation to participate. A number of motivational theories are important and help in understanding of what motivation actually is. Some of these theories include the Achievement Goal Theory; the Self-Determination Theory; and Cognitive Evaluation Theory. This study considers gender and the impact of gender role as motivating factor for participation in equestrian sport.

The Achievement Goal Theory was developed in order to look at motivation in a sport physical activity context (Brunel, 1999). According to the achievement goal theory, a major reason for people engaging in physical activity is demonstrating competence or ability. Task oriented athletes refer to the undifferentiated concept of

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ability, their competences are self-referred and effort dependent. Ego oriented athletes use the differentiated conception of ability; they look to demonstrate their superior ability in the task relative to others by using less effort to outperform others. Ego oriented athletes' perceptions of competence are therefore other-referenced and outcome-dependent.

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) assumes that people are innately and proactively motivated to master their social environment (Mallet *et al*., 2007). This theory is built on the presumption that human behaviour is motivated by three primary psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness with others (Frederick-Recascino, & Schuster-Smith, 2003). The core of SDT is not what causes intrinsic motivation but rather the conditions that enhance and maintain this inclination to interact with the environment so as to undertake challenges and immerse oneself in the doing of an activity. Intrinsic motivation is a key outcome of self-determination. SDT focuses on how intrinsic motivation influences people to develop, persist and even compete in sports and other physical activities. When an athlete is engaging in a sport of their choice at an optimal level of difficulty, he feels challenged and capable. Cognitive Evaluation Theory is the application of the Self-Determination Theory in the world of sport and exercise. CET addresses how external factors such as reward and competition are interpreted in sport and exercise. Athletes can interpret their sport and exercise performance in two ways, either informationally or in a controlling manner (Frederick-Recascino, & Schuster-Smith, 2003). If there is a shift to an external source of motivation, then an increase in extrinsic motivation may occur and this would result in the creation of unattainable goals or suspension of activity.

These motivational theories have been researched extensively for most sporting codes. Little research however has been done on gender as a motivational factor. Sport remains an environment dominated by a particular form of masculinity based on competitiveness, aggression and elements of traditional understanding of the sporting male (Wellard, 2002). There is a continued understanding of sport within contemporary western society that it is an activity in which some are more 'able' to take part than others. Participants adopt a more exclusive form of masculinity that draws on traditional understandings of heterosexual masculinity (Wellard, 2002). Participants unwilling to conform to the accepted dominant gender ideology

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participate are forced to the sidelines and the dominance of heterosexual masculinity is continued (Wellard, 2002). There are various purposes and outcomes of organised sporting participation for men; a consistent finding is that sport serves as a resilient social institution principally organised around the objective of defining acceptable forms of masculinity (Anderson & McGuire, 2010).

The idea that masculinity involves aggression and a desire to physically dominate others is normalised by dominant gender ideology. Heroes in sport, business and politics are men with power exhibiting a willingness to do *'whatever it takes'* to dominate others. Men are perceived as weak when they are seen as nurturing and supportive of others. Behaviour that does not conform to the dominant gender ideology often raises flags regarding the athlete or participant's sexual orientation. The danger of enforcing this ideology is that it teaches men to view manhood in terms of conduct that jeopardise safety and well-being of not only themselves, but others. Size, 'toughness' and accepted male behaviour allows them to violate norms and control others through fear and physical coercion.

Gender-segregated contact sports are recognised as leading markers of a valorised, orthodox form of masculinity, and participation in them is made near-compulsory through masculine peer culture (Anderson & McGuire, 2010). This might be a simplistic description of the Anglo-American version of masculinity; however, it provides a useful starting point for making sense of the concept of masculinity and its social stratification. From a young age and throughout young adulthood, boys are placed into a competitive sporting space that is used to construct their identities and influence their behaviours to align with orthodox perspectives of masculine embodiment and expression (Anderson & McGuire, 2010).

Within the sport environment, the assertion of one's masculinity is put to the test and for male athletes with a different sexual orientation than proposed by the heterosexual, testosterone laden gender discourse; there can be a conflicting sense of identity. Sport indeed has a powerful interaction with discourses of sexuality. It has in recent years promoted successful sports stars as the ideal form of male for men to aspire to and to attract women (Wellard, 2002). Sport not only serves as a predictor of gender identity but also provides a social space in which to learn about social values such as gender behaviour, competitiveness, physicality and sexuality.

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According to Faulkner (2009) masculinity and femininity define *"what men and woman do"*. He further states that there exists a kind of "gender marking" that discourages women or men from entering "gender-inauthentic" environments. Although Faulkner's research was aimed at gender issues in the work place his findings are in all likelihood also valid in the sporting world. Generally, from a sporting perspective one can define femininity as *"not being ruthless, not aggressive, not victorious, not having a killer instinct, not to want to win with all your heart and soul"* (Nelson 1998: 145). If true, this places a larger question mark on the reasons behind the participation of large numbers of woman in equestrian sport.

Many differences exist between men and women with some differences considered unfair and unacceptable, while others are considered legitimate (Chalabaev, Sarrazin, Fontayne, Boiche & Clement-Guillotin, 2013). Throughout history, sport has been recognized as an institution that was created by and for men (Dashper, 2012). Usually within sport, regardless of the strength, skill or age of participants, sports are unquestionably segregated according to sex. The historical justification for segregating males and females is that there are sexual differences and a belief in the unsuitability of sport and physical activity for girls and women (Dashper, 2012). Due to this segregation, female athletes struggle for recognition, space and resources within the sporting world.

Gender ideology varies within different cultures. In societies in which men have been privileged in terms of, for example legal status, gender ideology is based on a simple binary classification model (Coakley, 2009). According to this model all people are classified into one of two sex categories: male or female, which are defined in biological terms. This model is conceptualised to highlight difference and opposition between genders. All people in the male category are believed to be naturally different from people in the female category. Each category is believed to have different expectations when it comes to feelings, thoughts and actions, outlining the basis for the ways in which gender is defined and identified. The simple binary classification model therefore illustrates what is perceived as masculine feminine within society. This understanding of gender is so deeply embedded in how gender is perceived by society that people often resist thinking about gender differently and

explains why members of society might feel uncomfortable when people do not fit neatly into one category (Coakley, 2009)

Within the binary classification model the two categories are seldom equal. Even though men have higher levels of privilege, power and influence than females, there is a social and personal cost that comes with access and possession of power. Within the two-gender classification system, the accepted range of feelings, thoughts and actions for men is often more restricted than for females, with the implication that the normative boundaries associated with masculinity is more restricted than the boundaries associated with femininity. Positions of power and influence are consistent with masculine characteristics, with male members of society having more to lose collectively if they do not conform to gender expectations. Thus men strictly police their gender boundaries (Coakley, 2009)

Images and messages in sport have a large impact on public opinion, influencing perceptions, evaluations and constructions of gender. In Europe, the *'Resolution on the involvement of women in sport'* was adopted in 1981, with concrete proposals for active policy measures which included the demand for additional resources (Pfister, 2011: 2). Problems highlighted in the paper by Pfister (2011) include stereotyping, lack of support of sportswomen, difficulty of life-work-sport integration, inadequate media coverage and limited funding. The lack of women on sport's ruling bodies has also been identified as a major problem (Pfister, 2011). It is noted that the gender proportions in various sports are interrelated since the number of women in organized sport has an impact on the availability of women for executive and coaching positions (Pfister, 2011). Finding the reasons for gender differences is considered a much more difficult issue than merely mapping gender ratios in sports.

A report by the United Nations (2007) lifts the issues of gender equality to an international level indicating its importance. In particular this report highlights the value of sport in challenging gender stereotypes. This is further supported by the work of Wilde (2012). Of course the issue of lesbianism should also be addressed. A well-known book on the topic was published some years ago (Griffin 1998).

When looking at gender equality within sport it is important to note the various gender related goals of different periods of time. In the 1970s and 1980s, the goal was a gender neutral attitude, while in the 1990s this strategy was changed and

women were accepted as being different to men. What distinguishes equestrian sport different to other sports is the fact that equality exists in a formal sense, as men and women compete against each other at all levels (Plymoth, 2012). Biological and physical factors are cited in other sports as a reason for placing men and women in separate classes, these factors, however, do not feature in equestrian sport. Plymoth (2012) noted that early descriptions in the media of female equestrian Olympians had a serious tone and differed from descriptions of females in other sport, the reasoning given was that men and women competed in the same classes.

A large body of literature agrees on drivers of differing performance between men and women athletes. From this body of evidence one would expect that equestrian sport would also see male athletes as being dominant, especially seen its unique character of both genders competing against each other. The real picture in equestrian sport however is the opposite. According to Dashper (2012:14), "*equestrian sport offers an opportunity to explore sex integration in a traditional sporting environment in which men and women compete against each other*". She also points out that within equestrian sport there are no sex-based biological advantages for either males or females (Dashper, 2012). Success in equestrian sport is achieved through a combination of balance, precision, specialised training and the elusive concept of 'feel', all these attributes have no gender connotations. As men have no biophysical advantages over women, equestrian sport is thus an ideal sport for gender integration (Dashper, 2012).

The fact that equestrian sport attracts so many females is of particular interest as the typical attire for competitions is considered fairly masculine. According to the Oxford Dictionary masculinity is defined as "*Possession of qualities traditionally associated with men*", while femininity is defined as "*the quality of being female*" or "*womanliness*". It is interesting to note that Pringle (2005) points out the role that sporting practices play in the inequitable power relations between males and females. He noted that researchers tend to focus more on sports as a "vehicle" for female domination (Pringle, 2005). The riding attire differs for each particular event and there is little to no difference between the attire for males and females (Plymoth, 2012). The article by Plymoth (2012) also notes that female dominance wasn't always the norm and points out that the change really only happened in 1952 when both civilian men and women were allowed to participate. It is also noted in the

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article that future dressage masters, a title often only given to men, may also become mainly female. So far other research addressing this issue has been focused on European equestrians or other sports where males outnumber females.

It is important to note that although females dominate equestrian sport in participation numbers, elite levels are still male dominated. Dashper (2012) noted that in 2012 the world rankings for show jumping indicated that there are no women in the top 10 and four in the top 20, whereas in dressage there are six women in the top 10 and nine in the top 20, and in eventing there are two women in the top 10 and five in the top 20. Even with top female equestrian athletes Sanchez (2011) notes that "*behind every female competitor is a male trainer*". However there have been observations that as the current generation of riders mature, most future great dressage masters will be female (Sanchez, 2011). Dashper (2012: 3) states that "*within sport, the hegemonic form of masculinity has been identified as aggressive, competitive and strongly heterosexual*". This definition leads to the sporting subordination of not only women but also men who do not conform to hegemonic ideals i.e. gay men, disabled men and non-sporting men (Dashper, 2012).

Equestrian sport has gone through both a gender and class transformation during the 20th century. It is important to remember the role which media had, and still has, in how male and female athletes are presented. This portrayal may have consequences on social construction of gender and gender difference, as well as the "*stratification of society by gender and strengthening of the myth of female passivity and frailty*" (Koivula, 1999:590). The interaction between sport and media presents traditional expectations of femininity and masculinity, for example the existence of masculine sports appropriate only for men, and feminine sports perceived as appropriate or exclusive to women (Koivula, 1999).

Media, as a whole tend to portray equestrian sports as an educational arena for women, in which qualities such as independence, strength, courage, competitive instincts and decision-making ability are produced and able to provide new opportunities for the modern 'horse girl' (Plymoth, 2012). Plymoth (2012:337) further stated that: "*Media contributes to the construction of gender through representations of sporting practices, rather than just by reproducing prevailing values*".

It is important to remember that mass media is a powerful factor that influences one's beliefs, attitudes and the values we have of ourselves and others (Koivula, 1999). Media is not simply a means of communication that reflects reality in a *"more or less truthful way"*; it entails a complex process of negotiation, processing, and reconstruction (Koivula, 1999:589). Messages are used and interpreted by the public according to cultural, social, and individual circumstances (Koivula, 1999). A variable known as special media logic influences this interpretation. This entails a way of processing the information of what is mediated, including type of content and grammar (Koivula, 1999). We must, however, remember that we must not see mass media as a window in the world that shows us the truth and reality. Mass media is different representations of the world, thus can never be an unbiased objective representation of the world (Blackshaw & Crawford, 2009).

Plymoth (2012) points out that within the media equestrian sport is often portrayed as being 'girlish', and specifically discusses the image of the 'horse girl' in newspapers. Girls' relationships with horses are viewed as emotional and characterised as one of caring. An important factor leading to the feminisation of equestrian sports is 'education for caring' (Plymoth, 2012). Especially in Europe this is apparent where riders are expected to take care of their own horses (this is not the case in South Africa). Plymoth (2012) also noted that even professional female athletes within equestrian sport are treated differently by the media. In Sweden the media portrayed top show jumpers Malin Baryard Johnsson and Helena Lundback in very different ways. Johnsson is portrayed as an adult and very successful 'horse girl' who became a mother, whereas Lundback is presented as equestrian sports' new "Miss Glamour". Plymoth (2012) also implied that there is space for only one top female show jumper in Sweden. The reality within the sport however indicates otherwise.

It is evident therefore that this research is important as it addresses a question that has been asked on numerous occasions: *"Why has the number of males in equestrian sport decreased and the number of females increased?"* In fact, the American dressage magazine, Dressage Today, published an article asking this exact question (Sanchez 2011:36). The article by Sanchez (2011) highlights the issue that, especially at the lower levels, there were very few males (specifically younger males) participating in dressage. As Buchanan (2006) highlighted, sport participation

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is affected by a range of intrinsic attitudes, extrinsic influences, lifestyle factors and individual constraints. This view is supported by Muller (2010) who studied the social impact of the equestrian sport sector in Europe.

According to the British Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (Fact Sheet 2011) there are 8 women for every 1 man taking part in equestrian sport with equestrian sport being the 6th most popular sport activity for women. Although these figures are only relevant for the United Kingdom a cursory investigation seems to point towards a similar situation occurring in South Africa.

The economic value of the equestrian sport sector to the European economy is believed to exceed 100 billion Euros. Although figures for South Africa are not available there is no reason to believe that the equestrian sport sector in South Africa does not contribute measurably to the South African economy. Clearly then equestrian sport, despite sometimes popular opinion to the opposite, cannot be seen as a minor peripheral sporting code. Its economic value suggests that it should be seen as a major sporting code and the amount of research should reflect this. Economic value also appears to influence gender ratios. This is supported by Pfister (2011) who found that one particular sub-code of equestrian sport, namely elite level showjumping is dominated by men. It has been theorised that the reason for this is that showjumping is a highly commercialised sport it is, apart from racing, the richest equestrian sport (Hedenborg & HedenborgWhite, 2012) closely followed by dressage.

## 1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 1.5.1 Research design

This research was qualitative in nature, which can be defined as a form of research that has been designed *"to tell the researcher how (process) and why (meaning) things happen as they do"* (Cooper & Schindler, 2008:162). Qualitative research includes a number of interpretive techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate, and come to terms with the meaning, but not the frequency of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. It aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a situation.

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The strengths of qualitative research is "*drawn mainly from its inductive approach, focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words instead of numbers*" (Maxwell, 2005:52).

### 1.5.2 Research population, sample and sampling method

*1.5.2.1 Research population*

The research population for this study included riders ranging from the beginner level ("Preliminary" riders) to more advanced riders ("Novice") and full professional athletes competing in the top levels of the sport, known as Grand Prix riders (sometimes also known as "Open" riders).This provided for a sufficient sample Frame from which research respondents were drawn. Such a sample Frame is sufficiently representative of the equestrian male and female population. The focus was mainly on male and female equestrian participants in Gauteng as it represented the most active component of South African equestrian sport.

*1.5.2.2 Research sample*

A sample was drawn by attending various equestrian sporting events and selectively identifying equestrian athletes at various levels of the sporting code. A research sample of 18 athletes was utilised for the study. Participants varied in both discipline competing in either dressage, showjumping and/or eventing; and levels of experience; Novice, Intermediate and Grand Prix. This information formed the key research data in answering the research question. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Pretoria and participants' identity was kept anonymous. All participants were informed of this and could discontinue at any time of the interview (see appendix A).

*1.5.2.3 Sampling method*

The research project used non-probability, key informant sampling. Key informants were used based on who was able to supply the researcher with specialist knowledge based on position or relevant experiences. They were able to complement the data collected from the literature review. It was also important for the researcher to assess their perspective on the issue so that particular views could be taken into account.

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### 1.5.3 Data collection

*1.5.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews*

A sub-set from the initial sample population was selected for semi-structured interviews with the researcher using the researcher's knowledge and access to key local (and overseas) equestrian sport athletes. The sub-set was made up from individuals who were participants in South African equestrian sports participating at both national and international levels.

Semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher as data source as it is well known that such interviews are valuable in gaining knowledge from a sample population that could be impossible to elicit by only using a questionnaire. Kvale (1996, 14) sees such interviews as "*an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest*". A further benefit of using semi-structured interviews was that it allowed for the gathering of additional information not covered by the questionnaire.

The following steps were followed:

- Utilisation of a pre-questionnaire developed by the researcher that was distributed to the research subjects
- The results of this questionnaire was analysed by the researcher to identify initial trends.
- These results were used to develop a semi-structured interview questionnaire that was then used during interviews with selected research subjects from the original sample.

### 1.5.4 Data analysis

*1.5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews*

Data from the semi-structured interviews was interpreted by organising the data into common themes or categories. Categorisation and coding of data will be discussed in chapter Four.

## 1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

*Equestrian sport:* The sport of sitting on the back of a horse while controlling its movements (Free Dictionary), or, "equestrian" being a person (sportsman or woman) who is skilled in horse riding

*Femininity:* a characteristic or quality traditionally held to be female (Free Dictionary), or, the attributes that are perceived to convey womanhood

*Gender role:* A set of behavior patterns, attitudes, and personality characteristics stereotypically perceived as masculine or feminine within a culture

*Grand Prix*: A rider that is currently competing at a top level of their chosen discipline of showjumping, dressage or eventing. This would include all levels that fall under the FEI's jurisdiction. Dressage would be from Prix St George up to Grand Prix, Show jumping 1* up to 4*, and eventing 1* up to 4 *.

