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Family Financial Investment in Organized Youth Sport

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Introduction
Most American youth are involved in organized sports. A breadth of research has described the BENEFITS and CONSEQUENCES of this participation. Likewise, much research has been conducted to investigate on how involvement in organized youth sport affects the parent-child relationship.

Recent studies show that PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT in their children's sport of choice increased the child's enjoyment in that sport. They also found that the child's commitment to the sport increased with the support of their parents. To our knowledge, existing research does not specifically address the relationship among FAMILY FINANCIAL INVESTMENT, the enjoyment youth have in organized youth sport, and their subsequent motivation to continue participation. The present study aims to address this gap in knowledge.

Methods
163 parent-child dyads were recruited through organized youth sports leagues throughout the United States.

PARENTS were 78 fathers and 85 mothers aged 27 to 59 years (M = 41.02, SD = 5.63). Participants represented biological, step, and adoptive parents, identified primarily as White or Caucasian (61.3%), and reported relatively high gross annual incomes (M = $120,685, SD = $66,885).

ATHLETES were 126 males and 37 females aged 8 to 18 years (M = 16.21, SD = 2.39). Athletes were drawn from a variety of sports (n = 14) and the majority (74.2%) reported participating in two or more sports.

Procedures
After obtaining IRB approval, coaches were emailed to explain the details of the study. Permission was requested to survey parents and athletes on respective travel and recreational teams. If permission was granted, the ONLINE SURVEY INSTRUMENT was disseminated to parents via Email.

Results
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS were run using SPSS v.21 for each study variable. The means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Financial Investment</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.72-0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.22-3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Enjoyment</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>4.00-4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Motivation</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.75-4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PATH ANALYSIS
The DIRECT RELATIONSHIP between family financial investment and parental pressure was positive. Increases in family financial investment predicted increases in reported parental pressure (.20, p = .010).

The DIRECT RELATIONSHIP between parental pressure and enjoyment was inverse. Increases in parental pressure predicted reduction in child's enjoyment (-.53, p < .001).

The DIRECT RELATIONSHIP between enjoyment and motivation was positive. Increases in enjoyment predicted increases in motivation (.75, p < .001).

The INDIRECT RELATIONSHIPS from family financial investment to enjoyment (-.10, p = .014), from family financial investment to motivation (.08, p = .015), and from parental pressure to motivation (.40, p < .001) were also significant.

Discussion
Through our research, we were able to measure the correlation family financial investment and athlete motivation via parent pressure and child enjoyment.

This study informs PARENTS who have children participating in organized youth sports as well as SPORT ADMINISTRATORS and COACHES. Specifically, these providers of sport should be aware of the link of financial investment, parental pressure, child enjoyment, and motivation to continue in sports.

FUTURE RESEARCH should attempt to address the impact of family financial investment on less affluent families, as well as families whose children participate at the highest levels of organized youth sport. Such studies would address the impact of a higher percentage of family financial investment on parenting behavior and child outcomes.

References


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