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FEAR OF SUCCESS IN SPORT AMONG FEMALE BASKETBALL PLAYERS AND FEMALE SWIMMERS

by

CHRISTINE M. LEBLANC

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Fear of Success in Sport Among Female Basketball Players and Female Swimmers", submitted by Christine M. LeBlanc in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Supervisor

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine fear of success in sport (FOSS) among female basketball players and female swimmers at three scholastic levels. FOSS was also examined in terms of definitive skill levels of the athletes as rated by their respective coaches. FOSS was defined as a psychological barrier that interfered with high athletic achievement. The components of FOSS were identified as: fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of winning and fear of parental/peer disapproval.

One hundred fifty (150) female basketball players and one hundred sixteen (116) female swimmers participated in this study. Subjects responded to a 44-item FOSS inventory developed specifically for this study. The inventory contained eleven items for each component of FOSS. Reliability of this instrument was determined to be .81.

The results of this study indicated that FOSS was not a strong motive operating in female basketball players and female swimmers. Fear of winning was found to be the most salient component of FOSS, followed by fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of loss of femininity and fear of parental/peer disapproval, in that order.

The three scholastic levels and the four skill levels had no effect on any of the components of FOSS. There was a significant difference between the two sports for fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection and fear of winning. Swimmers showed a significantly higher fear of loss of femininity and fear of

social isolation and rejection than did the basketball players. Fear of winning was found to be significantly higher for the basketball players than for the swimmers.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

It has been suggested that females do not know how to be successful and are programmed to underachieve. Thomas Boslooper and Marcia Hayes, authors of *The Femininity Game*, describe this situation:

> Women aren't born losers. They're brainwashed. They don't know how to win because they've been conned and coerced from infancy into believing they shouldn't try (1973:25).

These authors continue by listing qualities necessary for success, such as aggression, competition, strength and physical prowess. They state that these qualities are highly admired in men but are discouraged in women.

Martina Horner, the President of Radcliffe College in the United States, proposed that success, as is pertains to women, has both positive and negative consequences. She suggested that women are threatened by social rejection and loss of femininity as a result of success. She pointed out that:

> A bright woman is caught in a double bind. In situations where she may achieve, she worries not only about failure but also about success. Failure is bad enough, but success may mean that she is too aggressive to be "feminine" (1973:55).

This situation may be evident to a great extent in sports. If a woman becomes a successful athlete, she may worry about losing her feminine image. It is not uncommon for many people to view

competitive sports as being primarily the prerogative of the male in Western society. Aggression, strength, power and endurance are but a few of the characteristics required for excellence in sport, and these tend to be regarded as masculine traits. Jan Felshin, Director of Graduate Studies at East Stroudsburg College in Pennsylvania, described the role of the woman in sport as being a social anomaly:

> If masculinity and femininity are viewed as appropriate social conceptions of the polar differences in the qualities of behavior of men and women, and if sport is logically deduced as a desirable masculine domain, then the role of woman in sport is a social anomaly (Gerber, Felshin, Berlin and Wyrick, 1974:200).

Janice Syrotuik recently conducted a study on fear of success in sport among adolescent girls. She suggested that cultural conditioning was responsible for discouraging girls from participating and from seeking success in sport (1975:1). The physically active young girl is referred to as a "tomboy" but her behavior is tolerated by society because of her young age. As she approaches adolescence, she is often pressured by society to conform to traditional sex roles.

It would appear that a conflict could exist between a young girl's participation in sports and appropriate sex-role behavior. Marie Hart, physical educator, commented that:

> Sport standards are male and the woman in sport is compared with men, not with other women. It starts early: "Wow, what a beautiful throw. You've got an arm like a guy," or "Yes, she loves sports. She's our little tomboy." . . . These comments carry the message of expected cultural behavior. When the girl gets the message clearly, she loses to a boy on purpose. She knows she may win the game but lose the boy (1971:66).

Women were not allowed to participate in ancient Olympic Games (Larned, 1976:9). In modern times, however, women have competed in most Olympic events. Before they are allowed to participate, they must undergo what has been referred to as the "femininity test". This

test involves the microscopic examination of a hair follicle or the cells from inside the cheek of the competitor. This test was adopted by the International Olympic Committee in 1968 to prevent countries from entering male athletes in female events and to screen out genetic males (Larned, 1976).

Jane Frederick, United States record holder for the pentathlon, is one of the many female athletes who has expressed opposition to this test. As she has stated:

> The official explanation of this test is to protect us from imposters and from women who are really men, whatever that means. No, I don't believe it. I think they're really saying, "You're so good, we just can't believe you're a woman. So prove it." (Larned, 1976:9)

Society appears to be saying that the successful female athlete is somewhat abnormal. Generally speaking, success seems to be inconsistent with what is viewed as appropriate feminine behavior. Syrotuik remarked that women are often hesitant in developing their athletic abilities and display guilt feelings over success (1975:5).

From the foregoing discussion, it might be assumed that some women could feel anxious in situations where success is a possible outcome. This anxiety which could develop from the anticipation of being rejected socially or from the thought of losing her femininity, could lead a young female athlete to fear success.

Fear of Success in Sport

It is reasonable to assume that, if females anticipate negative consequences because of success, they will not strive to achieve excellence in sport. For the purpose of this study, fear of success in sport, hereafter referred to as FOSS, is defined as

a psychological barrier that interferes with top athletic performance. This fear is not a single variable that inhibits athletic excellence, but rather a combination of variables. In this study, FOSS includes the following components:

(1) fear of loss of femininity;

(2) fear of social isolation and rejection;

(3) fear of winning;

(4) fear of parental/peer disapproval.

The following sections describe in detail each of these components.

(1) Fear of Loss of Femininity

Female athletes are often stereotyped as being unfeminine. Boslooper and Hayes quoted Marie Hart as stating that the penis is taken off the male dancer and placed on the female athlete (1973:45). Similarly, Dorothy Harris remarked that women who participate in sports risk their feminine image (1971:1). It appears that displays of strength and aggression are suitable only for males. Boslooper and Hayes cite a column by Abigail Van Buren, in which she warns her readers about aggressive behavior in girls:

> Dear Abby: My daughter is almost sixteen and she is giving me a big headache. She has always been a good athlete. As far back as I can remember she has played with the boys. Baseball and football were her fun. She never played with dolls or cared for girls. The boys came around and she wrestled with them. Then they tell her their troubles about liking other girls. No one has ever asked her for a date, and I have bought her lovely feminine clothes, but no one asks her. What can I do?
>
> A Mother's Heartache
>
> Dear Mother: Tell your daughter that a girl who wrestles and boxes with the boys becomes "one of the boys" and forfeits her femininity. She should start now to build a new feminine image, acquire a few girl friends, and leave the rough-housing to the fellows (1973:154).

A popular belief is that hea athletic training will masculinize a woman's appearance (Rarick, 1971). Scientific evidence does not support this claim, but the idea does persist. This myth could discourage a number of girls from becoming involved in strenuous training and serious competition. Syrotuik suggested that a change in physical appearance, such as muscle development, represents a threat to female adolescents. She remarked:

> In some cases, success might be directly associated with physical change as is the case with champion shot putters with fear of success in that sport being the end result (1975:16).

For some female athletes, the anticipation of success against a male competitor may threaten their femininity and they will lower their performance deliberately. Harris (1971) pointed out that the female is risking her femininity when she wins a tennis match from her male opponent.

If a young girl is told often enough that becoming involved in competitive athletics and achieving success in sport are not "ladylike", it is possible that her continued participation could lead her to fear success.

(2) Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection

For some girls, participating in sports may limit their social lives. An enormous amount of their time must be spent practising if they wish to be successful. Hart remarked that:

> As a girl becomes more proficient in sport, her level of personal investme increases and the long hours of practise and limited associations may isolate her socially (1971:64).

The social isolation that the dedicated female athlete experiences could lead her to a fear of losing her datability or

marriageability. Lendon H. Smith, author of *Your Child and Mine*, expressed concern about a girl becoming a great athlete. He stated that she might run so fast, she'd never get caught by a boy (Harris, 1971:2).

Tutko and Richards describe athletes who fear success as being "success phobic". They remarked that success, for these athletes, brings only jealousy and rejection from others. As a result, winning in athletic competition, leads not to joy but to pain (1971:53).

The fear of social isolation and rejection could be anxiety-provoking for many athletes and lead them to fear success.

(3) Fear of Winning

Participation, with resultant team or personal victories, is perhaps the most straightforward example of fear of success. This fear may be found in a number of outstanding male and female athletes. If a female athlete is successful, she is expected by parents, friends and fans to be successful continually. These expectations place the athlete under extreme pressure.

Bruce Ogilvie and Thomas Tutko believe that athletes who have a fear of winning develop a coping mechanism, intentionally holding back during an event. They work hard to be near the front but never on top. These authors continue by commenting about the successful athlete whose needs for affiliation are stronger than his needs for achievement:

> For the athlete who is sensitive about being liked and accepted by others, whose primary needs are to 'belong', this can be equally dramatic . . . In practise he must compete among his

> team mates; while in track meets, the other athletes seek to unseat his position. His need for being liked is threatened (1966:90).

For some athletes, the psychological burden of success may be too great. They may develop a fear of not being able to live up to expectations, a fear of loss of anonymity or a fear of not being loved. The female athlete who has a fear of winning may abandon success and never achieve her true athletic potential.

(4) Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval

Parents and peers exert an enormous influence on a young girl's choice of activities. One or both parents may discourage strength and aggression in their athletic daughters and encourage a more feminine behavior. Andrea Hauge commented:

> When parents decide athletic achievement is a threat to their daughter's social life and eventual marriage, they push the feminine role. This often results in the girl's retirement from serious competition because of fear of success (1973:19).

Another example of parental disapproval was given by James Michener in his article entitled, "Women Who Win". He quoted a mother from South Carolina as stating that there was hardly a woman in the United States who would not prefer seeing her daughter attracting boys and being well dressed, rather than "growing muscles like a man in some sport" (1976:85).

Boslooper and Hayes (1973) stated one case of a fourteen year old girl who was pressured by her peers into giving up sports. On one occasion, when she got into a snowball fight with some boys, she was taken aside by the girls and told "boys don't like that." She then gave up sports to become a "lady".

A deep conflict could arise if a young girl is motivated strongly to be active in sports and, at the same time, facing disapproval from parents and peers. If she chooses to remain in sport, it is possible that this disapproval could inhibit her performance psychologically.

The Problem

Judith Zoble (1972) has related fear of success to women in sport. Syrotuik (1975) found that fear of success did exist for female adolescents in sport situations. To the present investigator's knowledge, no study has yet examined fear of success among athletes.

An attempt was made in this study to examine FOSS among female basketball players and swimmers. Horner suggested that success in male-oriented situations should arouse the motive to avoid success more than success in female-oriented situations. She remarked that success in male-oriented activities implies behavior "unbecoming to a lady" and induces the anticipation of negative consequences (1968:24). It is possible that the negative incentive value of success could be greater for female basketball players than for female swimmers because basketball is often thought of as being more suitable for males. On the other hand, swimming is regarded by many people as being a traditionally female activity. For example, Boslooper and Hayes listed swimming, golf and riding as appropriate feminine sports. Baseball, track and basketball, on the other hand, were listed as "more closely competitive, sweaty and awkward" (1973:51).

Edwards commented: "So while males are participating in football, basketball and baseball . . . women are propelling themselves gracefully over the ice or through the water." (1973:232) Hart cited a study encouraging women to participate in such sports as ice skating, swimming, tennis and diving because of their social and fashion aspects (1971:64).

It is important to note that swimming, at a highly competitive level, most certainly requires strength, power, endurance and long hours of training. The comments by the preceding authors, therefore, may be more suitable to swimming as a recreational activity, rather than as a competitive sport.

A study by Bea Harres (1968) dealt with the attitudes of men and women concerning the desirability of intensive athletic competition for girls and women. Her sample consisted of three hundred male and female undergraduate students. Six sports were chosen for preferential ranking. The results indicated that swimming was the most desirable sport for women, followed by tennis, volleyball, track, softball and basketball, in that order.

It was, therefore, the purpose of this study to examine fear of success in sport (FOSS) among female basketball players and female swimmers at three scholastic levels. FOSS was also examined in terms of definitive skill level of the athletes as rated by their respective coaches.

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. Fear of success in sport, as measured by the inventory developed for this study, is not a strong motive operating in female basketball players and female swimmers.