*Intermediate*: This includes riders that are competing at the levels that are between entry levels and Grand Prix levels. In dressage this would include Elementary up to Advanced, Showjumping 1.10m up to 1.35m, and eventing 90cm.

*Novice*: For the purposes of this study is a rider competing at an entry level that is either themselves new to the sport or has a young horse that is new to competitions. In dressage this would be Preliminary and Novice level dressage, show jumping 70cm up to 1 meter and in eventing 60cm up to 80cm.

*Masculinity:* Possession of qualities traditionally associated with men (Free Dictionary), or, the hegemonic form of masculinity as aggressive, competitive and strongly heterosexual (Dashper, 2012).

## 1.7 OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation begins with chapter one which is the introduction of the study. It provides an overview of the research problem, identification of aims and objectives that guide the study, an outline of the research methodology used as well as clarification of the terminology used throughout the study.

The second chapter is titled *Motivational influences on participation in sport*. It looks at motivational theories, influences to motivation as well as barriers to participation in sport. The third chapter is titled *Effects of gender role on participation in equestrian sport*. It begins by looking at gender roles within both sport and society and then moves on to a history of female participation in sport. It concludes with a history of equestrian sport and the current state of Equestrian Sport both internationally and within South Africa.

Chapter Four, *Research Methodology*, presents the research design used in the study, participants involved in the study, a discussion of the data collection and data analysis approached used. Chapter Five, *Analysis and Interpretation of data*, summarises the research findings by presenting an analysis and interpretation of the semi-structured interviews. Chapter Six *Conclusion*, presents the important finding, recommendations and suggestions for further research. Chapter Six also outlines the final conclusions for the study

## 1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an introduction to the topic and the theoretical approach, a research problem, the aims and objectives to be achieved and an overview of the research methodology, thus placed the study in context. The next chapter explores motivational theories as well as the influences on motivation to participate.

# CHAPTER 2
# MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCES ON PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

When looking at participation in a specific sport, it is always important to look at what influences a person's motivation to participate in specific activities. Motivational influences affects things as minor as what programs a person may be inclined to watch on television, to things as major as which sport a person chooses to participate in. Motivation explains why people make certain decisions on the direction of their life; it also explains why some people seem to always be indecisive on aspects such as career choice. This chapter will look at theories of motivation, what influences the motivation to participate in sport, and what barriers there are for participation in sport.

## 2.2 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

Vallerand (2007:59) defines motivation as *the hypothetical construct used to describe the internal and/or external forces that produce the initiation, direction, intensity, and persistence of behaviour*. Motivation is a complex variable that's intangible. An athlete's motivation can change almost on a daily basis, athletes with amazing drive can suddenly lose it while athletes that are generally seen as lazy may suddenly turn up to a practice with conviction and give their all (Eliot,2005:3). It is important to look at how is motivation created and sustained, and the role it plays in athletes winning. External motivators such as money, fame, trophies and other accolades, although beneficial on the short term, are generally ineffective in the long term because they only serve as motivation when things are going well. Enjoyment has been identified as an important factor for motivating athletes to continue participating in a sport (McCarthy, Jones & Clarke-Carter, 2008). Due to this enjoyment is an important component in many major sport motivation theories such as achievement goal theory (McCarthy, Jones & Clarke-Carter, 2008).

Most athletes didn't enter their chosen sport in the first place for the accolades, many began because either their parents pushed them into the sport or their friends were

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already participating. Equestrians have the additional challenge of not only keeping themselves motivated but also finding ways to keep their horses motivated. Athletes generally are products of their genetics and their environment (Eliot citing Skinner and Triplett, 2005:4). According to cognitive sports psychology (Eliot, 2005:4), it is up to the athletes to be motivated, they must make the decision to be motivated. Although factors like genetics and environment will influence an athlete's motivation, it is important to never overlook the power of the mind.

In their quest for excellence in sport, athletes face many challenges. Rising up to these challenges requires not just physical endurance and talent but also psychological strength (Vallerand & Losier, 1999). There are two different forms of motivation that can motivate athletes. Athletes can be intrinsically motivated, meaning that they take part in sport activities out of pleasure and fun (Vallerand & Losier, 1999). Or they are extrinsically motivated, meaning they take part in sport in order to derive tangible benefits such as material or social rewards or to avoid punishment (Vallerand & Losier, 1999). According to Vallerand and Losier (1999) motivation refers to the why of behaviour. Thus the reasons for doing an activity are generally perceived as an indication of a person's motivation towards a given activity.

## 2.2.1 Motivational theories

The theories of motivation must be examined, before looking at reasons for motivation, in order to gain an understanding of what motivation is. According to Roberts, Treasure and Conroy (2007) there are at least 32 theories of motivation and each of these theories have their own definition of motivation, and with almost as many definitions as there are theorists. Motivational theories can be viewed on a continuum ranging from deterministic to mechanistic to organismic to cognitive (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). Deterministic and mechanistic theories see humans as passive and driven by various psychological needs, while organismic theories acknowledge innate needs but also recognise a connection occurs between the organism and social context, Cognitive theories see humans as active and initiate action through an interpretation of the achievement context (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). The majority of research done on motivation in the past 30 years has

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adopted a social-cognitive approach, specifically the most popular theory to emerge is Achievement Goal Theory (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).

Achievement goal theory was developed in order to look at motivation in a sport a physical activity context (Brunel, 1999). This theory assumes that people are intentional and goal-direct thus behave in a rational manner (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). In achievement contexts, achievement goals govern beliefs and guide decision-making and behaviour (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). According to the achievement goal theory, a major reason for people engaging in physical activity is demonstrating competence or ability. This theory assumes that people demonstrate their competence in two different ways. With undifferentiated conception or undifferentiated concept of ability, ability is not differentiated from effort and is perceived as improvement. According to differentiated conception or differentiated concept ability, ability is clearly differentiated from effort and is shown as capacity (Brunel, 1999) (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). These two conceptions of ability becomes the source of criteria for which the athlete will use to assess success and failure (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). The athlete's perceptions and beliefs of their interpretation of their performance form a personal theory of motivation (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).

Achievement can be defined as *the attainment of a personally or socially valued goal that has meaning for the person in a physical activity context* (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007:3-4). Both concepts influence achievement goal orientations which individuals adopt, namely task orientation and ego orientation. Task oriented athletes refer to the undifferentiated concept of ability, their competences are self-referred and effort dependent (Brunel, 1999; Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). Ego oriented athletes use the differentiated conception of ability, they look to demonstrate their superior ability in the task relative to others by using less effort to outperform others. Ego oriented athletes perceptions of competence are other-referenced and outcome-dependent (Brunel, 1999; Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).If an ego-oriented athlete perceives himself as low in ability then he is likely to demonstrate maladaptive behaviours such as avoiding the task, avoiding challenge, reduce persistence when faced with a difficult task, and dropping out (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).

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Researchers have argued over whether or not these two orientations are mutually exclusive. It has been noted, however, that goal states are dynamic and can change within a moment as information is being processed. An athlete may begin a specific task with a strong task orientation but events may cause the athlete to become ego oriented. Athletes may be predisposed to either be task oriented or ego oriented, this predisposition is known as achievement goal orientation (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).

According to achievement goal theory, situational factors also play a role in determining the adopted goal in a given situation. This has been referred to as the motivational climate and the terms mastery and performance are used to refer to ego and task orientation. Thus, when situational cues emphasize learning, improvement or effort the orientation will be task orientation. Both dispositional and situational factors are important as both dispositional goal orientation and perception of the motivational climate interact to influence subsequent behaviours or cognitions. Brunel (1999) found a negative relationship between perceptions of a mastery climate and amotivation. If the coach de-emphasized normative results then athletes were more likely to display a low level of amotivation. A consequence of this is that the athlete will devalue the activity.

The achievement goal framework divides goals into four main categories as is illustrated in figure 2.1 (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). Mastery approach goals focus on improving performance on a task, this is considered the optimal achievement goals as they are both task oriented as well as differentiated conception, while Performance approach goals focus on outperforming others, these goals are more ego oriented than mastery approach goals. Performance avoidance goals focus mainly on not being outperformed by others, while mastery avoidance goals focus on not making mistakes or not doing worse than a previous performance (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007).

**Definition of Competence**

|  | Mastery (absolute or intrapersonal) | Performance (normative) |
|---|---|---|
| **Approach** (striving for competence) | Mastery-Approach Goals | Performance-Approach Goals |
| **Avoidance** (striving away from incompetence) | Mastery-Avoidance Goals | Performance-Avoidance Goals |

*Valence of Strivings* (axis label)
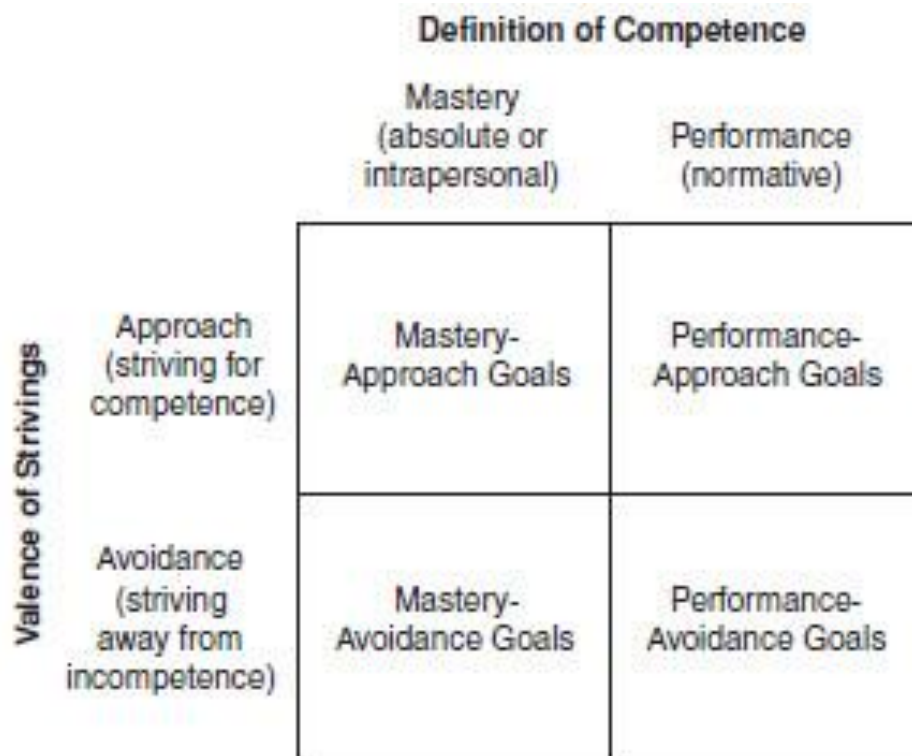
*Figure 2.1 Achievement goal framework* (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007)

Self-Determination theory (SDT) assumes that people are innately and proactively motivated to master their social environment (Mallet *et al*, 2007). It is built on the presumption that human behaviour is motivated by three primary psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness with others (Frederick-Recascino & Schuster-Smith, 2003). According to Vallerand (2007) SDT proposes that competence, autonomy and relatedness are universally essential for optimal human development, motivation and integrity. The core of SDT is not what causes intrinsic motivation but rather the conditions that enhance and maintain this inclination to interact with the environment so as to undertake challenges and immerse oneself in the doing of an activity.

According to SDT motivation is multi-dimensional, and different types of motivation have been associated with varying outcomes. Intrinsic motivation is a key outcome of self-determination. SDT focuses on how intrinsic motivation influences people to develop, persist and even compete in sports and other physical activities. When an athlete is engaging in a sport of their choice at an optimal level of difficulty, he feels challenged and capable. These feelings may then motivate the athlete to practise certain skills for many hours a week with no apparent award. It is important,

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however, to note that engagement does not always begin with intrinsic motivation. Activities are said to be extrinsically motivated when they are not freely chosen or challenging. These behaviours move through three levels of internalization, they occur as an athlete becomes increasingly self-determined. The first level is external regulation, the second level is introjected regulation, and the third level identified regulation. This is illustrated in figure 2.2.
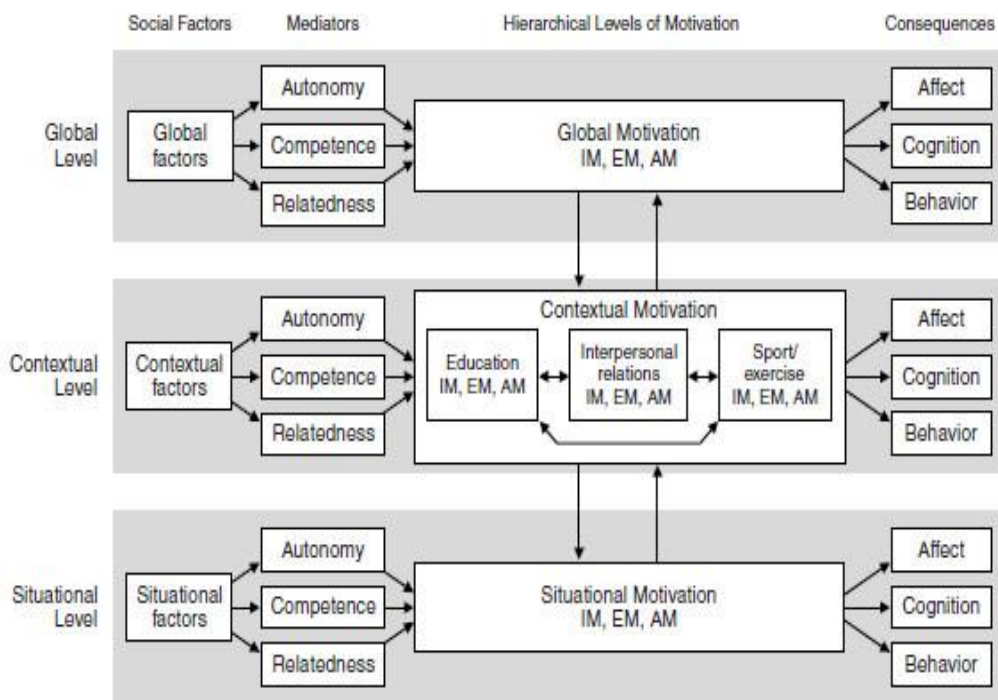


*Figure 2.2 The hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation* (Vallerand, 2007:61)

Cognitive Evaluation theory (CET) is the application of the Self-Determination Theory in the world of sport and exercise. CET addresses how external factors such as reward and competition are interpreted in sport and exercise. Athletes can interpret their sport and exercise performance in two ways, either informationally or in a controlling manner (Frederick-Recascino & Schuster-Smith, 2003).

In most sport men and women do not compete against one another, with the exception of equestrian sport and sailing. Competitive sport creates competitive hierarchies, everyone has the right to participate but not everyone has the same chance of winning. It is important to remember that not only gender, but also ethnic origin and socio-economic background have a decisive impact on sport participation both at a grass-root and elite level (Pfister, 2011). Nationality will also influence opportunities for both men and women to be successful in specific sports. What may be a women's sport in one country may be a male-dominated sport in another

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(Pfister, 2011). Thus within this study it is important to keep in mind that although gender ratio from another country is useful, it is still important to get a gender ratio of participants in equestrian sport in South Africa.

Reversal theory is *a theory of motivation, emotion and personality in which human behaviour is considered to be fundamentally inconsistent* (Lindner, Kerr, 2000). A number of meta motivational categories that is thought to form the basis of a person's motivational processes is conceptualised (Lindner& Kerr, 2000). These categories are concerned with a person's operative mental states as well as the frequency over time that particular mental states are operative (Lindner & Kerr, 2000). These states are called meta motivational states, *a phenomenological state which is characterised by a certain way of interpreting some aspects of one's own motivation*, and the frequency with which they are operative over time, meta motivational dominance (Lindner & Kerr, 2000).

Meta motivational states have four different states and thus matching categories of meta motivational dominance as illustrated in figure 2.3 (Lindner & Kerr, 2000). These are the telic-paratelic, negativistic-conformist, mastery-sympathy, and autic-alloic pairs (Lindner & Kerr, 2000). It is thought that individuals reverse between pairs of states through a process known as bi-stability and one of the four pairs of states are operative at any one time (Lindner,& Kerr, 2000). The first two pairs are known as the somatic state and are based on felt arousal and the other two pairs are known as transactional states, concerned with the outcome of interactions with others (Lindner & Kerr, 2000). Lindner and Kerr (2000) found that telic, paratelic, alloic and mastery were the most important for sports participants while paratelic, telic, mastery and autic were most important for non-participants.

| TELIC | | PARATELIC |
|---|---|---|
| Arousal-avoiding | | Arousal-seeking |
| Goal-oriented | | Sensation-oriented |
| Serious-minded | | Playful |
| Future-oriented | ⇔ | Present-oriented |
| Planning ahead | | Spontaneous |
| Prefer important activity | | Prefer unimportant activity |
| Attempt to complete activity | | Attempt to prolong activity |

| CONFORMIST | | NEGATIVISTIC |
|---|---|---|
| Desire to comply with rules | | Desire to break rules |
| Compliant | ⇔ | Rebellious |
| Cooperative | | Stubborn |
| Agreeable | | Angry |

| MASTERY | | SYMPATHY |
|---|---|---|
| Willingness to compete | | Willingness to cooperate |
| Desire for control | ⇔ | Desire for harmony/unity |
| Focus on toughness and strength | | Focus on tenderness and sensitivity |

| AUTIC | | ALLOIC |
|---|---|---|
| Concern with self | | Concern with other(s) |
| Desire to gain | | Desire to give |
| Suffering loss unpleasant | ⇔ | Suffering loss pleasant |
| Not identifying with other(s) | | Identifying with other(s) |
| Egoistic | | Altruistic |
| Focus on own feelings | | Focus on feelings of others |

*Figure 2.3 Characteristics of the four pairs of metamotivational states from reversal theory* (Lindner & Kerr, 2000).

