A REVERSAL THEORY PERSPECTIVE ON THE MOTIVATIONAL STATES OF SOCCER PLAYERS IN CANADA, GERMANY, AND JAPAN

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Abstract

This descriptive, exploratory study used a reversal theory framework to examine the in-event motivational states of 179 intercollegiate soccer players in Canada, Germany, and Japan. Information was also gathered on players' thoughts about the university soccer environment. The results suggest that all of the participants were oriented toward the mastery (strength, control) and conformity motivational states while playing. In addition, Japanese players reported the strongest endorsement of the telic (serious) state, and they were more sympathetic and alloic (concerned with others' outcomes) than the Canadian and German cohorts. With respect to the salience of these motivational states, Canadian players were most aware of the mastery orientation. In Japan it was the telic state that was most dominant, and in Germany it was spread out between the alloic, autic (concern about own outcomes), and mastery states. Other findings, obtained through content analysis, revealed that university soccer in Canada and Japan fosters both a social and performance-focused atmosphere, while in Germany it is perceived as more social and recreational than in the other two countries. These results provide a preliminary foundation for follow-up cross-cultural work. Future research should also examine the motivational states of more elite players (including those in Brazil) and the correlation of these states with winning and losing over time.

Keywords: Motivational states, reversal theory, soccer, cross-cultural, intercollegiate sport, content analysis.

ESTADOS MOTIVACIONAIS DE JOGADORES DE FUTEBOL NO CANADÁ, ALEMANHA E JAPÃO NA PERSPECTIVA DA TEORIA DOS REVERSOS

Resumo

Esse estudo descritivo e exploratório baseia-se na Teoria dos Reversos para investigar o estado motivacional de 179 jogadores de futebol universitário no Canadá, Alemanha e Japão. Dados foram também obtidos a partir do que os jogadores pensam em relação ao ambiente universitário futebolístico. Os resultados sugerem que todos os participantes estavam orientados pelos estados motivacionais maestria (competitivo e controle sobre outros) e conformidade (tendência a estar de acordo com as regras) durante o jogo. Identificou-se que o estado télico (evita alta excitação com foco no objetivo) é muito significativo entre jogadores japoneses. Estes também apresentam maior significância para ambos os estados simpático (cooperativo e harmonização com outros) e alóico (altruístico e preocupação com o resultado do outro) em comparação com atletas canadenses e alemães. Ainda com referência à dominância dos estados motivacionais, jogadores canadenses pareciam estarem mais conscientes do seu estado

dominante, maestria. Enquanto que na equipe japonesa o estado télico foi observado como o mais

predominante, na alemã há um maior predomínio dos estados alóico, áutico (egoístico e preocupação com os próprios resultados) e maestria. Outros dados, obtidos por análise de conteúdo, revelaram que o futebol universitário no Canadá e Japão promovem os aspectos social-rendimento com preocupação com atmosfera do jogo. Enquanto que na Alemanha observa-se maior enfoque nos aspectos social-recreacional que nas equipes anteriores. Esses resultados apóiam fundamentos preliminares para posteriores trabalhos inter-culturais. Pesquisas futuras poderiam considerar estados motivacionais de mais futebolístas, incluindo jogadores brasileiros, bem como a correlação desses estados com relação à vitória e derrota durante períodos de tempo.

Palavras-chave: Estados motivacionais; Teoria dos reversos; futebol; estudos inter-culturais; esporte universitário; análise de conteúdo.

ESTADOS MOTIVACIONALES DE JUGADORES DE FÚTBOL EN CANADÁ, ALEMANIA Y JAPÓN EN LA PERSPECTIVA DE LA TEORÍA DE LOS REVERSOS

Resumen

Ese estudio descriptivo y exploratorio se basa en la Teoría de los Reversos para investigar el estado motivacional de 179 jugadores de fútbol universitario en Canadá, Alemania y Japón. También fueron obtenidos datos junto a los jugadores sobre lo que piensan a respecto del ambiente universitario futbolístico. Los resultados sugieren que todos los participantes estaban orientados por los estados motivacionales maestría (competitivo y control sobre los demás) y conformidad (tendencia de estar de acuerdo con las reglas) durante el partido. Así, se averiguó que el estado télico (evita alta excitación con foco en el objetivo) es mucho más significativo entre jugadores japoneses. Estos también presentan mayor significancia para los estados simpático (cooperativo y armonización con los demás) y aloico (altruístico y preocupación con el resultado del otro) en comparación con atletas canadienses y alemanes. Todavía, en referencia a la dominancia de los estados motivacionales, jugadores canadienses parecían estar más conscientes de su estado dominante, maestría, mientras que en el equipo japonés predominaba el estado télico, y en el alemán, los estados aloico, áutico (egoístico y preocupación con los propios resultados) y maestría. Otros datos, obtenidos por análisis de contenido, revelaran que el fútbol universitario en Canadá y Japón valoran los aspectos social-rendimiento con preocupación con la atmósfera del juego. Mientras en Alemania hay mayor enfoque en los aspectos social-recreacional que en los equipos anteriores. Esos resultados apoyan fundamentos preliminares para estudios interculturales posteriores. Investigaciones futuras podrían considerar estados motivacionales de más futbolistas, incluyendo jugadores brasileños, así como la correlación de esos estados ante la victoria y derrota durante periodos de tiempo.