2. There is no significant difference in FOSS between female basketball players and female swimmers.
3. There is no significant difference in FOSS across scholastic levels in this study.
4. There is no significant difference in FOSS between athletes with varying skill levels.

Delimitations of the Study

1. This study was limited by the author's definition of fear of success in sport.
2. This study was limited to the extent that the measuring instrument was valid and reliable.
3. This study was limited to 150 female basketball players. All of these athletes competed for a junior high school, high school or university basketball team.
4. This study was limited to 116 swimmers. These athletes were in junior high school, high school or university and were members of a competitive swimming team.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Identification of the Motive to Avoid Success

Fear of success has been of interest to psychologists for many years. As early as 1916 Freud wrote about "success neurosis". He described this phenomenon as occurring when people fall ill because a long-cherished wish has come to fulfillment. He reported this disorder as existing in three general forms: those who fall ill at the pinnacle of their success, those who have a great potential but underachieve, and those who display great anxiety because of their achievements (1949:168).

The existence of fear of success (FOS) became widely acknowledged by the appearance of Horner's (1968) work on the motive to avoid success in women. She defined this motive as a disposition to become anxious in competitive achievement situations because of the anticipation of negative consequences brought on by success. She proposed that the motive to avoid success is a psychological barrier to achievement in women, and, when aroused, adversely affects performance. This motive exists because many women view success as being followed by negative consequences, such as loss of femininity and social rejection.

Horner hypothesized that FOS would be more characteristic of women than of men; that it would be more characteristic of women who are highly capable of achieving; and that anxiety over success

would be greater in competitive situations, especially when the competitor is male (1973:56).

Studies Purporting to Verify the Motive to Avoid Success

In Horner's (1968) study, the motive to avoid success was measured by responses to a projective test similar to the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). Verbal, rather than pictorial, cues were used. In this study, ninety females were asked to tell a story to the following cue: "Anne, after first term finals, finds herself at the top of her medical-school class," (Anne cue). Any negative imagery that reflected concern about doing well was scored for FOS. Horner found that 65 per cent of the females showed evidence of the motive to avoid success. On the other hand, less than 10 per cent of the males expressed this motive in response to a similar cue depicting John at the head of his class.

In the second part of this study, Horner was interested in determining what effect competition would have on the performance scores of females. She found that females not displaying the motive to avoid success performed better in a competitive group than in a non-competitive group, much like their male counterparts. Females who did display this motive experienced a performance decrement in competitive conditions. (Sample stories from this study can be found in Appendix A).

Moore (1971) investigated the relationship of fear of success to academic group membership. Sixty-four women from various faculties were administered a Thematic Apperception Test designed to measure the presence or absence of the motive to avoid success. She found that 62 per cent of her subjects demonstrated this motive. Moore

concluded that a role-conflict exists for women who pursue higher education and that this conflict serves as a psychological barrier to achievement in women.

In a 1972 article, Horner discussed a study where samples of black people were tested for FOS. She found that 67 per cent of the black men showed FOS imagery, while only 29 per cent of the women exhibited this fear. An interesting reversal occurs when these figures are compared to the white sample tested previously. Horner explained that one's disposition to accept success is a function of how consistent this success is with one's expectations and one's stereotypes of appropriate sex and/or race role identity (1972a:63).

In a later article, Horner discussed the findings of previous studies and stated that:

> The young men and women tested over the past seven years still tend to evaluate themselves and behave in ways consistent with the dominant stereotype that says competition, independence, competence, intellectual achievement and leadership reflect positively on mental health and masculinity but are basically inconsistent or in conflict with femininity (1972b:158).

In this article, Horner summarized the results of data collected in 1967. She observed that the incidence of FOS ranged from a low 47 per cent in junior high school females, to a high of 81 per cent in female college undergraduates.

Feather and Raphelson (1974) conducted a study on 214 male and female undergraduate students from Flinders University in Australia and 196 male and female students from Flint University in the United States. Subjects responded to the medical cue developed by Horner. This study differed from Horner's (1968) work, in that male and female subjects responded to both the Anne and John cue.

Results indicated that the males in the American sample along with both males and females from the Australian sample wrote a higher proportion of FOS stories to the female cue than to the male cue. Females in the American sample, however, wrote a much lower proportion of FOS stories to the female cue than did the Australian samples. The authors explained that the publicity given to the Women's Liberation Movement in the United States might account for the lower proportion of FOS stories written by the American females.

Monahan, Kuhn and Shaver (1974) replicated Horner's (1968) study with 120 boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 16. As in the study by Feather and Raphelson (1974), males and females responded to both the Anne and John cues developed by Horner. Results indicated that a larger proportion of males responded to the female cue with FOS than did the females. Neither sex showed a high proportion of negative responses to the male cue, however. Since both males and females responded negatively to the female cue, the authors concluded that females who choose traditionally male careers encounter many hardships and difficulties. Results also showed that negative responses to the female cue declined during adolescence. The authors attributed this to the Women's Liberation Movement.

The impact of coeducation on FOS was investigated by Winchel, Fenner and Shaver (1974). Their sample consisted of 240 male and female students from coed and non-coed high schools. In this study, more negative themes were expressed by both males and females when writing stories about a successful female than when writing about a successful male. Results also indicated that girls who had

attended a non-coed elementary school did not display FOS. The authors attributed this to the fact that the motive to avoid success is formed before a girl reaches high school. Since these girls had not learned to avoid success in the presence of male classmates, this motive did not exist for them.

The hypothesis that the motive to avoid success existed in seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth grade high-achieving girls was tested by Lavach and Lanier (1975). Eighty-five black and white girls responded to verbal TAT cues similar to those used by Horner (1968). The authors concluded that the motive to avoid success was prevalent in high-achieving girls and was not correlated with race. This motive, however, was correlated positively with increasing age level.

Inconclusive Studies on the Motive to Avoid Success

As previously mentioned, FOS has been defined by Horner as a disposition to become anxious in competitive achievement situations. She argued that FOS would be more characteristic of women than of men because success conflicted with society's definition of femininity. She also remarked that the performance of people high in FOS, particularly in competitive situations, would be inhibited because of the anticipation of negative consequences as a result of success. In a number of recent articles, men have been found to fear success as much, if not more than women. From the results of the following studies, it would appear that FOS is not more characteristic of women than of men.

In 1972 Pappo presented a theoretical account of fear of success and proceeded to design and validate an instrument that would identify individuals high in fear of academic success. According to her theoretical framework, individuals high in fear of success would manifest the following characteristics: low self-esteem, a preoccupation with evaluation, a competitive orientation, a tendency to repudiate their competence, and engage in self-sabotage behavior (1972:14-16). Her results indicated that high FOS individuals displayed these characteristics. It is interesting to note that no major differences in FOS among men and women were found in this study.

The purpose of a study by Morgan and Mausner was to "explore the possibility that behavioral avoidance of success might be found even if the motive was not expressed in fantasy" (1973:458). High school students were given the first half of the Hidden Figures Test. Subjects were asked to respond as well to two verbal cues previously used by Horner as a measurable instrument for FOS. Males responded to the John cue, while females responded to the Anne cue. The frequency of themes indicating FOS was greater among boys than girls. When girls who received a high score on the Hidden Figures Test were paired with boys who scored low, however, the girls' performance dropped remarkably. When high-scoring males were paired with low-scoring females, the males' performance dropped only slightly. The data from the projective test and from behavior in social interactions were inconsistent, indicating danger in predicting behavior from the motive to avoid success.

In an article in 1973, Tresemer contested the existence of FOS. His major complaint against Horner's work was the subjectivity involved in the scoring of FOS and the specificity of the medical cue. He stated that Horner's results have been misunderstood and oversimplified and that they are not evidence enough to prove that the motive to avoid success truly exists.

Jackaway (1974) conducted a study in which 120 male and female subjects wrote stories to male and female cues. A male set of cues and a female set of cues were given to an equal number of boys and girls. Her hypothesis that sex differences in FOS motivation existed in children between the ages of 9 and 17 was not supported. The second hypothesis stating that FOS would increase with age for females was also rejected. In addition, FOS scores for males while responding to male cues increased significantly with age and were significantly higher than the responses made to female cues. Jackaway also found a significant difference between the number of FOS responses to each of the respective cues, indicating the importance of the nature of the cue to "pull out" the desired imagery.

Hoffman (1974) replicated Horner's (1968) study but introduced three variations in the cue used to measure FOS. The sample consisted of 245 undergraduate students. The purpose of this study was to examine what aspect of the anticipation of success was anxiety-producing for the female. One cue was changed from medicine to child psychology to make the area more sexually neutral. In another cue, rather than communicate the achievement publicly, it was done privately. The last cue minimized the competitive aspect.

Results were consistent with Horner's (1968) findings for females; that is, 65 per cent showed FOS. However, 77 per cent of the males, as opposed to Horner's 8 per cent, displayed this fear. An attempt was also made to detect if the motive to avoid success was the same in men as in women. The most recurring theme in the female stories was affiliative loss, leading to social rejection. For males, the value of success was questioned. Results also indicated that FOS was more characteristic of honors students.

An attempt was made by Levine and Crumrine (1975) to replicate and expand Horner's (1968) study. The incidence and degree of FOS imagery was compared for 700 male and female college students. In this study, differing from Horner's, both sexes were randomly assigned the Anne of John cue. The majority of stories contained FOS imagery. No significant differences, however, were found between males and females. The authors explained that the inability to replicate Horner's findings was due to the methodological flaws in Ho[illegible]'s study. They continued by remarking that FOS "is a concept acceptable to many women, for it blames failure on an internalized set of cultural expectations" (1975:972). They concluded by stating that FOS may exist, but as yet, remains unproven.

The studies conducted up to this point appear to be highly elusive, and not durable, and they do not produce consistent results. Most of these studies have utilized Horner's original scoring technique (1968:105), even though a much more precise scoring system became available in 1973 (Horner, Tresemer, Berens and Watson). The original scoring technique developed by Horner is relatively primitive

and as a result there seems to have been much subjectivity in the scoring of FOS.

Literature Related to Fear of Success in Sport

To date, very few studies have related fear of success to sport. Following is a review of some of the literature dealing with FOSS.

On the basis of observations and interviews with top athletes over a period of twelve years, Ogilvie and Tutco have identified several varieties of problem athletes. One of these types is the success-phobic athlete or the athlete who fears success. They listed three classes of success-phobic athletes:

(1) the athletes who freeze when they think of opponents against whom they must compete;

(2) the athlete who is so affected by an outstanding performance that he is unable to produce;

(3) the athlete who is frightened by his own outstanding performance. (1966:86)

In a later article, Ogilvie listed the causes of success phobia as being fear of social and emotional isolation; guilt with respect to self-assertion or aggression; unconscious fear of expressing one's potential; fear of old idols and traditions; and disinclination for the burden of success (1968:38). He implied that these fears may operate independently or jointly, and that each was the result of social conditioning. Ogilvie also noted that a psychological barrier existed for these athletes. They were not able to perform up to their potential.

In 1972, Judith Zoble wrote about the female non-achievement syndrome in sports. She remarked that sport was a culturally male activity, and, as a result, women's achievement has been hampered. She suggested that some of the problems contributing to this syndrome were:

(1) Lack of female role models;

(2) The literature reflecting women as being less competent than men;

(3) Fear of success, because success may mean being unfeminine and unmarriageable (1972:214).

It is interesting to note that even though Zoble did not support her article with a study of her own, she is one of the first authors to relate FOS to women in sport.

A study by Syrotuik (1975) associated FOS to women in sport. Her sample was composed of 147 females, ranging in ages from 12 to 15. Syrotuik's instrument for measuring FOSS was a modification of the testing technique utilized by Horner (1968). She employed six verbal cues describing sport situations. An example of a cue was: "A young girl is talking about something important with her coach." She found that FOSS, as defined in her study, did exist. No significant differences in FOSS were found among girls who reported a strong sports background. Her hypothesis that FOSS would be highest among the older girls was also rejected. In addition, many of the subjects who exhibited FOSS altered the performance of the lead character in the cue to prevent success. This behavior supported the hypothesis that FOSS is a psychological inhibitor of performance in sport-success related situations.

Most of the research on fear of success has been conducted in academic situations. Syrotuik's (1975) study implied that FOS was also operating for females in sport. The present study was designed to further the investigation into fear of success in sport, or, more specifically, to examine FOS among female athletes.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter deals with the measuring instrument utilized in this study and outlines the selection of the sample. The section also includes information on the collection and statistical treatment of the data.

