NAVIGATING THE TURBULENT DUAL ROLES OF PARENT/COACH

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the nature of the communication between parent and child as the context changes to place them into the roles of coach and member of the team. Previous studies of parents coaching their own children are limited, suggesting the need for further examination in this area. The parent/coach is becoming far more common in competitive contexts due to the growing number of programs available for children without a corresponding growth in the number of adults able and interested in coaching (Turman & Schrodt, 2004). The study examines and extends role theory, conflict theory, and communication privacy management (CPM) theory.

Data were collected in two phases. In Phase 1 of the study, 20 parent-child dyads were interviewed, and their narrative responses provided the data for analysis. Questions focused on different aspects of the coaching dynamic (coaching background, the nature of the communication between parent/coach and child/competitor in private and public contexts, and reflective questions about their views of how the communication affected their relationship. Once themes from the original interviews had been analyzed, additional interviews were conducted during Phase 2 of the study. The data collected from Phase 2 sought to discover what boundary turbulence parent/coaches faced while managing the change in role from parent to coach, which criteria helped the parent/coach to negotiate communication rules that regulated how to manage the turbulence, and how this change in communication affected the relationship between the parent and child.

Results of the study indicated that, in the private context, technical talk, open and more personal talk, and parent role over coaching role were the dominate themes. In the public context, themes of topic masking, courteous and professional talk, and on the same team were evident. Four main themes emerged from the interviews in regards to the turbulence created by

the dual role. Four themes also emerged to identify how the change in communication during public and private contexts affected the relationship between the parent/coach and child/competitor. Finally, a dyadic reflection of the interviews revealed the positive and negative aspects' impact for both the parent and child.

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CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

There is robust agreement that family is central to human experience and that communication plays a central role in family life (Edwards & Graham, 2009). Family relationships play a critical role in socialization and identity formation and are among the most important relationships in our lives. Family is also consequential and responsible for modeling communication, reinforcing behavior, sharing values, and a confluence of images of what constitutes a family (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2006; Floyd, Mikkelson, & Judd, 2006).

The communication process is inherent within the family context. The family has long been regarded as among the most interesting and influential interpersonal systems and nowhere is its influence on individual behaviors more profound than in the area of communicative behaviors (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; McLeod & Chaffee, 1972; Reiss, 1981; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Reiss (1981) posited strongly that families are characterized by uniquely shared world views and value and belief systems. These value and belief systems have far reaching consequences for how family members perceive their social environment and their family's place in it and how they communicate.

In contemporary society, families are pulled in multiple directions and they must navigate rough waters in their efforts to play different roles in different settings (e.g. dual career couples, family businesses, political families). One area where this communication imperative in families is highlighted occurs when parents coach their own children in competitive activities. The parent/coach is becoming far more common in competitive contexts due to the growing number of programs available for children, without a corresponding growth in the number of adults able or interested in coaching (Turman & Schrodt, 2004). One estimate finds that parents of players

make up 90% of all youth sport coaches (Turman & Schrodt, 2004). Because of the increasing presence of parents involving themselves with the activities of their children in public contexts, the communication process within the family context is prominent. This exploratory study focuses on the intersection of family communication and parental coaching.

Family Communication

Family communication scholars contend that families, and our images of families, are constituted through social interaction (Fitzpatrick, 1987; Noller& Fitzpatrick, 1993; Vangelisti, 2004). Pearson (1993) defined a family as "an organized, relational transactional group, usually occupying a common living space over an extended time period, and possessing a confluence of interpersonal images that evolve through the exchange of meaning over time" (p. 14). The images evoked by the term "family" vary widely, but they tend to have one thing in common: "they are based on, formed, and maintained through communication" (Vangelisti, 2004, p. xiii). Vangelisti characterized the family as:

> A self-defined group of intimates who create and maintain themselves through their own interactions and their interactions with others; a family may include both voluntary and involuntary relationships; it creates both literal and symbolic internal and external boundaries; and it evolves through time: it has a history, a present, and a future. (p.8)

Researchers have long argued that families are open systems, and as a consequence, they should be studied in context (Vangelisti, 2009). Socha and Stamp (2009) suggested that not only do we need to study families in context, but also that what we conceive as context can become an integral part of family interactions.

Vangelisti (2004) wrote, "communication is what creates families" (p. x). While the concept and definitions of family are changing visibly, invisibly, and irrevocably (Turner &

West, 2006), communication between parent and child is a dynamic within the family context. When members of a family communicate, they do more than send and receive messages to and from each other. This communication allows the family to establish roles (e.g., parent or child), maintain rules, perform functions, and sustain behavioral patterns (Vangelisti, 2004). Parent/coach and child/competitor are examples of roles, each carrying with it certain behavioral expectations from the larger social system in which the role is embedded (Major, 2003). These additional roles create tension that may result in conflict within the family or within the individuals, ultimately affecting their communication with family members as well as others outside the family. While family research has increased our understanding of communication and families (Vangelisti, 2004), "the area of parent-child communication and relationship quality remains relatively uncharted" (Perry-Jenkins, Pierce, & Goldberg, 2004, p. 550).

Parental Coaching

As parents and children communicate within the family, the type of interaction and the level of control exerted by family members affects the parent-child relationship and can cause conflict, especially when parents become too involved. One parent noted: "I am a parent and coach and have officiated all levels of sports, most recently youth sports. I have seen parent involvement in youth sports at good levels and some that have over-involved parents on a very negative level" (Sahli, 2010, p. C2). As children develop a clearer sense of their autonomy within the family unit, they often seek more privacy and begin to develop their own privacy rules that may differ from those of their parents. Making choices about revealing and concealing private information is a challenge in family relationships. In an effort to negotiate this privacy boundary and to maintain a close affiliation with their children, parents often strive to keep the lines of communication open (Noller, 1995; Noller & Bagi, 1985; Petronio, 2002). Depending

upon the changing nature of their relationship, the way they communicate also changes (Mazur & Hubbard, 2004; Stein, Raedeke, & Glenn, 1999). As the role of parent/child interconnects with the role of coach/competitor, relationship nuances matter in a unique ways.

As children begin moving outside the family unit—in an effort to retain some level of control and to find ways to affiliate with their children—parents often extend their involvement from the home to the school setting by taking on the role of the coach or director for their child's activities (Barber, Sukhi, &White, 1999; Noller, 1995). According to Turman, Zimmerman, and Dobesh (2009), the involvement of young athletes is controlled and maintained by a combination of parents and coaches. For example, as the roles of parent and coach intersect, a child wishes his/her parent would be a supportive parent instead of a coach who criticizes his/her performance as the "coach" does with any of the other competitors. Kassing, Brown, Halone, Harrison, and Krizek, (2004) concluded that, for many families, sports consume a significant portion of their leisure activities. Baxter-Jones and Maffulli (2003) further offered that parents with an active interest in sports are more likely to expose their children to sports at an early age and allow this activity to become a vital part of the family's leisure time.

As more of a family's leisure time is devoted to sports, or other activities, more parents find themselves coaching their own children. The parent's direct and indirect messages about participating in the activity can either foster or take away from the child's involvement (Kidman, MacKenzie & MacKenzie, 1999). These messages can also increase or decrease a child's stress (Hirschhorn & Loughead, 2000). The nature of the communication shared when they move from private to public spheres complicates the changing roles for both the parent and the child. The parent/coach may have a difficult time shedding the coaching role in private. The intersection of

the private and public contexts as well as how the parent and child negotiate what they will and will not reveal both within and outside the family unit are worthy of study.

Rationale for the Study

In modern society, families have been torn between public and private contexts (e.g. the family- owned business, pastoral families, political families). This study explored how the changing roles played by parents and children in the public context affected their communication within and outside of the privacy context. Specifically, privacy boundaries were examined to determine how context was accounted for in the communication process and how the varying roles of the parent/coach and child/competitor affected views of privacy boundaries. This process merits study due to the large number of parents who take on coaching responsibilities and the limited understanding that exists about how communication between parent/coach and child/competitor occurs in public and private contexts as family members navigate roles. What and how they communicate with their children in private may be different from how, when, and if they communicate about particular topics when they are in the public eye.

Parents often need to negotiate the way they communicate with their children to establish appropriate communication boundaries. Petronio (2010) discovered that parents educate their children about the family's privacy orientation and the rules associated with regulating and protecting family information. When parents become a coach of a son or daughter's interest group, the privacy boundaries are negotiated.

Within the context of the competitive environment exacerbated by parent/coach roles being altered in the public context, the resulting communication and disclosure of personal information may be compromised. The change in role, communication patterns, and personal disclosures are significant to this study because competition places added pressures on parent-

child communication as a result of the different roles the parent and child take when they move between contexts. In the family system, the parent often establishes a set role that determines how s/he communicates with the child. Learning more about how families negotiate privacy boundaries is useful for families, scholars, and non-parent coaches.

In addition, we know that as children develop a clearer sense of their autonomy within the family unit, they often seek more privacy and begin to develop their own privacy rules that may differ from those of their parents. By exploring the choices facing families about revealing and concealing private information, scholars can offer insight for parents/coaches facing this difficulty as they manage private information which is revealed to them by their children/competitors.

Significance of the Study

This exploratory study is significant for two main reasons. First, it offers the opportunity to unpack the communication process known as boundary negotiation when parents and children are placed into roles as coaches and team members. Petronio (2002) argued, "studying turbulence gives us a way to decipher the unevenness of human interaction" (p. 317). Parents/coaches are challenged on many fronts, such as "I am the dad and the coach, so I can't treat my son differently than the rest of the team." We know the potential for extreme behavior exists because examples demonstrate how, as roles change, the communication dynamic changes.

Second, this exploratory study offers insight that enriches our understanding of how the four family types (consensual, pluralistic, protective, and laissez-faire), identified by Keorner and Fitzpatrick (2004) function when the coaching dynamic is introduced as a dimension affecting the communication between the coach and child.

Definition of Terms

To lay the groundwork and for the purpose of consistency throughout the study, several terms must be defined

Boundary turbulence occurs when a lack of effective privacy boundary coordination by members of a family occurs and when privacy rules are not functioning as intended (Petronio, 2002). Privacy boundary structures are the metaphoric ownership lines around information (Petronio, 2000a). As privacy boundaries apply to this study, a line between those topics are agreed upon by two or more individuals to remain unspoken outside the context in which they were discussed and those topics that may be spoken in any context. Recognizing the impact roles play and the conflict created by the changing and/or competing roles as the parent becomes coach and child becomes competitor, turbulence is affected by the negotiation of navigating the change in context.

Coach is defined as an individual with expertise in a particular competitive activity or event having the official responsibility to direct children/students in that competitive or creative activity. A coach is responsible for preparing a team or individual for practice, presentation/competition, and some form of reward or evaluation (Littlefield & Larson-Casselton, 2009).

Parents and children are described within a biological or adoptive relationship whereby the adults have primary responsibility for the care and development of the children.

Communication is the process of understanding and sharing meaning. Communication is considered a process because it is an activity, exchange, or set of behaviors (Pearson & Nelson, 1994).

Competitive activity is any activity through which teams or individuals represent a school or other such entity and are engaged in structured competitive events with winners and losers being identified.

Privacy is defined by Petronio (2002) as "the feeling that one has the right to own private information, either personally or collectively" (p. 6). According to Petronio (2002), people have the right to own and manage access to their private information. Disclosure and privacy are dialectical in nature, and to manage the tension between both, people make decisions about the disclosure and ownership of private information.

To facilitate the understanding of definitions and characteristics consistent with CPM theory, Petronio (2002) advised that it is important to think about the ebb-and-flow of the information that is exchanged. Once information is disclosed with others, the boundary opens up, and the mere act of exchanging information causes a shift in personal boundaries that occurs around an individual's information so that, now, the information is co-owned by both its sender and receiver.

Organization of the Study

This first chapter has provided a statement and explanation of the communication problem examined; that is, the changing roles of parents and children in public and private contexts that affect their communication, particularly what they decide to disclose or not disclose. Chapter two offers a review of the relevant literature pertaining to family communication, role theory, conflict theory, communication privacy management theory, and the role of parents coaching their own children. In chapter three, the methodology is introduced and explained. Chapter four reports the results of the study; and chapter five provides an interpretive

analysis of the study, including conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study examined the role of parents/coaches and their son/daughters/competitors as well as any turbulence that occurred in private versus public contexts. Family members are often asked to play multiple roles and face many privacy management decisions. Privacy management may be salient especially when the parent becomes the coach of his/her son/daughter's activity. Communication is central to family relationships, and understanding the functionality of communication in such relationships is an important task for researchers (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008; Knapp & Daly, 2002; Vangelisti, 2004; Wood, 2000).

The literature relevant to the issue of parents coaching their own children encompasses a variety of topics. This chapter highlights the major scholarship on several concepts related to these dual roles. The literature on family communication was examined to gain insight into the definition and nature of the competitive family. In light of the fact that members of these families are asked to play different roles, appropriate research on role theory is reviewed. When assuming dual roles, conflict may develop. Thus relevant research on conflict theory is offered. Related to the conflict that may arise from these dual roles, a parent/coach and child/competitor may conceal certain information while in public necessitating the inclusion of CPM in this review. Finally, to provide a theoretical context for the study of parents as coaches, relevant literature is highlighted. The chapter concludes with research questions clarifying the specific focus for the present study.

Family Communication

Studying the dual role of parent/coach and child/team member represents an appropriate phenomenon to use when seeking to understand the functionality of communication regarding the family. Examining families is not an easy undertaking whether for communication scholars

on the outside looking in at the multitude of family configurations or for family members trying to figure out their own family dynamics. In one of the very first surveys of family literature, Bochner (1976) wrote that communication is the foundation of family life. Although he proposed this conclusion many years ago, Vangelisti (2004) confirmed that the last 30 years of research in this area have increased our understanding about communication and families. However, "the area of parent-child communication and relationship quality remains relatively uncharted" (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2004, p. 550).

This gap has far-reaching implications, as Socha and Stamp (1995) suggested, because what children learn about communication in the family setting will be reflected in their future communication with individuals outside the family. As parents and children communicate within the family, the type of interaction and the level of control exerted by family members may affect the parent-child relationship. For children involved in activities with parents, the type of interaction between family members and the amount of conformity stressed within the family can be an issue. These family communication patterns may be examined through conversation and conformity orientations.

Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2004) described the differences between conversation and conformity orientations within families. *Conversation orientation* is "the degree to which families creates a climate where all family members are encouraged to participate in unrestrained interaction about a wide range of topics" (p. 184). Families high in conversation orientation spend a lot of time together and freely share information about their personal activities, thoughts, and feelings while families low in conversation orientation do not. Families with a *conformity orientation* stress "a climate of homogeneity of attitudes, values, and beliefs" (p. 184). Families with a high conformity orientation place a high value on the traditional family hierarchy where

parents make decisions and children do as they are told. Families that are low in conformity orientation allow members to be independent, have personal space, and place personal interests above those of the family.

The effects of these two dimensions on parent-child communication are interdependent, and both must be considered when determining the nature of communication within a family (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004). As a result of this research, we learned that families who are high in conformity orientation described their interactions as more directive (such as advice-giving), more deliberate, and more coordinated (defined as a greater use of questions). According to Barbato, Graham, and Perse (2003), conversation-oriented families are more focused on relational issues and communicate to relax, to show affection, and to have fun. Conformity-oriented families view communication not only as a way to control family members, but also to show affection. Clearly, a link exists between control and conformity, advice giving oriented communication, and coaching. However, how parents and children navigate the conversation and conformity orientations as they assume different roles as coaches and team members remains unknown.

Role Theory

The communicative management of dual roles is a common practice in family relationships, representing a useful context for researchers to explore. Role theory examines one of the most salient features of social life, characteristic behavior patterns or roles (Biddle, 1986). This theory explains roles by presuming that people are members of social positions and hold expectations for their behaviors and those of others based on the roles they assume. Through the lens of role theory, the fact that parents/children and coaches/competitors behave in ways that are

different and predictable depending on their respective roles and the situations affect the way they communicate and behave.

The role theory perspective emerged across disciplines in the social sciences during the 1920's and early 1930's (Major, 2003). Role theory began as a theatrical metaphor. If performances in the theater were differentiated and predictable because actors were constrained to perform parts for which scripts were written, it seemed reasonable to conclude that social behaviors in other contexts were also associated with parts and scripts that would be understood by social actors (Biddle, 1986). Biddle (1979) defined role theory as, "…concerned with the study of behaviors that are characteristic of persons within contexts and with various processes that presumably produce, explain, or are affected by those behaviors" (p. 4).