When looking at equality within sport it is important to note the various gender related goals of difference periods within history. In the 1970s and 1980s, the goal was a gender neutral attitude, while in the 1990s this strategy was changed and women were accepted as being different to men. What makes equestrian sport different to other sports is the fact that equality exists in a formal sense, as men and women compete against each other at all levels (Plymoth, 2012). Biological and physical factors are cited in other sports as a reason for placing men and women in separate classes, these factors, however, do not feature in equestrian sport. Plymouth

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(2012) noted that early descriptions in the media of female equestrian Olympians had a serious tone and differed from descriptions of females in other sport, the reasoning given was that men and women competed in the same classes.

## 2.3 MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCES ON PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

Motivational influences affect a person's motivation to make certain decisions. Decision making does not occur in a vacuum, people are motivated by influences that are all around them. The influences may come from their upbringing for example culture and finances; or it may come from those around them for example media and peer group. If the influences surrounding a person push them away from a specific sport then they are less likely to either begin participation or continue participating in the sport in question. If a person is surrounded by influences that encourage participation, then they are more likely to either begin or continue participation in a sport. The impact certain influences have on people is constantly evolving and changing. Certain influences may also have a bigger impact on one person than on another person.

### 2.3.1 Media

It is important to remember that mass media is a powerful factor that influences our beliefs, attitudes, and the values we have of ourselves and others. Media is not simply a means of communication that reflects reality in a more or less truthful way; it entails a complex process of negotiation, processing, and reconstruction. Messages are used and interpreted by the public according to cultural, social, and individual circumstances. A variable known as special media logic influences this interpretation. Media logic entails a way of processing the information of what is mediated, including components such as type of content and grammar (Koivula, 1999).

Masculinity rules in media sports, male dominated sports receive about 90 percent of the coverage in all media, and both images and narratives tend to reproduce traditional ideas and beliefs about gender (Coakley, 2009). It is important to remember the role which media has in how male and female athletes are presented as this portrayal may have consequences on: social construction of gender and gender

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difference, the stratification of society by gender and strengthening of the myth of female passivity and frailty (Koivula, 1999).

Media has not made the coverage of women's sport a priority; however, since the mid-1990s it has been taken more seriously especially with the Olympics, figure skating events, major tennis and golf tournaments and some professional and college basketball games. The coverage of women's sports in major newspapers remains at about 15 percent of the sports section in U.S. papers and is even less in major papers in most other countries. Although in some cases, coverage of women's sports has increased, the coverage remains uneven and does not support a pattern of consistent growth (Coakley, 2009). The interaction between sport and media presents traditional expectations of femininity and masculinity, i.e. there exist masculine sports appropriate only for men, and feminine sports appropriate or exclusive to women (Koivula, 1999).

### 2.3.2 Culture

Culture's role has long been considered in the anthropological and sociological studies of play, games and sport (Weinerberg, Tenenbaum, McKenzie, Jackson, Anshel, Grove & Fogarty, 2000). A small number of studies have shown, in regards to cross-cultural differences in exercise behaviour and physical activity, that there are significant differences between ethnic groups in exercise behaviour (Weinerberg*et al*., 2000). In a study undertaken by Weinerberg, Tenenbaum, McKenzie, Jackson, Anshel, Grove & Fogarty (2000) a cross-cultural analysis was undertaken that included the United States, Australia and New Zealand. They specifically chose these three countries due to the fact that although all three cultures may be considered 'Western cultures', they had significant differences regarding sport and physical activity involvement.

### 2.3.3 Peer group and parents

When studying motivation and motivational influences of athletes it is important to look at those influences that play a defining role with children who are beginning their athletic careers. Understanding the motivational influences of young athletes

means that an optimal motivational climate can be created and thus participation, enjoyment and motor learning is more likely to increase (Keegan, Harwood, Spray & Lavallee, 2009:3). It is becoming more evident that within the sports context, both parents and peers playing an important role in influencing motivation (Keegan *et al*, 2009:3). According to Ulrich-French and Smith (2009) both parents and peers, along with the coach, are key socialising agents in sport. Both parents and peers are strongly linked with the athlete's affect, self-perceptions, motivation and sport involvement (Ulrich-French & Smith, 2009).

People have very few social situations in which they can afford to disregard how they would be perceived and evaluated by others, because of this people sometimes behave in a certain way in order to create certain impressions for other people (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007). Self-presentation or image management refers to the processes where people monitor and control how they are perceived and evaluated by others (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007). Although this term may suggest pretense it actually shows people attempting to try and convey the image of how they see themselves (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007). Within image management two processes occur, namely impression motivation and construction as illustrated in figure 2.4 (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007). Impression motivation is '*the desire to create a particular impressions'* (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007, 138). While impression construction involves putting impression motivation into action, choosing an impression to create and then utilizing tactics to convey it (Martin Ginis, Lindwall&Prapavessis, 2007).
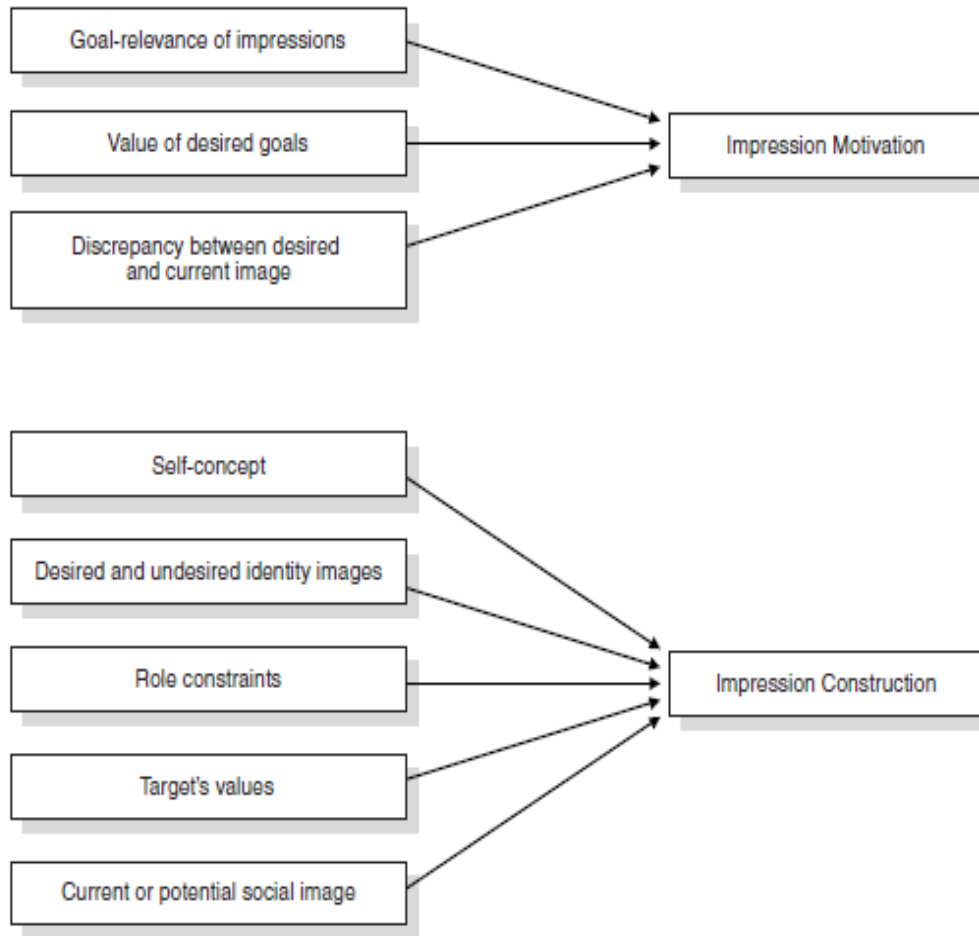
*Figure 2.4 Schematic representation of impression management* (Martin Ginis, Lindwall & Prapavessis, 2007)

Most athletes' early careers follow the same trend, athletes try a number of different sports, often encouraged by their parents, to see if they enjoy the sport, have some talent or both (Keegan *et al.*, 2009:3). There is a greater emphasis on play, and children in this phase are generally 6-13 years of age. At this age, where children are generally in primary school then their major social influences come from parents and peers (Keegan *et al*., 2009:4). According to Keegan *et al*., (2009:4 citing Roberts, 2001) the best way to understand motivation is from a social cognitive perspective, not as a function of arousal, but rather as a function of the goals behind motivated activity.

With studying the reasons for athletes acting in a certain way, it is necessary to look at the ways in which coaches, parents and peers influences the athletes reasoning (Keegan *et al.,* 2009:4). An athlete's sporting experiences are hugely influenced by the combined influence of all three groups as they are generally those people the athlete would want approval from most. When studying these influences it is

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important to keep Vallerand's hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as a guide. According to this model parents would be a fairly global influence while coaches and peers are more likely to exert a contextual and situational influence. Basically this would mean that peers only influence the athlete within the sport but not at home, while parents have a stronger influence as they would be present both within the sporting context and at home. However, an athlete's perception of friendship and peer acceptance is important as these are unique predictors of motivation-related variables within sport (Ulrich-French & Smith, 2009). When an athlete experiences two or more high quality social relationships within a sport then the athlete has a greater enjoyment and perceived competence (Ulrich-French & Smith, 2009).

Anderson, Funk, Elliot and Smith (2003) discuss achievement by proxy distortion (ABPD) behaviour in parents, which with some parents may be the reason behind them encouraging their child to participate in a specific sport. According to Anderson *et al*., (2003) when an adult gratifies conscious or unconscious need such as social status or financial benefit then the child may be placed in an exploitative situation. There is a strong correlation between parental support and encouragement, and sports participation in childhood (Anderson, Funk, Elliot & Smith, 2003). Both men and women associate parental encouragement with initial childhood participation in sport although there are some differences between the two genders in terms of the amount of encouragement needed (Anderson *et al*., 2003). It was found that encouragement is more important for women and that men were more likely to be influenced by their fathers to participate while women were more influenced by both their parents (Anderson *et al*., 2003).

In recent years the media has scrutinised the behaviour of parents of youth athletes, with stories including parents fighting at a youth Football game in the US and a Frenchman being convicted of manslaughter after drugging a tennis rival of his son which resulted in the rival dying in a car crash (Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn & Wall, 2008). A child's experiences within a sports setting can be affected by the ways in which their parents engage in that sport setting (Holt *et al*., 2008). Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn & Wall (2008) studied the involvement of parents within youth soccer, specifically looking at the effect they had on their children. The researchers noted that within their study comments of encouragement accounted for

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35%, comments about performance accounted for 5%, instructional comments accounted for 35%, comments that struck a balance between negative and positive comments accounted for approximately 10%, negative comments accounted for 10% of comments and derogatory comments accounted for 5% of comments made (Holt *et al.*, 2008).

Anderson *et al.* (2003) also noticed a relationship between the amount of parental pressure and a child's enjoyment for participating in a specific sport. They found that often well-meaning parents place pressure on their children to do well in a sport, wanting participation to bring the child success through financial benefits and high school or university scholarships (Anderson *et al.*, 2003). Holt *et al.* (2008) concluded that many parents tend to place pressure on their children due to empathy. Many of the parents that participated in their study believed that they were experiencing the same emotions as their children so they felt justified with being controlling and demanding. The parents, however, can also be influenced by other parents and by the atmosphere of the sports setting (Holt *et al.*, 2008).

Close friendships with other athletes can represent a stable construct that is linked with long-term-outcomes such as continuing to participate. Friendship can therefore be viewed as a key motive for sport participation (Ulrich-French & Smith, 2009). Interestingly, it was found that even when the relationship with the mother is not strong, a high quality peer acceptance and friendship can increase the c probability of continued participation (Ulrich-French & Smith, 2009).

Influences on motivation that are exerted by peers, parents and the coach are often referred to as the motivational climate (Keegan *et al.*, 2009:4). The concept of motivational climate is derived from the achievement goal theory, which was discussed earlier in the chapter. This theory suggests that an athlete is either motivated through performance or ego where the focus is to outperform others; or mastery or task where an emphasis is placed on effort, personal improvement and mastering a task. These two orientations result in very different motivational outcomes and behaviours that include positive affect, negative affect, perceived competence, strategies used, sportpersonship, deployment of mental skills, motor improvement and experience of 'flow' (Keegan *et al.*, 2009:4).

## 2.3.4 Coach

One of the most important influences on an athlete's motivation to participate in sport is the coach (Vallerand, 2007). How a coach interacts with their athletes influences the athlete's perception of autonomy, competence and relatedness. This in turn facilitates the athlete's self-determined motivation (Vallerand, 2007). Some determinants of a coach's behaviour towards athletes have been identified by Vallerand (2007). These determinants include the coach's personal orientations towards coaching, the context within which they work, and the perception the coach may have of their athlete's behaviour and motivation (Vallerand, 2007). This is illustrated in figure 2.5. Research has shown that athletes with controlling coaches tend to report lower levels of contextual intrinsic motivation and identified higher levels of amotivation than those who felt the coaches were more autonomous and supportive. This can further be shown in the coach-athlete model of Vallerand (2007). Athletes are also influenced indirectly by their coaches by the motivational climate that they create. A task-oriented environment will encourage athletes to improve their skills while an ego-oriented environment would encourage athletes to outperform each other (Vallerand, 2007).
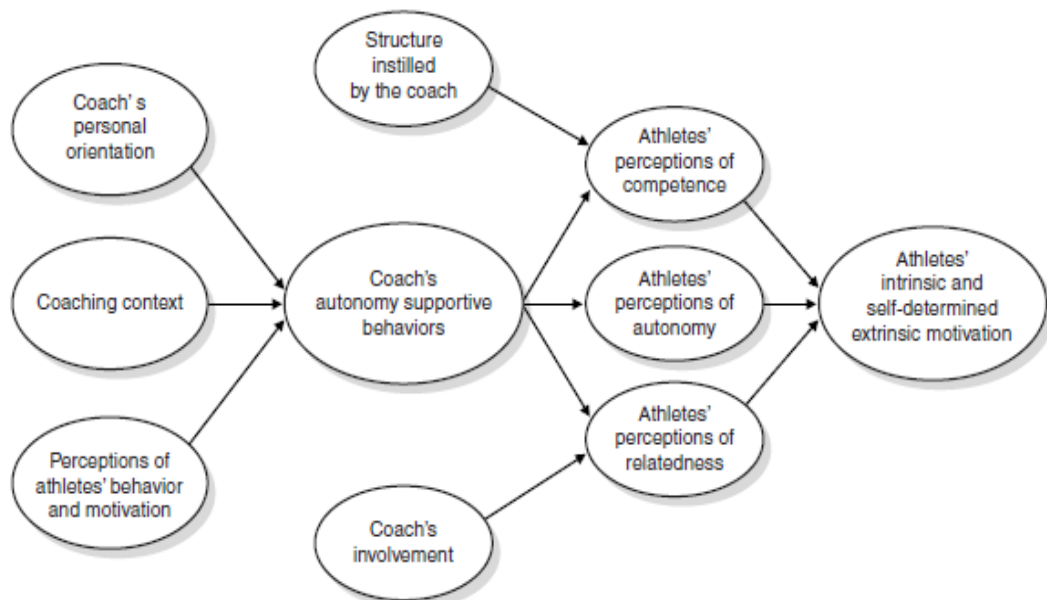


*Figure 2.5 Coach-athlete model of motivation* (Vallerand, 2007:68)

The mediational model of leadership, illustrated in figure 2.6, looks at both coach behaviours and the players' perceptions and recollections of those behaviours as well as the players' evaluative reactions (Chelladurai, 2007). This model shows just how

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much an athlete is influenced by the behaviour of their coach and their coach's perception of their attitude.
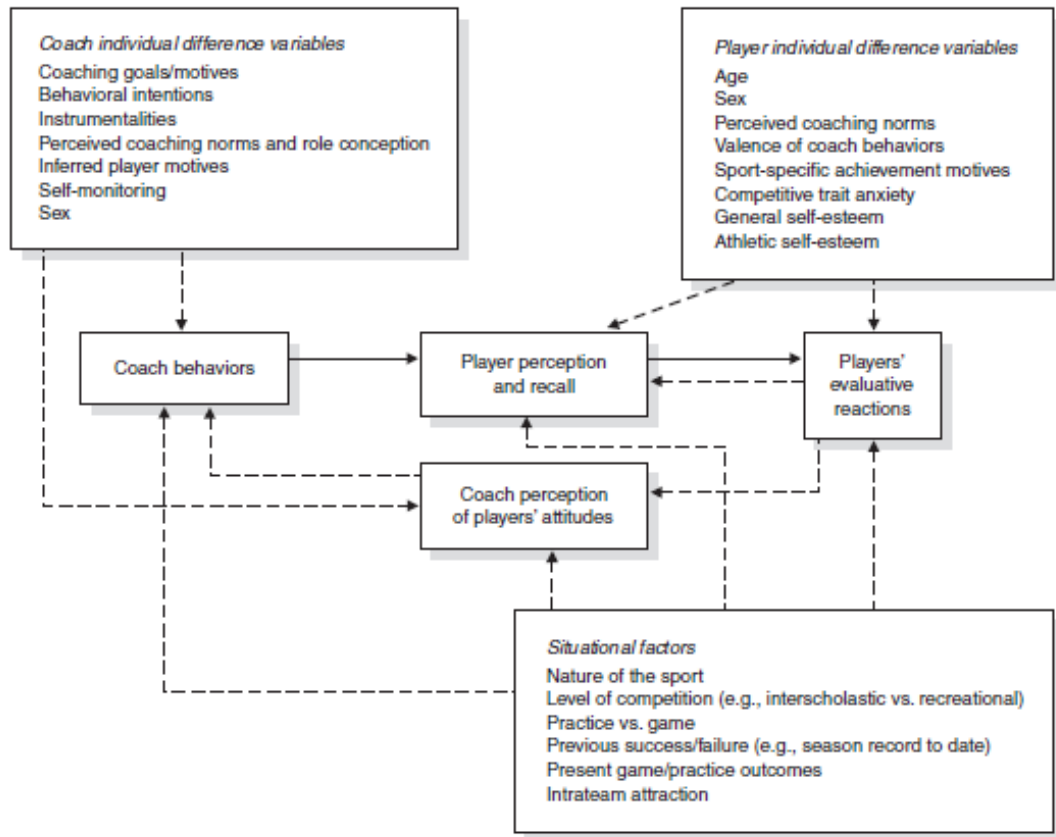