The Instrument

A valid and reliable inventory that measures FOSS could not be found. Therefore, an instrument was developed in this study to measure this psychological construct. Using such an instrument constituted a major limitation of this study. Efforts were made, however, to ensure construct validity and reliability.

The first area to be considered in the formation of the inventory was fear of loss of femininity. The following are examples of some of the items in this category:

Figure skating is more suitable for girls than hockey.

Female athletes who have large muscles do not look feminine.

The next component to be considered was fear of social isolation and rejection. Examples of some items are as follows:

Sports take up too much of my time.

Boys like to date outstanding female athletes.

Fear of winning was examined next. Samples of some of the items are:

I would like to be the world's greatest female athlete in my sport.

People expect too much from an outstanding athlete while she is competing.

The final set of items centered on the fear of parental/peer disapproval. This section contained items such as:

My parents encourage me to play sports.

People my own age usually discourage girls from participating in sports.

The original instrument, composed of 54 items, was administered as a pilot study to 34 female athletes ranging in ages from 13 to 23 years. Subjects responded to a four point scale by choosing one of the following responses as appropriate answers to the items of the inventory: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. Scores of 4, 3, 2, and 1 were given to the responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree respectively. So as not to bias the inventory, certain items appeared in a reverse format.

An attempt was made to assess the construct validity of each item of the inventory via an item analysis. The first step in this analysis was to examine the intercorrelations between the sub-total scores of each of the components of FOSS. As shown in Table I, each component was relatively independent of the other.

The next procedure in the item analysis was to generate a correlation matrix of all of the items with each of the component sub-total scores (See Tables II to V). The purpose of this procedure was to select valid items and to discard or alter irrelevant items. Items that correlated highly with their own component sub-total score and lower with the other three component sub-total scores were

TABLE I

INTERCORRELATIONS OF FOSS COMPONENT

SUB-TOTAL SCORES

	Loss of Femininity	Social Isolation and Rejection	Fear of Winning	Parental/Peer Disapproval
Loss of Femininity	-			
Social Isolation and Rejection	.31	-		
Fear of Winning	.16	.15	-	
Parental/Peer Disapproval	.30	.20	.32	-

TABLE II

INTERCORRELATION OF LOSS OF FEMININITY ITEMS

WITH ALL COMPONENT SUB-TOTAL SCORES

Item	Loss of Femininity	Social Isolation and Rejection	Fear of Winning	Parental/Peer Disapproval
1	.45	.245	.054	.061
2	.378	.291	.070	.131
3	.554	.471	.275	.079
4	.694	.044	-.092	.077
5	.683	.233	.385	.245
6	.328	.252	.024	.260
7	.045	.394	.049	.221
8	.230	-.163	-.015	-.131
9	.731	.327	.300	.201
10	.689	.175	.000	.051
11	.492	.093	-.031	.103
12	.380	.094	.045	.466
13	.270	.083	.001	.381
14	.522	.001	.035	.124

TABLE III

INTERCORRELATION OF SOCIAL ISOLATION AND REJECTION ITEMS

WITH ALL COMPONENT SUB-TOTAL SCORES

Item	Loss of Femininity	Social Isolation and Rejection	Fear of Winning	Parental/Peer Disapproval
1	.202	.225	-.398	-.276
2	.110	.368	-.075	-.069
3	-.061	.307	-.337	-.026
4	.172	.262	.484	.183
5	-.366	.128	-.034	-.312
6	.224	.080	.123	.290
7	.309	.156	.141	.225
8	.048	.285	.069	.001
9	.291	.027	-.187	.079
10	.466	.332	.359	.269
11	.195	.418	.061	.279
12	.307	.450	.189	.262

TABLE IV

INTERCORRELATION OF FEAR OF WINNING ITEMS

WITH ALL COMPONENT SUB-TOTAL SCORES

Item	Loss of Femininity	Social Isolation and Rejection	Fear of Winning	Parental/Peer Disapproval
1	-.110	.084	.436	.170
2	-.090	-.188	.228	.040
3	.064	.033	.365	.469
4	-.131	-.317	.242	-.168
5	.103	.257	.395	.141
6	.324	.158	.673	.132
7	.442	.215	.564	.509
8	.346	.236	.403	.337
9	-.104	-.013	.652	.127
10	-.043	.054	.582	.134
11	.265	.065	.523	.387
12	.095	.268	.622	.292
13	.154	.249	.430	.409
14	.013	.016	.402	.199

TABLE V

INTERCORRELATION OF PARENTAL/PEER DISAPPROVAL ITEMS

WITH ALL COMPONENT SUB-TOTAL SCORES

Item	Loss of Femininity	Social Isolation and Rejection	Fear of Winning	Parental/Peer Disapproval
1	.022	-.087	.232	.650
2	.084	.078	.148	.071
3	-.086	-.139	.039	.092
4	.199	.048	.367	.568
5	.067	.199	.113	.627
6	.413	-.009	-.050	.446
7	.231	.167	.363	.515
8	.166	.068	.116	.330
9	.125	.083	.154	.695
10	.130	.196	.358	.314
11	.045	.019	.136	.245
12	.393	.140	.003	.184
13	.116	.419	.080	.100
14	.214	.115	.273	.371

considered to be the most valid. For example, item 1 in Table V was designed to measure fear of parental/peer disapproval. This item was found to correlate highly (.650) with this component and lower with the other three (.027, -.087, .232) components. These correlations were sufficient reason to preserve this item within the inventory.

Item 12 in Table II was designed to measure fear of loss of femininity. This item was abandoned, however, because it correlated more highly with parental/peer disapproval (.466) than it did with loss of femininity (.380).

Following the item analysis, ten items were dropped from the inventory. Several of the remaining items were rewritten to improve their comprehensibility and to eliminate words that could have caused their correlations to other components. As a result, the final form of the inventory contained 11 items for each of the components of FOSS (see Appendix C). This inventory thus consisted of 44 items. Items 1, 2, 3 and 4 measured fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of winning and fear of parental/peer disapproval, respectively. Every fourth item, therefore was tapping one of the specific components of FOSS, that is, items 1, 5, 9, . . . 41 measured fear of loss of femininity.

Reliability of the inventory was measured by the Kudor-Richardson formula 20 (KR20), which is a measure of internal consistency. Items measuring fear of loss of femininity had a KR20 of .71; fear of social isolation and rejection, .50; fear of winning, .73; and fear of parental/peer disapproval, .70. The KR20 for the total inventory was .81.

In addition to the FOSS inventory given to the athletes, the coaches were asked to rate the skill level subjectively for each of their athletes. The rating form provided for coaches can be found in Appendix D. Coaches assessed the skill of their athletes on a scale ranging from below average, average, above average, to excellent. The purpose of this procedure was to determine if differences in FOSS could be found among athletes with varying skill levels. It is important to note that athletes were rated not in comparison to teammates, but in relation to other athletes in their league or conference.

The Subjects

A total of 266 female basketball players and female swimmers were tested for FOSS. All of the subjects were competitive athletes.

(1) Basketball Players:

One hundred fifty (150) female basketball players participated in this study. Six junior high schools and six high schools were selected from the Edmonton Public School System (See Appendix E). All junior high schools chosen were comprised of grades seven, eight and nine. High schools consisted of grades ten through twelve.

The university basketball player sample was composed of three basketball teams from the Canada West University Athletic Association (CWUAA).

All subjects were members of the senior or varsity basketball team from their particular academic institution, as opposed to a junior or intramural team.

(2) Swimmers:

One hundred sixteen (116) female swimmers participated in this study. The sample consisted of swimmers from all five Edmonton swim clubs. An additional 34 swimmers from across Canada who competed in the Alberta Invitational Swim Meet also took part in this study. This meet was held in Edmonton from April 23 to 25, 1976. All of these swimmers were in grades seven through twelve.

The university swimming sample was comprised of two swim teams from the CWUAA. A list of participating basketball teams and swim teams can be found in Appendix F.

Method of Collecting the Data

In most cases, the inventory was administered personally by the author. The inventory was sent by mail to coaches of the female swim teams and female basketball teams of the CWUAA (see Appendix G). When possible, the inventory was administered during regular practise sessions. In some cases, it was necessary for the testing to be undertaken prior to or following a competition.

The setting in which the basketball players completed the inventory was in the gymnasium, while the swimmers were tested within the swimming pool area. This testing was completed under the supervision of the experimenter. At the same time, coaches filled in a rating form for each of their athletes (See Appendix D). Instructions in filling out the inventory emphasized that the athlete respond to each item on the basis of how she felt about the statement, or how the statement best described her. Choices of responses were: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

Experimental Design and Statistical Treatment of the Data

A 2 X 3 X 4 factorial design was used in this study. The three factors were sport, scholastic level and skill level, having respective levels of two, three and four. The experimental design is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

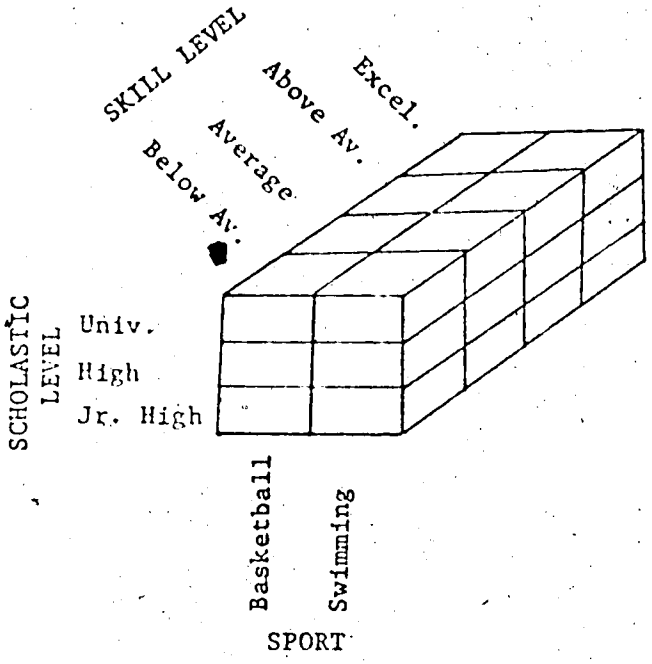

Figure 1. Experimental Design

Fortran programs were used to compute the results. In the pilot study, DESTO 2 was used for the item analysis. ANOV 35 was employed for the three-way analysis of variance. Where applicable, a Scheffé test was used whenever significant F's occurred.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the four components of fear of success in sport (FOSS) in female basketball players and female swimmers at three scholastic levels. FOSS was also examined in regards to the skill level of the athletes as rated by their respective coaches. More specially, the four components of FOSS examined were: fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of winning, and fear of parental/peer disapproval. All the athletes in this study were students from junior high school, high school and university. The skill level of the athletes was rated as below average, average, above average or excellent.

The analyses of the strengths of the four components of FOSS are dealt with in the first section of this chapter. Mean scores for each of the components of FOSS were examined, as well as the percentage of responses for each of the individual items comprising the components.

The second section of this chapter contains the analyses and discussion of the four components of FOSS in relation to scholastic level, sport, and skill level of the athletes.

The graphs presented in this chapter illustrate all scholastic level effects, sport effects, and skill level effects for each of the four components of FOSS. All significant effects for the analyses of FOSS are also illustrated. The level of significance for any reported difference was .05.

The Subjects

One hundred fifty (150) female basketball players and one hundred sixteen (116) female swimmers participated in this study. The distribution of subjects according to scholastic level and sport appears in Table VI, below.

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS--SCHOLASTIC LEVEL BY SPORT

SCHOLASTIC LEVEL	SPORT	
	Basketball	Swimming
Junior High (Grades 7 to 9)	64	55
High School (Grades 10 to 12)	58	40
University	28	21

Analyses of the Strength of FOSS

In order to investigate the strength of FOSS, as defined in this study, the means for each component of FOSS were examined. The minimum score that an individual could receive for each component of FOSS was 11, and the maximum possible score was 44. To facilitate discussion of the analyses, the scores were grouped into the following categories:

11 to 16	very low
17 to 23	low
24 to 30	medium
31 to 37	high
38 to 44	very high

A pictorial representation of the mean scores for each component appears in Figure 2. Fear of winning, with a mean of 28.94, was found to be the most salient component of FOSS and fell into the upper portion of the medium strength category. Fear of social isolation and rejection, with a mean of 24.22, was also classified as being of medium strength. The mean for fear of loss of femininity (23.47) and the mean for fear of parental/peer disapproval (20.47) were considered to be of low strength.