Palabras-llave: estados motivacionales; Teoría de los Reversos; fútbol; estudios interculturales; deporte universitario; análisis de contenido.

Motivational processes and their interrelationships with commitment, persistence, satisfaction, and performance have generated considerable interest in sport and exercise psychology. People take part in sports activities with a

variety of different motives, and decades of research have focused on such constructs as perceived competence, perceived control, intrinsic/extrinsic factors, and achievement goals to delineate what continues to be a poorly understood concept (Roberts, 2001). Today, the common interactionist view is that participation motives are subject to change, and that they are typically based on the interplay between individual experience and one's personal feelings about the particular activity and the environment in which it occurs (Kerr, Fujiyama, Wilson, & Nakamori, 2006).

Among the more contemporary approaches to measuring and analyzing these relationships is reversal theory (Apter, 1982, 2001), an integrative model that accounts for distinct patterns of motivation, arousal, and behavior in a wide range of settings. Reversal theory was first appropriated to sport by Kerr and colleagues in a number of reviews and research studies (for a summary, see Kerr, 1997, p. 193-200), and recent applications have included activities as diverse as canoeing (Males, Kerr & Gerkovich, 1998), rugby (Wilson & Kerr, 1999), tennis (Kerr, Fujiyama, & Campano, 2002), exercise (Keele-Smith & Leon, 2003), skydiving (Thatcher, Reeves, & Dorling, 2003), field hockey (Kerr, Wilson, Bowling, & Sheahan, 2005), and modern dance (Kerr, Kawaguchi, Oiwa, Terayama, & Zukawa, 2000; Kerr et al., 2006). The major tenet of reversal theory is that people can move (or "reverse") between opposing polarities within each of four paired metamotivational states in order to maximize their affective experience, or "hedonic tone." Metamotivational states represent the way that individuals interpret their own arousal and motivation to the extent that the states a person is in will determine the nature of his or her emotional experience and subsequent motivational orientation. The first two sets of metamotivational states are functions of perceived arousal and are described as telic-paratelic and negativity-conformity. The other two sets are the sympathy-mastery and autic-alloic states, and are concerned with the outcomes of interactions with others. Only one polarity of each pair is experienced at a given time, but some pairs may be more important than others in certain situations or contexts (Apter, 1982; Kerr, 1985). Taken together, the resulting motivational profile plays a significant role in how one approaches and responds to life events, including sports competition. In recent work (i.e., Kerr et al., 2006), the prefix has been dropped from the word "metamotivational" such that the different orientations can also be referred to more simply as *motivational* states. Table 1 presents the main characteristics of the four pairs of motivational states.

According to reversal theory, behavior in the telic state is associated with serious and goal-oriented thinking while paratelic refers to a playful, spontaneous, and sensation-seeking disposition. Negativity suggests that one feels stubborn and free of rules, with a motivation to defy traditions; conformity indicates a cooperative, agreeable nature and prompts an individual to adhere to established norms. Sympathy is based on attentiveness and consideration for others to foster a harmonious environment, while mastery implies a focus on winning, control, and domination. Finally, a person in the autic state is primarily concerned with net gain and his or her own outcomes in an interaction; someone in the alloic state is more altruistic and concerned with the other's outcomes. However, none of the states should be seen as traits or enduring dispositions. In fact, an individual can engage in the same behavior on different occasions and have different motivational orientations each time. Along similar lines, different people can participate in the same activity simultaneously but be in different motivational states, with each having a unique and even opposite experience (Kerr, 1997).

The latter point is especially interesting from a cross-cultural standpoint and from an East-West perspective in particular. The behavioral patterns of Eastern

and Western populations are often associated with the dictates of collectivistic and individualistic societies (see Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995), and it could be argued that the characteristics of *individualism* (independence, autonomy, motivation to satisfy one's own preferences and needs) and *collectivism* (interdependence, mutual compromise, motivation to meet the norms and duties imposed by the collective entity) are mirrored, respectively, in the polar ends of the negativity-conformity, mastery-sympathy, and autic-alloic motivational pairings. Research suggests that people in Japan and other Asian countries indeed have a stronger sense of collectivism and community than those in Europe and North America, where the greater focus is on independence and individuality (Kerr et al., 2000). Accordingly, it is possible that sports participants from these regions also possess different motivational orientations during competition that reflect these culturally derived attributes.

The globalization of modern sport has prompted a corresponding demand for sport psychology studies with a view on cultural diversity (e.g., Duda & Allison, 1990; Page & Liu, 1997) and more cross-cultural research within a reversal theory framework (Kerr, 1999). This notion of diversity in sport values and attitudes finds a measure of support from the extant cross-cultural literature on motivation. Research by Weinberg et al. (1997), for example, surveyed young sport and physical activity participants from the United States, Australia, and New Zealand about their reasons for engaging in competitive sport, and found that the American cohort put more emphasis on fun/fitness, teamwork, and competition/extrinsic motives than the other two groups. Another study by Kolt et al. (1999) examined the participation motivation of youth gymnasts from Australia, Canada, India, China, and Israel. Despite observing some commonalities among the groups, they reported significant differences on several factors of motivation, including skills, achievement, team/affiliation, challenge/fun, and recognition/excitement. The researchers concluded that many differences in participants' motives were consistent with more general cultural influences.