*Figure 2.6 The mediational model of leadership* (Chelladurai, 2007)

The coaching effectiveness model looks deeper at the influences of the coaches behaviour. This model was originally developed by Horn (cited by Chelladurai, 2007) and was developed from several theories including achievement goal theories, attribution theory, competence motivation theory, the expectancy-value model, self-determination theory and sport commitment model (Chelladurai, 2007). Chelladurai has used this model to further explain the situational factors in his own model for coaching, illustrated by figure 2.7.
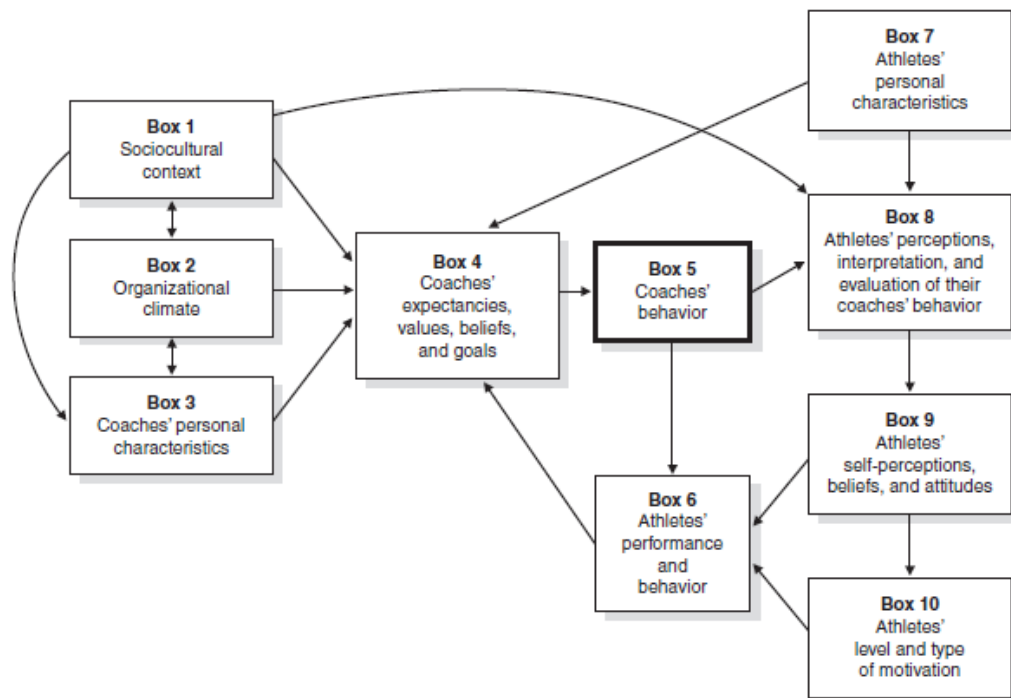
*Figure 2.7 The coaching effectiveness model* (Chelladurai, 2007)

### 2.3.5 Socio-economic status

While participation in organised sport has increased in recent years, it is still important to note that this trend is not at all uniform across the spectrum of socio-economic position (Dollman & Lewis, 2010). When participating in sport, parents provide emotional support for their child mainly by watching them participate. Both instrumental - buying equipment and providing transport - and emotional levels of support from parents varies according to the socio-economic position (SEP) of the family.

Low SEP families are less supportive both instrumentally as well as emotionally, thus girls from low SEP families will be less likely to participate in sports (Dollman & Lewis, 2010). Anderson *et al*. (2003) also noted that SEP was related to how involved children were in extracurricular activities. It was also found that a mother's level of education could be used as a measure of SEP (Anderson *et al*., 2003).

Sports such as equestrian sport will be less likely to attract those from low SEP families mainly due to the costs involved in participating. Horses are expensive to keep and even just riding lessons at a riding school can be fairly costly as the riding school needs to use the income to feed and provide proper care of horses used. Boys

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from low SEP families would also be affected negatively as the facilities available to them would be more limited than the facilities available to those that come from high SEP families (Dollman & Lewis, 2010).

### 2.3.6 Enjoyment

Enjoyment has been identified as a key factor in motivation and is an important component of many major sport motivation theories (McCarthy *et al*., 2008). Due to the consequences of enjoyment, McCarthy, Jones and Clark-Carter (2008) believed it necessary to understand the value of sport enjoyment. Enjoyment is an important factor in beginning and maintaining involvement in sport (McCarthy *et al*., 2008).

McCarthy, Jones and Clark-Carter (2008) noted that parents play a vital role in providing their child with a positive sporting experience which will lead to their enjoyment and long-term involvement in sport. Parents that have realistic goals for their children, tend to have children who are more intrinsically motivated and thus will be more likely to continuing to participate in sport. A strong predictor of enjoyment in sport is task orientation and perceived competence (McCarthy *et al*., 2008).

### 2.3.7 Gender

Participating in sport on a regular basis has been shown to have positive effects on one's physical health (Koivula, 1999). According to a number of studies and surveys the number of individuals participating in sport is low and in recent years has been declining especially among women (Koivula, 1999). Slater and Tiggerman (2011) noted that the dropout rates from both sport and physical activity are much higher in Australia for boys and that girls tend to dropout at a much earlier age than boys. They identified a number of reasons that include teasing, self-objectification, self-surveillance, body shaming, appearance anxiety and disordered eating (Slater & Tiggerman, 2011).

Many girls who drop out of sport, usually dropout during pre-adolescence and adolescence. During this period in their lives girls become far more aware of their body image and many of them experience body image dissatisfaction and have a

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desire to be thinner (Slater & Tiggerman, 2011). They become self-conscience about being watched while performing and this in turn affects the frequency and quality of their participation in their chosen sport. Girls at this age also raise the issue that it is no longer 'cool' or feminine for them to play sport and at an age where social approval plays a huge role in their psyche many girls would rather dropout than do something that is incompatible with their femininity (Slater & Tiggerman, 2011).

Studies show that there are a number of different motives for participation in sport and these motives vary between men and women (Koivula, 1999). Different studies have found that women in particular are more motivated by body-related and social factors while men are more motivated by competition and competence motives. This may be due to the societal expectations of proper behaviour for both men and women, men are expected to be competitive while women are expected to be yielding and concerned about not competing with others.

Slater and Tiggerman (2011) did, however, find that women who participated in one sport at a young age had a higher level of body image concern that women who participated in no sports and women who participated in two or more sports. Part of the reason could be that body shaming is generally found more in sports that tend to objectify the female body compared to those sports that are less likely to objectify the female body/ Women feel more comfortable within their own bodies when their body isn't a constant focus in the sport, where keeping in shape is important but it doesn't have a central role in performance. Abbott and Barber (2011) also found that girls involved in aesthetically focused sport placed a high emphasis on thinness while girls involved in non-aesthetically focused sport placed a higher emphasis on their bodies' functionality.

It was found that girls who move between sporting and social contexts have conflicting body ideals (Abbott & Barber, 2011) possibly due to the different expectations expected from girls in the two different contexts. Abbott and Barber (2011), however, also did find that girls who are actively participating in sports are more satisfied with their functional bodies than physically active and non-physically active girls. They suggest this may be due to the unique experiences offered to girls within the sports context, compared to other forms of physical activity. They did also note that the relationship between sports participation and body image is complex and that the type of sport that individuals participate in should be taken into account

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as different sporting activities place emphasis on different qualities of the athlete's body (Abbott & Barber, 2011).

Sport in general has been and still is regarded as a male domain, it is often seen as a very masculine activity which probably also strongly influences the way men and women view sport in regards to participation (Koivula, 1999). By participating in sport, women are challenging gender stereotypes and discrimination (United Nations, 2007:3). Thus just through participation, women already serve as a means to promote gender equality and empower both women and girls (United Nations, 2007:3). The stereotypes challenged through participation are not just those related to physical ability but also those regarding women's roles within local communities and society (United Nations, 2007:12). A greater number of women in leadership roles in sport have a significant influence on social attitudes towards women's capabilities as both leaders and decision makers (United Nations, 2007:12). The International Olympic Committee (2014) also acknowledges that while the amount of women participating in physical activities and the Olympic Games has increased, the number of women in governing and administrative bodies within the Olympic movement is still relatively low.

In general, men and women have different motivations for participating in sport and therefore often take part in different types of sport (Koivula, 1999). Generally boys are more motivated to participate in sports programs from a competitive aspect while girls are more likely to have social reasons for participating in sports. However, both boys and girls mainly want to have fun throughout their sports experiences (Sirard, Pfeiffer & Pate, 2006). The process of differential socialisation and experience with sport can be interpreted as a part of the social construction of female-male relations which works to maintain, strengthen and naturalise gender differences (Koivula, 1999).

The value of women's sport is often considered to be lower than that of male dominated sports which results in inadequate resources, unequal wages and prizes (United Nations, 2007:3). This could result in fewer women and girls either beginning a sport or continuing as the motivating factor of finances are negatively affected. Girls from lower income families are often unable to participate as funding that could be used for running sport programs in areas that are socio-economically poor is often lacking.

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Although in the majority of sports, women are in the minority, equestrian sport seems to be an exception to the rule when taking endurance riding out of the equation. Although equestrian sport is an exception to the rule, elite level show jumping is dominated by men (Pfister, 2011). It has been theorised that the reason for this is show jumping is a highly commercialised sport, it is, apart from racing, the richest equestrian sport (Hedenborg & White, 2012).

The fact that equestrian sport attracts so many females is especially of particular interest as the typical attire for competitions is considered fairly masculine. The riding attire differs on the particular event and there is little to no difference between the attire for males and females (Plymoth, 2012). Subramanyam *et al.* (2012), in their study on mental toughness, found that female athletes are better at controlling negative emotions such as fear, anger, frustration and envy than male athletes. This may be a contributing factor as horses are extremely sensitive to negative emotions and can act out in fear.

## 2.4 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

Slater and Tiggerman (2010) noticed a trend in which not only fewer girls participate in sport in general but that the dropout rates for adolescent girls are much higher than for boys. When they asked girls why they stop participating the reasons given included lost interest in activity, time, competence, availability/accessibility, injury, practical issues, poor team relationships, conflict with other girls, conflict with boys, coach, influence of friends and family, not 'cool' or feminine for girls to play sports, social activities, school work, not as many sporting options available for girls, uniforms and body image and transition from primary school to high school. Among the reasons given, it was found that the most common were losing interest or becoming bored with an activity; competence and time (Slater & Tiggerman, 2010).

Slater and Tiggerman (2010) noticed that gender can be seen as a barrier as often girls won't participate or dropout of a sport if it is a sport that is described as a 'guy' sport or 'tough' sport. The girls who participated in their study noted that girls who did take part in particular sports were often teased by boys and called names such as 'butch' and 'tomboys'. Women and girls are bombarded with the message that they need to be strong but not bulky so girls may dropout if they are worried that a

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specific sport may cause them to look too 'muscular'. Girls in the study also believed that it was more important for girls to socialise and have free time than it was for boys. They also did not believe that participating in sport was a form of socialising for girls.

Lindner and Kerr (2000) had similar findings where they suggested that social norms related to sex roles prevented females from taking part in mainly male sports in Australia. They also found that two major reasons for not participating in sport was preference for other leisure activities and not being good at sports, they also noted that concern with self was far more important for non-participants than those who participated actively in sport (Lindner & Kerr, 2000). According to Sirard, Pfeiffer and Pate (2006) both boys and girls report lack of interest, coaching problems and lack of time as reasons for dropping out of sport.
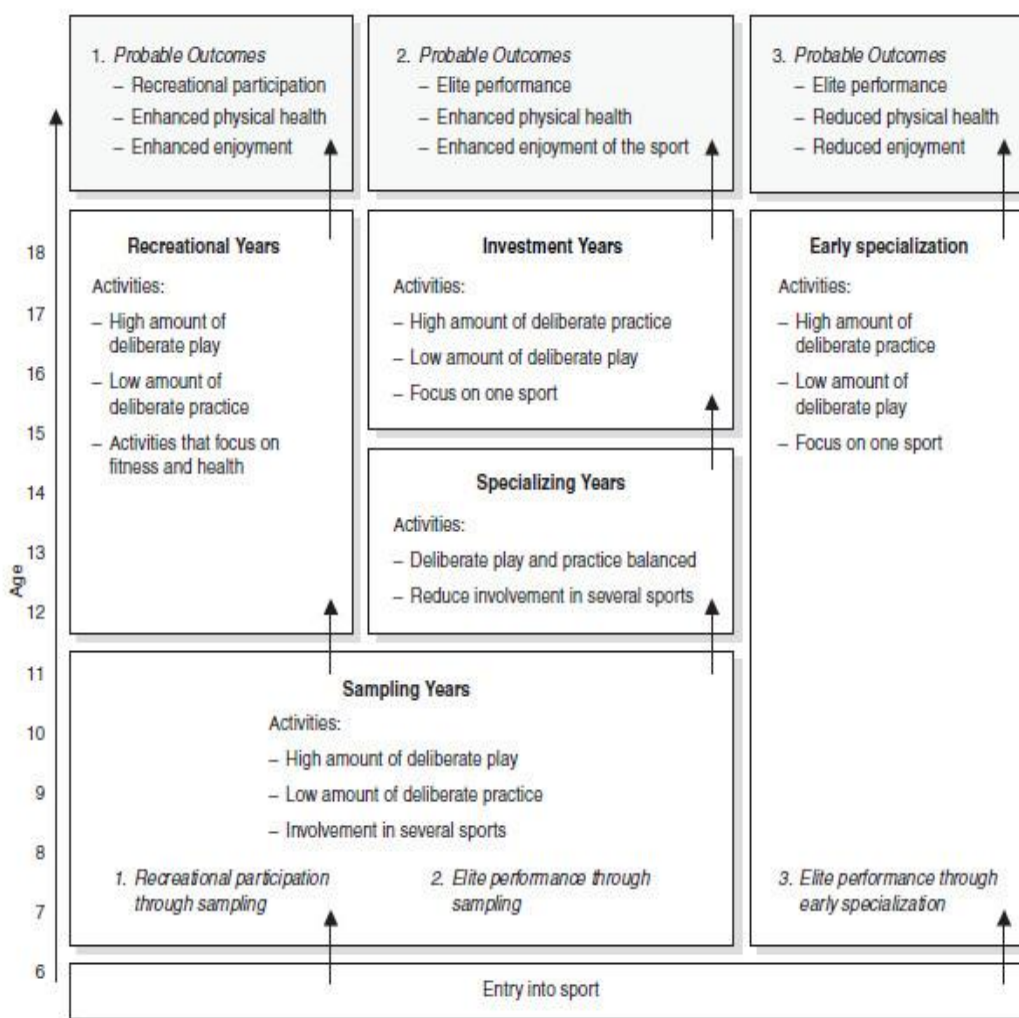


*Figure 2.8 Developmental model of sport participation* (Côté, Baker & Abernethy, 2007)

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According to Côté, Baker and Abernethy (2007) children who specialise from a very young age are far more likely to drop out at a younger age than those who specialise at a later stage as illustrated in figure 2.8 and table 2.1. Although some sports such as figure skating do require early specialisation, in general early specialisation leads to athletes skipping the stage where the athlete samples a variety of sports and thus skip experiencing enjoyment that comes with sampling and playing a variety of sports. Early specialisation can also have a negative impact on the athletes physical health and development (Côté, Baker & Abernethy, 2007).

Table 2.1 Comparison between dropout athletes and participating athletes

| Dropout | Participating |
|---|---|
| *Training patterns* | *Training patterns* |
| Early peak performance | Club developmental approach |
| No opportunity for other activities | Opportunity for other activities |
| Difficult transition to being the youngest in group | Healthy transition to being youngest in group |
| *Coach influence* | *Coach influence* |
| Coaches ignore weaker athletes | Subtle favouritism |
| Limited one-on-one coaching | One-on-one coaching for everyone |
| | Balanced coach personalities |
| | Open communication about withdrawal |
| *Parental influence* | *Parental influence* |
| Parents provide coaching and offer rewards | Parents do not always follow sport |
| Parents pressure to continue when considering dropout | Parents provide options when considering dropout |
| Pressure to be like parent athletes | Balanced parent personalities |
| Pressure because parents did not have opportunities | |
| *Peer influence* | *Peer influence* |
| Lack of sporting peer group in later years | School friends a positive influence in |

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| | later years |
| --- | --- |
| | |
| *Sibling influence* | *Sibling influence* |
| Rivalries with siblings | General positive influence of siblings |
| | |

(Fraser-Thomas, Côté&Deakin, 2008)


**2.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

In Chapter Two an overview of the theoretical assumptions used in the study is provided. It introduced motivational theories and factors that affect motivation to participate. Chapter Two concludes by looking at barriers to participation in sport. The next chapter looks at Gender role and its effects on participation in equestrian sport.

# CHAPTER 3
# EFFECTS OF GENDER ROLE ON PARTICIPATION IN EQUESTRIAN SPORT

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at what effect gender role has on participation in equestrian sport. Equestrian sport has gone through major changes in the last fifty years or so in terms of its gender image. What was once seen as a male dominated and very masculine sport is now, in most cases, female dominated and identified as a more feminine sport. This chapter firstly looks at what is gender role in society, and then gender role in sport participation will be looked at. Finally gender role in equestrian sport will be discussed. Within gender role in equestrian sport, the history of equestrian sport will be looked at, in order to understand how equestrian sport changed from a male dominated sport to a female dominated sport.