Discussion Pertaining to the Strength of FOSS

Responses to certain items of the inventory will be discussed in order to elaborate on the strength of the four components of FOSS. The percentage of responses for all of the items of each component of FOSS appear in tabulated form. The individual items mentioned in this discussion can be found in Appendix C.

(1) Fear of Loss of Femininity

Horner (1968) suggested that displays of aggression in females were considered unnatural or unfeminine. Although Horner was referring to academic situations, item 21 (See Appendix C) in the inventory developed for this study, was designed to determine if females viewed aggressive behavior in sports as being unnatural. Results indicated that approximately three-quarters of the subjects considered aggressive behavior in sports to be appropriate for girls.

In yet another item which stated: "Football teams should be organized for girls." (See Appendix C, item 33), 85 per cent of the subjects answered in the "strongly agree" or "agree" category.

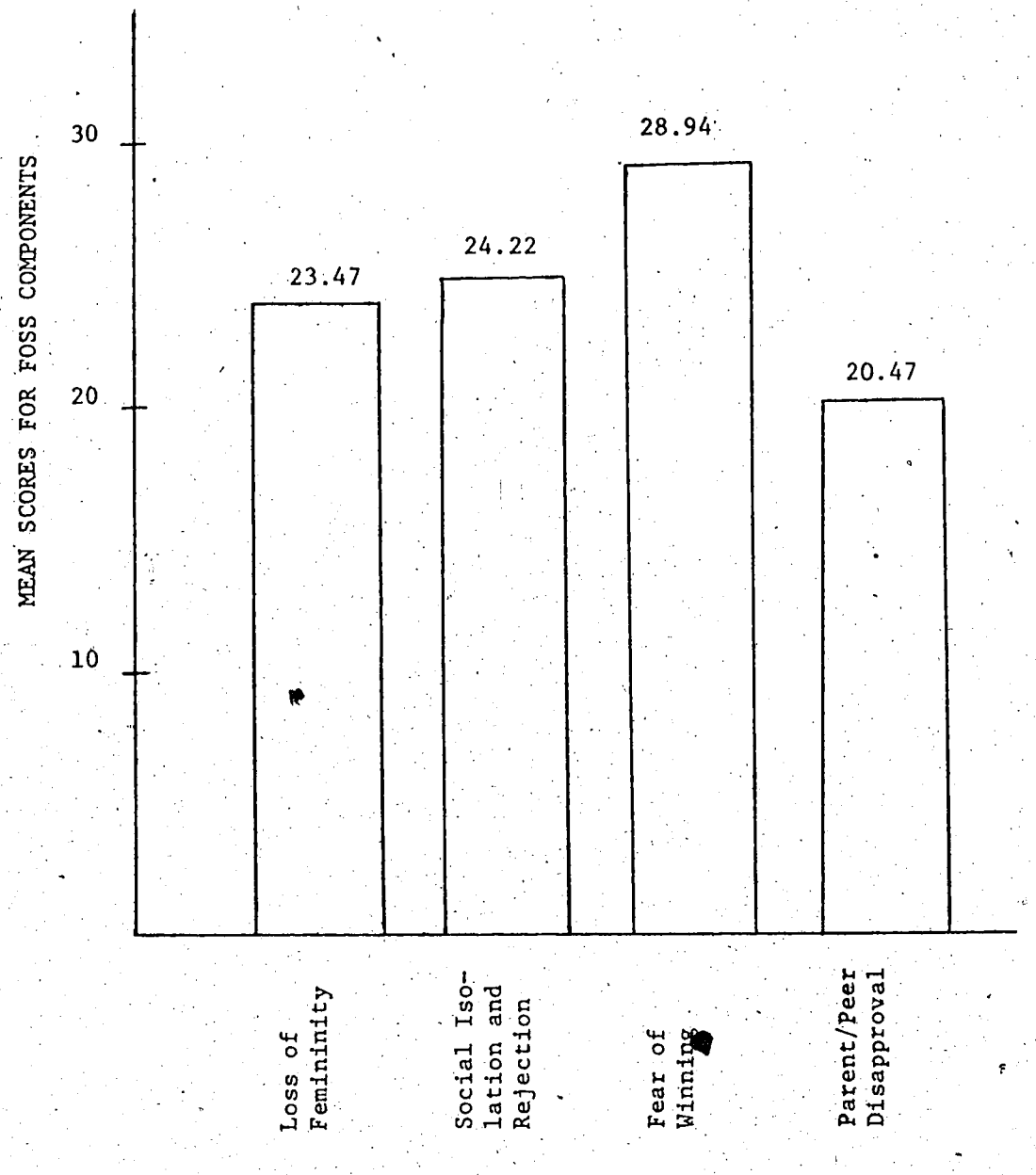

Figure 2. Strength of FOSS Components

This is surprising, considering football is viewed by many as a rugged and masculine sport.

As discussed earlier, females may feel that participation in sports masculinizes a woman's physical appearance. In the present study, however, only 12 per cent of the female athletes indicated that they worry about getting large muscles because of their participation in sports (See Appendix C, item 5).

The anticipation of success against a male competitor, more specifically, a boyfriend, was the most salient aspect of fear of loss of femininity. Forty-eight per cent of the subjects indicated that they would not like to win an athletic event while competing against their boyfriend (See Appendix C, item 29).

The mean score for fear of loss of femininity was 23.47. This mean was classified as being of low strength. It was apparent that the subjects in this study did not view participating in sports and achieving success in sport as a great threat to their femininity. The responses to the items measuring fear of loss of femininity can be found in Table VII.

(2) Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection

Earlier reference was made to the possibility that social rejection could result from participation and success in sport. Horner (1968) suggested that social rejection, as a result of success, might lead to anxiety about becoming unpopular or unmarriageable. This fear apparently did not exist for the females in this study. More than 98 per cent of the subjects thought that boys would like to marry top female athletes (See Appendix C, item 26).

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES FOR FEAR OF LOSS OF FEMININITY ITEMS

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	8.27	32.33	42.11	17.29
5	3.38	9.03	41.73	45.86
9*	24.81	27.07	33.46	14.66
13	4.51	21.05	37.97	36.47
17	4.51	30.83	46.99	17.67
21*	19.17	53.76	22.93	4.14
25	7.14	26.32	36.47	30.07
29*	14.29	37.97	39.47	8.27
33*	33.83	51.13	13.16	1.88
37	7.52	29.32	49.25	13.91
41*	17.67	51.12	23.68	7.53

* indicates reverse items

Response to one of the social isolation items (See Appendix C, item 30) revealed that 58 per cent of the subjects agreed that they often missed out on social events because of their participation in sports. Eighty-eight per cent, however, did not think that sports took up too much of their time (See Appendix C, item 22). This attitude may stem from the fact that many of the subjects in the study perceive social events as including undesirable elements, such as the use of drugs and alcohol. Therefore, being unable to attend some social events is perhaps not of great concern to many female athletes. It could also be that, for those strong in affiliative motivation, sport constitutes a social event in itself.

Fear of social isolation and rejection, with a mean score of 24.22, was classified as being of medium strength. It appeared that the athletes in this study did not show a strong fear of being socially isolated or rejected as a result of their involvement in sport. Table VIII presents the percentage of responses to the fear of social isolation and rejection items.

(3) Fear of Winning

Fear of winning received the highest mean score (28.94) of all the components of FOSS, and was classified as being in the upper portion of the medium strength category. A typical example of an item measuring fear of winning was: "If a girl's athletic performance is excellent, people expect it always to be excellent." (See Appendix C, item 31) It was found that 70 per cent of the subjects agreed with this item. The pressure involved in living up to expectations could be an important factor responsible for holding back athletes from reaching their true athletic potential.

TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES FOR FEAR OF SOCIAL ISOLATION AND REJECTION ITEMS

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2*	8.65	46.62	38.72	6.01
6*	3.00	33.08	47.37	16.55
10	12.03	52.63	27.82	7.52
14	6.39	23.68	46.99	22.94
18	5.26	16.92	43.98	33.84
22	2.26	10.53	45.86	41.35
26	.75	1.13	46.62	51.50
30	23.69	34.58	29.70	12.03
34*	19.17	56.40	21.05	3.38
38	2.63	6.39	46.24	44.74
42*	4.94	41.06	46.77	7.23

* indicates reverse items

It is important to note that the subjects in this study were all competitive athletes, spending many hours a week in diligent and difficult practice. Despite the fact that many coaches and the public in general place a great deal of emphasis on winning, 48 per cent of the athletes in this study indicated that they would not like to be the best athlete in their sport (See Appendix C, item 39). Eighty-two per cent of the subjects, however, expressed agreement with the following item: "Being liked by my teammates is more important than being the best athlete in my sport." (See Appendix C, item 27). For many of the athletes in this study, it appeared that affiliation was more important than excellence. The percentage of responses for the fear of winning items can be found in Table IX.

(4) Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval

The mean score for parental/peer disapproval (20.47) was classified as being low. Ninety-seven per cent of the subjects indicated that their parents liked them to be involved in sports (See Appendix C, item 44). In addition, 81 per cent thought that female athletes were respected by their peers (See Appendix C, item 36).

Previous authors (Boslooper and Hayes, 1973; and Michener, 1976) have suggested that parents and peers often disapprove of sports participation for females. These reports were not based on scientific evidence and were not supported in the present study. The percentage of responses for fear of parental/peer disapproval items are reported in Table X.

TABLE IX

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES FOR

FEAR OF WINNING ITEMS

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3	14.29	36.84	36.84	12.03
7*	4.51	16.17	37.97	41.35
11	21.13	40.75	29.82	8.30
15	4.17	16.29	43.94	35.60
19	19.92	48.50	27.82	3.76
23*	19.55	40.98	34.59	4.88
27	34.96	47.37	13.53	4.14
31	21.43	48.87	24.06	5.64
35	9.77	33.83	40.99	15.41
39*	19.93	31.95	38.72	9.40
43	15.47	48.68	30.57	5.28

* indicates reverse items

TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES FOR FEAR OF PARENTAL/PEER DISAPPROVAL ITEMS

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4*	36.84	42.86	15.41	4.89
8*	8.27	44.36	36.84	10.53
12	2.63	15.04	45.86	36.47
16	1.88	12.03	45.86	40.23
20	9.40	25.19	37.97	27.44
24	1.50	15.41	52.26	30.83
28	1.88	14.28	50.76	33.08
32*	42.48	42.11	12.03	3.38
36*	13.53	67.29	18.05	1.13
40	1.51	1.50	32.33	64.66
44	1.51	1.89	23.77	72.83

* indicates reverse items

Summary on the Strength of FOSS

In summary, fear of winning was found to be the most salient component of FOSS and fear of parental/peer disapproval was found to be the lowest contributing component. It is important to note that the subjects in this study comprise a select group of individuals. The low means for all of the components of FOSS could be explained by the fact that this selection process through which the subjects in this study have emerged, may have eliminated potential high scorers, such as sport drop-outs.

Analyses and Discussion Pertaining to the Four Components of FOSS

(1) Fear of Loss of Femininity

Table XI summarizes the three-way analysis of variance for fear of loss of femininity. There were no significant differences among the three scholastic levels or among the four skill levels. Significant F's were obtained for sport effects and for scholastic level X sport interaction. Swimmers feared loss of femininity to a significantly greater degree than did the basketball players. Scholastic level and skill level did not provide a significant contribution to the variance.

The mean scores for fear of loss of femininity for the three scholastic levels are illustrated in Figure 3. These mean scores of 24.01, 23.41 and 22.41 for junior high, high school and university participants, respectively, indicate a successive decrement for this component with increasing scholastic level. The difference of means, however, was not significant.