Donnelly and Young (1988) suggest that reasons for participating in sport are learned as part of the modeling process of sport socialization. More specifically, Hardman (1998) contends that much of the cross-national diversity in sport attitudes and behaviors is fostered through differences in the nature of school sports and physical education. Hardman's premise is underscored by Curry and Weiss' (1989) finding that American college athletes had a higher competition motive for participation in sport than student members of Austrian sport clubs, for whom fitness was the primary motivation. In explaining their study, they noted that the American practice of integrating competitive sport into the college system stands in contrast to the Austrian tradition, where sport is separated from education and access is generally provided through state-supported clubs with both competitive and recreational emphases (Curry & Weiss, 1989: 258-259). Returning to an East-West perspective, Yamaguchi (1984) observed that Japanese socialization into sport arises mainly from a closed school structure compared to the open community system in Canada, while other research with Asian cultures reveals that priority in education is sometimes given to academic achievement over physical or sport development (Carroll, 1993). To that end, Page and Liu (1997) looked at achievement motivation in university physical activity classes and found that American and Chinese students differed significantly in competitiveness and desire to win, though the authors did not give information on the direction of these cultural differences.

Reversal theory, as noted previously, has been used to study participants in a number of different sports. This includes both Eastern and Western competitors,

but little attention has been paid to the sport-related cognitions of culturally diverse soccer players who, perhaps more than any other athletes, are routinely said to display competitive mindsets and behaviors that reflect a purported national identity (Blain, Boyle, & O'Donnell, 1993; Crolley, Hand, & Jeutter, 2000; Horne, Tomlinson, & Whannel, 1999; Inthorn, 2006). In one investigation, Geisler and Kerr (in press) used a reversal theory-based measure to determine the competition stress and emotions of Canadian and Japanese players at an intermediate-competitive futsal tournament. Among the various findings, they reported that Canadian players felt more pleasant emotions after winning games than after losing and more unpleasant emotions after losing than after winning. Contrary to expectations, however, the Japanese players reported the opposite; that is, more unpleasant emotions after wins and more pleasant emotions after losses, and they experienced more unpleasant pre-game emotions than the Canadians. Motivational states were not addressed in the study, but the extensive work of Lazarus (see Lazarus, 1998; 2000) proposes that motivation is related to one's felt emotions. From that viewpoint, the affective experiences of the Japanese players suggest that they were most likely disposed to the sympathy and alloic motivational states compared to the telic, mastery, and autic states of the Canadians.

Thus, the purpose of the current investigation was to examine the in-event motivational states, and the most salient/dominant states, of another set of Eastern and Western competitors—intercollegiate soccer players in Canada, Germany, and Japan. To date, there has been no research from a reversal theory perspective into the motivational dispositions of such a diverse sample of soccer players, and as a result, there was a tangential interest in whether the measured motivational states of the Canadian and Japanese competitors might approximate those inferred for the aforementioned futsal participants. A second and corollary aim of the current study was to determine if players' motivational states could be linked with their thoughts and feelings about the university soccer environment. Given the aforementioned ties between school/university sports programs and the sport-related attitudes of participants, it was possible that the characteristics of intercollegiate soccer in each nation would be factors in the reported motivational orientations.

The exploratory and descriptive nature of the research meant that no formal hypotheses were proposed, but the study was based on two main questions:

1. What are the similarities and/or differences between intercollegiate soccer players in Canada, Germany, and Japan in the experience of motivational states and in the most salient or dominant motivational states during games?
2. What are the similarities and/or differences between intercollegiate soccer players in Canada, Germany, and Japan in their thoughts and feelings about the university soccer environment?

The answers to these questions can provide a preliminary framework for more extensive follow-up work, which ultimately should further the understanding of motivational states in culturally diverse players, how they are affected by game events, and the relationships of these dispositions to both successful and unsuccessful performance. This information is useful for coaches at all levels, and especially those in multicultural and/or academic settings.

Methods and Procedures

Participants

The study involved a total of 179 male intercollegiate soccer players from university and technical university soccer teams; 60 in Canada, 59 in Germany,

and 60 in Japan. All participants were full time students as well as members of their institution's top varsity soccer team, and were drawn from four competing teams per country. Ages ranged from 18-31 years in Canada (*M* = 21.4, *SD* = 2.31), 20-30 years in Germany (*M* = 22.8, *SD* = 2.27), and 18-22 years in Japan (*M* = 19.6, *SD* = 1.13).

Research Measures

To address Question 1, participants completed the motivational state section of the State of Mind Indicator for Athletes (SOMIFA; Bellew & Thatcher, 2002; Kerr & Apter, 1999). The SOMIFA is a questionnaire that identifies the operative motivational states (covering all four pairs of states) during sport and other performances, and the state that is most salient or dominant at the time. It is administered after competition and has athletes answer the questions by thinking back about the events that just finished.

