

Cardiff School of Sport
DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT PROFORMA:
 Empirical ¹

Student name:	<input type="text" value="Victoria Silk"/>	Student ID:	<input type="text" value="ST10001410"/>
Programme:	<input type="text" value="SES"/>		
Dissertation title:	<input type="text" value="Perceptions of the debilitating factors of sport-confidence in disabled athletes"/>		
Supervisor:	<input type="text" value="Dr. Owen Thomas"/>		

Comments	Section
	<p>Title and Abstract</p> <p>Title to include: A concise indication of the research question/problem. Abstract to include: A concise summary of the empirical study undertaken.</p>
	<p>Introduction and literature review</p> <p>To include: outline of context (theoretical/conceptual/applied) for the question; analysis of findings of previous related research including gaps in the literature and relevant contributions; logical flow to, and clear presentation of the research problem/ question; an indication of any research expectations, (i.e., hypotheses if applicable).</p>
	<p>Methods and Research Design</p> <p>To include: details of the research design and justification for the methods applied; participant details; comprehensive replicable protocol.</p>
	<p>Results and Analysis ²</p> <p>To include: description and justification of data treatment/ data analysis procedures; appropriate presentation of analysed data within text and in tables or figures; description of critical findings.</p>
	<p>Discussion and Conclusions ²</p> <p>To include: collation of information and ideas and evaluation of those ideas relative to the extant literature/concept/theory and research question/problem; adoption of a personal position on the study by linking and combining different elements of the data reported; discussion of the real-life impact of your research findings for coaches and/or practitioners (i.e. practical implications); discussion of the limitations and a critical reflection of the approach/process adopted; and indication of potential improvements and future developments building on the study; and a conclusion which summarises the relationship between the research question and the major findings.</p>
	<p>Presentation</p> <p>To include: academic writing style; depth, scope and accuracy of referencing in the text and final reference list; clarity in organisation, formatting and visual presentation</p>

¹ This form should be used for both quantitative and qualitative dissertations. The descriptors associated with both quantitative and qualitative dissertations should be referred to by both students and markers.

² There is scope within qualitative dissertations for the RESULTS and DISCUSSION sections to be presented as a combined section followed by an appropriate CONCLUSION. The mark distribution and criteria across these two sections should be aggregated in those circumstances.

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)

SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCE

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE DEBILITATING FACTORS
OF SPORT-CONFIDENCE IN DISABLED
ATHLETES**

PSYCHOLOGY

VICTORIA SILK

ST10001410

VICTORIA SILK

ST10001410

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

PERCEPTIONS OF THE DEBILITATING FACTORS OF SPORT-CONFIDENCE
IN DISABLED ATHLETES

Cardiff Metropolitan University Prifysgol Fetropolitán Caerdydd

Certificate of student

By submitting this document, I certify that the whole of this work is the result of my individual effort, that all quotations from books and journals have been acknowledged, and that the word count given below is a true and accurate record of the words contained (omitting contents pages, acknowledgements, indices, tables, figures, plates, reference list and appendices).

Word count: 10,517
Date: 15/05/2013

Certificate of Dissertation Supervisor responsible

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the student's own effort.
I have received a dissertation verification file from this student

Name: _____
Date: _____

Notes:

The University owns the right to reprint all or part of this document.

Table of Contents

	Page
List of Figures	
Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
CHAPTER ONE	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER TWO	
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	2
CHAPTER THREE	
3.0 METHODOLOGY	11
3.1 Participants	11
3.2 Instrumentation	11
3.2.1 Pre-interview Booklets	11
3.2.2 Interview Guide	12
3.3 Procedure	12
3.4 Data Analysis	13

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS	14
4.1 Types of Sport Confidence	14
4.2 Sources of Sport Confidence	20
4.3 Confidence Debilitating Factors	30

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION	37
5.1 Sources	37
5.2 Types	40
5.3 Confidence debilitating factors	41
5.4 Implications	43
5.5 Strengths and Limitations	44
5.6 Future directions	45

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSION	46
REFERENCES	45

APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Participant information sheet

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Appendix C: Pre-interview booklet

Appendix D: Interview guide

Appendix E: Sample transcript

List of Figures

Figure 1. Themes and categories for types of sport-confidence identified by elite level athletes'. Page 15

Figure 2. Themes and categories for types of sport-confidence identified by non-elite level athletes'. Page 16

Figure 3. Themes and categories for types of sport confidence identified by both elite and non-elite level athletes'. Page 17

Figure 4. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by elite level athletes'. Page 20

Figure 5. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by non-elite level athletes'. Page 22

Figure 6. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by both elite and non-elite level athletes. Page 24

Figure 7. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence identified by elite level athletes. Page 30

Figure 8. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence identified by non-elite level athletes'. Page 31

Figure 9. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence identified by elite and non-elite level athletes'. Page 32

Acknowledgements

The author of this study would like to thank Owen Thomas for his advice and guidance throughout the study, and the athletes' that participated.

Abstract

Vealey and Chase's (2008) conceptualisation of sport confidence recognised that athlete characteristics and organisational culture affect the manifestation of sport confidence within athletes'. The framework also indicated several factors (e.g., physical skills, characteristics of the athlete and external uncontrollable factors) may lead to debilitate a performers' sport confidence. To date previous research into confidence debilitating factors in sport has been limited to the secondary purpose within Hays et al.'s (2009) research. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to expand the current literature on confidence debilitating factors within the different organisational culture of disability sport. Pre-interview booklets and semi-structured interviews identified the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors in 16 disabled athletes (8 elite and 8 non-elite). Qualitative data was analysed inductively and revealed no significant differences between the elite and non-elite level athletes, so the findings were combined. Six types of sport confidence were identified from the analysis, including: achievement, skill execution, physical factors, psychological factors, superiority to opposition and athlete specific factors. These beliefs were gained from seven sources of sport confidence: preparation, performance accomplishments, coaching, experience, social support, competitive advantage and athlete specific factors. The athletes identified six confidence debilitating factors, including: poor preparation, injury/illness, poor performance, pressure and expectation, psychological factors and athlete specific factors. The findings revealed similarities with previous research on self-efficacy (cf. Bandura, 1977) and the sources of sport confidence (cf. Hays *et al.*, 2007) as well as providing support for the confidence debilitating

factors previously identified in Hays et al.'s (2009) study. Although, this study identified differences from previous research with regards to gender and the number of citing's for the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors.

Overall, this study supports the notion within Vealey and Chases' (2008) model; that organisational factors influence athletes' sport confidence. Practical implications of the current findings can provide practitioners, working with disabled athletes' and coaches', insights to help athletes' recognise what debilitates their sport-confidence. Consequently, interventions developed to protect athletes' sport-confidence should be targeted towards increasing an athletes' range of confidence types and sources and recognising their current types and sources of confidence prior to a competition in order to develop robust sport-confidence.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Self-confidence has been recognised by athletes', coaches' and sports psychologists' as vital to produce a successful performance whereas a lack of self-confidence has been associated with poor performances (Bull et al., 2005; Feltz, 2007; Jones et al., 2007; Vealey and Chase, 2008). Self-Confidence itself has been defined as "one's belief that he or she can successfully execute a desired behaviour" (Feltz, 2007, p.278). It is a skill acquired by elite level athletes' (Gould et al., 2002). For example, Bradley Wiggins, Olympic and Tour de France Champion, stated: "That feeling of confidence is a hard thing to explain. It's not confidence that you are unbeatable but confidence that you have done the work to the maximum of your ability" (Mail Online, 2012, online). Such a role model in sport with this opinion suggests that self-confidence must play a central role within sport.

Although self-confidence is viewed as vital to performance, even elite level athletes' demonstrate instabilities in confidence (Hays et al., 2009). Research identified pressure, expectations and distractions as contributors to low self-confidence levels. This was demonstrated in the Olympic Games, where athletes' confidence levels have suffered due to the pressurised environment (Gould et al., 1999). This has recently been captured by Paralympic athlete, Nathan Stephens's experience at London 2012: "It's heart breaking to come to your home Games..and see the whole way you thought you could compete turned upside down..for some reason the officials decided I was no throwing..when the first red flag went up my head went" (Yahoo Sport, 2012, online).