Biddle (1979) addressed the role concepts by providing an analytical examination of role theory from five theoretical perspectives. These perspectives include functionalism, symbolic interactionism, structural role theory, organizational role theory, and cognitive role theory. Functionalism focused on the characteristic behaviors or persons who occupy social positions within a stable social system. Functionalism was the dominant perspective in role theory until the mid-1970's. Mead (1934) introduced symbolic interactionism, defining actual roles as reflecting norms, attitudes, contextual demands, negotiation, and the evolving definition of the situation as understood by the actors (Biddle, 1986). Structural role theory focused on social structures conceived as stable organizations of sets of persons who shared the same, patterned behaviors or roles (Biddle, 1986). Organizational role theory described social systems where preplanned, task-oriented, and hierarchical roles manifested themselves (Biddle, 1986). Cognitive role theory centered on how relationships were conceptualized by those involved in them. This perspective

has largely focused on relationships between role expectations and behavior. The bulk of role research has largely been associated with cognitive social psychology (Biddle, 1986).

Biddle assumed that role expectations appeared simultaneously in at least three modes of thought: norms, preferences, and beliefs (Jackson, 1998). Normative behaviors and attitudes can be defined in terms of specific prescriptions. As a role occupant, one not only endorses normative behavioral expectations for oneself, but also holds expectations for others. According to role theory, the parent/coach is expected to use his or her expertise in managing the team. The child/competitor is expected to obey the parent/coaches rules. For the social interaction to run smoothly, it is important for both to understand their social positions, share the behavioral expectations associated with their roles, and enact those expectations or behaviors. Conflicting roles and role expectations can cause the parent/coach and child/competitor to be ill at ease with the assumed new roles.

Consensus and conformity are central concepts in role theory (Biddle, 1986). Biddle (1986) described: "social systems are presumably better integrated and interactions within them proceed more smoothly, when normative consensus is obtained" (p. 76). Conformity accounts for an individual's accommodation to acceptable patterned social behavior, which ultimately contributes to consensus (Jackson, 1998). Biddle (1979) claimed that individuals hold expectations for each other. As these expectations become known, individuals will conform either because the person holding the expectation is in a position of power and can apply sanctions or because the individual simply internalizes the normative expectations.

Role theory has been applied in the helping professions including counseling, social work, education and healthcare (Hardy & Conway, 1988; Killeya-Jones, 2005; Major, 2003; Payne, 1988; Rheiner, 1982). Role theory also has long been used to test the effects of occupying roles

in both the family and work domains (Edwards, Zarit, Stephens, Townsend, 2002; Rozario, Morrow-Howell, & Hinterlong, 2004). Wang, Shyu, Chen & Yang (2010) used role theory to examine the effects of work demands and family care giving. However, role theory has not been applied to the coaching context or explored from a communication perspective as it applies to public and private situations.

A role theoretic approach emphasizes the nature of people as social actors who learn behaviors appropriate to the positions they occupy. Although the "actors" in a public context of coaching or competing may be very different individuals in their private family context, each must adopt a relatively standardized set of behaviors appropriate to the public situation. Individuals are often defined by the roles they play. When a person is labeled as coach or team member, a profile of this person can be generated based on the characteristics, which are believed to coincide with this label. The assumed role of parent and child in private operates much the same way. The intersection of the private versus public role can create conflict or tension depending on the situation and the circumstances of situations. Role theory and the related concepts make it possible to consider both the parent/coach and child/team member interactions while in public or private contexts. The present study provides an opportunity to explore such interactions.

Conflict Theory

Roles often become particularly relevant when the family is in conflict (Floyd, 2011). Decades of research demonstrated that conflict shapes and permeates a broad range of family processes (Schlomer, Giudice & Ellis, 2011). Noller, Atkin, Feeney & Peterson (2006) wrote "there is no doubt conflict is a pervasive feature of family life that can have beneficial or harmful effects depending on how it is expressed and how it is resolved" (p. 165). Nicotera (2009)

contended, “conflict is an inevitable and necessary social process that when managed well contributes to creativity, cohesiveness, relational growth, and productivity” (p. 165).

Conflict for the parent and child can result from insufficient or ineffective communication. Communication and conflict seem to be interdependent, simultaneously defining each other (Nicotera, 2009). Consequently, there is a need to examine conflict in a particular type of family relationship such as when a parent becomes a coach of his or her own child.

Conflict is one of the most studied and discussed subjects in the area of family communication (Sillars & Tafoya, 2004). Conflict theories emphasize that conflicts are ubiquitous and inherent (Deutsch, 1973; Simmel, 1955), especially given the interdependence and emotional involvement of close relationships. Sillars and Tafoya (2004) contend “much of the research tries to isolate constructive versus problematic aspects of communication, with the hope that communication processes may then be appropriately modeled, suppressed, or otherwise changed” (p. 413).

Most researchers in family literature have followed the lead of classic conflict theorists who emphasized the inevitability of social conflict (Deutsch, 1973; Simmel, 1955). This perspective posits that all families will experience frequent conflict, which is considered neither good or bad, to determine how the family handles the conflict and to what extent conflict determines the vitality and resilience of the family relationship (Sillars & Tafoya, 2004). Charny (1980) extended this thought suggesting, “…what really becomes important in family life is not the ability to stay out of trouble but to get out of trouble, that is the ability to process conflicts and dilemmas and unfairness constructively” (p. 43).

Previous research suggested that conflict with parents tends to increase at the stage of adolescence (Steinberg, 1991), partly because adolescents come to see their parents' rules and demands as less legitimate and more arbitrary than they did when they were younger. Montemayor (1986) reported about two significant conflicts per week, whereas Laursen (1993) reported high school students had 7.4 conflicts on average per day with parents included as one of three relationships that endured these kinds of conflict. As the child/team member enters the adolescent stage, he/she may more likely resist the rules imposed upon them by their parent/coach. During this time, parents and adolescents often have different interpretations of the conflict, with parents seeing the disagreements arising from personal safety and conformity concerns and adolescents viewing the concerns as issues of personal choice and control (Smetana, 1989). Adams and Laursen (2001) found parental conflict with adolescents involved more daily hassles, negative affect afterwards, power-assertive actions, and win/lose resolutions. Smetana (1995) found an authoritarian parental style was positively related to the frequency and intensity of parent-adolescent conflict, but parents who granted adolescents control over some areas of personal style experienced less conflict. What all of these studies lacked was an investigation of how these conflicts changed as the roles of the parents and children changed due to movement between public and private contexts.

Communication Privacy Management

Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory was developed by Petronio (1991) as a way to investigate how family members communicated about private information. The CPM theory provides the theoretical framework for addressing how family members manage individual and collective family privacy boundaries. Research has verified the existence of family privacy boundaries, including those internal to the family unit and external to regulate

privacy to outsiders (Petronio, 2002). The use of CPM theory to explain how co-owned information held by the parent/coach-child/team-member in different contexts guided the understanding of how changing roles create boundary turbulence.

CPM also predicts that, implicitly or explicitly, family members functioning as recipients are perceived as having a responsibility for information that other members reveal to them or to whom they give access (Petronio, 2010). Although existing research has provided support for these predictions, Petronio further argued:

> more work is needed to identify the dimensions of responsibility that emerge in various family situations. A better understanding is needed to grasp how responsibility is enacted across situations and whether the commitment to a sense of accountability on the part of the recipient fulfills the expectations of the person giving access to his or her private information. (2010, p. 177)

Unlike self-disclosure, CPM is built around a boundary metaphor (Caughlin &Petronio, 2004; Petronio, 1991, 2002, 2004; Petronio & Durham, 2008). CPM expands and broadens the concept of self-disclosure, as previous literature had intended, to a process of disclosing that gives less consideration to the content of disclosure: "CPM makes private information, as the content of what is self-disclosed, a primary focal point. In this way, CPM sets parameters and gives substance to the heart of disclosures, that is, what is considered private" (Petronio, 2002, p. 3).

Communication privacy management theory (Petronio, 1994, 2000a, 2002) suggests that sharing private information is not easy and is regulated by two factors: boundary structures and rule management (Golish & Caughlin, 2002). Communication boundary structures identify who is and who is not allowed access to private information while rule management represents the

regulation of private information that moderates boundary linkage, boundary ownership, and boundary permeability (Petronio, 2000a). Petronio (2000a) further described four interrelated dimensions associated with communication boundaries: ownership, control, permeability, and levels. *Ownership* represents an individual's right to reveal or conceal private information about themselves, whereby individuals assess the amount of risk associated with revealing private information. *Control* refers to whom private information is shared. For example, a connection to a child because the parent is also the coach may make one privy to information that is restricted to other parents or team members. Making choices about who has access to private information influences the *permeability* of one's communication-constructed boundaries (Turman et al., 2009). Finally, *levels* represent the individuals within the subsystem who have access to information (i.e., spouse, siblings, assistant coaches, team members, and other parents).

The CPM theory and research provide a systematic way to grasp the interrelationship of disclosure, confidentiality, and privacy. Triangulation may occur as loyalty conflicts, bonding two family members against a third (Afifi, 2003). For families, the concept of co-ownership tends to be more like a guardianship, an expectation of members protecting the dissemination of information to individuals within and outside the family boundary (Petronio, 2010). Research has not yet examined the communication patterns between a parent/coach and his/her child/player. In the blurring of boundaries, can an individual communicate in two distinct roles at one time?

Principles Guiding CPM

Petronio (2002, 2010) described five principles of private information management that represent organizing tenets interlinking individuals and families: (a) ownership of information, (b) control, (c) regulation through privacy rules, (d) co-ownership or guardianship of another's

private information, and (e) turbulences or regulation of privacy breakdowns. The first tenant explains that at times people feel they want to conceal and other times people want to reveal information. Tension may occur between being public with private information and remaining private. The dichotomy of opposites brings tension to the relationship.

The second principle characterizes private information. Petronio (2010) stated, "because people believe they own their private information, they assume the right to control that information" (p. 179). Private information does not become owned by another until the one who owns the information reveals it to another person or persons. Given that private information is owned by an individual, the individual has control of that information.

The third tenant of CPM theory concerns a rule-based management system. Petronio (2010) added, "privacy rules are developed to determine when, how, with whom, and in what way others might be granted or denied access to someone's private information" (p. 179). These rules represent the guidelines used to decide if private information is going to be revealed to others or remain private. Rules also depict how open or closed the privacy boundary will be to protect the privacy of the information shared. The rules are developed based upon the following criteria: (a) culture, (b) gender, (c) motivation, (d) context, and (e) risk-benefit ratio (Petronio 2000a, 2002, 2004; Petronio & Durham, 2008).

The fourth principle of CPM is shared boundaries (Petronio 2000a, 2002, 2004; Petronio & Caughlin, 2006; Petronio & Durham, 2008). Co-ownership of information indicates that the confidant is in a position to decide whether to reveal the information to someone else or to keep the information private. Petronio and Reierson (2009) contended that this principle forms the basis for a fundamental understanding of how privacy management and confidentiality are linked together. When information is revealed by others, ownership of the information is relinquished,

thus allowing other people to share control over the privacy boundary that protects the private information. This principle establishes the importance of rules created to control the boundary around the private information so that it becomes very clear when information should be kept confidential and when private information can be made known to others.

The fifth and final principle of CPM is boundary turbulence (Petronio 2000a, 2002, 2004; Petronio & Caughlin, 2006; Petronio & Durham, 2008), the main principle applied in the current study. *Turbulence* occurs when expectations are violated about how privacy boundaries surrounding private information should be managed. Petronio stated, "the last principle predicts that mistakes, misunderstandings, intentional violations, intrusions, and mishaps take place and result in privacy boundary turbulence" (2010, p. 182). Boundary turbulence may also occur with privacy dilemmas (Petronio, 2000b, 2002, 2004; Petronio & Caughlin, 2006; Petronio & Durham, 2008). Thompson (2008) discovered that, when individuals experience dilemmas, they may be unsure whether to confide their private information to someone, or they may be uncertain about how to manage the privacy boundary surrounding the private information that has been disclosed to them. Turbulence occurs when expectations are violated about how privacy boundaries surrounding private information should be handled: "It is through analyzing the turbulence and how families respond to it, that researchers can better understand how to manage it" (Afifi, 2003, p. 735).

These five principles of CPM provided clear guidance to examine the context of the present study. Petronio (2010) continued:

> Communication Privacy Management theory has been useful in gaining insights into many different kinds of privacy contexts. However, particularly in the family, CPM has provided a clear way to better grasp the complexities of both remaining autonomous and

continuing important connections with family members. (p. 182) Thus, CPM can serve as the framework for understanding how people manage their private information and the way that others factor into management systems (Petronio, 2010).

Family Privacy Boundaries

Privacy boundaries are constantly shaped by the discourse in which individuals engage one another, and this process is very complex (Caughlin & Petronio, 2004; Durham, 2004; Petronio, 1994). Petronio (2002) discussed the intersection of interior and exterior family boundaries. When internal and external boundaries are congruent, little boundary turbulence occurs. When there is incongruence, the boundary turbulence may be substantial. Littlefield and Larson-Casselton (2009) found that the most common congruent combination is moderate interior and moderate exterior permeability. For example, when children and their parents negotiate a set of rules that enables the child to maintain some privacy within the relationship on the team as well as a degree of openness with the parent about the nature of the team, boundary turbulence should lessen.

Miller (2007) suggested that boundary coordination enables individuals to manage multiple boundaries in three ways. First, through boundary linkage, individuals share information and create collective boundaries with others, or they realign collective boundaries when new members gain access to private information. In the present study, parents/coaches attempted to coordinate boundaries with their child/team member around their private family information. If they chose to disclose private family information to their team, they tried to coordinate boundaries with each other by creating and enacting rules that guided how parent and child handled the private information. Second, boundary coordination requires individuals to assess boundary permeability. Boundary permeability refers to how open or closed collective boundaries are to individuals outside the boundary (Petronio, 2002). Boundary permeability

allows members of the collective boundary to protect private information and to control access others have to the information. Once collective boundaries are formed, individuals must find ways to negotiate a set of privacy access and protection rules to guide boundary permeability. Petronio (2002) suggested that privacy-access rules determine who outside the collective boundary has access to information, what they know, how much information owners give them, when disclosure is appropriate, and how owners share information. Miller (2007) posited that, to manage private information, co-owners may decide to avoid talking about certain information, declare topics taboo, or create rules for confidentiality. They may also decide how to protect the information from others.

Third, people determine control and ownership of information when they coordinate boundaries (Petronio, 2002). Although individuals may own and control their private information, they may give up control and ownership after collective boundaries are formed. To keep control of private information and to demonstrate the private nature of the information, individuals may use verbal privacy markers (e.g., saying "Please don't tell anyone" to the co-owner) and nonverbal privacy markers (e.g., whispering to demonstrate confidentiality) when disclosing information to others (Petronio & Bantz, 1991).

Boundary Turbulence

Boundary turbulence occurs when people are unable to collectively develop or enact privacy rules (Petronio, 2002). Petronio and Caughlin (2006) concluded, "families are particularly interesting for privacy scholars to study because the members not only preserve personal privacy boundaries, individuals must engage in managing multiple boundary spheres" (p. 39). Petronio (2007) stated, "turbulence characteristically occurs when there is a disruption in the coordination of privacy rules or when someone's privacy boundary is blatantly violated"

(p. 219). She went on to conclude that boundary turbulence often results in mistrust, anger, suspicion, or uncertainty about sharing private information.

Petronio (2002) explained that individuals tend to experience boundary turbulence in the following ways: (a) an intentional rule violation (e.g., betrayal of confidence), (b) boundary rule mistakes (e.g., Individuals do not know they have broken a privacy rule.), (c) mistakes in timing and inappropriate disclosures, (d) fuzzy boundaries (e.g., confusion about who owns the information), (e) differences in boundary orientation, (f) definitions about boundaries are different, and (g) privacy dilemmas.

