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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

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SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SPORT PARTICIPATION

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by
John David Carl
Norman, Oklahoma
2002

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SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SPORT PARTICIPATION

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

BY

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ABSTRACT

Children throughout the world are involved in many different activities. In the industrialized world children frequently spend their time involved in sports. In this study I investigate how social capital, as described by Coleman (1988), affects sport participation for elementary school age children. Focusing on three dependent variables, soccer participation, baseball/softball participation, and total sport participation, I explore how social capital differs by school and how these differences affect levels of participation for different sports.

I use data gathered in 1998 with a sample size of 301. I test Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital. In the study I predict that soccer will be unique as compared to baseball/softball and all other sports combined in that it seems logical that it would require something special in order to get children involved. I make this hypothesis based on the fact that soccer is a relatively new introduction to the sport scene of the United States. Its popularity, then, might be linked to a type of word-of-mouth style of promotion and the family's interaction with others in the child's school.

The study indicates that, indeed, soccer is different from baseball/softball and total sport participation. Family capital is moderated through school capital variables indicating that school attended significantly affects soccer participation,

while family capital plays a much larger role in predicting participation in baseball/softball.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Children throughout the world are involved in many different activities. In the industrialized world children spend their time with peers and in extracurricular activities. Social factors affect the choices made in how children use their leisure time (Larson and Verma, 1999).

In this study I investigate how social capital affects sport participation. I hope to discover if schools have a form of social capital that affects choice of sport. In particular, I focus on three dependent variables, soccer participation, baseball/softball participation, and total sport participation. I expect that social capital will have different effects on levels of participation for different sports. I predict that soccer will be unique as compared to baseball/softball and all other sports combined. I make this hypothesis based on the fact that soccer is a relatively new introduction to the sport scene of the United States. Its popularity, then, may be linked to a type of word-of-mouth style of promotion. As a coach of both girls tee ball and girls soccer, I have encouraged families not previously engaged in soccer to consider signing their daughters up for the sport. In all cases, the girls were signed up for tee ball, a variation of the national pastime, and in all cases knew little about soccer. However, with very little effort the girls joined the soccer team, learned the sport, and they and their parents seemed to enjoy the

experience. None of the parents of the girls on my teams had ever played soccer. The rules, norms, and terms were foreign to them. But this was not true for tee ball. This informs the theory that parents encourage participation in activities that they know something about. Therefore, I predict that soccer participation will require different motivators than baseball/softball and/or other sport participation.

For this study I use data gathered in 1998 from parents of public school children. The data come from a study entitled "Interaction of Parents and Children: A Social Contextual Approach," which was collected in 1998 in Norman Oklahoma. Parents of Norman Public School children who were then in third, fourth, and fifth grades were sampled and provided a questionnaire on their children's sport participation. These data will allow me to test the theory that the social capital of particular elementary schools affects student sport participation with regard to all sports, and specifically soccer and baseball/softball.

Youth sport participation is a topic of interest to many in the United States. Children in the U.S. are more likely to be involved in sport than in most other nations (Larson and Verma, 1999). Forty-five percent of children in the U.S. will participate in some form of youth sport in their lives (Chambers, 1991). Parents often influence their children to participate in sport (Howard and Madrigal, 1990) but children also see the benefits of specific types of involvement (Eder and Kinney, 1995; Kinney, 1993). Participation in extracurricular activities, including

sports, can increase a student's interest in school and strengthen his/her sense of personal identity (Oliver, 1995).

This research takes the position that our personal choices and individual responses are, at least in part, affected by our social setting. The issue of if, and how, neighborhoods matter at all has a long history, from Shaw and McKay (1942) to Wilson (1987). In this research I study the effect of neighborhood on sport participation, which is a truly sociological point of view (Sampson, 2001). In particular I use a measure of neighborhood at the school level. That is, elementary schools, which are based on geographic boundaries, represent a neighborhood, and those schools have social capital that might influence children's participation in sport activities.

As sociologists, we strive to find causes for human behaviors that are rooted in the group context. In this research, I use the school attended as a surrogate for neighborhood. This is a deviation from what is frequently defined as a neighborhood in much of the literature. Social scientists frequently use census tracts, geographic areas, or self-report data to discuss neighborhood. But are these really neighborhoods? As noted by Garner and Raudenbush (1991), neighborhoods are not one-dimensional or concrete spatial areas. "They vary depending on the type of problem being studied and the supposed relationship to

the study"(252). For my purpose, I equate school attended and neighborhood; this issue is discussed in detail in later chapters.

Neighborhoods have certain components that are extra-individual which are often discussed as social capital. In this research I use a functional approach to social capital as discussed by Coleman (1988). Social capital is a resource that links both financial and human capital components of group life. It is functional in that its presence allows individuals to perform tasks that, otherwise, they might not be able to perform. It also influences the opportunities available to individuals. Low levels of social capital are seen as a limiting factor as discussed by Wilson (1987).

From my personal experience of coaching youth sports in Norman Oklahoma, I have seen what appears to be evidence of social capital with regard to sport participation. In particular, certain schools always seem to have many children enrolled in sport, while other, numerically larger schools often have little or no interest. For example, this year I coach an under seven year old, girls soccer team. On the team I have seven girls from one elementary school, McKinley and one child from another school, Madison. The girl from Madison elementary school is the only girl under age seven in that school who signed up for soccer. Many parents in the McKinley neighborhood report that their child is playing soccer because her friends are on the team. This is a part of social capital. There

appears to be a structural component to youth sport participation in Norman, Oklahoma. Therefore, I believe that children who live in certain neighborhoods, and thereby attend specific schools, will have different rates of sport participation. This is a creation not merely of peer pressure but of the entire structural and social components of the child's neighborhood/school.

I believe I will find that children will generally follow their peer groups but that other factors influence what their peers do. In this research I hypothesize that schools have different levels of "sport-capital." School capital is equivalent to neighborhood social capital since school boundaries are geographically based. As this applies to sport participation, I expect to find different rates of participation for different schools. Thus, some schools will be over represented in soccer or baseball/softball while others may have low rates of participation.

Briefly then, this research is constructed in the following manner. The second chapter discusses the literature regarding sport participation including, the effects of extracurricular activities on children, children's participation in sport and, finally, the effects of neighborhood on individual choice and outcome. Also included in this chapter is a discussion of social capital theory and research. For the purpose of this study, I argue that children have very little, if any, individual capital. Because of their age they have no income, have no choice of their residence, and have low educational attainment. They are creations of a family

setting. So, I measure family capital and conclude that their individual capital is extremely limited if present at all. Therefore, this analysis focuses on two forms of capital, family and school, that are relevant to the creation of social capital.

In chapters three and four I discuss the theoretical model, the data and methods used, and the results of the quantitative analysis. The data provide me with a picture of youth sport participation in a small mid-western town. Using logistic regression, I will isolate effects of school on soccer, baseball/softball, and other sport participation for children in the sample. I control for typical demographic variables such gender and size of family and include family capital variables such as socioeconomic status. In the final chapter, the results of the research are discussed.

The impact of sport participation on children is of interest to many in the U.S. However, the choice to participate does not occur in a vacuum. In this research I expect to find that school social capital affects participation in sports, particularly soccer, since soccer is a relatively new sport to the United States, and few parents have personally experienced playing the sport.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout the world, children generally spend their time in three ways: school, work, and play. In more developed countries children typically do little work and therefore, spend the majority of their time in school and in organized activities outside of school. Larson and Verma (1999) study how children and adolescents spend time throughout the world. Using time diaries, observation, interviews and recall researchers find that children in all parts of the world spend time in play. The authors note a cultural component to the choice of activity worldwide. For example, children in Germany are more likely to engage in musical pursuits than children in the U.S. For their part, children in the U.S. are more likely to spend time involved in organized sports and/or games than their German counterparts. In industrial societies children have more time with peers than in non-industrial societies. In non-industrial societies children spend more time in work than do children in industrial societies. This research shows that the manner in which children use their time is affected by the cultural environment, familial context, and societal stage of industrialization. In this study I plan to discuss the impact of school social capital on youth sport participation using parental survey information. Participation in sport is a type of extracurricular activity and so I will first review the literature on the effects of extracurricular

activities on children. I will discuss sport participation in specific in the next section.

Extracurricular Activities

The arena of extracurricular activities has been studied predominantly from either an educational, psychological, or criminological point of view. In this chapter I will follow this same format, first discussing the effects of extracurricular activities on education and educational outcomes and then on crime and delinquency. Then I will discuss why some children choose to participate in extracurricular activities. For the purposes of this review, I define extracurricular activities, as those activities in which children participate that are voluntary and have some structure to them (Gilman 2001). Most children are involved in some form of these activities. But what effect on the children do these activities have? In the following pages I review the literature on the effects of extracurricular activities on children.

Activities for children are an industry and a way of life in the United States. Adler and Adler (1994) discuss the advent of After-school activities and how they have come to dominate children's developmental lives. Virtually all children in American society go through a process akin to a right of passage. Something that starts as recreational activity soon can develop into an activity that dominates a child's life. The authors argue that this is a process of specialization, whereby children become increasingly skilled in one task and results in an almost professionalization of leisure activities for children. A parent of a young child can

easily find many activities for her. Each season of the year can be filled with sport, dance, gymnastics, art classes and a host of other activities. This plethora of activity for American children results in the virtual elimination of idle time for children. Parents fill their children's time under the belief that it will be good for their children. However, Adler and Adler (1994) caution that this has resulted in children being under the control of adults at virtually all times. This imposition of adult norms may result in the loss of developmental opportunities for children as they lose the chance for spontaneous play.

The effects of extracurricular activities on education

As I begin this review of the literature on the effects of extracurricular activities on education, I focus on certain components of education. These are the likelihood of dropping out of school and college attendance, scores on standardized tests, and grade point average. As I review the literature, these themes will be discussed in detail.

Many young children are involved in after-school programs. Parents who work are often required to find childcare for their school-aged children until their workday is over. Shumow (2001) summarizes the major effects on academics of after-school type programs for elementary school age children. After-school programs have a positive track record with students. Students who participate in these activities are seen as better behaved by teachers. These students have fewer

incidents of outbursts and violence at school as well as improved ability to deal with conflict and aggression. After-school programs are positively correlated with the academic performance of participants. This includes those who are shown to be at risk of academic failure. The author cautions that not all programs are equal, and that further research is needed into the specific type of curricula that best advances children.

In addition to this, Cooper et al., (1999) look at the impact of after-school related activities on academic performance for children in grades six through twelve. The researchers investigate the effects of homework, extracurricular activities, time spent in structured group activities, watching television and number of hours employed per week. The hypothesis that hours spent on homework leads to improved academic performance, as well as hours spent on television leads to lower academic performance, is supported. With regard to extracurricular activities, the authors find a curvilinear effect in the shape of an inverted U. Extracurricular activities improve academic performance to a point, so long as the time investment in the activity is not so excessive as to limit the time the student would have for homework and other academic activities. The data show that multiple involvements in different activities have positive effects so long as the total does not exceed a time limit that is excessive. In fact, students with multiple involvements do better than those who are involved in only one activity. For example, students who do their homework, play on a structured sports team, and

are members of a student club also have better academic performance rates than their non-involved peers.

These findings support the work of Eccles and Barber (1999) that shows that structured extracurricular activities are a key for adolescent development and positively affect students' grade point averages as well as scores on standardized achievement tests. The authors examined the possible benefits and risks that might be associated with participation in structured extracurricular activities. They chose five different types of activities labeling them as follows: pro-social (church and volunteer activities), team sports, school involvement, arts, and academic clubs. In a large, gender-equal sample of high school students, the authors find a link between academic achievement and structured extracurricular activities participation. It is important to note that in virtually all areas pro-social outcomes are linked to participation in structured extracurricular activities with the exception of sport participation. Participation in team sports is linked to positive educational outcomes, but also to higher rates of drinking and other risky behaviors. The authors argue that these risky behaviors are the result of peer influences that link sport, conquest, and risk with personal identity.

McNeal (1995) investigates the relationship between extracurricular activities and dropping out of high school. Students who participated in activities such as fine arts and athletics decreased their likelihood of dropping out. In this study, McNeal (1995) includes important social variables such as race, gender, and

socioeconomic status. The finding that extracurricular activity reduces dropping out is independent of these other variables, even for individuals who might otherwise be determined to be high risk because of their gender, race, or socioeconomic status.

As we have seen, the preceding research supports the idea that extracurricular activities help academic performance. But it is often thought that sport involvement hurts academic performance. Silliker and Quirk (1997) study high school students in an effort to find whether or not participation in high school soccer affects academic performance for males and/or females. The authors find that male soccer players significantly improved their grade point averages during the soccer season. While girls appear to improve their academic performance during the season, the findings were not significant. Absences from school are not found to change significantly based on whether or not students were participating in soccer. The authors argue that contrary to what is often thought, athletic participation actually improves academic performance for high school students.

More recently Camp (2001) studies how participation and achievement are related. Many commonly held beliefs are born out in this research. Namely, females make better grades, watch less television, study more, and participate in extracurricular activities at higher rates than males. But, this research does not support the premise that work and television watching have negative effects on

academic achievement. However, most important for this discussion is the finding that student participation in extracurricular activities improves achievement. The author begs the question as to the direction of the causal link between the two variables. Simply put, is it participation that causes achievement, or achievement that causes participation? These data do not provide an answer to that question but the correlations are strong.

McNeely et al. (2002) uses longitudinal data to study if involvement in extracurricular activities increases integration in school among high school students. The authors argue that adolescents who feel cared for by, and connected to, their school have lower rates of dropout and higher rates of pro-social outcomes including academic success. A key component to involvement is school connectedness. School connectedness is measured at the individual level and is basically a measure of how important the school is to the student according to the student. These authors find that school connectedness is linked to school size and racial composition also plays a role. Racially heterogeneous schools have lower rates of reported connectedness and higher rates of negative outcomes. In general then, they find a positive association between extracurricular activities and academic outcomes as well as the feeling of integration into the school.

Gifford and Dean (1990) deal with similar questions for junior high age students. The authors particularly want to find out if ninth graders benefit more from being included in high school or junior high school. In this research the

authors investigate student involvement in extracurricular activities in the two groups. They find that ninth graders who attend junior high schools had significantly higher rates of participation in extracurricular activities and grade point averages than those who attend high schools. Students' attitudes toward school and self are not found to vary significantly based on which type of school they attend.

Some may ask. Is there is a cultural bias involved in the benefits of extracurricular activities? Davalos et al. (1999) support the idea that extracurricular activities improve school performance in a study of Mexican American youth. Traditionally, this population of students has been underrepresented in those who participate in extracurricular activities while, at the same time, dropout rates for this group are the highest of any group. The authors study student involvement in band, clubs, and athletics. They find that involvement in all extracurricular activities, with the exception of band, have positive effects on retention in school for Mexican American youth. They argue that extracurricular involvement increases a sense of integration with the school and this integration translates into retention.

Effects of extracurricular activities on psychological well-being of children

I have shown that, generally speaking, children benefit academically from involvement in extracurricular activities. But how does this affect their sense of identity and well-being? Gilman (2001) examines the relationship between

children's life satisfaction and their involvement in extracurricular activities. The author notes that structured extracurricular activities are important. Structured extracurricular activities are defined as "discretionary activities that are physically or mentally stimulating to the individual and contain some structural parameters as opposed to unstructured events in which the individual assumes primarily a passive role such as TV watching" (752). Gilman finds that structured extracurricular activities are linked to satisfaction with school and life among high school students. Important in this research is the finding that it is not the sheer number of activities, but also their quality that seems to be salient

Activities can lead students to personal success and popularity with peers. Kinney (1993) studies the unpopular in middle and high schools. The author uses intensive interviews with middle and high school students to determine how some children become popular and maintain popularity, while others remain on the outside of popular groups. Using qualitative means of interviewing and observation, the author concludes that most outsiders actually want to be in the popular crowd. This delineation between the popular and not popular groups is greater in middle school than high school. Many students, who classify themselves as "nerds" in middle school, change their self-perception to "normal" in high school. This transition is supplemented by increases in social activities in high school. The new "normals" take advantage of clubs and activities in high school that are often unavailable in middle school. This aids in the students' self-

perception changing over time. Many high school students have experienced some level of rejection in middle school but a greater level of acceptance and increased levels of self-esteem occur as students are integrated into the educational and social world of high school.

Following this research, Eder and Kinney (1995) investigate the possible links between extracurricular activity, popularity, and status among middle school age children. Extracurricular activities have a social component to them. This social component influences the lives of students as it influences their popularity in school. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, the authors show that there is a positive link to popularity and extracurricular activity for both boys and girls. For boys the activities that foster the most popularity are basketball, football, and wrestling, while for girls, cheerleading takes the primary role. Females who participate in sports activities were not shown to increase or decrease their popularity based on this decision. Important to this study is the longitudinal aspect of it. Over time the popularity of students grows depending on their continued involvement in the previously mentioned activities. In most high schools the most popular students are athletes and cheerleaders.

Effects of extracurricular activities on delinquency

Many criminologists agree that the environment can influence the likelihood of delinquent behavior. School attachment is logically connected to participation in extracurricular activities and school attachment has been shown to

have an inverse relationship with delinquency by many (Liska and Reed, 1985, Thornberry et al., 1991).

Cooley et al. (1995) studies the effect of extracurricular activities on drug use. In a study of more than five thousand Midwestern students in both suburban and rural schools, the authors seek to discover if participation in activities is linked to lower use of drugs among high school students. Particularly, the authors study the effects of participation in sports, student government and clubs, music and drama on drug and alcohol use. Drugs tested include alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, stimulants such as crack and methamphetamines, inhalants, and hallucinogens. The authors find a level of experimentation with drugs and alcohol in all groups. Thus, extracurricular activities do not totally prevent drug and alcohol use. However drug use is lower in groups with more activities. There also seems to be cultural type connection between a specific drug used and the activity in which a student is involved. For example, athletes are more likely to experiment with tobacco than students who are involved in other activities. Students in government and clubs use tobacco at higher rates than those in music and drama. Alcohol use is highest for those who participate in government and clubs and increases as student's age. Thus, those in 11th and 12th grades have the highest rates of alcohol use. Music and drama students are more likely to use marijuana than students who are involved in other activities. However, the group with the highest rates of use

of all substances is those who are uninvolved in any activity. The group with the lowest rate of substance use and abuse are those students with multiple extracurricular involvements. Therefore, while not eliminating drug abuse and use, extracurricular involvement is connected to decreased drug use.

Supporting this work is Jenkins (1996) who includes students' academic performance and extracurricular involvement in an analysis of hard drug use. Using a random sample of over two thousand students in eighth, tenth and twelfth grades the author investigates drug use in middle school and high school. For this study, entry-level drugs include tobacco, marijuana, and various types of alcohol, while hard drugs are defined as most other illegal street drugs. The study also includes a measure for drug using peer affiliates. Having peers who use drugs is the strongest correlate of drug use. Thus, the research supports the theory that delinquent peers and delinquency are linked. Academic performance is negatively related to drug use, as is involvement in extracurricular activities. This is true for both entry-level drugs as well as hard drugs.

Many of these studies have involved heterogeneous racial groups. Because of this one may ask: Are there racial differences in the benefits of extracurricular activities on delinquency? Joseph (1996) investigates the effects of school factors on delinquency among African American students. Using survey data from high school youth in New Jersey, the author tests the effect of school involvement on

delinquency while controlling for attitudes toward school, expectations for life, academic achievement, and negative experiences in the school related to race and discrimination. The findings are as expected. School factors are related to delinquency. Involvement in school activities and attitudes toward school are negatively related to senior high school delinquency. Involvement in school activities and academic performance are negatively related to delinquency for junior high school students.

Mahoney (2000) supports this view of extracurricular activities. Using longitudinal data, the author shows that criminality and dropping out decrease as involvement in extracurricular activities increases. Students involved in extracurricular activities are less likely to drop out and less likely to be arrested than their peers. This is particularly true for individuals who come from high-risk groups such as minorities and those of low socioeconomic status. The author included sports as well as clubs in the analysis and argues that pro-social components of these activities lead students away from antisocial behaviors that often result in dropping out and delinquency.