## 3.2 GENDER ROLE IN SOCIETY

The concept 'gender' often refer to traits and behaviours that a particular society or culture judge to be appropriate for men and woman. The concept 'gender' must be understood in addition to the concept 'sex' which refers to biological differences. According to Woolfolk (2010) an individual's identity in terms of these two concepts has three components: gender identity, sexual orientation and gender role behaviour. Gender identity can be explained as a person's self-identification as male or female which does not necessarily coincide with the expectations of a given culture or society. Gender-role behaviours are the behaviours and characteristics that a culture or society associate with each gender. Sexual orientation refers to an individual's choice of a sexual partner.

The relationship amongst these three concepts that constitute an individual's gender identity are complex and are influenced and impacted on by a variety of factors that will be discussed later in this chapter. The focus of this study is on the gender role – masculinity versus femininity and the concept of gender role will therefore be explored in depth.

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Coakley and Burnett (2014:183) explain the importance of gender in society by stating that *"gender is a central organising principle of social life…gender ideology influences our identities and relationships"*. Gender roles are expectations relating to how males and females should behave, therefore what is seen as feminine and masculine within a society. Gender role is defined by Dictionary.com (2014) as either "*the public image of being male or female that a person presents to others"* or "*a set of behaviours that indicates one's gender, specifically the image projected by a person that identifies their femaleness or maleness which is an overt public presentation of gender identity*". According to Princeton (2014), however, gender role should be understood as a theoretical construct in the social sciences and humanities that refers to a set of social and behavioural norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. Cliffsnotes (2014) defines gender roles as cultural and personal and adds that "*they determine how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society. Learning plays a role in this process of shaping gender roles. These gender schemas are deeply embedded cognitive frameworks regarding what defines masculine and feminine. While various socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, movies, television, music, books, and religion—teach and reinforce gender roles throughout the lifespan, parents probably exert the greatest influence, especially on their very young offspring*".

Gender roles vary by culture, time and place and have been radically altered over the last 50 years. Children become aware of gender differences as early as aged two. Even though biological differences, for example hormonal difference, play an important role in establishing differences, a strong determinant of a chosen gender role comes from how children are socialised. According to Woolfolk (2010) boys are often given more freedom and are often allowed to attempt potentially dangerous activities, whilst girls are more protected and socialised as the more vulnerable gender. Independence and initiative may therefore be more encouraged in boys than in girls. Parents, coaches and teachers may, in fact, reward behaviours that are perceived as gender appropriate, for example kindness and empathy in girls and strong assertiveness in boys.

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Gender roles in society are based on norms that are expected of both men and women. It is a standard that they are expected to maintain, hence men are expected to act in a certain way while women are expected to act in another way. Within western culture men are expected to act with strength, aggression and dominance while women are expected to act passively, nurturing and subordination. These behaviours are not based on any inherited genetic traits but rather on stereotypes about both genders. These stereotypes form the basis of sexisms or prejudiced beliefs that value one gender above the other.

Males and females are educated in their roles starting from birth. Boys are put in blue clothing while girls are dressed in pink. This socialisation gives them a sense that they are acting normal for their gender thus giving them a false sense of belonging. Boys are expected to play with masculine toys such as trucks, lego soldiers etc., while girls are expected to play with dolls and play dress up. Boys are discouraged from doing anything that could be seen as 'girly' as they are often worried what their peers may think of them. Members of society that don't fit into these stereotypes such as transgender and gender queer often face discrimination, oppression and violence as they do not conform to society's stereotypical gender roles.

It is important, however, to note that over the past fifty years women have managed to break into fields that were once dominated by men such as business, medicine and law. It is commonly accepted now to have women in positions such as CEOs, attorneys, medical doctors etc. Unfortunately it is still fairly uncommon to have men in careers such as nursing, teaching at preschools etc. In terms of gender progress men are stuck. It has been observed though that this may be due to economic reasons. Careers that are typically seen as female generally pay less than those that have previously been associated with being male dominated. However, even nursing, which is a fairly well paying career, has few men working as professional nurses. This may be due to the fact that men who are looking at picking a career are often encouraged to rather follow a career that is more stereotypically male. This may be a result of the idea that traditionally females are not the breadwinner in a household so typically wouldn't need to earn as much as men. If a girl is seen playing sports such as rugby or soccer, she is seen as strong yet if a boy does gymnastics or ballet he is

often mocked by his peers for being a 'sissy' or of homosexual orientation (Bowker, Gadbois & Cornock, 2003).

Gender ideology varies within different cultures. In societies in which men have been privileged in terms of, for example legal status, gender ideology is based on a simple binary classification model (Coakley, 2009). According to this model all people are classified into one of two sex categories: male or female, which are defined in biological terms. This model is conceptualised to highlight difference and opposition between genders. All people in the male category are believed to be naturally different from people in the female category. Each category is believed to have different expectations when it comes to feelings, thoughts and actions, outlining the basis for the ways in which gender is defined and identified. The simple binary classification model therefore illustrates what is perceived as masculine feminine within society. This understanding of gender is so deeply embedded in how gender is perceived by society that people often resist thinking about gender differently and explains why members of society might feel uncomfortable when people do not fit neatly into one category.

Through interaction with family, friends and the environment in general children start to form gender schemas, which can be explained as organised networks of knowledge about what it means to be male or female. It is through gender schemas as illustrated in figure 3.1 that children make sense of the world around them which subsequently guide their behaviour. Additional factors such as cognitive and social factors further affect and impact on gender role behaviour.
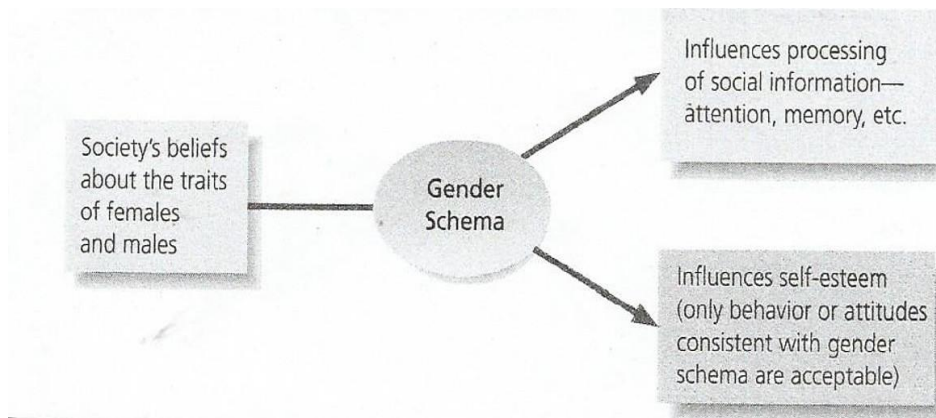


*Figure 3.1 Gender schema theory* (Woolfolk, 2010)

Within the binary classification model (see figure 3.2) the two categories are seldom equal. Even though men have higher levels of privilege, power and influence than

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females, there is a social and personal cost that comes with access and possession of power. Within the two-gender classification system, the accepted range of feelings, thoughts and actions for men is often more restricted than for females, with the implication that the normative boundaries associated with masculinity is more restricted than the boundaries associated with femininity. Positions of power and influence are consistent with masculine characteristics, with male members of society having more to lose collectively if they do not conform to gender expectations. Thus men strictly police their gender boundaries (Coakley, 2009).



*Figure 3.2 Binary model* (Woolfolk, 2010)

The diagram depicting the gender binary model refers to dominant ideas and beliefs about gender categories; it does not refer to people or their actions. Therefore heterosexual masculinity and femininity are depicted as separate non-overlapping categories.

According to Hofstede (2001) masculinity, as concept, represents a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material successes; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life while femininity relate to a society in which gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life. According to these two definitions, masculinity is seen as the trait that places an emphasis on ambition, acquisition of wealth, differentiated gender roles; whilst femininity stresses caring and nurturing behaviours, sexuality equality, environmental awareness, and more fluid gender roles.

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Femininity and masculinity form one's gender identity (Stets & Burke, 2000b). Gender identity refers to the degree to which a person sees themselves as either masculine of feminine. Both masculinity and femininity have a societal root rather than a biological one. Members of society determine what being male or female means and generally in response most males will respond by defining themselves as masculine while females will define themselves as feminine.

In recent years femininity has unfairly been assumed to be a form of male bashing instead of a movement for gender equality. This movement was begun by women who were fighting to have equal rights as men in society. The United Nations has recently launched the *He for She* campaign in order to encourage men to educate themselves about femininity and take a stand for gender equality. Hofstede (2001) illustrated the traits of masculinity and femininity in a diagram as seen in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Traits of Masculinity and Femininity

|  | High Masculine | Low Masculine (Feminine) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Social norms | Ego oriented<br><br>Money and things are important<br><br>Live in order to work | Relationship oriented<br><br>Quality of life and people are important<br><br>Work in order to live |
| Politics and economics | Economic growth high priority<br><br>Conflict solved through force | Environment protection high priority<br><br>Conflict solved through negotiation |
| Religion | Most important in life<br>Only men can be priests | Less important in life<br>Both men and women as priests |
| Work | Larger gender wage gap<br>Fewer women in management<br>Preference for higher pay | Smaller wage gap<br>More women in management<br>Preference for fewer working hours |
| Family and | Traditional family structure | Flexible family structure |

| school | Girls cry, boys don't; boys fight, girls don't  Failing is a disaster | Both boys and girls cry; neither fight  Failing is a minor incident |
|---|---|---|

*Hofstede, 2001*

## 3.3 GENDER ROLE IN SPORT PARTICIPATION

Many differences exist between men and women in many domains, some of these differences are considered unfair and unacceptable while others are valid differences (Chalabaev, Sarrazin, Fontayne, Boiché, Clément-Guillotin, 2013). Many of the differences observed in sport result from biological factors thus sex differences in sport is often questioned less than in other areas. Although biological factors have an influence it has been found that sex only predicts 5% of the variance in physical ability. Differences in performance between male and female athletes thus might not only be biological but also environmental (Chalabaev *et al*., 2013).

According to Coakley (2009) the reasons for increased participation and the motivation for females to participate in sport includes new opportunities, government legislation that mandated equal rights, the Global Woman's Rights Movement, the health and fitness movement, and increased media attention.

New opportunities account for most of the increased participation in sports among women and girls since the mid-1970s (Coakley, 2009). The main reason for a lack of participation prior to this was teams and programs did not exist. Teams and programs that were developed since the mid-1970s have inspired and supported interests that were previously ignored (Coakley, 2009).

The Title IX law passed in the United States of America had an enormous impact on not only the ability of females to participate in sport, but also on their motivation to participate. Title IX prohibited gender discrimination in schools that receive federal funding. It was passed in 1972 and stated that federal funds can be withdrawn from a school engaging in intentional gender discrimination in the provision of curriculum, counselling, academic support or general educational opportunities. Prior to 1972 sports were exclusively male-dominated in American schools. Before the passing of the Title IX act most elementary and high school girls only played sports in annual

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'play days' when track and field events were scheduled for them. Girls were cheerleaders for the boys teams, but very few had opportunities to play on teams like those provided for the boys. Students attending college or university experienced a similar situation with sports. In 1972 the American Congress also made the decision to update the *1964 Civil Rights Act*. The *Civil Rights Act* prohibited discrimination based on "race, colour, religion, or national origin" in public education, publicly funded programs, public facilities and private companies engaged in interstate commerce. Educational amendments to the Civil Rights Act was signed into legislation by President Nixon. Title IX was a section of the amendments that applied to educational opportunities in schools. Title IX was not defined as controversial when it was passed. At this point in history the women's movement and civil rights movement were in full swing and most people wanted their daughters to have the same educational opportunities as their sons.

In the application of Title IX gender ideologies come to the forefront as many felt it was unfair to male sports to be expected to give up part of their funding in order to fund female sports. There was also the stereotype that women were considered too weak to participate in many sports including but not limited to marathons, weightlifting and cycling. There was an argument that sport was harmful to women's health, especially their reproductive health. This stereotype was the fuel to gender-based discrimination in physical education and in all sports. Title IX forced those who discriminated against girls and women to give them the same sporting opportunities. If it wasn't for local and national legislation mandating equal rights then many women worldwide would not be participating in sport today. In the U.S. Title IX that was introduced into law in 1972 declared that *no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance* (Coakley, 2009:233). Many countries now have laws that support equal rights for girls and women in sport. In South Africa this is covered by the White paper on Sport and Recreation for the Republic of South Africa.

Over the past 50 years the global women's right movement has emphasized that girls and women are enhanced as human beings when they develop their intellectual and physical abilities. This has inspired a wide range of sport participation among girls

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and women who in the past would never have thought of playing sports. Changes in occupational and family roles of women have also been brought around by the women's movement. This has enabled many women to acquire the time and resources need to play sports (Coakley, 2009).

More people have become aware of the health benefits of physical activity since the mid-1970s. This awareness has encouraged more women to seek opportunities to exercise and play sports. Companies that produce sporting goods and apparel have also recognised that women can be serious athletes (Coakley, 2009)

Although women's sports don't receive the same coverage as male-dominated sports women can now see and read about the achievements of female athletes in a wider range of sports than before. This encourages women and girls by publicly legitimising their participation and providing alternatives to media content that portrays women as weak and helpless or in sexually objectified terms (Coakley, 2009).

## 3.4 HISTORY OF GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT

Baron Peirre de Coubertin stated "*No matter how toughened a sportswoman may be, her organism is not cut out to sustain certain shocks*" (United Nations, 2007:2). These words by the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Peirre de Coubertin, in 1896 sums up the beliefs held by many at the time. Although women's participation in sport has a long history, it is a history of division and discrimination that has been filled with major accomplishments by female athletes (United Nations, 2007:2). Previously women were considered too weak for sport especially endurance sports such as marathons, weightlifting and cycling (United Nations, 2007:2). This stereotype fuelled gender based discrimination in physical education and in recreational and competitive sport, sporting organisations and sport media.

The 1900 Olympic Games in Paris marked the first Olympic Games where women took part (IOC, 2014). Twenty two women competed in just five sports: sailing, croquet, equestrian sport and golf, however, only golf and tennis had events for women only. Since then the number of females participating has increased drastically with 44 percent of the total athletes at the 2012 games being female. The

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number of events for women in the last twenty years has increased drastically, especially due to the fact that since 1991 all new sports wishing to be part of the games must feature women's events.

Table 3.2: Introduction of Women into specific sports in the Olympic Games

| Year | Sports |
|------|--------|
| 1900 | Tennis, Golf |
| 1904 | Archery |
| 1908 | Tennis, Figure skating |
| 1912 | Swimming |
| 1924 | Fencing |
| 1928 | Athletics, Gymnastics |
| 1936 | Alpine Skiing |
| 1948 | Canoeing |
| 1952 | Equestrian sports |
| 1960 | Speed skating |
| 1964 | Volleyball, Luge |
| 1976 | Rowing, Basketball, Handball |
| 1980 | Field Hockey |
| 1984 | Shooting, Cycling |
| 1988 | Tennis, Table Tennis, Sailing |
| 1992 | Badminton, Judo, Biathlon |
| 1996 | Football, Softball |
| 1998 | Curling, Ice Hockey |
| 2000 | Weightlifting, Pentathlon, Taekwondo, Triathlon |
| 2002 | Bobsleigh |
| 2004 | Wrestling |
| 2008 | BMX |
| 2012 | Boxing |
| 2014 | Ski Jumping |

*IOC, 2014*

Gender equality is a major topic of discussion within sport, and is on the political agenda. The images and messages of sport has a large impact on public opinion, this

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refers as well to the perceptions, evaluations and constructions of gender in sport. Sport offers many benefits, including well-being and thus both men and women should have equal opportunities in sports (Pfister, 2011). In Europe, the 'Resolution on the involvement of women in sport' was adopted in 1981, with concrete proposals for active policy measures which included the demand for additional resources (Pfister, 2011).

Problems highlighted in this paper included stereotyping, lack of support of sportswomen, difficulty of life-work-sport integration, inadequate media coverage and limited funding. The lack of women on sport's ruling bodies has been identified as a major problem in the paper (Pfister, 2011). It is noted that the gender proportions in various sports are interrelated since the number of women in organized sport has an impact on the availability of women for executive and coaching positions (Pfister, 2011). Finding the reasons for gender differences is considered a much more difficult issue than merely mapping gender ratios in sports.

## 3.5 GENDER ROLE IN EQUESTRIAN SPORT

Equestrian sport is the only example of an Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other on equal terms, thereby promoting gender equality. Over the past fifty years the number of men participating has dramatically decreased, while the number of women participating has skyrocketed. In Britain it is estimated that 75% of British Horse Society (BHS) members are now women, while 85% of the Swedish Equestrian Federation members are now female (Hedenborg & Hedenborg-White, 2012). This was not always the case. This feminisation of equestrian sport is estimated to have begun in the 1950s when women were allowed to participate for the first time in equestrian sport during the Helsinki Olympics of 1952. According to the British Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (2011) it is estimated that for every eight women taking part in equestrian sport there is one man taking part. The Foundation also found that equestrian sport is now one of just seven sporting codes that have more female than male participants.

### 3.5.1 History of equestrian sport as related to gender participation

Equestrian sport was first introduced into the Olympics in Paris 1900. Five events were featured that included jumping, high jump, long jump, hacks and hunters

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combined, and mail coach. All equestrian events only had males as participants. Equestrian was then re-introduced in 1912 and since then has always featured in the Olympic Games featuring the three equestrian sports dressage, show-jumping and eventing. Vaulting did feature in the 1920 Olympic Games but has not featured since.

The international governing body of equestrian sport, the Fédération Équestre Internationale or International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) came into being in May 1921 after Pierre De Coubertin called for a meeting in Lausanne to discuss universal rules and form international sport federations. FEI made its first Olympic appearance as a governing body at the 1924 Olympics. Originally consisting of only three equestrian disciplines, FEI is now the governing body of seven equestrian disciplines that apart from the three Olympic disciplines also includes driving, vaulting, endurance and reining. Since 2006 both Para-dressage and Para-driving also fall under the governance of the FEI. FEI also has regional governance of the equestrian sports *Horseball* and *Tentpegging*. In 1952 females were allowed to participate in dressage, and since 1964 all three equestrian disciplines have featured mixed events.