Boundary turbulence can be problematic and productive for families (Petronio & Caughlin, 2006). Disturbances in the family relationship can make individuals feel uncomfortable and uneasy because the disturbances disrupt the equilibrium that family members count on when they use privacy rules (Petronio & Caughlin, 2006). At the same time, this discomfort can motivate family members to examine the turbulence created by the dysfunction and to adjust the rules to better fit the needs of the family or situation. Studying turbulence gives the researcher a way to decipher the unevenness of human interaction and helps us understand the dynamics of relational systems (Petronio & Durham, 2008).

Previous Scholarship Using Communication Privacy Management

Since 1998, there have been many attempts to illuminate the translational qualities of CPM (Petronio & Durham, 2008). The guiding rationale for making an effort to translate CPM arises from the belief that a theory is only as good as its application (Petronio, 2007). Petronio (2007) discovered several important frameworks to translate research into practice, including: identifying real problems, considering the fit, including evidence that fits the needs of translating the research, conversing the findings into practices and acting on the research. Thus far, no

study has used CPM to examine the public and private communication involving parents and children in coaching contexts.

CPM has been used in "predicting and explaining boundaries and the regulation of revealing and concealing private information in dyadic, family, group, or organizational systems" (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008, p. 282). Scholars have used CPM to study numerous contexts, including families. CPM has been utilized by several scholars to study stepfamilies and parent-child communication (Afifi, 2003; Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Caughlin et al., 2000; Miller, 2007). Family secrets and what is revealed in families as a necessary component for family satisfaction were studied by Caughlin and Petronio (2004). Petronio, Jones, and Morr (2003) discovered that dyads or triads are often formed by family members linking boundaries with some members of the family and not others. Stepfamilies as well as the managing of disclosure and privacy to prohibit stepfamily members from being caught in the middle have been researched (Afifi, 2003; Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Braithwaite, Toller, Dass, Durham, & Jones, 2008).

Petronio (2000b) studied how the cohesiveness of the parent-child bond is also related to the permeability of communication boundaries. A strong parent-child bond can foster permeable boundaries with other family members when appropriate communicative behaviors are modeled. Afifi (2003) stated, "researchers and practitioners recognize that children can harbor feelings of being caught, but little is known about how family communication patterns contribute to them" (p. 733). Several scholars have also used CPM to study the issue of topic avoidance in parent-child communication. Mazur and Hubbard (2004) discovered that, when the privacy of adolescents was invaded by a parent, the adolescents reacted by strengthening their personal privacy boundaries through "direct and indirect rejection, aggression, and nonverbal responses to

terminate the conversation" (p. 35). Caughlin and Afifi (2004) found that, in parent-child dyads, a negative relationship existed between topic avoidance and relationship satisfaction. However, the relationship between children's topic avoidance and parent-child relationship satisfaction was less negative if children reported topic avoidance to protect the parent-child dyad.

The research on topic avoidance points out that a privacy-rule strategy is used when a person feels compelled to keep information protected within the privacy boundary. Researchers have also used CPM to study topic avoidance and the disclosure of information following the death of a child (Hastings, 2000), and the disclosure of pregnancy narratives (Petronio, 2000b; Petronio & Jones, 2007). Miller (2007) used CPM to examine post-divorce co-parenting relationships as co-parents communicated and managed private information with one another about dating. Most recently, McManus and Nussbaum (2011) found that parents' ambiguity during divorce-related stressor conversations influenced parents' and young adult children's relational closeness, satisfaction, and communication satisfaction.

Petronio and Durham (2008) stated, "CPM argues that one of the criteria on which privacy rules are predicated is the motivation for revealing or concealing private information" (p. 319). As a result, some research has started to suggest the ways in which motivations impact our choice to either reveal or conceal information in a relationship. Caughlin and Afifi (2004) and Golish and Caughlin (2002) found that relational dissatisfaction was moderated by an individual's motivations for avoiding disclosure of a topic, suggesting that motivational criteria for decision making regarding revealing and concealing are a robust theoretical assumption.

The present study was grounded in CPM for two reasons. First, because CPM is a useful theory in understanding how parents enact rules to negotiate the turbulence created when the role shifts from being parents to coaching their own child. Second, because CPM is centered on

communication, CPM helps to frame the focus on the intersection of family communication and parental coaching. Future research efforts are necessary to analyze parents/coaches as an interpersonal process by tracing the communication dynamics. Previous research using CPM points to the importance of studying turbulence and privacy boundary formation as interlocking systems in which alliances are created, maintained, and minimized through interaction. But no study has addressed the specific context of coaching and how that poses particular constraints on how families navigate privacy as they move between contexts.

Coaching Literature

The research on family communication suggests that the bonds established in a family, as well as the value placed on individuality and conversation in a family, have strong implications for a child's development and satisfaction. The coaching situation offers the opportunity to strengthen family bonds through regular and open interaction. Sports psychology research has documented the important role of significant adults, such as parents (Fredricks & Eccles, 2004) and coaches (Horn, 2002), in youth participants' psychosocial development and achievement motivation. The roles of parent and coach are often synonymous, suggesting a dual, rather than independent, relationship with the child participant (E. W. Brown, 1998; Rathbun, 1998; Weiss & Sisley, 1994).

A common phenomenon of North American culture is the parent/coach dual role (Weiss & Frettwell, 2005). Most coaches in competitive youth sports are parents of one or more of their players (Barber, Sukhi, & White, 1999). Brown (1998) estimated that about 90% of the volunteer coaches in a given community are a parent of one or more team members. Although one can conclude many positive aspects of the parent/coach dual role, there is also the possibility for the child/team member to perceive stress from this parent/child relationship.

Gould, Wilson, Tuffey, and Lochbaum (1993) reported that adolescent athletes felt a pressure to perform well not only from their coaches, but also from their parents. The attitude and approach of the parent/coach can affect how the child comes to view participation and interest in the activity. Despite calls by scholars to study how the parent/coach influences the child/participant (B. A. Brown, 1985; Brustad, 1992; Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992), only three studies have explored the impact of parents/coaches on their children (Barber et. al., 1999; Littlefield & Larson-Casselton, 2009; Weiss & Fretwell 2005). Barber et al. (1999) found that the presence of a parent as a coach was not perceived by the child as detrimental to the relationship. Weiss and Fretwell (2005) discovered costs and rewards of being coached in soccer by your father. Littlefield and Larson-Casselton (2009) examined how the context of the coaching situation influenced the nature of communication between parent and child when the roles were changed to that of coach and team member. However, none of these established how the roles played by the parents and children affected their relationship as the context changed between public and private settings.

The conundrum of separating the parenting and coaching roles and responsibilities is salient in deciding whether it is more or less beneficial for parents to coach their own children (Weis & Fretwell, 2005). Further research is needed to understand and discover the positive and negative impacts of the parent coaching his/her son or daughter.

Research Questions

Many adults who coach and manage youth activities are parents of the participants. This dynamic is one that inevitably affects both family and team relationships. Martin (2008) concluded that parent/coaches are necessary for the survival of youth sports, but asked parents to be aware of the stress it can place on a precious parent/child relationship. In responding to

question; “How are privacy boundaries negotiated when a parent becomes a coach of his/her own child?,” this study is guided by three specific research questions.

R1: How do public and private contexts influence the way the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate?

R2: How do the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate about the boundary turbulence created by their changing roles in public or private environments?

R3: How does the change in communication in public and private contexts affect the relationship between the parent and child?

Summary

This chapter examined relevant research in family communication, role theory, conflict theory, communication privacy management theory, and literature about parents as coaches. Weiss and Fretwell (2005) wrote: “There is little empirical research on the dual role of the parent/coach” (p. 288). Many potential benefits as well as costs of the parent/coach-child/team member relationship exist. It may be insightful for communication scholars to examine children’s perceptions of being coached by a parent, the parent’s perception of coaching a son/daughter, and the potential positive and negative consequences of this phenomenon more fully. Such research has the potential to guide and educate administrators, teachers, coaches, and parents in their practical challenges with this situation and also to contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of family communication.

CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the present study's methodology used to investigate the process of boundary negotiation when parents and children are placed into new roles as coaches and team members. Communication privacy management (CPM) theory provides the guiding qualitative framework used for interpreting the data. Interpretive researchers believe in multiple realities as opposed to an objective reality and focus on making sense of how people describe and explain their experiences (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Interpretive researchers rely on rich and detailed description from the perspective of the actors themselves (Baxter & Babbie, 2004), what interpretivists refer to as "evocativeness" (p. 62). Researchers who center their work on this paradigm focus on giving voice to their participants, encouraging their participants to offer narratives, examples, and analogies to describe a particular phenomenon (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Rationale for Qualitative Methods and Interviewing

Researchers situated in the interpretive paradigm most often use qualitative methods to gather open-ended data from their participants (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 1998). Merriam (1998) indicated, when a study is not looking for explanations or predictions, the qualitative approach is best because it is geared for insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. Creswell (1998) wrote that researchers should use a qualitative approach when: (a) their research questions ask how or what; (b) the topic needs to be explored; (c) the researcher wants a detailed view of the topic; and (d) the researcher wants to tell a story from the participants' view. While the turbulence created by the dual role of the parent/coach is relatively unexplored, the use of qualitative methods enabled the researcher to conduct an exploratory investigation of this communication phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The qualitative data collection method that best reflected the assumptions of the interpretive paradigm and allowed the researcher to uncover the process of communication between the parent/coach and child/competitor in private and public contexts was in-depth, semi-structured interviewing (Kvale, 1996; Smith, 1995). McCracken (1998) argued that interviewing is one of the most powerful qualitative methods because interviewing allows researchers to step into the "mental world of the individual," to "glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world," to see "the context and pattern of daily existence," and "to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves" (p. 9). Smith (1995) argued that semi-structured interviews are well suited for studies in which researchers are interacted in the "process or where an issue is controversial or personal" (p. 10).

To further enrich the interpretive possibilities of the present study, interviews were co-constructed; that is, both parent/coach and child/team member created their responses while interacting in the presence of the researcher. This in itself afforded the researcher with the opportunity to observe the negotiated boundary first hand.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for two reasons. First, when a researcher uses semi-structured interviewing, he or she uses a set of questions to guide, but not dictate, the interview (Smith, 1995). Using an interview protocol as a guide allowed the researcher to impose some structure but also allowed the exploration of new ideas. Second, through the use of semi-structured interviewing, the researcher provided participants' in-depth reflection and the ability to talk about their experiences (Baxter & Babie, 2004). Interviews allowed participants to use their own language to describe their communication performances and practices (Lindlof, 1995). Interviewing also allowed for the parent and child to reflect on their communication with

one another and to discuss how they made sense of their communication with one another in private and public contexts (McCracken, 1998).

Phases of the Research Process

This research study was divided into Phase 1 and Phase 2. The data collected in Phase 1 of the research project came from transcripts of co-constructed interviews previously collected by the researcher as part of a larger study (see Appendix A for Phase 1 interview questions). In Phase 2, the researcher added additional interviews that allowed the researcher to garner new insights and expand on themes identified during Phase 1 interviews (see Appendix B for Phase 2 interview questions).

To comply with the regulations of the university's Institutional Review Board, the primary researchers (of which the present author was one) described three aspects of the Phase 1 study: (a) the purpose of the study, whereby a parent and his/her son/daughter were informed that research was being conducted to determine how they communicated in public and private contexts; (b) the method by which data collection would occur, requiring utilization of audio equipment to record the interview; and (c) how the data would be utilized after transcription occurred. After parents and children agreed to participate, the researchers acquired written consent from them (Appendix C). As each interview was completed, participants were asked to identify other parent/child dyads they felt would fit the parameters of the study and might be interested in being interviewed. IRB approval was secured.

Once themes from the original interviews were analyzed, Phase 2 of the IRB process was undertaken as exempt status was applied for and received to conduct additional interviews. Following approval for Phase 2, interviews were scheduled following a protocol similar to Phase 1 at the convenience of the participating dyads.

Participants

Phase 1

The participants for Phase 1 of the present study were drawn from a larger project exploring the communication patterns of parents who coached their own children. A convenience sample of 20 parent-child dyads was interviewed who had been invited via a letter requesting their participation (see Appendix D). The dyads were selected because of their willingness to discuss the nature of their coaching relationship and their communication patterns. A nonprobability convenience sample obtained through networking was appropriate because the results were not generalized to other populations (Creswell, 1994). Additionally, as Merriam (1998) stated, the goal in a qualitative study is not generalizability, but rather, to create a unique interpretation of events. Random sampling was not necessary in this qualitative study because the "[researcher was] not trying to control variables; rather, …. trying to discover them" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 281).

Five pairs involved a mother and daughter; eight pairs were a mother and son; one pair was a father and daughter; and six pairs were fathers and sons. The median age of the 13 mothers was 50 while the median age of the 7 fathers was 53. The median age of the 6 daughters was 23, and the median age of the 14 sons was 23. Of the parents, 19 were married at the time they coached their children. Eighteen of the children had one or more siblings while their parent coached them. The researchers drew the dyads from the same region of the country. Dyads were not asked to provide their ethnicity because ethnicity was not a variable in this particular study.

A demographic questionnaire (Appendix E) was administered at the beginning of each interview. All dyads were engaged in what appeared to have been stable or regular coaching

relationships for extended periods of time (median = 6 years). To be interviewed, the child had to be 18 years of age or older, the parent had to have coached the child in a competitive activity at some level, and both had to be present together for the interview. The type of competitive activity did not matter. The following activities were found to be included within the participant pool: basketball (middle school travel team, high school, and college), football (middle school and high school), wrestling (high school and college), track (middle school and high school), soccer (high school), baton twirling (middle school and high school), speech and debate activities (middle school and high school), and drama (high school).

All of the parents/coaches identified their occupation as having something to do with education. All 20 children had experienced some level of education following high school graduation. Sixteen of the parents/coaches were current or former high school teachers, and four were employed at the collegiate level in some aspect of teaching or coaching. Seventeen of the interviewed children were currently engaged in education in some way: a high school senior or current college/university student, a high school teacher, or a college teacher/coach.

Phase 2

Following an analysis of the first 20 interviews, additional pairs were sought to add robustness to the research project. The reason for adding the additional dyads was specifically to analyze how the dyads negotiated boundary turbulence in their relationships. No pre-determined total number of dyads to be interviewed was formulated. Rather, the number of participants involved was determined by saturation. The researcher began selecting additional parent/child pairs to develop new insights or expand and refine those insights already gained (Taylor & Borgdan, 1998). When no new information was forthcoming, theoretical saturation was reached (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this study, saturation was reached on different issues at different

times throughout the interview process. By the fifth interview in Phase 2, the researcher was hearing no new themes on any of the major topics being introduced.

Among the Phase 2 participants, two pairs involved fathers and sons, and three pairs were mothers and daughters. The median age of the two fathers was 57, and the median age of the three mothers was 48. The median age of the two sons was 26, and the median age of the three daughters was 20. Of the parents, four were married at the time they coached their children. Five of the children had one or more siblings while their parent coached them. The research drew the dyads from the same region of the country. Dyads were not asked to provide their ethnicity because ethnicity was not a variable in this particular study.

Four of the parents/coaches identified their occupation as having something to do with education and one was a store manager. All of the children had experienced some level of education following high school graduation. Two of the parents/coaches were current high school teachers, and two were employed at the collegiate level in some aspect of teaching. Four of the interviewed children were currently engaged in education at the college level, and one of the children was working as an account executive.

Instrument

Phase 1

In Phase 1, to elicit open-ended responses from parents and children regarding their thoughts or feelings about the nature of their communication relationship (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), a 14-item instrument was generated by the researcher and adviser based upon their preliminary study of parents and children involved in coaching relationships where relational communication themes were identified. The 14 structured questions focused on four different aspects of the coaching dynamic: demographics, coaching stories, the nature of the

communication between parent/coach and child/participant in different contexts, and reflective questions about their views of the relationship. The narrative responses provided insight about how the participants viewed themselves, their relationships, their roles, and their personal experiences (Cohler, 1991; Friese & Grotevant, 2001). The instrument was pilot-tested with a parent and child who had a coaching relationship, and minor modifications were made so that both researchers could comfortably use the instrument when interviewing participating dyads. Each dyad also filled out a demographic questionnaire prior to the interview (Appendix D).