Cassel et al. (2000) reviews the major literature on extracurricular activities and points out that virtually all studies support the theory that extracurricular activities decrease delinquency. Students who are involved in their high school's extracurricular activities repeatedly are known to make the transition from high

school to work or college more easily than those who are not involved. They argue this is because extracurricular activities provide the student with a series of pro-social qualities including a team spirit, a feeling of belonging to something larger than oneself, a personal sense of pride, and a respect for the value of fair play and honesty. These traits are taught in virtually all sports and extracurricular activities and these values translate well into the accepted norms of society. Thus, Cassel et al. (2000) argue that these points work against the likelihood of delinquency and toward the goal of academic and employment success.

Reasons for participation in extracurricular activities.

In this section I discuss some of the reasons for students participation in extracurricular activities. McNeal (1998a) addresses the question; Who is likely to participate in extracurricular activities? The common belief is that students who are white and from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities than students from other racial and socioeconomic groups. He finds that indeed youth from higher socioeconomic status homes are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, but race and gender have no effect at all. In fact, girls are more likely to be involved in extracurricular activities than are boys in all areas except athletics. Racial minorities have the same likelihood as their white classmates to participate. Thus,

the findings present a mixed picture. While socioeconomic status does play a role, race and gender do not.

Extracurricular activities vary in availability depending upon the location of the person. Schoggen and Schoggen (1988) point out that student participation in extracurricular activities is dependent, in part, on school size. In a study of over 10,000 high school seniors, the authors find that school size has a significant effect on the likelihood of extracurricular participation. For most of us, this idea makes common sense. Students from small high schools may have fewer total opportunities to participate, but the per-capita activity rate for smaller schools is always higher. In short, it takes the same number of students to field a baseball team in a school with ninety students as in a school with nine hundred. The difference is in regard to the level of competition required to participate. The authors point out that school size directly affects the participation level in a school and that logically, children in smaller schools reap the benefits of increased likelihood of involvement in extracurricular activities.

McNeal (1999b) investigates the effects of school on extracurricular participation arguing that participation in extracurricular activities is linked to increased levels of human capital, as individuals increase personal skills, personal traits, personal achievement and knowledge. In addition to this, the individual gains cultural capital when he or she integrates into the milieu of art, sport, music,

etc. Finally, individuals gain social capital by extending their social relationships and networks, as well as their access to adults in supervised activities. In this context, McNeal (1999b) shows that the school attended is a part of the social context as it allows for certain opportunities that influence the choices available to students. In this project, the author investigates the effects of school size, teacher-student ratio, school climate, and academic achievement of the school. The findings support the idea that school size and school climate affect participation in extracurricular activities. Thus the larger the school the less opportunity for children to participate due to increased competition. In the same vain, when students attend schools that have safety concerns the school climate is negative and they are less likely to be involved in extracurricular activities. Safety concerns arise in schools with high rates of violence. School size and safety are key components to determining who participates. One surprise of this research is that there is no effect of socioeconomic status on participation. In fact, the author finds that when using mean income of the school for SES, the students from schools with higher SES had lower participation rates. This may be because these children had other opportunities generated by their parents' incomes or there was increased competition among the social elite for extracurricular activities leading to more students attempting to participate without increasing the number of opportunities for them to participate. In any event, the structural components of the school are key in predicting participation.

In this section I have discussed the impact of extracurricular activities on academics, well-being, and delinquency. In general, the effects of extracurricular activities on children are positive. In the next section of the chapter I discuss the effects of sport participation in particular. Thomas and Moran (1991) point out that the effect of extracurricular activity on children depends on the activity. Academically oriented activities serve to enhance learning and scores on outcome-based exams. Meanwhile, athletic activities tend to reinforce issues of obedience and teamwork. Thomas and Moran (1991) show that schools predominantly serving the working class tend to emphasize athletics over academic pursuits. In studying one school over time, the researchers show that as the demographic variables of race and economic status change, so do the extracurricular activities offered. In short, the lower the social class the greater the emphasis on athletics and the less the emphasis on academic clubs and organizations.

This finding suggests there is a social component to what extracurricular activities are offered. Put another way, the social capital of the neighborhood as well as the school affect the offering of activities. This finding supports my research agenda, which studies the effect of social capital on sport selection for children. The importance of extracurricular activities for children is beyond question. In the next section I review the literature on athletic participation.

Children's Participation in Sport

In the following pages I investigate the literature on youth sport participation. I am going to cover two issues in depth in this section: the benefits of participation in sport activities, and the determinants of sport participation. In general, the literature focuses on characteristics of children involved in youth sport, the potential benefits and detriments from participation. Included in this discussion are the effects of parental involvement on youth participation, and the social forces involved in youth sport participation. However, initially it seems relevant to turn to some of the demographics of youth sport in America.

Decker (1995) argues that children who participate in sports develop what he calls a "moral point of view." The moral point of view is defined as "one that is meant for everybody and is for the good of everyone alike." The moral point of view is the opposite of the "self-interested point of view" where one considers only personal interest. Females who participated in sports scored higher than their male counterparts on measures of a moral point of view, but both appear to benefit from sport activity. Contrary to what is sometimes proposed, competition in athletics teaches not only cutthroat competition but team cooperation as well.

Seefelt (1997) provides an overview of youth sports in America noting that 45 percent of children ages 5-17 years of age play in some form of agency-

sponsored sport. Participation by gender has been slowly changing over time. Initially, girls rarely participated in sport. However, in more recent times, both boys' and girls' participation is increasing and girls are approaching equity with boys. Girls are currently 39 percent of the total participants in youth sport in America. Parents' participation is increasing as well. Parental participation often takes the form of coaching. Coaching provided in youth sport remains predominantly a volunteer activity and is dominated by males. In the U S., the ratio of one woman to every nine men typifies the youth sport coaching ranks. The benefits of sport participation to children are numerous and include public health benefits, educational, social, and psychological benefits. The author argued that if children are taught to understand rules and roles, work as a team, and learn appropriate ways to deal with stress and competition, they gain from youth sport participation. The report also notes that many of the negative effects thought to result from youth sport participation such as stress, anxiety, and increased aggression have little support in the data.

Benefits of participation in youth sport

Instead of a negative influence, Kirshnit et al. (1989) shows that participation in athletics is often one of the most positive activities children experience during adolescence. Studying fifth through ninth graders, the researchers find that as children become older they spend less time in sport

activities. This is largely related to a decline in informal sports participation on the part of most children as well as declining performance for others. The self-reported responses from subjects indicate that for those who dropped out of sport, the activities had lost their appeal.

Magill and Ash (1979) study children in grades one through five in the hope of determining the psychosocial characteristics of participants and non-participants in youth sport. Behaviorally, they find that anxiety related to sport is a key feature in determining which children participate in sport. As expected, those with greater levels of anxiety cease participation at higher rates. Of specific importance in this research is the finding that there is no difference between participants and non-participants in psychosocial measures. Thus, many of the pro-social claims for sport participation, such as self-concept, greater levels of physical fitness, and academic achievement are not supported by this research However, no negative effects are found either. This research also finds that parental participation in sport has no effect in predicting the participation of the child.

While this early study by Magill and Ash (1979) argued for no benefit, more recent research has shown that youth sport participation has many positive influences on children. For example, The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (1997) reports that participation in sport has numerous positive benefits

for women. In particular, girls and women who participate in athletics have lower risk of obesity, heart disease, and many other physical maladies. Female sport participation is linked to high self-esteem, improved body image, and lower rates of stress and depression. In addition girls who participate in sport have higher grades, higher test scores on standardized tests, and a lower risk of dropping out of high school These factors point to the conclusion that participation in sports is a positive for women.

Decision to participate in sport

Children's life choices are influenced by peer culture. Corsaro and Eder (1990) reviewed the theories and literature regarding peer cultures of young children. They note that, historically, the vast majority of research on children's decisions has focused on adolescents and their response to issues such as peer pressure. Specifically, they argue that the social worlds of young children involve a peer culture that is different than the peer culture of adolescents. In particular, they hold that certain themes resonate throughout early childhood. These themes include sharing and social participation, dealing with confusions, fears, and conflicts in daily life, and resistance to, and challenging of, adult rules and authority. Each of these themes evolves as early childhood makes the transition to early adolescence. Children learn early on that participating in games and sharing with others brings them joy. Young children are less able to sustain these

interactions on their own. As they age, children require less external assistance to achieve this end. Dealing with fears and conflicts often take place within the context of fantasy play. Children at this stage enjoy routines and repeated fantasy play assists them in dealing with conflicts, fears, and doubts that may be long-term. Challenging adult rules occurs from the first year of life when the child spits out his/her peas. As children become more sophisticated they become more subtle in their resistance. These themes are carried forward in the literature on why children choose a sport or activity and how their interest is maintained in that sport and it is these children that I study in the current research.

Chambers (1991) looks specifically at elementary school children's participation in sport activities. Children self-report that they continue in sport activities for many reasons including fun, skill development, excitement, achievement, status, energy or tension release, and friendship. Chambers notes that school size can impact the opportunity to participate in sport. In smaller high schools the average student participates in over twice as many sports as students in larger schools. This led to these students gaining the positive effects of athletics that are generally shown to increase self-esteem.

Chambers (1991) also points out that retention in sport activities is linked to a form of pleasure - pain calculation. As long as the activity remains "fun" children remain involved. Generally, anxiety and stress result when pressure from

the outside is placed on children. The greater the anxiety the less the reported enjoyment and the more likely a child will eventually quit sport altogether. In addition to this, children whose decision to participate is solely their own are more likely to remain active in the sport. The major themes discussed as to why children quit have to do with disliking coaches and lack of playing time.

But children do not make the decision to participate in sport solely on their own. Howard and Madrigal (1990) show that parents are the first to influence a child's decision to enroll in sport or recreational activities. The authors attempt to discover the degree to which parents or children influence the child's participation in recreational activity. In addition, they ask if age plays an important role in this influence. Finally, they investigate the effect of family structure or characteristics of the family on the choice of whether or not children participate in recreational activities. In a study of the parents, the researchers interviewed mostly mothers and found that mothers play a dominant role in the decision for children to participate in sport and recreational activities. Mothers generally find the activities, evaluate their quality, and then encourage or discourage the child to participate. The research found no link between age of the child and family structure with the primacy of the mother's role. Therefore, the authors argue that mothers play a dominant role in the children's decision to participate in youth sport activities.

Anyone who has ever been involved in little league knows that youth sports definitely involve both the child and the child's family. The decision to participate also includes a family component. Orthner and Mancini, (1990) investigate the relationship between shared leisure activities and family bonding. The authors note that marital satisfaction and shared leisure time are positively correlated. This research investigates whether shared leisure activities promote a positive family environment. In a sense, the authors wanted to know, does the family that plays together really stay together? They purport that it does The authors find family satisfaction, interaction, and stability are positively related to common leisure activity. Thus familial involvement in mutual leisure activities increases the cohesion and pleasure for all members of the family

Parental involvement in youth sport often raises the specter of the hideous parent-coach forcing his or her child into sport participation despite the lack of interest on the part of the child. Barber et al. (1999) investigates the influence of parent-coaches on the motivation and anxiety level of children who participate in sport activities. As previously noted, parental involvement is cited as a key component to children's participation in sport. Of course, parent involvement does not always include coaching, but most coaches of youth sport are volunteer parents (Seefelt, 1997). The authors find no significant difference in anxiety about performance between children who have parents who coach as opposed to those

whose parents do not coach. In addition, no differences are found with regard to motivation, fun, or any other suspected negative influence. In short, the researchers find that having a parent as coach does little or nothing to hurt or help the child deal with the psychosocial aspects of sport participation.

Certainly parents influence a child's decision to play sport. However, children also have a mea sure of power in this decision as well. White et al. (1998) studied 192 sport participants with a mean age of 11.5 years. The researchers questioned participants in youth sport in two major areas, their goals for participation and individual views of the utility of sport participation. Children who scored high on task orientation believed that sport participation should increase self-esteem, encourage personal improvement toward mastery of the sport, and promote pro-social behaviors that lead one to be a respectable member of society. When divided by gender, the researchers find different reasons for sport participation among boys and girls. Boys see the purpose of sport participation as a means to increase social status and popularity. Girls are more interested in peers and relational aspects of sport participation. Boys feel competitiveness and a desire to win are positive attributes that justify a superior attitude toward other non-athletic children. Girls do not share this attitude.

Effects of childhood sport activity

Does the activity of childhood affect adult patterns? With regard to sport, Giuliano et al. (2000) looks into childhood play activities that predict sport participation for women college athletes. The authors acknowledged that most literature has traditionally tested four hypothesis related to women and sport. 1) that girls who play stereotypically masculine games are more likely to play sports as adults, 2) that girls who play predominantly with boys are more likely to engage in sports as adults, 3) that girls who play team sports are more likely to persist in sports as adults, and 4) women athletes are more likely to report themselves to have been tom-boys as children. The researchers surveyed eighty-four female undergraduates at a small university in Texas. They sought to answer two questions: 1) what childhood play activities predict varsity sports participation in college? and 2) among athletes, which childhood play activities predict "traditional" (e.g., tennis, golf, volleyball, etc.) or "non-traditional" (e.g., basketball, soccer, track) sport participation?

Giuliano et al. (2000) find that certain types of play in childhood predict later athletic participation. Girls who played traditionally male games and played in male or mixed-gender groups during their childhood were more likely to grow up to become varsity athletes. But team sport participation did not predict future participation. Among athletes, types of play predicted sport-related outcomes as well. Girls who played with boys were heavily influenced toward "non-

traditional" types of female sport. Thus, the authors argue that peer influences, as opposed to socialization by parents, are more important in predicting athletic participation among adult women. This is relevant to the present study, as I will examine the effect of social capital on participation.

Youth sports include recreational leagues as well as competitive leagues. Recreational leagues generally are designed to allow all to play regardless of their skill level. Competitive leagues have no such rule. Ryska and Yin (1999) investigates two hundred and sixteen youth soccer players in the southeastern part of the United States in an effort to determine if certain psychological factors influence the form of participation in either competitive or recreational leagues. The authors hypothesize that athletes differ between the two leagues. They find that children who participate in competitive leagues show lower levels of perceived mastery of sport skill than do recreational players. In addition, recreational players feel greater emphasis on development of personal skill and less attachment to the team's win and loss record. Competitive players are less interested in personal mastery. The authors fail to determine any particular individual factor that seems to influence the choice of league, leaving them to suggest that children who are less ego-oriented and more team-oriented seem to gravitate to competitive leagues. They acknowledge that coaching, parents, and the structure of leagues can greatly influence children's participation patterns.

This suggests factors beyond the individual characteristics impact the decision to play youth sport.

Buonamano et al. (1995) dealt with the issue of motivation for participation in youth sport in Italy. Using a detailed questionnaire, the researchers use factor analysis to analyze the children's decision to participate in sport. They find five typologies for participation in youth sport. Enthusiasts believe that sport involvement leads to personal and familial success. These children generally come from larger families and lower socio-economic classes. Those looking for socialization primarily participate in sports to be with their friends and have fun. There are so-called competitors, who participate primarily for the thrill of winning and competing. Through winning members of this group, generally feel they achieve social status. Individualists participate but do not care about the socialization that goes on in youth sport. These children are involved in sport for a number of personal reasons including release of energy, physical fitness, athletic skill, and dealing with anger. Non-competitors are the final group, including the children who did not participate in sport at all. These findings support much of what has previously been discussed. However, it appears that from the psychological point of view, children have a variety of motivations for participation in youth sport.

Lindner (1999) notes that contrary to what is often feared, namely that sport participation decreases academic success, the opposite is true. In a randomly

selected sample of school children in Hong Kong, the author finds that participation in sport is positively correlated to academic achievement. Those students who did not participate, generally, perceived themselves as worse academic performers. Non-participants in sport, generally, stated that they were uninterested in sport, or that it was "not their thing." However, many of those who did not participate also noted that a lack of skill played a role in this decision.

In a review of the major literature, Weiss (2000) provides three major reasons for sport participation among children. These are: 1) the desire to develop and show physical skill, 2) gaining social acceptance and support from peers and adults, and 3) fun and/or enjoyment. This theme is found in much of the literature discussed in this chapter. However, for Weiss (2000) self-esteem is the mediating variable between competence and social support, and enjoyment. If involvement in sport supports self-esteem then children continue to participate. The author argues that adults can structure practice and game environments so that children can show off their gains in physical activities, increase their self-esteem, and thereby maintain their motivation to participate.

Parents and peers and sport participation

Most will agree that parents' influence on their children is a key component in their development. Jambor (1999) studies parental perceptions of the benefits of sports with regard to the sport of soccer. Parents of children who play soccer had pro-athletic attitudes toward the sport and how it affects their

children. The author found no demographic differences between parents whose children participated in soccer and those who did not. Nor were there any differences in parents' previous involvement in the sport. Children who played soccer did not necessarily come from soccer homes. Therefore, a child's participation in soccer must be due to something non-demographic and not directly due to a type of role modeling of soccer behavior. The findings suggest that children have some expectation of return from their soccer participation and if this is met, they will participate. Children who come from families that perceive benefits from youth soccer participation are more likely to persist in the sport and more likely to engage in it in the first place. Parents also note that having fun and interacting with friends are a key component of a child's participation in youth soccer. In my research I will study participation in soccer, as well as baseball/softball and other sports.

Hoyle and Leff (1997) study the role of parental involvement in youth sport participation and performance. Examining twenty-four young tennis players, the authors determine the influence of parental involvement on youth enjoyment in their sport. The authors define parental support as behaviors by parents that are perceived by children as supporting their involvement. This is different than parental pressure, which is defined as behaviors perceived by children that indicate unreasonable expectations of success. The difference between the child's expectations and the parent's expectations are parental pressure. Parental

participation was positively related to enjoyment for children. In short, support increases enjoyment but the findings indicate that support is not related to success. Higher levels of parental pressure translated to greater success in the sport but lower levels of enjoyment for the child.

Anderssen and Wold (1992) investigate the influence of peers and parents on the leisure time of young adolescents in Norway. The authors investigate factors that encourage both boys and girls to engage in a physical activity. They find that significant others have an important role to play in a child's choice to engage in physical activity. Active peers and active parents influence the leisure-time choices of children. The findings show that if we desire to raise physically active children, having them involved with others who are physically active is the best way to ensure this.

Green and Chalip (1997) study the process of socialization that occurs in youth soccer. In a study of parent and child pairs, the researchers sought to discover if parents' encouragement of children had any effect on the child remaining involved in soccer. They find that parent attitudes toward, and encouragement for, playing the sport directly affected the child's satisfaction with the sport. The soccer leagues organizational structure had a direct effect on the parents' socialization and acceptance of the sport as well as their desire to participate in the promotion of it. The researchers conclude that parental involvement and acceptance of the sport, and particularly the sports organizational

structure, directly affects the child's participation in that sport. Continuing involvement in the sport is linked to child and parents' attitude toward the total program. Contrary to what is often feared, that parental involvement is equivalent to pushy parents forcing their child to play, this research supports the role of parent in helping the child enjoy and persist in soccer.

Freysinger (1994) explores the role of parental involvement in children's leisure activities to determine the effect of this involvement on satisfaction with the parental role. The data show that fathers have greater levels of satisfaction in their parenting role as their involvement in their children's activities increase. In other words, fathers' parenting satisfaction is positively related to their interaction with their children in leisure activities. This was not true for mothers. However, the author argues that this may be in large part because mothers report less leisure activity with their children. The data show that mothers spend more time with their children. Therefore the author concludes that mothers are less likely to frame their interactions with their children as leisure, while fathers, who generally spend less time with the children, value that leisure time a great deal.

Yang et al. (1996) examines parental influences on children's sport participation using a longitudinal data set. They test the impact of socio-economic status, education, family structure, age, gender and parental sport participation on youth sport participation. With regard to parental sport participation, these findings support the previously discussed literature, that fathers play a key role in

determining the involvement of their children in sport. Both parents being active in sports, but particularly fathers, increases the likelihood that children, regardless of gender, will be active. Mothers' activity has a stronger effect on girls than on boys. This suggests that parents are models of behaviors for their children. Family structure is found to be significant only in one area. Children from single-parent homes are more likely to be active than children from homes with passive fathers. This is perhaps due to the desire on the part of the custodial parent to provide "quality influences" for his/her children. Interestingly, the study finds that socioeconomic status has no effect on boys' sport activity. These findings suggest that something more than mere economic capital is occurring with regard to sport participation.