TABLE XI

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR FEAR OF LOSS OF FEMININITY

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Ratio
A (Scholastic Level)	26.37	2	13.18	.84
B (Sport)	74.59	1	74.36	4.75*
AB (Sch. Level X Sport)	317.84	2	158.92	10.16*
C (Skill)	73.20	3	24.40	1.56
BC (Sport X Skill)	11.09	3	3.70	.24
AC (Sch. Level X Skill)	82.92	6	13.82	.88
ABC (Sch. Level X Sport X Skill)	52.84	6	8.81	.56
Errors	3786	242	15.64	

* significant at the .05 level

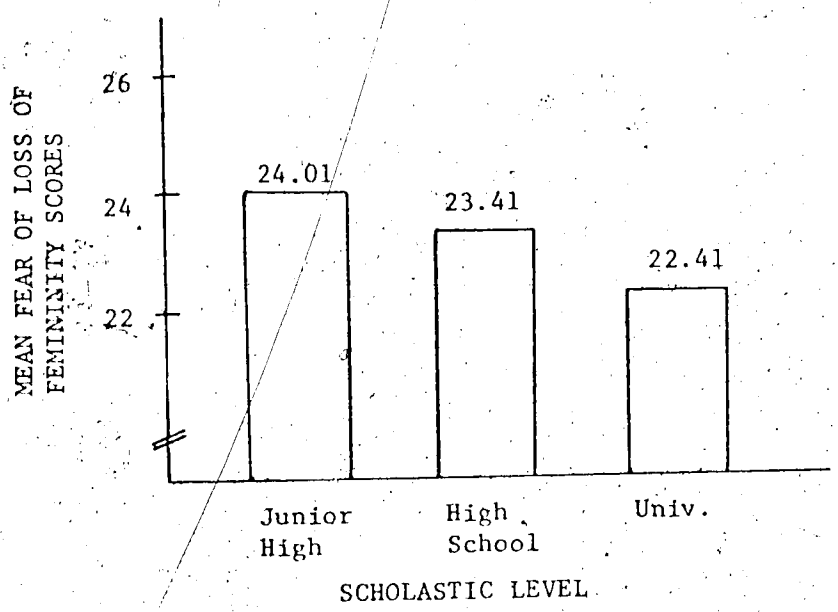

Figure 3. Mean Fear of Loss of Femininity Scores for the Three Scholastic Levels

Figure 4 illustrates the mean scores for fear of loss of femininity for the two ports considered in this study. The mean score for the basketball players was 23.21 and the mean score for the swimmers was 23.86. This difference was found to be significant. The lower score for the basketball players could be explained by the fact that basketball, thought of by many as being a less feminine sport than swimming attracts females who do not worry about losing their femininity as much as athletes who choose swimming. It could also be that intensive swimming training develops excessive upper

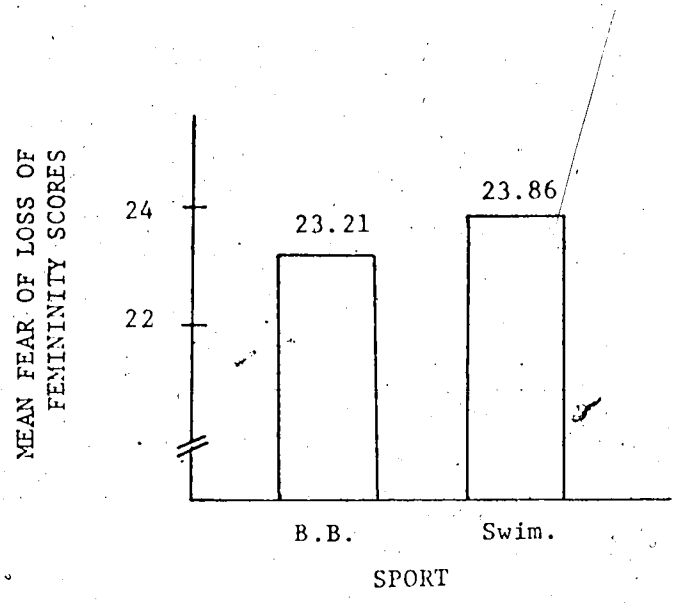

Figure 4. Mean Fear of Loss of Femininity Scores for the Two Sports

body musculature. If muscular development is viewed as a threat to a young girl's femininity, this could account for the higher score obtained by the swimmers.

The mean fear of loss of femininity scores for the four skill levels appear in Figure 5. The mean scores for the athletes with below average, average, above average and excellent skill levels were, respectively, 23.43, 22.96, 23.89 and 23.89. The difference of means was not significant. Thus, skill level had no effect on fear of loss of femininity.

An AB interaction (scholastic level X sport) was significant at the .05 level for fear of loss of femininity. This interaction

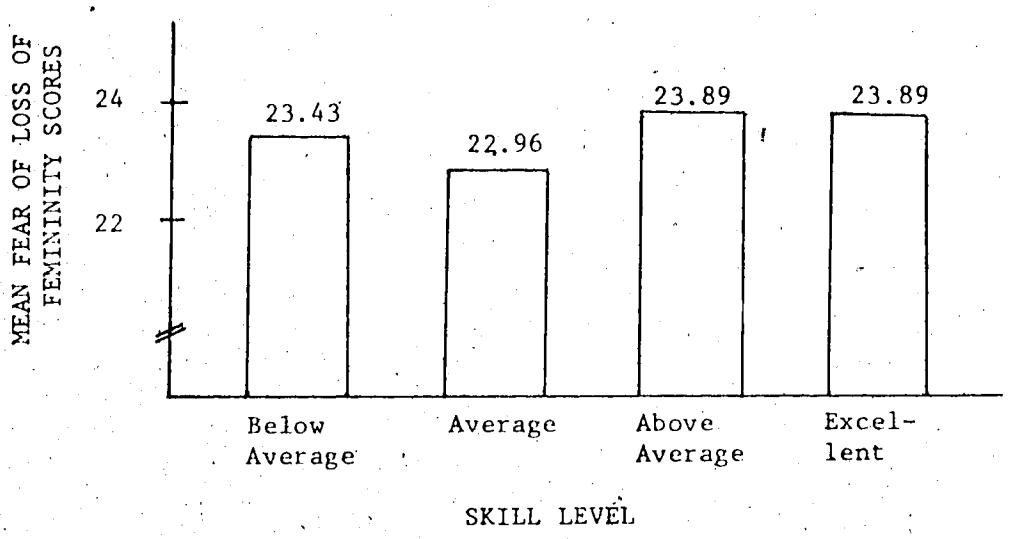

Figure 5. Mean Fear of Loss of Femininity Scores for the Four Skill Levels

indicates that although the mean scores for the swimmers and basketball players were significant, they were not independent of the scholastic level. Table XII shows the significant scholastic level X sport interaction revealed by a Scheffé test. This disordinal interaction is illustrated in Figure 6.

The order of the means for the swimmers and basketball players changed from junior high, high school, to university. The mean scores for both the basketball players and swimmers decreased from junior high to high school with the basketball players having the higher means. In university a change occurred. The mean score

TABLE XII

F-SCORES FOR THE COMPARISON OF SCHOLASTIC LEVEL X SPORT MEANS

FOR FEAR OF LOSS OF FEMININITY (SCHEFFÉ TEST)

	University B.B.	High School Swim.	Junior High Swim.	High School B.B.	Junior High B.B.	University Swim.
University B.B.		8.64	13.47*	15.92*	26.21*	35.76*
High School Swim.			.42	.92	4.67	20.70*
Junior High Swim.				.12	2.69	2.58
High School B.B.					1.72	7.34
Junior High B.B.						3.24
University Swim.						

*significant at the .05 level

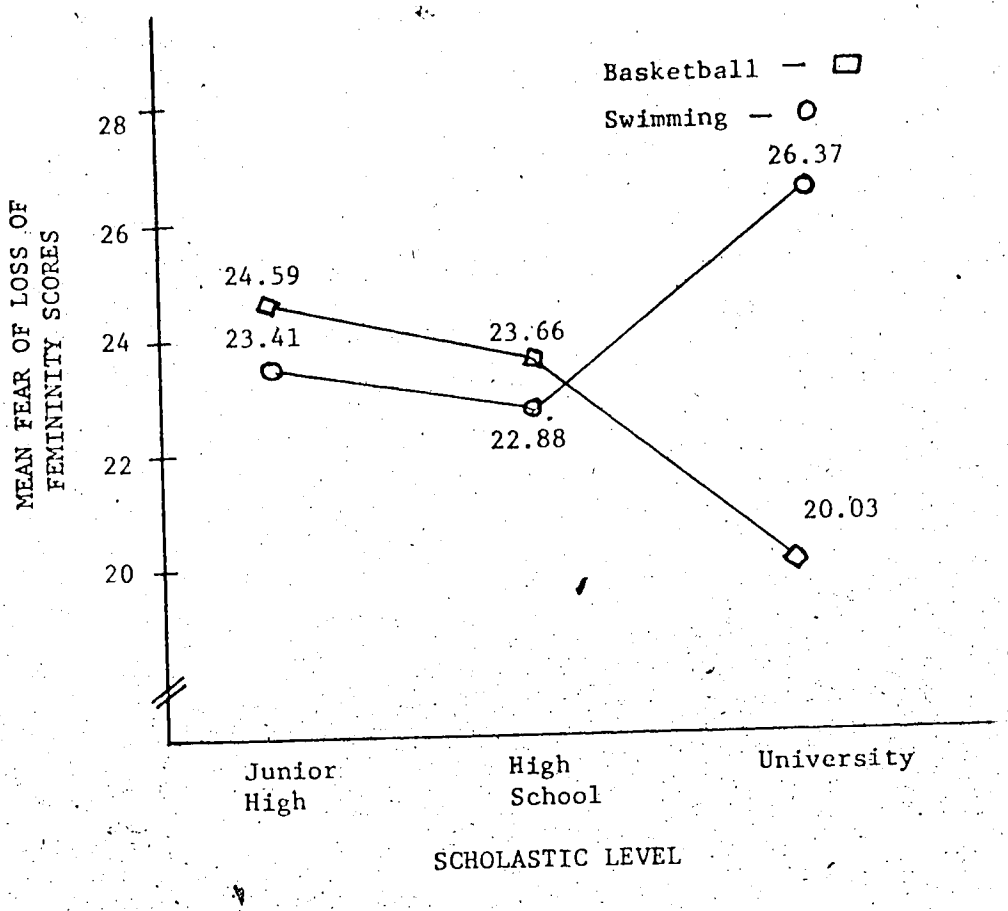

Figure 6. Mean Fear of Loss of Femininity Scores for Scholastic Level X Sport Interaction

for the basketball players decreased remarkably, while the swimmers' score increased.

(2) Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection

The analysis of variance for fear of social isolation and rejection is summarized in Table XIII. No significant differences for this component occurred among the three scholastic levels or among the four skill levels. Significant F's were obtained for sport effects, that is, a significantly higher fear of social isolation and rejection was shown by the swimmers.

The mean fear of social isolation and rejection scores for the three scholastic levels are presented in Figure 7. The mean scores for junior high, high school and university athletes were, respectively, 24.35, 24.53 and 23.29. There was a tendency, though not significant, for these scores to increase from junior high to high school and then decrease in university.

Figure 8 illustrates the mean fear of social isolation and rejection scores for the two sports considered in this study. The mean score for the swimmers (25.21) was significantly higher than the mean score for the basketball players (23.46). It is important to note that most of the swimmers in this study practise regularly for their sport twelve months of the year, while the basketball season is approximately six months in length. In addition, swimming is an individual sport in which communication and interaction with teammates is kept to a minimum, particularly during practises. These solitude and time factors could explain why the swimmers showed a greater fear of social isolation and rejection.