Phase 2

In Phase 2, six new open-ended questions based upon the findings in Phase 1 and drawn from the CPM literature, were developed to encourage more in depth responses from the parent/child about this specific communication phenomenon (Appendix B), allowing the parent/coach and child/team member to focus solely on the turbulence created by public and private contexts. The instrument was tested using the researcher's advisor and one of his children to determine face and content validity; as well as to enable the researcher to determine if the questions garnered the kind of information needed to answer the research questions. The information gleaned from the testing of the instrument was included as the comments were found to be consistent with those provided by the others who were interviewed. The dyad also was asked to describe situations when turbulence arose because of the dual role each played as parent/coach and child/team member. As in Phase 1, a demographic questionnaire was filled out prior to the interview (Appendix D).

Procedures

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) explained that a qualitative interviewing approach is useful to "understand the social actor's experience or perspective" (p. 173). Fontana and Frey (1994) noted, "interviewing has a wide variety of forms and a multiplicity of uses" (p. 361).

Researchers who use interviews enable their participants to vividly describe and explain a particular phenomenon using their own words and phrases. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) stressed:

> At its best, the qualitative interview is an event in which one person encourages others to freely articulate their interests and experiences. Its ability to travel deeply and broadly into subjective realities has made the interview a preeminent method in communication and other Social Sciences. (p. 170)

Interviews also allow researchers to analyze the meaning of what the participants have to say, as Rubin and Rubin (2005) wrote, "Qualitative interviewers listen to hear the meaning of what interviewees are telling them" (p. 14).

Phase 1

The Phase 1 interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participating dyads, usually in informal settings, such as coffee shops, restaurants, offices, or the participants' surroundings. The interviews varied in length, but most took between one-half and one hour to complete. The parent/coach and son/daughter/team member were interviewed together to create the co-constructed nature of the communication. The level of co-ownership represented collectively held information and provided credibility for the data. No fantasy could be created unless it was co-constructed because each person heard what the other was describing. Although the co-constructed data may not have necessarily reflected reality, they did represent how the dyad viewed the coaching relationship.

The conversations were tape recorded to allow the interviewer to stay focused on the participants' responses. The participants were told that all specific references would be changed, and all appeared comfortable with the presence of the tape recorders. From the interviews,

transcripts were prepared to "capture the interview more or less exactly as it was spoken" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 187).

Two unrelated college students were hired to transcribe the tapes for Phase 1. The tapes and transcripts from four interviews (two from each of the students who transcribed them) were reviewed by the researchers and found to be completely consistent. Once transcribed, participants were given pseudonyms, and all specific references to people, places, and events were changed to protect anonymity. The changed transcripts were kept for data analysis; the original, typed transcripts were destroyed, and the tapes were erased.

Phase 2

The Phase 2 interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participating dyads and were conducted in similar locations as Phase 1. Most of the interviews lasted between 30 minutes to an hour, and the parent/coach and son/daughter/team member were interviewed together. For Phase 2, the researcher transcribed the tapes. The tapes and transcripts from two interviews were reviewed by an independent reader and found to be completely consistent. Once the interviews were transcribed, participants were given pseudonyms, and all specific references to people, places, and events were changed to protect the anonymity of the dyads. Only the changed transcripts were kept for purposes of analysis.

Analysis and Interpretation

Thematic analysis allowed the participants' own language, practices, and behaviors to come through in the results from which ideas and patterns were seen (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). By using an inductive approach, the data were allowed to show themselves, and patterns emerged. This was done to garner a holistic understanding of the interaction between the parent/coach and son/daughter/team member. From both sets of data, a thematic analysis was

conducted. The responses to the interviews were reviewed inductively to look for themes and patterns. To preserve the authenticity of responses, participants' grammar and syntax was left as they said it. Interpretive scholars build a systematic account of what they observed and recorded (Charmaz, 1995; Ezzy, 2002). In the following section, the data analysis procedure is explained.

Thematic Analysis

Phase 1

To systematically analyze the data, Smith's (1995) five-step process of thematic analysis was used. In this process, the researcher created themes from the analysis of data using the theory to guide the analysis. Smith advised researchers first to engage in multiple readings of a single transcript. He also suggested when working with transcripts to use the master list of themes from the first interview to analyze smaller subsets of cases which was accomplished in this study by first reading a single transcript numerous times, taking notes on any information that stood out as noteworthy and important, and highlighting that information. These comments included summaries, connections to CPM and/or the research questions, and/or preliminary interpretations. Particular attention was made to comments that supported the key concepts and assumptions of CPM, including explanations made by the parent and child regarding privacy rules and boundary turbulence in public and private contexts.

Second, emerging themes were identified and written in the right margin, using words that were highlighted in the interviews. Each individual transcript was read and reread so that the researcher was familiarized with the data. Third, a list of the themes was made and connections between the themes were identified. Through this process, new themes were discovered that pulled together categories that had been initially identified. When this happened, the transcript was reexamined and the new themes were compared to the participant's words in the interview.

In this step, an understanding of the parent/coach and child/competitor was accomplished and a greater interpretation of their responses was discovered. Fourth, a master list of themes was generated and ordered coherently. A name or phrase was then given to each theme to capture the essence of each theme. Fifth, examples from the transcripts were identified to support each theme. After reexamining all transcripts once again, a master list of themes was produced that enabled the researcher to report examples for each theme in the transcripts.

Once the data were all transcribed and the themes identified, the researcher analyzed the data to be used for the study. Tables 3.1 – 3.5 provide a description of the collected data.

Table 3.1. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Phase 1

Description – Phase 1	No. of lines	Percentage
Total Data Set	8075	100%
Lines providing headings for the questions	441	5%
Data pertaining to parent response	3021	37%
Data pertaining to child response	2698	33%
Data pertaining to interviewer	1915	24%
Total data used from questions 8,9, 10 and 13	3386	42%
Total data unused from remaining questions	4689	58%

Table 3.1 showed that in Phase 1, 8,075 lines of data were gathered with 3,021 parent responses or the equivalent of 37% and 2, 698 child responses or the equivalent of 33%. Lines pertaining to headings and interviewer questions represented 2,356 or the equivalent of 29%. Questions 8, 9, 10 and 13 from a total of 14 questions were analyzed. Those 4 questions represented 3,386 responses of an equivalent of 42% of the total data collected in Phase 1. Total unused from the remaining 8 questions was 4,689 responses or an equivalent of 58%.

Table 3.2. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Question 8: "How often do you think about this coaching relationship?"

Description – Question 8	No. of lines	Percentage
Total data set	810	100%
Lines providing headings for the questions	20	2%
Data pertaining to parent response	345	43%
Data pertaining to child response	235	29%
Data pertaining to Interviewer	285	35%

Table 3.2 showed that in Question eight, 810 lines of data were gathered with 345 parent responses or the equivalent of 43% and 235 child responses or the equivalent of 29%. Lines pertaining to headings and interviewer questions represented 305 or the equivalent of 37%.

Table 3.3. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Question 9: "In what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship between the two of you in private?"

Description – Question 9	No. of lines	Percentage
Total Data Set	485	100%
Lines providing headings for the questions	40	8%
Data pertaining to parent response	165	34%
Data pertaining to child response	130	27%
Data pertaining to interviewer	150	31%

Table 3.3 showed that in Question nine, 485 lines of data were gathered with 165 parent responses or the equivalent of 34% and 130child responses or the equivalent of 27%. Lines pertaining to headings and interviewer questions represented 190 or the equivalent of 39%.

Table 3.4. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Question 10: "In what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship in public?"

Description – Question 10	No. of lines	Percentage
Total Data Set	790	100%
Lines providing headings for the questions	20	3%
Data pertaining to parent response	230	29%
Data pertaining to child response	330	42%
Data pertaining to interviewer	210	27%

Table 3.4 showed that in Question ten 790 lines of data were gathered with 230 parent responses or the equivalent of 29% and 330 child responses or the equivalent of 42%. Lines pertaining to headings and interviewer questions represented 230 or the equivalent of 30%.

Table 3.5. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Question 13: "Can you describe a theme or image for your coaching relationship?"

Description – Question 13	No. of lines	Percentage
Total data set	690	100%
Lines providing headings for the questions	80	12%
Data pertaining to parent response	310	45%
Data pertaining to child response	125	18%
Data pertaining to interviewer	175	25%

Table 3.25 showed that in Question thirteen, 690 lines of data were gathered with 310 parent responses or the equivalent of 45% and 125 child responses or the equivalent of 18%. Lines pertaining to headings and interviewer questions represented 255 or the equivalent of 37%.

Phase 2

The analysis began with reading the entire document to identify the issue of focus, followed by more detailed study involving line-by-line, phrase-by-phrase, word-by-word analysis. The coding utilized in this process, to identify common themes was based on the conceptual similarity of the interviewer's comments. For example, if the comments were about a similar theme (e.g. spending quality time together) they were grouped together. Comments that were specific to a particular activity (e.g. basketball) were not necessarily grouped together. Thus, the theme of the interview comments rather than the area of activity or topic facilitated the sorting process.

Using the pre-established categories based upon the CPM dimensions privacy boundaries, boundary turbulence, and self-disclosure in public and private contexts, relationships among the themes were developed as the researcher looked for answers to questions such as: why, how, or how come; where; when; and with what results. Answering the questions enabled the researcher to relate structure with process and to create the circumstances in which problems, issues, or events pertaining to a phenomenon were situated or arose. For example, the use of pre-established categories was useful in discerning turbulence created by public or private contexts. Pattern statements were then developed that described the emerging relationships between the themes. Through analysis of the pattern statements, the researcher was able to discern common threads or connections, which formed the basis for analysis. Examples were identified to represent the themes used in the presentation of the data.

As in Phase 1, once the data were transcribed and themes identified, the researcher analyzed the data that was useable for Phase 2 of the current study. Table 3.6 provides a description of the collected data.

Table 3.6. Breakdown of the Interview Transcripts for Analysis – Phase 2

Description – Phase 2	No. of lines	Percentage
Total data set	611	100%
Data pertaining to parent response	329	54%
Data pertaining to child response	121	20%
Data pertaining to interviewer	161	26%

Table 3.6 showed that 611 lines of data was analyzed in Phase 2, with 329 parent responses equivalent to 54% of Phase 2 data and 121 child responses equivalent to 20% of Phase 2 data.

Summary

This chapter provided the methodology used in the present study to explore the way turbulence between the parent/coach and child/team member is negotiated. A qualitative approach was chosen as the process used to understand the change in roles and its effect on the parent/child relationship. In the tradition of qualitative research, the methods were driven by the data, and categories emerged from the data. This project offers an exploration of the parent/coach and child/team member that is both qualitative and interpretive because of focusing on the process of how people structure their experiences and create meaning (Merriam, 1998).

CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS

This study explored the process of boundary negotiation when turbulence occurs between a parent and child placed in roles as coach and team member asking the overall research question, how are privacy boundaries negotiated when a parent becomes a coach of his/her child. Chapter Four reports the results from Phase 1 and Phase 2 as they relate to the three research questions: 1) How do private and public contexts influence the way the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate? 2) How do the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate about the turbulence created by their changing roles in the public and private environments? 3) How does the change in communication in public and private contexts affect the relationship between the parent and child?

Generally, the results from Phase 1 of the study provided the basis for the more specific responses pertaining to privacy-boundary negotiation between the roles of parent/coach and child/competitor. Phase 1 showed that the communication did change from the private to public context when a parent and child were placed in roles as coach and team member. Additional interviews in Phase 2 asked more pointed and specific questions to reveal a deeper understanding of the family dynamic.

Private Versus Public Context

The overall research question sought to discover how privacy boundaries are negotiated when a parent becomes a coach of his/her own child. The first research question addressed how private and public contexts influence the way the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate. Eighteen of the 20 parents in Phase 1 of the study felt they did communicate differently in public and private contexts while 16 of the 20 children interviewed felt the same way. One mom commented, “I guess I sometimes expressed frustrations about kids on the team,

and it's probably not professional to do that; you know you just blow off steam more in private." One son responded, "Yeah, in private, we would talk like he said; it was more of a technical talk." Of the two parents and four children who did not notice a difference, a comment such as "I don't think we really talked about it in private" was the main reason given. In Phase 2 of the study, all the dyads perceived a difference in how they communicated in private and in public.

Phase 1

Private Context

When asked the questions, "in what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship between the two of you in private," and "in what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship in public," the 20 interviews from Phase 1 collapsed into 7 themes. Four prominent themes were identified for private communication, and three main themes were identified for a public context.

Technical talk. In the private setting, technical talk was the most common theme in describing the communication that took place between the parent and child. These were responses in which the parent and child mentioned actual conversations about the techniques observed at practice or at the competition. One father stated, "I think we talk about more technical stuff–it's not that was a great shot; it is more like how he got open to make the great shot." The son went on to comment, "Yeah, we would talk like he said; it was more of a technical basis." Another daughter reported:

> It was nice to be able to have a parent to talk to, and they understood what you were talking about. For me to go and talk to somebody who doesn't know anything about track, they don't understand; they don't understand how much, how time consuming it is

and things like that. And it's nice that my mom can relate to the way I feel about the activity.

Mom: "I still play the role of coach to this day."

Additionally, another dyad mentioned, "It was more technical. We'd talk about teams and watch films. It is more technical–we would analyze." Thus, as these examples suggest the private context allowed the parent/coach and child/team member to continue to talk in private about the public competitive activity. This seemed to be a positive experience for both the parent and the child.

Open and more personal talk. Open and more personal talk was the next most frequently mentioned theme. There seemed to be a comfort level between the parent and child that existed because of the time spent together during the competitive activity. One mother stated:

> I think it's easier when it's just the two of us. I think when there's more than the two of us, it's much more difficult than if we were in the car just the two of us talking about it. So when we talk about the coaching aspect when we're alone, I think we're much more open about what we both think.

Another son commented:

> Much more personal. When it is just the two of us, it is much more like this is what I think, let's try to figure out ways, whereas if it's me and other students, and she goes, you should try this, then I'm going to try that.

One final example from a son was as follows: "We would talk very openly in private, about everything." In short, the private context permitted the parent/coach and child/team member to

express their feelings in a safe environment without the presence of others affecting what the dyad felt comfortable sharing or not sharing.

Parent in private, coach in public. A third theme identified in the private setting exemplified the challenges of the dual roles played by the parent and child. One mother stated, "You know the mother stayed here in private and the coach came out in public." Her daughter went on to comment, "Yes, I would be very candid with her in private. I could tell her my problems, and when I was frustrated without worrying, I wasn't afraid to talk to her just one-on-one. I wouldn't do that in public." For one parent/coach, the private interaction with her daughter provided an opportunity for her to provide suggestions about how to deal with the conflict she was having with other students in a theatre production:

> I remember one time coming home from rehearsal, and some kids were being terrible to her…I was so sad for her. We got in the car and she just started crying. We drove home and we sat in the driveway for a long time and we did a lot of talking. I was trying to teach her self-talk, how to be strong in all situations.

A son commented, "In private, we might argue about who should start or those kinds of things. I wouldn't argue with him in public because he's the coach." Additionally, a mother mentioned, "I think it comes back to, you know, that public persona and that personal persona, and no matter what, she knows there is a fine line there when there are other students around." The examples from this theme reflected how role seemed to dictate how and what was said when in private or public contexts for both the parent/coach and child/team member.

Honest feedback and insider information. A final theme reflected information shared by the parent/coach and child/competitor that was not available or accessible to other team members. Parent/coaches also felt that they were able to get feedback from their child about how

practices were going or how the team was feeling. One father stated, “If I’m coaching him and I want him to do something and he doesn’t like it, he’ll say, “I don’t like it.” If we’re in a room and it’s him and five other students, he won’t do that to me because of the five other students in there. A daughter went on to comment, “she talks to me honestly about how I played and about how my teammates played. A father/coach gleaned as a result of having his son on the team, “I get feedback about how practice is going.” Another parent/coach stated, “I guess I sometimes express frustrations about the kids on the team to him, and I guess I tried to get information out of him too sometimes and asked if he would validate a rumor.”

Some children commented that they were more open to disagreeing with their parent/coaches in private than they would be in public. One son stated:

> In private, we might argue about who should start at a certain weight, those kinds of things. Out in public, we talk about how we’re going to approach something; and I don’t go and disagree with him on that, I don’t do that in public.

As a rule, this theme referred to advantages the parent/coach and child/team member gleaned as a result of their dual roles. Feedback and information were seen as positive aspects that were not afforded to other team members because of the opportunity to have daily private context communication.