Sport persistence and termination

Butcher et al. (2002) recently have published the results of a large sample study. The authors hoped to duplicate the benefits of a longitudinal study by asking tenth grade students to reflect back on their history and provide information about withdrawal from competitive youth sport. This retrospective study provides the reader with information about the withdrawal patterns of children in youth sport. Most of the youth in the study had participated in sports early in their lives. The average number of sports was four. Therefore, the majority of subjects had withdrawn from a sport in their lifetime. What occurred in most cases is that children withdrew from some sports, while remaining active in others. Dropping

out increased with age with the highest number of dropouts occurring in soccer, swimming and gymnastics. The reason most often cited for the withdrawal from a sport activity was a lack of enjoyment. However, the authors divided up the subjects into groups based on how long they had participated in the sport. For those who had played only a short time, two seasons or less, they cited a lack of fun and a lack of skill. Those who were determined to be "elite" participants, those who played in highly competitive leagues, cited that injury and pressure to perform most often precipitated their dropping out of a sport. This research indicates that the level of commitment of the athlete with regard to the time he or she has played the sport greatly influences his/her reasons for dropping out. Apparently for those who are "elites," fun is no longer an issue, but pressure to succeed is. This pressure is not likely to be present in the current study as the students surveyed are too young to play in elite leagues.

Weiss (1993) argues that self-esteem is the primary social construct in the determination of child participation as well as persistence in sport. Coaching techniques and parental influences are the key component in determining young children's (7-9) self-esteem with regard to sport activity. Sport performance in comparison to peers plays a dominant role for older children's lack of, or strength in, self-esteem. For children to be interested in, and maintain themselves in sport activity, it must be structured so the child increases esteem. Children's entry into sport is shown to be an interaction of three key factors: 1) modeling and

reinforcement from parents and peers, 2) opportunities for involvement and increasing skill competency, and 3) both ascribed and achieved attributes. Thus, social class, race, and gender all play a role in a child's desire to play sport, as well as the child's perception of personal skill and the value placed on sport participation in the child's social world. Once involved in sport, children persist for a variety of reasons according to Weiss (1993). In particular, children report multiple causes for their continued involvement including skill improvement, friendship with other players, fun and competition.

Sport participation in a social context

Coakley et al. (1993) discuss the sociological perspective on sport participation. Children are creations of their social context. Therefore, their participation in sport in North America is far more than an individual decision. It is framed in a society that places high value on sport and the lessons it can teach such as hard work, specialization of task, delay of gratification for long-term reward, and a desire to be a winner not a loser. However, children in the U S are caught in a double bind because by its nature, sport always produces more losers than winners. Adults control children's lives in all areas, including the choice to participate in sport. Children who enter sport, or quit it, do so with the implicit permission of their controlling adult. Coakley et al. (1993) argues for a conflict paradigm for sport participation. However, it is important to note that many outcomes from sport participation offer positive outcomes for children.

In a separate work, Coakley (1993) discusses the impact of participation in competitive sports on preadolescent children. The author argues that children can benefit from participation by gaining an increased sense of physical mastery, increased ability to deal with social realities such as authority and peers, and increased interaction with and generation of friends. The structure of the program has a great deal to do with determining how effective the particular sport program is in influencing its participants. Equal play rules and coaching greatly affect the child's experience. Children's ability to participate has individual components such as physical and cognitive development. For example, in tee ball with 6 year olds, often the best players might not have the greatest physical abilities, but the greatest ability to concentrate on playing the game. Children with short attention spans frequently find the slow paced game frustrating.

Donnelly (1993) discusses the problems associated with children being involved in highly competitive sport. Three key factors interact to create problems for participants: 1) the organization structure of the sport, 2) major time commitments required at an early age, and 3) gender. Elite athletes are generally children who rise to the top of their recreational sports. Most are recruited into the sport only to find that intensive training sessions are required. This can be particularly true in the female dominated sports of gymnastics and figure skating, for example. This can lead to major problems for the children who are not developmentally prepared for the rigors of these training sessions. Most

importantly, these regimes often correlate with behavior problems such as bingeing. Bingeing is described as excessive aberrant behaviors such as use of illegal drugs or drinking, smoking, vandalism, etc. Many elite athletes were involved in binge behavior. Fewer women reported this than did men. As might be expected, more women reported having used food and eating disorder behavior as a means of controlling weight for athletic pursuits. Donnelly (1993) argues that highly competitive, elite athletes who are still children need more free time to experience childhood. When they are left under the control of adults who are attempting to mold them into superior athletic performers they often suffer

Bourdieu (1978) discusses social class and sport. First and foremost, the author argues we must view sport as a social reality. As such, it has meaning and conveys meaning. It, therefore, should not be surprising that certain sports become associated with certain groups. For example, because of the high cost only a select group can afford to play polo. Bourdieu (1978) discusses more than this simplistic financial understanding of sport selection. For example, all sports go through phases of popularization on their way to becoming mainstream. Once a sport becomes known to and participated in by the masses, much of its appeal is lost to the elites. For example, at one time only the elite played tennis. After a surge in popularity, it became a sport of the masses and lost some of its appeal to the elites. Along this line, in looking at the recent popularization of golf in the United States, one would predict that the allure to the elites in private clubs will be lost as the

masses become more and more involved in the sport. Thus, some other form of activity might take its place leaving many country clubs wanting members. The author notes that mountain climbing is a sport that requires a modest financial investment in equipment, but tends to be dominated by the well-educated and the wealthy. Perhaps this is because of the cost of travel for those who do not live near mountains. But even for those who live in mountainous areas, the author argues that mountain climbers are an elite group of intellectuals and this elite status makes the sport quite attractive to people of similar status. Thus, the selection of a sport reflects a person's social class. For example, a parent of a child who attends a competitive gymnastics gym will likely note that the quality and cost of vehicles in the parking lot at the gym are far superior to the cars one sees at the tee ball fields.

Hasbrook (1986) looks for a selection effect with regard to sport participation. Specifically, are children who are socialized into sport doing so based on a reciprocal process? Does a high degree of interest and ability in sport for a specific child lead to more encouragement from adults to participate in the sport, and thus greater participation and enjoyment in that sport from the child? Believing that the process of sport involvement is reciprocal, Hasbrook also investigates if this process is different for boys and girls. The findings are inconclusive with regard to the question of reciprocity, but they do support the idea that parental encouragement of sport is significant for girls and non-athletic boys.

However, for boys with great skill parental encouragement is not significant. The findings suggest that children's parents are significant contributors to their initial activities in sport but that for boys this support becomes less relevant than personal ability.

Hasbrook (1986) also investigates the possible relationship between social class and youth sport participation. In reviewing data from two separate studies the author tested whether social class and gender affect sport participation. The findings show that for males no effect is present with regard to social class. However, for females there does appear to be a positive relationship. The lower the social class of the female, the less likely she is to participate in youth sport. The author argues that sport participation is an expected part of the American culture for boys and, thus, participation transcends class. However, females have no such expectation. Only the wealthier families have the expendable income necessary to assist their daughters to engage in youth sport.

Sack (1988) views sport involvement in childhood in a social context. Using Bourdieu's theory of social class differences, the author discusses how the decision to engage in a particular sport is based on the development of taste. The impetus to engage in any activity involves an interaction between the individual and the social world. Taste results when the individual integrates economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital with issues such as area of neighborhood, age, race, sex and familial setting. The decision to involve oneself

in sport is argued to be a function of taste. Children engage in sport for a number reasons previously cited. However, these individual explanations for involvement are dependent on social availability, neighborhood contexts, familial attitude, peers, school and cultural contexts. For example, a child who grows up in a rural area may watch World Cup soccer and become enthralled with the sport, but will not participate if no team exists in the local area. Likewise, a child may choose to participate in soccer regardless of his or her liking the sport, if that child is encouraged by his/her social setting. It is this point that my research attempts to engage.

Jarvie and Maguire (1994) discuss the importance of social class, gender, and ethnicity for the meaning given to sport participation. Throughout history, classes have participated in different kinds of sport based on their income and position in society. For example, the aristocracy of England plays tennis while the lower classes play rugby. This occurs because different classes receive different kinds of profit from the sport's practice. For example, golf allows one to find a spacious and relatively elite leisure activity that is almost exclusive to the upper classes. This occurs not merely because of the cost to play, but also the cost of equipment. In contrast, soccer is available to virtually everyone as it costs relatively little and can be played almost anywhere. It is important to note that leisure choices all indicate something about the person and the social space he or she occupies. In the United States and other post-industrial societies, many leisure

choices are available to individuals. The competition among various groups to gain participants leads to eventual class factions and struggle. This conflict paradigm of sport argues that we all hope to maximize our social benefits while minimizing our social costs. As we approach the issue of childrens' participation in sport, we are faced with the question Merton (1968) posed, "who benefits?" Who benefits from the participation in sport by children?

Murphy (1999) attempts to answer this question by discussing the healthy side of youth sports. While he admits that many children become embroiled in the dreams and aspirations of their parents who are trying to live vicariously through them, most do not. In particular, Murphy argues that competition is a positive for children. It only damages self-esteem if the expectations are so high that they are impossible to reach. Most studies have shown that children enjoy the competition and that it is fun to play sports. Additionally, when we look at levels of anxiety we find that children participating in sport have lower levels of anxiety than the same age children who are about to take a test in school. In other words, anxiety is a part of life and sport anxiety is at a lower level than other socially acceptable stressors. The author argued that sport for children has many positives, including the development of moral attitudes, playing by the rules and an understanding of sportsmanship. Learning to win gracefully is as important as learning to lose. In a recent tee ball game I was coaching, after the victory some girls on the team were gloating to the other team's players. As a coach, I quickly intervened and urged

them to show good sportsmanship toward the other team whether in victory or defeat. This is a positive life lesson. Finally, Murphy (1999) argues that competitive sports build self-esteem for children if the adults involved maintain a balanced and positive approach to winning and losing. In general, youth sport is a positive for the vast majority of participants.

Trew et al. (1997) looks at the impact of schools, gender, and religion on sport participation in Northern Ireland. The data used allow the researchers to measure the impact of these factors against more personal factors such as family and personal characteristics. The findings support the current research model. Namely, the authors find that young people's participation in sport is strongly linked to social factors as well as personal and family characteristics. Importantly, school attended made a difference with regard to sport chosen. Children who attended Catholic schools were far more likely to participate in traditional Gaelic games. The authors note that Gaelic athletics are strongly linked to Catholic parishes and schools and serve as a promoter of ethnic and cultural identity to Irish Catholics. Irish Protestants are rarely involved in Gaelic sports at the school or club level. Thus, children who attended Protestant schools were more likely to be involved in school-based sports, while Catholic children were more involved in club-sports. This research also supports the current effort to link social forces and structures to youth sport participation.

Wang and Wiese-Bjornstall (1996) examine the effects of school type and gender on sport participation in the People's Republic of China. In China there exist what are known as spare-time sports schools, where elite athletes train daily as a part of their educational process. Children who attend such schools are chosen either by coaches at the school, by physical education teachers at regular schools, or by try-outs to be enrolled in such schools. The researchers compare two groups, those enrolled in regular schools, and those enrolled in the sports schools, to determine their motivation for participation in sport. Youth in the study reported that they participate in sport for fun, fitness, prestige, social status and peer socialization. These factors are similar to those found in the U.S. and Europe. As was expected, type of school played an important role in the motivation of the children in the study. For those who attended the sport school, professional athletics and competition played more important roles than for those who attended the regular school. Gender was also a key issue in the study, showing that girls tended to rate team orientation higher than their male counterparts.

De Knop et al. (1999) noted the importance of structural factors that influence sport participation and the trends in sport in Belgium. Four major issues are discussed for their impact on youth sport involvement. The first is associated with demographic changes in Flemish society. Belgium has an aging population, which affects the number of potential athletes as well as the services

and structures needed to provide for them. In addition, migration and immigration patterns have affected the programs offered. For example, an increasing number of Muslim immigrants have increased the number of boys involved in sports, while decreasing the percentage of girls associated with sport, as Muslim girls generally do not participate in sport at all. Second, they point to the changing taste in society for certain sports. In other words, sport popularity varies with time. Thirty years ago tennis was gaining great popularity and consequently one could not find an open tennis court. Now, courts are, generally, open as the popularity of that sport has decreased. Third, the authors note that socio-economics also plays a role in predicting children's participation in sport. They note an increasing number of women are working which leads to an increasing need for childcare. In response to this, sport camps have increased in number, as women need a place for their school age children to spend time while they are at work during school holidays. Participation in such clubs and camps has increased. Parents have decreased time to spend with their children and, therefore, have increased their involvement in sport clubs. Finally, technology also offers other outlets to youth beside sport, leading them to be involved in non-sport leisure activities such as computer and video gaming. Socio-psychological changes have resulted in a society that is more youth-centered. This allows for children to make demands on adults for increased peer interaction separate from parental observation.

De Knop et al. (1999) argue that parents view sport as a positive influence and children use sport to increase their peer encounters. According to the authors, these children increasingly enjoy non-organized sport activity done mainly in the absence of coaches and parents, such as skateboarding. The steady increase in the rate of divorce has led to a complexity of role for organized sport teams as they seek to discover who should lead, coach, etc. Divorces make leadership of organized sport more complex. The world of organized sport has changed in a number of ways. Sports that once were for the elite, such as golf, skiing, etc., have been increasingly reaching out to the lower socioeconomic classes. This helps to integrate society. In addition, sport is an important political and economic reality in Flemish society. Children in sport have been legally protected from the abuse of adults in new laws and sports clubs have blossomed to the point that some individuals can maintain their entire livelihood through their involvement in youth sport. In short, sport is a commercial product that is marketed and sold to parents and children. There are also international repercussions for youth sport, particular to European culture. Certain youth soccer clubs travel internationally and can be a source of national pride. All of these issues reflect the reality that youth sport involvement is more than an individual decision to play a sport. It is affected by the meaning and functions of sport for the society. In the current study I continue this line of thinking as I examine the effect of social capital on sport participation.

Vanreusel et al. (1997) uses longitudinal data to investigate sport socialization. The authors are interested in how remaining active in sports endures through the life course. They find that participation is different depending upon the type of sport the child is involved in. Participants in competitive sports are found to drop out earlier than those involved in recreational sport activities. Recreational sport participants were found to be more likely to maintain some form of activity, even into adulthood. However, the findings are not entirely clear. The authors note a general decline in all individuals' activity level as they age. This leaves an unanswered question, what is the effect of aging on activity level?

In this section I have shown that sport participation is a sociological phenomenon. Children choose to participate in sport for personal, familial, and social reasons. The social reality of sport in the United States leaves one to question the effects of social capital on sport involvement. The information regarding sport participation is vast. Generally young children have been shown to benefit from participation both socially and emotionally. But sport participation does not occur in a vacuum. In the next section I investigate how neighborhoods affect the individual. The elementary schools that I study have boundaries that roughly conform to neighborhoods. My research examines how social capital from a child's family and school might influence his or her choice to participate in sports.

Neighborhood effects

This research examines whether the neighborhood in which children live influences their participation in youth sports. In particular, I investigate the effect of social capital on sport choice for elementary school age children. Aber et al (1997) notes that elementary school age children gain an increasing sense of self as they develop. In this context peers and school become increasingly important in the lives of young children. Therefore, the child's sense of self-identity develops in the context of school and neighborhood peers, which bring about a sense of community. In this research I am looking for the existence of neighborhood effects at the school level. I use elementary schools because they have boundaries that approximate neighborhoods. School effects essentially are neighborhood effects. I argue that neighborhoods, schools and peers influence the choices children make. In short, neighborhoods measured at the school level, matter to the outcomes for children.

In this research I first focus on defining a neighborhood. This is not always as easy as it might seem. Social scientists have used census tracts, geographic areas, or self-report areas to operationalize neighborhood. But are these really neighborhoods? Booth and Crouter (2001) point out that with increasing specificity in research we are gaining increased knowledge of neighborhood effects but the question remains, exactly how is neighborhood

operationalized? I first discuss the definition of neighborhood and then discuss the literature on neighborhood effects.

Neighborhood defined

Sampson (2001) reminds sociologists that examining neighborhood effects is a key sociological endeavor. It is understood that as sociologists we strive to find causes for human behaviors that are rooted in the group context. It is exactly this that I do in this research. The present research uses the school attended as a proxy for neighborhood. Some might argue that school is not the same as a neighborhood. However as stated by Garner and Raudenbush (1991), neighborhoods are not one-dimensional or concrete spatial areas. "They vary depending on the type of problem being studied and the supposed relationship to the study"(252). Lee (2001) showed that when survey recipients in Nashville Tennessee were asked to define their neighborhood they responded with a broad range of answers from one to nine hundred blocks.

Certainly, the structural components of neighborhoods are important and these include racial mix, income level, residential stability, crime rate, etc. It is also important to remember in the study of neighborhoods that they are not necessarily isolated units. Instead, they represent a patchwork mix of a city or town. They are like interlocking circles that more or less overlap depending upon social, structural, and demographic factors. Neighborhoods are embedded in the environment that surrounds them (Lee, 2001).

Massey (2001) agrees with this point. The neighborhoods that surround or are in close proximity to, the neighborhood in question are important because they provide the context for all interactions in that neighborhood. In other words, they provide influences on those who live there. The ecological components of a city in question greatly impact the residents. Therefore, in measuring a neighborhood we need to include many factors in the analysis and, perhaps, consider making the neighborhood a larger geographic area than merely a census tract in order to include the area's interaction with others in the same proximity.

Gephart (1997) argues that neighborhoods are spatial units as well as networks and perceived environments. The author points out that the key variable component of neighborhood research is the definition of neighborhood. Depending upon the research model and the subject of interest, this definition varies. Regarding neighborhood, the author writes: "for some purposes, the relevant neighborhood is the block on which an individual, or family resides; ... for still others; it encompasses a wide physical area that includes shopping areas, schools and community facilities" (10).

Burton et al. (1997) summarize the primary ways neighborhood has been operationalized in social science research. In addition they provide suggestions for continued study. Traditionally, there have been four methods of defining neighborhoods. The first is neighborhood as a physical site. This generally connotes neighborhood as a social address and often uses census tracts as the

operationalization of neighborhoods. Second, researchers can study neighborhood as perception. This involves the researcher asking the subject to self-define the neighborhood. This is most often done in ethnographic work and affords the researcher the opportunity to use the subjects' appraisal of neighborhood as the definition. Of course, as noted in Lee (2001), these definitions are often quite disparate. Third, research tends to focus on neighborhood as social network. This classification includes the social networks that impact the person. Finally, neighborhoods have been studied as separate cultures. They have an ethnicity and attitude. The amount of social support and social interaction in a neighborhood creates a culture specific to the area.

This leads us to the discussion of neighborhood as a community. Small and Supple (2001) argue that while neighborhoods have traditionally been defined by geographic boundaries, they are more than that. Neighborhoods are communities. In that, they are more than merely spatial areas. Neighborhoods certainly include physical space but also they include the social relationships that exist in community. They conclude that neighborhoods as communities have norms, values, goals, identification, sense of belonging, etc. For them the community has more impact on the individual than does the neighborhood. While neighborhood is often easier to define, community is a loose boundary that varies with the individual. Community defies a physical space because it includes the social forces on the individual that have special meaning. These vary a great deal

depending on the individual. They present a framework for defining community. First, communities have more influence on the individual than the physical space people occupy. While certainly there is overlap with the neighborhood, community is a broader concept. Second, we must focus on how communities affect individuals and not solely define the community by demographic markers generated from census data. A community involves how information is transferred and what that information means to those involved. Finally, the authors argue that a community is a highly complex theoretical concept and not easily defined or operationalized. As such, it requires a broader definition than a geographic boundary. It must include the social relationships that impact those who are involved.

Randolph et al. (1996) notes that family, school, and neighborhood have important influences on the development of children. These influences are the key ecological components in children's lives. In addition, defining community is important. They point out that defining neighborhood along objective lines may lead the researcher to miss key components of influence in the lives of subjects.