TABLE XIII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR FEAR OF SOCIAL ISOLATION AND REJECTION

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Ratio
A (Scholastic Level)	43.36	2	21.68	2.59
B (Sport)	77.28	1	77.28	9.22*
AB (Sch. Level X Sport)	3.74	2	1.87	.22
C (Skill)	22.83	3	7.61	.91
BC (Sport X Skill)	13.20	3	4.40	.52
AC (Sch. Level X Skill)	50.33	6	8.40	1.00
ABC (Sch. Level X Sport X Skill)	96.13	6	16.02	1.91
Errors	2027.56	242	8.38	

*significant at the .05 level

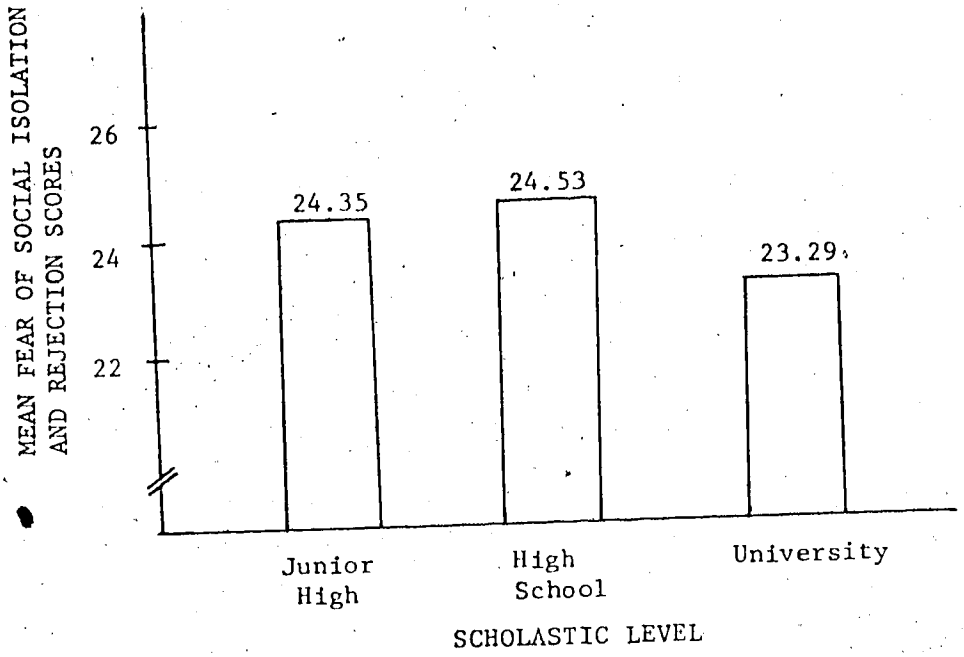

Figure 7. Mean Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection Scores for the Three Scholastic Levels

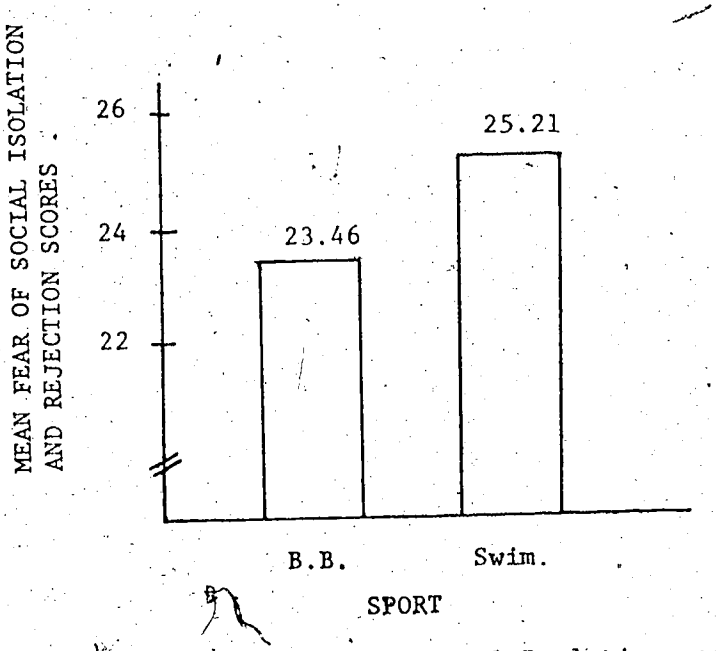

Figure 8. Mean Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection Scores for the Two Sports

The mean fear of social isolation and rejection scores for the four skill levels are presented in Figure 9. Scores ranged from 23.64 for average athletes to 24.99 for excellent athletes. No significant differences, however, were reported for the variable of skill for this component.

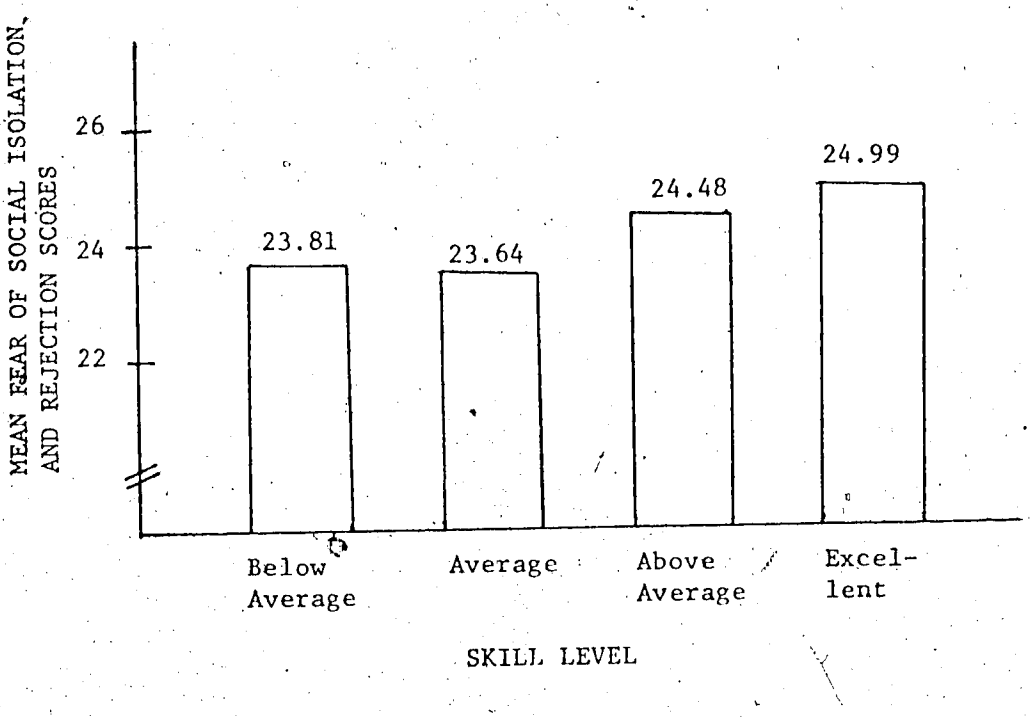

Figure 9. Mean Fear of Social Isolation and Rejection Scores for the Four Skill Levels

(3) Fear of Winning

The analysis of variance for fear of winning, as presented in Table XIV, showed a significant F for the effect of sport. Basketball players exhibited significantly higher fear of winning than did the swimmers. No significant differences for this component occurred among the three scholastic levels or among the four skill levels.

TABLE XIV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR

FEAR OF WINNING

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Ratio
A (Scholastic Level)	[illegible]	2	8.67	.624
B (Sport)	[illegible]80	1	54.79	3.94*
AB (Sch. Level X Sport)	58.68	2	29.34	2.11
C (Skill)	65.58	3	21.86	1.57
BC (Sport X Skill)	12.30	3	4.10	.29
AC (Sch. Level X Skill)	85.68	6	14.28	1.03
ABC (Sch. Level X Sport X Skill)	74.71	6	12.45	.90
Errors	3362.06	242	13.89	

*significant at the .05 level

Figure 10 illustrates the mean scores for fear of winning for the three scholastic levels. The mean scores decreased from junior high (29.42) to high school (28.48) and then increased in university (28.71).

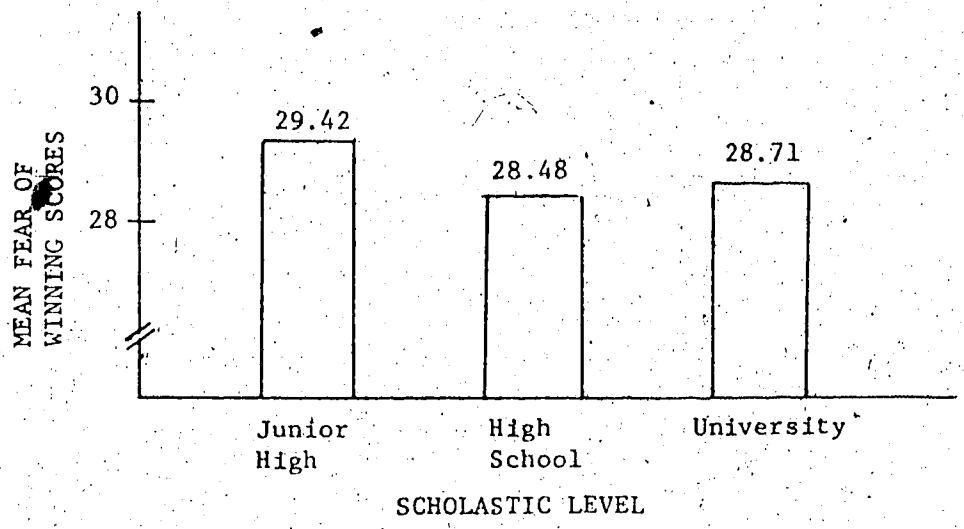

Figure 10. Mean Fear of Winning Scores for the Three Scholastic Levels

The mean fear of winning scores for the two sports considered in this study appear in Figure 11. The mean score for the basketball players (29.88) was significantly higher than the mean score for the swimmers (28.71). In this study, being a top athlete seems to be more attractive to the swimmers than to the basketball players. The explanation could lay in the nature of the sport itself. It has been mentioned previously that basketball was classified as being a more aggressive and less feminine sport than swimming. It appears that

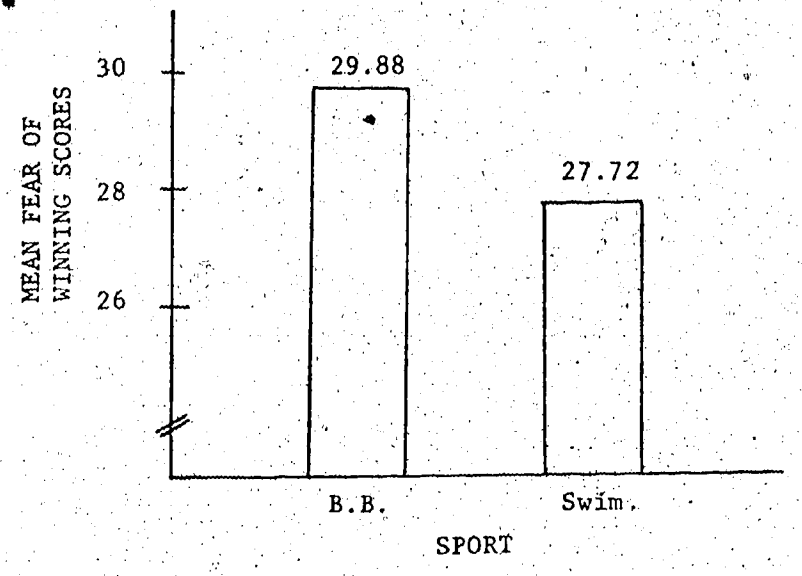

Figure 11. Mean Fear of Winning Scores for the Two Sports

being a success in a masculine sport could be more anxiety-provoking than being a success in a feminine sport.

Figure 12 illustrates the mean fear of winning scores for the four skill levels. Fear of winning, although not significant, was found to decrease progressively with increasing skill level. Below average athletes displayed the highest fear of winning with a mean score of 29.87. Athletes who were rated as excellent had the lowest mean score for this component (27.59).

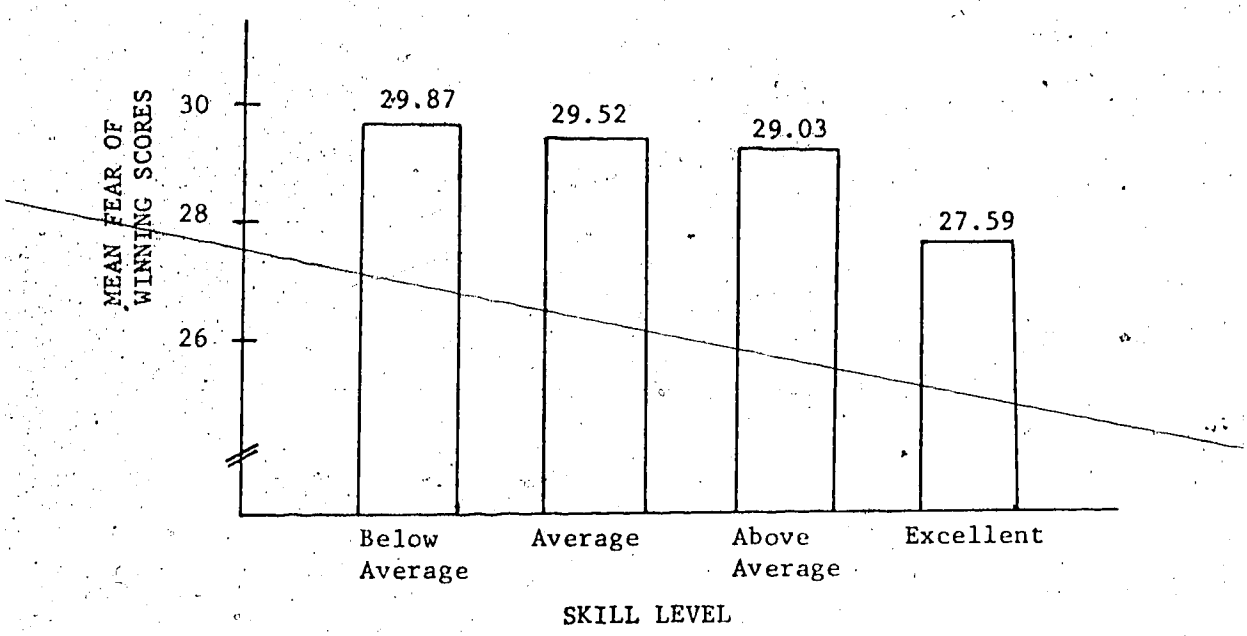

Figure 12. Mean Fear of Winning Scores for the Four Skill Levels

(4) Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval

Table XV summarizes the analysis of variance for fear of parental/peer disapproval. No differences for this component occurred among the three scholastic levels, the two sports or the four skill levels.