Question 2 required players to respond to the following: "What is it like to be an intercollegiate soccer player at your university? Please list or describe whatever thoughts and feelings you have about playing soccer for your university team." This information was intended to gauge the overall cognitions associated with competitive soccer participation at the intercollegiate level, and to determine whether the sampled players in each nation perceived their university soccer environments in similar ways.

Two people were involved in translating the open-ended questionnaire and the motivational state section of the SOMIFA into German. Another two people translated the open-ended questionnaire into Japanese. The SOMIFA required no Japanese translation as this had previously been done for a number of initial trials involving judo, basketball, and rugby players from Japan (see Kerr, 1999). The process used here followed the common procedure of translating and then back-translating the forms via two independent and bilingual individuals familiar with the applicable constructs and terminology (Brislin, 1986). Differences were then discussed before final versions of the questionnaires were agreed upon.

Data Analysis

The data for Question 1 were drawn from forced choice responses on the SOMIFA questionnaire and did not address any formally stated hypotheses. Kerr et al. (2006) contend that the lack of multiple-item subscales on the SOMIFA precludes the use of statistical procedures for measures with subscales (such as item-to-subscale correlations, item analysis, and factor analysis), and test-retest reliability calculations were of little value since consistent responses across situations were not expected for such a state measure. Moreover, content analysis was an inappropriate choice because participants did not respond freely to open-ended questions; therefore, percentages were simply determined for the proportion of players endorsing each motivational state during games and presented as descriptive findings. This also applied to the most dominant motivational states in the three nations.

Question 2

Lacked formal hypotheses as well, but in this case the data were obtained through open-ended questionnaires. As such, it was suited to content analysis and conceptual analysis in particular. Conceptual analysis is an inductive process in that perusal of questionnaire responses leads to the formation of conceptual clusters. In this study, the English versions of players' responses served as the unit of analysis and were read by two principal investigators. The responses

comprised the raw data, and consensus was reached between the investigators on the organization of these raw data themes into higher-order themes, or conceptual clusters. Thus, the clusters represented selected ideas, and instances of specific words or statements on the questionnaires were counted as scoring units of the corresponding conceptual clusters that emerged for each national cohort. This provided a means of numerical expression for each cluster (e.g., 4 instances of applicable statements equaled 4 scoring units), which was converted into percentages and presented as descriptive information. For a more detailed explanation of content analysis, see Sanders and Pinhey (1983, p. 184-202).

This method of analysis resembled the one employed by Dale (2000), whose examination of the distractions experienced by decathletes reduced 32 raw data points into eight higher-order themes or clusters. It should be noted, however, that content analysis is a coding procedure and not any kind of statistical test (Sanders & Pinhey, 1983). It is a useful method for categorizing people's statements into specific concepts or frameworks (Patton, 1990), but it is simply concerned with transforming and *studying* data, and the information obtained frequently remains at a descriptive level for qualitative research purposes (e.g., Dale, 2000; Park, 2000; 2004).

Procedure

In each country, data were collected during the latter part of the intercollegiate soccer season. First, participants completed the open-ended questionnaire about the university soccer environment at a team meeting. These data were gathered as part of a larger comprehensive investigation, and as a result the players were also administered a series of other questionnaires at that time. The motivational state section of the SOMIFA was completed on another day, immediately after one designated game for each participating team. In both cases, players were informed that there were no favorable or unfavorable answers and that all responses would be kept confidential through a coding system on the questionnaire forms and in the data analysis. Ethics committee approval was granted for this research prior to initiation of the study.

Results

Question 1

The first research question was concerned with the motivational states that players in each country experienced during games. As mentioned, responses on the SOMIFA were tabulated and converted into percentages. Looking at the responses of all 179 participants together, the three groups showed a similarly strong endorsement of the mastery and conformity states within the mastery-sympathy and negativity-conformity pairings. However, there were still some differences between the groups in the number of players favoring these states, and larger differences in the numbers allotted to the other motivational orientations.

In Canada, 56 of the 60 sampled players (93.3%) reported being in the mastery state during competition. In addition, 49 players (81.7%) were in the conformity state and 40 players (66.7%) endorsed the telic orientation. However, there were almost equal ratings for the autic and alloic states, with 29 players (48.3%) and 31 players (51.7%), respectively.

Results obtained for the German group indicate that 51 out of the 59 players (86.4%) reported the mastery motivational state and 47 players (79.7%) experienced the conformity orientation while playing, but responses were split more evenly within the other two pairs. The telic state received the endorsement of 34 players (57.6%) compared to 25 (42.4%) for the paratelic state. The same

figures applied to the autic and alloic pairing—25 players (42.4%) experienced the autic state and 34 players (57.6%) had an alloic orientation during games.

Players at Japanese universities showed very clear preferences toward one state within each motivational state pair. The conformity state was the most common and was endorsed by 52 of the 60 sampled participants (86.7%). This was followed by 47 players (78.3%) in the telic state, 45 players (75.0%) in the mastery state, and 38 players (63.3%) with an alloic orientation. For ease of interpretation, Table 2 presents the number and percentage of players in the three nations that experienced each state within the four motivational state pairings.