It is also important to note the work of Sampson (2001), who reviews the literature on neighborhood effects and points out that changing the unit of analysis has not changed the robustness of the effect. This shows that research at multiple levels of geographic measurement has not changed the results that neighborhoods matter and affect the lives of those who live in them.

In this research I equate school attended with neighborhood. The city of Norman, Oklahoma has fifteen elementary schools. Children attend the school closest to their home and my theoretical model proposes that these schools create for the children who attend them a community of sorts. Children develop a personal sense of who they are through the interactions they have at school. Thus, schools provide geographic, network, and cultural inputs to children and this affects their sport participation. In Norman, the extracurricular athletics I study are linked to the child's school. This makes equating school and neighborhood in this current research a legitimate definition of neighborhood as the schools represent spatial areas as well as communities that influence a child's decision to participate in sport.

Literature on neighborhood effects

In the rest of this section I will review the literature on the effect of neighborhood on children. I first discuss the theories of neighborhood effects followed by information regarding the effects of neighborhood on education. I then survey some research on neighborhood effects on psychological well-being as well as delinquency and other undesirable behaviors such as teen pregnancy. Many studies have focused on the effects of neighborhood characteristics on crime and delinquency, child development, teen pregnancy, drug use, and educational attainment. The issue of if, and how, neighborhoods matter at all has a long history, from Shaw and McKay (1942) to Wilson (1987).

The theories that guide the study of neighborhood effects on young people generally focus on one of three areas according to Jencks and Mayer (1990). Contagion theories treat neighborhood influences like a disease that can be passed from one's peers to oneself. Contagion theories support the power of peers to pass on and spread problem behaviors. Collective socialization theories focus on the presence or absence of neighborhood role models and how this affects behavior. In these theories neighborhood role models affect children in positive or negative ways. Observation and monitoring of children by competent adults are the key aspects of communal socialization. Competition theories focus on actual or relative deprivation and how members of neighborhoods compete against one another for scarce resources. Competition theories not only focus on material goods but also on social institutions and access to adults in the community such as schools, teachers, police, and other adults.

Park et al. (1925) presents a theory of delinquency maintaining it is the result of the failure of community organizations to function, as they should. This approach examines how churches, schools, courts, families and neighborhoods function to decrease delinquency. They argue that racial heterogeneity and residential instability tend to increase levels of social disorganization. Later, Shaw and McKay (1942) pick up this thinking and examined deviance from a social disorganization perspective. In general, they note that certain neighborhoods continue to have criminality over time. These neighborhoods are dominated by

racial heterogeneity, poverty, and a lack of strong social institutions. These neighborhoods are said to be socially disorganized, leading the inhabitants to delinquent behavior. Sampson and Groves (1989) support the ideas of Shaw and McKay (1942). They show that socioeconomic status, ethnic heterogeneity and instability of residence are related to delinquent behavior. They also add mediating factors such as family disruption and urbanization showing that these, too, affect neighborhood delinquency rates. Bursik and Grasmick (1993) supported the premise that socioeconomic status, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility and family disruption lead to social disorganization that, in turn, increases the likelihood of delinquency.

Wilson (1987) argues that some individuals in American society are "truly disadvantaged," not simply because they are poor buts also because they live in neighborhoods that are dominated by poor schools, weak social structures, larges amounts of crime, and drug use. Individuals are truly disadvantaged because their community interest offers no opportunity for improving their situations. In short, they have no role models to follow or insights into how to rise above these environments. When a person has no role model who is engaged in pro-social behaviors, such as having a stable job or an adequate education, that person is doubly disadvantaged. They are disadvantaged not merely because they are poor but because they live in a bad environment and have no vision of anything else. The concentration of poverty in the United States has increased over time

(Jargowsky, 1996). Wilson points out that in some neighborhoods this leads to a social reality characterized by social isolation. The lack of working-class and middle-class role models leaves a social void for these neighborhoods and results in weak social institutions. Thus, the truly disadvantaged are a creation of a neighborhood that has little or nothing to offer in providing them a vision of some other form of life.

Gephart (1997) describes the trends in neighborhood poverty in the United States arguing that the concentration of poverty and the increased geographic spread of poverty are beyond debate. In addition, other forms of disadvantage such as high crime rates, drug use, single-parent homes, residential segregation, and out-migration of non-poor families accompany urban poverty. Children in poverty areas suffer from lower birth weights, have lower levels of educational attainment, higher levels of dropping out of school, and suffer greater levels of abuse and neglect along with higher rates of illness and malnourishment. In short, neighborhoods can have dramatic effects on children.

Many studies have pointed to the problems described by Wilson (1989). Initially, I will discuss the effects of neighborhood on educational outcomes. Brooks-Gunn et al. (1993) find significant neighborhood effects on IQ, teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school in keeping with Wilson (1989). Of particular interest for my research was the effect of "affluence" on children. Affluence was defined as incomes greater than thirty thousand dollars a year and,

as expected, children growing up in more affluent neighborhoods did better than those who grew up in low-income neighborhoods. This means they do better in school, have lower rates of teen pregnancy, and higher IQ scores. Poor children who grow up in affluent neighborhoods are not found to benefit from doing so. The researchers proposed a social isolation explanation for this, arguing that poor children in affluent neighborhoods are isolated from affluent children. The authors find significant effects of neighborhood and family factors on children's development.

Entwisle et al. (1994) discusses the "gender gap" in math and the possible effects of neighborhood on it. What has been supported by the literature is that in elementary school no math difference exists between boys and girls. However, as children age into adolescence the math gap begins to appear with boys scoring better than girls. They test the impact of neighborhood on elementary school age children using data with an eight-year follow up. The authors find that neighborhoods have a greater effect on math performance for boys than for girls. Boys' math performance is enhanced when they live in affluent neighborhoods but suffer when they reside in poor neighborhoods. The impact of neighborhood is significant in the determination of boys' math performance. The authors speculate this is, in part, because young boys spend more time away from home and in the neighborhood than do young girls. Therefore, exposure to neighborhood influences is stronger for boys in affluent neighborhoods where more resources are

available to them. In such neighborhoods they use their time away from home in games, sports, work and other activities that cause them to need reasoning and mathematical skills.

Garner and Raudenbush (1991) test the effects of neighborhood on educational attainment. They show that variation in educational attainment is linked to neighborhood. The authors show that neighborhood and educational attainment are related. Children who reside in deprived neighborhoods have lower educational attainment than children who live in more advantaged neighborhoods. Thus they argue neighborhoods matter with regard to educational attainment.

This is supported by the research of Solon et al. (2000) who find supportive correlations between neighborhood and educational attainment. However, they note that these correlations decrease significantly when accounting for characteristics of the family. They argue that differences that had been attributed to neighborhood are partially removed when accounting for family characteristics. Thus, family characteristics can mediate the effects of neighborhood.

In a yet unpublished manuscript, Turley (2002) examines the effects of neighborhood median income on children's test scores and self-esteem. Turley (2002) finds that family capital is a key determinant of these relationships. Children from higher income homes benefit more from living in a better neighborhood than do low- or middle-income children in terms of self-esteem.

Interestingly, it is middle-income children who benefit the least from neighborhood effects on self-esteem. Low-income children benefit more than middle-income children, but less than higher income children from living in strong neighborhoods.

This leads me to a discussion of other effects of neighborhood on residents. Ross et al. (2000) views the issue of neighborhood stability from a non-delinquency point of view. They test whether psychological distress is related to residential stability and/or the economic context of the neighborhood. They hypothesize that social isolation would be greater in extremely poor neighborhoods and that fact would lead to greater distress. They find that residential stability increases well-being only in economically advantaged neighborhoods but not for the extremely poor. Living in an extremely poor and residentially stable neighborhood is associated with distress because these areas are enclaves of extreme poverty. The authors argue that many of these neighborhoods leave people feeling powerless to escape thus resulting in greater levels of distress.

Feeling trapped and powerless is often the result of social isolation. Rankin and Quane (2000) discuss the importance of neighborhood on poverty and the social isolation of families. The authors discuss the increasing levels of isolation in urban, poor neighborhoods in the U.S. The authors point out that social capital, as discussed by Coleman (1988), is lacking in poor isolated

neighborhoods. As I will discuss in subsequent sections, social capital, in part, refers to the social networks and resources that surround an individual. Thus, the social disorganization of the neighborhood limits the social capital available to all in the neighborhood. Social isolation of the neighborhood was found to be linked to poverty. The authors find that individual residents of poor neighborhoods had fewer friends who were college educated and fewer friends who were employed. Contrary to what is often believed, however, these authors found greater levels of voluntary participation in institutions in the poorest neighborhoods. They argue this might result because of the need for self-protection and the limited number of options for outside activities.

It is logical to assume that social isolation limits opportunity for those who live in poor neighborhoods. Clampet-Lundquist (1998) discuss the opportunity structure available in neighborhoods. In particular, how do various opportunities get transferred to residents? Potential transmission mechanisms may be collective socialization (adults as role models), institutional influences on norms (church, community centers, schools), contagion (peer influences), and social competition (neighbors competing for scarce resources.) Through these avenues, individuals are socialized into their neighborhood. Using qualitative and quantitative data, the author found that structural components, such as neighborhood income, have significant effects on teen-age childbearing. In addition to this, unemployment and income have significant effects on non-completion of high school. Qualitative

analysis revealed little in discussing how these outcomes get transmitted on a micro-level. Clampet-Lundquist (1998) point out that trying to determine neighborhood effects is extremely complex. While micro-level analysis may be important, the author argues that social capital seems to be the stronger influence.

When discussing neighborhood deprivation and social isolation there are often questions of race. Do persons from different races respond differently to deprivation? South and Baumer (2000) discuss the impact of race and neighborhood on premarital childbearing. They are particularly interested in whether racial composition in the neighborhood is significant in the determination of premarital childbearing. They find that racial components of neighborhood are not relevant when we consider socioeconomic status. For example, the type of neighborhood in which they live explains higher rates of premarital childbearing among African American women. The link between low socioeconomic status and premarital childbirth is made. Some theories argue for the low opportunity cost of childbearing out of wedlock for the poor. However, this analysis shows that peer group influence and pro-child attitudes are the dominant reason for childbearing out of wedlock. This supports the early work of Anderson (1989).

Krivo and Peterson (1996) examine the relationship between neighborhood disadvantage and crime. In particular, the authors test the commonly held belief that extremely disadvantaged neighborhoods have higher rates of crime than other neighborhoods. In addition, the authors investigate the structural disadvantage of

race as it applies to extremely disadvantaged neighborhoods. In short, do extremely poor white neighborhoods have the same level of crime as extremely poor black neighborhoods? Disadvantaged neighborhoods are characterized by four components: poverty, family disruption, male unemployment, and lack of persons in high-status occupations. The authors use data from Columbus Ohio because of relatively high rates of residential segregation in that city. They find that disadvantage is the key variable in predicting violent crime but not property crime. This holds true regardless of race. Thus, the dominant race of the neighborhood, either being black or white, is not relevant to predicating crime rates. However, disadvantage is correlated with high rates of violent crime in both types of neighborhoods.

Other research into neighborhood effects on crime include the work of Felson et al. (1994) who investigate individual and school effects on delinquency among high school students. They want to know if certain schools foster a violent attitude that results in persons in that environment having different values and attitudes toward violence. Using student surveys, the authors test the effect of school values on individual values and on individual violence and delinquency. They find that individual values vary greatly depending upon high school attended. Schools-wide values toward violence increase the likelihood that a student will retaliate in a violent manner regardless of his or her personal views on violence.

Sampson (2001) summarizes much of the relevant literature on neighborhood effects and presented five "neighborhood facts" (6). The first fact is that inequality is linked with race and social status. Americans cluster according to socioeconomic status and in racially segregated areas. Second, many social problems are grouped together in neighborhoods such as crime, delinquency, drug use, dropping out of school, low birth weight, infant mortality and child abuse. Third, certain neighborhood characteristics predict certain negative outcomes in children, including racial isolation, poverty, family disruption and residential instability. Fourth, the unit of analysis has not changed the robustness of the effect. Thus, different operational definitions of neighborhood have not changed the effect. Finally, the concentration of poverty, race and disadvantage has increased in the 1980's and 1990's, as has the concentration of affluence.

In my research I investigate the effect of neighborhood on youth participation in all sports, and particularly participation in soccer and baseball/softball. I use data gathered from families of elementary school age children. To date, existing research on neighborhood effects has neglected to consider this important youth activity. Furstenberg and Hughes (1997) point out that the concept of social capital is important in the study of neighborhood effects. Social capital includes those inputs that provide resources for a child's development. These can include the norms, expectations, and information

transmission in the neighborhood. In the next section I discuss the concept of social capital in detail.

Social Capital

This research examines the effect of social capital on youth sport participation. In this section I first discuss the etiology of the concept of social capital as well as the definition of the concept. I then review some of the literature supporting the idea that social capital affects our lives.

Theoretical discussion of social capital

The foundation of the concept of social capital can be traced to Emile Durkheim (1893) who discussed the concept of solidarity in *The Division of Labor in Society*. For Durkheim, two forces, solidarity and social control, hold society together. Durkheim proposes two types of solidarity. Mechanical solidarity is a characteristic of primitive societies. In such groups individual differences are small and most members hold similar values and feel similar emotions to one another. Societies with mechanical solidarity are usually close-knit and small. Stratification and the division of labor in such societies are minimal. Organic solidarity is a characteristic of modern societies in which traditional influences on authority structures are supplanted by new structures. Under organic solidarity, society has a great deal of stratification and division of labor, which, in turn, increases the individualism of the society. The diversity of the system leads to a complex interrelationships among individuals. They become mutually dependent on one another and are bound together by a complex system of exchange, norms,

and laws. This interrelationship is the foundation of the concept of social capital discussed later by Coleman (1988).

Moving to more recent times, Granovetter (1973) discussed the idea of social networks. The networks in which we are involved tie us as individuals to the macro structures of society. Thus, whom we know and how we know them impacts the ties we have through networks. The strength of ties is dependent on the amount of time we have spent with another person. Emotional intensity and intimacy also are important parts of the ties we have with others. In general, we all have more weak ties than we do strong ones and it is through weak ties that most information is passed. Granovetter discussed the reality that most information passed through social networks is impersonal and general. The intensity required to maintain strong ties limits an individual's contact with others and, thus, his/her access to information. The idea that weak ties are positive for society leads us to Coleman's (1988) discussion of social capital.

Coleman (1988) argued that social capital includes the many aspects of life that affect an individual that are, in part, external to that individual. Coleman presents a functionalist viewpoint of social capital. Social capital is a social fact and exists not in individuals but in the structure of the social organization in which they live. Social capital is a form of collective capital. It is associated with the social ties present in communities. These might include personal skills of the individual, but also the financial and human capital around them. Social capital is

a resource. Social capital is not a single item but a conglomeration of many elements. Social capital is a functional entity that, by its presence, allows individuals to perform tasks that, otherwise, they might not be able to perform.

For Coleman (1988), social capital has many forms. The social expectations of behavior and the reciprocal obligations of social interaction, in connection with the structures of the society, form the basis of social capital. Coleman argued that trustworthiness arises from these interactions and makes social life possible for us all. However, not all structures and settings have the same degree of trustworthiness and, thus, this form of social capital is variable. Channels for information are, likewise, important to social capital. Living in a social realm with advanced forms of information transmission positively affects the individual. Norms and sanctions for aberration from norms also affect social capital. They allow the individual to move freely within a social realm, while at the same time constraining his/her behavior to behaviors that are not deviant. Some social structures are more effective than others in increasing the effect of social capital on individuals.

Coleman (1988) also discussed how social capital functions in the family. The capital of the family has three different components: financial capital, human capital, and social capital. It is beyond the obvious that financial capital, measured as wealth and income, provides stability, social status and resources for the family. Human capital, such as education and intelligence of parents, also has a great

impact on the family. But social capital is more than these two combined. It includes the relationship between the parents and children, and their interaction with their social environment.

Finally, Coleman (1988) acknowledged that social capital exists outside the family as well. Public social capital includes the resources of a community, neighborhood, or city. Thus, growing up in an urban ghetto neighborhood is quite a different experience than growing up in a rural poor area, even if the levels of human and financial capital in both situations are identical. This type of social capital is greatly influenced by the previously described components of social capital: obligations/expectations, information flow, trustworthiness, and norms and sanctions.

Bourdieu (1986) viewed the idea of social capital from a conflict paradigm. He argued that the economic system is the primary driver of all societal interactions. Thus, social capital is a creation of the material world. It is a resource to be lost or cultivated and is rooted in one's social class. In order to measure social capital we must include the economic foundations common to the interactions. Social capital is made up of two parts, the social network and the quality of the network. Here the interaction with the economic reality becomes obvious. Those in the elite class have greater quality social networks, at least with regard to generating more economic capital. In short, the rich get richer because they know the rich. However, social capital is not only dominated by an economic

reality, but also flows from power and prestige. Here it seems Bourdieu borrows from Weber (1922) who pointed out that one's status involves power and prestige, not solely economic power. Thus, for Bourdieu, all forms of capital (money, social, or cultural) can be traded for one another and build on each other. For social capital to assist an individual the person must have knowledge of it and use it properly to advance his/her cause.

According to Portes (2000a), the issue of social capital has been revised since these initial discussions. While it remains popular in social science literature, it has broadened its scope to include more than individual capital. Since the current research focuses on social capital and its effect on sport participation, I will very briefly discuss the community level literature.

Social capital is rooted in community. Robert Putnam (1993) discussed the idea that communities, cities, states or nations can have differing levels of social capital. In this line of reasoning, social capital is the tangible benefits that result from a well governed and collectively-minded social unit. In this context, communities possess social capital. Later, Putnam (1995a) described the decline in social capital in the U.S. by discussing voter apathy and decreased membership in civic organizations. This decline will lead to the deterioration of the national unity. It would be interesting to see how Putnam views the attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001, as it appears that much of the apathy in our nation rapidly declined following the attacks.

Portes (2000a) pointed out that within Putnam's theory is a tautology, namely that to measure a community with strong social capital we use committed and quality political environments, which only exist where there is strong social capital. This circular reasoning weakens Putnam's argument according to Portes (2000a:4). This argument becomes virtually unprovable because we define the presence of social capital by the results we believe are connected to it.

Paxton (1999) defined social capital differently because it involves two major components. First are objective associations between individuals. This refers to the links between individuals. In other words, individuals are connected to one another in a social setting. This connection requires some form of network that links them to others. This network is objective. Second, there are subjective associations or types of ties between individuals. These include a level of reciprocity and/or trust that exists between people. This is an interpretive component and varies with the individual. In this context, Paxton tests Putnam's (1995b) hypothesis that social capital is declining in the United States. While finding that individual levels of trust and association have declined over time, the author is unable to support the claim that this has translated into decreased levels of trust in the institutions of society. Thus, the ideas purported by Putnam (1995b) are not supported.

One issue arises in the discussion of the effects of social capital. Specifically, social capital has micro and macro components. Neighborhoods have

different levels of social capital, but the individuals within those neighborhoods also have different levels of social capital available to them. Brehm and Rahn (1997) tested the interconnection between social capital on a macro scale and social capital on a micro scale. In particular, they test the issues of trust in others and trust in structures. Initially, they proposed that social capital is dominated by individual characteristics. However, they showed that those who are involved in civic organizations increase their level of interpersonal trust and confidence in social structures such as the government. Interestingly, personal beliefs about the safety or trustworthiness of individuals do not seem to increase feelings of trustworthiness in institutions. Confidence in institutions does affect levels of interpersonal trust. People who become involved in civic organizations generally have higher levels of education and interpersonal trust than do those who do not. Thus, in viewing social capital, the authors show that social capital on the micro level might result from feelings of confidence in institutions but might not increase confidence in institutions.