In agreement with Vealey and Chase (2008) the fact that self-confidence has been recognised as crucial to performance, yet appears to be unstable in nature provides an interesting concept for future research. Currently, only one study (e.g., Hays et al., 2009) has researched into the factors responsible for debilitating sport confidence, specifically, in the organisational culture of world-class athletes'. Although it is worth noting that the research into the confidence debilitating factors in sport has been limited due to the secondary purpose within Hays et al.'s (2009) research. Therefore, future research is needed to expand upon the current literature on confidence debilitating factors within organisational cultures, outside of world-class sport.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Literature Review

Self-confidence in sport has been a key area of discussion amongst academics, leading to several theoretical explanations. These include, perceived competence, movement confidence, performance expectancy, self-efficacy and, sport confidence (Kingston et al., 2010).

Perceived competence has been linked to expectancies of success completing specific tasks and can be useful to predict both behaviour, and, motivation in sport (Nicholls, 1984; Bandura, 1997). Movement confidence involves a self-evaluation process of both, personal skills linking to task requirements, and personal beliefs of sensory involvement including, enjoyment of movement sensations and recognised potential for physical harm (Griffin et al., 1984). The inclusion of both perceived competence and sensory involvement results in differences between movement confidence to self-efficacy and sport confidence (Vealey & Chase, 2008). The Performance expectancy theory was mostly used in the 1970s on self-confidence and proved useful as self-confidence links to expectancies of the outcome in certain situations (Vealey & Chase, 2008). Notably, these theories contributed to literature in sport psychology, although advances in the self-confidence domain required a sport specific conceptualization and measurement instrumentation (Vealey, 1986).

Firstly, Bandura constructed a situation-specific form of sport confidence, self-efficacy, which was originally intended for a social-cognitive approach in behaviour causation. This approach, argues that, behaviour; physiological factors; cognitive factors and environmental influences function as interacting determinants of each other (cf. Bandura, 1986). However, the theory has since been applied to explain behaviour in sport psychology (Hardy et al., 2001). Therefore, self-efficacy was defined as an athletes' belief to achieve a certain performance. Self-efficacy is not related to how many skills an athlete has but instead associated with athletes' perceptions of success with the skills they have.

The self-efficacy model consists of beliefs which are derived from the self-appraisal and evaluation of the sources of information. Bandura initially identified four sources of information underpinning efficacy expectations, but later extended them to six. He identified as: performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and perception of emotional and physiological states (Bandura & Adams, 1977; Maddux & Gosselin, 2003). Maddux (2000) clarified that self-efficacy beliefs are not predictions or casual attributions, instead they are beliefs that an individual has to perform certain behaviour to achieve a desired outcome. Banduras' theory represents a hierarchical framework, shown by, performance accomplishments that has been recognised to have the greatest effect upon self-efficacy as it is based upon athletes' mastery experience. However, Banduras theory is considered a non-sport-specific framework so, it was unknown whether the sources of self-efficacy are most salient to athletes within the sport context (Vealey, 1986; Vealey et al., 1998). This is demonstrated with the most important self-efficacy source, performance accomplishments; which can be interpreted differently athletes'. For example, some may associate performance accomplishments with winning, whilst others may associate it with improving a certain skill (Vealey et al., 1998).

Therefore, Vealey (1986) was the first to provide a sport-specific framework of sport confidence in an attempt to produce valid and reliable predictions of behaviour across a variety of sporting situations. . She defined sport confidence as, 'the belief or degree of certainty individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sport' (Vealey 1986, p.222). Vealey's (1986) framework of sport confidence was based upon a dispositional state approach, which utilised inventories to categorised sport-confidence into trait and state as well as controlling individual differences in a construct known as competitive orientation (Hays et al., 2009). Trait sport confidence represented the beliefs an individual held about their ability to be successful in sport, whereas state sport confidence concerned the beliefs individuals held about their ability to perform successfully in sport at a certain time. Competitive orientation was utilised to reflect individuals' own belief about driving towards achieving certain goals (Vealey, 1986). Vealey (1986) hypothesised trait sport-confidence predicted athletes' behaviour/performance, due to the interaction of situational factors and individual

differences. Vealey's (1986) study established sport-confidence to be an effective conceptualisation of self-confidence as it manifested in sport situations. However, Vealey (1986) received limited empirical support for her original hypothesis. For example, this was demonstrated in Gayton and Nickless's (1987) study, which tested Vealey's (1986) original hypothesis identifying inconsistencies with Vealey's (1986) model regarding trait sport-confidence scores predicted performance better than state scores.

In 1998, Vealey et al. produced a revised model due to the deficiencies in the original model. The revised model removed the state and trait sport-confidence inventories and therefore reconceptualised sport-confidence from a social-cognitive approach to a multi-dimensional concept. The revised model proposed organisational culture of sport (e.g., sports programmes) and both demographic and personality characteristics, influence the manifestation of sport-confidence in athletes as well as the determinants of sport confidence. A number of similarities appeared between Vealey et al.'s (1998) revised model, and Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, due to Vealey et al. (1998) reflecting the influence of social and cultural factors on sport confidence by focusing on the information sources which develop their beliefs (Thomas et al., 2011). To recognise the determinants of sport-confidence, Vealey et al.'s (1998) study involved four phases with a deductive literature review. Within phases 1, 2 and 3, the preliminary concept basis for the Sources of Sport Confidence Questionnaire (SSCQ) was developed and evidence supporting the structure, reliability and validity was given by collegiate athletes. The fourth stage assessed the structure of the SSCQ from confirmatory analysis. The nine sources of confidence that Vealey et al., (1998) identified were based upon a review of the literature and deductions made by the authors. The nine sources were categorised into three broad domains, including; achievement (mastery and demonstration of ability), self-regulation (Physical/mental preparation and physical self-presentation) and social climate (social support, vicarious experiences, coach's leadership, environmental comfort and situational favourableness). In addition to identifying the sources of confidence, Vealey et al., (1998) discovered athletes who obtained an increased focus upon physical and mental preparation prior to a competition, experienced higher levels of confidence, whereas athletes' that focused upon body image,

obtained lower levels of confidence. Vealey et al.'s (1998) findings supported the models predication's with regard to the organisational and demographic/personality characteristics which influenced athletes' confidence development. For example, organisational differences were evident as the high school athletes' cited multiple sources of sport-confidence, such as; mastery, demonstration of ability, social support, preparation and coach leadership, whereas college athletes' cited the sport-confidence sources demonstration of ability and social support. Additionally demographic/personality differences were evident as female athletes' more frequently cited self-presentation and social support in comparison to male athletes'. Although caution is needed when viewing Vealey et al.'s (1998) findings, due to the lack of support the SSCQ received for different athletic populations. This was demonstrated in Wilson et al.'s (2004) study who examined sources of confidence in master athletes, however, confirmatory analysis failed to replicate the 9-factor structure of the SSCQ, which proved more psychometric work is needed to be done in order for it to be employed within different athletic populations. Additionally Vealey et al.'s (1998) deductive approach can be viewed as limited due to the sources of confidence being gained from a review of the existing literature and deductions were made by the researchers. This implies that an inductive approach would have been suitable, where the investigator researches a situation without imposing pre-existing expectations; beginning with specific observations, building to general patterns. This approach is to be adopted in the present study due to qualitative methods generally being orientated towards exploration, discovery and inductive logic (Patton, 2002).

Further to this, in 2001, Vealey produced an integrated model of sport-confidence to gain ideas about the psychosocial processes that influence self-confidence in sport. The concept was to gain a wider knowledge of how self-confidence was dealt with in a sport context, as well as providing a basis for interventions to enhance sport confidence. This model incorporated physical skills, uncontrollable factors and sport characteristics in order for Vealey (2001) to illustrate how they affected sport-confidence.

Overall, Vealey (1986, 1998, 2001) suggested that sport-confidence occurs within a multidimensional construct; where athletes' possess multiple sources of sport-confidence. Vealey also suggested the possible effects that organisational and demographic factors could have upon athletes' sources of confidence, although further research is required within different organisational cultures. Therefore, Vealey (2001) accepted her model was exploratory in nature but suggested it was a future topic for research.

