Exploring How Coaching Practices Impact Athletes' Holistic Development Opportunities

by

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Abstract

Recently, sport psychology consulting has transitioned from a focus on mental skills training to helping athletes develop holistically by developing themselves as people in addition to sportspeople (Bond, 2002; Miller & Kerr, 2002; Friesen & Orlick, 2010). While this pursuit is well-intentioned, interventions designed to address holistic development remain focused on individuals. After being exposed to Foucault's (1995) concept of disciplinary power and how Foucauldian coaching researchers have applied his work to problematize traditional sport settings (e.g., Denison 2007; Denison, Mills, & Konoval, 2015a; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Shogan, 1999), I noticed a gap in the current holistic sport psychology interventions (Friesen & Orlick, 2011) as they were missing a consideration of how 'the social' impacts athletes.

Foucauldian coaching literature has shown that there are unintentional consequences to dominant coaching practices which tend to reinforce athlete docility and the athlete as machine discourse through a coach's use of disciplinary power (e.g., Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Denison, Mills, & Jones, 2013; Gearity & Mills, 2012). Importantly, these unintended effects appear to restrict athletes from being able to benefit from the current holistic sport psychology interventions, as they are limited from seeing themselves as unique people, to make decisions, and to act authentically. To explore how athletes were being affected by dominant coaching practices, and particularly how discipline impacted their holistic development opportunities, I conducted a qualitative study with a local soccer Academy. My data consisted of field notes from weekly observations of both coaches and athletes during their training sessions, as well as transcripts from interviews with the athletes to learn about their experiences at training. Three interviews were completed with each athlete participant to be able to capture moments of growth during the athletes' participation in the Academy.

My findings reinforced my early concerns, as discipline often acted to restrict and limit athletes in multiple ways not previously considered by sport psychology consultants. Through the athlete as machine discourse, coach-athlete interactions worked to confine athletes to a homogenous understanding of themselves. Furthermore, I found that discipline worked to promote a docile athlete position whereby athletes were discouraged from thinking for themselves and limited in their decision-making opportunities. Lastly, as power fixed athletes to a 'norm', they were pulled in opposing directions as they often had to choose between acting authentically or acting according to their coaches' expectations. While there were moments where athletes were less restricted and limited in their opportunities to see themselves as people, think for themselves, and choose their actions, these moments occurred when disciplinary power was less pervasive. Importantly, I outlined that athletes face multiple barriers to holistic development within a disciplinary sport environment, and as such it is important for sport psychology consultants to be aware of said barriers and create new interventions designed to address them if they wish to be effective in their practice.

My study was unique in that it aimed to connect sport psychology and sport sociology, answering Thorpe, Ryba, and Denison's (2014) call to bring the two fields together in conversation. In doing so, I was able to show support for taking an interdisciplinary approach to research and consulting practice, as it is imperative that we consider how both 'the individual' and 'the social' impact athletes' experience, well-being, and performance. Therefore, I propose that we reimagine holistic sport psychology philosophy and subsequent interventions from a poststructural lens to better facilitate athletes' holistic development.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Lydia Sokol. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "Exploring How Coaching Practices Impact Athlete Holistic Development Opportunities", No. Pro00089648, May 13, 2019.

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1.0 Introduction

As an avid sports fan, I often reflect on the biggest names in hockey and how they are described compared to the average players. It has been suggested that Sidney Crosby "finds ways to score and places to pass the puck that few players can think of, let alone execute" (Kurtzberg, 2013). I consistently hear friends attempt to explain how Connor McDavid's impressive speed comes as a result of a unique skating technique that is not traditionally taught. In what is typically considered the best hockey goal of all time, Alex Ovechkin seemed to defy physics as he scored from his back. These players and their plays are connected by several factors that, from my perspective, set them apart from their competitors. Crosby, McDavid, and Ovechkin all possess a combination of high skill level, a sense of innovation and outside-the-box thinking, and a lot of hard work and discipline.

Unfortunately, sometimes discipline runs too heavily, becomes too strong, and as a result, athletes may not be capable of doing things on their own or doing things beyond what they have been taught. From an academic point of view, this is known as docility. Specifically, docility, as an unintended consequence of dominant coaching practices, refers to being placed in a submissive and obedient position, where athletes follow their coach's instructions without being offered an opportunity to think critically or creatively about their actions (Pringle, 2007). This lack of control over their bodies can leave athletes feeling as if they are merely 'going through the motions' when they participate in sport (Denison, 2007). Docility can then restrict athletes from developing the creativity and critical thinking necessary to invent never-before-seen movements or strategies that can propel them and their team to a more successful position.

Importantly, the discipline that produces docility within athletes simultaneously works to improve utility by increasing performance (Mills & Denison, 2013). As such, coaches who are

not aware of the unintended consequences of their actions may only recognize the utility of their disciplinary practice – indeed, docile athletes have won gold medals. However, docile athletes may not reach their full potential and may instead become cogs within a system that values control over athlete interaction, learning, and personal growth (Denison, Mills, & Konoval, 2015a). Therefore, practices that may at first appear effective in transforming athletes into winning competitors can at the same time limit an athlete's ability to think or act for themselves (McMahon, Penney, & Dinan-Thompson, 2012). In this way, good athletes may be inhibited from becoming great, innovative athletes, and in some cases, athletic performance may actually suffer (Denison, 2007).

So, we know that many athletes, especially at an elite level, have high skill, discipline, and a strong work ethic, but what if we could take them even further? How might we take athletes to a level they have never reached? Perhaps the answer lies in part in helping athletes develop creativity and critical thinking skills, like those exemplified by Crosby, McDavid, and Ovechkin, and perhaps we can achieve this better by removing the disciplinary barriers shown to restrict such innovation. Imagine the potential of an athlete who has developed elite skills through hard work, but isn't restricted by discipline, who hasn't been made docile? What an athlete that would be!

Now, sport psychology consultants have long been searching for ways to help athletes reach their full potential, as it is their job to psychologically support athletes so they may optimize performance and improve well-being (e.g., Fortin-Guichard, Boudreault, Gagnon, & Trottier, 2018). Recently, some sport psychology consultants have taken a holistic approach to help athletes minimize their barriers to sport performance, where consultants aim to help athletes develop as people (e.g., Friesen & Orlick, 2010; Miller & Kerr, 2002). However, while the

intentions behind promoting holistic athlete development are valiant, the interventions that typically make up consulting work represent a troubling pattern within the wider field of sport psychology. Many sport psychology interventions remain hyper-focused on individuals and their ability to 'fix' their problems by working on bettering themselves, and as such, the barriers athletes face are usually conceptualized as personal issues (Denison & Winslade, 2006).

Unfortunately, due to this narrowed focus on individuals, there is a prominent gap within sport psychology literature where an awareness of how 'the social' impacts an athlete is absent. Even social psychology, which concerns itself with how the environment or cultural influences impact individuals, fails to consider how sport as an institution is shaped by forces such as power and knowledge. When a sociological lens is used to view sport psychology practices, it becomes clear that what initially appears promising is actually problematic. Without challenging the dominant discourse and power relations that produce harmful consequences, current interventions fall short of creating the change they intend. Instead, individual based interventions that claim to help athletes enhance performance or develop holistically disregard the "wider operations of power that can serve to subordinate, normalize and objectify athletes' bodies and as a consequence limit… athletes" (Denison et al., 2015a, p. 2).

Of particular influence on my recent skepticism is the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault. Through a detailed inspection of the prison system, Foucault developed a theory on how disciplinary power was used to contain and manipulate prisoners (Foucault, 1995). Over time, researchers began to recognize and explore a connection between Foucault's concepts and the sporting environment. These Foucauldian sport scholars have shown how a coach's use of disciplinary power within a sport setting can have negative unintended consequences on athletes, such as docility (e.g., Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Denison, 2007; Johns & Johns, 2000;

Shogan, 1999). While common coaching practices have produced high performance athletes, these practices can also harm athletes and inhibit their sporting performance, as they are based on powerful, taken-for-granted knowledge (Denison, 2007). Foucault (1980) explained that when certain knowledges are widely accepted as truth, they become normalized and thus remain out of reach of critique. Scientific knowledge such as physiology, biomechanics, and psychology, for example, are typically unquestioned in terms of their importance in informing coaching practices and moulding the sporting environment. While these knowledges are not inherently harmful, it is important to critically reflect on how the logic that forms such dominant knowledge may be unintentionally restricting athlete experiences and performance (Pringle, 2007).

After learning about the unintended implications of dominant coaching practices on athletes, I contemplated how a sport psychology consultant could further play a role in improving athlete experiences by incorporating Foucauldian theory into their practice. As many poststructural sport scholars have shown, power within a sporting context operates through coaching practices that work to maintain an imbalanced coach-athlete relationship (e.g., Denison, Pringle, Cassidy, & Hessian, 2015b). Therefore, sport psychology consultants must be aware of the discursive formation of coaching knowledge that works to reinforce a coach-athlete power imbalance and subsequently produce unintended harmful consequences. Otherwise, efforts to help athletes develop holistically to improve performance may fall short.

While the previously described research demonstrates that there has been a growing emphasis placed on social theory within the coaching literature, poststructural concepts have not gained significant inroads into the field of sport psychology. Recently however, there has been a call to bridge the gap between sport sociology and sport psychology by "critically [examining] knowledge and practice together – how we know what to do and how we do what we know to do

and why" (p. 134), so that sport research can initiate meaningful change (Thorpe, Ryba, & Denison, 2014). My thesis answers this call by bringing attention to the way athletes are affected by dominant coaching practices, building on current coaching literature which suggests that disciplinary power works to restrict athletes from holistic development.

1.1 Purpose and Significance

The purpose of my research was to bring sociology and psychology into conversation through their application in sport to help improve athlete performance, experience, and well-being. In doing so, I introduced the poststructural concept of discipline into the sport psychology literature, as introducing marginalized knowledge can result in creating new opportunities and possibilities for innovative practices to develop (Denison & Avner, 2011). Specifically, I worked to understand how discipline, as part of coaching practices, impacts athletes' opportunities for holistic development by exploring athlete experiences throughout a sporting program. Therefore, not only does my research add to the Foucauldian coaching literature by considering the direct perspective of the athletes, it also contributes to the expanding field of holistic sport psychology by introducing an awareness of how social forces influence athletic bodies. As such, I am aiming to introduce sociological knowledge to the field of sport psychology in an attempt to address some known barriers to athlete performance and well-being.

1.2 Thesis Structure

The following literature review chapter of my thesis is intended to summarize both the Foucauldian-informed coaching literature and holistic sport psychology literature. I specifically explain how my own research project contributes to the field of sport psychology by introducing a number of Foucauldian concepts. First, I review Foucault's analysis of discipline and its

unintended consequences. Then, I explore holistic sport psychology and its interventions to suggest the introduction of poststructural knowledge into the field of sport psychology.

Next is my methodology chapter, where I explain how I designed my study to learn how athletes' experiences with a range of disciplinary coaching practices impacts their holistic development, and how my study is encompassed within the poststructural paradigm. What follows is my results and discussion chapter, where I present and analyze my empirical material gathered during my study in three themes. Lastly, my conclusion chapter summarizes my study findings and provides insights into future research directions.

2.0 Literature Review

The following literature review chapter of this thesis is intended to conceptualize and rationalize my study within Foucauldian-informed sport research and sport psychology research. As such, I will summarize both areas of literature and suggest support for their intersection through my thesis. My literature review will be divided into four main sections. The first section aims to explore disciplinary power as it relates to sport. Furthermore, I will briefly describe the specific techniques and instruments of disciplinary power that are often utilized by coaches. In the second section, I will explain how docility and the athlete as machine discourse, as unintended consequences of disciplinary practice, can limit and restrict athletes. I will further suggest that disciplinary power can act as a barrier to athlete performance and well-being that is of relevance to sport psychology consultants, as it is their goal to improve athlete experiences.

These unintended consequences of disciplinary practice are particularly pertinent to holistic sport psychology consultants, and so the third section of my literature review will summarize holistic sport psychology philosophy and subsequent interventions. Importantly, the interventions commonly used by holistic consultants are well-intentioned, but they may not be as effective in helping athletes develop holistically when they are operationalized within a restricting and limiting disciplinary environment that is common in many sporting contexts. The final section of my literature review will describe my novel research study that began to address this disconnect between the restrictions on athletes shown within the Foucauldian sport literature and the effectiveness of holistic sport psychology interventions.

2.1 Disciplinary Power

During his life as a historian of thought, Michel Foucault was thoroughly interested in exploring the ways in which modern power was exercised, and from an extensive analysis of the prison system, he concluded that discipline was the essential mechanism to increasing one's control. Foucault (1995) found many similarities between the prison system and hospitals, schools, the military, and workplaces, in that discipline was at the center of controlling human behaviour. Recently, sport has been included as another space where Foucault's concepts of power relations have been applied to manipulate individual behaviour. Shogan (1999) explained how "the discipline of high-performance sport produces a set of knowledges about 'the athlete,' who is then controlled and shaped by these knowledges in a constant pressure to conform to a standard of high performance" (p. 10). In these cases, discipline is used to shift the balance of power towards those in charge, as they are able to gain access to the bodies, attitudes, and actions of individuals (Foucault, 1980). This power relation develops people who are "objects of information [rather than] a subject in communication" (Foucault, 1995, p. 200). Without the capacity to choose their own actions and influence how they are treated, individuals subjected to disciplinary power can become docile and may only operate at the mercy of authority figures. Effectively, as their ability to be actively engaged in their environment is compromised, these individuals become 'cogs in the system'.

The process of reducing people to cogs within a system works to then reinforce the disciplinary power that placed them in such a position, as individuals are taught that the system and their position within it is normal. When such power relations become dominant and normalized in this way, the structure they create exists unquestioned, and its harmful effects are often hidden. As such, Foucault (1988) advocated for critically analyzing and problematizing

institutions' use of disciplinary power, and many researchers have answered his call. Recently, sociologically informed sport scholars have turned to Foucault's (1995) theories to examine and critique common coaching practices that reinforce disciplinary power in order to "alter behaviour, to train or correct individuals" (p. 203) in the ceaseless pursuit of winning.

In order to critique coaching practices, it is important to first recognize exactly how disciplinary power is exercised. Foucault (1995) explained how discipline trains and shapes bodies through the organization and regulation of time, space, and movement. These specific spatial, temporal, and movement manipulations, termed by Foucault as disciplinary techniques and instruments, have been shown to coerce individuals "to govern their thoughts and behaviours in line with particular 'rules', procedures and ways of being" (Denison et al., 2015a, p. 3). As discipline becomes more invasive, athletes become shaped, trained, and impressed with "the habituated gestures, procedures, and values of a discipline" (Shogan, 1999, p. 9). The techniques include the art of distributions, the control of activity, the organization of genesis, and the composition of forces, which are presupposed and sustained by the instruments of disciplinary power: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement, and the examination, each of which will now be described in brief.