Social capital is a truly sociological concept. It can be argued that the networks, resources, and characteristics of the environment influence individual actions. Lin (2001) discussed the importance of social capital in social science research. Social capital refers to an investment in social relations that provides a certain return. It is primarily rooted in the reality of social networks and is embedded in the resources of the community. Thus, social networks are the

foundation of social capital. The structural factors of networks are both vehicles to transfer information and resources themselves. Thus, when measuring social capital the author argues that one must include three key components: how resources are embedded in the social structure, accessibility to resources by individuals, and the use of these resources for action. The author described four explanations for why social capital affects outcomes. The first is that social capital involves the flow of information. Information is a key component to social capital as it provides the individual with opportunities and choices he/she might otherwise not realize exist. Second, social capital influences the choices of individuals as well as outcomes. Social ties have differing weights for different actors, but generally social capital involves influence of the individual by the society. Third, social ties are resources that provide an in-group component for the individual. Thus, being connected to others through social capital provides the individual added resources in excess of his or her personal human capital. Finally, social relations reinforce identity for the individual. The current research seeks to investigate these components by testing the effect of neighborhood on individual sport choice.

Morrow (1999) evaluated the concept of social capital as defined by Coleman and pointed out that it underemphasizes the agency of children and overemphasizes the inputs of family. Morrow called for a greater inclusion of factors associated with the individual's social environment as a part of his/her

social capital. The structural factors of the environment can act to free or constrain the choices children make. These need to be included as a part of any evaluation of social capital. In my research I will include this environmental component by examining data based on school, allowing for a neighborhood component to be added to the analysis.

Portes (2000b) argued that social capital is a reciprocal process that is generally mutually beneficial to all parties. In a discussion of immigration, Portes argued that social capital comes from two primary sources. The first is called simple reciprocity and refers to the individual transactions that occur between two parties and are mutually beneficial to both parties. In this form of social capital both parties to a transaction believe the other will benefit them and, therefore, are willing to trust one another and work together. The second involves the trust that occurs in the social structures of a community. In this context individuals interact with the norms of society, much as described by Coleman (1988), which results in a measure of social control. Portes calls this enforceable trust, because the individual experiences pressure to perform appropriately from his or her community as in the case of no-collateral loans from Cuban immigrants to more recent immigrants.

Sandefur and Laumann (1998) argued for a conceptionalization of social capital to include the social system and the individual and social relationships that occur within that system. The social system is the place of interaction between

individuals. Social capital, then, consists of the place where interactions occur. According to this paradigm, individuals have an egocentric part in the formation of social capital. The extent to which a person can achieve and maintain relationships with other individuals is part of his or her egocentric social capital. But we must remember that individual interactions have a social context as well. Sandefur and Laumann (1998) called this the socio-centric component of social capital. The quantity and quality of these individual interactions are located within a social setting. This socio-centric component of social capital is also vital to the value of one's social capital. Thus, social capital for Sandefur and Laumann must include not only the social setting, but also the way the individual relationship fits into that setting.

In a review of the history of social capital, Portes (1998) discussed how Coleman and Bourdieu are similar. While it is true Bourdieu argued social capital always boils down to economic underpinnings, both would agree on many other points. For example, both agree that the intensity and quality of relationships are key factors in determining the benefits of social capital. Social capital does not just happen. It occurs in relationships with others and it is those others who determine the quality of the capital. Thus, social capital is a good that can be accumulated or lost and comes from many sources to the individual. Simply put, it is a resource that is more than human or economic capital; it is both and more. On

a practical level, social capital allows people to benefit, not simply because of who they are, but because they know others and they have others who know them.

As this relates to my study, I argue that social capital impacts the choice of sport participation for young children. I further argue that because of the age of the subjects, they have little if any individual capital. For children the family capital is the same as the individual capital. Young children, like those in this study, have no income, little education, and limited ability to control their own lives. Thus, the theoretical basis for social capital in this study somewhat alters Coleman's (1988) model for social capital. Social capital in this study is the combination of family capital and school capital. Social capital has been studied from many different angles. In the concluding section of this chapter I will move more specifically to some of the findings of current research on social capital.

Research on social capital

The research in the area of social capital is quite broad. The concept has been used to study many different types of social phenomenon. For example, Burt (1997) provided a study of managers and social capital, showing that the value of social capital to the individual depends on how many workers are doing the same job. Managers who have few peers tend to benefit and use social capital more frequently for their own advancement. Those managers who are not competing with peers are able to foster more social contacts and integrate with other groups.

This is true even for lower-level managers who are employed in jobs that are somewhat isolated.

Wellman and Wortley (1990) investigated the impact of community ties on families finding resources. The strength of ties is important to the resulting benefit. They found that family and friends provide emotional and financial support. This is a form of social capital that extends benefits to the individual. As we might expect, family ties provide support but they found that strong ties do not always provide as much support as expected. With the exception of women providing emotional support, no personal gains from family ties are found. The social capital of individuals is rooted in social networks that are composed of both immediate kin and other more loosely knit relationships composed of friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Thus, primary and secondary relationships are found to provide benefits to individuals.

Family structure and characteristics are important in the determination of social capital. Entwisle and Alexander (1995) discussed the impact of family structure on standardized test scores of first and second grade children. The authors tested the question of how residence in single-parent families relates to young children's scores. They argued that children from single parent homes have a disadvantage that is rooted in them having lower levels of social capital. Access to adults increases children's social capital.

Downey (1995) expanded this idea arguing that the educational attainment and socioeconomic status of those adults is also important. He asks: Does the family structure affect scores on standardized reading and math tests? The findings were virtually identical for both reading and math scores, indicating that family structure was not important. When using multiple measurement periods, winter when school is in session and summer when there is no school, the authors found a seasonal effect not related to family structure. However, significant effects were found with regard to socio-economic status during the summer months. Children from wealthier homes did better on summer testing. Despite the reality that many single-parent homes suffer from financial deficits, these data show that it is the absence of economic capital that provides the greatest impact on children.

Bianchi and Robinson (1997) used time diary data to investigate family inputs on the generation of children's social capital. The authors investigated this idea by testing the effects of family structure and the education of parents on children's time spent reading, doing chores, studying and watching television. They found that television watching dominates preschool and elementary school age children's activities regardless of family structure. Social capital theory has argued that access to adults is crucial for the development of children and their human capital. However, these findings show little difference in effect depending upon family structure for hours spent either in reading, watching television or

doing homework and chores. Thus, apparently, children's use of time is not affected by family structure with the exception of maternal employment. Children with stay-at-home mothers report higher levels of television time than children from either single-parent homes or those where mothers are employed outside the home. These findings provided limited support for the idea that time spent together improves children's social capital. In general, I tend to believe that children absorb the social capital of their parents and thus are creations of their environments.

Parcel and Menaghan (1993) investigated the effects of family social capital on children's behavior. The authors expected that children from families with high rates of social capital would learn social norms better and, therefore, have fewer behavior problems. Using a cohort analysis of six to eight year old children from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, they found that mothers have a significant effect on children's behavior. They also argued that parents' jobs influence their parenting style. Family social capital is a resource that affects children's learning of appropriate behaviors. Children from unstable homes have difficulty in this learning. The data showed that parents with stable employment and marriages have children with fewer behavior problems. In addition, mothers who feel they are good parents have children with fewer behavior problems. The authors found that the social capital of the family is predominantly embedded in the personal capital of the mother but that the father's employment is relevant as

well. They also found that the more complex the father's work the less behavior problems a child will have. Working mothers and additional children were shown to increase the likelihood of behavior problems in children.

Following this research, Parcel and Dufur (2001) used the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) to investigate the effects of family structure and school capital on math and reading achievement. The authors tested family and school effects independently and then investigated a possible additive effect. The dependent variables for the analysis are achievement on math and reading standardized tests. They tested the idea that family capital is dependent on the number of children, time with parents, and resources of the family.

Schools also are suspected to increase human capital of students as shown by Teachman et al. (1997). The analysis showed that school effects are secondary to the effects of family capital on the educational outcomes measured. It is important to note that family and school capital are additive. Thus, children who attend quality schools and come from homes with high rates of parental interaction, lower numbers of children, and higher socioeconomic status have the best educational outcomes.

Teachman et al. (1997) and Teachman et al. (1996), investigated social capital and its likely effect on dropping out of high school. The first article argued that the context in which a person's financial capital and human capital interact is social capital. They argued that it is the lens through which the resources of the

person and his/her family can be viewed. Interestingly, they found that children from divorced families are not necessarily at risk of higher dropout rates merely from this fact. Instead, the social interaction between parent/parents and school is key. Children who attend school where parents are more involved have lower dropout rates regardless of their parents' marital status. In the second article the authors found that social capital is a context through which success in school can be achieved. Previously, it was believed that private schools provided a level of social capital that worked against the likelihood of dropping out of high school This research showed that parent-child interaction is far more important for the prevention of dropping out of school than the school attended In addition, changing schools increases the chance of a student dropping out. Both of these studies support the social capital hypothesis of Coleman (1988) by showing that parents' involvement with children provides them a source of social capital that assists them in living within the norms of society.

Furstenberg and Hughs (1995) looked at social capital as a source of social control. This idea is in keeping with Coleman's (1988) hypothesis about the functions of social capital. In particular, these authors investigated the success rates of poor children over time and identified the impact of social capital on this success. Poor children are often viewed as at risk for delinquency and dropping out of school. But what factors may help those with disadvantage overcome their environments? The authors examined the role of social capital in success. Using

twenty-year longitudinal data, these authors sought to discover how the children of teenage mothers fair. Contrary to common belief, most of these children did graduate from school and managed to stay out of trouble with the law. Most girls did not have children in their teen years and most did not exhibit any signs of depression or anxiety-related illness. For those who adjusted well to being from a single parent home, the authors attempted to measure the impact of social capital. The authors found that social capital as a child was linked to socioeconomic success as an adult for this sample. Bonding with parent and family was shown to be related to success in school as well as good mental health later in life. But social capital had no effect on teen parenting or delinquency. However these factors are often connected to neighborhood characteristics that are a part of social capital according to these authors. Parental interaction with the child, as well as socioeconomic status, are shown to increase the child's social capital and act as a preventive agent for children who are traditionally seen to be at risk.

McNeal (1999) looked more deeply into the issue of parental involvement as a part of children's social capital. In fact, the author argued that parental involvement is social capital for children. The author tested the effect of parental involvement on science achievement as well as deviant behaviors such as truancy and dropping out. However, this research goes further than previous research in that it attempts to measure what type of involvement helps attainment and decreases deviant activities. Findings showed that relational factors between

parent and child are vital in determining both educational and problematic outcomes. Parent-child discussion significantly increases achievement while, at the same time, decreases truancy and dropping out. Other factors such as socioeconomic status and base achievement level significantly improve scores on science exams. With regard to measures of social capital, the author found that membership in parent/teacher organizations decreased negative outcomes but was negatively related to achievement. Likewise, close monitoring of children decreases negative outcomes but negatively influences science achievement. These findings support the social control aspect of social capital theory. Social capital measures have significant effects on behaviors. However, the positive effects on academics are not supported by this research.

A good deal of the research regarding social capital has focused on immigrant groups and issues of immigration. Massey et al. (1987) and Massey and Espinosa (1997) applied social capital theory to immigration to the U.S. from Mexico. Massey and Espinosa (1997) surveyed recent immigrants and examine the impact of social capital on migration. They measured social capital in four ways including: if parents have migrated, number of siblings who have migrated, proportion of those in the community over 15 years of age who have migrated, and migration legal status of any member of the individual's household. They found that social capital is the primary driving force behind the initiation and continuation of Mexican immigration to the U.S. They argue that knowing

someone who has migrated or having a family member in the U.S. increases the odds of migration for potential immigrants. These factors are beyond the individual and are a product of the social setting in which one lives. This idea is consistent with social capital theory, illustrating the impact of environmental factors on individual choice

Zhou and Bankston (1996) argued that the tight social network of Vietnamese enclaves results in positive outcomes for children. The second-generation children who remain tied to their culture have better outcomes with regard to educational attainment and dropping out of school. The Confucian philosophy of avoiding shaming your family at all costs acts as a social control mechanism for children who then reap the benefit of this form of social capital

Portes (1996) discussed the Cuban enclave in Miami showing that economic and educational attainment has benefited from the social capital available to immigrants in the enclave. For example, refugees that came immediately following the Cuban Revolution arrived in the U.S. with a good deal of human capital and a desire to build wealth in order to return one day to Cuba. They realized that by joining together in an effort to build wealth they would be more likely generate the wealth needed to overthrow the government of Fidel Castro. This resulted in entrepreneurship and economic success. This allowed subsequent refugees to enter into an ethnic enclave in Miami. In the enclave the recent immigrant could find work, a common language, religion, and social

structure. This allowed even those with very little human capital to benefit from the combined social capital of all those in the enclave.

It is much the same story for the Chinese immigrants studied by Zhou (1992). Recent immigrants to Chinatown in New York City find great benefit in the collective capital of the enclave. The social capital of the enclave allows individuals who do not speak English to have a chance at success. The results are better than expected educational and economic outcomes, including high rates of entrepreneurship.

Waldinger (1996) supported the idea that many immigrant groups have benefited from social capital. In a detailed study of immigration to New York City, Waldinger showed that African Americans were continually supplanted in the pecking order of success, in part because of a lack of cultural and social capital. African Americans left the South and arrived in New York City around the same time as East-European Jews, Chinese, and Italians. However, each of the new immigrant groups grew in economic and political power while African Americans did not. In fact, many subsequent groups have surpassed African American migrants from the southern United States despite those groups having little understanding of the language or culture of the U.S. Waldingers' explanation for this is that these immigrant groups had a sense of unity and collective social capital that was not present for African Americans. In a sense, immigrants' sense of

people-hood increased their social capital and, thus, increased their odds of success and entrepreneurship.

As this applies to the current study, I assume that children do not have measurable individual capital and, therefore, family capital is the same as individual capital for them. I also suggest that family capital variables have both direct and indirect effects on sport participation. Indirect effects are mediated through school capital. Thus, I predict that schools do matter with regard to sport participation and particular schools will have different levels of "sport-capital" based on neighborhood components and the sport studied. For example, I expect that soccer will be affected differently than baseball/softball and other sports because soccer has a limited history for many individuals in this community. Some schools will have significantly greater sport participation than others with regard to soccer because those schools have more social capital than others. On the other hand I expect that baseball/softball participation and general sport participation will be more similar because they have longer histories with parents and peers. Because they are in the experience of many, they require less capital to encourage participation.

Putting this idea into a larger framework, I believe this research follows in the theoretical history of participation in voluntary associations. Generally speaking, participation in voluntary associations is assumed to be based on individual decisions. Similarly, participation in a sport is often believed to be a

voluntary association based on individual decisions. I believe that most individuals choose to participate in voluntary associations on a pleasure/pain basis. They, generally, choose to associate with activities that provide them with more reward than cost. Social capital, among other things, affects the choice of participation in voluntary associations and therefore affects the choice to participate in certain sports. As previously noted, participation in soccer requires a bit more pain for most Americans because it is a relatively new sport to this country. Therefore, participation in soccer requires more social capital than participation in other sports. Thus, soccer participation is a personal, voluntary association that is affected by social capital. Sports that are more mainstream, such as baseball/softball, will require less to foster participation, while sports such as soccer will need social capital in order to generate participation. In the next chapter I discuss the data and the research methodology that are used in this study.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODS AND THEORETICAL MODEL

In this analysis I use the data from a study entitled "Interaction of Parents and Children: A Social Contextual Approach," which were collected in 1998 in Norman Oklahoma. The original goal of the research was to obtain interviews from approximately three hundred parents of Norman Public School children who were then in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. A stratified random sample was taken from a list of all 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders in the Norman Oklahoma Public Schools. Subjects were stratified as being residents of the east or west side of Norman using school attended as the criterion for the stratification. Initially, researchers selected four hundred subjects, two hundred from both the east and west sides of Norman. Letters were sent to the parents/guardians of subjects informing them of the study. Letters were followed up with a phone contact and interview times were set up with the parents/guardians of the subjects at their convenience. The parents/guardians were interviewed about the sports activities of their children, among other things.

Interviews were conducted at the homes of the respondents. Individuals who refused the interview or failed to keep the appointment were replaced. In addition, numerous phone disconnects were discovered. This exhausted the initial sample of four hundred and so researchers returned to the original list of students

and randomly selected more subjects. This process continued until three hundred and one interviews were completed with one hundred and forty-four being from the west side of Norman, and one hundred and fifty-seven being from the east side of Norman.

In attempting to set up interviews researchers received one hundred and thirty-two refusals, with eighty-five from the east side and forty-seven from the west side of Norman. There were sixty subjects for whom appointments were set up but parents weren't home when the interviewer arrived, forty-two being from the east side and eighteen being from the west side. These individuals were unable to be rescheduled. Seventy-two subjects from the sample had phones that had been disconnected with no forwarding number, fifty-nine for the east side and thirteen for the west side. One hundred seventeen were called but were never reached. An average of six attempts were made per subject.

The response rate for this survey is detailed as follows. A total of six hundred and eighty-two children were drawn into the sample. Thus the response rate for the entire sample was 44.1 percent (301/682). If we subtract the seventy-two who were no longer available from the six hundred and eighty-two the sampling response rate becomes 49.3 percent (301/610). If we further subtract those who could never be reached in one of the six attempted phone calls the response rate becomes 61 percent (301/493). Therefore, in order to complete this

sample of three hundred and one, there were one hundred thirty-two refusals and sixty who failed to keep their appointments.

A parent was chosen, usually a mother, to provide information about the child selected into the sample and the child's family. These adult respondents, for example, provided information on the age, educational attainment, and occupation of all the adults in the household, as well their relationship to the child of interest. They also provided information on such things as family income, residence type, etc. Finally, the respondents provided information on the child of interest's activities including organized sports activities. These data allow me to test the theory that the social capital of particular elementary schools affects student sport choice. A copy of the questionnaire that was used appears in Appendix A.

The dependent variables for this study were sport participation variables and are listed in Table 1. Respondents were asked "In the last year has the (focal) child participated in any youth sports?" These responses were then coded into dummy variables to indicate the individual's participation in sport in either soccer, baseball/softball and total sport participation. For each sport variable, one is equal to participation and zero represents non-participation.

[Insert Table 1 here]

The theory discussed by Coleman (1988) argues that social capital involves different components which, when added together, generate a separate entity

Table 1: Dependent variables and descriptions

Variable Name	Description of Independent Variables	Measured as:
SOCCER	Subjects' participation in soccer.	Dummy, 1=participation
BBSB	Subjects' participation in baseball/softball.	Dummy, 1=participation
SPORT	Subjects' participation in any sport. Including Baseball/softball and Soccer	Dummy, 1=participation

called social capital. Social capital is the total of individual, family and neighborhood capital. As discussed previously, I link individual and family capital because of the ages of the subjects. Children's opportunities are linked to their families' ability to provide for them and they have no distinguishable individual capital themselves. Therefore, from now on I refer to the individual level capital as family capital. The concept of family capital is operationalized by the variables listed in Table 2.

[Insert Table 2 here]

Family capital is distributed among family members. Respondents were asked; "What are the first names of all children age 18 or younger in your household?" From these answers I made a variable indicating the number of children in the household excluding the focal child. The number of children in the household variable was created depicting the number of siblings of the focal child. Thus, the total number of children in the family is equal to one plus the variable. Family size is relevant to the distribution of capital so I control for the number of siblings of the focal child in the analysis.

Respondents were asked: "About how many adults in this particular neighborhood do you know well enough to have a conversation with?" This variable adults known in the neighborhood, serves as a measure of connectedness and communication in the neighborhood. This is a key component to Coleman's

Table 2: Independent Family Capital Variables and descriptions

Variable Name	Description of Variables	Measured as:
Number of children in the household	Number of children in household not counting the focal child	Continuous
Adults known in the neighborhood	Reported number of adults known in neighborhood	Continuous
Male child	Male child	Dummy, 1= male
One adult in household	One adult living in the household.	Dummy, 1= one adult
Income	Income in thousands of dollars	Continuous
Family occupation	Family occupational prestige rating	Continuous - Duncan OP Score
Family education	Family Educational attainment	Continuous–education level
Residence	Residence type – homeowner or renter.	Dummy, 1=home owner
Age of parents	Age of parents.	Continuous
Family capital socioeconomic scale	Scale of SES variables: Income, family occupation, family education, residence, and age of parents.	Continuous

(1988) social capital theory. The number of adults known in the neighborhood variable was adjusted somewhat. If respondents listed greater than 50 adults known in the neighborhood the value of 50 was truncated at 50. This was done in only five cases where the reported numbers of adults known was extremely high. For example, one respondent claimed to know 131 adults in the neighborhood. This resulted in a decision to limit the maximum number possible to 50. an answer that already had a few responses.