The SOMIFA questionnaire also asked players to indicate the motivational orientation that they found to be the most salient or dominant during competition. In Canada, 27 of the 60 participating players (45.0%) listed the mastery state as the one that they were most aware of while playing. In comparison, only a handful of players listed five of the other states, while negativity and sympathy were not named at all.

Responses in Germany were not so one-sided. Of the 59 sampled players, 15 (25.4%) named the alloic state as being the most dominant, 14 (23.7%) listed the autic state, and 12 players (20.3%) were most aware of the mastery orientation. Four of the remaining states received only scant endorsement, and negativity was not listed at all.

Finally, 21 of the 60 players in Japan (35.0%) reported that the telic state was their most dominant motivational orientation during games. This was followed by the alloic state (12 players; 20.0%), conformity (10 players; 16.7%), mastery (8 players; 13.3%), and the paratelic state (6 players; 10.0%). The remaining states were endorsed rather weakly, but the Japanese cohort was the only one in which all of the motivational states were listed by at least one player. Table 3 provides the number and percentage of players in the three nations that reported each motivational state as the most dominant during intercollegiate competition.

Question 2

The second research question dealt with the thoughts and feelings that players had about being intercollegiate soccer players. The conceptual analysis method of content analysis was conducted on the questionnaire responses of all 179 participants, which yielded 335 raw data themes (scoring units). The mean number of responses per participant was 1.87 and the range was 0 to 8. The raw data themes were then broken down into 23 higher-order themes, or conceptual clusters, and for players at the sampled Canadian, German, and Japanese universities, thoughts and feelings about the intercollegiate soccer environment could be categorized into 20, 18, and 12 of these conceptual clusters, respectively.

Nine clusters were endorsed by all of the participant groups, but there were some discernible differences between the three national cohorts. For the players in Canada, 22 scoring units (15.6%) indicated that intercollegiate soccer was a source of fun/made life more interesting. At the same time, they believed it was demanding/required commitment and that it was a source of pride/honor (both with 11.3%), while also feeling that the university soccer environment provided the chance to make friends/interact with others (9.9%).

The German group was of the same belief that intercollegiate soccer was a source of fun/made life more interesting (17.6%), but this came second to the thought that it was a source of pride/honor (22 scoring units; 18.5%). The other clusters with reasonably high endorsement were the feelings that players could make friends/interact with others (10.1%); that they had the chance to be part of

a team (7.6%); and that their involvement in university soccer provided support/distraction from their studies (6.7%).

The thoughts of players in Japan fit into a smaller number of clusters than those in Canada and Germany, but the allotment of scoring units was more evenly spread out. With 11 scoring units (14.7%), the feeling listed most frequently was that intercollegiate soccer gave players the chance to be part of a team. Other thoughts of note were that it helped players develop themselves/maturity/discipline and that there was a duty to act responsibly/maintain the team's image (both with 12%); that they could achieve goals/achieve something special while also making friends/interacting with others (both with 10.7%); and that intercollegiate soccer had a serious/professional atmosphere and was a source of pride/honor (both with 9.3%). Table 4 presents all of the conceptual clusters that were formed for Question 2, as well as the corresponding number of scoring units and percentages for the players in each country.

Discussion

This exploratory investigation used reversal theory reasoning and a reversal theory measure to examine the predominant motivational states of intercollegiate soccer players in Canada, Germany, and Japan. It also determined the most salient motivational states in each country and provided insights into players' thoughts and feelings about the university soccer environment. The analysis allowed only for descriptive findings, but as advocated by contemporary cross-cultural researchers (e.g., Kolt et al., 1999; Weinberg et al., 1997), discussion of these preliminary results shall highlight both the differences and the commonalities that emerged between the three national cohorts. Reference will also be made to the specific features of intercollegiate soccer in each nation and their presumed influence on the overall findings.

Responses on the motivational state section of the SOMIFA reflected a high endorsement of the mastery and conformity motivational states for the entire sample of participants. On the SOMIFA questionnaire, mastery entailed being "tough with and dominating over opponents" and conformity signified a tendency to "keep to the instructions and expectations of coaches and others." These descriptions underline a focus on performance and achieving goals, but a closer look suggests that while the Canadian and Japanese players probably equated this performance emphasis with the principal goal of winning games, the German interpretation may have been broader, encompassing such experiential factors as giving one's best effort, adhering to team tactics, and/or contributing to positive intra-team dynamics. Support for these assertions is drawn from two additional sets of findings—endorsement within the telic-paratelic pairing and ratings for motivational state salience.

Beginning with the former, the telic state was described on the SOMIFA as wanting to "achieve something important to me (e.g., status, improved skill)" and the paratelic state was the wish to "simply enjoy the fun of participating in the event." The Canadian and Japanese players were much more oriented toward the telic state than the paratelic. In fact, the telic state received the second and third highest endorsement of all states among the Japanese and Canadians, respectively. In Germany, however, the endorsement of both polarities within this set was more balanced, and acknowledgement of the paratelic state was noticeably higher than it was for the other two groups. In practical terms, these observations mean that among the German players, the seriousness associated with the telic state was most likely tempered by a desire to meet selected performance or process

goals (see Kingston & Hardy, 1997) and by an opposing paratelic need to derive a requisite amount of enjoyment from the competitive experience. In contrast, the low paratelic ratings of the Canadian and Japanese groups suggest that their telic orientation engendered a strong outcome focus and that winning may have been the most important part of competing. Reference to Table 1 provides a succinct summary of these patterns—all of the players were willing to compete within the motivational climate set by their teams, but intercollegiate soccer overall was quite serious and important to the Canadian and Japanese competitors while somewhat less serious to the more play-oriented Germans.