2.1.1 Art of Distributions

Foucault (1995) explained that "discipline proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space" (p. 141). The art of distribution thus refers to the control of the body through the organization of space. Foucault elaborated to suggest that the manipulation of space allows those in charge to supervise individuals, to know where each person is at any given moment, so they may assess and judge a person's actions. Denison, Mills, and Jones (2013) recognized how a coach's use of space minimizes confusion and maximizes efficiency to allow for a greater ability

to judge athletes' progress and performance, creating useful space to "classify or rank athletes according to their abilities" (p. 391). This judgement, however, can limit and control an athlete's autonomy and development (Denison, 2007). In an examination of how youth gymnasts were affected and shaped by disciplinary power, Barker-Ruchti and Tinning (2010) recognized that spatial organization had productive effects as athletes improved their skills, but also left the gymnasts at the mercy of authority and surveillance.

2.1.2 Control of Activity

Another technique of disciplinary power was the control of the body through regulated cycles of time. Through an establishment of rhythms with timetables and a breakdown of movement into successive elements, "time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power" (Foucault, 1995, p. 152). When considering the rigid scheduled training sessions in sport, coaches believe it is essential to use time efficiently, and so every minute is designed to maximize productivity. This devotion to efficiency has effects beyond creating skilled athletes. In their study on discipline in a strength and conditioning setting, Gearity and Mills (2012) found that the coach's constant management of time dominated his practices and restricted consideration of alternative methods. As a result, "athletes were rarely asked how they felt; they had no input into programme design or session planning" (Gearity & Mills, 2012, p. 6). Furthermore, in the pursuit of attaining perfect performances, athletes were not allowed to fail in their learning process or permitted to rest as their body required, with the coach reflecting that "it'd be nice to have a longer rest but I can't sacrifice the time" (Gearity & Mills, 2012, p. 6).

2.1.3 Organisation of Genesis

Once time and space are organized and controlled, disciplinary power is exercised through "the development of successive or parallel segments" of movements (Denison et al., 2013, p. 393). This 'seriation' of successive activities makes possible a detailed control and a regular intervention of differentiation, correction, punishment, and elimination (Foucault, 1995). Importantly, the segments are organized into an analytical plan with increasing complexity that is concluded with an examination to judge the competence and utility of each athlete (Gearity & Mills, 2012). Athletes can then be progressed through the program in an efficient and timely manner, maximizing advantages and neutralizing the inconveniences (Foucault, 1995). Conversely, this succession also makes struggling 'problem athletes' more visible, as it is clear when an athlete is unable to progress to the next segment. As coaches have a never-ending supply of athletes to select from, particularly at the higher level of sport, this visibility coupled with the desire to increase production places athletes at the coach's disposal.

2.1.4 Composition of Forces

The final technique Foucault (1995) described refers to the combination of the previous three techniques. With the composition of these disciplinary forces, the body is made into an efficient machine. As athletes are developed into machines, they are expected to follow commands quickly and precisely without requiring or desiring any explanation (Gearity & Mills, 2012). The composition of forces is particularly effective for creating productive teams, as individuals are expected to combine their skills into an "efficient unit" (p. 33) that can increase performance (Shogan, 1999). Furthermore, Denison et al. (2013) recognized that through this technique, each individual is seen as having an important role within the 'multi-segmentary machine' that is a team. In this way, athletes are stripped of their individuality, as it is a body's

place within this machine that holds purpose, rather than its unique qualities (Denison et al., 2013).

2.1.5 Hierarchical Observation

The instrument of hierarchical observation refers to a key mechanism of discipline that "coerces by means of observation" (Foucault, 1995, p. 170). Individuals who are made visible through this instrument become knowable, and therefore subject to disciplinary power (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Constant supervision is a common coaching practice, as leaving athletes to their own devices can result in mistakes in their training, which is not an option when coaches are aiming for the highest levels of performance (Denison et al., 2013). Importantly, this observation must be discreet so that an athlete is "constantly aware of being visible but is also never able to identify it" (Denison et al., 2013, p. 396). Williams and Manley (2016), who conducted a study on how surveillance technologies impacted rugby players, found that with an increased use of video analysis, athletes felt "judged as disposable products" (p. 843) as they inverted their coach's gaze internally. This self-surveillance can strip athletes of their sense of ambitions, enthusiasm, or embodiment that may drive their sport participation, as they can begin to perceive themselves as mere workers within a disciplinary system (Denison et al., 2015a).

2.1.6 Normalizing Judgement

One reason coaches are employed is to correct athletes' movement in an effort reduce their mistakes and errors. The correction (or punishment) utilized by coaches leads to athletes being judged, instilling in them a constant pressure to conform to a coach's expectations (Denison et al., 2013). Foucault (1995) explained how this judgement "compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes", and in short, "it *normalizes"* (italics in original, p. 183)

Furthermore, surveillance prompts a normalizing judgement, whereby coaches can easily compare and judge athletes against a 'norm' of ideal movement. As athletes are held to a normalized standard, they are taught to work towards this ideal, and as such athletes become homogenized. At a first glance, homogenization amongst teammates appears to be a desirable outcome. There is utility to having a group of athletes who all move the same way, and indeed this helps coaches maintain control over how their athletes perform.

However, homogeneity has unintended consequences that can harm athletes. In their study on athletes in the weight room, Gearity and Mills (2012) explained how individuals who expressed themselves and disagreed with a coach's expectations were frequently reminded that they could "go ahead and quit, coach will just replace you" (p. 5). These athletes were thus reminded that they are disposable, and there is an abundance of homogenous athletes desperate for the opportunity to compete. Diversity within athletes is seen as undesirable, and athletes are punished when they deviate from the norm. This normalizing judgement also enables coaches to assess which athletes are higher in skill level and subsequently reward stronger players with more competitive opportunities (Shogan, 1999). Therefore, players who conform are rewarded and deviant athletes are punished, further reinforcing homogenization.

2.1.7 The Examination

Shogan (1999) noted that "it is not enough for coaches to know how to distribute individuals in time and space... a coach must also know who is most skilled for a particular competition or situation" (p. 35). Coaches may gather this knowledge via the examination. According to Foucault (1995), the examination is a combination of observing hierarchy and normalizing judgement – "it is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish" (p. 184). The examination is often found within sport,

particularly through ritualized fitness tests and sporting competitions (Markula & Pringle, 2006), as well as during training when coaches assess each athlete's physical and mental aptitude (Gearity & Mills, 2012). The results of each examination impact an athlete's position within the team, or their rank, as gaps are determined and levels are measured between players. Coaches are then able to assess how close their team is to achieving the desired performance, justifying interventions to control and manipulate athletes furthest away from the normalized standard (Shogan, 1999).

Various Foucauldian sport scholars have outlined and problematized several unintended effects of these disciplinary practices on athletes including increased injuries, depression, docility, and early sport retirement (Avner, Jones, & Denison, 2014). For the purpose of my research project, I will focus on docility, as it is a consequence of particular relevance to the work of holistic sport psychology consultants.

2.2 Docility

Disciplinary power defines "how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines" (Foucault, 1995, p. 138). When an athlete is reduced to operating as their coach wishes due to the previously explained mechanisms of power, they can become docile.

In their ethnographic study on how sport participation shaped young female gymnasts, Barker-Ruchti and Tinning (2010) explored the docile-making effects of dominant coaching practices. They recognized that many of these coaching practices had productive effects as athletes were able to greatly improve their skills. However, these same practices simultaneously

left the gymnasts "subject to authority and surveillance" (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010, p. 240). As such, the authors found that the athletes were left problematically "actively passive" (p. 240) – active in their physical movements but passive in their ability to influence their sport participation through decision-making or creating their routines. Pronger (2002) explained that when a body is coerced into presence exclusively in terms of its utility, it is rendered docile. It is in this way that a body becomes more obedient as it becomes more useful, and vice versa (Foucault, 1995). Mills and Denison (2013) further supported the docility-utility relationship evident within dominant coaching practices, suggesting that while a limitless subjection of the athletic body leads to increased sport performance in the form of records and medals, it can also reinforce athlete docility.

Other scholars have found similar consequences and recognized that dominant coaching practices place athletes in a docile position of being well-disciplined, submissive, and obedient (Denison, 2007), and thus easily taught (Mills & Denison, 2013). Underperformance, injury, and a lack of self-awareness are further unintended effects of docility, which work to limit athlete health and well-being (Gearity & Mills, 2012). Such unintended consequences can also leave little room for holistic development and can therefore act as barriers to holistic sport psychology consultants.

Importantly, docile bodies are produced through a strict control and organisation of training practices. Denison (2007) explained more specifically that a coach's organization of time and space worked to shape athletes into becoming "well-disciplined, economically efficient and obedient" (p. 375). Again, this strict organization had productive effects in that it helped the athletes move quickly through the training schedule, minimized distractions, and kept the athletes visible to allow the coaches to correct mistakes. However, this incessant coach gaze

made possible by the organization of athletes within the space reinforced docility as athletes were under constant surveillance. In this way, docile athletes can become "cogs in a system where interaction, learning and personal growth [are] subservient to strict practices of control" (Denison et al., 2015a, p. 3). Importantly, holistic sport psychology is dependant on athletes being able to interact, learn, and grow, so this restricting environment may be problematic. Additionally, docility further restricts athletes as it reinforces a powerful discourse known as the athlete as machine. Due to its prevalence in relation to the aims of holistic sport psychology, this discourse and its effect on athletes will be described in the following section.

2.2.1 Athlete as Machine Discourse

It is important to recognize that disciplinary power is exercised both "at the level of the body controlled through technology" as well as "through the subject matter of a discipline conveyed through discourse" (Shogan, 1999, p. 10). In fact, disciplinary power requires "the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse" (Foucault, 1980, p. 93). A discourse can be understood as a particular way of knowing and doing that shapes our reality. They are socially constructed, historically created, and are thus typically taken for granted and difficult to identify, often being viewed as 'natural'. When a discourse becomes normalized in this way, it becomes dominant and hidden from critique. This can be problematic, as discourse often has negative unintended consequences. Furthermore, in acting through power, discourses determine who can say what, and so they also limit who can meaningfully speak and participate. In sport, it is a coach's voice and perspective that is powerful over an athlete's experience. Shogan (1999) elaborated, suggesting that a coach's expertise and knowledge are translated into "ever more exacting technologies of docility to produce ever more disciplined athletes" (p. 39). As athletes are made docile, they become more susceptible to the athlete as machine discourse.

One of the most prominent and problematic discourses within sport is the athlete as machine. Foucault suggested that "the cumulative result of successful disciplinary training… is the production of a docile but 'efficient machine' (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 102). Within this discourse, bodies are considered mechanical, with lever systems and motor engines (Gleyse, 2013), and minds are viewed as programmable computers. Melin (2013) expanded, suggesting that "a sportsperson's body is [seen as] a pure instrument of a subject which can and need to be controlled and modified with the aim of attaining perfectedness" (p. 2). The prominent conceptualization within many sport sciences is to refer to athletes as nothing more than manipulatable objects that are programmable and thus predictable in both their thoughts and their movements.

As athletes are viewed as machines, knowledge explaining how the human body functions in mechanical terms such as physiology, anatomy, biomechanics, and psychology become dominant in that they provide methods to fix and manipulate 'broken' (read: underperforming) bodies. While such knowledge is not inherently bad, its dominance restricts athlete engagement and reinforces athlete docility, as they are at the mercy of coach decisions. Therefore, this discourse places the coach in a position of power, as their knowledge dictates that they are the sole owners of the expertise required to achieve a perfect performance. Meanwhile, athletes are expected to be obedient and disciplined and are limited in the emotions and opinions they may express.

Additionally, these athletic machines are often celebrated for how they robotically "conform by not questioning the umpire or coach, the value of competing, nor the rationality of arduous training requirements" (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Furthermore, the athlete as machine discourse produces homogeneity amongst athlete bodies, as the mastery of an efficient gesture

"involves a process of assimilation" (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010, p. 241). Athletes' differences are erased as team cultures promote conformity and favour 'coachable' athletes (Denison et al., 2015a). Through normalization of judgement, the athlete as machine discourse creates essentially a homogenous group of compliant soldiers, disciplined into "perfect alignment, immobility and silence" (Foucault, 1995, p. 177). Non-conforming athletes who deviate from the coach's expectations are thus seen as replaceable, as coaches have a never-ending production line of docile bodies waiting at the ready for their chance to be champions.

In this way, the literature shows that athletes are being moulded into docile machines, whereby submission, homogeneity, and efficiency are reinforced over creativity, independence, and a quality learning process. Such consequences are quite relevant to sport psychology consultants, as they have an immediate impact on their work. When athletes are made to be docile, they may be more susceptible to burnout, early sport retirement, or injury (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Denison et al., 2015b; Pringle, 2007) – undesirable experiences that typically interest sport psychology consultants. Therefore, docile athletes may face additional barriers to their sport experience and performance. These barriers are particularly relevant for holistic sport psychology consultants, as their philosophy centers itself around athletes being able to recognize themselves as full human beings. I will further explain holistic sport psychology philosophy and its interventions below.

2.3 Holistic Sport Psychology

Holistic sport psychology emerged initially as an athlete-centered philosophy aiming to minimize barriers associated with sport participation (Bond, 2002; Miller & Kerr, 2002). The popular approach to sport psychology, known as mental skills training, had been critiqued as

merely "a bandage, a superficial solution that slows the bleeding without determining why the bleeding occurred in the first place or stopping it permanently" (Corlett, 1996, p. 90). Practitioners found that, despite attempts to improve athletic performance and well-being through mental skills training, athletes participating in high level sport often suffered in their overall development. In an effort to help athletes address their problems at a more fundamental level and aid in their overall development, many consultants began to adopt a holistic sport psychology philosophy (Miller & Kerr, 2002). A more detailed explanation of this philosophy and its interventions will follow in the upcoming sections.

2.3.1 Holistic Sport Psychology Philosophy

As sport psychology began to diverge from the mental skills approach to performance enhancement, practicing sport psychology consultants realized that an athlete's improvement in a sporting context is facilitated by their personal growth (Andersen, Van Raalte, & Brewer, 2001; Friesen & Orlick, 2010; Miller & Kerr, 2002; Ravizza, 2002). The sporting environment does not facilitate holistic development naturally, so practitioners aimed to shift their focus towards giving athletes opportunities to improve personally as well as athletically. Indeed, literature began to promote the importance of understanding and recognizing that an athlete is a functioning person in addition to being a sportsperson (Bond, 2002). From this perspective came a surge in holistic athlete development as a goal designed not only to improve athlete performance, but to address issues related to an individual's non-performance identity, and eventually holistic sport psychology was established as a professional consulting philosophy (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). This philosophy contains at its core three central perspectives: 'environmental effects', 'developing the core individual', and 'whole being'.