Phase 1

Public Context

When asked the question “in what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship in public?” three themes were identified: topic masking, courteous and less open talk, and on the same team.

Topic masking. Topic masking was the most common theme in describing the communication that took place in the public context. Responses here were ones in which the parent and child mentioned that they were intentional in avoiding the parent/child relationship in public. Even though the parent and child would comment that they felt how they communicated was different, several could not really identify what was different, or they would purposely not talk about the activity when in public. Several dyads also felt that the topic of their relationship as a parent and child just did not come up. One son stated, "It didn't come up, even when in public." Another son commented:

> I don't think we ever talked any different when we were in public. I just said whatever needed to be said. You've got to be aware not to go bragging about how good of coach he is. I didn't really think or talk about it too much.

One father mentioned, "I was guarded in public. I didn't talk or mention a lot about sports to people in public." A son reported, "I made sure to call him coach in public; I didn't call him dad. That allowed me to yell back at him, and the other kids wouldn't think I was yelling at my dad." Finally, one daughter stated,

> I would not speak openly in public about our relationship. Our relationship became very discreet; I would talk to her in a corner somewhere about something that would happen or that would potentially happen that required her immediate assistance.

This theme established how the role of parent/child was intentionally avoided while in the public context. The dyad was careful to establish the coach/team member role while in the presence of others and down play the parent/child relationship.

Courteous and less open talk. Courteous and less open talk was the second theme identified in the public context. Under this theme, respondents commented on how they felt the

need to be more polite with each other when in public and that the topic of conversation was at the surface level: “I am much more courteous to her [mom] in public.” Another respondent stated:

> I think as a coach, you have to have a balance because you’ve got other team members that are an important part of the team, so as a father/coach you have to be careful what you say and how you say it.

One child mentioned, “I think our talk became much more professional when we were in public. We didn’t mention our relationship.” Finally, one parent/coach commented:

> If I heard another coach mention my son, and they didn’t know I was his mother, I’d say, “well you know, he’s my son, and I’m really glad to hear that,” or sometimes I just wouldn’t say anything because I didn’t want to bias them.

This theme expressed how the dyad felt others were often observing their behavior as parent and child. The need to act as coach and team member in public was important to not draw attention to their familial relationship.

On the same team. The last theme identified in the public context was on the same team. “Out in public, we’re very much on the same team. We talk about how we are going to approach something. We never disagreed in public.” Another parent/coach added, “… the coach came out in public.” Comments included times when the son/daughter was treated just like everyone else on the team: “I was like mom come over here, I need your help. And you know you said, wait your turn. I was pretty demanding. You use to say, you’re going to have to do this one on your own.” Once again, this theme explained how the presence of others in the public context altered the parent and child role in order to present unity.

Phase 2

Private Context

Identical themes for private and public communication were identified during the Phase 2 interviews: Technical talk; open and more personal talk; parent in private, coach in public; and honest feedback and insider information.

Technical talk. In reference to the theme technical talk, one parent commented, "We are a very strategic family about how we would talk about things. We would sit down and talk strategically about things. And I would try to define teachable moments." Another parent mentioned:

> There was one way to talk to the girls at games or at practice. Kari would always get a different talk on the way home. It was a time to talk about what we did well, how we played the game.

One son responded, "In private, we talked plays, we talked strategy; it was fun to analyze the game together." As in Phase 1, this theme reflected how the parent/coach and child/team member continued to share information about the activity in private or public contexts.

Open and more personal talk. Talk that was more personal and open also became a theme for the Phase 2 interviews. Parents and children found themselves talking about more personal issues that might be affecting the team, but also knew those issue were not to be shared outside the private context. One child said: "I always knew what was said at home, what was said in the car, wasn't supposed to be said someplace else. If it is said in public, then it was OK." Another child reported, "We always talked about some stuff like, 'he isn't that good or this person hates that person or I'm getting picked on.' These comments remained private."

Thus, examples for this theme established unwritten rules about information shared in the private context was not to be shared in the public context.

Parent in private, coach in public. The theme difficulty in the separation of roles also resonated with the Phase 2 interviews. One parent/coach commented:

> In the beginning it was more, my role as parent. I would watch out for him because I would want to make sure bad things wouldn't happen. I would be conscious of him not that I wouldn't necessarily change anything, but I think I was much more conscious of not wanting something to happen to him.

In contrast, a parent recalled: "My son kind of watched out for me, too, probably as much as I was looking out for him. If there was something going on that was bad for me, I would find out about that, too, from him."

One parent also commented that s/he felt s/he was harder on his/her own daughter in private then s/he would have been in public. In other words, s/he would have never said to his/her daughter in public what was said in private. A daughter commented, "When we got in the car after games, I was definitely getting scolded for not doing something right. There was always something wrong." The illustrations suggested the difficulty the parent/coach experienced navigating between the roles of coach and parent. The child/team member often felt singled out when in the private context and would be given criticism other team members would not necessarily receive.

Honest feedback and insider information. The private setting of the car ride home after a game or practice often was when this final theme was noticed. One mother said:

> Kari would always get a harder push on the way home. Unfortunately, the pressure was always to perform, to score, to do that. So looking back, it was an awful lot of pressure

> put on a young person. But we did talk differently, but I would agree with Kari that I was actually harder on her in private.

A mom/coach stated, "I would often ask my daughter how the group was thinking things were going. I guess I kind of used her as a barometer as to how I was doing." One final example, "I relied on her a lot. So whenever I was in front of the group, I always looked at her to see whatever I was doing was ok. I remember one time, I don't know if I was telling a joke or what, but was going out of the norm of whatever it was, and she was nonverbally telling me to stop." This theme suggests the parent/coach benefited the most from the information gleaned as a result of the relationship of coach and team member. The child became a useful source of information assisting the parent/coach more effectively perform their role as coach.

Phase 2

Public Context

The three themes of topic masking, courteous/professional talk, and on the same team emerged in the public setting.

Topic masking. The inability to be open about one's feelings and speak openly in a public context when such comments might be detrimental to members of the team was one way communication differed between public and private contexts. One parent/coach commented:

> In public, we were very careful because we didn't want anything causing problems for the students. I saw my job as making sure nothing bad happens to good kids. I was on the lookout for that, so when we would talk in public it was very different.

Another son reported, "What was said during practice was ok. I don't think we ever talked about our relationship in public." As found in Phase 1, the topic of the parent and child relationship was nearly unmentionable in the public context.

Courteous and professional talk. Courteous/professional talk, once again, was identified as the second theme that was evident from the Phase 2 interviews.

> "When we were in competition, it was always our behavior reflects on us as people, our coach, our school and our state. Very professional demeanor when we were in public. When we were by ourselves, it was very different."

Another daughter commented, "When our friends would come to our house, they would call you Rosemary, but they would never call you that at school. You were always Mrs. H at school and that is what I called you, too, at school." Another example of the care the parent/coach and child/competitor exhibited to not let their relationship send the wrong meaning in public was shown in the following situation, "There was a time when I was in the room and as the coach didn't like the decision, and I was spouting off a bit; I had my son on one side of me and his partner on the other, both telling me to shush." The delineation between how the parent/coach and child/team member acted while in the private verses public context was demonstrated in these examples.

On the same team. The third theme, on the same team, was more difficult to identify in the Phase 2 interviews. Comments were made, however, such as, "Everything we talked about on or off the field was open ground for all–we were a team. I don't think we have had any conversations that were taboo–it was open for everybody." Another comment made by a parent/coach supports this theme: "Because they knew it was something that we shared, because we shared this ability to interact with one another through this activity, a closeness developed; it can't be explained." As a rule, a united front was intentionally communicated between the parent/coach, child/team member, and the rest of the team.

Turbulence

The second research question examined how the parent/coach and child/competitor communicated about the turbulence created by their changing roles in private or public environments. Nineteen of the twenty interviews addressed the issue of turbulence being apparent because of their dual roles as parent/coach and child/competitor. Four main themes emerged from the interviews conducted in Phase 1 of the study: Role confusion, team politics, caught in the middle, and loyalty conflicts.

Phase 1

Role Confusion

Role confusion was the most common theme parent/coaches and child/competitors identified. Respondents mentioned being conflicted about how to negotiate their dual roles in private and in public contexts:

> I think that the hardest thing for me, too, was separating the coach from the parent. I am a parent and it is my own child coming late for the bus; therefore, I am embarrassed and every kid on the bus is watching to see if I get as angry at her as if I'd gotten annoyed with a team member. Separating those roles is really a tough thing.

One daughter went on to state, "The team knew how to push my mom's buttons, and I knew what buttons not to push because she had a temper sometimes, and sometimes she would snap."

How to communicate true feelings and how to behave were also elements of negotiation for the parent/coach:

> I was so conflicted about what to say as a parent and what to say as a coach. Because when conflict happened, my first reaction was Sam's been screwed. This isn't fair, this isn't right. I was pretty angry, but it was really hard for me to step back and let go; it

took me a long time to step back and say it doesn't matter, I'm angry because this is my son.

Another parent/coach reported:

You couldn't show your true emotions. When he's up there and all the finalists come up, as a parent, your heart is beating a bit. But you do that, too, as a coach, but it's a bit more intense when it's your son or daughter.

The parents/coaches also articulated role confusion in their private behavior toward how to treat their own child because of their dual role as parents/coaches:

It's such a road full of possible pitfalls that I've thought about it and if anything, I probably erred on the side of choosing the parent role over the coaching role. I am sure I could have pushed her harder and as a result of that, she might have done better sometimes.

Or the parent/coach who did the opposite: "I think I pushed him because I knew how far he could go and I knew how hard I could push. I did not necessarily know that with the other kids on the team." There was also the fear of how the child would react to the parent/coach's behavior: "We had a real battle of wills. It was very hard to get past that. She didn't want her mom to be the one that was telling her what to do. Many days she would just be absolutely unwilling so we would just pack up and go home." One final negotiation was how other coaches might treat the child because of their dual role: "I always worried that having a coach for a parent could have hurt how she finished because, if I was having a disagreement with another coach, I always hoped that that would never enter into the judging process. So you always kind of worry about that." Thus, as these examples suggest, the parents experienced turbulence as they struggled to determine which role to play in public.

Team Politics

The second theme identified that created turbulence was team politics. It was evident from the interviews that the parent/coach and child/competitor felt the turbulence created from the rest of the team because of their dual roles. One parent noted: "I think that just because of the nature of the parent/child relationship and the love that you share, that it's going to come out, I mean, you know. It'd be natural for the other students to perceive that and resent that."

A son went on to comment:

> When I came as a freshman, I was good enough to play on the varsity team, but dad was hesitant to play me, because of community members who might say something or upperclassmen who wouldn't like a new freshman coming in and taking a spot of theirs. It was hard to get them to understand that he's not favoring me in any way.

The reaction of others on the team was often a very painful experience for the parent/coach and the child/competitor because they always felt the need to legitimize the child's success rather than to accept the child's success as a result of talent and hard work. One parent/coach said:

> A lot of people would say the only reason Nancy got the lead in the play was because she was my kid. No it was because she was the best. Some things happened to her that weren't very pleasant because of it. A lot of ostracizing at times because of that. It was very painful for me.

One daughter added:

> As the coach's kid you are kind of put on a pedestal. You are expected to be at this certain level, and if you aren't there, or if you are, they say certain things to hurt you. That is the only reason you're playing–you are the coach's kid.

Another son commented, “The hardest it got for my being the son of a coach was when it started to get more competitive. I’d get, oh the only reason you’re playing is because your dad’s the coach.”

Parents/coaches were very aware of their behavior and actions to help alleviate the team politics happening for their son or daughter.

> I would stay away and let her just be with the rest of the kids. I wouldn’t ask anything personal at a speech meet. I would try to keep it all real generic so that all the kids were feeling as special as she was.

Another parent/coach also stated, “I bent over backwards trying to make it look like I wasn’t playing favorites.” The statement shared from this theme suggest how the parent/coach and child/team member were at a disadvantage because of their relationship. This caused the parent and child to experience turbulence.

Caught in the Middle

Child/competitor caught in the middle was identified as another theme related to the turbulence created by the relationship. The child/competitor felt caught in the middle in two ways: by his/her teammates and also by his/her parent/coach. Examples of feeling caught by teammates include: “Anytime the team needed a little favor or they didn’t want to run too much in practice, they’d always have me try and ask him, to try and get us out of something–I was kind of the middleman.” Another child added:

> If the team wasn’t happy and venting about something, I wouldn’t go tell him. They were probably looking at me wondering if I was going to tell my dad, I didn’t need to be the team rat. I just wanted to be one of the guys.

Sometimes being caught in the middle was identified as being helpful:

> Sidney would be the go-between, and he would pull me aside and say, "Mom, I think you need to go talk to so and so, she's real concerned about this and I think she needs you to talk to her." I felt like I had to be more responsible because I was the coach's kid.

The parent/coach also added to the child/competitor's feeling of being put in the middle: "Obviously, I want all the other students to really like my mom and really know her as well as I do, so I was always saying, "Don't ruin it Mom, don't get too mad, don't be too was sensitive." One parent/coach added, "I think there is much more pressure on him than on me." The turbulence felt from this theme was predominately experienced by the child/team member.

Loyalty Conflicts

One last theme that created turbulence for the parent/coach and child/competitor relationship was that of loyalty conflicts. Often, the child/competitor would feel as though s/he had let down his/her parent/coach or the parents/coaches felt as though they had let down their child/competitor: "I was too domineering. I didn't give him his own opinions. I don't like that I did that." A son/competitor added, "When we would lose a game, I'd feel like I let my dad down, and I wouldn't go crying to him, but it kind of ate me up sometimes." One mom/coach lamented, "She was more worried about what the team thought about me than I was of what they thought about me. That made me sad."

Phase 2

Phase 1 interviews demonstrated that turbulence created by the parent/coach and child/competitor relationship influenced how the dyad interacted. In the Phase 2 interviews, the pairs were asked a more focused question about the turbulence that was created by the dual role of parent/coach and child/competitor. The dyads were asked: "Did you feel that the above

situations you just described caused turbulence (conflict), or was turbulence (conflict) avoided?" Seven of ten individuals reported that they felt turbulence was caused by the parent/coach and child/competitor relationship. One mother/coach felt that conflict was delayed by the relationship; one son/competitor described how turbulence was caused and avoided as a result of the relationship; and one father/coach saw how the relationship prevented turbulence and caused positive conflict.

Evidence of the following themes emerged from the Phase 2 interviews: Caught in the middle, team politics, role confusion, and a new theme of delayed conflict.

Caught in the Middle

The child feeling caught in the middle between the parent/coach and the team was the most common theme among the respondents from the interviews. For example, one parent suggested:

> I would say that if there was a situation where maybe a person on the team or a situation was coming up that I needed to know something about, I would get some information in private then I might come out with some kind of policy or decision in public that I could live with.

A child/competitor commented:

> I was always used as an information link to my mom. I was always getting text messages from several in the cast about what time was play practice at or what scenes are we covering tonight at practice. They would text me and expect me to know the information instead of listening themselves or contacting my mom.

One parent/coach talked about how the child in the middle actually prevented turbulence from happening:

> I know that there was always one person on the team that always disrupted the sleeping arrangements; that was just hard. I wouldn't know that because I am not on the team. I remember him [son] telling me, "You've got to do something about this because this person is making it so that other people aren't able to sleep or its just being very disruptive."

As in Phase 1, examples from this theme eluded to the turbulence experienced primarily by the child/team member.

Team Politics

Team politics was the next theme identified during the Phase 2 interviews. This theme encompassed behaviors that advantaged the child/competitor because she/he as a child of the parent/coach. As one son commented:

> The very nature that I was the son of the coach and that I was very successful in the activity I think that on the surface caused some resentment along the way among team members and among some of our competitors from other schools. And so I think that, to a large degree, that because I was in the activity and he was the coach, people assumed that I was an inside job. I think that definitely existed on our team as well as other teams.

It was clear from this example the child/team member believed others thought she/he received an unfair advantage due to their relationship with the parent/coach.

Role Confusion

The third reoccurring theme was role confusion. As one father/coach added, "You don't want to ever favor your own child. I mean you do, but you can't." Another parent/coach

commented: "I don't know a coach who coaches their own kid who wouldn't think that their son would be better or should be better than everyone else because he is your kid. As a coach, I felt each kid should have equal time, but truthfully, I guess, he did get more playing time."