The sex of the child is relevant to the current research since boys have higher rates of participation in sport than girls (Lawson and Verma, 1999). Respondents were asked; "What is the sex of each child?" This was related to the focal child to indicate the gender of the child for the study. I then created a dummy variable for male child with a value one for male and zero for females

In order to determine the impact of single parent households I created a variable to test the effect of one adult in the household. A decision was made that the number of adults in the household is relevant to the family capital. However, not all respondents lived with a parent. Therefore I created a dummy variable to measure households with only one adult in them with a value of one for one adult households and zero for households with more than one adult.

Respondents were asked about the education levels of all the adults in the household with the question, "What is the highest degree of education completed by him/her?" (referring to the adults). This resulted in an educational attainment

score for all adults in the household. Educational attainment was scored in categories ranging from zero to seven. The categories of educational attainment were as follows: 0 = eighth grade or less, 1= 9-11 years but no high school graduation, 2 = high school graduation or equivalent, 3 = high school degree plus vocational/technical but no college, 4 = some college but no degree, 5 = associate's degree, 6= bachelor's degree, 7= Ph. D., M.D., J.D., Master's, etc. In the computation of the family educational attainment variable, an assumption was made that the father's value would, generally, be the dominant value for family capital. Thus, if a father or stepfather was present in the home, his value was used as the value for family educational attainment. For families with no father or stepfather present the mothers' educational attainment value was used.

The age of parents was determined by asking respondents "How old is he/she?" (referring to all adults in the household). This provided an age for each adult in the household. I created an age of parents variable by using the age of fathers or stepfathers if present in the household and the age of the mother if no father or stepfather was present.

I created an occupational prestige variable from the question, "What is his/her current occupation?" (referring to adults in the household). These answers were then transformed into an occupational prestige ranking for each individual using the Duncan occupational prestige score rating system (SEI) (Stevens and Featherman, 1981). In making the family occupational prestige

variable I made an assumption consistent with the one made regarding education and age of parents. I assumed that the father's occupation would, generally, be the dominant occupation for the family. For households that had no father or stepfather, I used the occupational prestige score for the mother. There were some households that had missing data on occupational prestige for both fathers and mothers. For those cases I imputed values using ordinary least squares regression. I imputed values for the cases with missing occupation by regressing occupation on education and age for the cases without missing data on occupation. I then used the linear regression equation to estimate missing values for the family occupation variable.

The income of respondents was determined by using a show card system. Respondents were told; "Here is a card that shows a range of household incomes Which category best describes your household's total income for 1997 from all sources before taxes?" Twenty-one income categories were on the card, representing changes in income of $10,000 per category. The lowest category was $0-9,999 and the highest category was $200,000 +. Respondents were assigned the midpoints of the categories into which they fell. For respondents in the highest income category, values were coded to be $204,999. The income variable was transformed from the raw data into income in thousands of dollars. There were also some missing values on income. I used a similar procedure as described above to impute the income values. I regressed income on family occupation, age

of parents, and family educational attainment for cases without missing values, to gain a regression equation. I then used the linear regression equation to estimate missing values for the family income variable and imputed them into the data.

Respondents were asked, "Do you rent or own this residence?" The variable about residential ownership was then transformed into a dummy variable that I created to indicate home ownership. I used 1 for home ownership with 0 for renting.

Each of these five variables, age of parents, family occupational prestige, income in thousands, family educational attainment, and residential home ownership, are measures of socioeconomic status. After reviewing the correlations and considering the issue of collinearity, I combined the variables into a socio-economic status scale. I used z-score transformations of the individual variables to create the scale. The alpha for the scale is .79.

The variables used for neighborhood characteristics are nested in the school that the child of interest attends. Schools in this study are proxies for neighborhoods because children attend schools based on their geographic location within the city and so schools have boundaries that coincide, roughly with neighborhoods. Table 3 shows the distribution of cases by school. There are three elementary schools in the Norman Public School system that don't appear in the list. Two of these, Washington and Lakeview, are rural schools with large school catchment areas and low density populations. No data were collected for

students in these schools because they don't conform to "neighborhood" schools. In addition, no data were collected for students of Jackson school. Along with McKinley school, Jackson represents a geographical transitional area between west and east. A few interviews were conducted for McKinley students. These students do appear in the analysis that follows.

[Insert Table 3 here]

In addition to the family capital variables I created a number of school capital variables. These were created from information on the individual students from each school. These are listed in Table 4. School level variables for occupational prestige, educational attainment, age of parents, residential home ownership, income, and adults known in the neighborhood were calculated for each child as the mean score by school. In making these calculations for each individual child I removed his/her case from the calculation of the school variables in order to assure that it would not be influenced by the student in question. Thus, for each of these variables I subtracted out the individuals' score, and calculated the mean based on one minus the sample size for that school (N-1).

I then created a school level socioeconomic status scale in a manner similar to the individual socioeconomic status scale. I used z-score transformations of the school level variables for occupational prestige, educational attainment, age of parents, residential home ownership, and income to create a scale. The alpha for the scale is .76.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for schools sampled

School	Frequency	Percent
Cleveland	29	9.6
Eisenhower	7	2.3
Jefferson	10	3.3
Lincoln	24	8.0
Madison	14	4.7
McKinley	5	1.7
Monroe	22	7.3
Roosevelt	27	9.0
Truman	61	20.3
Wilson	39	13.0
Kennedy	43	14.3
Adams	20	6.6

I also created school sports participation rate variables for participation in soccer, baseball/softball, and overall sport participation. In calculating these rates the child in question is excluded from the calculation. That is, the calculations are based on the participation of the other children at the school.

The west-side residence variable represents a geographic line that was included in the initial sample. Elementary schools located on the west side of Norman, Oklahoma were scored as one for the dummy variable. They include Truman, Roosevelt, Monroe, and Cleveland elementary schools. Also, I have included McKinley school as a Westside school in the analysis because of its similarity to other Westside schools regarding socioeconomic status. The other schools were scored as zero.

Finally, I created individual school dummy variables. For each variable one signifies attendance at that school and zero signifies attendance at some other school. For this analysis I use Truman elementary school as the reference group. Truman was chosen because it represented the largest part of the sample as well as having a high rate of participation in each of the three dependent variables considered in this study.

[Insert Table 4 here]

Table 4: School capital variables

Variable Name	Description of Independent Variables	Measured as:
School average occupational prestige	Average occupational prestige of parents for school.	Continuous
School average educational attainment of parents	Average educational attainment of parents for school.	Continuous
School average income	Average income for school in thousands of dollars.	Continuous
School rate of home ownership	Home ownership rate for school	Continuous
School average for adults known in the neighborhood	Average number of adult's known in the neighborhood for school.	Continuous
School average for age of parents	Age of parents for school	Continuous
School level socioeconomic status	Socioeconomic scale for school using school level averages for: occupational prestige, educational attainment, income, home ownership, and age of parents.	Continuous
School level participation rate in soccer	Rate of Soccer participation for school	Continuous
School level participation rate in baseball/softball	Rate of Baseball/Softball participation for school	Continuous
School level participation rate in any sport	Rate of all sport participation for school.	Continuous
West-side residence	Lives on West/East side of Norman, Oklahoma.	Dummy 1=West
Adams	Adams Elementary school	Dummy 1=Adams
Kennedy	Kennedy Elementary school	Dummy 1=Kennedy
Wilson	Wilson Elementary school	Dummy 1=Wilson
Roosevelt	Roosevelt Elementary school	Dummy 1=Roosevelt
Monroe	Monroe Elementary school	Dummy 1=Monroe
McKinley	McKinley Elementary school	Dummy 1= McKinley
Madison	Madison Elementary school	Dummy 1=Madison
Lincoln	Lincoln Elementary school	Dummy 1=Lincoln
Jefferson	Jefferson Elementary school	Dummy 1=Jefferson
Eisenhower	Eisenhower Elementary school	Dummy1=Eisenhower
Cleveland	Cleveland Elementary school	Dummy 1=Cleveland

The data are evaluated using quantitative data analysis methods. In particular I use logistic regression, which allows multivariate analysis with a dependent variable that is discrete. Logistic regression requires a dichotomous dependent variable, which is the case with these data. In each model presented, participation in the particular sport will be measured as a yes, or no response. Thus logistic regression is an appropriate methodology (Tabachick 2001).

In the analysis, I decided to exclude certain sports based on their low rates of participation in the sample. Thus basketball, football, tennis, golf, etc. were not studied, in part, because of very low levels of participation, but also many of these are not linked to the school. In Norman children are placed on soccer and baseball/softball teams based on the grade school they attend. While this is also true of basketball and football, participation in these sports in the sample was so small that I decided to combine participation in any sport into one variable to indicate sport participation.

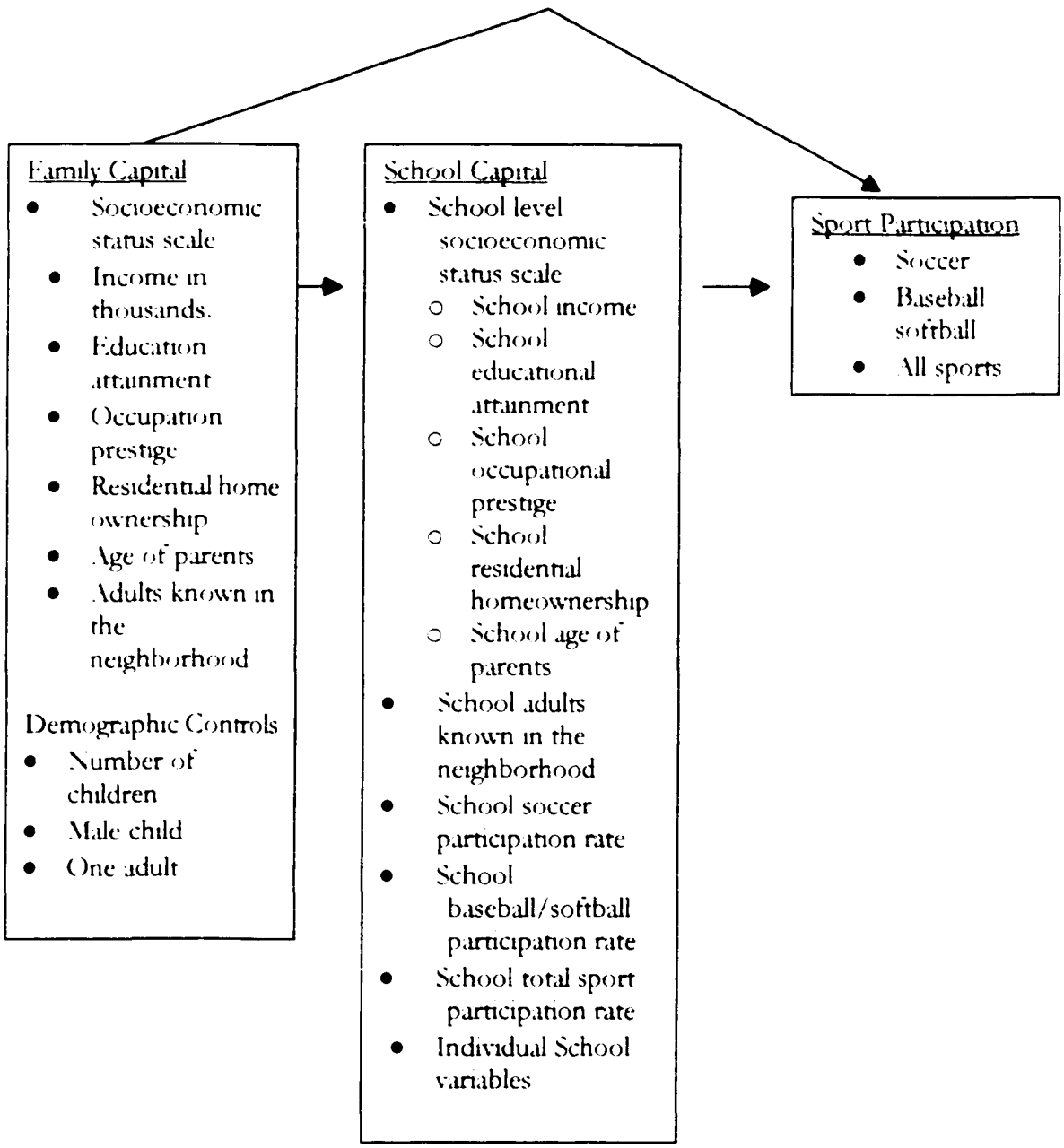
In addition, I excluded race as a variable because nearly all the children in the data were white. In the sample 282 of 301 were white accounting for 93.7 percent of the sample. The age of the child was also excluded from the analysis because there is little variation in the age among the children. Sixty-four percent of the children were either ten or eleven years old. The remaining children in the study were evenly divided as nine year olds or twelve year olds.

In this study I expect to find that students in a particular school are more likely to engage in specific sports than students in others schools. I hypothesize that schools have social capital that influences sport choice for children. Thus, I suggest that a child will participate in sport because of the social capital of that school.

In Figure 1 I present a theoretical model with the variables that I use in the analysis. You can note that I surmise that family capital has a direct effect as well as an indirect effect on total sport participation as well as participation in soccer and baseball/softball. I believe that school capital variables will moderate the effects of family capital and thereby support the hypothesis that social capital influences participation in sports. In the analysis that follows in the next chapter I first separate out soccer, then baseball/softball and finally total sport participation. I surmise that different schools/neighborhoods have a type of social capital that either encourages or discourages sport participation.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

FIGURE 1 - Theoretical model



CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The effects of social capital on sport participation are examined in this research. The analysis was performed with logistic regression. In this analysis I use participation in soccer, baseball or softball, and a combination variable including all other sports as dependent variables. Using this format I can predict the likelihood of sport participation based on the independent variables used. Analysis was performed using SPSS 10.0 for Windows. Ten cases with missing values on income were imputed using ordinary least squares regression. Twelve cases with missing values on family occupation were imputed using ordinary least squares regression. This was discussed in Chapter 3. Thus data analysis was done on 301 cases representing 157 cases from the east side of Norman and 144 cases from the west side of Norman. The number of cases for each school is shown in Table 3 in the previous chapter.

Table 5 presents the means and percentages for each variable used in the analysis by school. The number of children in the household represents the number of children in the family excluding the focal child. Generally most children have more than one sibling. The adults known in the neighborhood represents a measure of family connection to their neighborhood. Madison, Jefferson, Adams, Wilson, and Kennedy all have low levels of adult interaction

(less than 6 adults) while Cleveland, Monroe, and Roosevelt have quite high levels of adult interaction (greater than 20). Truman and McKinley are not far behind with averages of 18 and 16 respectively.

The variables that report income in thousands of dollars, family education, family occupational prestige, residential home ownership, and age of parents all follow a somewhat similar pattern by school. Note that the schools in which families have low levels of income also have low levels of occupational prestige, educational attainment, residential homeownership, and parents that are younger. For example, Eisenhower, Jefferson, Kennedy, Adams, and Madison all have relatively low school incomes less than $36,000, while Cleveland, Truman, Monroe, Roosevelt, and McKinley have high incomes in excess of $80,000. Family occupational prestige shows a similar pattern. Thus, schools that are high on income have higher levels of family occupational prestige as might be predicted. Not surprisingly, family educational attainment and home ownership also follow this pattern. On both of these variables Eisenhower, Jefferson, Kennedy, Adams, and Madison all have low values, while Cleveland, Truman, Monroe, Roosevelt, and McKinley have high values. Age of parents follows a similar pattern with Adams, Kennedy, Wilson, Madison, Jefferson, and Eisenhower having parents that average 38 years or less, and Cleveland, McKinley, Monroe, Roosevelt, and Truman all having parents with older ages, greater than 39 years on average. This pattern in the data supports the decision to

create a socioeconomic scale. The collinearity of these variables is apparent by their high correlation.

[Insert Table 5 Here]

Tables 6 through 8 present logistic regression coefficients and standard errors for the logistic regression of each of the dependent variables on the independent variables. The dependent variables are participation in soccer, baseball/softball, and all sports including soccer and baseball/softball. Coefficients that are statistically significant are indicated by one asterisk, at the $p< 10$, two asterisk at the $p<.05$, and three asterisk at the $p<.01$. In each table the models present the change in effects moving from family level variables to school variables. It is by this manner that I am able to note the effect of school on individual participation in sport. School level variables were grouped to determine effects. For example, first I examined the impact of west side of town residence and then examined the school dummy variables with Truman elementary as my reference group. I examined school level socioeconomic status, adults known, and the rate of participation in the sport separately in order to avoid collinearity.

Table 6 shows results of the logistic regression analysis of soccer participation. In model 1 the socioeconomic status scale and sex of

Table 5: Means/Percentages for each school for individual capital variables

School	Number of Children	Adults known in the neighborhood	Socioeconomic status scale	Income	Family occupational prestige	Family educational attainment
Cleveland	1.28	20.93	3.19	109.32	70.88	6.10
Eisenhower	1.71	10.57	-2.89	27.86	41.23	3.29
Jefferson	1.00	4.70	-3.19	29.00	27.14	2.70
Lincoln	1.21	8.13	-.96	42.59	42.59	4.33
Madison	.79	4.21	-2.87	27.86	41.79	3.50
McKinley	1.00	16.20	4.75	98.9	83.10	7.00
Monroe	1.68	22.55	3.31	121.66	72.27	5.50
Roosevelt	1.44	21.00	2.69	89.76	68.54	5.78
Truman	1.00	17.74	2.29	83.60	69.74	5.44
Wilson	1.79	4.87	-3.03	32.73	33.31	3.13
Kennedy	1.60	5.70	-2.65	34.77	44.66	3.81
Adams	1.4	4.95	-2.71	36.50	43.25	3.30

School	Residential home ownership	Age of parents	Soccer participation	Baseball softball participation	Sport participation	
Cleveland	.90	39.93	.52	.48	.79	
Eisenhower	.57	34.00	.29	.14	.57	
Jefferson	.70	35.50	.10	.30	.50	
Lincoln	.67	38.88	.13	.38	.63	
Madison	.29	36.86	.14	.14	.50	
McKinley	1.0	43.60	.40	.40	.80	
Monroe	.82	41.32	.64	.64	.91	
Roosevelt	.96	40.19	.56	.52	.93	
Truman	.89	40.21	.52	.43	.87	
Wilson	.31	38.08	.15	.33	.59	
Kennedy	.37	34.65	.19	.12	.49	
Adams	.55	33.65	.25	.25	.60	

the child being male have significant positive effects on soccer participation at the $p<.01$ level of significance. Thus, higher levels of family socioeconomic status and being a male increase the likelihood of soccer participation. Adults known in the neighborhood and number of siblings of the focal child are positively related to soccer participation but don't have statistically significant coefficients. The coefficient for adults known in the neighborhood just misses being statistically significant with a t-test of 1.58. The coefficient for one adult in the household is not found to be significant.

[Insert Table #6 Here]

In Model 2 I add west side residence while controlling for the family level variables. The findings show that west side residence has a positive effect on soccer participation at the $p<.01$ level of significance when controlling for family level variables. In addition, male child continues to be statistically significant but this time at the $p<.05$ level. The coefficient for number of children in the household is negatively related to soccer participation at the $p<.10$ level. Thus, attending a west side school and being male increases the likelihood of soccer participation at high levels of significance. The odds ratio for west side residence indicates is 5.28 meaning that children who reside on the west side of Norman are 5.28 times more likely to play soccer than children on the east side of Norman. The effects of one adult households and family socioeconomic status are not significant when residential location is considered. The -2 log likelihood for this

model (334.1) is smaller than it is for Model 1 (352.1), indicating a better goodness of fit for this model.