The first perspective refers to a recognition that athletes are affected by multiple environments outside of the sporting environment. In this sense, while athletes are often expected to leave any 'emotional baggage' from their daily stress at the training door, this is not realistic as their non-sport selves and their athlete selves coexist and therefore impact one another. For example, if an athlete's parents are getting divorced, they may struggle to keep intense focus during a training session and their typical performance level may decrease. The second perspective explains that sport psychology consultants should acknowledge that athletes will perform better when they can develop a sense of who they are as a human being beyond merely an athlete. Helping athletes develop a strong personal core will give them a foundation to lean on when the stress and demands of competition and training increase. Additionally, solely nurturing an athletic identity can have negative consequences for athletes. For example, without a holistic sense of self, a poor performance may jeopardize an athlete's self-worth (Ravizza, 2002), or an athlete removed from sport via injury or retirement may feel a loss of purpose. The third perspective requires that sport psychology consultants be aware of how behaviour, thoughts, feelings, and physiology interact within each person to affect their performance. In recognizing that an athlete's sporting experience is affected by these multiple components, sport psychology consultants can view the athlete as a whole being. The thoughts behind promoting holistic athlete development are well-intentioned, as sport psychology consultants are aiming to overcome common sporting barriers to athletic performance and well-being.

However, the interventions that are currently practiced by holistic sport psychology consultants do not take into account how disciplinary practices work to restrict and limit athletes through docility and the athlete as machine discourse. Without considering the unintended consequences of disciplinary power, namely docility, which as I have explained can have

sustained effects on athletes' health and well-being (McMahon et al., 2012), the current interventions may not be as effective in helping athletes develop holistically. The interventions and my concern with their limitations will be explored in greater detail in the section below.

2.3.2 Holistic Sport Psychology Interventions

Expanding on their previous study on holistic sport psychology philosophy, Friesen and Orlick (2011) explored how holistic sport psychology consultants put their philosophy into practice through interventions. Participants explained that the primary goal of holistic sport psychology consulting was to help athletes reach their physical potential through personal growth and development. In other words, in recognizing that you can't separate the person from the athlete, interventions that focus on personal development will effectively result in sporting development, leading to improved sport performance. The six most commonly used interventions thus build towards this goal, and include emotional preparation and recovery awareness, foundational questioning, reflection, acting authentically, social support, and balance.

Emotional preparation and recovery awareness aim to satisfy the third perspective of holistic sport psychology, as consultants work to develop the whole athlete by considering how emotions and physiology interact. Rather than encouraging athletes to control and lessen their emotions, holistic consultants prompt athletes to be aware of how they feel, and simply be prepared to experience a variety of emotions in a given performance. Unfortunately, the athlete as machine discourse promotes a disconnect from emotions, and disciplinary practices can produce docile athletes who feel as if they are merely 'going through the motions' (Denison, 2007), which limit an athlete's ability to be emotionally prepared. Recovery awareness interventions may specifically include ensuring that athletes get quality recovery in all dimensions by resting mentally, physically, and emotionally. However, athletes who are

restricted by the organization of genesis within their sporting environment may find it difficult to rest appropriately. As athletes' mental, physical, and emotional reactions to training and life stress are not predictable, they cannot adequately rest and recover while they are conforming to a rigid, predetermined schedule. Furthermore, in order to achieve a more holistic sense of recovery, coaches will need to be prepared to alter their periodized training programs as they typically only schedule rest from a physiological standpoint.

The next intervention of foundational questioning involves leading the athletes to reflect on their sense of self, which can help athletes maintain perspective during stressful moments and gain awareness of what motivates them to participate in sport. Understanding themselves as more than just athletes can be hampered however, if an athlete is being produced as a docile machine through disciplinary practices, especially when considering the first perspective of holistic sport psychology which recognizes not only how athletes are affected by outside environments but also how the sporting environment can affect them as people. If athletes are being made docile and are regularly moulded into machines when they are within their sport context, they may find it difficult to understand themselves beyond being a cog in this disciplinary system. Indeed, despite the fact that each person is different from another, through the composition of forces technique, athletes tend to follow an identical path of progression, which can work to homogenize athletes (Denison et al., 2013). Athletes are further homogenized when coaches exercise a normalizing judgement, which rewards conformity and discourages deviance (Markula & Pringle, 2006). When coaches set normalizing standards with which to judge the capability and potential of their athletes, such as suggesting that all defensemen should have the same 'ideal' physical, mental, or personality characteristics, their athletes are limited in how they can view themselves, especially when they want to be successful. This can present as a challenge

to athletes attempting to think critically about "how [they] want to live and compete", "what [they] value" and "what are [they] all about" (Friesen & Orlick, 2011, p.33), for they have only ever been taught to be the same as other athletes. Furthermore, should an athlete be able to answer such foundational questions uniquely and honestly but find their answers differ from 'the norm', they may feel anxious about this disconnect, which is not likely facilitative to improved performance and well-being. Indeed, Markula and Pringle (2006) noted that disciplinary power "contributes to a general discomfort that pervades life" (p. 16) and as such, it may be a prominent barrier to overall holistic development.

Interestingly, in an article sharing advice from experienced practitioners, one sport psychologist explained that the honest discussions with athletes occur most frequently outside of the sporting environment (McCormick & Meijen, 2015). He described one scenario in particular where an athlete was "struggling to remain upbeat during briefings and debriefings", and that these "fixed opportunities to talk were very specific to strategy and process goals etc. (as they should be), and included the coach and sometimes other support staff" (McCormick & Meijen, 2015, p. 4). The athlete didn't open an honest conversation with the sport psychologist until they took a drive to go shopping. While the advice for novice consultants was to be ready for these unconventional moments, I believe it also reflects on how the sport environment can be restricting and not afford moments for athletes to express themselves. Athletes may feel most comfortable when they leave the training environment because they are away from the restricting disciplinary techniques and instruments. In a store, the athlete is removed from a coach's normalizing judgement and the constant surveillance of hierarchical observation. For example, this athlete likely felt uncomfortable or frustrated when her statements during meetings, which conformed to 'the norm' and what was expected of an elite athlete, did not align with how she

actually felt. Knowing that athletes can internalize disciplinary practices, this may be contributing to how they interpret their performances and experiences, causing them additional discomfort or anxiety when they are attempting to have an honest discussion. When athletes internalize their own surveillance, they may not be able to understand themselves as honestly as necessary to answer foundational questions.

Reflection is similar to the previous intervention, as sport psychology consultants aim to help athletes reflect regularly on both themselves and their environments. One consultant explained how he asks his athletes questions to get them to "start thinking about how they make decisions, why they make decisions, and why they find themselves in certain places" to consider if they are "there by intention or by default" (Friesen & Orlick, 2011, p. 34). Yet, the disciplinary techniques and instruments exercised in a sporting setting can restrict athletes' choices and independence over their bodies, which can contribute to athlete docility. As explained previously, Barker-Ruchti and Tinning (2010) found that docility was problematic in that disciplinary practices left gymnasts "passive in terms of making decisions, creating routines, or reflecting on their sport" (p. 244). Athletes may thus not be able to reflect on their decision-making process when they are not given the opportunity to make many decisions. Furthermore, as athletes contemplate why they find themselves in certain places, they may more likely see that they are there by default rather than intention. In a physical sense, athletes may be distributed in space by their coaches in a way that maximizes efficiency, or they may be following a strict timetable laid out by their coach that is designed to improve their physiological adaptations. In these moments, athletes are much more influenced by disciplinary practices than their own intentions. Interestingly, the sport psychology consultant interviewed also recognized that in today's culture, "people aren't necessarily taught to be reflective" (p. 34), and so it is a skill that

needs to be reintroduced to athletes (Friesen & Orlick, 2011). Nevertheless, Foucauldian coaching research has suggested that in addition to not being taught to be reflective, the unintended consequences of disciplinary practices can restrict athletes from even being able to reflect. As such, an intervention designed to teach athletes to reflect may not be enough when their sporting environment itself is limiting their ability to be reflective.

After athletes have learned to understand their identity, interventions transition into helping athletes act more authentically with said identity. Consultants converse with athletes to figure out what may be preventing them from acting consistently with their beliefs and values. While this conversation can be important, it does not appear that discussions around disciplinary practices are included. As explained above, athletes within a disciplinary apparatus do not typically have choice over their actions, so athletes may not have much opportunity to act according to their own beliefs and values and they may struggle to act authentically. Introducing an awareness of how disciplinary power can restrict athletes through docility into a conversation on authenticity may strengthen this intervention. Furthermore, without countering the docile-making practices of the athletes' coaches, the aims of this intervention may not be realized. Disciplinary practices designed to make athletes programmable, and thus predictable, restrict athletes from being able to manipulate their own environment and actions. Within such a limiting environment, athletes are not afforded opportunities to think and act for themselves, but rather are taught to behave as docile machines.

The next intervention involves ensuring athletes connect with members of their social support group, which can benefit an athlete because they will have more people that can remind athletes of their identity during moments of stress or adversity. In this intervention, it is also suggested that connecting with others, such as teammates, from a genuine place can help the

athlete feel complete. When athletes are able to connect with each other holistically, their relationship will be strengthened and subsequently their teamwork will improve. The examination instrument within coaching practices, however, can work to disconnect teammates from each other, as they are constantly being evaluated against each other as well as against other standards. Coupled with a coach's normalizing judgement, teammates become homogenized and thus seen as replicable and replaceable (Gearity & Mills, 2012). Athletes are then pitted against each other as they vie for a starting position, which may disrupt the team environment and impede performance.

Lastly, practitioners seek to help athletes learn how to balance their time and energy between the many demands in their life, such as academics, training, and leisure time. Particularly as athletes experience increased stress, this intervention is focused on teaching athletes how to manage and organize their own lives so as to reduce the barriers to their holistic development. One consultant reflected that occasionally the only way to help an athlete reduce their stress is to "just get the training periodized differently so that they're not in high stress sport and high stress life at the same time" (Friesen & Orlick, 2011, p. 36). While this is a promising point, life stress is not predictable. Furthermore, Foucauldian coaching research would lead us to recognize that stress can occur from more than just physiological training. Many dominant coaching practices, as they penetrate an athlete through strict practices of control exemplified by the use of disciplinary techniques and instruments, can create a stressful environment. Therefore, it is possible that an athlete's stress or anxiety may at times be an effect of coaching structure (Denison & Avner, 2011). In this way, an athlete's training environment may need to be changed in order to reduce an athlete's stress: Denison et al. (2015a) explained that it is futile to expect an athlete's routine "nervousness, hesitation, anxiety, underconfidence [*sic*], doubt and insecurity

[to go] away without also considering the power/knowledge relations that have been integral in forming the wider context – their team culture – within which these problems occur and exist" (p. 9). Otherwise, athletes may be unable to balance the many demands in their lives, which will restrict their ability to nurture various parts of themselves, and subsequently impede their holistic development.

All of the aforementioned interventions attempt to achieve holistic development through athlete-centered processes. Yet, as Foucauldian coaching literature has suggested, disciplinary power acts as a barrier in that it produces athletes as docile machines, which restricts and limits their ability to think and act for themselves. This leads me to ponder if the holistic interventions will be effective when they are applied within a disciplinary sporting context?

My concern is that athletes may be unlikely to develop holistically while they are being limited and restricted by disciplinary practice. As unintended consequences of sporting environments that rely heavily on disciplinary practices to produce winning athletes, docility and the athlete as machine discourse can prevent athletes from being able to rest fully, think deeply about themselves as whole beings, make decisions, act authentically, experience social support, or find balance in their lives – all of which underlie current holistic interventions. While the interventions are well-intentioned, they require an ability to think and act for oneself, which is not typically afforded to docile or machine-like athletes who are bound by disciplinary techniques and instruments. Without considering how coaching practices may limit athlete exploration, learning, and development, the common interventions used by sport psychology consultants may fail to be effective and their aims may not be realized. It is therefore important that sport psychology consultants recognize how disciplinary practices utilized by a coach can act as a prominent barrier to holistic development, and therefore a barrier to athlete performance

and well-being. Perhaps to better achieve holistic development, we need to counter the docile-making practices used by coaches. To address this barrier and create a more welcoming environment for athletes to be able to develop holistically via the current sport psychology interventions, coaches may need to change their disciplinary practices. Denison et al. (2015a) supported such changes in coaching, stating that,

> despite a coach believing that he or she is coaching in an autonomy supportive, holistic or athlete-centered way, he or she is unlikely to develop the type of engaged or open-minded athletes he or she is intending to if at the same time he or she is not problematizing the docile-making effects of disciplinary power that have come to frame almost everything a coach does. (p. 6)

Sport psychology consultants may find their athlete-focused interventions are better at improving both athlete well-being and performance once coaches utilize practices which construct a learning environment that provides athletes with opportunities to engage, explore, and grow.

2.4 My Thesis

However, before diving deep into making changes to coaching practices, we need to first explore how athletes are actually experiencing dominant coaching practices and how their holistic development is being affected. As explained previously, disciplinary practices can have both productive and docile-making effects on athletes. We therefore need to learn how athletes are being impacted along this utility-docility continuum – in other words, are dominant coaching practices as harmful to athlete development as we think? Additionally, disciplinary practices typically reinforce an imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, and so athlete voices are often dismissed. It is thus important to explore the athletes' perspectives on normalized coaching practices. To accomplish this, I conducted a novel exploratory study with a group of athletes and

their coaches. Accordingly, my research aimed to answer the question, how does the presence and activity of discipline, as part of coaches' normal everyday practices, impact athletes' capacities and capabilities to develop holistically? In the following chapter, I provide details on how I conducted my study.

3.0 Methodology

My research aimed to bring together knowledge from sport sociology and sport psychology. One of the challenges I therefore faced in my thesis was making purposeful decisions while navigating its interdisciplinary nature. In order to create a novel interdisciplinary research project of high quality, I had to "actively negotiate between the multiple paradigms, multiple theories and multiple methods" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 54). For my study, sport sociology, and in particular Foucauldian coaching studies, were the key influence on my research design. The following chapter will outline how I made such choices in an effort to design a qualitative research study aimed to answer my research question.

3.1 Research Paradigm

When conducting research, it is important to consider which paradigm fits best with the purpose of a research question, as one's paradigm guides all decisions made in the research process. More specifically, a paradigm provides an orientation around ethics of the social world, the nature of reality, how one can know the world, and how you can obtain knowledge about the world – known as axiology, ontology, epistemology, and methodology respectively (Markula & Silk, 2011). Researchers, thus, will locate themselves within a paradigmatic structure based on the purpose and goals of their research. In what follows, I explain how my research is encompassed within the poststructural paradigm.