Using Vealey's (2001) model to form the basis of the interview guide, Hays et al., (2007) conducted an inductive, qualitative study with 14 elite world-class athletes'. Hays et al. (2007) suggested that the organisational culture of world-class sport would be different from the samples obtained in Vealey's previous studies, thus world class athletes' may derive confidence from additional sources. By conducting in-depth interviews, Hays et al.'s (2007) findings identified nine sources of sport confidence salient to world class athletes'. These comprised of the sources found in previous research (e.g., Vealey et al., 1998; Bandura, 1977); preparation, performance accomplishments, coaching, social support, competitive advantage, trust, experience, self-awareness and innate factors. The sources of confidence Hays et al. (2007), identified proved contextually relevant descriptors of Bandura's (1977) broader categories in the self-efficacy theory, specifically, verbal persuasion and performance accomplishments. For example, the source social support and coaches' leadership directly related to verbal persuasion (Vealey and Chase, 1998). In this study, each athlete identified performance accomplishments as a significant source of confidence. This supported Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory that performance accomplishments provided the most powerful effect (Hays et al., 2007). Differences were also prevalent between Hays et al.'s (2007) study and previous research (e.g., Vealey et al., 1998), specifically emotional and physiological states and vicarious experiences were not identified as a source of confidence by world class performers. Although, Hays et al. (2007) suggested this may be due to the elite nature of the sample, making them unlikely to gain confidence by observing others performances. In comparison with Vealey et al.'s (1998) findings, preparation was identified as a source of confidence, although, the world-class athletes' in Hays et al.'s (2007) study identified three separate approaches to preparation, which were categorised into the appropriate

themes: mental, physical and holistic. Hays et al. (2007) defined a holistic approach as the use of technology, such as video analysis, which provided a source of confidence to the athletes. Even though an additional source of confidence was recognised, Hays et al. (2007) suggested it was due to the nature of the world-class sample; as such resources are easily available to elite level athletes'. Other sources of sport confidence identified by Hays et al. (2007) included; innate ability (e.g., natural skills), perceived competitive advantage (e.g., environment), experience, self-awareness (e.g., positive feelings transferred to sport) and trust (e.g., trust in teammates to perform well). Similarly to Vealey and colleagues findings, Hays et al. (2007) also found gender differences between the sources of confidence. For example, Hays et al. (2007) found male athletes' focused more on competition outcomes whereas, female athletes' focused upon their own personal performance as a source of confidence.

Hays et al. (2007) was the first study to research athletes' types of sport confidence (e.g., what athletes are confident about). The researchers recognised athletes' were easily able to distinguish between, what they were confident about (sport confidence types) and where it was derived from (sport confidence sources). Hays et al. (2007) identified six types of confidence salient to world-class athletes, these included; skill execution, achievement, physical and psychological factors, superiority to opposition and athlete specific factors. From the findings of the study, Hays et al. (2007) recognised that the sources of confidence the world-class athletes' identified might have influenced their types of confidence. This was evident in Hays et al.'s (2007) findings, where the athletes' who cited preparation as a source of confidence were also confident about their skill execution. Therefore, Hays et al. (2007) suggested viewing types of confidence as evidence-based belief systems grounded in athletes' sources of sport confidence. As with the sources of confidence, gender differences between the types of confidence was identified. For example, feeling superior to their opposition was identified mostly by male athletes'. Following this research, Vealey and Chase (2008), revised the 2001 model of sport-confidence and incorporated demographic and organisational factors to influence the types and sources of sport-confidence athletes' possess.

After identifying the types and sources of sport-confidence salient to world-class athletes, Hays et al. (2009) considered levels of sport-confidence and examined the role of confidence in relation to the cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses it prompts. He also identified the factors responsible for debilitating confidence levels within the organisational subculture of world-class sport. Previous studies (e.g., Gould et al., 1999) have recognised the wavering levels of confidence Olympic athletes' possess, suggesting self-confidence is highly important amongst all levels of athletes'. Although further research comprising of elite, and, non-elite athletes' is required before these findings can be generalised. The confidence debilitating factors, Hays et al. (2009) identified were categorised into six groups; poor performances, injury/illness, poor preparation, coaching, pressure and expectations and psychological factors and athlete specific factors. These debilitating factors were directly related to the sources of sport-confidence identified in Hays et al. (2007) study. For example, poor preparation related to a lack of, the confidence source, and, mental and/or physical preparation. In Hays et al.'s (2007) previous study, the sources of sport confidence were influenced by gender, which also proved true with the confidence debilitating factors. For example, pressure and expectation provided to be more of a common debilitating factor to females than males.

Overall, Hays et al.'s work (2007; 2009) supports the predictions of the sport-confidence model; athlete's characteristics and organisational factors influence the types and sources of sport-confidence (Kingston et al., 2010). However, due to the nature of the world-class sample, the findings cannot be generalised to athletes' outside of the world-class organisational subculture. It is therefore true that further studies investigating the types and sources of non-elite athletes' would be beneficial.

Prior to the studies by Hays et al. (2007; 2009), most of the studies investigating sport-confidence adopted a quantitative approach, which used numerical approaches, to represent athletes' self-evaluation of their confidence. Vealey (1986) originally adopted this approach, using likert scales in the Trait-Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI) and the State Sport Confidence Inventory (SSCI). Both of these inventories assessed self-confidence, as a unidimensional

construct based on athletes' perception of ability to successfully perform skills. Although the inventories were criticised due to the instructions requiring individuals to rate their confidence against the most confident athlete they know. This demonstrated the inconsistencies that exist between individuals, as it was dependent upon the confident athlete they chose (Feltz & Chase, 1998). A further criticism included, the single scoring instrument participants used to rate their confidence as a whole, whereas the inventories (TSCI and SSCI) typically assess numerous areas of confidence.

To account for the deficiencies her first model faced, Vealey and colleagues developed Sources of Sport-Confidence Questionnaire (SSCQ) to measure sources of sport-confidence salient to athletes. However, the study by Wilson et al. (2004) demonstrated poor support for the nine factor structure of the SSCQ when investigating sources of confidence in master athletes, suggesting differences within athletic groups.

Hays et al. (2007) was the first study to adopt a qualitative approach, which developed an in-depth understanding of the athletes' personal constructs and experiences from their perspective (Ezzy, 2002). Vealey's (2001) integrated model of sport confidence provided a basis for the interview guide, which Hays et al. (2007) conducted inductively, this enabled patterns to emerge from the data without pre-supposing what the dimensions were going to be (Patton, 2002). Hays et al. (2007) conducted open-ended semi structured interviews with each athlete by following an interview guide. The interview included athlete's types and sources of confidence, but athletes' were also asked to describe a time they felt most confident leading into a competition and to recognise the types and sources of confidence they experience. The results of Hays et al.'s (2007) study supported previous research findings (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Vealey et al., 1998), however previous studies in the sport confidence literature had been quantitative, which adopted likert scales to represent athletes' confidence levels (e.g., Vealey, 1986), however, Hays et al.'s study demonstrated that athletes' confidence levels cannot be categorised by a set of descriptors.

Hays *et al.* (2009) went further and researched into the factors responsible for debilitating world-class athletes' performance whilst investigating the role of confidence. Within semi-structured qualitative interviews, Hays *et al.* (2009) additionally asked each world-class athlete to describe when they had felt least confident going into a competition and to identify the confidence debilitating factors. Hays *et al.* (2009) recognised the confidence debilitating factors directly related to the sources of sport confidence, identified in Hays *et al.* (2007) previous study. Therefore, consideration for the confidence debilitating factors is essential, in addition to the types and sources of confidence in order for researchers to gain a holistic view of sport confidence.