A son/competitor continued: "I still remember me getting pulled because after three innings, because that was all my playing time, to put in a kid that wasn't quite as good. And they got to play three innings, and we started losing." Thus, examples from this theme suggest the parent/coach would frequently treat their own child more harshly as to not show favoritism. The child/team member realized their parent's harshness because of the dual role.

Delayed Turbulence

The last theme, and a new theme to emerge, was delayed turbulence. This new theme reflected how the child/competitor withheld his/her feelings at the same time when his/her parent/coach was making decisions, but later revealed why those decisions were difficult to accept or troubling. One respondent mentioned:

> Kari just accepted things, and she didn't bring things up. Later in life when she got older and now, she'll bring stuff up to me. And I think, God, I wish I could have seen things. I should have known. I think Kari at the time may have been thinking this is the right thing because my mom is doing this. Kari has always been that way. She never questioned. Now she will question.

The daughter/competitor went on to respond:

> There was a lot of conflict avoiding and that's why there was conflict later and why I quit. As a team member, I went along with it and tried to avoid it and make people happy, my team and my coach. As a result, it actually caused conflict.

Examples from this theme illustrate how the child/team member respected the dual role of their parent/coach. In an effort to avoid conflict, the child/team member waited until the coach and team member relationship had concluded prior to sharing feelings of hurt or unfair treatment they had experienced.

The Relationship Between the Parent/Coach and Child/Competitor

The third research question addressed how the change in communication during the public and private contexts affected the relationship between the parent/coach and the child/competitor. Nineteen of the parent-and-child interview dyads in Phase1 made comments about this question that resulted in identifying four themes: Quality time, relational closeness, shared experience, and harder on my own child.

Phase 1

Quality Time

Quality time spent together was the most common theme for this research question. Parents and children addressed how their relationship benefited by spending so much time together. "You spend so much time together, and you spend it in a competitive situation, and you get to know their friends better. We really have this common ground because we spent so much time together." Another parent/coach described, "I just wanted to be around him. I look back and those are some of the best days I had. I really enjoyed spending the time with him." One child/competitor described:

> It's taken what I love to a whole new level. It's the conversations in between that develop everything that I'm doing in those performances. It distills it and makes the love between us even stronger. And it builds a better relationship; it's quality time.

One final comment by a son/competitor was as follows:

> I grew as a player and as a person. The wins and losses, who cares? Being able to have a father to be with all the time really helped the growth experience. The overall experience is what really mattered, and nothing could take that away.

His father/coach continued:

> I am so glad I didn't miss this opportunity. Do you have any regrets? I absolutely have some, but I spent this quality time, and you can't take that away from me. Rob can't tell you what his record was, and I can't tell you what his record was, but we were together.

One parent/coach and one child/competitor described negative attributes to quality time. The parent/coach stated:

> Parents who go into coaching thinking that they're going to use it as an outlet to spend more time with their kid . . . is the wrong idea. Because it's not quality time. Although it works out to be that way–that's not the reason you should. I wanted to coach him because I wanted him to know how to do things the right way.

A child/competitor added, "Because they are your coach, they are always there for you. The disadvantage is they are there all the time." As they reflected on the amount of time spent together during the parent/coach and child/team member activity, both parties shared positive feelings associated with experience.

Shared Experience

Shared experience was the second-most frequently identified theme. Descriptors listed under this theme related to how the activity itself was important to bring the parent/child and coach/team member closer together. One parent/coach described:

> We were like Laurel and Hardy. I was very blessed by this relationship. Because Sam's a good debater but he's a good person. I don't care whether you come home and you won

> or lost, I care that you came home a better person than when you went. That's what this activity does for a student.

One daughter added, "It has always kind of been our thing that we talk about and get along with, and so when we see each other we talk about it. It's how we connect with each other." One final comment by a child/competitor was as follows: "We learned how success feels together, how failure feels together. Lots of parents don't get to feel that." One father/daughter dyad felt that the shared experience actually pulled them apart. "I didn't talk to him [dad] a lot at home about things, things, going on with the team." The father continued:

> We separated so much from one another because of basketball. I think, in some ways, it hurt our personal relationship just because things around my heart that were going on were hard to talk to her about, I didn't want to turn her against her teammates, and she didn't want to turn me against her teammates if she was upset about something.

A son described how shared experiences helped him relate to his mother/coach: "In coaching track and field, for me to go and talk to somebody who doesn't know anything about track…it was nice that my mom can relate to the way I feel about things." Thus, examples from this theme demonstrate the activity was integral in allowing parent/coach and child/team member to have experiences other members of the team did not have with their parents.

Relational Closeness

Relational closeness was evident from both the parent/coaches and the child/team members. This theme characterizes the relationship at the emotional level. A mother/coach described their closeness: "I think it's easier when it's just the two of us." One daughter commented, "It has taken love to a whole new level for me." A dad further reported, "I think we were probably closer when I was coaching him than we are now." Another child/competitor

responded, “She never made me feel like I wasn’t the most important thing no matter what she had going on.” One final example of relational closeness was discussed by a parent/coach: “I got to know her in all kinds of ways. She got to see me not just as her mom but as I interacted with other people. I saw the respect she got from other students and I think she sees how my peers felt about me.” One father/coach later realized and told his son how he felt about the time they spent in their coaching relationships: “It took a long time to talk to him about it. I think it was only a couple of years ago that I told him that I really appreciated what he had done…I wanted himto know that those five years were very precious to me.” The closeness felt by the parent/coach and the child/team member increased due to their shared experience.

Harder on my Own Child

The final theme that arose for how the relationship between the parent/coach and child/team member was affected by the change in communication was as follows: harder on my own child than the other team members. Parents/coaches and children/team members both felt this way. Parents felt that they were too hard on their son or daughter, and the child also felt that his/her parent singled him/her out and was harder on him/her than the rest of the team. A mom/coach commented, “I think he knows that, when he auditions, he has to audition harder, when he wants something, he has to try harder because I’m always overcompensating. Deep down, he knows he has to prove himself.” Another parent/coach stated, “Sometimes you go too far one way, and you don’t give your own son enough credit and you put more credit towards the others on the team.” A final statement from a parent/coach was as follows: “Everyone will tell you you are harder on your own son then everyone else. I think he had to prove himself more than any other athlete. I was probably a little bit more cautious doing that.”

One comment from a parent/coach addressed how other family members felt about the parent/coach being too hard on his/her child:

> I remember one time when we were playing in a travel tournament, and I kind of got on his case a little, sat him down, and started yelling at him. When I got home that day, his mom sat me down and directly went into my face and said if I ever did that again, I would never be allowed to coach him again. I realized that day, I had gone too far.

The children/team members also felt uncomfortable with the unfair treatment they felt was projected at them because they were the son or daughter of the coach: "I wasn't comfortable with my parent being my coach. Having a parent in the high school as a coach in an authoritative position was an original turn-off. He was always harder on me than anyone else on the team." Another child/team member who is now also coaching commented, "I'm calmer then he is, more laid back as a coach. When I was younger and he was my coach, he was hard on me; I didn't like that, and I didn't want to be like that." In summary, this theme affected the parent/coach and child/team member, but also the other members of their family.

Phase 2

It was apparent from the Phase 1 interviews that the parent and child dyads were able to identify and articulate how the change in communication, as a result of the turbulence created by the dual role of parent/coach and child/team member, affected the relationship. The themes generated from Phase 1 led to a series of four more specific and focused questions that were asked of the interviewees in Phase 2 of the study. The four questions asked of the dyads were as follows: (a) Tell me about a time when the role of coach conflicted with your role as a parent. (b) Tell me about a time when the role of team member conflicted with your role as a son/daughter. (c) Tell me about a time when you acted like a coach and you wished you would have acted like a parent, and/or tell me about a time when you acted like a parent and you wished you would

have acted like a coach. (d) Tell me about a time when you acted like a team member and wished you would have acted like a son/daughter and/or when you acted like a son/daughter and wished you would have acted like a team member.

Sources of Turbulence for the Parent/Coach

Questions a and c above asked the parent/coach to describe times when the role of coach conflicted with being a parent or caused regret. The questions allowed the parents/coaches to offer comments regarding the conflict associated with the dual role of the parent/coach in private and public contexts. The study revealed four sources of tension to show the turbulence about times when the role of coach conflicted with the role of parent. These sources were second guessing the role of parent or coach in public; difficulty distinguishing between roles in public; waiting until private contexts to be the parent; and avoiding favoritism.

Second guessing the role of parent or coach in public. When asked, "Tell me about a time when the role of coach conflicted with your role as a parent," all of the parent/coaches were able to share an example of this type of conflict. The conflict created by private versus public environments was the main theme identified for this question. It was common for the parent/coaches to second guess the public decisions that they had to make because of their role as a parent/coach. One parent/coach commented about a time when a decision needed to be made about who the team should nominate for an award, one of the possible nominations was his son:

> I think I was conflicted because I think we made the right decision, but I think we were really struggling, saying okay what do we do here, and as a dad, I wanted him to be on the ballot, but then also I rationalized that, and came to the conclusion as coach we needed as a team to have a name on the ballot, and he was the one that was there.

Difficult to distinguish between roles in public. Another parent/coach offered an example of the difficulty of separating the parent role and coaching role when making public decisions:

> When Amy was a junior, she was up for the lead role in the school musical, I would have just given it to her, but I had, at the time, a panel of judges who decided who got what part and that was really tough, because they ended up not giving it to her because she wasn't a senior. She was the best person for the role, but I didn't dare argue for her because she was my daughter. It was difficult to separate the director role from the parent role.

Wait until private context to be the parent. Parent/coaches realized a direct conflict of needing to be the coach in public and waiting until arriving at a private environment to be the parent. One mother/coach describes a situation when her daughter made an amazing three point shot:

> I wanted to stand up and cheer so much,… but because of my coaching role, I could not. I never got a chance to celebrate that with my daughter, and when the girls got in the huddle for the first time after that shot, she looked at me and I think she looked at me because she wanted to hear something or wanted to be hugged. I wanted to do that so bad but I had to wait until the game was over and until we were alone by ourselves.

An additional parent/coach stated:

> I remember a time when I was embarrassed because Mary didn't know her music and the rest of the kids did, and they knew she didn't. I felt very nervous about that. I think you want your kid to be the best because it's a direct reflection of you. The parent in me was angry, but I couldn't show that anger in public.

Avoiding favoritism in public. As an example of this theme, one dad mentioned:

> I really don't think I ever really had a problem with it. Bud might have a different idea, but I don't think being a coach and being a parent really conflicted at the time. You have to discipline your own kid just as you would all the other kids. You don't want any parent to come and say, "You're doing this to my kid and not to your kid." That was in the back of my mind a lot of time that I was coaching, so I guess that could be a conflict in roles, just because I had to think about that.

These experiences described by the parents/coaches demonstrate the turbulence they felt in navigating the dual role.

When asked, "Tell me about a time when you acted like a coach and wished you would have acted like a parent, and/or when you acted like a parent and wished you would have acted like a coach," all of the parents/coaches offered examples revealing three themes. These themes were distance between parent and child relationship in public; harder on my own child in public; and no regrets.

Distance between parent and child relationship in public. Most felt that it was evident in the public environment that they were a parent/coach, and this enhanced the need for them to place distance between themselves and their son or daughter when in public, and to decrease that distance when in private. One parent/coach stated:

> You know I honestly have to say that I think people knew pretty well that I was a parent when I was in a coaching situation. So I was especially careful to somehow be as formal and coach-like as I could when I got into a tournament environment.

Another parent/coach offered:

> There were a couple of parents there watching and when their daughter would do something well in practice, they would say something to them or clap for them. But being in that role of coach I couldn't do that for my daughter.

Harder on my own child in public. Parents would offer examples of conflict that arose because they expected more out of their own child then the rest of the team. One parent/coach responded:

> I can't think of either way where I should have been more of a coach or more of a parent, but I do think there were times where I was harder on her because I expected more of her because she was my daughter. I think I would reprimand her in the same way I did the other students, but when I got home, I probably chewed her out a little more.

Another parent/coach stated: "The worst part is you are harder on them than anyone else. And you take out loses on them if they don't happen to be the best player on that day." One parent broke down in tears when answering:

> Yes, when he got hurt. [At this point, we had to stop the tape for quite a while as the father broke down in tears.] Being a coach, watching your kid get hurt–it was hard, you wanted to be a parent, you wanted to coddle and protect them and console him and make sure that he was fine. As a coach, to a point you do that, but you just make sure he isn't hurt too bad, and then on with the game.

No regrets. The joy of being able to have this time special time with my son or daughter was the last theme identified. One parent/coach stated, "I can't think of a time that I ever regretted what I did. I was so glad I was right there, and this is a moment I will never forget." Another parent lamented:

> All I can think of, is it just isn't as much fun to teach and coach when she isn't here anymore. It really isn't. I don't have the compassion that I did in the last 3 or 4 years with her in it. This year is very hard for me. People talk about empty-nest syndrome, for me, it's more at work and school than at home.

Even as parents/coaches described a distance between themselves and their child as a result of being harder on them in public, the parents/coaches expressed joy in having shared the activity and the time with their child/team member.

Sources of Turbulence for the Child/Team Member

Questions b and d of the Phase 2 interview asked the child/team member to offer examples of the turbulence created by their dual role in public and private contexts. The areas of turbulence identified were protecting the parent, team member over son/daughter, son/daughter over team member, and always being there.

Protecting the parent. When the children/team members of Phase 2 were asked, "Tell me about a time when the role of team member conflicted with your role as a son/daughter," three of the interviewees could think of an example and two did not notice any conflict. Of the three who did, the theme of needing to protect the parent was identified: "Yes, absolutely. I was friends with a lot of people on my team and I often knew things from them that I didn't convey to him [my dad]." The father went on here to comment, "I think that it was not so much, I tried not to put you in the place where you would have to tell me things, but when you did tell me something, it was more so that I think you were looking out for me."

Team member over son/daughter. Some child/team members indicated that they tried to avoid any semblance of being identified as the child of the coach.

> I always was a team member first. That's just how I played. I didn't want to be the coach's daughter, just a team member. I didn't want the others on the team to think that I was being favored by my mom or that she was treating me like her daughter.

Son/daughter over team member. One daughter provided an example of how she prioritized her role as a daughter to be more important than her role as a team member:

> During the musical I would put my homework first because grades were more important to me than being in her play and I needed to get good grades. I wouldn't learn my lines. So in that case, I was acting more like a daughter.

Two of the children/team members interviewed in Phase 2 commented that they did not feel any conflict and that it was not a big deal for them. One offered the following reason: "We always were together. As soon as the game or practice was over, usually by the time we were home, it was completely over with–whether or not something went wrong or not. I didn't notice any conflict as a son or as an athlete." The other suggested, "I can't think of anything. It was kind of normal for me."

The final question asked of the children/teammate's was, "Tell me about a time when you acted like a team member and wished you would have acted like a son/daughter, and/or when you acted like a son/daughter and wished you would have acted like a team member." This question drew a great mixture of responses. The main theme identified was the presence of the other was always constant. For some, this response was positive, and for others, it was not as positive:

Always there. From the child's point of view, being always there meant being in the public eye.

> I was always there so it was very much a, I am always the person who has to meet the requirements for practice time, put in the hours put in the weekends. Fill in for other

> people when it was necessary. We were always very aware, my dad and I, that we were under the microscope, by both our teammates and our competitors as well. I could never misbehave.

Another daughter commented: "I don't know; she was there throughout my whole school career…. That's not how she planned it, but it's how it happened. So it wasn't like a huge deal; it was just kind of normal for me." A similar statement was made by another child: "I can't think of any times. She was just always there; she was just like everywhere." A son added:

> I learned so much from him. I think I was blessed because I had a parent and a coach who was very knowledgeable in all areas of the sports I was playing. I knew he knew what he was talking about. I found it a lot easier to listen to your dad who is knowledgeable, who is your coach. I had it a lot easier than some of them.

A final comment caused deep emotion for one daughter. She felt that she had lost her daughter status in the public context: "I guess I never felt like a daughter, it was just more of a player on the team." (At this point, we had to pause the interview for several minutes for her tears to stop.)

The children/team members expressed conflict in living out the dual roles. Protecting their parent/coach and struggling to determine if they were considered the child or team member, caused internal conflict. The examples provide insight in their conflicting emotions resulting from their parents always being there.