In Model 3 I substitute the individual school dummy variables for Westside/eastside residence. In this model Truman elementary school was left out of the analysis as a reference group. The -2 log likelihood of this model is lower (328.6) indicating a more precise fit for this model than for previous models. In fact, this model presents the best fit of all models in this analysis. Negative coefficients for the eastside schools Lincoln and Wilson are statistically significant at the $p< .01$ level of significance while Jefferson, Madison, Kennedy, and Adams all are statistically significant at the $p< .05$ level. Thus, students who attend those schools are less likely to participate in soccer than are students from Truman school. The odds of participating in soccer and attending one of these schools are decreased between 92% and 73% depending upon the school. This infers a social capital component to soccer participation. Conversely, none of the coefficients for the west side schools are statistically significant representing no difference from Truman school. Interestingly, in this model the number of children in the home is negatively related to soccer participation at the $p< .05$ level. Thus, the greater number of children in the home the less likely it is a child would participate in soccer. As before, being a male increases the likelihood of soccer participation at the $p< .05$ level. One adult households and family socioeconomic status once again are not statistically significant.

Table 6: Logistic regression coefficients for participation in soccer.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Family capital Socioeconomic scale	.154*** (1.17)	.013 (1.01)	.012 (1.01)	.029 (1.03)	.002 (1.00)	.082 (1.09)
Adults known in the neighborhood	.014 (1.01)	-.001 (1.00)	-.003 (1.00)	001 (1.00)	.001 (1.00)	.005 (1.01)
Male child	.640*** (1.90)	.629** (1.88)	.646** (1.91)	.640** (1.90)	.629** (1.88)	.624** (1.87)
Number of children in the household	-.228 (.80)	-.255* (.78)	-.335** (.72)	-.261* (.77)	-.312** (.73)	-.264* (.77)
One adult in household	-.091 (.91)	-.072 (.93)	-.194 (.82)	-.167 (.85)	-.225 (.80)	-.109 (.34)
West-side residence		1.663*** (5.28)				
Cleveland			.067 (1.07)			
Eisenhower			-.744 (.48)			
Jefferson			-2.53** (.08)			
Lincoln			-1.94*** (.14)			
Madison			-2.01** (.13)			
McKinley			-.637 (.53)			
Monroe			.697 (2.01)			
Roosevelt			.193 (1.21)			
Wilson			-1.58*** (.21)			
Kennedy			-1.29** (.28)			
Adams			-1.29** (.28)			
School level socioeconomic status				.156*** (1.17)		
School average for adults known in neighborhood					.119*** (1.13)	
School rate of soccer participation						.024*** (1.02)
-2 log likelihood	352.1	334.1	328.6	338.0	332.4	345.8

** *= p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10 Note: Odds ratios in ().

Model 4 adds school level socioeconomic status while continuing to control for the family variables. The school level socioeconomic status scale is positively related to soccer participation at the $p<.01$ level of significance. Therefore, as community socio-economic status increases, the likelihood of soccer participation increases. As with the previous models, being a male significantly increases the likelihood of playing soccer at the p.05 level. The number of children in the household is negatively related to participation at the $p<.10$ level The -2 log likelihood for this model is 338.0 indicating a better fit than in the first model, but not as good a fit as the model with the individual school dummy variables. Family socioeconomic status and one adult in the household are once again not significant.

In Model 5 the school level variable measuring adult's known in the neighborhood is considered while controlling for family level variables. As the average number of adults known in the neighborhood increases, the likelihood of soccer participation increases at the $p<.01$ level. Being male is positively related to participation at the $p<.05$ level. The number of children in the family is negatively significant at the $p<.05$ level. These two family level variables as well as the school level measure of adult's known in the neighborhood increase the likelihood of soccer participation. Once again, family socioeconomic status and one adult in the household are not significant. The -2 log likelihood for this model indicates a better fit to the data than does Model 1 but not as strong as model 3.

Model 6 presents the effect of school soccer participation on individual soccer participation while controlling for family level variables. The rate of soccer participation is significant at the $p<.01$ and positively increases the likelihood of soccer participation. As with previous models, male child remains significant at the $p<.05$ level. The number of children in the household is negatively related to participation at the $p<.10$ level. Thus the rate of school soccer participation and being a male increase the likelihood of soccer participation. The goodness of fit for this model is not as strong as for other models and as with the previous model, family socioeconomic status and one adult in the household are not significant.

In reviewing Table 6, I find that the family level variables of socioeconomic status and male child are significant indicators of soccer participation until I consider school level variables. Once variables that measure location of residence, school average number of adults known, school socioeconomic status, and the school soccer participation rate are included, family level socioeconomic status is no longer found to be significant. Thus, these findings support the hypothesis that family level variables may be important but their effect is indirect as it goes through school variables to affect the likelihood of soccer participation.

Table 7 shows results of the logistic regression analysis of baseball/softball participation. In Model 1 family socioeconomic status at the $p<.10$ level and adults known in the neighborhood at the $p<.01$ level are significant positive

predictors of baseball/softball participation. Thus, higher levels of socioeconomic status and a greater numbers of adults known in the neighborhood increase the likelihood of baseball/softball participation. Living in a one adult household, being a male child and number of siblings do not have significant effects on participation. It is interesting to note that the coefficient for family socioeconomic status for baseball/softball participation is about half as large as for soccer participation.

[Insert Table 7 Here]

In Model 2 I add the dummy variable for west-side residence to the model. Although the coefficient for west-side residence is positive it is not statistically significant. However it does not miss reaching statistical significance by much (t-test = 1.35). The number of adults known continues to be significant but now at the $p < .05$ level. The effect of family socioeconomic status is not found to be significant when west-side residence is considered. All other variables are also not found to be significant. The -2 log likelihood for this model (363.8) is only slightly smaller than it is for model 1 (365.7), indicating a small improvement in goodness of fit for this model.

Model 3 presents the results of logistic regression of baseball/softball participation on the family level variables and the individual school dummy variables. In this model Truman elementary school was left out of the analysis as a reference group. The -2 log likelihood of this model is lowest (351.4) indicating a

Table 7: Logistic regression coefficients for participation in baseball/softball.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Family capital Socioeconomic scale	.068* (1.07)	.026 (1.03)	.004 (1.00)	.011 (1.01)	.013 (1.01)	.048 (1.05)
Adults known in the neighborhood	.032*** (1.03)	.027** (1.03)	.025** (1.02)	.025** (1.02)	.027** (1.03)	.030*** (1.03)
Male child	.290 (1.34)	.279 (1.32)	.228 (1.27)	.283 (1.33)	.277 (1.32)	.273 (1.31)
Number of children in the household	-.066 (.94)	-.07 (.93)	-.142 (.87)	-.076 (.93)	-.087 (.917)	-.079 (.92)
One adult in household	-.475 (.62)	-.475 (.62)	-.663 (.52)	-.514 (.60)	-.527 (.59)	-.507 (.60)
West-side residence		.506 (1.66)				
Cleveland			.224 (1.25)			
Eisenhower			-1.014 (.36)			
Jefferson			-.245 (.78)			
Lincoln			.251 (1.29)			
Madison			-1.121* (.33)			
McKinley			-.118 (.89)			
Monroe			.922* (2.51)			
Roosevelt			.366 (1.44)			
Wilson			.186 (1.20)			
Kennedy			-1.19** (.30)			
Adams			-.426 (.65)			
School level socioeconomic status				.072* (1.04)		
School average for adults known in neighborhood					.043* (1.04)	
School participation rate in baseball & softball						.009 (1.01)
-2 log likelihood	365.7	363.8	351.4	362.5	362.8	365.1

*** *= p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10 Note: Odds ratios in ()

more precise fit for this model than for previous or subsequent models. However, only one eastside school, Kennedy is found have a negative and significant effect on baseball/softball participation at the $p< .05$ level. The coefficient for Madison elementary school is negative and significant at the $p< .10$ level. The coefficient for Monroe is positively related to participation at the p .10 level when compared to Truman elementary. Thus, students who attend Kennedy and Madison elementary are less likely to participate in baseball/softball than are students from Truman school. While students who attend Monroe are more likely to play baseball/softball. The odds ratio for Monroe indicates that students who attend Monroe are 2.51 times more likely to play baseball than are students who attend Truman. At the same time, students who attend Madison and Kennedy are approximately 70% less likely to play baseball/softball than students who attend Truman. Although they do not reach statistical significance, the coefficients for the other east side schools are all negative except for Wilson. In addition, adult's known in the neighborhood remains significant at the $p< .05$ level. This supports the idea that social capital affects baseball/softball participation. Family socioeconomic status, number of children in the household and one adult in the household are not significant.

Model 4 presents the effect of school level socioeconomic status on baseball/softball participation while continuing to control for family variables.

The school level measure of socioeconomic status does have significant positive effect but only at the p< .10 level. The t-test for this coefficient is 1.75, just short of statistical significance at the p< .05 level. Adults known in the neighborhood remains positively related to baseball/softball participation at the p< .05 level. The -2 log likelihood for this model is 362.5 indicating a better fit than in the first model, but not as good a fit as Model 3. Family level socioeconomic status, as well as one adult in the household, and number of children in the household are once again, not significant

Model 5 presents the effect of the school level measure of adult's known in the neighborhood on baseball/softball participation while controlling for family level variables. The school measure of adults known in the neighborhood does have a significant positive effect on baseball/softball participation but only at the p< .10 level. It is just short of statistical significance at the p< .05 level with a t-test of 1.56. However, the individual level variable regarding the number of adults known in the neighborhood continues to increase the likelihood of baseball/softball participation. The -2 log likelihood of this model indicates a better fit for the data than does model 1 but not as strong as model 3. Once again, family level socioeconomic status, as well as other family capital variables does not have a significant effect on participation in baseball/softball.

Model 6 presents the effect of school level baseball/softball participation on individual baseball/softball participation while controlling for family level

variables. The school rate of baseball/softball participation is not significantly related to participation in baseball/softball. Although, the coefficient for this variable is positive, it is considerably smaller than its standard error. As with previous models, the number of adults known in the neighborhood remains significant and positively increases the likelihood of baseball softball participation. This model provides a poorer fit to then most of the other models. Family socioeconomic status and other family variables are not significant.

The results found in Table 7 provide a view of baseball/softball participation that is somewhat different than that of soccer participation. The family level variable regarding the number of adults known in the neighborhood is significant in each model indicating a connection between family neighborhood cohesion and baseball/softball participation. Of the school level variables, only attendance at Kennedy school is a strong negative predictor of baseball/softball participation. No other school level variables have strong statistically significant effects. Nonetheless, most of their coefficients are positive, as expected and most are just short of attaining statistical significance. The one exception is the school baseball/softball participation rate. It appears that participation in baseball/softball is not influenced by the rate of participation in the sport by other children in the school. This supports the idea that baseball/softball is best predicted by the family level variables and are not mediated through school effects.

Table 8 shows results of the logistic regression analysis of participation in any sport including soccer and baseball/softball, on the independent variables. In model 1 only adults known in the neighborhood is a significant positive predictor of sport participation. Thus the more adults known in the neighborhood increases the likelihood of sport participation in the first model.

[Insert Table #8 Here]

Model 2 presents the result of west-side residence on sport participation while controlling for the family level variables. The findings show that west side residence is positively correlated with sport participation at the $p< 01$ level of significance. The odds of participation in any sport increases by 3.52 or 352% for children who reside on the west-side of Norman. Being a west-side resident significantly increases the likelihood of sport participation. The effect of all other family level variables, including socioeconomic status is not found to be significant when I control for place of residence. The -2 log likelihood for this model (322.7) is smaller than it is for model 1 (332.0), indicating a better goodness of fit for this model.

Model 3 presents the result of logistic regression with the school dummy variables as independent variables. In this model Truman elementary school was left out of the analysis as a reference group. The -2 log likelihood for this model is the lowest of all models (318.2) indicating a better fit for this model than for previous models. The following eastside schools were found have a negative and

Table 8: Logistic regression coefficients for participation in any sport.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Family capital Socioeconomic scale	.103 (1.11)	.006 (1.00)	.0001 (1.00)	.013 (1.01)	.007 (1.00)	.083 (1.09)
Adults known in the neighborhood	.044*** (1.04)	.029 (1.03)	.027 (1.03)	.029* (1.03)	.030* (1.03)	.041** (1.04)
Male child	.302 (1.35)	.287 (1.33)	.260 (1.30)	.306 (1.36)	.294 (1.34)	.292 (1.33)
Number of children in the household	-.128 (.88)	-.149 (.86)	-.186 (.86)	-.148 (.86)	-.166 (.84)	-.136 (.87)
One adult in household	-.030 (.97)	-.030 (.97)	-.093 (.92)	-.081 (.92)	-.108 (.90)	-.040 (.96)
West-side residence		1.258*** (3.52)				
Cleveland			-.578 (.56)			
Eisenhower			-1.318 (.27)			
Jefferson			-1.673** (.19)			
Lincoln			-1.090* (.34)			
Madison			-1.618** (.20)			
McKinley			-.524 (.59)			
Monroe			.424 (1.53)			
Roosevelt			.603 (1.83)			
Wilson			-1.070* (.34)			
Kennedy			-1.50*** (.22)			
Adams			-1.188* (.31)			
School level socioeconomic status				.125*** (1.13)		
School average for adults known in neighborhood					.084*** (1.09)	
School participation rate in any sport						.008 (1.01)
-2 log likelihood	332.0	322.7	318.2	323.7	323.4	331.6

*** = p< .01, **p< .05, *p< .10 Note: Odds ratios in ()

significant effect on sport participation: Kennedy at the $p < .01$ level, Jefferson and Madison at the $p < .05$ level and Lincoln, Wilson and Adams at the $p < .10$ level of significance. Thus, students who attend these schools are less likely to participate in sport than are students from Truman. Living in these schools decreases the odds of participation in any sport by percentages as high as 81% (Jefferson) and 76% (Wilson). This is infers a social capital component to sport participation. Family socioeconomic status and all other family variables are not significant.

Model 4 presents the effect of school level socioeconomic status on sport participation while continuing to control for family variables. School level socioeconomic status is positively related to sport participation at the $p < .01$ level. Thus, as school level socioeconomic status increases, the likelihood of sport participation also increases by a ratio of 1.13 to 1. The -2 log likelihood for this model is 323.7 indicating a better fit than in the first model. Adults known in the neighborhood is significant at the $p < .10$ level while all other family capital variables, including socioeconomic status are once again not significant.

Model 5 includes adults known in the neighborhood at the school level while controlling for family level variables. The results show that school average for adults known in the neighborhood is positive and significant at the $p < .01$ level. Thus, as the school average number of adults known in the neighborhood increases so does the likelihood of sport participation. The -2 log likelihood for this model indicates a better fit to the data than does model 1 but not as good as model 3.

Family level adults known in the neighborhood is also significant but only at the $p<.10$ level. Family socioeconomic status and all other family variables do not have a significant effect on general sport participation.

Model 6 presents the effect of school sport participation on individual sport participation while controlling for family level variables. The coefficient for school sport participation is not statistically significant. But the number of adults known in the neighborhood by the family is again positive and significant at the $p<.05$ level. The goodness of fit for this model is not as strong as for other models. Family socioeconomic status as well as all other family variables are not significant.

These data present mixed results regarding the hypothesis that schools have a form of social capital that affects sport participation. In particular, family level socioeconomic status is significant in model 1, but not in other models. This suggests that school effects decrease the effect of family socioeconomic status. This supports the hypothesis that individual variables are moderated through the school variables and affect sport participation indirectly.

After reviewing this last analysis I noted that the Table 8 was quite similar to Table 6. This raised the question as to how I had defined the dependent variable for Table 8, sport participation. That is, it might be that the values in Table 8 reflect only participation in soccer. Initially, I had decided that sport participation should include participation in any sport including soccer and baseball/softball.

However, after reviewing the findings I decided to run the analysis again with soccer removed from the calculation of the sport participation variable as well as school level sport participation.

Table 9 presents the results of the sport participation variable as the dependent variable. This variable excludes soccer, but includes BBSB. With soccer removed from the sport participation variable the analysis changes significantly. In all models the family level measure of adults known in the neighborhood is statistically significant. No other variable in any other model is found to significantly effect the sport participation if soccer is excluded. Clearly the results of Table 8 were driven by the inclusion of soccer participation in the dependent variable

[Insert Table 9 Here]

I then decided to remove both soccer and baseball/softball from the calculation of sport participation and school level sport participation. I analyzed the data excluding both soccer participation and baseball/softball participation from the calculation of sport participation and the school level of sport participation. Table 10 presents the results of the analysis of sport participation excluding soccer and baseball/softball. Upon initial observation I can see that when I exclude the two major sports from the analysis, no effect is found to be significant for any of the variables until the final model. In Model 6 the rate of school sport participation has a negative statistically significant effect on

Table 9: Logistic regression coefficients fore participation in any sport excluding soccer.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Family capital Socioeconomic scale	.031 (1.03)	.009 (1.01)	.005 (1.00)	.004 (1.00)	.008 (1.01)	.038 (1.04)
Adults known in the neighborhood	.042*** (1.04)	.040*** (1.04)	.039*** (1.04)	.039*** (1.04)	.040*** (1.04)	.043*** (1.04)
Male child	-.012 (.99)	-.019 (.98)	-.065 (.94)	-.016 (.95)	-.018 (.98)	-.004 (1.00)
Number of children in the household	-.051 (.95)	-.054 (.95)	-.088 (.92)	-.056 (.95)	-.060 (.94)	-.046 (.96)
One adult in household	.098 (1.10)	.101 (1.11)	.060 (1.06)	.087 (1.09)	.083 (1.09)	.106 (1.12)
West-side residence		.264 (1.32)				
Cleveland			.036 (1.04)			
Eisenhower			-.990 (.37)			
Jefferson			-.260 (.77)			
Lincoln			.162 (1.18)			
Madison			-.468 (.63)			
McKinley			-.765 (.47)			
Monroe			.279 (1.32)			
Roosevelt			.253 (1.29)			
Wilson			.338 (1.4)			
Kennedy			-.728 (.48)			
Adams			-.241 (.79)			
School level socioeconomic status				.034 (1.03)		
School average for adults known in neighborhood					.018 (1.02)	
School participation rate in any sport excluding soccer.						-.003 (1.00)
-2 log likelihood	394.3	393.8	385.2	393.5	393.8	394.2

*** *= p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10 Note: Odds ratios in ().

individual sport participation. Thus, there appears to be an inverse effect of these variables on sport participation when I exclude both baseball/softball and soccer. While I have no definitive explanation for these findings, I surmise that it might be explained, in part, by the small number of children who play sports exclusive of soccer and baseball/softball (47) as well as the broad array of sports that are included in this participation variable. Sports from horse riding to karate were reported. While the effects are not significant, it is also interesting to note that family socioeconomic status also has a negative effect. In the chapter that follows I discuss the implications of these findings and make recommendations for further study.

[Insert Table 10 Here]

Table 10: Logistic regression coefficients for participation in any sport excluding soccer and baseball/softball.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Family capital Socioeconomic scale	-.044 (.57)	-.016 (.98)	.007 (1.01)	-.003 (1.00)	.002 (1.00)	.040 (.95)
Adults known in the neighborhood	.012 (1.01)	.016 (1.02)	.019 (1.02)	.018 (1.02)	.017 (1.02)	.023 (1.02)
Male child	-.508 (.60)	-.496 (.61)	-.500 (.61)	-.499 (.61)	-.495 (.61)	-.404 (.67)
Number of children in the household	.015 (1.02)	.020 (1.02)	.059 (1.02)	.022 (1.02)	.032 (1.03)	.063 (1.07)
One adult in household	.669 (1.95)	.663 (1.94)	.814* (2.26)	.688* (1.99)	.704* (2.02)	.750* (2.12)
West-side residence		-.370 (.69)				
Cleveland			-.376 (.69)			
Eisenhower			-.327 (.72)			
Jefferson			-.205 (.81)			
Lincoln			-.052 (.95)			
Madison			.557 (1.75)			
McKinley			-5.458 (.004)			
Monroe			-1.696 (.18)			
Roosevelt			-.171 (.84)			
Wilson			.345 (1.41)			
Kennedy			.125 (1.13)			
Adams			.218 (1.24)			
School level socioeconomic status				-.058 (.94)		
School average for adults known in neighborhood					-.040 (.96)	
School participation rate in any sport excluding soccer and baseball/softball.						-.038*** (.96)
-2 log likelihood	254.0	253.5	248.0	252.9	252.7	245.9

** *= p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10 Note: Odds ratios in ().

Chapter 5 – DISCUSSION

In the preceding chapters I discussed the development of a hypothesis. I investigated the question: Does social capital affect children's sport participation, and, in particular, their participation in soccer and baseball/softball? In this section I will first discuss the results of the analysis for soccer, then for baseball/softball, and finally for total sport participation. I then discuss implications for future research.