In 1990 the first World Equestrian games was held in Stockholm, Sweden and has since been held every four years. The world equestrian games has had a major impact on the promotion of all equestrian sports, and the 2014 games had record numbers participating in all eight disciplines. South Africa had representatives in all sports except driving, and featured a full team in both show jumping and dressage. The South African dressage team made history twice as being the first team from South Africa to compete in dressage at the World Equestrian games and also having the first Friesian horse competing in dressage. The South African vaulting team also made history being the first South African team to reach the team vaulting final, the team finished in sixth position.

Dressage has traditions that go as far back as ancient Greece. It is considered the art of equestrian sport and forms the groundwork for all other disciplines. The Greeks recognised two thousand years ago that complete cooperation between horse and rider was necessary if both were to survive battle and thus dressage was developed as a method to train horses for war. The disintegration of ancient Greece caused the art of riding to slowly fall into oblivion until it was revived during the Renaissance

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period. The creation of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna in 1729 was when classical dressage reached its peak and the basis of modern dressage was laid. Dressage was the first equestrian sport to allow females to participate. In more recent years the freestyle to music test was introduced in Atlanta in 1996 and has since become an integral part of dressage. It is the pinnacle of dressage execution, with magical results.

Eventing is considered the most demanding of the three Olympic equestrian disciplines. It includes three 'tests' that includes dressage, cross country and show-jumping. Eventing was developed to test and prepare cavalry horses, so like dressage has a military history. Eventing in the early years provided a basis to compare training standards between the cavalries of different countries. Although women has been allowed to compete in equestrian events since 1952 it wasn't until 1964 that eventing saw its first woman representing her country, when Helen du Pont competed for the United States.

Show-jumping as it is now known was developed as a result of competition among fox hunters due to the introduction of the enclosures act that came into force in England in the eighteenth century. With its introduction into the Olympics, Show-jumping was initially dominated by the military but with the mechanisation of the army civilians became more and more prevalent. This also paved the way for women who made their Olympic debut in show-jumping in 1956 and today are as often if not more on the top spot of the podium.

### 3.5.2 Current participation of female participants in equestrian sport

Sport has become an important social empowerment tool through the skills and values it teaches, such as teamwork, negotiation, leadership, communication, and respect for others (United Nations, 2007:9). It gives girls a large number of social benefits, which is extremely important especially for adolescent girls. Many girls have far fewer opportunities than boys for social interaction, and sport provides these girls with these opportunities in a safe and controlled environment (United Nations, 2007:9). Freedom of expression and movement which increases self-esteem and self-confidence is encouraged through sport and this allows girls to acquire new interpersonal relationships, develop a sense of identity and access new opportunities

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(United Nations, 2007:9). This in turn then encourages the girls to become more engaged in their school and community life (United Nations, 2007:9).

Sports in South Africa that are dominant or popular sports are mainly sports that are to a certain degree male-dominated. These include: rugby, soccer, cricket, athletics and swimming. Golf and motor sport are als0020zo fairly popular among the general population. Equestrian sport, although still fairly small in comparison to big sports such as rugby, is slowly growing in popularity. Events such as Easter Festival and South African Show-jumping Derby have become incredibly popular and have even been able to bring in both judges and world class course builders from top equestrian nations. In recent years South Africans have begun making an impact on the international scene. 2012 was the first time a South African competed in eventing at the London Olympics. In 2014 at the Normandy World Equestrian Games South Africa was represented in every discipline with the exception of driving, a South African show-jumper also managed to finish in 23rd place individually beating top international show-jumpers.

Media in South Africa, however, still gives preference to bigger, more popular sports although in recent years has been showing more equestrian events on television. The South African Show-jumping Derby has also been shown live on *Supersport* on television, and has in recent years attracted attention from large radio stations and television stations.

### 3.5.3 Current state of equestrian sport

In 2008 the president of the FEI Princess Haya of Jordan was reported to have given warning that Equestrian sport's part in the Olympic Games was by no means guaranteed, regardless of its history spanning 100 years (Clarkson, 2012). She received criticism for her remarks, surprisingly, considering the fact that not only is she president of the FEI but is also a member of the IOC. The IOC had a number of concerns surrounding the abnormally low popularity of dressage, safety issues within eventing and doping problems. Equestrian sport experienced a major embarrassment at the 2008 games when the large number of positive doping tests on horses resulted in Norway losing its team bronze medal in show jumping. A few months after the games at the FEI General Assembly in Buenos Aires, partly due to judging issues,

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the dressage committee was disbanded. In 2009 the FEI launched its Clean Sport initiative that is now widely supported, but at the time it had most of the world's major equestrian nations up in arms due to the progressive list of drugs. FEI was far more rigorous in its approach to the drug issue at the 2010 World Equestrian Games, and this resulted in zero positive doping results at the London Olympics.

Even with the controversies surrounding Equestrian in recent years, it still is the only mixed sport at the games and has a high ration of female participation. It also gives older athletes an opportunity to participate at the games as many top equestrians are at an age when most elite athletes in other sports are retiring from top level competition. Apart from China, many of the world's top sporting nations do well in equestrian competition which means television audiences within these markets are reasonably strong. Tickets for equestrian events at the London games sold fairly well, most likely partly due to the fact that Great Britain is one of the major equestrian nations and had strong medal contenders in all three equestrian disciplines.


**3.6 CONCLUSION**

Chapter Three discussed the gender role in society which included masculinity versus femininity and the binary model. It gave an overview of gender role in sport participation and the history of gender equality in sport. The Chapter concluded with a history of equestrian sport and the current state of equestrian sport. Chapter Four will focus on the research methodology utilised in the study.

# CHAPTER 4
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim underlying this study was to determine how masculinity and femininity influence motivation to participate in equestrian sport. To achieve this aim the study was approached from a qualitative perspective with data collected by using semi-structured interviews.

The objectives of the study included:

➢ Identifying the changes in gender participation in equestrian sport.

➢ Explore the gender role in relation to participation in equestrian sports.

➢ Determine aspects in equestrian sport that are perceived as feminine in nature.

➢ Identify the motivational differences between males and females impacting on participation in equestrian sport.

## 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology is explaining how a study was conducted. It encompasses who the participants are, the instruments or apparatus used, procedures used and what the design and analysis of the study was. A standard rule in methodology is its description should be thorough enough that a competent researcher should reproduce the study (Thomas *et. al.*, 2011).

Research is a form of problem solving; it implies a careful and systematic means of solving problems. According to Thomas, Nelson and Silverman (2011) research involves five characteristics namely it is: systematic, logical, empirical, reductive and replicable. Problems solved through research come from many sources and can entail resolving controversial issues, testing theories and trying to improve present practice. Research design is described by Gratton and Jones (2010:287) as *"the overall blueprint that guides the researcher in the data collection stages in terms of what data to collect, from whom, and when"*.

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This study adopted an explorative qualitative research design, a form of research that has been designed *"to tell the researcher how (process) and why (meaning) things happen as they do"* (Cooper and Schindler, 2008:162). Qualitative research includes a number of interpretive techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate, and come to terms with the meaning, but not the frequency of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. It aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a situation. The strengths of qualitative research is "*drawn mainly from its inductive approach, focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words instead of numbers*" (Maxwell, 2005).

### 4.2.1 Research Population

The research population are those that were selected for a specific research because they have specific characteristics that are necessary. These characteristic could include: age, sex, level of training and level of performance. Long (2007) defines the research population as including all the people within a specific category being investigated.

The research population utilised in the study included riders ranging from the beginner level (so-called "Preliminary" riders) to more advanced riders ("Novice") and full professional athletes competing in the top levels of the sport, known as Grand Prix riders (sometimes also known as "Open" riders). This provided for a sample frame which represented both male and female research respondents. Such a sample frame was therefore sufficiently representative of the equestrian male and female population. The focus of the study was mainly on male and female equestrian participants in Gauteng as it represented the most active component of South African equestrian sport. For purposes of this study the research population refers to the riders that are participating in the research study.

### 4.2.2 Research Sample

A research sample is a group of participants, treatments or situations selected from a larger group. Generally the sample of participants represents some larger group thus the findings can be generalised to the larger group (Maxwell, 2005). The study made use of a non-probability purposive key informant sample in which participants and documentation were chosen on the basis of the specific experience or knowledge or

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information possessed (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Cresswell (2009:178) states that *"the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question"*.

The sample for this sample was drawn by attending various equestrian sporting events and selectively identifying equestrian athletes at various levels of the sporting code. A research sample of 18 athletes was aimed for the study. Participants will vary in both discipline (competing in either, dressage, show-jumping and/or eventing) and levels of experience (Novice, Intermediate and Grand Prix). The researcher attempted to select equal numbers of participants from all three disciplines as well as an equal number of male and female participants. This information formed the key research data in answering the research question. Eventually the researcher had 9 respondents, 8 of whom had interviews that were usable for the study. Of these 8 respondents, 7 were female and one was male. Three of the participants compete in dressage, four compete in show-jumping and one competes in eventing.

Key informants were used who were able to supply the researcher with specialist knowledge based on position or relevant experiences. They were also able to complement the data collected from the literature review. It will also be important for the researcher to assess their perspective on the issue so that particular views can be taken into account.

## 4.3 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection can be described as *"an attempt to learn about the world"* (Babbie, 2008) and typically follows from the research question (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Creswell (2013), however, warns against the notion to simplify the process of data collection to the actual types of data as data collection involves various interrelated activities that range from the location of research participants, gaining access and establishing rapport, collecting data, exploring field issues and storing collected data.

"*Data collection offers one more instance for assessing research design within each tradition of inquiry*" (Creswell, 2007:109). It is further defined by Creswell (2007:

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110) as *a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions* as can be seen in figure 4.1. In the process of collecting data a researcher would engage in a series of activities. These activities include locating a site/ individual, gaining access and making rapport, purposefully sampling, collecting data, recording information, resolving field issues and storing data. Creswell (2007) describes the process of collecting data as a circle of interrelated activities. Although generally researchers begin collecting data by locating a site or an individual, according to Creswell (2007:110), researchers may begin at a different entry point for example purposefully sampling.
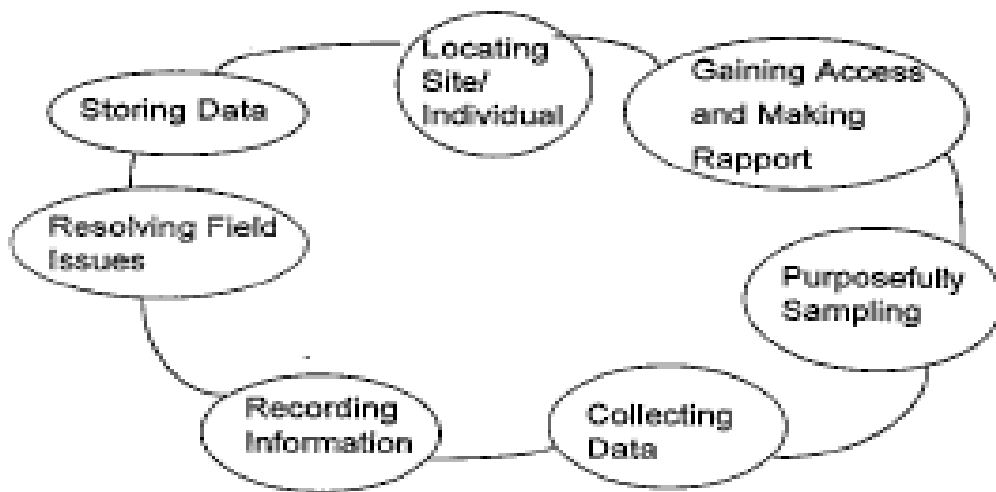


*Figure 4.1 Circle of Data Collection (Creswell, 2007:110)*

Research instrumentation used in the study included semi-structured interviews.

### 4.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

One of the main strategies in qualitative data collection is the interview. This approach can take several forms including a structured-, semi-structured or unstructured interview. Semi-structured interviews will be used by the researcher as an additional data source as it is well known that such interviews are valuable in gaining knowledge from a sample population that could be impossible to elicit by only using a questionnaire. Kvale (1996) sees such interviews as "*an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest*".

A sub-set from the initial sample population will be selected for semi-structured interviews with the researcher using the researcher's knowledge and access to key

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local (and overseas) equestrian sport athletes. The sub-set will be made up from individuals who are deemed to be participants in South African equestrian sports participating at both national and international levels.

A further benefit of using semi-structured interviews is that it allows for the gathering of additional information not covered by the questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews are a common tool in qualitative research such as this. Topics pursued in the semi-structured interview included: demographical details, motivational factors influencing participation, masculinity as influence on participation and open ideas.

## 4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data Analysis is defined as the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data (University of Illinois, 2014). The form which data analysis takes depends on the type of qualitative research being conductive for example biography and oral history etc. (University of Illinois, 2014). Data is collected before being reviewed and then analysed in order to form a conclusion about the phenomenon being examined (Business Dictionary, 2014).

Data from the semi-structured interviews were interpreted by organising the data into common themes or categories. The researcher is aware that it is difficult to interpret the data of interviews as the data is qualitative and may lack the structure of data found in the questionnaires. Analysis of transcribed and textual data was categorised into identified themes and codes. Codes were applied to all transcripts using the qualitative software program *Atlas ti*. The consistency and trustworthiness of the data analysis and interpretation were enhanced by using an external validation process; member validation; an audit trail; and reflexivity (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

Themes included:
- Coach and family
- Media
- Peer group and Culture
- Competitive element

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- Partnership and love for horses
- Interest outside of main school sport
- Knowledge of sport
- Artistic element
- Adrenaline
- Alternative Sport
- Discipline of the sport

## 4.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter four gave a comprehensive description of the research process used in this study. The research methodology, sampling method, research population, as well as data collection method was specified. The next chapter will offer an analysis and interpretation of the analysed data.

# CHAPTER 5:
# ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter it was stated that the influence of masculinity and femininity on the motivation to participate in equestrian sport needed to be determined. The research methodology used to collect data to confirm this was discussed in Chapter Four. The results of the study will be discussed according to the study objectives and themes used in analysis.

The software program Atlas *ti* was utilised for the qualitative analysis. Data was coded according to themes and codes that were identified in Chapter four. Results will first be presented in table form and then interpreted.

## 5.2 RESULTS

The results are presented according to the aims of the study. The results of the study are presented according to the semi-structured interview schedule utilised. Data analysis includes the following categories: motivational factors influencing participation in equestrian sport and participant's perception of equestrian sport as predominantly male or female. Most participants have participated in equestrian sport since they were very young.

### 5.2.1   Motivational factors influencing participation in equestrian sport

Data analysis showed that motivational factors that influenced equestrian sport are diverse and include factors such as: coach and family; the media; peer group and culture; the competitive element inherent in equestrian sport; sense of partnership and love for horses; interest outside of main school sports; knowledge of the sport; the artistic element inherent in equestrian sport; adrenaline rush; alternative sport; and the discipline of equestrian sport. These factors are all illustrated in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Motivational factors

| Factors | Data |
|---|---|
| Coach and family | *"Yes, my two cousins used to ride a few years ago however, both have stopped riding due to lost interest in the sport."* |
| | *"It's a family passion, so I grew up with horses so it was a natural progression for me to start riding umm ja and the passion has been inculcated to me by my parents forever."* |
| | *"Umm apparently according to my mother it's supposed to calm ADD children*<br>*So your mom was just like you're too much*<br>*Ja I've had hyperactivity attention disorder and it's supposed to calm kids like that down and make them more focused. So ja that's how I started riding"*<br>*They still cheer on the side?*<br>*Ja, my dad doesn't know much about horses but when I win he gets very excited and cheers on*<br>*That's like my dad*<br>*Oh you came first, clap hand clap hands. That's my child' that's my child. Look she won the class, that's my child."* |
| | *"When I first started riding I was a show jumper. However, when I bought my first horse I moved stable yards and also got a new instructor. My new instructor trained and taught classical dressage and in turn she taught me. I stopped show jumping and have been a dressage rider ever since."* |
| | *"Does anyone in your family participate in equestrian sport? Yes, my sister and brother in law."* |
| Media | *"Yes. I like to watch either dressage or show jumping when it's broadcasted as I find I can learn many new techniques and methods to continue to improve my riding."* |

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|---|---|
| | *"To know what's happening in the world, cause if we compete we've got to know what's, what's happening out there, ummm we watch international riders to see how they solve certain problems umm also to be aware of trends in the dressage to see as they say on twitter what's trending because dressage has a lot to do with fashion as well and it is quite subjective. Soo ja to specifically see how other riders ride and how they solve their problems."* <br><br> *"Ja for me it's also, I like, now I'm not at that level but I like to compare myself to them, even though I probably shouldn't but I do. Because I, let's say now with the world equestrian games it was broadcasted I watched it and I went I like that guys style, that's how I want to ride. Let's see what I can improve on myself to ride like that."* <br><br> *"Some of it but not all of it. I watch mainly the dressage stuff and occasionally the cross country cause I like watching the people fall"* |
| Peer group and culture | *"I must say in South Africa men are a lot more careful too, within our sport not to be emasculinated so, because it's seen in Afrikaner culture, it's a bit of a moffie sport unless you go galloping in the veld, you know that's male but to compete is seen as a especially dressage obviously is seen as a female sport, showjumping not so much. I find men are more careful when it comes to the display of their masculinity than they are in Europe."* <br><br> *" I think if we grow the sport in South Africa it will encourage a lot more males to take part, because there's this idea that horseriding is a girly sport which it isn't actually. I'm just thinking about countries like Portugal and Spain where horseriding is still seen as quite a macho sport"* |
| Competitive element | *"Yes. I currently own an SA Boerperd and we have recently upgraded to Medium level dressage and would like to carry on competing as it is a challenge for both of us. I also have a young thoroughbred who has recently lost an eye and I would like to compete with* |