Poststructuralism views knowledge as contextual and reality or truth to be multiple and subjective (Avner et al., 2014). Poststructuralism is unique in that it observes multiple interpretations of reality but only views them as valuable when they become "reflected against the social and historical context of the knowledge making" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 47). In the

case of my study, athletes' experiences were primarily valuable as they were reflected against a coach's disciplinary power. This is because disciplinary power operates through discourse, which determines who can speak and who is silenced in the knowledge making process. Athletes' voices can therefore become silenced and homogenized in a disciplinary sport setting. Sport psychology consultants have also expressed the importance of listening to athlete voices, as McCormick and Meijen (2015) shared advice for consultants looking to better care for their athletes, suggesting that "we show we care when we listen to understand our clients' stories and help our clients to tell their stories in a way they have not done so before" (p. 16). This advice, however, is missing an acknowledgement that sometimes the sport setting itself, as a consequence of disciplinary power, can restrict athletes from telling their stories. It is thus necessary to introduce a poststructural perspective into sport psychology research that values athletes' multiple subjective realities and considers them against dominant knowledge.

Another key concept imperative to poststructuralism, and Foucauldian theory specifically, is the understanding that power is relational. In this sense, power is not necessarily oppressive, nor organized in a top-down fashion, but rather is present in all interactions. Furthermore, power is not possessed, but rather positions of power are achieved through a strategic use of knowledge, which is not neutral or objective, but "is deeply embedded in power relations" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 49). Without this relational understanding of power, sport psychology consultants may view dominant coaching practices as unproblematic and instead direct their interventions primarily towards athletes. As a poststructural researcher, I considered how coaching practices that use disciplinary power may have harmful effects on athletes by creating an imbalanced power relation between a coach and athlete. By learning how athletes experience discipline within a sporting context, I gathered insight into the way normalized

coaching practices influence the coach-athlete power relation and thus affect an athlete's holistic development.

Lastly, poststructuralism supports the idea that an individual is consistently being shaped by power relations and dominant knowledge. Thus there "is no core, or unchanging 'true self' to be found, but an individual becomes a subject within power relations and continually creates an understanding of a self or assumes an identity suitable to a specific social context" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 51). While holistic sport psychology typically supports humanistic psychology and the notion of a core, innate self that should be unlocked (Friesen & Orlick, 2010), by thinking poststructurally I will shift this perspective to consider not how athletes must find this 'true self' in order to develop, but rather how athletes need to be afforded opportunities to expand their currently restricting docile machine identity through a redefined position within the coach-athlete power relation. Effectively, my study explored how normalized coaching practices, as they tend to uphold an imbalanced power relation, impact athletes' abilities to actively construct diverse identities. Furthermore, as Foucauldian poststructuralists see subjects as a modifiable form, we can recognize that "if a certain understanding of an individual or identity is currently limiting, it can be changed" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 51). My study may thus provide direction on how the dominant understanding of an ideal athlete should be changed in order to create a more ethical sport setting.

3.2 Context of my Study

To explore how the presence and activity of discipline, as part of coaches' normal everyday practices, affects athletes' capacities and capabilities to develop holistically, I conducted a study with the local Gold Medal Soccer Academy. The Gold Medal Soccer Academy provided me with an exciting environment to address my research question due to its

unique structure. Unlike many youth sport academy settings where athletes can elect to attend on their own, the Gold Medal Soccer Academy recruits teams to register and attend as a group. The teams are then distributed and rotated amongst multiple Academy coaches during a single training session. Athletes in this Academy are thus exposed to a variety of coaching styles and practices.

Being that my qualitative methodology is encompassed within a poststructural paradigm, I aimed to learn about the experience of athletes directly so that I could recognize their multiple subjective realities as they are reflected against dominant knowledge. For my study methods, I observed coaches and athletes within the Gold Medal Soccer Academy to see how different coaching practices, through their use of discipline, impact athlete development. I then conducted interviews with the players concerning their experiences with the coaching practices and their understanding of what this could mean for their holistic development. There were several strengths to working with the Gold Medal Soccer Academy for my thesis. Firstly, I interviewed athletes while they were being coached which allowed them to actively reflect on their experiences. Secondly, I had the opportunity to observe the actual coaching so I could layer my own interpretation of the disciplinary nature of the training and ask athletes about my observations. Lastly, as there were multiple Academy coaches, I was able to ask the athletes about different coaching styles and the variations that I noticed in the presence and effects of discipline within the coaching practices.

The study took place over a two-month period during May and June, when the spring session of the Gold Medal Soccer Academy was running. I used purposeful criterion sampling (Patton, 2002) to select participants for my study, with the primary criteria being that participants were involved with the spring 2019 session of the Gold Medal Soccer Academy program.

Furthermore, I had two groups of participants: coaches and athletes. Athlete participants had the additional criteria of being born in 2006 or earlier (so they would be turning thirteen years or older at the time of the study). This specific age range was chosen as I anticipated athletes younger than twelve years old were likely to find the interview questions too difficult to answer with great detail, particularly as my participants were asked questions about their sense of self (Visek, Harris, & Blom, 2013). Coach participants thus had the additional criteria of working with the teams that were comprised of athletes twelve years or older. Specific details on participant recruitment and data collection methods will be explained below.

3.2.1 Participants

I recruited six coach participants for my study. Potential coach participants were identified through the Gold Medal Soccer Academy director. As my athlete participants worked with several coaches during the Academy sessions, I contacted all of the coaches working with my potential athlete participants during recruitment. I sent a letter of initial contact through email to the Academy director, who then contacted the coaches on my behalf, explaining the purpose and procedures of my research. Interested participants were then able to contact me and were given a more detailed information letter and asked to provide their written consent.

The sample size for athlete participants in this study included four athletes. This size was chosen purposefully as it provided meaningful qualitative data while staying within the scope of what is manageable for a Masters thesis (Braun & Clarke, 2013). To recruit my athlete participants, I attended early Academy training sessions to verbally explain the purpose and procedures of the study and provide a written information letter and consent form. I only spoke to the teams with athletes that fit my age criteria, and as the athletes were all under 18 years of age, interested participants took home their information letter and consent form so their

participation could be discussed with their parents. Interested participants contacted me directly via email or in person for any questions and returned their written consent form at a following training session or through email. As the athletes involved in the Academy were underage, I took thoughtful steps to ensure their protection as a vulnerable population, which will be described further in a later section. To collect data for this study, I observed both coach and athlete participants and conducted interviews with my athlete participants. Specific details on my data collection methods will be described in the following two sections.

3.2.2 Training Observations

Throughout the entirety of the study, I observed both coach and athlete participants during the weekly Gold Medal Soccer Academy training sessions. Academy coaches and athletes that did not consent to participate in the study were not included in my observations. To collect data from the coach participants, I completed field notes based on my observations. That is, I recorded and later analyzed what they were and were not doing—their programing and pedagogical details. My field notes specifically focused on the disciplinary techniques and instruments that were being implemented during training, such as a coach's use of time, space, and examination. To aid with this process, I used an observation template which provided theoretical guidance during my note taking.

I also observed how the coaching practices were impacting my athlete participants, and therefore, I also collected field notes based on athlete behaviour. Specifically, I recorded how the athletes reacted to the coach's practices. For example, I recorded any moments where athletes appeared to be upset with a coach's comments or annoyed in being given strict instructions when completing a drill. I also noted moments when athletes appeared engaged in the training session, for example, if they seemed to enjoy an opportunity to problem solve without coach input. My

field notes therefore included coach and athlete interactions as well. I managed my observation data by typing up my field notes after each training session. Lastly, in addition to providing empirical material for analysis, my field notes were used to inform my athlete interview guide and contextualize participant experiences.

3.2.3 Athlete Interviews

In addition to being observed while they took part in the Gold Medal Soccer Academy training sessions, the athlete participants selected for my study completed interviews. To acquire in-depth knowledge on how athletes experience holistic development in the context of disciplinary coaching practices, I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (Galletta, 2013). I conducted three interviews with each participant, the first of which took place during the first half of the Academy session. The second interview occurred approximately midway through the Academy, and the final interview took place near the end of the Academy session. Conducting multiple interviews allowed me to explore moments of growth as they occurred, which provided richer data as I was seeking to understand how disciplinary coaching practices impact athletes' abilities to develop holistically. All of the interviews were conducted near the training facility in a classroom either before or after a practice so as to minimize any inconvenience on the part of the participants and their families. The interview transcripts were then transcribed shortly after each interview was conducted. During transcription, my participants' comments were cleaned into coherent statements by removing words such as 'um' or 'like'.

The interviews focused on exploring how the athletes understood and experienced opportunities for holistic development under disciplinary coaching practices. To discuss holistic development, I used several holistic sport psychology interventions as a framework. While there

were six holistic interventions outlined in the sport psychology literature, I used three to guide my interview questions: foundational questioning, acting authentically, and reflection. These three interventions were selected as they are most influenced by daily coaching practices. Foundational questioning requires opportunities for athletes to explore an individual sense of self. Then, to act authentically athletes need to have choice over their actions during training. Lastly, athletes cannot reflect on why they are making certain choices if they are not given an opportunity to make decisions in practice. Moreover, as the remaining three interventions require long term changes in regards to the team environment and consideration of periodization, they fell outside of the scope of this study. The interviews thus included questions regarding how the athletes perceived their ability to be individual, to make decisions, and to act authentically in relation to the coaching practices they were exposed to in the Academy.

As mentioned, my interview questions were also guided by my field notes. Specifically, I adjusted each participants' interview guide to ask athletes contextualized questions about how the coaching practices have influenced their opportunities to think and act for themselves. I also asked unstructured probing questions contextual to each interview so that I could clarify ambiguous language and comments made by my participants. Prior to commencing data collection, I conducted two pilot interviews with athletes of similar age to my potential participants to improve my interviewing skills as well as to explore the effectiveness of my tentative interview guide.

3.3 Ethical Proceedings

To ensure that research is not harmful to its participants, it is imperative that the participants are treated with dignity and respect, which can be achieved by considering how to protect vulnerable persons, maintain privacy and confidentiality, ensure free and informed

consent, and strive for justice and inclusiveness (Markula & Silk, 2011). Prior to the start of the study, I provided a participant information letter and consent form to explain to potential participants the purpose and procedures of my research. This form also included the potential risks and benefits associated with the study and the participants' right to withdraw their consent/assent at any time so that my participants and their parents were well-informed. I was also sure to emphasize, both within the information letter and verbally during the initial contact, that the coaches would not be informed which of their athletes were participants versus non-participants to minimize the likelihood of any conflict of interest or special treatment during the training sessions. After receiving the information and consent form, potential participants were given an opportunity to ask questions.

Due to the athlete participants being under the age of 18 and therefore considered a vulnerable group, I required written parental or guardian consent as well as written participant assent. Athlete participants provided assent by signing the same informed consent form as their parents. To further protect my athlete participants, I completed a criminal record check. In an effort to maintain participant confidentiality, I explained that any information collected during interviews and field notes would not be discussed outside of the study and that pseudonyms would be used after the study's completion. Additionally, any data collected remained on a password-protected computer that was only accessible to myself, and empirical material from the study was only accessed by myself and my supervisor, Dr. Jim Denison.

The last principle of justice and inclusiveness advocated by Markula and Silk (2011) refers to the benefits participants should receive from the research. Athletes in my study may have experienced holistic development, which could potentially improve their well-being and performance. While there was minimal risk of participants feeling psychological or emotional

discomfort during the interviews as they were asked to reflect on their sense of self, to minimize

such risks and mitigate harm to the participants, referrals were prepared. I prepared referrals

specifically for trusted psychologists and therapists who are trained to work with youth clients on

a number of topics, including sport performance. I also had contact information ready should I

have had the need to legally disclose the abuse of a child, the abuse of an elder, or suspected

harm to self or others. Therefore, the potential benefits of participation outweighed the minimal

risks of the study. Furthermore, the previous literature review outlines the unintended harm

associated with dominant coaching practices. My study was intended to help us learn how we

can create a more ethical sport setting, which can lead to benefits for coaches and athletes in the

future.

Finally, Avner et al. (2014) explained that ethical poststructuralist research "requires an

ongoing critical questioning of one's use of power" as a researcher, and a "commitment to

minimize unbalanced power relations" (p. 46). As such, I practiced self-reflexivity throughout

the research process so that I could reflect on how, in my powerful position as researcher, my

actions may unintentionally act to limit participant power or uphold dangerous normalizations. In

a further attempt to balance the researcher-participant power relation, and to provide richness and

depth to my research, I conducted member reflections with my athlete participants after my

initial analysis (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Rather than testing the validity of my data as is

common with member checking, member reflections involve "sharing and dialoguing with

participants about the study's findings, and providing opportunities for questions, critique,

feedback, affirmation, and even collaboration" (Tracy, 2010, p. 844) and as such they

complemented the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of the poststructural paradigm.

3.4 Analysis

To conduct poststructural research that is of high quality, I ensured my project was rigorous and theory driven. This was evident particularly during my analysis. As my research is encompassed within the poststructuralist paradigm, the analysis did not follow a strictly defined process. Rather, I analyzed my empirical material through a Foucauldian theoretical lens, following a general pattern for analysis described by Markula and Silk (2011). This process began with an identification of themes within my empirical material relevant to Foucault's (1995) theory of disciplinary power. To complete my analysis, I first read through my field notes and the interview transcripts and highlighted them using colours to represent athletes' positive and negative comments, which were then grouped into shared and unique experiences. I then re-read and highlighted my empirical material to search for the disciplinary techniques and instruments as well as the three holistic sport psychology interventions. From there, I identified themes surrounding the coaching practices and athletes' multiple, subjective experiences as they related to my highlighted topics. Specifically, I was interested in looking at the ways in which discipline was reinforced through coach practices and analyzing athletes' perception of such practices. I was therefore looking for themes in my data surrounding disciplinary practices, including a coach's use of time, space, scheduling, normalizing judgement, hierarchical observation, and examination. I also generated themes based on how these disciplinary practices have influenced athletes' opportunities to think and act for themselves. To accomplish this, I explored how the observed disciplinary practices impacted athletes' ability to explore a sense of self, make choices over their actions, and reflect on their decisions.

Secondly, I cross-referenced my interview transcripts with my field notes. Third, after identifying my themes, I considered how they developed, what ideas they suggest, and their

relationship to other themes (Galletta, 2013). Fourth, I looked for relationships in my data to disciplinary power by exploring moments where the disciplinary techniques and instruments were connected to the holistic sport psychology interventions. As Taylor (2014) suggests, analyzing the data is not an isolated step between data collection and thesis write up, but rather an ongoing recursive process of "working back and forth between data and theory, understanding and questioning the data" (p. 182). I therefore revisited my empirical material, my themes, and theory multiple times throughout the analysis process. Furthermore, I was able to analyse my empirical material during my data collection while I typed out my field notes and transcribed my interviews.

Importantly, throughout the analysis I connected the themes within my empirical material to "power relations, theory and previous literature" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 109). It should be noted that while poststructuralists believe the construction of the self is dominated by discourse and knowledge, "the individuals, as part of power relations, can also actively construct selves that while still informed by the discourses, are less dependent on them" (Markula & Silk, 2011, p. 52). During my analysis, I explored how athletes may be able to actively construct selves differently when the coaching practices allow for disciplinary power relations to be altered. Providing athletes with the opportunity to reflect on how disciplinary power, experienced through coaching practices, impacts their sense of self and thus their holistic development connects to the ethical goals of my research. In the succeeding chapter, I outline and discuss the findings of my study.