Overall, Hays *et al.*'s (2007; 2009) in-depth qualitative research has significantly contributed to the sport confidence literature. It supported the notion within Vealey and Chase's (2008) sport-confidence model; athlete characteristics and organisational factors influence athletes' sport-confidence. Hays *et al.* (2007; 2009) has provided a clear view of the nine sources of confidence, identified to increase levels of confidence as well identifying six factors responsible in debilitating athletes' sport confidence. Hays *et al.* (2009) also recognised the confidence debilitating factors overlap with the sources of confidence, therefore confidence and increase or decrease due to the same factor. However, to date, the literature on confidence debilitating factors has been limited and this is because of the secondary purpose within Hays *et al.*'s (2009) study. With regard to Vealey and Chase's (1998) conceptualisation of sport confidence, it is recognised that athlete characteristics and organisational culture affect the manifestation of sport confidence within athletes. There is a gap for future research to investigate athletes' confidence debilitating factors within a different organisational culture, other than world class athletes'.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to expand the current literature on confidence debilitating factors within the organisational culture of disability sport. The current study aims to support previous findings (e.g., Hays *et al.*, 2009) and to allow for any additional factors responsible for debilitating confidence to emerge. This study adopted a qualitative approach to provide in-depth knowledge of the confidence debilitating factors in disabled athletes'.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Participants

With institutional ethics approval, 16 athletes were interviewed, consistent with previous qualitative sport-confidence research (e.g., Hays et al., 2007; Hays et al, 2009). The sample consisted of athletes' with various disabilities, which included cerebral palsy, amputees, dwarfism, visually impaired and tetraplegia. The sample was equally divided into 8 elite and 8 non-elite level athletes. All elite level athletes had previously medalled in a major international competition (e.g., The Paralympics or World Championships) and had competitive experience of 7.9 ± 3.2 years and were aged 21.8 ± 2.8 years. All non-elite athletes had competed at national level and had competitive experience of 4.6 ± 1.5 years and were aged 19.3 ± 1.7 years. The sample contained a mixture of 12 male and 4 female athletes', as previous research in sport-confidence identified differences between both genders (e.g., Hays et al., 2007; Vealey et al., 1998). All athletes' all represented the sport of athletics; however the participant's discipline included either a field event; shot put, discus and/or javelin or track events; 100 and/or 200 metres.

3.2 Instrumentation

3.2.1 Pre interview booklet

Prior to the interview, a pre-interview booklet was given to each athlete. This enabled athletes' to become familiarised with the types of questions that were to be asked in the interview. As well as asking the athletes' to write down their reflections upon their past experiences of both high and low levels of confidence. The answers given in each booklet were used to structure each athlete's individual interview guide.

3.2.2 Interview guide

A semi-structured interview guide including probing questions was utilised in this study (Patton, 2002). The questions were based upon, those in Hays et al.'s (2007; 2009) studies, which, enabled identification of athletes': sources, types and confidence debilitating factors. Throughout the interview, the athletes' were given the option to refer back to their pre-interview booklet during the interview. The first and second part of the interview included introductory questions on their sport (e.g., what is your discipline in athletics?) and their thoughts on sport confidence (e.g., would you consider yourself as a confident athlete?). The third part instructed athletes to identify their types and sources of sport confidence (e.g., you have now identified your types of confidence, can you now identify where each type of confidence comes from?). Next, the fourth part, asked the athletes' to reflect upon a time in their athletic career when they had felt their most confident and least confident. These reflections lead onto discussing the athletes' types, sources and their confidence debilitating factors. Hays et al., (2010) justified the use of this method within her research as prompting the athletes' about their least confident sporting moment and confidence debilitating factors allowed a wide range of information to be recalled rather than simply asking the athletes' to recognise their own sources of confidence. The interview concluded with questions on the interview experience and to check if any useful information had been missed. Prior to the data collection, a pilot study was implemented which resulted in a few changes to the interview guide, regarding the wording of both the questions and probes.

3.3 Procedure

The athletes' were all contacted in person, due to the researcher seeing them on a regular basis and all volunteered their participation by signing a consent form. Prior to the interview, all athletes' were presented with the participant information sheet; informing them of the rationale for the study and their role within the study as well as the pre-interview booklet. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each athlete either before or after their training session at the same venue for each athlete and lasted up to a maximum of one hour. Before

interview began all athletes' were reminded by the researcher of: the studies purpose, confidentiality of their answers, their rights to withdraw at any time and that there were no right or wrong answers. The questions included within the interview allowed each athlete to recall the time that they have felt most confident leading into a competition and the time that they have felt least confident leading into a competition. At the end of each interview, the researcher questioned the athlete's on any useful information that may have been overlooked. Each athlete was given the right to withdraw themselves or anything they had discussed from the study as well as being presented their results to confirm the researchers interpretations.

3.4 Data Analysis

The inductive data analysis process involved all interviews being transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The transcripts were studied multiple times and manually content analysed using the procedure suggested by, Miles and Huberman (1994). Content analysis identified quotes from the transcripts to form raw data themes (Gratton & Jones, 2004). The raw data themes were identified to represent either sources of confidence, types of confidence or confidence debilitating factors. Next, the raw data responses were organised into similar groups to create meaningful sub-themes (e.g., confidence derived from emotional support from family), higher-order themes (e.g., confidence derived from social support from family) and global dimensions (e.g., confidence derived from social support) (Gratton & Jones., 2004; Hays *et al.*, 2007). These themes emerged from the data inductively; however they were confirmed through deductive methods to ensure the global dimensions were present in the initial transcripts. Direct quotes from the original transcripts provided confirmation of the global themes; this also allows the reader to gain full understanding of the findings (Sparks, 1998). Meetings were held between the researcher and each athlete during the data analysis process to confirm the understanding of the findings (Sparks, 1998). Trustworthiness was gained through recording and transcribing all the interviews, the use of quotes and participants confirming that the final results proved a good reflection of their views.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

4.0 Results

The findings from the current study are presented in three separate sections. The types of sport-confidence identified by the athletes' are outlined first. Next, the sources of sport-confidence; where the beliefs were derived, are provided. The final section includes the sport-confidence debilitating factors. All sections compromise of: three hierarchical trees displaying the raw data themes, sub themes and high order themes (where applicable) and global dimensions for the elite and non-elite athletes' as well as a combined hierarchical tree displaying the raw data responses gained from both elite and non-elite, due to there being no significant differences between groups. To underpin each combined flow chart, informative text, including direct quotations are provided. Similar to previous research, the number of male and female athletes' citing each response will be presented in brackets as (M/F) throughout.

4.1 Types of Sport Confidence

The types of sport-confidence salient to both elite and non-elite athletes' were categorised into 7 global themes: achievement, skill execution, physical factors, psychological factors, superiority to opposition and athlete specific factors (See Figure 3). Superiority to opposition was only identified as a type of confidence by non-elite athletes'.

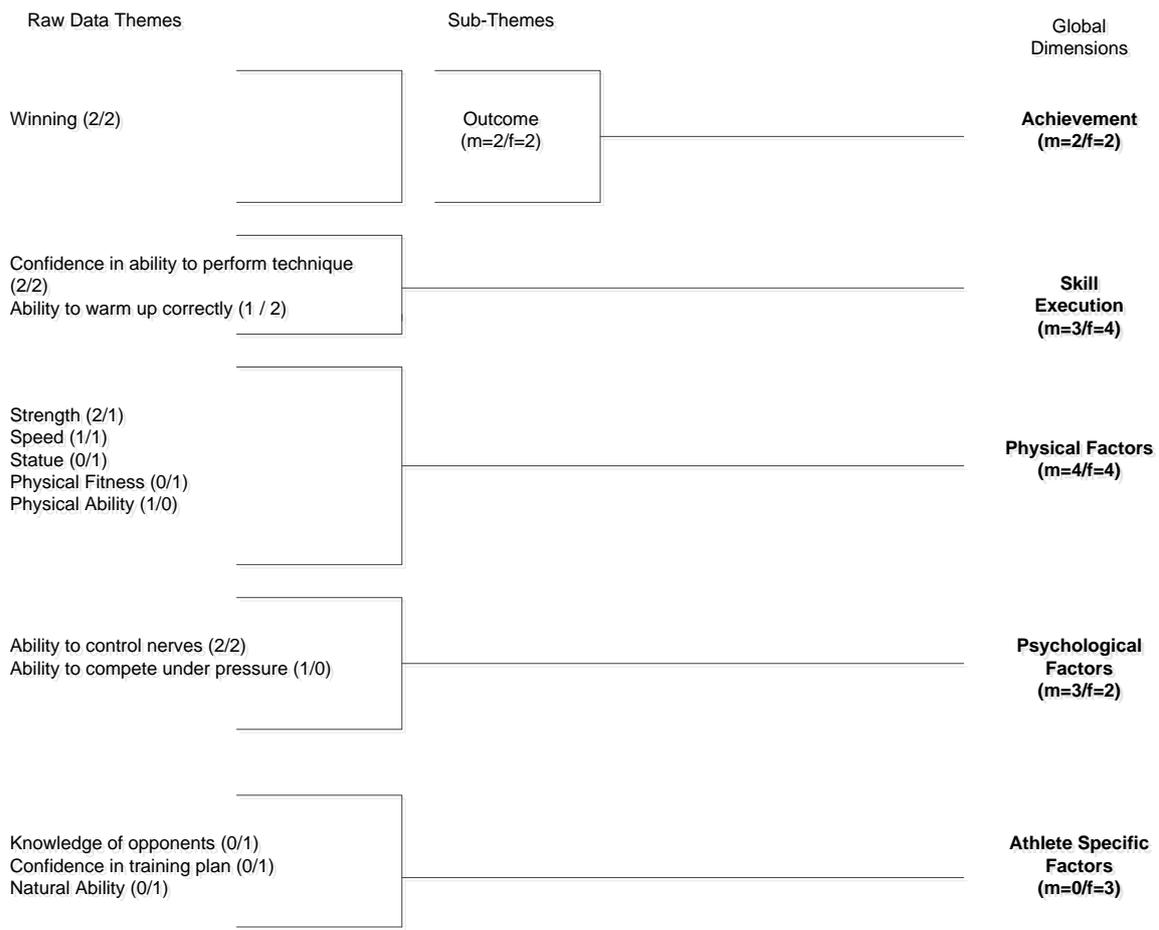


Figure 1. Themes and categories for types of sport-confidence identified by elite level athletes’.