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| | |
|---|---|
| | *him as it would be a great achievement for both of us."* |
| | *"Because it's fun and I have a pony and I enjoy competing"* |
| | *"Definitely, I wouldn't ride if I didn't compete. I enjoy competition because it gives me... firstly it gives me goals to work towards and it gives me, it's a nice way to measure myself. Where I am in terms of my training goals. Where I am in training of my horse and to compare myself with other riders and I enjoy winning, I'm, I'm quite competitive so I like to compete and I like to win umm like I say it's, you get a lot of satisfaction out of your work being recognised. You're putting so much work into a horse and training and fixing little problems and ja at the end of the day getting recognised for that or getting recognition for it."* |
| | *"We like to push our limits as well, seeing how well we can get it right. We like to challenge ourselves."* |
| | *"The goal is to reach grand prix and I am a long way away so I need to keep working if I ever hope to achieve the goal. There is a saying that it take 10 000 hours to become a professional – I'm convinced it takes 10 000 hours of perfect practise with dressage. I also think competition is motivation to keep fitness, suppleness and strength up for both horse and rider. If you don't have the pressure of shows it is very easy to slip into a space of complacency and procrastination."* |
| Partnership and love for horses | *"I loved horses from an early age and eventually begged my mother to send me to a riding school for riding lessons. I had my first lesson when I was five years old and have never stopped riding since"* |
| | *"The feeling of symbiosis with your horse, cause that's my ultimate goal is and the ultimate satisfaction that I get is to be in full symbiosis  with your horse with* |

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|---|---|
| | *minimal force or aids or strength. So the ability to communicate with your horse with a single movement of your hip bone or of your shoulder and, and having your horse halt without having to do anything by literally just sitting a little bit deeper in the saddle. That's for me the ultimate in dressage. And problem solving, the problem solving of dressage. Influencing the horses balance in such a way to do, make him do a difficult movement in a balanced way, ja and solving little problems. Each horse being different, for me was a lot more interesting than jumping for instance."* |
| Interest outside of main school sport | *"Ja and with me I was never a rugby player or a big sportsman, I was never like dad's springbok player and then I got a flyer of a pony camp and ja then I started, went to the pony camp and ja then that's how I started."*<br><br>*"Think something that also motivated cause I can't say I was into school sport a lot and also being more naturally the artistic side I did ballet and horse riding obviously but ja I didn't do a lot of school sport"* |
| Knowledge of the sport | *"Absolutely nothing. My parents actually thought I would not like horses because I was scared of dogs so ja. But horses aren't the same as dogs though? Yes, I was scared of a Chihauhau. I would stand on a chair for a Chihuahua. Then I went and hopped on to the horse"* |
| Artistic element | *"The artistic side of it"* |
| Adrenaline | *"For me it was the adrenaline of jumping, ja, it's literally because I like dressage as well but the technical part of dressage and jumping it's just the adrenaline and ja it's a passion of mine, I would say it comes down to cause I am an adrenaline junkie, umm ja it's just seeing this big fence infront of you and ja the adrenaline. That rush I get it satisfies me quite a bit Seeing how high you can go? Ja, ja I'm that guy that guy that goes balls to the walls [laughs] So ja that's"* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *"With jumping the test changes everytime cause it's different courses. Ja, every horse is different, like lets say with my mare I won't lift my hands at all but with a deliberate horse that's on the forehand I would lift my hands and ja it's exactly like she said, maybe put your inside seatbone on for that horse, maybe stand up in your stirrups, don't sit in the saddle cause it shortens the canter and then with another horse sit because it lengthens. All about problem-solving? Ja, it comes down to that. Every horse is a challenge and because they're animals every day is a different challenge. So you could have a very good week and then have a bad week. Have a good day and then have a bad day. That's, it's a bit sadistic I find, you put in so many hours of work, so many, so much patience to get that, those 5 minutes of pleasure or of satisfaction. That's why I, err ja it's quite a bit of a sadistic sport. You've got to be a bit not well in your head [laughs]. Cause running you can just run, it's based on yourself"* |
| Alternative sport | *"Ja and with me I was never a rugby player or a big sportsman, I was never like dad's springbok player and then I got a flyer of a pony camp and ja then I started, went to the pony camp and ja then that's how I started."*<br><br>*"Initially it was in seeking diversity in exercise"* |
| Discipline of sport | *"I just like the control that dressage has and the eloquence, and the structure, I enjoy things with structure."*<br><br>*"What motivated you to choose your current discipline of riding? Upon the purchase of my first horse, who developed a sore back and became limited to doing dressage only, I started to gain immense interest and respect for the discipline. After having my first dressage lesson (which was a disaster) I knew I had found the discipline that best suited me. Dressage is about discipline, harmony, feel, flow and accuracy."* |

*5.2.1.1 Influence of Coach and Family on motivation*

Within the influence of coach and family a number of sub-factors were found. These are illustrated in table 5.2.

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Table 5.2 sub-factors within influence of Coach and family on motivation

| Family history | "*Yes, my two cousins used to ride a few years ago however, both have stopped riding due to lost interest in the sport.*"<br><br>"*It's a family passion, so I grew up with horses so it was a natural progression for me to start riding umm ja and the passion has been inculcated to me by my parents forever.*"<br><br>"*Does anyone in your family participate in equestrian sport? Yes, my sister and brother in law.*" |
| --- | --- |
| Parent support | "*Umm apparently according to my mother it's supposed to calm ADD children*<br>*So your mom was just like you're too much*<br>*[F3] Ja I've had hyperactivity attention disorder and it's supposed to calm kids like that down and make them more focused. So ja that's how I started riding*"<br><br>"*Ja, my dad doesn't know much about horses but when I win he gets very excited and cheers on*<br>*That's like my dad*<br>*[F3] Oh you came first, clap hand clap hands. That's my child' that's my child. Look she won the class, that's my child.*" |
| Coach as motivation | "*What motivated you to choose your current discipline of riding?*<br>*When I first started riding I was a show jumper. However, when I bought my first horse I moved stable yards and also got a new instructor. My new instructor trained and taught classical dressage and in turn she taught me. I stopped show jumping and have been a dressage rider ever since.*" |

*5.2.1.2 Media*

There's an opposite to media motivation in terms of other sports. In equestrian sports it seems that when people participate they already know what they want to do. Participants expressed different perceptions regarding the impact of media on their perception: "*Yes. I like to watch either dressage or show jumping when it's*

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*broadcasted as I find I can learn many new techniques and methods to continue to improve my riding.”; To know what's happening in the world, cause if we compete we've got to know what's, what's happening out there, ummm we watch international riders to see how they solve certain problems umm also to be aware of trends in the dressage to see as they say on twitter what's trending because dressage has a lot to do with fashion as well and it is quite subjective. Soo ja to specifically see how other riders ride and how they solve their problems; Ja for me it's also, I like, now I'm not at that level but I like to compare myself to them, even though I probably shouldn't but I do. Because I, let's say now with the world equestrian games it was broadcasted I watched it and I went I like that guys style, that's how I want to ride. Let's see what I can improve on myself to ride like that.”*

### 5.2.1.3 Competitive element

Participants reported elements of competitiveness as motivation. This is demonstrated in table 5.3

Table 5.3 Elements of competitiveness

| Element | Data |
|---|---|
| Challenge | *"Yes. I currently own an SA Boerperd and we have recently upgraded to Medium level dressage and would like to carry on competing as it is a challenge for both of us. I also have a young thoroughbred who has recently lost an eye and I would like to compete with him as it would be a great achievement for both of us."*<br><br>*"We like to push our limits as well, seeing how well we can get it right. We like to challenge ourselves"* |
| Perfectionist element | *"You're putting so much work into a horse and training and fixing little problems and ja at the end of the day getting recognised for that or getting recognition for it"*<br><br>*"The goal is to reach grand prix and I am a long way away so I need to keep working if I ever hope to achieve the goal. There is a saying that it take 10 000 hours to become a professional – I'm convinced it takes 10 000 hours of perfect practise with dressage"*<br><br>*"you don't push the horse to do somethings that he can't* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | *but you know it's that satisfaction of getting it as perfect as possible or figuring out how to get it as perfect as possible"* |
| Goal setting | *"I enjoy competition because it gives me... firstly it gives me goals to work towards and it gives me, it's a nice way to measure myself. Where I am in terms of my training goals. Where I am in training of my horse and to compare myself with other riders and I enjoy winning"*<br><br>*"The goal is to reach grand prix and I am a long way away so I need to keep working if I ever hope to achieve the goal. There is a saying that it take 10 000 hours to become a professional – I'm convinced it takes 10 000 hours of perfect practise with dressage. I also think competition is motivation to keep fitness, suppleness and strength up for both horse and rider. If you don't have the pressure of shows it is very easy to slip into a space of complacency and procrastination"* |
| Competitiveness | *"Because it's fun and I have a pony and I enjoy competing"*<br><br>*"I'm quite competitive so I like to compete and I like to win umm like I say it's, you get a lot of satisfaction out of your work being recognised"* |

*5.2.1.4 Partnership and Love for horses*

A number of sub-factors were identified within the factor partnership and love for horses. These are illustrated in table 5.4

Table 5.4 Partnership and Love for horses sub-factors

| | |
|---|---|
| Inherent love for horses | *"I loved horses from an early age and eventually begged my mother to send me to a riding school for riding lessons. I had my first lesson when I was five years old and have never stopped riding since"* |
| Symbiosis with horse "being one with the horse" | *"The feeling of symbiosis with your horse, cause that's my ultimate goal is and the ultimate satisfaction that I get is to be in full symbiosis with your horse with minimal force or aids or strength. So the ability to communicate with your horse with a single movement of your hip bone or of your shoulder and, and having your horse halt without having to do anything by literally just sitting a little bit deeper in* |

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| | |
|---|---|
| | *the saddle"* |

### 5.2.1.6. Interest outside of main school sports

Both a female and male participant stated that part of the appeal of equestrian sport was that it provided an alternative to traditional school sport such as rugby, soccer, netball, hockey etc. They stated: *I was never a rugby player or a big sportsman, I was never like dad's springbok player*; *Think something that also motivated cause I can't say I was into school sport a lot and also being more naturally the artistic side I did ballet and horse riding obviously but ja I didn't do a lot of school sport*. This factor is clearly playing a big role as can be seen by the popularity of inter-schools equestrian competitions run by the South African National Equestrian School Association (SANESA).

### 5.2.1.7 Knowledge of the sport

One participant mentioned that before he began horse riding that he had known absolutely nothing about horses. He stated: "*Absolutely nothing. My parents actually thought I would not like horses because I was scared of dogs*".

### 5.2.1.8 Artistic element

A female participant remarked that an important motivational influence on her decision to participate in equestrian sport is *"the artistic side of it"*.

### 5.2.1.9 Adrenaline

Sports providing an adrenaline rush are often seen to be masculine. Table 5.5 demonstrates that participants find a number of sub-factors influencing adrenaline.

Table 5.5 Sub-factors of adrenaline

| Sub-factors | Data |
|---|---|
| Jumping | "*For me it was the adrenaline of jumping, ja, it's literally because I like dressage as well but the technical part of dressage and jumping it's just the adrenaline and ja it's a passion of mine, I would say it comes down to cause I* |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | am an adrenaline junkie, umm ja it's just seeing this big fence infront of you and ja the adrenaline. That rush I get it satisfies me quite a bit" |
| | Course changes | "Ja, every horse is different, like lets say with my mare I won't lift my hands at all but with a deliberate horse that's on the forehand I would lift my hands and ja it's exactly like she said, maybe put your inside seatbone on for that horse, maybe stand up in your stirrups, don't sit in the saddle cause it shortens the canter and then with another horse sit because it lengthens" |
| | Challenges | "Every horse is a challenge and because they're animals every day is a different challenge. So you could have a very good week and then have a bad week" |

### 5.2.1.10    Alternative sport

A male and female participant both saw equestrian sport as an alternative to main sports and forms of exercise. They stated: *Ja and with me I was never a rugby player or a big sportsman, I was never like dad's springbok player and then I got a flyer of a pony camp and ja then I started, went to the pony camp and ja then that's how I started*; *Initially it was in seeking diversity in exercise*.

### 5.2.1.11    Discipline of sport

A number of participants referred to the discipline involved in their chosen sport as a motivating factor for participation. Dressage is a sport that requires a huge amount of discipline from both the horse and rider as when performing the movements in a competition judges mark on how accurately a movement was performed, thus a great deal of discipline is needed at all times. One of the participants stated: "*I just like the control that dressage has and the eloquence, and the structure, I enjoy things with structure*; *Dressage is about discipline, harmony, feel, flow and accuracy. It is, in my opinion, the most taxing on a horse and rider in terms of emotional and physical resilience and tests the relationship in the team*".

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### 5.2.2. Perception of equestrian sport as predominantly male or female

All of the participants expressed that the view various different elements within equestrian sport to be either predominantly male or predominantly female. Views on which aspects are more male or female, within some participants viewing a specific aspect as predominantly male while other participants viewed the same aspect as more female. This is illustrated in table 5.6.

*5.2.2.1 Aspects in equestrian sport perceived as male or female*

Table 5.6 Aspects in equestrian sport perceived as male or female

| Aspects | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|
| Clothing | "[M1]*I think with the male and female aspect with the riding thing, men in South Africa feel not as, hulle'sbietjieskaamommyrybroekiestedra. In Europe they don't care.*" | "*In terms of clothing, men in jodhpurs do not portray a good picture and therefore, are more for women.*"<br><br>"*[F2] Dressage is very fashion oriented so bling at the moment where it's this, at the moment bling is the in thing.*" |
| Discipline | "[M1] *Hmmm jumping uhh it's ja, if you look at the lower levels I would say it's 50/50 if you go on to the higher levels there's more males*"<br><br>"[F2*] I must say in South Africa men are a lot more careful too, within our sport not to be so emasculated, because it's seen in Afrikaner culture, it's a bit of a moffie sport unless you go galloping in the veld, you know that's male but to compete is seen as a especially dressage obviously is seen as a female sport, showjumping not so much. I find men are more careful when it comes to the display of their masculinity than they are in* | "*South African dressage is female dominated at lower levels but at higher levels (Medium – Grand Prix) you will see a fair divide between male and female competitors.*"<br><br>"[F3] *I think it's more a female sport than a male sport, especially in the dressage. There's more females competing in our* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Europe.*" | *country than males in the dressage.*"<br><br>"*[F2]Dressage is female, jumping I don't know*"<br><br>"*[F2] but in the lower dressage classes you find people who are too scared to jump but still want to ride and want to compete but in the higher I think it stays the same but there's definitely more female dominated, it stays constant throughout, if I had to take a guess about 80% female hmm 90% female and 10% male. It stays pretty constant*"<br><br>"*[F2] I think females are more scared to jump*" |
| Riding of the horse | "*Other people may be insensitive to horses and force them to perform even if not yet ready and this can be seen as fairly masculine and forceful.*"<br><br>"*[F3]I think sometimes the strength the guys have is sometimes a bit better for the horseriding and that the girls perhaps lack that, that sometimes gives the guys a bit of a edge to riding the bigger horses.*"<br><br>"*Masculine is when we fall off, and get* | "*In terms of riding – I think the act of horse riding is very intuitive and is about feel (if you are doing it correctly) – that could be perceived as feminine.*"<br><br>"*I think that the equestrian sport is mainly female dominated as when I go to shows or*" |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *dirty and our ability to control this big animal and the strength we have to control them."* | *equestrian events I see many more women than men."* |
| Care of horses | *"but the grooming of the horse I think is definitely for my groom to do. He's got all the muscles, he can do that stuff."* | *"Care of horses is very maternal and requires sensitive intuition to gauge what a horse really needs (obviously coupled with the appropriate knowledge) – feminine"* |
| Tack and clothing | *"[F3] Ja the matching outfits, and it's like I jumped a meter 30, you try and do that. I think for them it's more about that, where with women it's more about it's all in pink I knocked a few jumps it's okay."*<br><br>*"[M1] There's a lot of riders, lets say, like the one lady who I ride for, She had this heavy bling bridle on her horse then Ray came and competed the horse for her a little bit and he said he doesn't want that bling, it's too girly for him and If I look at 80% of the the male riders they won't wear tight pants."* | *"[F3] Ja it's more girly with all the bling and the looking pretty and the even your boots these days you know have bling on and your stirrups and everything so I think in that sense it does make it more for the girls than the boys. I don't think there's much appealing tackwise for men. Everything's girly, I mean your riding jackets these days have got bling on, everything's getting blingified to attract the girls and unless you're really fabulous, but then you're feminine in anyways so it's fine."*<br><br>*"Feminine is how we dress, pamper the animals etc<br>Most of the outfits have diamonds, and it's such a big market* |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | *all the bling etc for your horse and yourself.”*<br><br>“[F2]*You get people with golden leg wraps and golden overreach boots. I's it's, ja, and the bridle is a big thing. I mean people spend a fortune on tack, dressage saddles, ja you name it. The looks are very important to some people, they spend quite a lot of money on it.”* |
| Training | | *“Training methods can also be a neutral subject however, it can also be gender biased. Women may prefer training methods that are kinder and gentler on the horse however, men may take a more strict and stern approach”* |
| Dirt | “[F2*] The masculine side of it for us girls is working with a big animal, getting dirty, umm standing outside in the arena. Your nails are never clean, umm you don't wear make up, ummm or if you do it smudges.”* | |
| Culture | “[F2] *I think if we grow the sport in South Africa it will encourage a lot more males to take part, because there's this idea that horseriding is a girly sport which it isn't actually. I'm just thinking about countries like Portugal and Spain where horseriding is still seen as quite a macho sport”*<br><br>“[F2] *Ja, got a lot more males than females riding but they've still got that* | |

| | *old culture of the warrior or umm soldier on a horse and dressage is, it's a parade uhh discipline if I can put it like that so horses are taught piaffe and to passage but as a means to show off their masculinity more than here it's the total opposite, you're just fiddling around with your horse."* | |
|---|---|---|

## 5.3 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Interpretation of results is presented according to the objectives as stated earlier in the dissertation.