4.0 Results and Discussion

In this chapter, I represent and analyze my athlete participants' experiences as they connect to holistic development and disciplinary practices. By exploring my field notes and my interview transcripts together, I developed three main themes. The first theme focused on the ways in which the sport environment influenced the athletes' abilities to see themselves as people. My second theme addressed how the athletes' abilities to reflect were impacted by disciplinary coaching practices. Lastly, the third theme considered how the coaches' use of discipline affected the athletes' abilities to act authentically.

4.1 'We're Not Just Players, We're People': The Impact of Coach-Athlete Interactions and the Athlete as Machine Discourse

As Friesen and Orlick (2010) explained, the most effective and least harmful path to athletic development is through growth as a human being. One intervention to help athletes grow as people, known as foundational questioning, requires athletes to think about their sense of self or 'who they are' as a person (Friesen & Orlick, 2011). To be able to answer such foundational questions it is imperative that athletes are able to see themselves as multifaceted people rather than as only athletes. One prominent theme that developed in my data in this regard was the impact of coach-athlete interactions. In these interactions, athletes can in one moment be made to feel like people with a broad sense of self and in another they can feel pressured to fit the mould of the 'successful athlete'. The dominant conceptualization of the 'successful athlete' connects to the athlete as machine discourse, whereby ideal athletes are seen as programmable machines whose performances can be manipulated into perfection by an expert coach (Melin, 2013). This discourse can have restricting effects on an athlete's ability to see themselves as a person beyond that of an athlete.

During my observations, I noticed that the athlete as machine discourse was often reinforced during coach-athlete interactions specifically through the coaches' use of feedback. At training, the coaches gave feedback quite regularly by calling out to players during a drill. However, during interviews, the athletes expressed a preference for reduced, but more meaningful feedback from the coaches, essentially desiring quality over quantity. To make coach comments more meaningful, one participant, Nessa, explained that she wanted their corrections to be applicable, stating, "if you're explaining to us that we shot too high, we know we shot too high. Teach us how to not shoot high instead". Another participant, Karly explained that "typically when you make a mistake you know you made a mistake", and so she too was appreciative of the moments where her coaches did not dwell on the mistake itself. Karly also explained that she felt respected as a person when the coaches inquired about how she was feeling when she appeared 'off her game' instead of only being critiqued for making too many mistakes, stating, "I think it's helpful just cuz then they realize that 'hey something's going on'. I think that's kind of nice that they're actually paying attention and realizing that we're not just players, we're people".

Many of the coaches provided constant and immediate feedback to their athletes not just by calling out, but by stopping a drill to explain an athlete's error. The athletes found that with these coaches, the drills were interrupted more often than was necessary. Theresa, another participant, supported that it might be helpful to have the coach allow a drill to continue while the athletes were confused to give them an opportunity to figure out how the drill works on their own, explaining, "sometimes they'll stop it and the player will already know what they did wrong, so I feel like [the coaches] need to [interrupt] a little less, like more sparingly rather than all the time". The athletes also felt that constant feedback, particularly during a game-like drill,

was overwhelming and therefore they tuned out their coaches' comments in order to focus on the task at hand. Nessa explained, "when it's a game and you're dribbling and passing and looking around for player movement, it's too much. You just kinda learn to not listen".

When the coaches merely pointed out the athletes' mistakes, it was as if the athletes were seen as mindless machines that needed to be informed of their every error in order to be conditioned into the desired behaviour. Disregarding an athlete's self-awareness is thus one way that the coaches' feedback reinforced the athlete as machine discourse. The excessive interruptions and comments from the coaches is a common practice derived from the dominant belief that because athletes are considered programmable, they can be controlled through coaches' commands. However, as the athletes are people and not computers, they responded to this constant commentary by ignoring it, as that was the only way for them to be able to focus on their own movements and complete the drill.

Furthermore, such constant feedback implies that learning occurs through transmission as opposed to being reciprocal, which reinforces a very hierarchical coach-athlete power relation. Previous Foucauldian coaching scholars have pointed out how an imbalanced coach-athlete power relation typically sees the coach in a position of power over an athlete which can have harmful effects on athletes (e.g., Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Denison et al., 2015b). As holistic sport psychology consultants are interested in learning and growth as an outcome, it is important they are aware of the athlete as machine discourse and how its prevalence contributes to the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, both of which act as a barrier which can restrict athlete learning.

One option to a more command and control method of feedback that most of the participants appreciated was receiving feedback during 'natural' breaks in a drill, for example

after a goal is scored or when the ball rolls out of bounds, where the drill would already be stopping. When this occurred at the Academy, the drill was not being interrupted in the same way as it would be if a coach was stepping in, and so the flow and rhythm was not being disrupted. The athletes were also able to listen to the coaches' feedback and then apply it once the drill began again, rather than being overwhelmed by simultaneous coach instructions and task demands. Moreover, by allowing the athletes to work through a chaotic drill and learn from their own mistakes rather than being cut off every time they do not operate exactly as the coach desires, the athletes were given a chance to learn how to problem solve instead of learning only how to follow instructions. Theresa summed up the importance of coaches resisting the urge to overcorrect or criticize athletes for every mistake when she suggested, "what makes a good coach is how much patience they have". Similarly, excessively informing the athletes of their mistakes and immediately stopping a drill to correct their movement reinforces the athlete as machine discourse as athletes are seen as machines who require instant feedback in order to learn. However, humans do not learn the same way as machines, so as people they may require time to work through a challenging task in order to learn. Therefore, coaches who interrupt a drill at every possible moment may be unintentionally limiting their athletes from seeing themselves as people. In this regard, practicing sport psychology consultants need to consider how the normalized process of coach feedback can hamper an athlete's ability to develop holistically.

As outlined, unquestioned coaching practices can reinforce the athlete as machine discourse. This presents a significant challenge to athletes attempting to see themselves not only as humans, but as people with a sense of self that encompasses more than their athlete identity. This is especially relevant as we consider the second central perspective of holistic sport psychology philosophy, which suggests that athletes should develop a sense of themselves as

human beings rather than merely athletes (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). Importantly, if the sporting environment is reinforcing the athlete as machine discourse, athletes may find that they are restricted from seeing themselves beyond this discourse. Indeed, Pringle (2007) outlined how athletes within a disciplinary setting are susceptible to "losing their humanness in the obsessive pursuit of sporting victory" (p. 391). Practicing sport psychology consultants should recognize how an athlete's sense of self is affected by the athlete as machine discourse and look to explore how coaching practices may play a role in reinforcing this discourse if they want to promote holistic development by helping athletes understand themselves as more than athletic machines. In this way, consultants may need to broaden their scope of practice to include interventions designed to address the barriers within the sport environment, such as helping coaches adjust their feedback.

Notably, there was one reoccurring comment within my interviews related to how the coaches helped the athletes feel more like people. When I asked Nessa if she could think of anything the coaches could do to help remind her that she is more than just an athlete, she reflected,

to make you feel more human… getting that you can mess up? Cuz you're not always gonna be the first to the ball, you're not always gonna win tackles. Just being okay when they make mistakes, I think that would be a good thing… I mean I like corrections and all. And I get pushing players. I mean honestly, I think that's the best way to coach; correcting people. But I guess you have to just sort of draw a line where it's like, you know they're actually people too. You can't always be perfect.

Often coaches are expected to hold their athletes to a high standard of performance both in training and in competition. However, as expressed by one athlete participant Scarlett, "practice

is the time to try new things and to get better at old things". It was important to all of my athlete participants to have coaches that allowed and even encouraged mistakes as part of the learning process.

Encouraging mistakes was possible at the Academy as the use of the examination as a disciplinary instrument was minimal, particularly for my athlete participants' team. Recalling that the examination refers to coaches' testing of athletes, the coaches at the Academy rarely evaluated my athlete participants, and thus there was not as much pressure for athletes to perform perfectly. Furthermore, the instrument of normalizing judgement was not used as predominantly with this team as has been shown in other sport environments. For example, other studies have found that athletes are often "judged according to a fixed set of truths" (Denison et al., 2013, p. 395) which acts to pressure athletes towards a particular standard of performance. Surprisingly, while the Academy coaches did judge athletes' behaviour and movement, this judgement was not used to normalize perfection as I was expecting. With some exceptions, the coaches at the Academy created a less disciplinary environment by regularly encouraging the athletes to take chances while trying new tactics and to make mistakes while learning difficult skills. Rather than demanding constant perfection, the coaches normalized risk taking, skill development, and resetting or adjusting after a mistake was made. In my field notes I recorded that Coach Sean was "telling the athletes that they don't have to execute perfectly off a bad first pass. They don't have to force it when it's not going to work out in their favour, so they can just reset and keep passing until they build up a better rhythm and pass to get it started". These coaching practices are important for reducing normalizing judgement, but they also play a part in reducing the athlete as machine discourse. As athletes were encouraged to make errors and take their time during a drill, their efficiency became less of a priority. Thus, the athletes were not forced to perform with a

"machine-like efficiency" often expected within a disciplinary environment (Pringle, 2007, p. 390).

As Foucault (1995) outlined, disciplinary practices act to homogenize subjects, yet based on my athletes' comments, this effect was not as prominent as I anticipated. Theresa explained that her coaches were able to recognize that each player was unique, stating, "if you're a coach, you know which players can do what, so you have different expectations for each player". Such an understanding of individual differences reduces the homogenization that can occur from disciplinary practices such as normalizing judgement, which works to pressure athletes towards a fixed ideal. Rather than forcing athletes into the same mould, coaches can aim to recognize how different players are different people and adjust their expectations to fit each athlete's unique sense of self. Being aware of athletes as individual people, instead of a homogenized group, can be very helpful in assisting athletes' holistic development.

It is important for practicing sport psychology consultants to be aware of the ways in which the coaches can influence an athlete's ability to see themselves as a person. Particularly as disciplinary practices can homogenize athletes and reinforce the athlete as machine discourse, the sporting environment can play a significant role in shaping how athletes view themselves. To "help others coach and perform effectively and efficiently while improving the overall experiences of those involved in sport" (Butryn, LaVoi, Kauer, Semerjian, & Waldron, 2014, p. 178), I believe consultants need to consider how discipline within the sport environment may be working, often through coach interactions, to limit or promote an athlete's holistic development by impacting their ability to see themselves as unique people. In my second theme, I will continue to highlight why sport psychology consultants should be aware of the impact of the disciplinary environment on athletes.

4.2 'I'm Just Following What They Say': The Extent of Athlete Decisions Within the Docile Position

Another holistic sport psychology intervention I considered in my study was reflection. Friesen and Orlick (2011) described the importance of encouraging athletes to reflect on their decisions to explore if they arrived in a particular position "by intention or by default" (p. 34). During my observations, I noticed that the coaches seemed to make every decision at training, including "what drills the athletes do, when they do them, when they move on to the next progression within a drill, who gets to start in what position, and how long the drills will last" (Field Notes). Like other sporting contexts, the coaches were at the forefront of the decision-making process, and athletes were expected to follow rather than lead this process (e.g., Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Denison et al., 2013; Gearity & Mills, 2012). As I interviewed my athlete participants, they often supported this notion, providing me with comments, as Nessa did here, explaining how at practice "it's kinda like, do the drill that you're told, play as well as you can". Instead of being able to make their own decisions, athletes found themselves participating in training by default as they were at the mercy of coaches' decisions, and thus they had little to reflect upon in this sense. A lack of decision-making opportunities then presents as a barrier to an athlete's holistic development. Not only do athletes have little decisions to reflect upon, but they are not given chances to improve their decision-making skills. As the coaches control what the athletes do at training, the athletes are not able to learn which choices will help them grow and develop as both athletes and as people.

Coaches are often expected to make all the decisions surrounding training due to the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation that is dominant in sport settings (Pringle, 2007). My athlete participants were aware of how this power relation operated within their training setting,

as they made comments supporting the coaches' authority. Nessa explained, "we know that the coaches, they're our superiors, they're our betters, they know more than us". Scarlett justified the coaches' position of power by calling on the expertise she believed her coaches held, stating, "the science or technology behind it of why they say it is true in my opinion". Scarlett's trust in the coaches' scientific knowledge demonstrates the historical development of such knowledge into a position of unquestioned power. As Foucault (1980) explained, when certain knowledge is widely accepted as true, it becomes powerful and thus taken for granted. It is important for sport psychology consultants to recognize how power and knowledge are connected and problematize how the automatic use of powerful knowledge may negatively impact athletes' holistic development. For example, because of this normalized understanding of the coach as the expert, my athlete participants often believed it was proper that the coaches were in control of the drills and athletes' behaviour at training. When asked if she would like to provide more input at training, Karly explained, "being [with] your coach is 'I listen to you, you tell me what to do', and I guess I like that, personally". These comments during the interviews not only justify the coach's position of power, but they reflect how a docile athlete position is reinforced within such disciplinary settings, as the athletes explained how they were expected to follow coach directions without question, and in some cases this was accepted and even preferred by the athletes.

This docile position may become another barrier to an athlete's ability to reflect critically, as athletes are discouraged from thinking for themselves. Like other studies have shown, athletes within this docile position can become "actively passive" in that while their bodies move, they are restricted from engaging in decision-making, reflecting, and critical thinking (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010, p. 244). Scarlett demonstrated this concern, as initially when I asked her what she thinks of having the coaches pick all of their drills, she stated, "I don't ever think once I

wanna be doing something different. I like all of the drills they pick". However, I then asked her how she would change her practices if she was given the opportunity to make more decisions instead of her coaches, to which she gave multiple suggestions for different drills that she felt would benefit her own team based on their weaknesses. In this case, Scarlett's initial reaction was to support any decisions the coaches made, and only when she was prompted to think for herself did she find she had an opinion about the drill selection at practice. This is not unexpected as highly disciplined athletes are "likely to accept these forms of control in an uncritical manner" (Pringle, 2007, p. 391).

As a docile athlete position can be reinforced through a lack of control over decisions, the athletes' ability to think critically may have been limited. Karly also showed signs that she was capable of thinking critically when she questioned the reason behind a specific coach instruction, yet any deeper reflection was not able to flourish within the restricting power relation as she explained, "I'm not sure if it's exactly the best idea, but I'm just following what they say". So even when she had reservations towards the coaches' instructions, Karly did as she was told and fell into place within the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation.