The interview setting allowed the dyad to communicate about their parent/coach and child/team member relationship in a public context. In Phase 1 of the study, the parent/coach used most of the interview time. Question 10 provides the only occasion when the child/team

member offered more lines for the researcher to analyze. In Phase 2, the parent/coach once again contributed the most lines for analysis.

Summary of Findings

Parents/coaches were able to articulate the change in communication between themselves and their son/daughter in private versus public contexts. Themes of more technical talk, open and personal talk, parent in private and coach in public, and honest feedback, insider information emerged in the private context. Topic masking, courteous talk, and wanting to be treated like everyone else on the team were the relevant themes from the public arena. Turbulence was also noted as being created by the parent/coach and son/daughter/team member when in private or public environments. Themes of role confusion, team politics, loyalty conflicts, and caught in the middle were the identified categories. Finally, this change in communication did affect the relationship between the parent/coach and his/her son or daughter. Here, parents/coaches and children/team members saw the effects caused by relational closeness in both the private and public contexts, quality time spent together, shared experience, and being harder on their own child then with the rest of the team.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the data collection from the interviews conducted in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study. Based on the results in chapter four, several main themes evolved to help in understanding the research questions. Chapter five discusses these findings as they relate to role theory, conflict theory and communication privacy management theory. These findings respond to the research questions with reference to the process of boundary negotiation when turbulence occurs between a parent and child placed in roles of coach and team member.

CHAPTER FIVE. DISCUSSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study set out to reinforce the claim that roles, conflict theory and the communicative management of privacy boundaries is a central practice in family relationships, representing a fitting phenomenon for researchers to examine (Child & Petronio, 2011; Morr & Petronio, 2007; Petronio, 1991, 2000a, 2002). Privacy boundaries and the turbulence created by them is a complex process shaped by the discourse in which people engage (Caughlin & Petronio, 2004; Durham, 2004; Petronio, 1991, 2000a, 2002). To extend the usefulness of role theory, conflict theory, and CPM to the study of family communication, this project investigated the process of boundary negotiation as parents and children were placed into new roles as coaches and team members. These findings provide evidence to suggest that parent/coaches and child/team members communicated differently in private and public contexts, affecting the nature of their relationships.

This chapter reviews the research questions and discusses the findings. The research questions relate to the ways private and public contexts influence the way the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate and how the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate about the turbulence created by this change. In addition, the research questions ask how the change in communication in public and private contexts affects the parent/child relationship. This chapter also identifies limitations of the study and a variety of directions for future research are offered.

Research Question One

Research question one asked, “How do private and public contexts influence the way the parent/coach and child/competitor communicate?” The findings show the parent/coaches and the child/competitors did communicate differently when interacting in private and public contexts.

The interviews about the private communication between the parent/coaches and their children provided examples pertaining to the kind of "talk" that took place between the dyad in private and the role of parent as the dominant participant in private. Findings indicated that parents/coaches felt a need to control information regarding their child's participation by establishing what Petronio (2002) referred to as "ownership lines" (p. 6). These collectively held privacy boundaries about decisions become clear through the parents/coaches' explicit remarks. For example, playing time was viewed as a highly risky disclosure to make to the team or other parents, but could be openly talked about in private between the parent/coach and child competitor. Petronio (2002) argued that, although we work to control our communication boundaries, one's "boundaries may also become weakened by events outside the control of the owner" (p. 6).

Examples from the interviews also pointed to the openness of the communication between parent/coach and child/competitor when in private. One way individuals managed boundary openness is through the directness of their communication (Petronio, 1991, 2002). Directness refers to the degree to which the meaning and expected responses are explicitly expressed: the more direct, the more the sender indicates to the recipient how to react to and manage the information (Petronio, 2002; Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). With highly direct approaches, the speaker clearly, explicitly articulates his/her intention, meaning, and expected response so that the recipient has high certainty about how to react to the message and how to manage the information that is revealed (Petronio, 1991, 2002). When the sender is using an indirect approach, the intention of sending the message may be unclear and detail may be missing.

Several parents/coaches and children/competitors were pleased that technical talk was part of the private dialogue that took place between them. Weise and Fretwell (2005) found that the child's perception of his/her parent as a coach was an opportunity to receive motivation and technical instruction that others on the team did not have. In the perspective of the parent/coach, being both provided the opportunity to teach values and skills that s/he feared the child might not receive from another coach.

Parent/coaches verbalized the challenges of separating the parent-child from coach-team member role when in public and private contexts. The parent/coaches were able to articulate the delineation but nonetheless admitted it is a fine line to tread. Consistent responses about the desire and need to separate parent and coach roles in public and private contexts raise the issue of role ambiguity (Davis, Dollard, & Vergon, 2009). Parents/coaches recognize they hold ambiguous responsibilities but often lacked the information to know how or when to separate their roles. Beauchamp, Bray, Eys, & Carron (2002) conceptualized role ambiguity in four ways: (a) breadth of responsibilities, (b) behaviors required to carry out role responsibilities, (c) evaluation criteria for responsibilities, and (d) consequences of successfully or unsuccessfully carrying out role responsibilities. Responses by parent/coaches and their child/team member pointed to role behavior ambiguity, characterized by not knowing what adjustment are needed to carry out one's roles. As one parent/coach state: "then the game is over, you are back to being the parent." It is apparent that parent/coaches recognized the differences in their roles as a parent and coach, but reducing such role ambiguity is not an easy or comfortable responsibility.

Narratives about the private communication between parent/coaches and their children provided examples of parental dominance and negotiated dominance based upon the nature of the relationships. Dominance is defined as "the degree to which one actor attempts to regulate

the behavior of the other" (Dillard et al, 1999, p. 53). The parental dominance reflected the authority to make decisions about what the child would or would not be allowed to do. The negotiated dominance reflected the role of the coach versus the parent as more instructional (e.g., seeking information about the team from their son/daughter; providing instruction about the activity; helping to solve problems; and maintaining a smooth, working relationship with the child). Examples from the interviews suggested that the coaching relationship reflected how information about the activity was to be shared with others in a public setting. The public context of the activity did however provide a time and place for the parent and child to bond more closely because they also occupied the roles of coach and team member.

This dominance also included times when the child/team members were more open to disagreeing with their parent/coaches in private than they would be in the public where the negotiated boundary of conformity would be expected. One mother described the private relationship with her son this way: "When we talk about the coaching aspect and we're alone, I think we're much more open about what we both think." Her son agreed: "When it's just the two of us, it's much more like, 'this is what I think, let's try to figure out ways.'

Parent/coaches seemed to realize that negotiation was often necessary to get their child/team member to conform. As one parent/coach stated: "I didn't feel like I had the same kind of ability to say 'this is is what we are doing.' I think you negotiate that more with your child than you do with others on the team."

In the examples between the parents/coaches and children/competitors in public settings, there appeared to be less public negotiation about what each person expected and how communication was managed. As one parent/coach commented, "The parent role changes during practice and games. If the coach's kid doesn't show respect, how is anybody else going to show

respect?" The parent/coach expected conformity to the norms of appropriate behavior, a more disciplined effort, and compliance about requests made in different contexts.

Often, others on the team tried to use the child to violate the privacy boundaries with his/her parent in order to get to the parent/coach in some way; the child/competitor often felt compelled to deal with the difficult situation without the parent/coach's involvement. At other times, the parent/coach often used the child to violate the privacy boundaries in order to receive information about the team. When the privacy boundaries were being negotiated between the son/daughter and the team or the son/daughter and the parent/coach, the son/daughter had the power to ultimately make the decision how to manage the privacy boundary. When boundary rules are broken and information permeates an established boundary, turbulence may occur until synchronized coordination can be established again. This reinforces the notion that central to boundary management is the issue of power and control.

Communication avoidance between parent and child can influence how the message is perceived. When such avoidance is received, the recipient of the message must determine what meaning to assign to the message and the relationship (Petronio, 1991, 2002). When discussing sensitive and stressful information, scholars have argued that avoidance can be a viable strategy (Rosenfeld, 2000; Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). It may be especially useful when a direct message or avoidance has a potentially negative consequence. Because of the many interpretations about why the topic is avoided, recipients can attribute meaning consistent with their needs even when the dyad has differing views. Avoidance may help maintain openness, allowing parents/coaches to express their stress, yet permitting the child/competitor to interpret the message in ways that conform to his/her needs. Thus, avoidance, when communicating in public, may be a useful strategy for the parent/coach and child/competitor.

Research Question Two

Research question two asks, "How do the parent/coaches and child/competitors communicate about the turbulence created by their changing roles in public or private environments?" The use of role theory, conflict theory, and communication privacy management theory to explain how co-owned information held by the parent/coach and child/competitor in private and public contexts aids in understanding how this change causes boundary turbulence: "Boundary turbulence can occur when rules regulating boundary permeability are not explicitly stated" (Child, 2007, p. 27). In the case of family interactions, boundary turbulence can also be a by-product of parents invading their children's privacy boundaries (Petronio, 1994). Petronio (2000b) elaborated on this idea, stating "When parents invade their children's privacy by telling them what to do, the parent's behavior shifts the center of ownership away from the children and to them as a way to exercise control" (p. 42).

Despite the prevalence of positive responses to the dual role relationship, contentious factors relating to the parent/coach phenomenon were also recognized. Parent/coaches and child/team members mentioned indecencies of conflict, criticism, ambiguity, preferential treatment and feelings of being caught in the middle. These findings support theory and previous research on potential negative influence by parent (Babkes & Weiss, 1999) and coaches (Price & Weiss, 2000) on youths' feelings of anxiety, doubts and competence, and reduced enjoyment of and motivation to participate in the activity.

Responses from the interviews also echoed those by Gould et al. (1993) in finding young athletes felt pressure from their parent/coaches to perform better than others on the team. These comments suggest that the child/team member desire their parent/coaches to occupy distinct roles and embrace separate responsibilities in the public environment.

Petronio (2002) discussed the intersection of interior and exterior family boundaries. When internal and external boundaries are congruent, little boundary turbulence occurs. When there is incongruence, the boundary turbulence may be substantial. When children and their parents negotiated a set of rules that enable the parent/coach and child/competitor to maintain some privacy within the relationship as well as a degree of openness, satisfaction seemed to be greatest. Most relationships between the parent/coach and child/competitor were described in more positive terms. One explanation for this finding is the willingness of the child to negotiate dominance on the part of the parent/coach in private and public contexts. In most cases, the dyads functioned, and relationships were maintained. This suggested that communication can be enhanced through the parent/coaching relationship.

The study discovered that the parent/coach and child competitors experienced confidant privacy dilemmas, which Petronio (2002) explained, "occur when one seeks out another to disclose a problem" (p. 200). Petronio (2002) also indicated that dilemmas involved having to make a choice between two alternatives. While in the midst of a dilemma, one is unsure what to do. From this study, two different types of privacy dilemmas emerged. First, emotional dilemmas resulted from the parents/coaches not wanting the rest of the team to think they were happier for their own son/daughter than for the rest of the team members. For example, several parents/coaches explained that they struggled with choosing whether to reveal or conceal private feelings about their own child in front of team members. Second, the child felt caught in the middle dilemma. As explained by a child/competitor: "If the team wasn't happy and venting about something, I wouldn't go tell him [Dad]; I didn't want to become the team rat." The criteria that helped to develop privacy rules for decisions leading to reveal or conceal information included how certain were the parents/coaches that they would not fracture the

relationship that they had with the rest of the team by disclosing information about their son/daughter. Another criterion was that the child/competitor would often not disclose information to the parents/coaches in order to maintain a positive relationship with the rest of the team.

This study also found team politics to be a factor that contributed to turbulence. Team politics often included factors outside the control of the child's ability to perform well in the activity. Turman et al. (2009) found that a wide range of issues were addressed by parents, including the perception that coaches showed considerable favoritism to their own children at the expense of others on the team. A number of parents made the following observation: "You look at the team; I mean you go to a game, and I can always figure out who the coach's kid is. Quite often the coaches' child will play more" (Turman et. al., 2009,p.179). Another parent in the Turman et al. (2009) study reported:

> There are definitely a lot of coaches in our school with high school age children who are playing on sporting teams. I'd like to think it's ability, you know, that's what they try to say, they are playing the kids who show the best ability. (p. 179)

The comments made in the Turman et al. (2009) study were consistent with the themes identified in the current study.

Research Question Three

Research question three asks, "How does the change in communication in the public and private contexts affect the relationship between the parent and child?" Communication privacy management theory posits that relational closeness, relational satisfaction, and communication satisfaction are affected by the directness of communication (Petronio, 1991, 2002). Message directness can be varied by altering how explicitly the information, intention, response

expectations, and privacy rules are expressed by the speaker (Petronio, 1991, 2002). For example, parents may create an ambiguous message by purposefully wording information vaguely so that there are multiple ways for the child to decode the conversation (McManus & Nussbaum, 2011). Ambiguity has been argued to be useful for managing difficult situations (Rosenfeld, 2000), protecting individuals and relationships, and allowing information to be interpreted in a way that is consistent with recipients' informational needs (Eisenberg, 1984; Petronio, 2002). Therefore, its utilization while navigating the dual role of the parent/coach may help explain why some parent/coach and child/competitor relationships are considered "close" and satisfying.

Relational closeness, satisfaction, and communication satisfaction, according to CPM theory, are impacted by how relational partners communicate (Petronio, 1991, 2002). Through its dyadic, interaction approach, CPM claims that all individuals within the relationship have an important role in managing and protecting private information (Petronio, 2002). As one daughter stated, "She never made me feel like I wasn't the most important thing no matter what she had going on. Parents/coaches' perspective on the positives of coaching their own child offered distinctive knowledge to understanding the parent/coach and child/team member relationship. Parent/coaches verbalized feelings of pride, and opportunities to teach specific skills to their child because of their involvement in the activity. They also mentioned the effects of positive role modeling. One parent commented, "It's good for my daughter to see her mother involved in this manner with other students" and another child went on to state, "I am a better coach today because of watching my dad coach." These results support the notion of reciprocal influences between parent and child as well as coach and athlete (Eccles et al., 1998).

Positive relational dynamics between parent/coach and child/competitor were very apparent in the private communication context. The closeness, felt by the parent/coach and the child/competitor, created a positive bond that enabled them to interact at what one son described "as a level of communication intimacy." Shared experiences provided for a more technical and complex level of communication because both individuals understood what the other was experiencing or describing about the activity.

Roberts, Treasure, and Hall's (1994) findings indicated that children perceive two conceptually different types of parental involvement, one that represents parental facilitation of the children's activity participation, and one that suggests parental control of the child's activity participation and imposes performance standards. For some athletes, this parental control could be perceived as a moderate form of parental pressure (Turman et al., 2009).

Despite the potential positive benefits that result from parent-child sport interaction, research has also demonstrated how parental influence can produce detrimental results (Roberts et al., 1994). When examining the backlash of parental involvement, messages that continually focus on success- and performance-based outcomes establish an expectation in children that winning is the only way to satisfy (Turman et al., 2009). Hirschhorn and Loughead (2000) found that children can develop the fear that their standing with parents is based on their on-field performance, which can produce long-term effects that influence the parent-child relationship. Often, the parents will attempt to live vicariously through their child and will believe that the performance of the child is a direct reflection of them (Hirschhorn & Loughead, 2000).

Petronio et al. (2003) found that privacy dilemmas in families cannot be solved because the dynamics are too complex and no right answer can be found that works for the entire family. These researchers called for the development of new ways to teach families to manage the

turbulence instead of holding out for a solution. Petronio et al. (2007) stated, "using the framework of CPM, families can learn privacy management skills that help them discern different ways to coordinate privacy boundaries, redefine privacy rules, and make choices about third party or public disclosures"(p. 221). The challenge of separating parent and coach roles may become too stressful for some parent/coaches, leading to an unfulfilling experience or withdrawal from this role to preserve an amiable relationship with one's child.

Limitations

Although this study represents a promising start to examining the dual roles of the parent/coach and the child/team member, a number of limitations should be noted. Creswell (1994) stated that every study has its exceptions, qualifications, and boundaries. The limitations of the current study related to the sample used as well as the data-collection process. Each of the study limitations are discussed below.