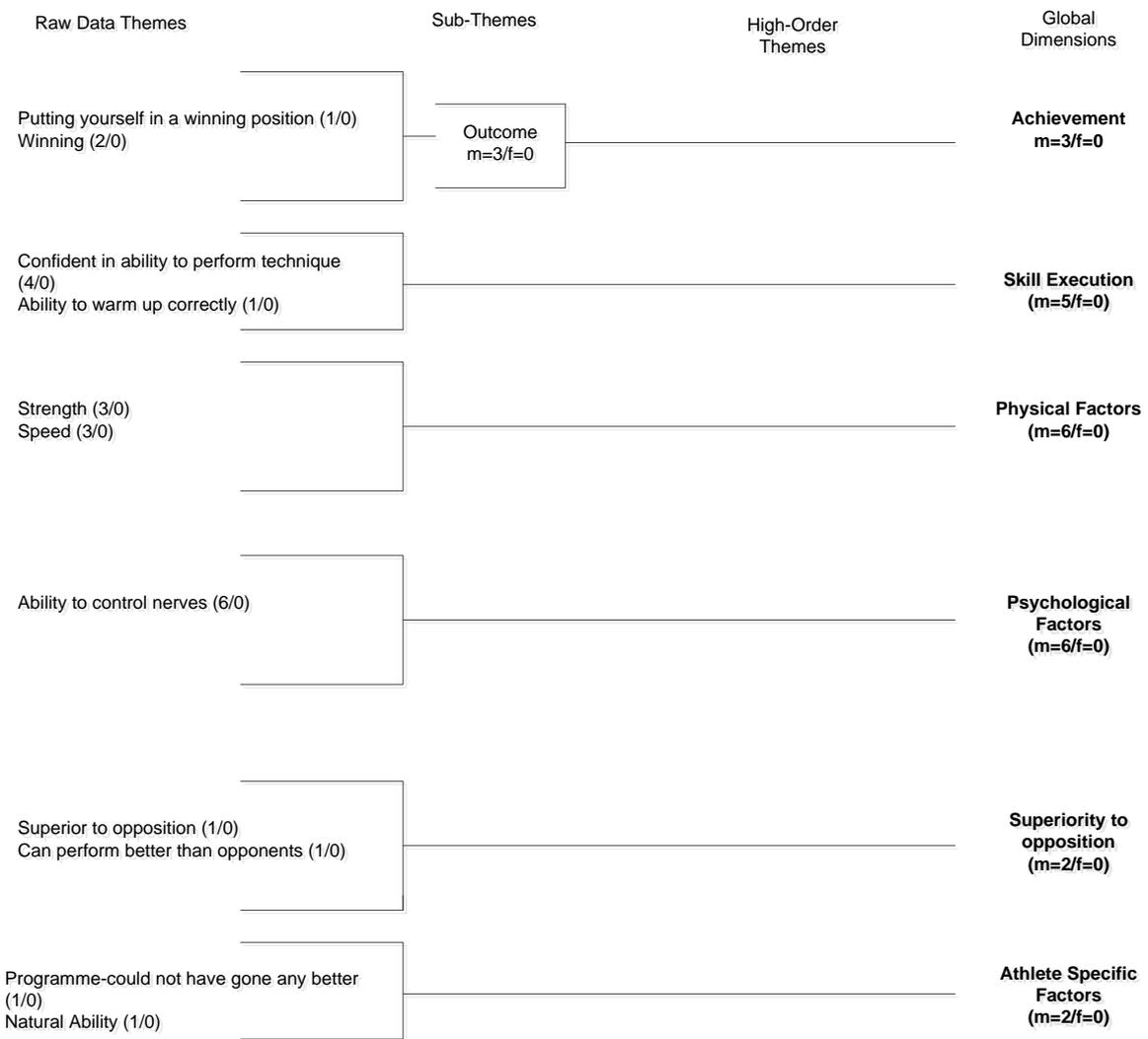


Figure 2. Themes and categories for types of sport-confidence identified by non-elite level athletes’.

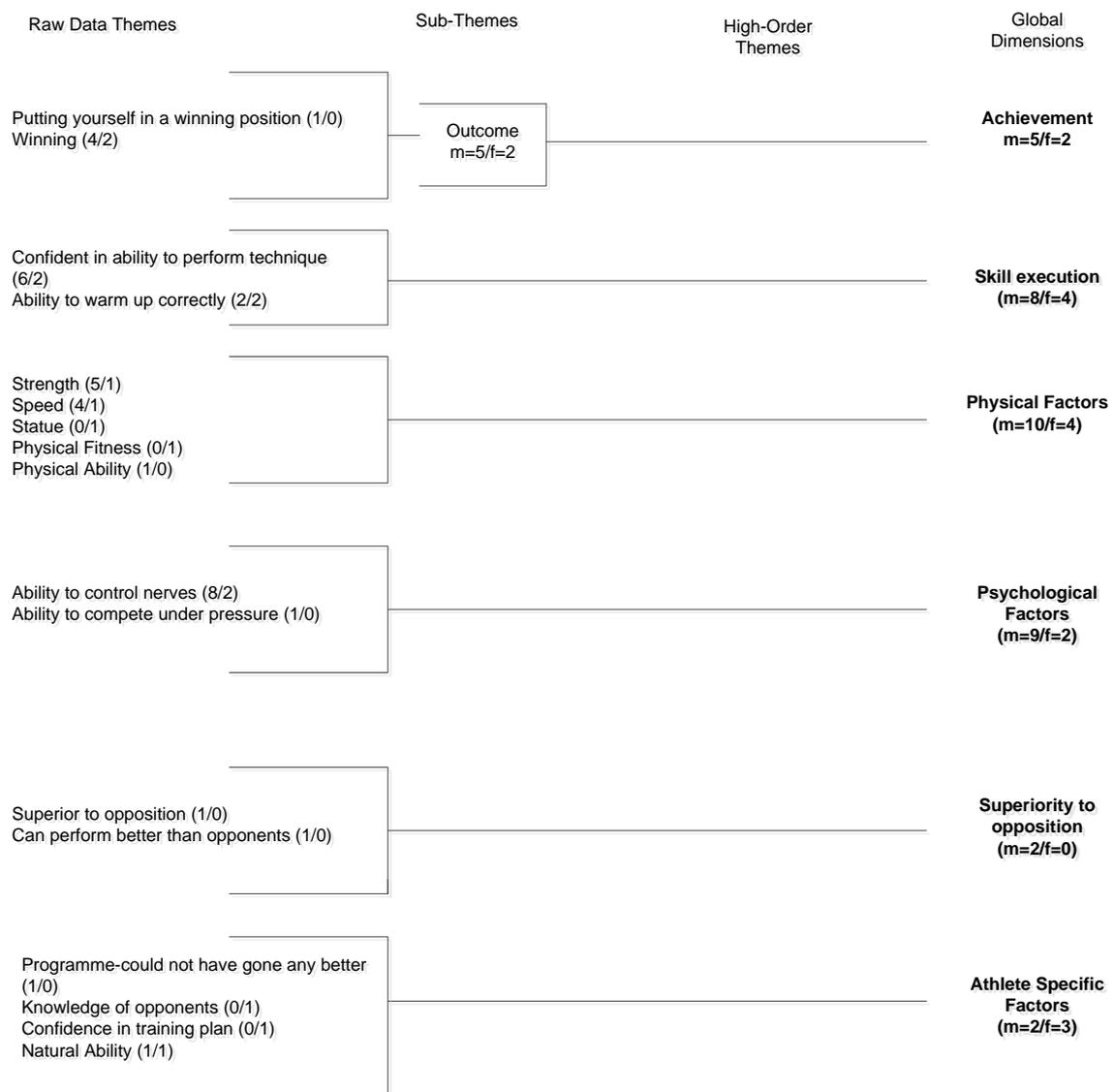


Figure 3. Themes and categories for types of sport confidence identified by both elite and non-elite level athletes’.