Furthermore, this docile athlete position has implications for our current understanding of the third central perspective of holistic sport psychology, known as 'whole being' (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). When the athletes only learn to listen to the coaches' decisions and are limited in their ability to reflect, they can fall privy to merely 'going through the motions' (Denison, 2007). When athletes become disengaged in this way, they may not be able to understand how their emotions, physiology, thoughts, and behaviour are interconnected and affect their performance and experiences. Nessa, describing how the coaches decide when to progress within a drill, said, "I suppose when you're doing well and you're getting it right and then you get to progress". In

this case, 'getting it right' referred to meeting the coaches' standard of execution. The athletes were not prompted to develop an understanding of their whole body when they perform, and instead learned how to please their coaches. This presents a limitation of the holistic sport psychology perspective itself which attempts to consider how an athletic performance is a multidisciplinary experience. As this study supports, discipline also interacts with athletes' behaviours, thoughts, feelings, and physiology, and thus has an impact on an athlete's development and performance. It is important for practicing sport psychology consultants to consider how discipline influences athletes if they wish to provide effective interventions towards holistic athlete development.

Notably, I found some athletes enjoyed having their coach giving direction and making all of the decisions at training. Scarlett explained that she would be uncertain if she was given the chance to decide the next progression of a drill, and her reaction would be to say to the coaches, "I don't know, you choose". For Karly, having the coach control what the athletes did, where they went, and what they were supposed to look like in practice helped her feel prepared for a game scenario, as expressed in her comment,

> cuz although in games I have to make those decisions myself most of the time so I don't
> have people telling me 'oh yeah you should do this', in practice they are telling me 'hey,
> this is what you do' and I can put that into a game perspective. So it gives me confidence
> when I'm in the game, just like, 'I know that I'm supposed to do this, these people told
> me I'm supposed to do this, and so if I do this, I'm doing it right'.

While Scarlett's reaction to providing more input suggests that she is not developing her decision-making skills during training due to the docile-making practices of the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, Karly's comment reflects a more positive consequence of coach

control. Karly expressed an awareness of how she needs to be capable of making decisions in a game setting as that is a context where the coach-athlete power relation is more balanced. From Karly's perspective, having the coach's guidance during training provided her with a sense of comfort and thus confidence in the decisions that she would be making by herself during a game. This is an important comment as it reinforces how each athlete will respond to a coach's use of discipline differently, and thus coaches need to be constantly thinking about individuals and contexts, rather than basing their practices on a totalizing model. This point is also relevant for practicing holistic sport psychology consultants, as they need to be aware of how disciplinary coaching practices may be affecting individuals in both harmful and facilitative ways. With this contextualized understanding, consultants can look to create interventions designed to address the disciplinary environment as needed, "in ways that traditional [sport psychology] has often not addressed or recognized" (Butryn et al., 2014, p. 178).

One way that coaching practices impacted the athletes' ability to make more choices at training was through the drill selection. As explained previously, the coaches primarily made the decision on which drills and progressions were included in a given session, which restricts athlete engagement. Yet, there were some coach-selected drills that allowed for more athlete decisions within the drill than others, and thus were less limiting. As Nessa explained, "when it's like stand in a line, take a shot, that's just horrible and boring. When you're doing something interactive, like possession, dribbling, you know something I actually enjoy doing in a game, that's so much better, of course". The athletes preferred dynamic drills, such as a scrimmage or a one-on-one drill, more than a structured drill where one person would be completing a specific order of steps at a time. This was because the dynamic drills better reflected a game scenario and allowed athletes to make decisions such as where to move, what to do with the ball, and how to

work as a team to accomplish the task. Theresa explained that a dynamic, less coach-controlled drill, such as a one-on-one drill or a scrimmage, "gives you freedom with the ball and lets you make more decisions", whereas "if you're doing a passing drill, where there's a specific pattern, you can't really make any specific decision".

Importantly, there is a level of efficiency that occurs with a highly structured, step-by-step drill often desired by coaches (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010). Athletes are placed strategically in particular positions within the space during such a drill, connecting directly to Foucault's (1995) idea of the art of distributions, which refers to the way coaches can manipulate athlete bodies through their organization within space. These positions allow for strict coach control as athletes can be inspected easily by the coaches, who can then interrogate every mistake and error. In this way, the coaches can increase their hierarchical observation and subsequent normalizing judgement; two instruments of disciplinary power that can be utilized to make athletes into docile bodies (Shogan, 1999). Therefore, structured drills can expose athletes to discipline and restrict their opportunities to think for themselves as well as restrict their engagement with their environment. In this regard, it could benefit holistic sport psychology consultants to become aware of the impact that drill selection can have on athletes' ability to be reflective of their experiences and decisions if promoting and supporting such an outcome through their work with athletes is to have a better chance to succeed.

While I have outlined several barriers that prevent athletes from being able to reflect, primarily stemming from the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, it is important to note that my participants also showcased how reflection can be facilitated by their desire to challenge the coaches' position of power. For example, Nessa commented that while the coaches' control at training resulted in a "lack of decisions, lack of choices in your own training", she stated, "I

kinda wish that we could coach ourselves". As the athletes pushed against their docile position, they learned how to think for themselves, which is a necessary component of reflection. The athletes recognized how being more involved in their own training would both require and foster their ability to think critically. When asked how the coaches could change the sessions to give the athletes more chances to practice their decision-making, Karly suggested, "asking [the athletes] questions, asking us where we should be and when before telling us, cuz it makes you think". Even when they supported the coach as the primary decision-maker during training, they felt it was important that they learned how to make their own decisions, especially for a game situation. Scarlett explained that in a game it is you who needs to make a decision.

> You have to choose and try and make the right call on your own and really try and do what you think is best and take a second to think. And sometimes coaches can't see things, and that's why you have to be confident in yourself to do things on your own.

Theresa was the most vocal in this regard, stating, "if the coach is telling you exactly what to do, I feel like that's too much, cuz the players should be able to have their own mind and choose their own actions". Theresa routinely commented during her interviews that she felt it was important for the athletes to be given the chance to make decisions and think for themselves at training rather than learning to do exactly as they are told. She believed that there were important benefits to challenging the dominant docile athlete position, explaining that,

> if the coach just tells you what to do, it's like 'okay I get it' but if you personally have to think, like put your mind to something, you're able to grasp it easier… because if you think for yourself, then I feel like you'd be able to retain that information better, so during a game you'll remember what to do. (Theresa)

The athletes' comments reinforce the idea that being engaged in their own training will help with their learning and give them a better understanding of their training (Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2009). This supports the need for holistic sport psychology consultants to be aware of the potential of a more balanced coach-athlete power relation, as athletes who are engaged and can think for themselves will likely be more capable of reflection. Once this power dynamic is shifted, holistic sport psychology interventions may be more effectively implemented.

In addition to being able to provide their own input on sessions, the athletes also appreciated understanding the reason or purpose behind the drills and tasks they undertook at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy. Nessa liked when her coaches discussed why they were giving her particular instructions, explaining, "when it's like "just pass to this player', it's like, 'okay but I could just take it and shoot it right now, so why?". In my own observations, I noticed that the amount of reasoning given behind each task varied from coach to coach and from drill to drill. In some moments the coaches would explain the purpose of a drill before the athletes began, and other times the coaches would wait until the end of the drill to discuss its purpose. Further still, the coaches would fluctuate between providing the 'why' versus asking athletes to figure out the 'why' themselves. The athletes appreciated this range, as they found different benefits to each in relation to promoting thought and reflection. Scarlett stated,

> I like it in the beginning so then I know if I've been in that situation before and I know what to do generally, then I'll do that. Cuz if he's just putting us in, it's like, 'what is this for? Why are we doing this?'.

Theresa on the other hand commented, "sometimes I feel like it's more useful after because that gives players time to question why they're doing it and maybe they come up with the answer themselves". And finally, Karly showed support for being prompted to think about why they may

have done a drill rather than being told as she explained, "sometimes what they'll ask after is they'll ask why we're doing it so we have to figure it out. So I really like when they do that". From the athletes' comments, it is clear that encouraging the athletes to contemplate the purpose of a drill is helpful in allowing the athletes to think for themselves and begin to reflect on their training. Indeed, Gearity and Mills (2012) explained that docile athletes are taught to blindly and promptly follow commands, and as such they do not develop self-awareness or learn to ask questions. Practicing consultants may find that it is easier to help athletes develop holistically when the sporting environment is encouraging thought in this way rather than promoting docility.

Therefore, sport psychology consultants need to be aware of how an imbalanced coach-athlete power relation and dominant coaching practices can have docile-making effects which can impact an athlete's ability to think critically and reflectively. After gaining an understanding of how athletes are being affected by discipline, practicing consultants should look to create more effective holistic development interventions by addressing both the individual athlete's limitations and the limitations produced by the sport environment. Mainstream psychology tends to be concerned primarily with the individual self (Markula, 2014). Current sport psychology interventions tend to be heavily focused on addressing individual limitations on account of the historical development of psychology as a 'science' "geared toward the individual level and microsocial factors" (Moola, Normal, Petherick, & Strachan, 2014, p. 206). As my study suggests however, this formation fails to acknowledge all that influences athletes' experiences, and thus it is necessary for sport psychology consultants to consider the sporting environment through a poststructural lens. Only then can consultants broaden their scope of practice to effectively address the sociological barriers to holistic development.

4.3 'Acting Accordingly' or Authentically: Considering Power and the Self

The last holistic sport psychology intervention that I focused on during my study was the athletes' ability to act authentically. One prominent theme which tied all four participants' experiences together in this regard was the push and pull they felt at training between acting authentically and acting accordingly. On the one hand, most of my athlete participants expressed a strong connection to their sense of self while they participated in sports, and soccer particularly. Three of my participants commented that they were able to act more like themselves at practice than in any other context in their lives. Nessa explained, "I'm a lot more at ease, laid back, confident, talkative, stuff like that, which I kind of love, and I love being on the field. That's kind of why". From this perspective, it appears that at training the athletes were able to align their actions and feelings with their sense of self, which is promising with respect to the holistic sport psychology literature, as helping athletes act authentically is intended to improve athletes' development and performance (Friesen & Orlick, 2011). The athletes who participated in my study loved that soccer allowed them to be a part of a team, make friends and learn new things. For my athlete participants, the Gold Medal Soccer Academy provided opportunities to work together with their teammates and to learn new skills, therefore helping them act authentically with their values.

However, I found the athletes also made some contradictory comments about their ability to act authentically to their values and their sense of self, despite feeling more themselves at training than anywhere else. While overall my athlete participants felt that soccer provided the best opportunity to act and feel like themselves, they expressed concerns over how they were expected to act while at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy. During interviews, the athlete participants commented that they understood the coaches' expectations as needing to be the type

of player who never faltered in being committed, focused, and serious. Nessa, reflecting on a teammate who represented this preferred behaviour, explained that her teammate was "very dedicated, she takes it all very seriously, when we're on the field she doesn't laugh, doesn't joke". She went on to say, "I think that's the example, and I just don't know if I can do that" (Nessa). For this participant, acting authentically at practice meant that she was interacting in a friendly manner with her teammates. Nessa expressed her struggle between acting accordingly and acting authentically succinctly when she stated, "it's a fight between being how [my teammate] is and how the coaches want you to be, and then being a friend".

The fight between acting accordingly or authentically left Nessa feeling frustrated as she did not want to isolate herself from her friends, but she also didn't want to be "bad at soccer". This comment stood out to me as it represents my athlete participants' belief that they must act accordingly to the coaches' expectations in order to develop as strong athletes. Karly expressed a comparable understanding when she explained that at training she had to "act accordingly so [the coaches] can do what they want to and so we can learn". For Karly too, acting the way the coaches' desired was necessary in order to learn and develop. In a similar fashion, when Theresa described how she typically acts at practice she commented, "my team usually chit chats and everything, but in the past coaches have gotten mad, so I refrain from doing that as much as possible and just focus on what we're doing, so I can excel". Later in the same interview when I asked Theresa what may be preventing her from acting more like herself, she stated, "if I act completely like myself and unfocused then I won't be able to improve, cuz I've been taught that you need to be able to focus 100% or else you won't improve". Like Nessa, Theresa altered her behaviour so that she was acting more in line with the behaviour expected by the coaches.

The athletes' comments represent a different narrative of what is required to succeed than is presented in the holistic sport psychology literature which suggests that athletes can excel by acting authentically within their sporting context (Friesen & Orlick, 2011). One consultant in Friesen and Orlick's (2011) study explained that in an effort to help his clients perform authentically, he looks to find "what is interfering with their ability to just simply act consistent with what they believe and the things they value" (p. 34). My participants' comments suggest that one barrier may be the understanding that in order to improve in sport, athletes should act according to coach's expectations, regardless of whether that aligns with their authentic self. This understanding is not unique to my athlete participants, however, as it is an idea that has become common sense in sport and thus it has become normalized and unquestioningly integrated into dominant coaching practices.

There are multiple ways that coaches' practices can influence athletes into acting accordingly while at training. As outlined in previous literature, coaching practices can unintentionally homogenize athletes towards what is historically considered an ideal attitude in sports through disciplinary practices (Denison et al., 2013, 2015a). Athletes with such an attitude are seen as 'coachable' and are then favoured by coaches while athletes who act differently are considered 'problem' athletes, which perpetuates the 'right way' to participate in sport. Specifically, two instruments of disciplinary power, hierarchical observation and normalizing judgement, can be used to reinforce a quiet, obedient, and hard-working attitude amongst athletes. In this way, I noticed that some coaching practices at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy promoted a homogenized and fixed athlete self. For example, the coaches expressed their expectations for the athletes' behaviour by making comments that I recorded in my field notes such as: "don't be lazy", "no side talk unless it's about the activity", "jog it, don't waste our

time", "I need you to really sprint and not dance so much", "be more concentrated", and "it's practice, take it seriously, it's not a playground, you can leave anytime if you don't want to be here". When the athletes did not act accordingly to these expectations during a drill, the coaches would interrupt the drill to express their frustration with such behaviour. These comments set a standard of how successful athletes must behave and which behaviour was judged as expected and acceptable. Said behaviour then becomes a norm that is reinforced through traditional coaching practices.

Furthermore, any differing behaviour was categorized as deviant and thus punishable. Once when the athletes lost control of a ball during a drill, I recorded that "Coach Sean stopped the drill to explain that they weren't focused enough and had them run a suicide [anaerobic running drill] before attempting the drill again" (Field Notes). Karly supported how the coaches used punishments to control athlete behaviour, stating that "we have to focus and get down to work and if one of us isn't doing it, the entire team suffers, by push ups or whatever". Denison et al. (2013) explained how punishment from a Foucauldian perspective "'compares', establishes 'rules' and 'standards', 'measures', 'hierarchises' and lastly 'excludes'" (p. 395), and as such it pressures individuals into conforming. Through comments, stoppages in drills, and punishments, the coaches worked to normalize ideal athlete behaviour as quietly listening to the coach, focusing solely on the task at hand, and always moving quickly. Athletes who took their time during a water break, talked with their teammates, or goofed around during a drill were then seen as problematic in that they were limiting the effectiveness of training by unsettling the coming together of all of discipline's techniques through Foucault's (1995) idea of the composition of forces, which is the combination of forces to create a precise unit or "machine with many parts,

moving in relation to one another, in order to arrive at a configuration and to obtain a specific result" (p. 162).