Regarding the salience of the various motivational states, Canadian players were most aware of the mastery state during competition. The Japanese group rated the telic state as most dominant, and as described, these cognitions are probable markers of a win-oriented intercollegiate sports culture. In both cases, the alloic orientation was the second most dominant state, while the German participants reported a rather even distribution between the alloic, autic, and mastery motivational states, in that order. On the SOMIFA, autic indicated that players "wanted to perform well for myself" and alloic represented a desire to "perform well for others (e.g., coach, team, supporters, etc.)." However, this alloic concern for others may have had a different connotation for the German cohort than for the other two groups. Among the Canadian and Japanese competitors, the dominance of the mastery and telic states is a likely indication that alloic thoughts were associated with the primary purpose of helping teammates and coaches to win games. In the German cohort, the dominance of the alloic and autic orientations over the mastery or telic states suggests that, rather than being fixed on winning, players were also concerned with having positive experiences themselves while contributing to the team experience overall. Of course, interpretation of the findings for Question 1 must be taken in due context. It is not that the German players were unconcerned about winning, nor is it likely that they played with a lack of drive; the suggestion is simply that in this sample of participants, the German players were slightly less inclined to let their experiences be defined by game outcome.

The results discussed thus far are not surprising when matched with the findings for Question 2. The Canadian and Japanese participants listed a combination of both social and performance-focused characteristics to describe their intercollegiate soccer environments. For example, some of the most frequent responses indicated that university soccer was fun (Canada), that it provided the chance to be part of a team (Japan), and that it allowed one to make friends/interact with others (both countries). At the same time, these sentiments were offset by recurrent achievement-oriented feelings that intercollegiate competition was demanding/required commitment (Canada), that one could achieve goals or achieve something special within a serious and professional atmosphere (Japan), and that it was a source of pride/honor (both).

The most commonly reported thoughts of the German participants, on the other hand, had a predominantly social tone. These players put considerable emphasis on the fact that university soccer was fun, that they could make friends/interact with others, and that it provided the chance to be part of a team. Among the five most notable German responses, the only reference with any connection to a sport achievement focus was that intercollegiate soccer was a source of pride. Interestingly, this was mentioned more often than all of the other German responses, but it was also accompanied by a number of qualifying statements indicating that this pride was merely a function of being selected to represent

one's team and one's school, and that the level of soccer itself was not so impressive. In fact, the German cohort was the only one to describe university soccer as mainly recreational, and the one with the largest number of players for whom it was seen as a positive distraction from studying. Therefore, the findings for Question 2 provide additional evidence that the German players' focus on winning was likely the lowest of the three groups and that they generally took intercollegiate competition less seriously. The results also give support to the proposed relationship between thoughts on the university soccer environment and players' motivational orientations toward games.

The relationship is further elucidated by the realities of university sport in the three countries. In Canada and Japan, highly competitive or top-level athletes are often members of intercollegiate sports programs, and the programs themselves are frequently built around the ethos of competitive excellence. This is backed up by the data from both groups. For the Canadians, references to the demanding nature of intercollegiate soccer and the commitment that it requires made up the second most common cluster, a pattern that speaks to the relevance of university soccer for this cohort. The absence of a nation-wide professional league in Canada means that outside of the very few who manage to secure contracts in foreign countries or in American Major League Soccer (MLS), the majority of Canadian players are restricted to competing in regional amateur leagues and cannot look to soccer as a source of livelihood. As a result, many players opt to attend university, where they continue to play at the intercollegiate level. This has a positive effect on the standard of competition, as does the fact that most university teams engage in some form of off-season training, and these factors combine to create an intercollegiate sports environment that can be serious and performance oriented in nature.

The Japanese players also acknowledged the serious/professional atmosphere of their programs and the opportunity to achieve something special, but the pursuit of competitive excellence in Japanese intercollegiate sport is a more recent phenomenon. As Pempel (1998, p. 131) points out, the country's rigid educational system that evolved from the postwar years emphasized test scores and academic success while downplaying competitive sport (other than baseball) at the high school and college levels. This echoes Carroll's (1993) observations about the tradition in some Asian cultures to prioritize academic achievement over physical or sport development. In the late 1990s, however, the Japanese Ministry of Education moved to increase funding to the national sport association and to pay for the training and housing of top athletes, which came around the same time that Japan's new professional soccer league ("J-League," established in 1993) was making great strides in popularity. Together, these initiatives helped lead to an increased profile for sport overall and for soccer in particular at many high schools and universities. Soccer thus added an entirely new dimension to Japanese athletics (Pempel, 1998, p. 135), and this has carried over to intercollegiate sport to the extent that J-League players are sometimes drawn directly from strong high school and university soccer programs.