Achievement

Achievement was identified by 7 out of the 16 athletes interviewed. Achievement represented the athletes’ own belief to achieve a certain outcome. All eleven athletes’ were confident about their performance outcomes, this included, “winning” and “putting themselves in a winning position”. For example one athlete stated: “My ability..I was confident about winning.”

Skill Execution

Skill execution referred to the athletes' beliefs to execute certain skills successfully. Thirteen athletes' recognised skill execution as a type of sport confidence. Nine athletes' were confident about their ability to perform the correct technique. The following quote highlights this point:

Probably my technique and in terms of my technique, my start as I am probably more of a 200m runner so my start and the bend is my best and what I am most confident about.

Four of the athletes' specified that they were confident in their ability to warm up correctly. For example one athlete stated: "I am pretty confident in my ability to do drills and warm up."

Physical Factors

Fourteen of the 16 athletes' interviewed identified physical factors, such as strength, speed, stature, physical fitness and physical ability as a type of sport confidence. For example, one athlete spoke about their confidence in their strength and speed: "Strength and speed I am confident with as this allows me to gain height when taking off in long jump."

Psychological Factors

The ability to control nerves and to compete under pressure was identified by 12 of the athletes' interviewed. One athlete explained how he felt psychologically confident in competing:

I know that psychologically I am also confident to compete...Very rarely I get nervous, I can't think of a time I have been nervous, even in my first competition, so that is quite an advantage for me.

Superiority to opposition

Two male athletes', both non-elite, interviewed identified superiority to opposition as a type of sport-confidence. This type of sport confidence was associated with being a physically better performer than other athletes'. One athlete knew that they were going to win a medal after seeing who they were going to be competing against in a mixed classification race:

I knew that I would get a medal basically... There were fewer participants in the disability races than the able-bodied races. Depending on what someone's time was, because it was a mixed classification race, so if I came first I might not of got a medal, but leading into it I was the closest to my world record than them to their world records.

Athlete Specific Factors

Five of the athletes' interviewed identified types of sport confidence which could not be categorised into the above global dimensions. Two female athletes' identified confidence in their training plan and natural ability. Another female athlete identified knowledge of opponents, captured below:

I'd say knowing my opponents, because obviously a lot of them are abroad so me and my coach often check up on what they are throwing and I know usually the top five, who are probably going to stay about the top 5 and are probably not going to drop down.

For two male athletes', the unique themes identified included; their training programme could not have gone any better and their natural ability. This is highlighted in the following quote:

I am pretty confident about my speed to; the fitness isn't there yet, but my natural speed..I've always been fast, I haven't been as fast as mainstream kids in school but I have been fast, it's just been natural speed really. I haven't done anything to improve the speed really it has just always been there from the start.

4.2 Sources of Sport Confidence

The sources of sport confidence salient to both elite and non-elite level athletes' were classified into 7 categories: preparation, performance accomplishments, coaching, experience, social support, innate factors, competitive advantage and athlete specific factors (see Figure 6.). Only non-elite level athletes' derived confidence from athlete specific factors.

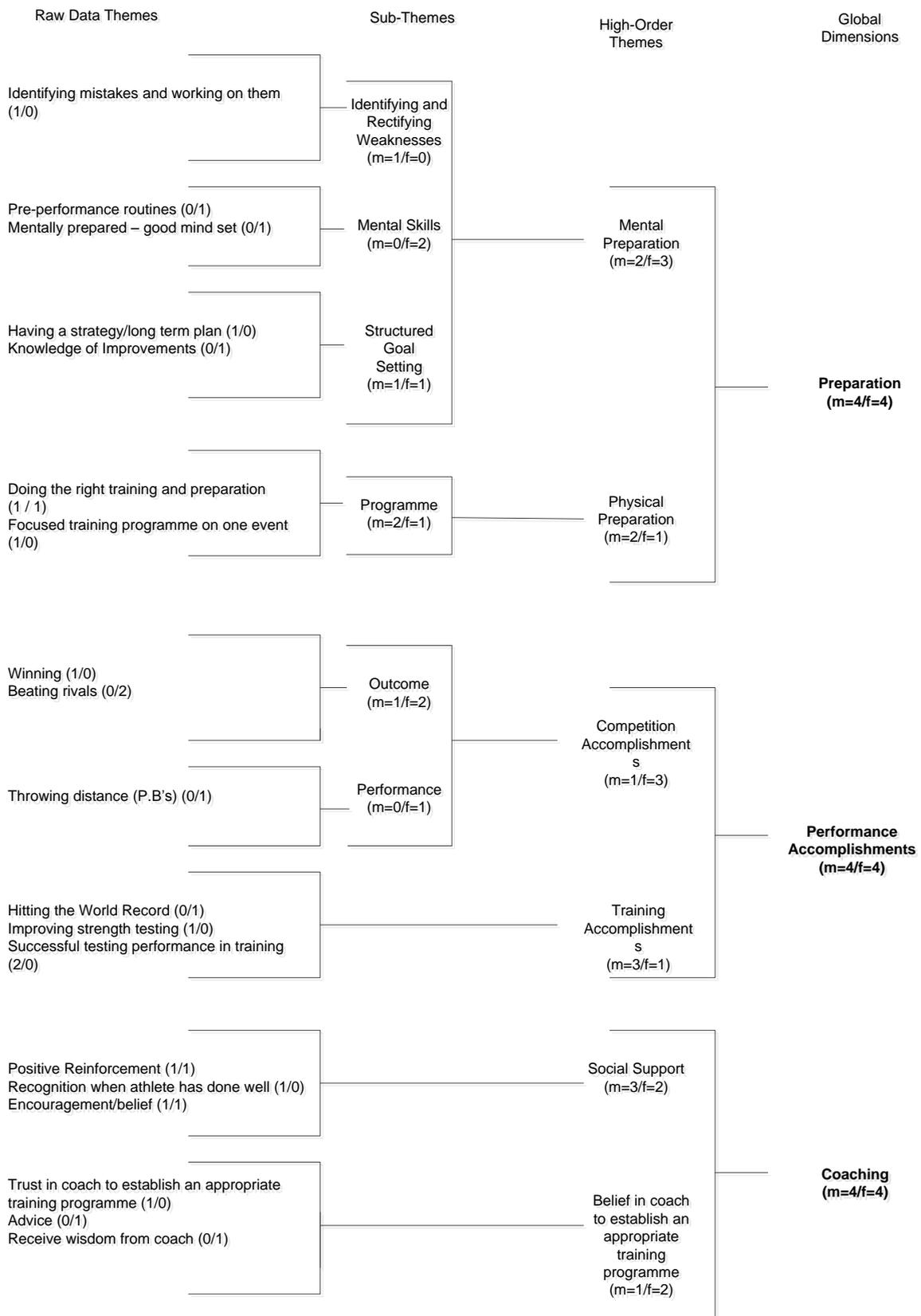


Figure 4. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by elite level athletes' (Continued).