The athletes' behaviour was also influenced by the coaches' constant observation. Scarlett pointed out, "I don't really see them not watching, whenever I look at them, they're always watching". Karly supported this, commenting that "they watch everything, as far as I know anyways, as far as I notice". When the athletes explained that they were aware of being watched at all times regardless of whether such observations were occurring or not, I noticed a connection to the Foucauldian concept of surveillance. Previous Foucauldian coaching scholars have explained how surveillance can be particularly effective in reinforcing behaviour as, in anticipation of being watched, athletes begin a process of self-surveillance (e.g., Johns & Johns, 2000; Williams & Manley, 2016). This self-surveillance can then work to further encourage athletes to modify their behaviour in an effort to follow the dominant narrative that defines a successful athlete as perfectly obedient, serious, and focused. When asked how they would act if they were relieved of the coaches' gaze momentarily, Karly explained, "you're gonna act a little bit differently when there's no one there compared to if there's a coach watching you, so [when they are watching] I guess probably a little bit more mature". Theresa also recognized how a decrease in coach observation would allow the athletes to act differently, stating, "some people only focus when the coach is watching, so it might make it worse, but at the same time, some people also focus better when no one's watching cuz they feel like there's less pressure on them". In this way, the athletes altered their behaviour based on the coaches' use of hierarchical observation, surveillance, and normalizing judgement which seriously calls into question the idea of authentic athlete behaviour and how that can be facilitated within such a strict system of control.

Further to this point, my participants' experiences raise a concern for holistic sport psychology consultants, as such disciplinary practices are affecting athletes in ways not previously considered in the holistic sport psychology literature. Practicing consultants must be aware of how the pursuit of authentic behaviour is not simply a matter of choice and hard work, but rather athletes must navigate around coaching practices outside of their control which can restrict their ability to act as they desire. It is necessary then for sport psychology consultants to modify their interventions so they may consider these social forces if they wish to be effective in helping athletes develop holistically. To help remove barriers to an athlete's holistic development, sport psychology consultants may need to work alongside a coach to help them alter their practices in a way that better supports athletes acting authentically.

Another prominent expectation the coaches held was that the athletes would always do what they were told. One participant, Scarlett, mentioned that in previous years with other coaches she had a bad attitude, stating, "I didn't really like to listen but then like you can't go anywhere, you can't do anything without getting that fixed". Her current "good attitude" now revolves around "just being there like 'yes coach, I'll do this'" (Scarlett). As previous Foucauldian coaching scholars have explained, coaching practices can mould athletes into this submissive (read: unauthentic) position whereby they learn to be compliant and obedient (e.g., Denison 2007; Denison & Mills, 2013). While Scarlett was content in this 'ideal' attitude, Karly was slightly more critical, stating, "I personally input feedback, sometimes when I'm not supposed to, but whatever". Karly knew that her coaches expected her to listen to instructions rather than make suggestions, but she was not shy to push the boundaries with her behaviour. Nessa had a similar desire to make suggestions at training but recognized the risk in doing so, suggesting that she could not really provide input as "that'd be talking back to the coach". Even

Scarlett, who felt it was important to have a good (read: submissive) attitude, showed a desire to step outside of this passive position. In a later interview, she explained how the coaches "just always being kinda [like] 'do this, do that' is not really fun", and stated "I would love to give my own opinion" (Scarlett). In this sense, the athletes chose to restrict themselves and adopt their normalized position within the coach-athlete power relation despite their actual desires to express themselves.

The prominence of this imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, emerging due to the dominant ways of thinking in sport, may act as another barrier preventing athletes from acting authentically. It is thus important for practicing holistic sport psychology consultants to be aware of this barrier when working with athletes, as this might lead them to move away from the current holistic sport psychology perspective about the self as core and unchanging and adopt instead a poststructurally informed perspective which recognizes how individuals continually create an understanding of the self suitable for the given power relation they find themselves in (Markula & Silk, 2011). Indeed, as Markula (2014) argued, it would be beneficial to more carefully problematize psychology's current approach to power. By recognizing the role of power in influencing athletes' actions, sport psychology consultants can look to alter the problematic coach-athlete power relation to reduce its limitations on athletes. They can do so by creating environment-focused interventions to address coaching practices that resist athletes' potential for holistic development. For example, a sport psychology consultant could look to help coaches recognize the unintended harms of the 'ideal athlete' narrative and subsequently help a coach provide opportunities at training for athletes to act 'differently' from this narrative.

Additionally, my athletes' experiences led me to reflect on the first central perspective of holistic sport psychology philosophy, titled 'environmental effects', which recognizes that our

multiple sense of selves coexist and affect each other regardless of our given environment (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). During interviews, my participants made comments that they felt they were expected to separate their different selves based on the context or environment that they occupied at the time. Nessa explained her frustration with such expectations, commenting, "a lot of my teammates are going through a really hard time right now, so when I'm on the field with them, I wanna be next to them and around them so I know that they're okay". In this way, Nessa was discouraged from helping her teammates navigate between their athlete and non-sport selves while at training. This discouragement has implications for holistic sport psychology consultants intending to impart the first central perspective without taking into account all that coaching practices do. As explained, dominant expectations of athlete behaviour have arisen historically out of a perspective on the nature of an athlete's identity as singular and unchanging rather than multiple and dynamic, which contradicts the first central perspective of holistic sport psychology philosophy. Again, sport's modernist legacy and its accompanying assumptions of the self present a potential limitation of the individual-focused holistic sport psychology interventions as they fail to address the social forces which lead to the normalization of harmful coaching practices.

Importantly, the multiple barriers outlined in this theme have arisen historically out of dominant ways of thinking and subsequently they have become prominent staples of a 'functional' sport setting. Due to this normalization, individual-focused holistic sport psychology interventions will struggle to overcome said barriers; having a conversation with athletes to determine how their coach interactions may be preventing them from acting authentically does not challenge the unquestioned power-knowledge that drives dominant coaching practices. Therefore, if sport psychology consultants wish to help athletes act more authentically to develop

as people, they will need to focus on more than the individual athlete and instead also consider how people are positioned by various histories, power relations, and discourses to act in particular ways. Indeed, as Crocket (2014) argued, "there is much to be gained by drawing on both social and psychological theory to analyze sporting issues" (p.198). A more poststructurally informed holistic sport psychology practice is thus needed to address both the sociological and individual barriers currently impeding athletes in their quest for holistic development and improved sport performance. To accomplish this, sport psychology consultants may need to expand the focus of their interventions to include what coaches are doing in their practices as well as the type of conversations they have with athletes.

However, despite the barriers outlined throughout my thesis thus far, I did find that my athlete participants experienced moments of holistic growth during their time at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy. Notably, this growth was made possible primarily through less disciplinary practices. During my final interviews with my participants, I asked them to reflect on which coach(es) helped them develop the most as a person over the Academy season. Coach Sean was described as the most impactful coach by all four of my athlete participants. Coach Sean was also the coach that intrigued me the most during my observations. In one field note I wrote that,

> He is complicated for me because he has this extremely disciplinary way of coaching (he always wants them to be more serious, talk less, listen more, etc.), but at the same time he is the most athlete-centered in that he seems to genuinely ask for their input, their ideas, and helps them work through the 'why' of many drills. He also encourages them the most to be creative, to try new things, use both feet, etc. but again punishes them the most. So he is the most disciplinary but also the one who seems to help them develop the most. It's an interesting balance. (Field Notes)

So, on one hand, coach Sean had the strongest use of discipline to pressure athletes into acting accordingly, but on the other hand he encouraged deviance in that he pushed the athletes to be different, creative, and think for themselves. Based on both my observations and athlete comments, Coach Sean was the most supportive of athlete mistakes and structured his drills and feedback to provide opportunities for athlete decision-making. Nessa stated that with Coach Sean there was an atmosphere of "if you're gonna do it wrong at least practice the things you need to do wrong, like 'practice your left foot' type thing" while Theresa explained that "in his drills and everything, we're able to make more decisions and kind of have more freedom". In this way, despite his constant homogenizing expectation of the athletes' attitudes, coach Sean seemed to create the most opportunities for the athletes to see themselves as people, reflect on their decisions and training, and act differently while on the field. Considering the opportunities afforded by his coaching practices, it is not surprising that my athlete participants felt he was important for their holistic development.

The other coach that was mentioned by my athlete participants during my final interviews was coach Jason. Unlike coach Sean, coach Jason regularly encouraged athletes to act more like themselves rather than expecting them to act accordingly. Scarlett explained that "he's really accepting if you're being goofy and stuff". I recorded a moment in my field notes when Scarlett was being loud and goofy during a drill, which typically was seen as punishable behaviour by the Academy coaches. Coach Jason however, called out to Scarlett that he liked her energy (Field Notes). Nessa agreed that coach Jason's supportive approach to their behaviour and attitude helped her feel comfortable, stating that "[Jason's] just so fun, honestly, and it's like you can talk to him, you know, he's approachable in a way that some of the other coaches aren't".

Nessa also explained that she appreciated both coach Jason and coach Sean, and found that having more than one coach, with differing disciplinary practices, gave her different perspectives and helped her learn from both of them in unique ways. This is important, as my study suggests that holistic growth may happen most when certain disciplinary barriers are removed. Having coaches with different uses of disciplinary practices meant that the athletes were afforded opportunities with one coach that they were not necessarily an option with another. The structure of the Academy thus created a more diverse presence and activity of discipline, and therefore more moments where discipline was also less pervasive, so the athletes could explore different moments for holistic development as they rotated between each coach. It is important to note that this was a unique setting as most athletes do not have the opportunity to rotate between coaches as they participate on one team with a single coach. To be clear however, this is not to say that the presence of more coaches reduces the unintended consequences of discipline, but rather that at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy where one coach's practices were restricting, another coach used discipline in a less restricting way (and vice versa), and this opened more opportunities for holistic growth than if a singular coach was running every session.

Additionally, the athletes developed holistically over the Academy season primarily when disciplinary power was less prominent. When asked how she may have grown as a person since the Academy began, Theresa explained, "Before the training started, I was more reserved and kinda just like 'kay this is what I have to do because I'm being told what to do'. But with the addition of having that freedom and making your own decisions, it made me less reserved and more outgoing". The opportunity to make her own decisions and challenge the notion of a fixed self was afforded to Theresa within a less disciplinary environment. From this less restricting

position, Theresa was able to act more authentically. Nessa felt that at the Academy she learned how to "be civil with people" in reference to some conflict she experienced with teammates over the training. There were several moments I noted during observations where coach Sean in particular allowed the athletes to organize themselves without his influence. (Field Notes). From these moments where the athletes were given space outside of a coach's gaze, Nessa could practice her interpersonal skills. With a disciplinary environment where an athlete's actions and location within space are always known and judged, the opportunity to collaborate with teammates and resolve conflict is not available. This again represents the potential of athletes' holistic growth when the coaching practices are less disciplinary.

The athletes' growth was also often reflected in a desire to move out of their restricting position within the coach-athlete power relation. Scarlett explained "as a person, I think I realize a lot more and I pay more attention to what [the coaches'] advice is, what effects it brings on the game". Gaining an awareness of her training represents a step towards holistic growth for multiple reasons. First, developing a strong sense of self requires a level of awareness. Then, from awareness comes the ability to think for yourself, which can help athletes reflect critically. Finally, from this awareness of her training, Scarlett could look to consider if her actions are authentic or pre-determined by coaches. Scarlett's increased awareness shows that she was not just going through training on auto pilot. Similarly, Karly made comments that demonstrate how holistic development can challenge a restricted development of the self. Reflecting on her growth during the Academy, she stated that,

> I have become a little more confident, because, especially when my coach is trying to tell
> me to do certain things in a game setting, like there are times when he'll just stay quiet.
> There are times when I feel like I wanna make my own decisions and that shows that I'm

a little more confident in what I'm doing, and that's really new cuz normally I look to

him and I'm like 'yo am I in the right spot?'. (Karly)

As she developed as a person, Karly found herself less willing to follow instructions

unthinkingly and instead desired opportunities to make her own decisions. Overall, my athlete

participants' holistic growth occurred mostly due to coach Sean and coach Jason's less

disciplinary practices and resulted in my participants taking steps towards disrupting dominant

power relations and the impact that can have on the formation of their selves.

4.4 Summary

This chapter outlined three main themes representing athletes' experiences with the

sporting environment at the Gold Medal Soccer Academy in relation to their ability to develop

holistically. While there were some positive moments that supported athletes' growth, my

findings suggest that increased discipline can act to restrict athletes in their ability to see

themselves as unique people, reflect critically and think for themselves, and act authentically.

Ultimately, dominant coaching practices can unintentionally limit athletes' holistic development

as athletes who are heavily disciplined are often placed in a position where they are expected to

act as docile machines. In my concluding chapter, I will explain how holistic sport psychology as

it is currently conceptualized is inadequately prepared to address discipline as a barrier to holistic

development, as the primary focus of a consultant's interventions is on the individual athlete. In

order to better support an athlete's holistic growth, sport psychology consultants need to expand

their interventions to address how coaching practices create a disciplinary environment that

restrict athletes.

5.0 Conclusion

Throughout my thesis, I aimed to answer Thorpe et al.'s (2014) call to "open up new conversations about the potential and politics of working at the intersection between sport sociology and sport psychology" (p. 131) by making connections between the two disciplines that, despite their often shared axiology, have maintained a distance from each other. Furthermore, as sport sociology was the primary influence on my methodological choices, my research contributes interdisciplinary work that adds balance to the previously "unidirectional attempt at bridging the gap between sport psychology and sport sociology" (p. 168) that has been mainly led by scholars in sport psychology (Butryn et al., 2014). The purpose of my research was thus twofold; generally I aimed to bridge the gap between sport sociology and sport psychology, and specifically I hoped to learn how sport practitioners can help improve athlete well-being and performance by introducing the poststructural concept of discipline into the holistic sport psychology literature. Accordingly, my thesis posed the research question, how does the presence and activity of discipline, as part of coaches' normal everyday practices, impact athletes' capacities and capabilities to develop holistically?

To address this question, I conducted a qualitative study with the Gold Medal Soccer Academy to gather empirical insight into how athletes experience dominant coaching practices in relation to their holistic development opportunities, which I then used to generate three main themes. In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the key findings from each theme. Then, I will provide suggestions for the future direction of holistic sport psychology, including implications for both researchers and sport psychology consultants.

5.1 Summary of Findings

My first theme considered how an athlete's ability to develop holistically from the holistic sport psychology intervention, foundational questioning, could be impacted by disciplinary coaching practices. I noticed that dominant coach-athlete interactions reinforced the athlete as machine discourse which in turn limited how athletes saw themselves as people. Conversely, coaching practices such as supporting and encouraging athlete mistakes as a necessary part of the learning process worked to disrupt the athlete as machine discourse. Therefore, my first theme demonstrated the unintended restricting consequences of dominant coaching practices and the potential of less disciplinary practices to provide opportunities for athletes to broaden their sense of self in a way that facilitates holistic development.