In the previous chapter, Table 6 presented the results of the logistic regression analysis for soccer participation. The question asked is: Does social capital affect soccer participation? The initial model shows the impact of family capital. This model supports the notion that family capital, as measured by the socioeconomic status scale, increases the likelihood of soccer participation. The sex of the child being a male is also important. This shows that boys are more likely to play soccer than are girls. However, once I began to consider school effects, only the sex of the child remains significant throughout all models. In reviewing those models, the goodness of fit measure, -2 log likelihood, shows that Model 1 has the weakest fit of all models and Model 3 has the best fit. Model 1 isolates only family capital variables, whereas Model 3 includes school capital

through the individual school variables. This supports the idea that something other than family characteristics affects soccer participation.

In the analysis of soccer participation, all the measures of school capital are statistically significant. There is an apparent connection between west side residence, attendance at a west side school and participation in soccer. Living on the east side of Norman, Oklahoma makes it less likely for a child to play soccer than if that child were to live on the west side of Norman. It is important to note that family socioeconomic status is no longer significant once I control for residential location. Children who attend Jefferson, Lincoln, Madison, Wilson, Kennedy, and Adams elementary schools are significantly less likely to participate in soccer than children who attend Truman elementary school. These schools all serve the east side of town, while Truman is a west side school. The family capital variables that remain significant in this analysis are the sex of the child and the number of children in the family. Thus, regardless of school attended, boys are more likely to participate in soccer than girls. In addition, the number of children in the household has a negative effect on soccer participation. The smaller the family size the more likely it is to have a soccer player in it. In this analysis, school capital and family capital work together supporting the idea that for soccer participation social capital has a significant impact. The remaining models tested support this hypothesis as well. The school level variables for socioeconomic status, adults known in the neighborhood, and school soccer participation all

increase the likelihood of soccer participation. These findings leave us with a picture of boys, children who attend west side schools, and children from small families being most likely to play soccer. Conversely, children from the east side, and some east side schools in particular, are less likely to play soccer.

Coleman (1988) argues that social capital is a measure of neighborhood and family components. In this analysis the neighborhood measures are all statistically significant. As the school level socioeconomic status increases, the likelihood of soccer participation increases. In addition, as neighborhood communication increases as measured by the rate of adults known in the neighborhood so too does soccer participation. Both of these are key components in social capital theory. I argue that the variable for school level socioeconomic status is a measure of the neighborhood economic capital, while the school level adults known in the neighborhood variable measures the interconnectedness of the neighborhood. In both cases, these variables have statistically significant and positive effects on the likelihood of soccer participation.

The school rate of soccer participation is also linked to individual participation in soccer. This indicates a neighborhood component to this seemingly individual decision to participate in soccer. The data support the hypothesis that social capital does affect soccer participation. School and individual characteristics work in tandem to increase the likelihood of soccer participation. Family socioeconomic status, while important prior to the inclusion

of school effects, becomes less relevant to soccer participation once I account for the impact of neighborhood variables.

A slightly different picture arises from the data with regard to participation in baseball/softball. Table 7 showed the results that support a somewhat mixed implication for the theory that social capital affects baseball/softball participation. In the initial model, the family capital measures of socioeconomic status and the number of adults known in the neighborhood are positively related to participation. This measure of family level connection to the neighborhood is significant in all models. It is important to note that the coefficient for family socioeconomic status is about half the size for baseball/softball as it was for soccer. So, while family socioeconomic status is an important factor in participation in baseball/softball, it is not as important a factor as it is for soccer. Interestingly, the gender of the child and the number of children in the family do not have statistically significant effects on baseball/softball participation.

The effects of the school variables on baseball/softball provide a less clear picture than was true for soccer. For example, residence on the west or east side of town does not have a significant impact on participation. When I control for neighborhood through the school dummy variables, only the variable for Kennedy elementary is significant. As was the case for soccer, the relationship is negative. The number of adults known in the neighborhood is significant in all models. For this model the -2 log likelihood indicates that it is the best fitting of all the models.

Thus, I conclude that children who attend Kennedy elementary are less likely to participate in baseball/softball than children who attend Truman. This and the positive effect of adults known on participation provide the strongest support for the hypothesis, namely that social capital affects participation. Many of the school capital variables that are significant for soccer are not significant for baseball/softball, but they miss significance only slightly. The direction of their impact on participation in baseball/softball is consistent with those for soccer. Thus, living on the west side of town has a positive effect (though not significant) on participation and attending Eisenhower, Jefferson, Madison, and Adams, all east side schools, has a negative effect (though not significant).

Therefore, it seems plausible to argue that social capital plays some type of role in baseball/softball participation, and specifically for those who attend Kennedy school. However, baseball/softball may be a sport that defies my hypothesis due to it being "the national pastime." For example, it is frequently said "the smaller the ball, the greater the socioeconomic status of those who use it." This reference is often to golf, racquetball and tennis. However, baseball/softball defies this old adage in that socioeconomic status, both at the family level and the school level, are not significant predictors of participation. Perhaps this is because baseball/softball is our national game; it is a more inclusive sport.

Table 8 examined participation in any sport. This analysis defines sport as including soccer and baseball as well as all other sports. As discussed previously, this table resembles the findings for soccer participation. Family capital plays a role in general sport participation, particularly the family's socioeconomic status and the number of adults known in the neighborhood. Thus, the findings indicate the higher the socio-economic status and more adults known to the family, the higher the likelihood of sport participation for children. When the school variables are added I get a somewhat different picture. The results are quite similar to baseball/softball in that adults known in the neighborhood remains significant in each model but most other variables are not found to be significant.

When I add a variable for west or east side residence a significant effect is found. When I add the individual school variables only Kennedy, Madison, and Jefferson have strong statistically significantly effects though the directions of the effects for the other school variables remain consistent with the finings for soccer Thus, east side children, and particularly children from those previously mentions schools, are less likely to play any sport than children from other schools. This model also presents the best fit when I compare the -2 log likelihoods for each model. Thus, model three provides some support for the hypothesis that social capital affects sport participation because both individual number of adults known in the neighborhood and Kennedy elementary are statistically significant.

In the analysis the school level measures for socioeconomic status and adults known in the neighborhood are also statistically significant. Only the school sport participation variable is not significant. Thus, these findings are almost identical to those for soccer and support that claim that sport participation is affected in part by social capital.

The analysis of sport participation excluding soccer is quite different. As discussed, in Table 9 showed that only the family capital measure of family interconnectedness has a statistically significant effect on sport participation if I exclude soccer. This analysis is somewhat similar to the analysis of baseball/softball in that the direction of the effects of most variables is quite similar However, none of them is significant. This indicates that the more adults known to the family the more likely it is for the child of that family to participate in sports that exclude soccer

I then repeated the analysis again excluding both baseball/softball and soccer from the calculation of the sport participation variable. Table 10 showed the results of the analysis of sport participation. In reviewing this analysis, the effects of the family capital and school capital variables are not statistically significant. Interestingly, the effect of socioeconomic status on sport participation is negative.

In reviewing the analysis and summarize the findings, it seems fair to say social capital does indeed affect soccer participation in Norman Oklahoma. Living

on the west side of Norman and attending west side schools results in a greater likelihood of playing soccer. In fact, with regard to soccer there appears to be a west side versus east side phenomenon that dominates. Perhaps this is a west side form of social capital. The culture of those elementary schools may provide a climate that encourages soccer participation while perhaps east side schools discourage it. The soccer analysis supports the hypothesis that social capital does indeed affect participation in soccer.

However, that seems less true to say with regard to general sport participation and/or baseball/softball participation. In both instances, attending Kennedy elementary stands out as having a negative effect. The analysis for sports other than soccer provides little support for the school capital influencing sport participation. Thus, I am led to the question of what else besides family and school might influence sport participation.

It seems logical to argue that Kennedy elementary may simply have a non-sport culture. Kennedy elementary is located in an area of town dominated by rental property. This leads to a potential transient group of parents who might not be able to support sport participation for their children. Further research should attempt to improve measures of neighborhood socioeconomic status. In doing this analysis, I included the number of one adult households in hopes of accouting for some of this variance. However, one adult in a household is not significant in any

model. Thus, I conclude that single-parent households are not relevant to the issue of participation in any sport.

Thus, I am left with a question that is not answered, why would social capital affect soccer participation but not other sport participation? While the data do not provide a clear-cut answer, it does seem relevant to acknowledge that soccer is a relatively new sport to the United States. Its popularity might be linked to a word-of-mouth style of promotion. For example, as a coach of both girls tee ball and girls soccer, I have encouraged families not previously engaged in soccer to consider signing up their daughters for the sport. In all cases, the girls were signed up for tee ball, a variation of the national pastime, and in all cases knew little about soccer. However, with very little effort the girls joined the soccer team, learned the sport, and they and their parents seem to enjoy the experience. None of the parents of children on my team actually played soccer in their youth. The rules, norms, and terms are foreign to them. Therefore, this is why school capital is positively related to soccer participation. Parents do not have previous experience with the sport and therefore do not necessarily encourage their children to play without some form of social capital to push them along the way.

Interestingly, the school capital variables are important predictors of soccer participation but for baseball/softball participation and/or general sports participation excluding soccer, they are not significant. School capital then, is apparently vital to a sport such as soccer. This novel sport to the U.S. apparently

requires something extra in order to motivate parents and children to participate in it. Parents and children would, generally, have little information regarding the sport of soccer and need something, outside family capital, to motivate participation. This something is social capital.

However, with regard to general sport participation and baseball/softball, I propose that those sports have a more fixed place in the society of both Oklahoma and the United States. Many people sign up their children for baseball/softball, basketball, football, and a host of other sports because they themselves played the sport. They know the rules and they know the general purpose and gist of the sport. Therefore, social capital is not necessary to foster interest in the sport. Individuals have enough personal information and capital to understand and participate in these other sports. Where soccer is dependent upon social capital for participation, other sports are not.

Family capital variables, especially family socioeconomic status do not have effects on sport participation after school capital variables are included. This also is a somewhat surprising and important finding. This supports the hypothesis in Figure 1, which shows that the effect of family capital mainly is to get kids into schools where school capital will get them involved in sports. The effect of family capital on general sport participation then, is an indirect effect.

I propose that the negative relationship found between Kennedy school and other non-soccer sports is linked more to a culture at Kennedy than to social

capital; further research should investigate this possibility. It could be done through a more detailed survey of Kennedy families and/or an ethnographic research project.

Any conclusions made from this research are made under the understanding that the data are limited to Norman Oklahoma, and provide a snapshot of individuals who answered a survey in 1998. The sample used for this analysis provides a snapshot of sport participation in 1998. It may be that sport tastes change over time and so generalization of findings to the present should be made with caution. In short, sport participation could change and duplication of this survey in the future could provide different results

Threats to the validity of this study include a rather small sample size (N=301). This resulted in certain schools having rather small representations, for example McKinley elementary, N=5. In addition, assumptions were made about the primacy of the role of the father for family education, occupational prestige and age. These assumptions certainly might be incorrect and, thus, lead to inaccurate results. These assumptions were made based on the belief that males remain in the dominant position in society today with regard to education and occupational prestige. Finally, having no information on race leaves out of the analysis one key demographic variable. The sample simply did not provide enough information of sport participation and race.

When viewed from a larger context this research supports the main premise of the field of sociology; namely, social forces are important in determining individual decisions. This research adds to the knowledge base of sociology in an area that previously had not been considered in this manner. In particular, sport participation is like participation in a voluntary association and, as such, is affected by social capital. As previously discussed, sport participation are is assumed to be the result of a decision based on purely individual or family capital. However, this research shows that while this may be true for some sports, it is certainly not true for soccer participation in Norman Oklahoma. While many factors affect sport participation, social capital is key to participation in soccer. This, I believe, is due to the nature of the game of soccer. Soccer is new to the United States and even newer to Oklahoma. Therefore, it requires more social capital to motivate participation. Soccer participation is a personal, voluntary association, which is affected by social capital. Other sports are more mainstream to the culture and, as such, require less to generate participation. I began this dissertation with a question: does social capital affect sport participation? I conclude it with an answer. Yes, social capital does affect soccer participation, but it does not affect general sport participation and/or baseball/softball participation.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1	**Name of focal child (Provided before interview).**	

I want to begin by getting some basic information about your household.

		Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4	Child 5
2	**What are the first names of all children age 18 or younger in you household?**					
3	**What is the sex of each child? (M,F, ask only if you can't tell rom name)**					
4	**How old is each child?**					

If there is more than one child, say **when I ask questions related to children, I will focus on name of child because he/she is the best age for the study.**

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
5	**What are the first names of all the adults over age 18 who live in your household?** [If there are more than four, list the ones who are most involved with the focal child)				
6	**How is he/she related to child?**				
7	**How old is he/she?**				
8	**What is his/her race or ethnicity?** (White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, or Other)				
9	**What is the highest degree of education completed by him/her?**				
10	**What is his/her current occupation? Be as specific as you can.**				
11	**About how many hours per week does he/she work in a typical week?**				

12	**Here is a card that shows a range of household incomes. Which category best describes your household's total income in 1997 from all sources before taxes?**	
13	Type of residence (make observation and circle appropriate)	a. Single family b. Duplex c. Apartment d. Other (Describe _____)
14	**Do you rent or own this residence?**	a. Own b. Rent
15	**For how many years have you lived in this residence?**	
16	**Before you moved into this residence, where did you live?**	a. Someplace else in Norman b Someplace else in Oklahoma but not in Norman. c. Someplace outside Oklahoma
17	**If you had to give one reason, what is the main reason you moved into this particular neighborhood?**	
18	**About how many adults in this particular neighborhood do you know well enough to have a conversation with?**	

Next, I would like to ask you some questions about focal child.

19	**Does child have his/her own room at home or must he/she own room share a room with someone else?**	a. Own Room b. Share a room
20	**Does child have access to a computer at home?**	a. yes b. no
21	**About how many hours a week do you think child watches television in typical week during the school year?**	
22	**How many times does child and an adult in your household sit down and read a book together in a typical week during the school year?**	
23	**For about how many hours a week is child home without adult supervision in a typical week during the school year?**	
24	**In the last year, has child been on any trips outside of Oklahoma for any reason?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 29)

		Trip 1	Trip 2	Trip 3	Trip 4
25	**Where did child go on these trips?**				
26	**What was the main type of transportation used on each trip?**				
27	**About how many days long was each trip?**				
28	**What was the main purpose of each trip?** (If not obvious from "where")				

29	**In the last year, has child done any of the following things? Go to ...** (Read list. circle each that apply).	**a. the Oklahoma City Zoo.** **b. a museum.** **c. the Oklahoma State fair** **d. an OU Football game** **e. an OU men's basketball game** **f. an OU women's basketball game** **g. a Blazer's hockey game** **h. RedHawks or 89er's baseball** **i. Calvary Basketball** **j. a play or concert at OU.** **K. see a play or concert or some other professional performance in OKC.** **l. a state park at least 30 miles away.** **k. play in a sporting event that was at least 30 miles away.**

30	**In the last year has child taken any formal lessons outside school that cost money? Examples might include sports lessons, music lessons, or computer lessons**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 32)

31	**What were those lessons?**	**a. Lesson**	
		b. Lesson	
		c. Lesson	
		d. Lesson	

32	**In the last year has child attended church or other worship services, including Sunday School?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 37)
33	**What is the main church or place of worship child has attended?**	
34	**How many times in a typical month does child attend formal church or worship services, including Sunday School?**	

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
35	**Which, if any, adults in the household are involved in these services (for example, as a Sunday School teacher)?**				
36	**In what way is the adult involved?**				

37	**In the last year has child participated in any church-related activities (other than formal church or worship services or Sunday School)? Examples might include youth groups or choirs?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 41)

		Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity .3	Activity 4
38	**What are these Activities?**				
39	**Which, if any, adults in this household were involved in these activities?**				
40	**How was each adult involved in <u>each activity</u>?**				

41	**In the last year has child participated in any activities like Girl or Boy Scouts, or Campfire Girls?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 45)

		Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity. 3	Activity 4
42	**What are these Activities?**				
43	**Which, if any, adults in this household were involved in these activities?**				
44	**How was each adult involved in <u>each activity</u>?**				

45	**In the last year has child attended any camp IN Norman that costs money to attend?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 48)

		Camp 1	Camp 2	Camp 3	Camp 4
46	**What were the camps IN Norman?**				
47	**What type of camp is it? (if not obvious from Q. 46)**				

48	**In the last year has child attended any camps OUTSIDE Norman that cost money to attend?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 52)

		Camp 1	Camp 2	Camp 3	Camp 4
49	**What camps were these?**				
50	**What type of camp is it? (if not obvious from Q. 49)**				
51	**Where is each camp located?**				

52	**In the last year has child participated in any youth sports other than those that are sponsored by his/her school? Examples might include Norman Youth Soccer Association soccer or Parks and Recreation Little League.**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 58)

		Sport 1	Sport 2	Sport 3	Sport 4
53	**What sports were these?**				
54	**Which, if any, of the adults in this household were involved in this sport as coaches, officials, or volunteers of any kind?**				
55	**How was each adult involved in each sport?**				

56	**When child has a PRACTICE for a sports team, how often does at least one of the adults in your household stay and watch?** (Show card)	**a always b. more than half the time but not always c. about half the time d. sometimes but less than half the time e. never**
57	**When child has a GAME, how often does at least one of the adults in your household attend?**	**a always b. more than half the time but not always c. about half the time d. sometimes but less than half the time e. never**

58	**In the last year has child been involved in any extracurricular activities at school? These might include things like clubs, school athletic teams, and performing groups like bands, orchestras, and choirs.**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 63)

		Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
59	**What extracurricular activities were these?**				
60	**Which, if any, adults in this household were involved in these activities?**				
61	**How was each adult involved in <u>each</u> activity?**				

62	**If child had a performance of any kind how often adult from this household attend?** (show card)	**a always** **b. more than half the time but not always** **c. about half the time** **d. sometimes but less than half the time** **e. never**

63	**In the last year has any adult in your household been a member of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) in child's school?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 66)

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
64	**What adults have been members of the PTA?**				
65	**How was each adult involved with the PTA? For example, just a member, an officer, on a committee, chair of a committee, etc.**				

66	**In the last year has any adult in your household participated in fund raising events for child's school?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 69)

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
67	**What adults have participated in fund raising events?**				
68	**What did each adult do in the way of fund raising events?**				

69	**In the last year has any adult in your household given money supplies or equipment to child's school?**	a. yes b. no (skip to Q 71)

70	**What were these contributions?**	**a. contribution**	
		b. contribution	
		c. contribution	
		d. contribution	

71	**In the last year has any adult in your household attended a parent-Teacher onference for child?**	a. yes b. no (skip to question 74)

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
72	**Which adults have attended par ent-teacher conferences for child?**				
73	**How many parent-teacher conferences did each adult attend for child?**				

74	**In the last year has any adult in your household helped out at child's school by doing such things as assisting teachers in the classroom or with special events, gone along on field trips or made presentations at the school?**	a. yes b. no (skip to question 77)

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
75	**Which adults in your household have helped out at child's school?**				
76	**How has each adult helped out at child's school?**				

77	**In the last year has any adult in your household worked on any special project at child's school involving maintenance of school property or installing equipment?**	a. yes b. no (skip to question 80)

		Adult 1	Adult 2	Adult 3	Adult 4
78	**Which adults in your household have worked on special projects at child's school?**				
79	**What special projects did each adult work on?**				

80	**In a typical week during the school year, how many times does your family have a meal at which everyone in your family is present?**	
81	**In a typical week during the school year, how many family engage in some kind of activity, other than eating, in which everyone in your family is involved?**	