The mean fear of parental/peer disapproval scores for junior high, high school and university, as shown in Figure 13, are, respectively, 20.50, 20.56 and 20.23. These means were all low and did not differ significantly among the three scholastic levels.

TABLE XV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR FEAR OF PARENTAL/PEER DISAPPROVAL

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Ratio
A (Scholastic Level)	28.15	2	14.08	.98
B (Sport)	33.67	1	33.67	2.35
AB (Sch. Level X Sport)	5.32		2.66	.186
C (Skill)	64.33	3	21.44	1.50
BC (Sport X Skill)	91.66	3	30.55	2.13
AC (Sch. Level X Skill)	112.90	6	18.82	1.31
ABC (Sch. Level X Sport X Skill)	124.36	6	20.73	1.45
Errors	3465.63	242	14.32	

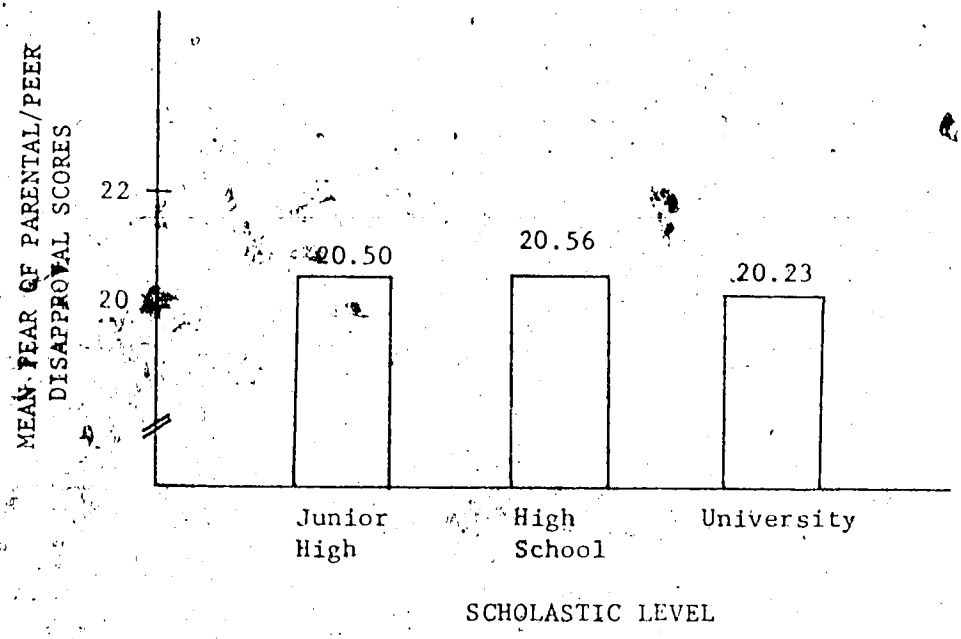

Figure 13. Mean Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval Scores for the Three Scholastic Levels

Figure 14 illustrates the mean fear of parental/peer disapproval scores for the basketball players and swimmers. The mean score for the basketball players (20.84) did not differ significantly from the mean score for the swimmers (20.00).

Figure 15 graphically depicts the mean fear of parental/peer disapproval scores for the four skill levels. These scores were found to be highest for above average athletes (21.09) and lowest for excellent athletes (19.91). No significant differences, however, were found among the four skill levels.

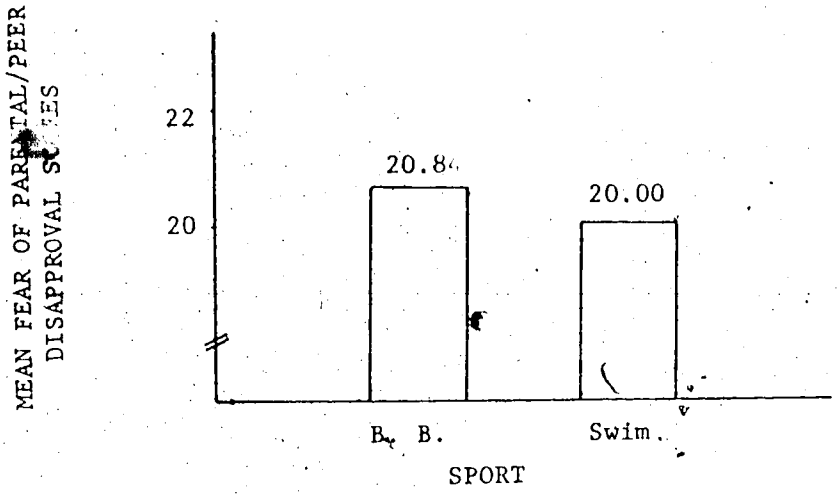

Figure 14. Mean Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval Scores for the Two Sports

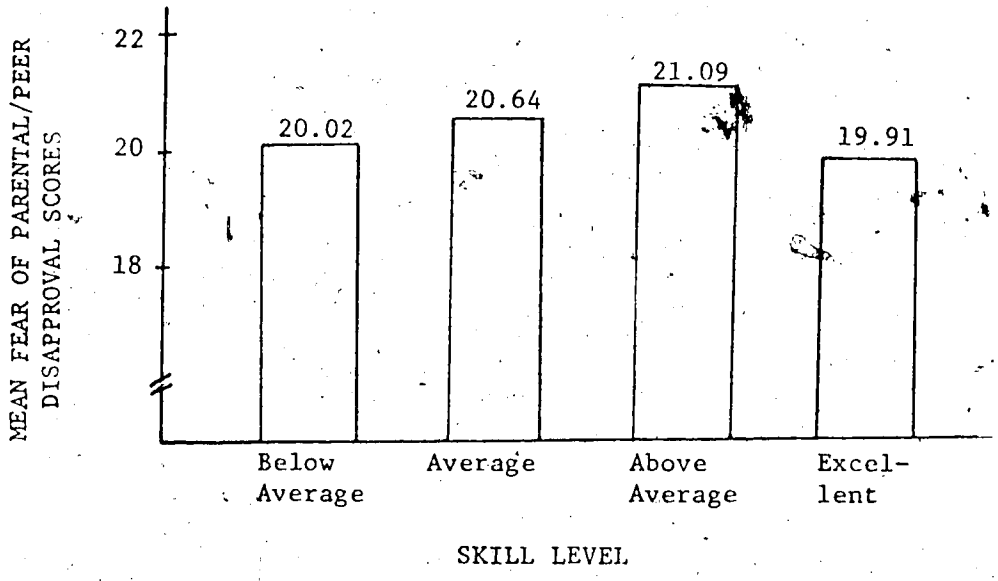

Figure 15. Mean Fear of Parental/Peer Disapproval Scores for the Four Skill Levels

Summary of the Analyses of FOSS

The four components of FOSS were examined in relation to scholastic level, sport and skill level. Fear of loss of femininity was found to be significantly higher for the swimmers than for the basketball players. Scholastic level and skill level did not provide a significant contribution to the variance for fear of loss of femininity.

Swimmers exhibited a significantly higher fear of social isolation and rejection than did the basketball players. No differences for this component were observed among the three scholastic levels or among the four skill levels.

Basketball players showed a significantly higher fear of winning than did the swimmers. The three scholastic levels and the four skill levels had no effect on this component.

No significant differences in fear of parental/peer disapproval were found in the analyses used, that is, no significant differences for this component were found among the three scholastic levels between the two sports or among the four skill levels.

Summary of Results

The following is a summary of results in terms of the four hypotheses stated in Chapter I.

The first hypothesis dealt with the strength of fear of success in sport. In this study, FOSS was not found to be a strong motive operating in female basketball players and female swimmers. Fear of parental/peer disapproval and fear of loss of femininity were found to be of low strength. Fear of social isolation and

rejection was categorized as being of medium strength. The most salient component of FOSS was fear of winning, which fell into the upper portion of the medium strength category. Mention was made of a selection process that could be operating in sports, that is, potential high FOSS females could have already dropped out of sports.

The second hypothesis proposed that there would be no difference in FOSS between female basketball players and female swimmers. A significant difference was found to exist between the two sports for the components of fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection, and fear of winning. Swimmers exhibited a significantly higher fear of loss of femininity and fear of social isolation and rejection. These results were attributed to the strenuous training involved in swimming, and to the extremely long swimming season. Basketball players had a significantly higher mean score than the swimmers for the fear of winning component. It was thought that this result could be due to the aggressive nature of basketball as compared to swimming.

The lack of difference in FOSS across scholastic levels, suggested by the third hypothesis, was supported. Even though there was a tendency for all of the components of FOSS to decrease with increasing scholastic level, no significant differences were reported. This result is consistent with that reported by Jackaway (1974) and Syrotuik (1975).

The fourth hypothesis stated that there would be no difference in FOSS among athletes with varying skill levels. In previous studies (Horner, 1968; Hoffman, 1971; and Lavach and Lanier, 1975) fear of success was found to be more characteristic of high achievement-

oriented or high ability women. Horner (1968) remarked that only if a woman is capable of success can she expect the negative consequences. Although Horner was referring to academic situations, an attempt was made in the present study to relate fear of success to high athletic ability. In this study, however, FOSS did not differ significantly among athletes whose skill level was rated as below average, average, above average or excellent.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It was suggested that fear of success could exist in sport because success conflicted with traditional feminine behavior. Fear of success in sport (FOSS) was defined as a psychological barrier that interfered with high athletic achievement. The four components of FOSS were identified as: fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of winning and fear of parental/peer disapproval.

The purpose of this study was to examine the four components of FOSS in female basketball players and female swimmers at three scholastic levels. FOSS was also examined in terms of definitive skill levels of the athletes as rated by their respective coaches. One hundred fifty (150) female basketball players and one hundred sixteen (116) female swimmers, all of whom were students from junior high schools, high schools and universities, participated in this study.

Subjects responded to a 44-item FOSS inventory developed specifically for this study. The inventory contained eleven items for each of the components of FOSS. Reliability of this instrument was determined to be .81.

The findings of this study indicated that FOSS was not as strong a motive for female athletes as might be expected. Fear of winning was found to be the most salient component of FOSS, followed

by fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of loss of femininity and fear of parental/peer disapproval, in that order.

The three scholastic levels and the four skill levels had no effect on any of the components of FOSS. There was a significant difference between the two sports for fear of loss of femininity, fear of social isolation and rejection and fear of winning. Swimmers showed a significantly higher fear of loss of femininity and fear of social isolation and rejection than did the basketball players. Fear of winning was found to be significantly higher for the basketball players than for the swimmers.

The results of this study could be a reflection of society's changing attitudes towards females who engage in vigorous physical activity. Within recent years there has been a rise of professional sporting opportunities for women. In addition, intensive efforts have been made by both federal and provincial governments to make the public aware of the benefits of physical activity for all ages and for both sexes. Where once the mesomorphic female athlete was likely to possess negative feelings concerning her body type (Caskey and Felker, 1971: 253), now a more healthy looking and muscular female body build seems to be in vogue. Factors such as these undoubtedly have influenced the attitude of the public toward the idea that sports are becoming the "in" thing for girls. Also, it seems that achieving success in sport does not detract from a woman's femininity, threaten her with feelings of becoming socially rejected or of incurring disapproval from parents or peers.

Conclusions

The conclusions from this study are as follows:

1. Fear of success in sport was not found to be a strong motive operating in female basketball players and female swimmers. Fear of winning was found to be the most salient component of FOSS, followed by fear of social isolation and rejection, fear of loss of femininity and fear of parental/peer disapproval, in that order.
2. There was no significant difference in fear of loss of femininity among junior high school, high school and university female athletes.
3. Fear of loss of femininity was significantly higher for the swimmers than for the basketball players.
4. There was no significant difference in fear of loss of femininity among female athletes of varying athletic ability.
5. There was no significant difference in fear of social isolation and rejection among junior high school, high school and university female athletes.
6. Fear of social isolation and rejection was significantly higher for female swimmers than for female basketball players.
7. There was no significant difference in fear of social isolation and rejection among female athletes of varying athletic ability.
8. There was no significant difference in fear of winning among junior high school, high school and university female athletes.
9. Fear of winning was significantly higher for female basketball players than for female swimmers.