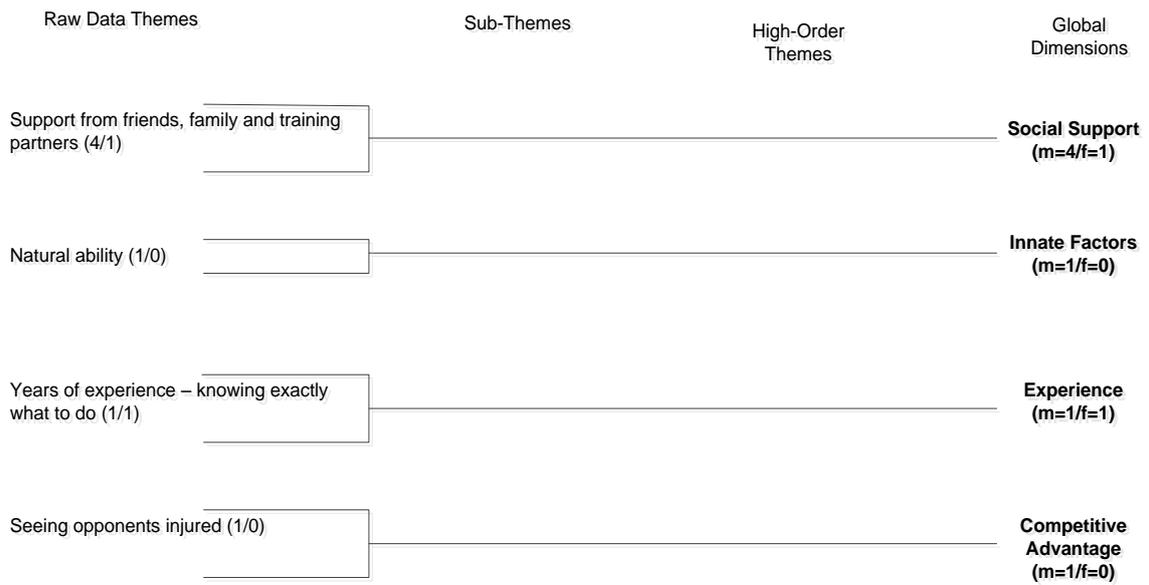


Figure 4. (Continued)

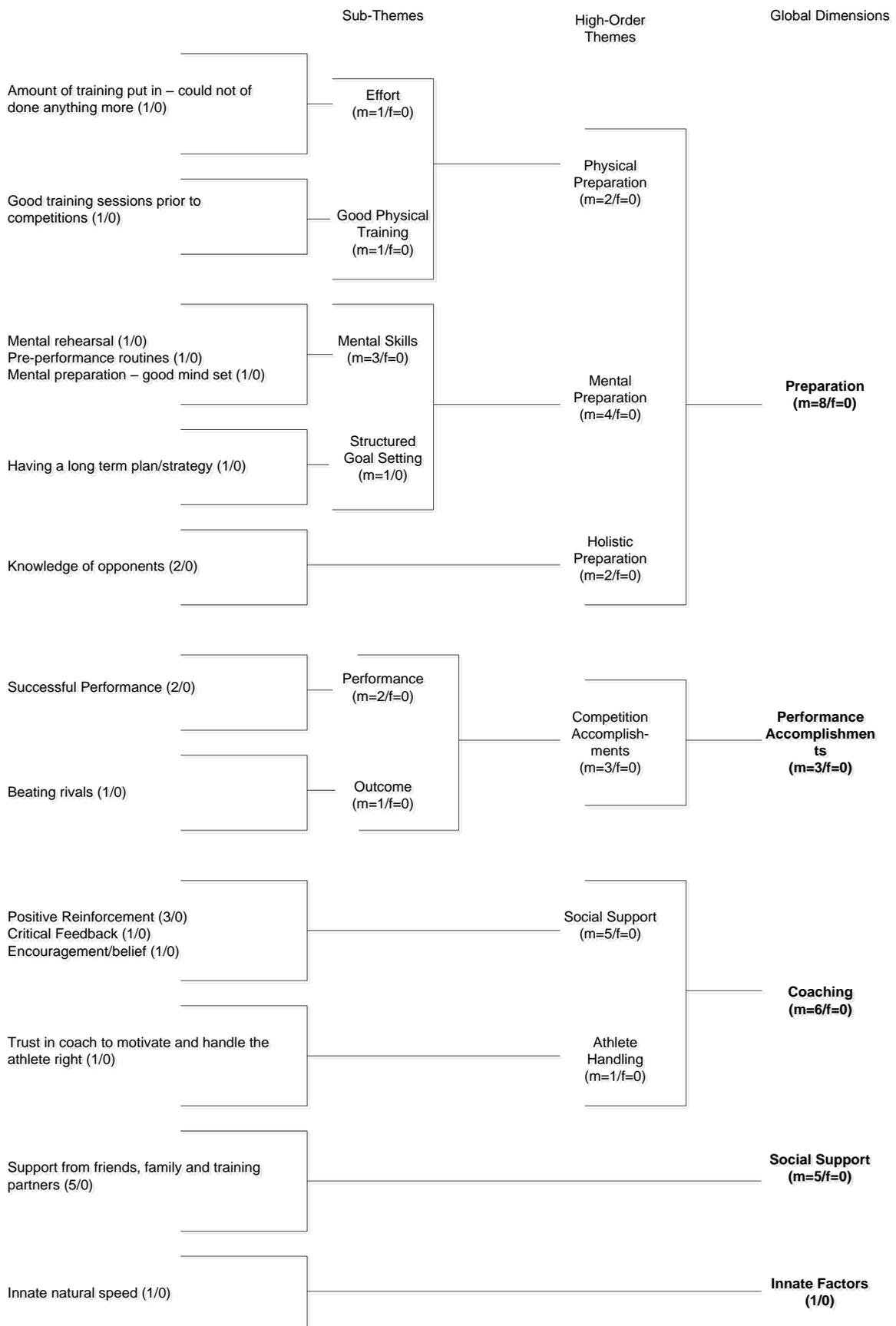


Figure 5. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by non-elite level athletes' (Continued).

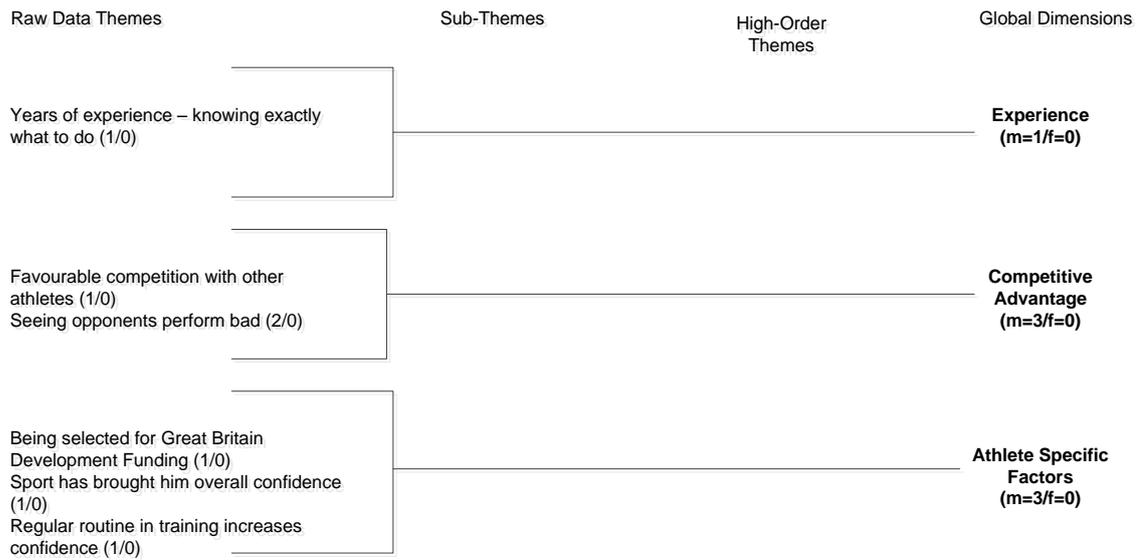


Figure 5. (Continued)