Such a high-profile climate of excellence is not usually associated with university soccer in Germany, where the gap between elite and intercollegiate players is probably the widest of the three nations. This might be attributed in part to the historical development of German soccer, and what Pyta (2006) describes as the traditional and powerful affiliation between players, supporters, and their local or regional clubs. Since the advent in 1963 of the German professional "Bundesliga," young players have typically honed their soccer skills

in the local club system and, if good enough, in the youth academies of professional teams. Today, the German Football Federation (DFB) has extended the strategy of fostering young talent to the national level, through the establishment of 390 training centers across the country that involve 1,200 coaches responsible for the development of 22,000 players between the ages of 10 and 17 years (Pfister, 2006, p. 108). Therefore, instead of entering university, players with high or elite aspirations are generally involved from a young age with these professional academies or high performance programs, or both. Even those who do not ascend to the top divisions can often compete at the semi-professional level (and sometimes with very reasonable remuneration) in one of the regional leagues, and if they attend university as well, it is typically only to study. For this reason, many students who play university soccer in Germany appear to do so mainly for recreation. It may also be why, in comparison with the Canadian and Japanese players in this study, only one of the German participants believed that he could learn/become a better player through intercollegiate competition and why none of the German players associated university soccer with a demanding or serious/professional atmosphere.

While some of the patterns observed here were unique to the German participants, there was support as well for certain a priori assumptions that set apart the Japanese competitors. For instance, evidence of a Japanese sense of collectivism was demonstrated through the fact that the chance to be part of a team was the most frequently reported thought about intercollegiate soccer participation. Japanese players also endorsed the alloic state very highly, and they were more conformist, alloic, and sympathetic than the Canadian and German participants. In fact, the Japanese players were almost two times more alloic than autic, whereas the Canadian and German groups showed a closer balance in their ratings of these states. These orientations can be seen as characteristic of a collective or group-oriented mentality that Pempel (1998) says is embraced and respected in Japanese sport. To that extent, the Japanese players had the strongest belief that university soccer helped to develop discipline, another presumed Japanese trait (Pempel, 1998), and even more telling was the understanding that intercollegiate participation carried with it a duty or obligation to act responsibly and to maintain the team's image. Nagaki (1998) states that obligation is a traditional value in Japanese sport; as such, it comes as little surprise that the Japanese players were the only ones to list duty/obligation on the open-ended questionnaires.

In summary, this exploratory investigation addressed the motivation of culturally diverse soccer players by providing a preliminary framework that can guide the work of both researchers and coaches. The findings revealed differences as well as commonalities among the sampled national cohorts, and much of the congruence applied to participants at the Canadian and Japanese universities. At the same time, the discrepancies between these two groups provided some corroboration for the inferred motivational states of both the Canadian and Japanese futsal players in the previously described Geisler and Kerr research, and the results from both studies underscore the presence of collectivistic or other-oriented concerns among Japanese soccer players. Results for the German participants, however, belied the notion of a competitive, aggressive, and results-oriented mentality that media discourse regularly ascribes to German soccer (Blain et al., 1993; Crolley et al., 2000; Horne et al., 1999; Inthorn, 2006), and it is here that one of the main limitations of the study comes to light—the level of competition and the setting in which it took place.

Specifically, the patterns observed for the three groups must be treated as unique functions of the university soccer environment in each country. Elite and upper-level players might be expected to exhibit rather different motivational tendencies than those seen here, especially in the German and Japanese cases. To illustrate, Teipel's (1992) investigation into the attitudes of German club team players found that they reported high levels of stress during training when teammates were lacking in motivation and when there was inadequate team preparation for the next game. They also experienced stress if they felt unfit during their pre-game warm up and when defeat was caused by player error. The implication of Teipel's results is that, unlike the paratelic and alloic states of the German university sample, club soccer in Germany is characterized by a more telic win orientation to training and competition. As for Japanese soccer, recent research by Otake et al. (2004) showed that elite players from the junior youth teams of professional J-League clubs had higher levels of confidence, decisiveness, aggressiveness, volition to win, and volition for self-realization than players belonging to middle school teams. Put another way, their findings suggest that to succeed at the highest levels of play, Japanese soccer players must develop competitive mindsets that challenge the collectivistic mores attributed to the university players in this study. Accordingly, follow-up research can make an important contribution by examining the motivational dispositions of elite and club team players in these as well as other countries.

The second main limitation deals with the method of analysis. This research provided only descriptive information, which means that differences in motivational orientations of the three sets of players must not be interpreted as being statistically significant. Instead of drawing objective conclusions, the findings simply offer insights into the players' motivational experiences against the backdrop of their feelings about intercollegiate soccer. This information can serve as a springboard for new research questions and hypotheses, but the results cannot effectively be generalized to samples beyond these particular subsets. Extended research can therefore provide a better understanding of motivational states and competitive orientations in culturally diverse players by employing more rigorous methods of data analysis.