10. There was no significant difference in fear of winning among female athletes of varying athletic ability.
11. There was no significant difference in fear of parental/peer disapproval among junior high school, high school and university female athletes.
12. There was no significant difference in fear of parental/peer disapproval between female basketball players and female swimmers.
13. There was no significant difference in fear of parental/peer disapproval among female athletes of varying athletic ability.

Implications for Further Study

Based on the results of the present study, the following are recommendations for further research:

1. The construction and validation of an instrument to measure FOSS is of utmost importance. Although an attempt was made in this study to construct such an instrument, much more research with the FOSS inventory is required before ultimate claims can be made about its validity or reliability.
2. An interesting project might be to administer the FOSS inventory to sport drop-outs. It is probable that FOSS would be more characteristic of this gr It could then be determined which components of FOSS have contributed to girls being "turned off" in terms of sport, and steps could be taken to rectify this situation.
3. It might be useful to repeat this study with females from varying levels of competition, such as provincial, national and international athletes.

4. It could also be worthwhile to examine FOSS among boys. Recent studies have related fear of success in academic situations to men. No such attempt, however, has been made in sport situations.
5. The emphasis of the present study was from a cultural viewpoint. In future research, personality could be an important variable to consider when dealing with FOSS.

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APPENDICES

A. Sample Stories (Horner)

B. Sample Stories (Syrotuik)

C. FOSS Inventory

D. Coaches' Rating Form

E. Cooperative Activities Program

F. Participating Basketball Teams and Swim Clubs

G. Letters Requesting Cooperation from Coaches

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE STORIES

(From "Sex Differences in Achievement Motivation and Performance in Competitive and Non-Competitive Situations" by Matina S. Horner)

Examples of female stories written to the cue: "At the end of first term finals, Anne finds herself at the top of her medical school class." (Horner, 1968):

1. Anne is an acne faced bookworm. She runs to the bulletin board and finds she's at the top. "As usual," she smarts off. A chorus of groans is the rest of the class's reply. Anne was always praised for her initiative and study habits, mainly because these were the only things one could praise her for. She studies twelve hours a day, and lives at home to save money. She rents her books. "Well it certainly paid off. All the Friday and Saturday nights with my books, who needs dates, fun. I'll be the best woman doctor alive." And yet, a twinge of sadness comes through; she wonders what she really has. But, as is her habit, she promptly erases that thought, and goes off reciting aloud the 231 bones in her wrist.

2. Anne has a boyfriend Carl in the same class and they are quite serious. Anne met Carl at college and they started dating around their soph. years in undergraduate school. Anne is rather upset and so is Carl. She wants him to be higher scholastically than she is. Anne will deliberately lower her academic standing the next term, while she does all she subtly can to help Carl. His grades come up and Anne soon drops out of med. school. They marry and he goes on in school while she raises their family.

Examples of typical male stories written to the cue: "At the end of first term finals, John finds himself at the head of his medical school class." (Horner, 1968):

1. John is a conscientious young man who worked hard. He is pleased with himself. John has always wanted to go into medicine and is very dedicated. His hard work has paid off. He is thinking that he must not let up now, but must work even harder than he did before. His good marks have encouraged him. (He may even consider going into research now.) While others with good first term marks slough off, John continues working hard and eventually graduates at the top of his class. (Specializing in neurology.)

2. John is very pleased with himself and he realized that all his efforts have been rewarded, he has finally made the top of his class. John has worked very hard, and his long hours of study have paid off. He spent hour after hour in preparation for finals. He is thinking about his girl Cheri whom he will marry at the end of med. school. He realizes he can give her all the things she desires after he becomes established. He will go on in med. school making good grades and be successful in the long run.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE STORIES

(From "Fear of Success in Sport Among Adolescent Girls" by Janice Syrotuik)

Sample stories written by males to the cue: "Dave and the girl he has been dating for over a year have decided to have a competition between the two of them to decide who is the better bowler." (Syrotuik, 1975):

1. Dave and Susan both of them bowlers and enjoy it have been dating for a year, with no problems at all but all of a sudden dave had to open his mouth and start and arument about who is the better bowler. Susan doesn't want to have this competition because she says it will probably break them up . . . "

2. Dave and his girlfriend are going to have a compitition in bowling. They just want to see which one is better for the fun of it. Dave thinks that he is going to win, but he doesn't. After it's over he is mad at his girlfriend but the next time she is going to let him win.

3. After school Dave and Delilah walked over the town bowling alley, they were both expert bowler and had been in several competitions each. Dave went first and made a strike. Delilah went next and made a strike also, Dave went again and made another strike, strike after strike the game went on until Dave got perplexed and would have no more. He promptly dropped a bowling ball on Delilah foot and ended the game.

Sample stories written by females to the cue: "A young girl is talking about something important with her coach." (Syrotuik, 1975):

1. A girl is explaining to her coach that she can not go on playing because she has torn some ligaments in her knee. The team looses the game because she is the best players on it after the game she is taken to the hospital and finds out that ther is nothing wrong with her.

2. A young girl talk about her important point. She is sorry that she made a mistake even though she won. She is not happy. Now she has to go to the playoffs.

3. Elaine has to ask a very important question with her coach after the game. She had scored the last couple minutes and they won 10 to nothing. Then after the game she had asked her coach was I suppose to score the last couple minutes, because I wasn't sure if I was suppose to or not, but I did. Is that alright? The coach said "Yes of course indeed."

APPENDIX C

FOSS INVENTORY

DIRECTIONS:

On the following pages, you will find statements that are designed to measure how you feel about female participation in competitive sports. There are no right or wrong answers, the best answer is your personal opinion. Try not to spend too much time on any one item. Be as honest as possible about your choice. Your answers will not be shown to anyone.

Read each statement carefully and decide how you feel about it or how it best describes you. Express your agreement or disagreement by marking one letter only for each statement on the separate answer sheet. Please answer all items. Use the code listed below:

A : Strongly Agree
B : Agree
C : Disagree
D : Strongly Disagree

1. Figure skating is more suitable for girls than hockey.
2. If I had a choice between going out with my boyfriend or practising my sport, I would rather practise.
3. When a coach tells me that my performance is good, I worry about doing as well the next time.
4. My parents encourage me to play sports.
5. I worry about getting large muscles because I am active in sports.
6. Boys like to date outstanding female athletes.
7. "Stars" should be selected after each competition.
8. Most people my own age are interested in sports.
9. I would rather be a shot putter than a ballet dancer.
10. I would like to have more friends outside of my sport.
11. I would rather win a team trophy than an individual trophy.
12. My parents would rather I helped around the house than play sports.
13. Training with weights is more suitable for boys than for girls.
14. Teammates are jealous of the best athlete on a team.
15. I would rather be a top best in my sport than the best.
16. People my own age think that sports that make you "sweat" are mostly for boys.
17. If I had "bulgy" muscles, I would wear clothes to hide them.
18. I usually only date boys who participate in sports.
19. People expect too much from an outstanding athlete while she is competing.
20. My parents think of me as the "tomboy" of the family.
21. It is natural for girls to be aggressive when they play sports.
22. Sports take up too much of my time.
23. I would like to be as well-known in my sport as Nancy Greene is in her sport.
24. My classmates (peers) think that most female athletes are masculine looking.
25. I don't mind practising for my sport, but I wouldn't like training with weights.
26. Boys don't like to marry good female athletes.
27. Being liked by my teammates is more important than being the best athlete in my sport.
28. People my own age usually discourage girls from participating in sports.

29. I would like to win against my boyfriend when we are playing sports together.

30. I often miss out on social events because of my participation in sports.

31. If a girl's athletic performance is excellent, people expect it always to be excellent.

32. My parents would come to watch me compete in my sport if they had time.

33. Football teams should be organized for girls.

34. Teammates admire the best athlete on a team.

35. People ridicule an outstanding athlete who performs badly on one occasion.

36. My classmates (peers) respect female athletes.

37. Female athletes who have large muscles do not look feminine.

38. My only interest is my sport.

39. I would like to be the world's best female athlete in my sport.

40. My parents think sports are a waste of time.

41. It does not bother me if I am called a "tomboy".

42. Female athletes are often voted to head committees in the school or university.

43. Teammates depend too much on the best athlete on a team during a competition.

44. My parents do not like me to be involved in sports.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

APPENDIX D

COACHES' RATING FORM

ATHLETE'S NAME: _____

How does this athlete's skill level compare with other athletes in your league?

EXCELLENT _____

ABOVE AVERAGE _____

AVERAGE _____

BELOW AVERAGE _____

APPENDIX E

COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

1. Nature of Activity (Check One)

   Student Teaching Internship ___ Demonstration/Experimentation ___

   Special Practicum ___ Research X

2. Organization to be Involved

   Edmonton Public School System X County of Strathcona ___.

   Edmonton Separate School System ___ St. Albert Protestant/Separate School System ___

   N.A.I.T. ___

   U. of A. Faculty of _____ Other _____

3. Requestor (staff member)

   Name Prof. J. G. Donlevy Position Asst. Prof. Faculty of Phys. Ed.

   Date February 2, 1976

   Request made on behalf of Miss Christine LeBlanc

4. Description of Activity - Include title, objectives, procedures, evaluation techniques, etc.

   Fear of Success in Sport among Female Swimmers and Female Basketball Players

   Please find enclosed a detailed description of this study.

5. Anticipated value to requestor

   The completion of this project will fulfill the requirements for a Master's thesis.

6. Anticipated value to cooperating organizations

   It is hoped that the results of this study will make coaches aware of some of the problems facing female athletes. This study could also explain why some female athletes do not reach their athletic potential.

7. Estimate of cost (see remuneration guidelines).

   There will be no cost involved.

8. Suggested personnel, schools and times

Schools are listed separately.
The most suitable time is during the week of February 23-27.
Testing will take place during regular basketball practises.

For Office Use Only

Approved by _____ Division of Field Experiences

Date _____

Approved by _____

Date _____

Subject to the following conditions:

(a) A report of the results of findings of this project is required by the cooperating school system (Check one) Yes___ No ___.

(b) Other

APPENDIX F

PARTICIPATING BASKETBALL TEAMS AND SWIM CLUBS

Basketball Teams

Junior High Schools:
- Dickinsfield
- Highlands
- Londonderry
- Ottewell
- Vernon Barford
- Westmount

High Schools:
- Bonnie Doon
- Harry Ainlay
- Jasper Place
- M. E. LaZerte
- Queen Elizabeth
- Ross Sheppard

Universities:
- Alberta
- Calgary
- Saskatchewan

Swim Clubs

- Bonnie Doon Blue Fins
- Canadian Dolphin Swim Club
- Cascade Swim Club
- Foothills Swim Club
- Jasper Place Swim Club
- Manitoba Marlins
- North Edmonton Sharks
- Olympian Swim Club
- Saskatoon Kinsmen Goldfins
- Saskatoon Y Knots
- South Side Swim Club
- Stettler Centennial Swim Club
- Thunder Bay Thunderbolts

University Swim Teams:
- Alberta
- Calgary

APPENDIX G

LETTERS REQUESTING COOPERATION FROM COACHES

FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA T6G 2H9

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

March 8, 1976

Dear _____:

Miss Christine LeBlanc, one of our Graduate Students, is undertaking an in-depth study of Fear of Success in Female Basketball Players and Swimmers.

It is my feeling that this study will give physical educators and coaches greater insight into the reasons female athletes succeed, fail to reach their athletic potential or simply drop out of sports.

Your cooperation in having your athletes complete this inventory will give Miss LeBlanc's study significant validity and give her work meaning to coaches in a number of team and individual sports.

I encourage you to complete and return this enclosed questionnaire at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

J. G. Donlevy
Assistant Professor

JGD/jdn
Encl.

FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA T6G 2H9

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

March 8, 1976

Dear Coach:

I would appreciate your cooperation on this research project for my Master's thesis. Could you have all the female members of your team respond to the enclosed inventory on the computerized answer sheet. It is advisable that this inventory be completed during a regular practise session, under your supervision.

Could you fill out a "coaches' rating form" for each athlete.

Please foward answer sheets and rating forms to the following address as soon as possible.

Miss Christine LeBlanc
Faculty of Physical Education
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. All information received will be held in strict confidence.

Sincerely,

Christi: eBlanc

CL/jdn
Encls.