The results of this study provided a general overview of coaching across different activities. One limitation may be related to the demographic characteristic of the parents/coaches indicating that almost all were, at one time, employed in the field of education. Despite the reality that they were already teachers in the home, the present study was useful in presenting the subtleties of how the parents/coaches manage their communication in different contexts because of their public role in the school and community.

In addition, researchers might find specializing in athletics or fine arts to produce unique findings. Focusing on coaching particular age groups might also be especially insightful. Moreover, the nature of the parent/coach and child/team member relationship may be different in an individual activity (e.g., tennis, swimming), in which competitors perform independently or of or in a dual role with teammates, rather than the highly interdependent nature of team activities

such as hockey or a theatrical production. Further research should continue to explore the parent/coach phenomenon with empirical studies of varying parent/child relationships, types of activities, and levels of competition.

For this study, the population of children who were interviewed consisted of students who were, at a minimum, one year and, for others, several years away from their most recent activity participation under the influence of their parent. Probably their perspectives were affected by the lapse in time that had occurred since interacting with their parents. Future research should attempt to examine participants currently facing parental influence concerning their involvement.

The data that emerged from the interviews were primarily from Upper Midwest, mostly middle-class, and an all-white population. Minority populations and geographical diversity were not elements of this study. The data were not separated by gender pairings. It would be of interest to note in future studies if a male parent/coach with a male child showed any comparable difference to a female parent/coach with a female child, a female parent/coach with a male child, or a male parent/coach with a female child.

Given that the role of the parent is traditionally dominate in the family relationship and the role coach is often dominate in a competitive relationships, it is not surprising to find that the parent/coach provided most of the lines for analysis of the present study. The interviews also took place in a co-constructed environment. Both individuals were present and heard the answers each provided to the questions that were asked. As a result, participants may have selected socially-desirable responses to place their parents or son/daughter in a positive light. Self-recall could have been softened to present the relationship in a constructive manner. Thus it

would be interesting to conduct follow up interviews with the individual members of the dyad to notice if the type and amount of lines for analysis would differ.

Muehlhoff and Wood (2002) stated that interviews hold significant value for data collection. Even though this method of data collection has benefits, some limitations inherent in this process can be revealed. The interview comments may not be grounded in actual fact, may not be the identical stories the parent and child would share without the interviewer present, and may not be the same stories shared with a different interviewer. For the interviewer, it is not possible to truly understand a relationship when she is not a part of that relationship.

Even though the interviewer should be unbiased and open to what is being said, the interviewer's presence does influence the responses (Creswell, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The fact that some of the parent/child dyads were known to the primary researcher could have helped and hindered the quality of the responses. The connection between the interviewer and the parent/child dyad increased the ease and comfort level for the interview and facilitated conversation. The connection between the dyad and the interviewer could also, however, influence the amount and type of disclosure.

A final limitation, as suggested by Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999), is the question of if the interview information from the parent/coach and the child/team member can be joined to indicate a reality for the dyad. Although the interviewed pair in this study, for the most part, jointly told the information, the question still arises: does data shared by one member in a family reflect the thoughts, experiences, and realities for the parent/coach and child/team member? There is no assurance that the information shared by either the parent/coach or the child/team member is representative of their shared reality.

Thus, it is important to conduct further research to understand the dual roles of the parent/coach and child/team member relationship, to help assist the parent/coaches about how they can perform their roles effectively and unambiguously, and maximize closeness and help minimize conflict as they navigate in private and public contexts.

Future Research Directions

Several directions for further research on this topic exist. Little data-based research has been conducted on the roles of the parent/coach and child/team member (Weiss & Fretwell, 2005). Given the absence of research of the effect these dual roles have on family communication, this topic area is, perhaps, the most significant. In general, additional future research directions include different approaches to data collection and analysis, additional topics, extending the present study, and application of an applied viewpoint.

This study provides a basis for identifying a particular type of family communication due to the introduction of changing roles based upon private versus public contexts. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2004) suggested that families differ in their communication between conversation orientation (subject and symbolic) and conformity orientation (behavior and practices). These differences result in four family types (consensual, pluralistic, protective, and laissez-faire).

Families found to be high in both conversation orientation and conformity orientations are labeled *consensual*. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002) wrote "their communication is characterized by a tension between pressure to agree and to preserve the existing hierarchy within the family on the one hand, and an interest in open communication and in exploring new ideas, on the other hand" (p. 87). Parents in this type of family would be interested in what their children have to say, but feel that they are the ones who should make decisions for the family

and also for the child. They find it is also important to explain the reasoning behind decision making to their children.

Families who are high in conversation orientation but low in conformity orientation are labeled *pluralistic*. Communication in pluralistic families is characterized by open, unconstrained discussions that are open to and involve all family members. Parents in these families do not feel the need to be in control of their children or to make all their decisions for them (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002, p. 87). Parents allow children to participate equally in the family decision-making process and accept the children's opinions as valid.

Protective families are defined as being low on conversation orientation but high on conformity orientation: "Communication in protective families is characterized by an emphasis on obedience to parental authority and by little concern for conceptual matters or for open communication within the family" (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002, p. 87). Parents in this type of family make all the decisions and do not feel a need to explain their reasoning for decisions to their children.

The fourth family type is *laissez-faire*. This family is found to be low in both conversation orientation and conformity orientation: "Their communication is characterized by few and usually uninvolving interactions among family members that usually concern only a limited number of topics. Most members of laissez-faire families are emotionally divorced from their families" (Koerner & Fitzptrick, 2002, p. 87). Parents in this family type have little interest in their children's decisions, and they do not find value in communicating with their children about these decisions.

Each of these four family types suggests that certain members exhibit particular degrees of control over the family communication. However, the family unit described in the present

study is different from these in that the type, the amount, the timing, the use, and the nature of communication all seem to change between public and private contexts. These differences in orientation suggest that the four family types described by Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2004) could be expanded to include an additional family type. This type would be more reflective of the coaching dynamic influencing the communication because the coach and child were found to have a high conversation orientation and a negotiated conformity orientation.

The findings also extend the use of communication privacy management theory to help explain how co-constructed information held by the parent/coach and child/competitor in private and public contexts aids in understanding how changing roles can increase and/or cause boundary turbulence. Children and their parents negotiated a set of rules that enabled the child to preserve some privacy within the relationship with his/her teammates while maintaining a degree of openness with the parent about the nature of team information.

In the present study, the dyadic reflection of the interviewees revealed an impact of the positive and negative aspects for both parent and child. One explanation for this finding was the willingness of the child to accept the dominance of the parent/coach in the public context. While some negotiation occurred in private settings, as long as the child was willing to accept the direction of the parent/coach in public, the coaching relationship remained functional. If the child became less willing to conform to the dominance of the parent/coach, the coaching relationship became negative and could, ultimately, cause the child to withdraw from the activity. Another area for study relates to the child's decision to discontinue participation in an activity based on a dysfunctional parent/coach and child/competitor relationship. In addition, the effect on communication within the family provides an opportunity for additional research. If the parent steps into the arena as coach only to create dysfunction, the communication with the

child/competitor will be impacted. The potential also exists for communication challenges within the entire family.

A family can be viewed as a system in conflict consisting of ongoing confrontation between its members (Roloff & Miller, 2006). Conflict is likely to remain a feature of family interaction. Research needs to continue to investigate this consequential aspect of family relationships. The conflict created by the dual roles of the parent/coach and child/team member offer yet another unique lens to examine this important aspect for the family system.

In general, additional future research ideas include different approaches to data collection and data analysis, additional topics, and expansion of the present study. One potential avenue is the examination of the dual role for parents and children in other contexts. For example, the turbulence created by this dual role could be explored in the context of family-owned businesses (Carmon, 2010). Other potential avenues include comparison among the various activities (i.e., sports, drama, music, and speech), geographic regions, economic levels of the families, school size, and age of the parent/coach. Expansion of the same research line to other cultural populations could involve a combination of methods for collecting interview data and written data.

Some data in Phase 1 of the present study were not analyzed for the present study. The original data included the metaphors the parent/child reported as representing their relationship. Metaphor "can help individuals to explain their reality through language without literally having to define the experience" (Pawlowski, Thilborger, & Cieloha-Meekins, 2001, p. 180). The metaphor allowed the dyad to offer an insider's perspective on the family dynamic in a way that literal description could not (Turner & West, 2006). 19 of the dyads were able to describe a metaphor that reflected this unique relationship. For example, one parent stated the metaphor of

"a butterfly, because you look back on your experience in theatre and speech and know it's more beautiful now because it gave you so much." Another dyad commented, "going from an ugly duckling to a beautiful swan, you know, that same thing where we were getting beaten by 20, and the next year by 10, and the next year we were beating them" These images as metaphors would appropriately fit a metaphoric analysis (Pawlowski et al., 2001). Turner & West (2006) state, "as linguistic comparisons, metaphors can offer insight as to the collective identity of the family and provide a sense of understanding for both its members and outside observers (p. 48). Thus, the meanings of the metaphors offered by the parent/coach and child/team member were very descriptive to each dyad.

Additional data included how other family members (spouse and siblings) felt about and reacted to the parent/coach and child/teammate relationship. Because of the special relationship established as a result of involvement with the competitive activity, it would be interesting to study the reaction and feelings of the spouse and siblings. Specifically, how the non-coach parent and the non-coached sibling(s) viewed time spent with the parent/coach and how the non-coach parent functioned as mediator or cheerleader between the parent/coach and child/team member.

The Phase 2 interviews demonstrated that how the parent/child told the story was very revealing and added dimension to the message. McManus and Nussbaum (2011) proposed that how parents communicate, rather than what they discuss, seems to affect the relational outcomes for the parent and child. The transcripts could be submitted to a conversational analysis to explore a variety of interaction issues. Characteristics such as vocalic elements, including pauses, interruptions, crying, and vocal hesitations, would be interesting to analyze.

Although this study examined the dynamics of the parent/coach and child/team member relationship, attention should also be paid to the quality of the parent and child relationship outside of the activity. Specifically, contentious family relations outside of the public context may influence coach behaviors and should be a caveat for any parent considering coaching their own child.

Future research should continue to explore the parent/coach and child /team member phenomenon with empirical studies of varying parent-child relationships, types of activities, and levels of competition. The results of this study could also be pragmatically applied through sharing the information with parents who may be considering coaching their own child. The experience of this researcher has been that the parent and child had not ever really talked about this dual role. Many feelings were expressed for the first time as the dyad was asked to share answers to the interview questions. It was very helpful for the parent and child to discuss their experience with one another.

Conclusion

As this study has demonstrated, parent/coaches serve an important role in the lives of their children. A variety of techniques are used to encourage, support, and maintain a positive relationship with the child/competitor. The interaction that occurred between parents/coaches and their child/competitor in the private and public settings provided a valuable look at the nature of the communication process. As parents/coaches and children/competitors continue to intersect, communication scholars are presented with a range of avenues for continued study of this phenomenon. Most important is the opportunity to apply a communicative lens to help families address the interaction problems that exist when a parent has the dual role of parent and coach to his/her own child.

Much can be learned about the role that communication serves in understanding the turbulence that might arise for the family. Additionally, examination of the dual role for the parent/coach and child/competitor has the potential to better inform family communication research. This dual role as a source of negotiation, cohesion, topic of talk, loyalty, and quality time within the family may serve as an important variable that speaks to the structure of many families within today's society.

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APPENDIX A. QUESTIONS FOR PHASE 1 INTERVIEWS

1. What was the activity where you and your child were involved as coach and team member?
2. When and how long did this experience last?
3. What is one of your favorite stories/memories about your coaching relationship?
4. What is one of your least favorite stories/memories about your coaching relationship?
5. Are there any funny stories you could share?
6. Are there any sad stories you could share?
7. What are some other stories?
8. How often do you think about this coaching relationship?
9. In what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship between the two of you in private?
10. In what ways do you talk about this coaching relationship in public?
11. How do you think the coaching relationship affected your communication with other family members?
12. How do you think the coaching relationship affected your relationship with the other team members?
13. Can you describe a theme or image for your coaching relationship? (For example, your coaching relationship might be like a tree that changed with the seasons)
14. Other thoughts about your coaching relationship?

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS PHASE 2

1. Tell me about a time when the role of coach conflicted with your role as a parent.
2. Tell me about a time when the role of team member conflicted with your role as a son/daughter.
3. Tell me about a time when you acted like a coach and you wished you had acted like a parent. Now tell me about a time when you acted like a parent and wished you had acted like a coach.
4. Tell me about a time when you acted like a team member and wished you had acted like a son/daughter. Now tell me about a time you acted like a son/daughter and wished you had acted like a team member.
5. Did any of the above situations cause conflict or was conflict avoided as a result of the behavior?
6. Did these conversations take place more in private or in a public context?

APPENDIX C. CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW

NDSU N O R T H D A K O T A S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

701.231.7783

***Fax* 701.231.7784**

Department of Communication #2310

P.O. Box 6050

Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Research Study

You are invited to participate in a study about the relationship between a parent and his/her own child in a coaching situation. Parents often have stories about what it was like to coach their own children; and the children of parent coaches have their own stories about what it was like to be the "coach's kid" on the team.

Basis for Participant Selection

You have been selected because you were a coach of your own child and/or you were coached by your parent; and you have indicated a willingness to share your information.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of the study is to explore the nature of this coaching relationship. Specifically, the project will address the role of the parent/coach and child/team member, the themes generated from your answers to the questions, and how the themes reflect upon the relationship of the parent and child in public or private contexts.

Explanation of Procedures

The process will involve interviewing you and your parent/son or daughter together in an informal setting. The questions will be fairly open-ended and encourage you to talk about your stories/memories of the coaching relationship. The interviews will take place in a setting that is selected by the participants and that will allow for the interviews to be audio taped. The interview time will vary, but most interviews will last about 20-30 minutes. The parent/son or daughter will receive information about the process one week prior to the interviews and will also be given a consent form and demographic form to complete and bring to the interview.

Potential Risks and Discomforts

You have been selected to be interviewed because of your willingness to talk about your coaching relationship. There are no apparent risks to you.

Alternatives to Participation

You may choose not to participate.

Compensation for Participation

There is no compensation for participation as this is an educational endeavor undertaken by a graduate student, but your willingness to be involved is greatly appreciated.

Assurances of Confidentiality

While you will be identified in the information we collect, we will keep private all research records that identify you. You will be assigned a pseudonym (a fake name) to be used in transcription of the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in a locked file and destroyed upon completion of the study. Your identity will not be revealed at any time in the process of this study.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal From the Study

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect you in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.

Offer to Answer Questions

You should feel free to ask questions now or at any time during the study. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact: Cindy Larson-Casselton (701-238-6726, clarson@cord.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Robert Littlefield (701-231-7783 or R.littlefield@ndsu.edu). If you have any questions about the rights of human research participants, or to report a complaint about this research, contact the NDSU IRB Office, (701) 231-8908.

Consent Statement

You are voluntarily making the decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have willingly decided to participate, having read the information provided above. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

_____

Printed Name of Participant Signature of Participant Date

_____

Printed Name of Participant Signature of Participant Date

_____

Printed Name of Investigator Signature of Investigator Date

APPENDIX D. LETTER TO PARENT WHO COACHED OR CHILD WHO WAS COACHED BY PARENT

Dear Parent Coach or Child of a Coach:

You are invited to participate in a study about the relationship between a parent and his/her own child in a coaching situation. All of your responses will be completely confidential. The information you provide will be used to complete a dissertation project at North Dakota State University. If you do not feel that the interview applies to you, you may indicate that you do not wish to participate. Your participation is greatly appreciated, but is completely voluntary. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact Cindy Larson-Casselton at (701) 238-6726. Thank you so much for your help.

Sincerely,

Cindy Larson-Casselton

APPENDIX E. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

N O R T H D A K O T A S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y **701.231.7783**
***Fax* 701.231.7784**

Department of Communication #2310
P.O. Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Names_____

Address_____

E-Mail contact_____

Cell Phone Number_____

Check the Activity You Coached or In Which You Were Coached:

_____Athletics _____Speech/Debate

_____Fine Arts _____Other (list)

Parent's Occupation_____

Son/Daughter Occupation_____

Parent's Education Level_____

Son/Daughter Education Level_____

Parent's Age _____

Son/Daughter's Age_____

Parent's Marital Status While Coaching_____

Other Siblings of Son/Daughter_____

Pseudonyms (To be completed by the interviewer; real names will not be used in study)