Nevertheless, for coaches of intercollegiate soccer players and for those in multicultural settings, the results of this study can help inform the development of team motivational climates that reflect the motivational orientations of players. To shed even more light on these considerations, researchers might wish to examine the patterns that exist among other national groups, such as players from the emerging soccer nations of Africa and the traditionally strong teams of South America. Of special interest would be the motivational mindsets of competitors in Brazil, a country with five World Cup titles and exporter of numerous players to the top European leagues. The artistic and creative style of play usually attributed to Brazilian soccer is what gave rise to the iconic figure of Pele and his vision of "the beautiful game;" thus, a Brazilian perspective might provide dual insights into the motivational roots behind both performance success and specific ways of playing. Finally, the notion of motivation and successful performance can be addressed further by examining the relationships between selected motivational states and game outcome, and by tracking teams and players in any given country over a series of several matches or over an entire competitive season. This last topic is currently being pursued by the authors.

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Table 1
Characteristics of the Four Pairs of Motivational States

Telic Goal-oriented Serious Prefer important activities	**Paratelic** Sensation-oriented Playful Prefer unimportant activities
Negativity Desire to break rules Rebellious Stubborn	**Conformity** Desire to comply with rules Cooperative Agreeable
Mastery Willing to compete Desire for control Focus on dominance/strength	**Sympathy** Willing to cooperate Desire for harmony Focus on sensitivity
Autic Concern for self Desire for net gain Losing is unpleasant	**Alloic** Concern for others Altruistic Losing can be pleasant

Note: Adapted from Kerr et al. (2006).

Table 2

The Number and Percentage of Players Experiencing Each State within the Four Motivational State Pairi

	Canada (*n* = 60)		Germany (*n* = 59)		Japan (*n* = 60)	
Motivational State Pairings	No. of Players	Percent (%)	No. of Players	Percent (%)	No. of Players	Percent (%)
Telic	40	66.7	34	57.6	47	78.3
Paratelic	20	33.3	25	42.4	13	21.7
Negativity	11	18.3	12	20.3	8	13.3
Conformity	49	81.7	47	79.7	52	86.7
Mastery	56	93.3	51	86.4	45	75.0
Sympathy	4	6.7	8	13.6	15	25.0
Autic	29	48.3	25	42.4	22	36.7
Alloic	31	51.7	34	57.6	38	63.3

Table 3

The Number and Percentage of Players Reporting Each Motivational State as the Most Dominant

	Canada		German		Japan	
Most Dominant State	No. of Players	Percent (%)	No. of Players	Percent (%)	No. of Players	Percent (%)
Telic	4	6.7	6	10.2	21	35.0
Paratelic	3	5.0	5	8.5	6	10.0
Negativity	-	-	-	-	1	1.7
Conformity	7	11.7	5	8.5	10	16.7
Mastery	27	45.0	12	20.3	8	13.3
Sympathy	-	-	2	3.4	1	1.7
Autic	8	13.3	14	23.7	1	1.7
Alloic	11	18.3	15	25.4	12	20.0
Total	**60**	**100**	**59**	**100**	**60**	**100.1**

Note: A dash (-) appears if the listed motivational state was not reported by the applicable cohort.

Table 4

Thoughts or Feelings about the Intercollegiate Soccer Environment in each Country as Reported by the Three Groups of Players

	Canada		Germany		Japan	
Cluster (Thought/Feeling)	Scoring Units	Percent (%)	Scoring Units	Percent (%)	Scoring Units	Percent (%)
Can achieve goals/ achieve something special	5	3.5	6	5.0	8	10.7
Can learn/become a better player	5	3.5	1	0.8	4	5.3
Chance to be part of a team	3	2.1	9	7.6	11	14.7
Chance to make friends/ interact with others	14	9.9	12	10.1	8	10.7
Chance to be physically active/maintain fitness	7	5.0	4	3.4	-	-
Chance to compete with other schools	-	-	5	4.2	-	-
Can feel school spirit/contribute to the school's image	2	1.4	6	5.0	-	-
Source of fun/joy/makes life more interesting	22	15.6	21	17.6	4	5.3
Serious/professional/ elite atmosphere	2	1.4	-	-	7	9.3
Demanding/requires commitment	16	11.3	-	-	4	5.3
Helps develop self/ maturity/discipline	6	4.3	1	0.8	9	12.0
Source of motivation	3	2.1	2	1.7	-	-
Source of pride/honor	16	11.3	22	18.5	7	9.3
Prestigious/can gain respect from others	4	2.8	2	1.7	3	4.0
Privilege/chance to belong to something important	8	5.7	-	-	-	-
Duty to act responsibly and maintain team's image	-	-	-	-	9	12.0
Provides support/ distraction from studies	5	3.5	8	6.7	1	1.3
Mainly recreational	-	-	5	4.2	-	-
Lower level of play than club soccer	6	4.3	4	3.4	-	-
Stressful 2	1.4	-	-	-	-	-
Poor organization/facilities	4	2.8	3	2.5	-	-
Little recognition for players/team	6	4.3	5	4.2	-	-
Normal/ nothing special	5	3.5	3	2.5	-	-
Total	**141**	**99.7**	**119**	**99.9**	**75**	**99.9**

Note: A dash (-) appears if the listed thought or feeling was not reported by the applicable cohort.

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