My second theme showed how the holistic sport psychology intervention of reflection was influenced by the disciplinary sporting environment. As the integration of powerful knowledge into a coach's toolbox places them in a position of expertise over an athlete, the use of coaching practices derived from said knowledge reinforced an imbalanced coach-athlete power relation. Like previous Foucauldian sport scholars have demonstrated, this power relation had negative impacts on athletes including reinforcing athlete docility (e.g., Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Gearity & Mills, 2012; Pringle, 2007). Within my study, traditional coaching practices built from this power relation acted particularly to restrict athletes' opportunities to make decisions and develop the skills required to reflect on their experiences and choices. While in some moments my participants were content with these dominant roles, in others they expressed a desire to challenge their prescribed docile position. This finding was in line with the tenet of poststructuralism that, as power is relational and subjects are modifiable, the imbalanced

coach-athlete relationship is not permanent but rather can be shifted to better serve the well-being of athletes.

Finally, my third theme shed light on how each athlete must navigate between the often opposing pulls of acting according to their coach's expectations or acting on their authentic desires. My participants were often unable to act authentically as the coaches' disciplinary practices restricted them to a fixed self. The holistic sport psychology intervention of acting authentically is thus missing an understanding of how disciplinary power, in manipulating athletes to act accordingly, can present a barrier to athletes' development. I also explored how my participants experienced holistic growth over the course of their season and aimed to understand why certain coaches were influential in said growth. It became clear that athletes' holistic development occurred the most within moments where the coaching practices were less restricting and limiting – that is, when the sport environment was less disciplinary.

While all three of my themes point to the presence and activity of discipline as problematic, it is important to recall that each theme also represented alternative athlete experiences, and thus we would do well to remember that there should always be a balance to our practices. A large part of what led us to the current dominant sport environment is a binary perspective reflected in the development of powerful knowledge. Our most prominent sport science knowledge such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, and often even psychology, is wrought with binary logics that value objectivity over subjectivity, observed over experienced, quantitative over qualitative, and individual over social. To suggest that the solution to the harmful effects shown through my thesis is to simply shift power fully from one side of the binary to the other would be ironic and ill-informed, as "poststructural theory endeavours to avoid the substitution of one 'truth' for another" (Graham, 2005, p. 3). Instead, I

propose a solution to the sport sociology/psychology divide by reimagining the philosophical assumptions around our ways of knowing and doing in holistic sport psychology altogether.

5.2 Future Direction: Holistic Sport Psychology from a Poststructural Lens

Foucauldian coaching scholars have been researching ways to improve the world of sport through a poststructural lens well before I began my thesis. Many have called for an integration of social theory into coaching research and practice (e.g., Denison, 2007; Denison & Avner, 2011; Denison et al., 2015b; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Shogan, 1999). Following their example, I also believe it is important to integrate social theory into sport psychology research in order to reflect how 'the social' and 'the individual' converge to impact athletes' experiences. To successfully introduce social theory into the sport psychology field, as my thesis has attempted with Foucault's (1995) concept of discipline, we need to take a poststructural approach to our research. Poststructuralism has several key assumptions which differentiate it from other paradigms. These assumptions, detailed in my methodology chapter, are that knowledge is contextual, reality and truth are multiple and subjective, power is relational, and that individuals are continuously shaped by power and knowledge. To expand our approach to helping athletes improve their experience and performance, I argue that we need to bring these poststructural assumptions to holistic sport psychology. In recognizing sport as a complex process encompassed within various historical power relations, we can explore new ways to support athletes in their personal and sport development.

During my analysis, I found myself reflecting on the shortcomings of the three central perspectives to holistic sport psychology philosophy (Friesen & Orlick, 2010). In order to broaden the scope of holistic sport psychology, I believe that we need to restructure these three central perspectives to reflect a poststructural ontology and epistemology. The first central

perspective, 'environmental effects', is intended to recognize that athletes face multiple realities and pressures which affect each other regardless of the environment an athlete is immersed within in a given moment. This perspective is built from the belief that "each individual is a compilation of multiple selves" (Friesen & Orlick, 2011, p. 233). However, my thesis has shown that dominant coaching practices, as they are derived from and support binary assumptions, leave athletes feeling as though they must disentangle their multiple selves so as to bring only their athlete self into their sport. In this way the first central perspective is naïve to the complexity of the athletes' experiences within sport. I suggest that 'environmental effects' should be expanded to state that sport and non-sport environments may affect athletes' multiple selves in both facilitative and harmful ways. In doing so, sport psychology consultants can recognize that when disciplinary practices are employed in a sport environment, athletes may be expected to disentangle their multiple selves, and thus the sport environment may be harmful. Sport psychology consultants can then look to address the disciplinary practices which promote this limited understanding.

The second central perspective of holistic sport psychology aims to recognize that athletic performance "is facilitated by developing the core of who the athlete is as a person" (Friesen & Orlick, 2010, p. 231). This perspective, due to its humanistic underpinning, supports an innate fundamental core that may be hidden but not altered. Yet as sport is not excluded from the social world, we cannot ignore the social influences it has on individual bodies and so the holistic sport psychology perspective should instead appreciate how identities are shaped and continuously reconstructed based on their surrounding context (Markula & Silk, 2011). Only after recognizing that an athlete's sense of self is impacted by social forces can we further explore the effects of these social forces on holistic development. 'Developing the core individual', to reflect

poststructural assumptions, should be altered to recognize that athletic performance is hampered when athletes are restricted from exploring their sense of self. Sport psychology consultants can then promote athletes exploring their sense of self by designing interventions to address the many ways such exploration may be limited, including the restricting effects of a disciplinary sport environment.

Finally, the third central perspective of holistic sport psychology philosophy, known as 'the whole being', acknowledges how people are impacted by four interacting dimensions that reside within themselves and are a result of their own experiences: behaviour, thoughts, emotions, and physiology. However, these four dimensions fail to consider wider operations of power. Again, holistic sport psychology philosophy is too narrowly focused on individuals and must shift to understand an athlete as a social entity. My thesis introduced the concept of disciplinary power into the conversation and supported multiple ways that discipline impacted athletes. Therefore, the whole being should expand to acknowledge that human beings are affected by multiple internal and external interacting dimensions, including behaviour, mind, emotions, physiology, and power. Then sport psychology consultants can address negative effects of power on athletes' thoughts, behaviour, emotions, and physiology by creating new interventions to disrupt imbalanced coach-athlete power relations.

Ultimately, by exploring how athletes are impacted by discipline within sport, my thesis highlights how the current philosophy of holistic sport psychology, and thus its accompanying interventions, are ill-equipped to recognize and address the sociological barriers to athletes' holistic development. Thus, holistic sport psychology needs to be adapted to better reflect the world we live in where power, knowledge, the body, and learning are part of complex discursive formations. I suggest that we can do so by approaching holistic sport psychology from a more

poststructural lens. However, further research should be conducted to explore how to re-conceptualize holistic sport psychology philosophy from this new perspective. Then, from these broadened central perspectives, researchers can explore novel ways to help athletes develop holistically and improve their performances.

5.2.1 Implications for Sport Psychology Consultants

My thesis highlighted several barriers to the current holistic sport psychology interventions of foundational questioning, reflection, and acting authentically not discussed by Friesen and Orlick (2011). As the other three established interventions were outside the scope of my study, there may be other barriers I was unable to explore. Accordingly, practicing sport psychology consultants should reflect on their interventions to problematize how they may be missing an awareness of the sociological influences on athletes' bodies. Sport psychology consultants need to be cautious in their practice and ensure they do not use interventions unquestioningly, lest they risk merely paying lip-service to their intentions. As Denison et al. (2015a) reflected,

> behavioural or motivational interventions intended to foster and develop thinking, responsible, resilient, self-compassionate or self-regulating athletes will largely be ineffective if they are not accompanied by practices that disrupt sports' disciplinary legacy and the many unseen effects that disciplinary power has on athletes' bodies. (p. 6)

To begin disrupting disciplinary power within the sporting environment, sport psychology consultants would benefit from creating environment-focused interventions to supplement the existing athlete-focused interventions. Some strands of sport psychology research have begun to consider the social, and thus offer an opportunity to augment how current holistic sport psychology consultants are designing their interventions. For example, practicing

consultants could look to positive youth development literature which suggests better coaching strategies (e.g., Camiré, Forneris, Trudel, & Bernard, 2011), or to cultural sport psychology literature around cultural praxis (e.g., Ryba, 2013) for ideas on how to create new environment-focused practices, though they do not directly consider disciplinary power's effect on athlete experiences.

Excitingly, from a poststructural perspective, research on how to work alongside a coach to assist them in problematizing and changing their dominant practices has already commenced and as such may be a valuable resource for practicing consultants. For example, Kindrachuk (2018) worked with a coach developer versed in Foucauldian theory to alter his own practices as a swim coach. It may be beneficial for sport psychology consultants to fulfill a similar role as a coach developer where they can assist coaches in critiquing all that their practices do and brainstorm practices to counter any unintended effects. In another study, Watson (2018) designed and implemented a coaching workshop to introduce the skill of problematization to a group of coaches in an effort to help them become more critical of dominant coaching practices in order to better facilitate athlete engagement. Sport psychology consultants could look to present likewise workshops for coaches to challenge their normalized understanding of how to coach effectively. By creating environment-focused interventions to address which knowledge guides coaches' practices and subsequently how coaches interact with athletes, sport psychology consultants can begin to create a sport environment that is less disciplinary and more supportive of athletes' holistic development.

While sport psychology consultants are recognized as having a role within an athlete's integrated support team (Sporer & Windt, 2018), they are not traditionally expected to work together with a coach to change their practices. One reason for this may be the necessity of

maintaining confidentiality with athletes, as due to the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation, athletes often perceive that there may be negative consequences to a coach finding out they are struggling to perform or that they are dissatisfied with their coaches and sport environment (Gulliver, Griffiths, & Christensen, 2012). However, my thesis outlines the need for interventions that address the sociological barriers to holistic development, and as such requires that sport psychology consultants broaden their practices to include working with those in a position to alter the sport environment – in most cases this means sport psychology consultants will need to create interventions that address dominant coaching practices. This provides a challenge to sport psychology consultants in that they will have to be innovative in order to find a way to work alongside both coaches and athletes without sacrificing athlete confidentiality.

Though, by problematizing and altering the imbalanced coach-athlete power relation and disrupting the athlete as machine discourse we can hopefully reduce the negative consequences of athletes speaking honestly and openly about their struggles and concerns. If coaches and athletes hold more balanced positions within the sport environment, then coaches are not seen as the experts with the sole right to make every decision about how athletes are allowed to think and behave. Rather a shift in power will see that athletes are experts, and thus their concerns, experiences, and knowledge are just as valid. Furthermore, if athletes are not restricted to being seen (and seeing themselves) as docile machines, we will recognize that as whole people with diverse experiences, they will not perform perfectly or learn in a linear fashion. It will then be less alarming when athletes make mistakes or experience a decrease in performance, and no longer be a sign of individual weakness that must impact an athlete's opportunities (Denison, 2007; Denison, 2010). Thus, by taking steps to challenge disciplinary power and reduce its prevalence within the sporting environment, we may find that athletes face fewer consequences

when expressing their concerns and struggles as they relate to both their well-being and their performance. Athletes might then have sport experiences that are less problematic and more facilitative to holistic development. In this way, sport psychology consultants can avoid the ironic practice of treating the symptoms of athletes' issues without working to identify the deeper cause by instead acknowledging how "sometimes, the problem at its fundamental level is not the athlete alone, but the interactions of the athletes with coaches, parents, and the sport itself" (Corlett, 1996, p. 90).

5.2.2 Implications for Researchers

The holistic sport psychology interventions of emotional preparation and recovery awareness, social support, and balance were not included in my study and so further research should be conducted to explore how they are affected by discipline. Additionally, as my study included the experiences of younger, or more developmental athletes, further research is needed to explore how older or more high-performance athletes' experiences may differ. As more advanced athletes are often trained in highly disciplinary environments and may have spent more time within a disciplinary sport setting, I would anticipate they may face more barriers than my athlete participants to develop holistically. These athletes, on account of being immersed in a potentially more pervasive disciplinary environment, may have internalized dominant discourses and begun a process of self-regulation, and as such may interestingly be more supportive of their environment despite its harmful effects. It is therefore necessary to conduct research on how sport psychology consultants can work alongside both coaches and athletes to address the multiple barriers to holistic development, particularly when both groups see more utility than harm in a disciplinary environment. As discipline is normalized in most sport settings, I anticipate it will be challenging to reduce. However, my thesis, adding to previous Foucauldian

coaching research, outlines why such ethical endeavors are worthwhile. As suggested by Butryn et al. (2014), "now is the time that scholars should make a concerted effort to contextualize corporeal experiences within larger structures of power, discipline, and control" (p. 178).

In addition to researching holistic sport psychology from a poststructural lens and creating new environment-focused interventions, my thesis opens the door for further research that blends knowledge together through shared axiology. Over the course of conducing my thesis, I noticed connections between the concepts I was exploring and theories from other sport research, including the constraints-led approach to motor skill acquisition (Davids, Araújo, Shuttleworth, & Button, 2003), and the psychological construct of mindfulness (Langer, 2000). Future research should be conducted to discern the potential of exploring these and other concepts from a poststructural lens, and what the implications of such a perspective would be for athletes and other sporting bodies.

5.3 Final Thoughts

In introducing Foucauldian concepts such as discipline and power-knowledge to holistic sport psychology, I have shown multiple complex barriers which extend beyond the scope of current individual-focused holistic sport psychology interventions. In order to address these barriers and more effectively assist holistic development, I propose that we reimagine holistic sport psychology philosophy through a poststructural lens, after which researchers and sport psychology consultants can look to use social theory to create new environment-focused interventions. As explained, further research is needed to explore how we can design such novel interventions. While my thesis lays the groundwork for new ideas, it is important to recall that my study took place in a unique situation and thus my analysis was contextual. In the pursuit of innovative interventions, it is necessary to consider the context in which the practices are to take

place, as "effective planning in athletics requires constant and continuous thought" (Denison et al., 2013, p. 397). In any circumstance, sport psychology practices should depend on the disciplinary situation and the needs of the athletes if they are to be effective in promoting holistic development. Ultimately, we need to have an awareness of athletes as active social entities operating within a discursively formed environment should we desire to meaningfully impact their holistic development through holistic sport psychology interventions. Otherwise, how can we claim to "understand, assist, and support the development of the whole person" (Friesen & Orlick, 2010, p. 228) without considering every force that impacts said person – said differently, how can we claim to help athletes develop holistically if we do not consider their holistic experiences?

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