### 5.3.1. Factors influencing motivation to participate in equestrian sport in South Africa

Most of the respondents had been influenced in one way or another by family members or coaches in their choice to begin horse riding or in their choice of discipline. Some participants were influenced by other members of their family participating, to begin participating themselves, while others families although not actively participating were supportive of their choice of sport. One participant was influenced to change sports through her coach after beginning lessons with this specific coach. When athletes begin participating in equestrian sport their coach and family are equally influential but this dynamic changes as the athletes get older.

The majority of participants seem to rather use the media as a means of gaining knowledge of what's happening in the international arena. Participants like to keep track of trends in the international arena as well as a means to look at how other riders ride in order to get an optimal performance. Some participants used the media for its entertainment value, for example one participant specifically said that she watched the cross country phase of eventing as she liked watching the people fall.

A number of the participants did touch on the fact that the Afrikaner culture did mean that a sport such as dressage was seen as a "*moffie sport*" versus doing something like galloping in the veld. So this perspective could mean that a number of men that may be interested in dressage may rather not participate in order to avoid

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being ridiculed or labelled as homosexual by their peers and community. The female participants, however, did not identify their choice of sport as not being accepted in society.

Most participants see competing as a challenge and something enjoyable. They all want to push their limits and see competing successfully as an achievement in itself. Some participants also see competing as a way to push their limits and a means of ensuring that they were constantly pushing themselves and their horses as a means for constant improvement. Both male and female participants perceived the competitive element of equestrian sport as motivating.

A number of participants started horse riding due to their love for horses and their passion seems to have grown from that. A number also mentioned their partnership with horses as a means of motivation for their chosen discipline. They all seemed to be driven by the need to be in symbiosis with their horse, where they can perform with minimal aids. Interestingly, within dressage it is a aim to be able to use as few aids as possible and make it seem as though the horse and rider are dancing together. This was similar for both male and female participants.

Both a male and female participant admitted that they never had an attraction to the typical school sports. A possible reason for participating was the fact that equestrian sport is completely different to sports offered at most schools. Even though schools may have equestrian teams, they don't have a means of running team practices like with other school sports so athletes usually decide with their own trainer when they are ready to participate in competitions and at what levels. This means that equestrian sport, although it can be seen as a team sport including male and female participants/athletes, also has the interesting dynamic of also being an individual sport.

Most of the participants had little to no knowledge of the sport before starting with horse riding lessons, and gained more knowledge of equestrian sport through participating in lessons with various instructors. Dressage has an artistic side to it and some of the participants who currently compete in dressage were drawn to this artistic side of the sport. The artistic element is often perceived to be female.

The adrenaline rush obtained by participating in equestrian sport seems to play a role in relation to the sports of eventing and show-jumping. With jumping the test is not

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just about being in harmony with one's horse but also being able to jump a course of jumps both accurately and often against time. Often the excitement with jumping, especially with the higher levels is being able to see how quickly one can complete a course without knocking any jumps down. This factor can be perceived to be either male or female.

A few participants sought out equestrian sport in order to participate in sports that are different from the usual sports people participate in. They either were never very good at usual school sports or were simply looking for a way to create diversity in their exercise. This can be perceived to be both male and female.

Equestrian sport requires a huge amount of discipline from the rider. Both male and female participants agreed on this and confirmed that this type of discipline is not influenced by the gender role.

Although a majority of participants were initially motivated through extrinsic motivating factors such as family, peers, coaches etc. Almost every participant also stated that intrinsic factors played an integral role in their choice of sport as well as their continued active participation in their specific chosen discipline. Even though a few participants did state that they would not ride if they did not compete, it was clear that competing was more about challenging themselves than beating their competition i.e. the idea of competing is more about self-improvement than winning a rosette.

### 5.3.2 Aspects in equestrian sport that are perceived to be feminine or masculine in nature

The majority of the participants felt that the clothing in equestrian sport is more feminine in nature. They felt this was due to the fact that *jodphurs* or breeches are tight and most men are not willing to participate in a sport where they must wear tight pants. The current fashion-oriented nature of some equestrian athletes may also lead to a perceived feminine nature because of the current trend to add 'bling' to different equestrian clothing such as boots, breeches, gloves, helmets etc. Advertisements seem to be focused on the female market, for example as pink clothing marketed to younger participants. This may influence the perception of participants as it relates to the gender role and participation in dressage.

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Although within equestrian sport there exists different riding disciplines, all participants felt that each Olympic discipline was either more feminine or more masculine in nature. Dressage was perceived to be more feminine in nature, show-jumping more masculine in the upper levels and eventing was considered to be equal.

The majority of the participants felt that how the horse was ridden would determine if riding was masculine or feminine. More forceful methods were considered more masculine as these methods would involve using more strength. Participants also noted that some horses, due to their size, would be more likely to be ridden by men as physical strength was seen as an advantage when working these horses. This may impact a female's decision to participate in certain equestrian sports. Figure 5.1 highlights the use of strength to force a horse into a position, while figure 5.2 shows a rider who has not had to use extreme force to encourage the horse to carry itself in a position.



*Figure 5.1  The above figure demonstrates the rider using physical strength when riding which in turn causes the horse to tuck it's head in towards it's chest* (Sandin, 2005)

This photograph has been edited to remove some flaws. It is not intended as a proof of anything, just an illustration.

*Figure 5.2 A rider not using physical strength with riding* (Sandin, 2005)

According to most participants taking care of a horse is a more maternal activity as it involves using sensitive intuition that can be seen as more feminine. However, one of the participants did feel it's more masculine as she doesn't have the muscles for grooming her horse. She stated that: "*but the grooming of the horse I think is definitely for my groom to do. He's got all the muscles, he can do that stuff*" Figures 5.3 and 5.4 shows that caring for the horse can be both masculine and feminine in nature.



*Figure 5.3 Caring for the horse by washing mud from its legs which also demonstrates the dirty nature of working with horses* (Equestrian outreach, 2010)

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*Figure 5.4 Brushing the horse's coat is one of the routine tasks of caring for a horse which can also be a fairly dirty task* (Blockdorf, 2015)

The tack used on the horses can be 'girly' and female oriented with the current trend to put *bling* (anything that glitters) on almost everything. As emphasised by most participants this would not be appealing to men. Tack can also be very extremely feminine in appearance with some of the colours available being pink and purple. Appearances within the equestrian world can be very important, especially for female riders. Thus tack, although once masculine, can now be perceived as feminine with the current trends. Figures 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 all highlight how in recent years tack has been feminized in appearance.



*Figure 5.5 Bridles with 'bling' have become a common sight at equestrian competitions* (Griffin, 2012)

*Figure 5.6 A riding helmet that has had 'bling' added to it* (Champion's choice Browbands, 2014)

Tack that was once only available in black or brown can now be made in almost any colour of the rainbow, increasing the perception of equestrian being a 'girls' sport. The newer, more female colours are also widely shown in advertising thereby possibly influencing the perception of equestrian sport as a female sport.



*Figure 5.7 Tack in a more female oriented colour* (Velvet rider, 2015)

Training of horses can be gender neutral, although it can also be gender-biased. Women prefer to use methods that are kinder to the horse, while men will rather take a more strict and stern approach. Thus how the training is approached can make it either more feminine or masculine. Figure 5.8 illustrates a method of training that

due to it involving more force can be perceived as more masculine. Figure 5.10, however, illustrates a training method that involves little to no force, thus could be perceived as more feminine.



*Figure 5.8 More masculine method of training* (Santarossa, 2015)



*Figure 5.9 More feminine method of training* (de Jong, 2015)

Getting dirty and working with a big animal was perceived by participants to be masculine. As pointed out by one participant, girls who work with horses never have clean nails and don't wear makeup while working with horses. She stated that "*your nails are never clean, umm you don't wear make-up, ummm or if you do it smudges*". Slater and Tiggerman (2011) had similar findings that girls who participate in sports from a young age are less likely to self-objectify their bodies, which in this case also mean that the girls won't be as concerned about getting dirty while working with

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their horses. They accept that getting dirty and sweaty is part of working with horses, this also means they make conscientious choices to dress in practical colours for everyday riding. They make decisions based on practicality rather than on how good they may look in a certain colour.

In South Africa equestrian sport is seen as a girl's sport and thus few men participate. It is interesting to note however that a few participants spoke about the fact that equestrian sport is seen as very masculine in countries such as Spain and Portugal. In both Spain and Portugal dressage is seen as a means to show off one's masculinity. It should be noted that equestrian sport is not seen as an additional or alternative sport in Europe thereby rendering it as acceptable sport for both male and female participants. Equestrian sport also shows that various factors that are given as reasons for why there are differences between men and women are not all accurate. Partly this may be because the physical differences that do exist don't play as large a role as in other sports such as athletics. This finding agrees with Chalabaev *et al.*'s (2013) finding that stereotypes may lead to sex differences in sports. Both figures 5.11 and 5.12 illustrate Portuguese horse and rider combinations.



*Figure 5.10 Portuguese rider and Lusitano stallion* (Warne, 2012)

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*Figure 5.11 Portuguese horse and rider combination* (Platz, 2009)

### 5.3.3    Motivational differences between genders impacting on participation in equestrian sport

From the data it is clear that gender does not prescribe and determine participation in equestrian sports. It influences some aspects, however it was found that certain aspects within equestrian sport was seen as gender neutral for some participants. One participant, interestingly enough, felt that clothing in equestrian sport is gender neutral, as it has been customised to suit both genders for example breeches come in different cuts for males and females. Many participants felt that in general the concept of riding a horse is fairly gender neutral and it is how the horse is ridden that makes the act of riding either masculine or feminine. Most participants felt that training could be both masculine and feminine. They agreed that the methods used would make training more masculine or more feminine in nature. Unfortunately due the lack of male respondents the study was not able to create a clearer understanding of the motivational differences between male and female riders. This would be an area that future studies can explore in greater detail.

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## 5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the results of the study. From the analysis it became apparent that gender does influence the effect various factors for motivation to participate have. Even though on face value equestrian sport is meant to be gender neutral, it is clear from the effects that various facets of society have on motivation that this is not the case in reality. This study will conclude in the next chapter with conclusions and recommendations based the analysis as presented in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 6
# CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter one it was suggested that against expectation, equestrian sport is being practised mainly by female athletes. It was further proposed that this feminisation of Equestrian sport began in the 1950s. This study proposed to study which factors influence participation and how does these factors differ between males and females, doing so would lead to a better understanding of the role of gender differences in motivational factors and barriers to participation in equestrian sport which would also be valuable information to other sporting codes. The research question for this study was:

***How do masculinity and femininity influence motivation to participate in equestrian sport?***

This study confirmed various theories in the interpretation of results. Various factors that play a role in motivation to participate were identified and included. How masculinity and femininity plays a role in motivation to participate was also identified.

In Chapter One the objectives of the study were formulated as to:

➤ Identify factors influencing motivation to participate in equestrian sport in South Africa.

➤ Explore the gender role in relation to participation in equestrian sports.

➤ Determine aspects in equestrian sport that are perceived as feminine in nature.

➤ Identify the motivational differences between males and females impacting on participation in equestrian sport.

Conclusions and recommendations are now presented according to these objectives.

## 6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Results from the study showed that a number of different factors play a role - not just in the decision to start participation in equestrian sport - but also in the decision to continue participation. Certain aspects involved in participation may also influence motivation depending on if they are perceived as more masculine or feminine by the athlete. Results also showed that there are differences between males and females in motivation to participate which could serve as an explanation for why, even though equestrian sport provides an even playing field for both genders, there are differences in the numbers participating in equestrian sport.

The following factors were identified as influencing participation in equestrian sport:

- Coach and family
- Media
- Peer group and Culture
- Competitive element
- Partnership and love for horses
- Interest outside of main school sport
- Knowledge of sport
- Artistic element
- Adrenaline
- Alternative Sport
- Discipline of the sport

Aspects in equestrian sport that are perceived to be feminine or masculine in nature:

- Although historically equestrian clothing was perceived to be masculine in nature it seems that clothing used for equestrian is now perceived to be feminine in nature. This is most likely due to changes in fashion and society's perception on what clothing is considered to be masculine. Another reason could be riding apparel companies have in recent years begun to make riding clothing that appears more feminine i.e. putting bling on riding gloves, breeches, riding helmets etc.

- Most riders perceive certain disciplines to be more feminine in nature than others and this affected the gender ratios participating in various disciplines. Most participants believed dressage to be the most feminine in nature while show-jumping was the most masculine in nature.

- Most participants were divided in their opinions of whether riding horses is more masculine or feminine. Most, however, did seem to agree that how the horse is ridden may determine the masculine or feminine nature of riding horses, with more forceful riding being seen as more masculine.

- Most participants felt that due to the maternal nature of taking care of horses that it was more feminine. They did however also accept that there were more masculine aspects in taking care of horses.

- Tack used on horses has become more feminine in nature with companies becoming more adventurous with the colours they use for different tack. The increasing popularity of using *bling* on bridles and halters has also impacted the feminine portrayal of the sport.

- Training of horses could be either masculine or feminine depending on how it is done. More forceful, aggressive methods were considered more masculine while softer methods were considered feminine. Training methods did not seem to impact on the influence of gender role on the decision to participate.

- Dirt involved in participating in equestrian sport is perceived as more masculine. Even though it is seen as masculine, it was interesting to note that female participants described themselves as 'more masculine' orientated as this aspect of equestrian sport did not seem to be a problem.

- A particular cultures' portrayal of what is masculine and what is feminine plays an important role in whether equestrian sport is seen as masculine or feminine. Some participants did note that within Afrikaner culture equestrian sports such as dressage would be considered more feminine in nature. They

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also noted that in countries such as Spain and Portugal dressage is considered to be masculine in nature. This would consequently be a strong influence on the impact of the gender role on motivation to participate.

## 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the aims of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Governing bodies within the equestrian community need to look at how to change society's perceptions of males participating in equestrian sport in order to increase the numbers currently participating in entry-level competitions.

- Other role players such as trainers would also need to get involved in encouraging males to participate and interested in a variety of equestrian sport especially those like dressage currently perceived to be feminine.

- Governing bodies such as SAEF and DSA should study how equestrian sport is promoted across genders in countries such as Spain and Portugal.

- It may be helpful to encourage equestrian clothing stores to promote a greater variety in clothing aimed specifically at male riders.

## 6.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this study raised several questions regarding the role of masculinity and femininity on motivation to participate in equestrian sport and presented the following opportunities for future research:

- Equestrian sport other than those included in the Olympics for example Vaulting, reining, equitation, as these sports also would provide valuable insight into perceptions of masculinity and femininity. In recent years western disciplines for example reining, western pleasure and western

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mounted games have grown in popularity in South Africa especially among male riders.

- Motivational factors influencing pony riders and junior riders. Often riders drop out during their high school years so it would be beneficial to find out how to decrease the number of riders dropping out.

## 6.5 FINAL STUDY CONCLUSION

This study attempted to determine the influence of masculinity and femininity on the motivation to participate in equestrian sport. It must be emphasised that this study did not attempt to put the concepts of masculinity and femininity in a negative light but rather highlight the importance in understanding these concepts in order to be able to motivate new athletes to begin participating in equestrian sport.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A-PARTICIPANT LETTER

**UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA**
**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**
**YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA**

**Pretoria 0002 RSA**
Http://www.up.ac.za

**FAKULTEIT GEESTESWETENSKAPPE**
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**Dept Sport- & Vryetyd Studies**
**Dept Sport & Leisure Studies**

**Tel: 012 420-6040**
**Faks/Fax: 012 420-6099**

Dear Participant

My name is Ingrid Lalk and I am a Masters student with the Department of Biokinetics, Sport and Leisure Sciences, University of Pretoria. My research topic is entitled *"An exploration of masculinity and femininity as influence on participation in equestrian sport"*. You have been selected randomly as a possible participant in this research project due to your active participation in equestrian sport.

With your permission I invite you to participate in this research by making some of your valuable time available for an interview that will generally address the attached questions. There is no compensation for your participation, nor is there any known risk to you personally. If you choose to participate please attempt to answer all questions as honestly and forthright as possible during the interview. No data collected will be traceable to you personally. Participation is voluntary and you may stop participating at any time.

The data collected will provide useful information regarding gender issues in equestrian sport. If you would like a summary copy of the research report please provide your contact details in the tear-off section at the bottom of this letter and return this to me at my e-mail address below. All your personal details will be kept confidential at all times and will not be made available to any third party by myself or the university under any circumstances. Neither will your personal details play a role in the outcome of the research.

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If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this research is conducted you may report (anonymously if you wish) any complaints to my Supervisor Engela Van der Klashorst who can be directly contacted at engela.vanderklashorst@up.ac.za.

Sincerely,


Ingrid Lalk

Student Number 28258160

ingridlalk@gmail.com


---------------------------------------Detach Here------------------------------------------


**Request for Information**


Please send a summary copy of the research report to:

Name: _____

Address:

_____

_____

_____


e-mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

# APPENDIX B-INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

**UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA**
**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**
**YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA**

**Semi-structured Interview Schedule**

**Semi-structured interview outline:**

Section A: Demographical details

Section B: Motivational factors influencing participation

Section C: Masculinity and femininity as influence on participation.

Section D: Conclusion

**Section A: Demographical details**

1. Age?
2. Gender?
3. Discipline?

**Section B: Motivational factors influencing participation:**

1. How long have you been riding for?
2. What motivated you to start riding?
3. Does anyone in your family participate in equestrian sport?

4. What motivated you to choose your current discipline of riding?
5. Do you see yourself continuing to compete in the future?
   Why/Why not?
6. Do you watch equestrian sport when it is broadcasted on the television?

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Why/Why not?

**Section C: Masculinity and femininity as influence on participation:**

1. Do you perceive equestrian sport as a predominantly male or female sport? Why?

2. Which aspects in participation in equestrian sport do you perceive as masculine or feminine? In terms of clothing, tack, getting dirty, training methods?

**Section D: Conclusion:**

1. Any additional comments or suggestions?

Thank you for your participation, it is much appreciated!