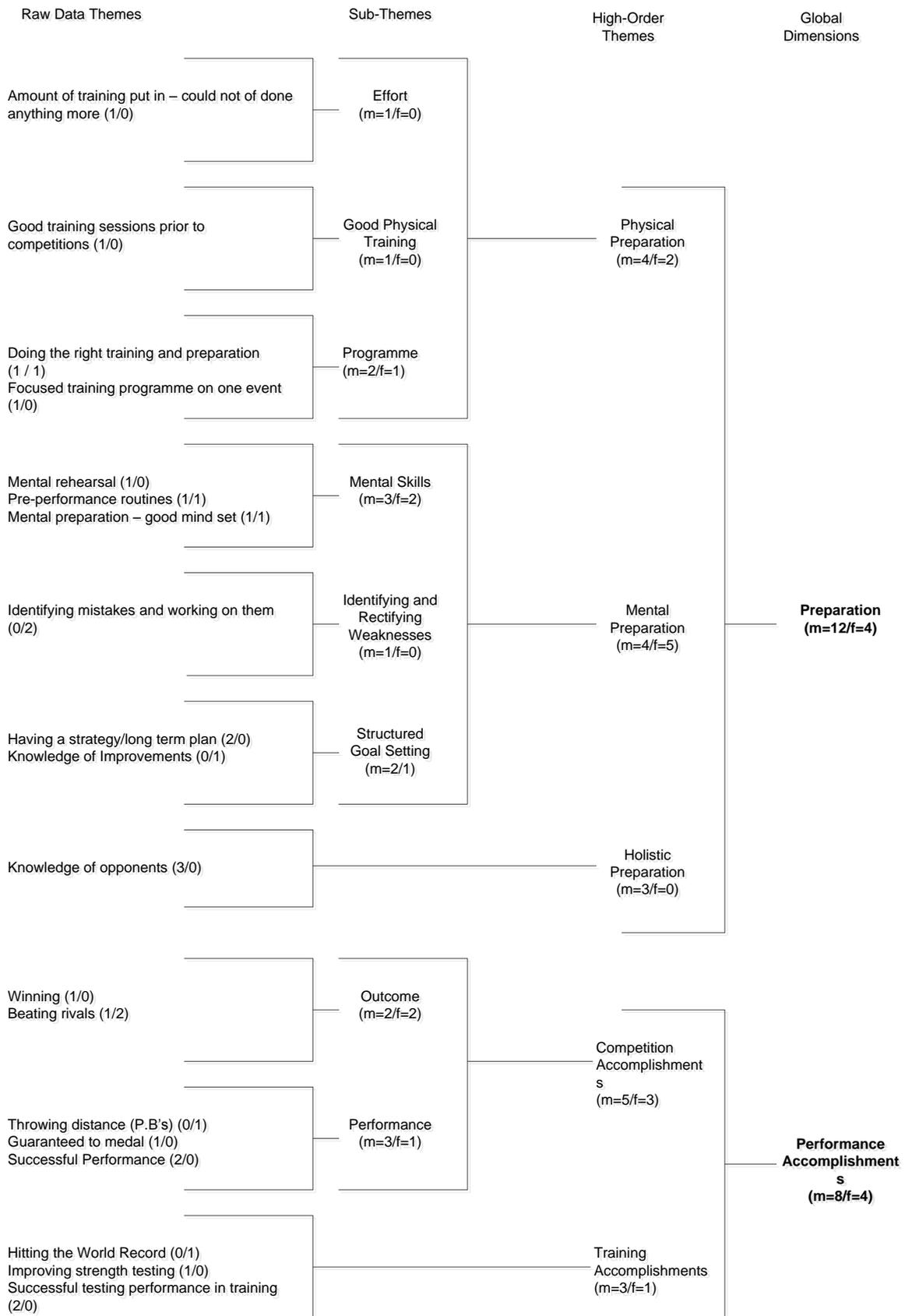


Figure 6. Themes and categories for sources of sport confidence identified by both elite and non-elite level athletes (*Continued*).

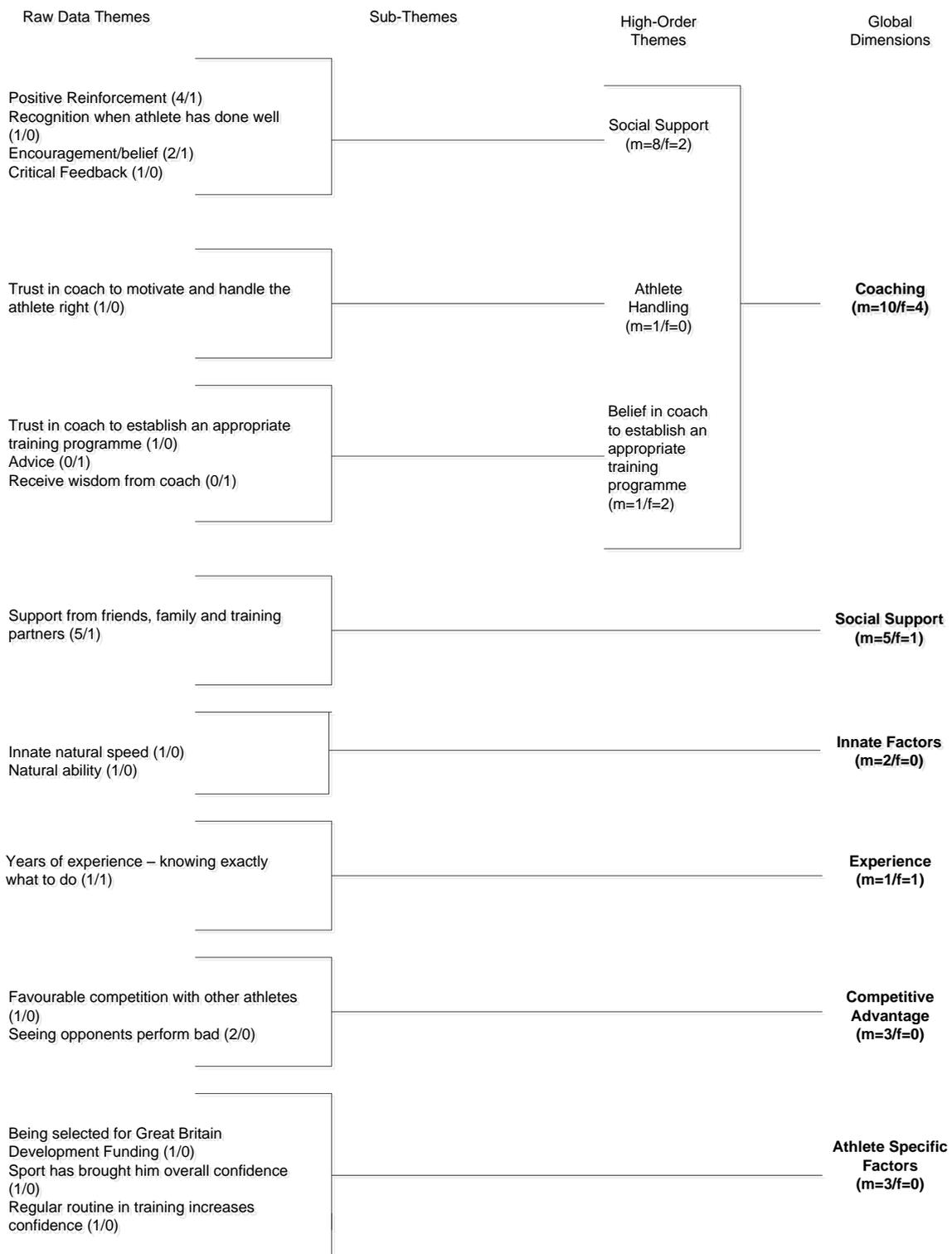


Figure 6. (Continued)

Preparation

Preparation was identified as a source of confidence by 15 athletes'. One elite athlete felt completely prepared, leading up to the London 2012 Paralympic Games by stating:

The main thing to me is having solid two week training block before the competition, if that has gone well then no matter what competition I am going into I can then be confident about performing well.

Five of the athletes' identified physical preparation as a source of confidence. One of the athletes' explained how their preparation related to their programme:

I had a plan and I think the two main things that influenced my confidence when competing, were my training preparations, which for that one I had focused completely on that one event, so I know I had given everything for that one event, instead of focusing half my training on another event. Equally, I had my preparation plan for my race which had been well rehearsed by then so I knew what I was doing.

Eight athletes' gained confidence from mental preparation such as mental rehearsal;- for example, one athlete highlighted: "Watching my event at London 2012 started me to visualise competing against them in that competition and focusing on aspects of my technique allowing me to win."

Structured goal setting was also identified by athletes', this included having a long term plan or strategy, one athlete gained this from working together with a psychologist, and the following citation highlights this:

I think from speaking to psychologists, I sat down with my psychologist and we identified some strategies to help me go through the process and get a bit more regulatory within the whole competition environment. She was saying how going from a smaller level competition to a bigger competition, it is quite easy for nerves etc to build up just because of the hype of the competition whereas making a routine which I can transfer from a smaller competition to a bigger competition, works well and stops you from developing big amounts of nerves.

Finally two non-elite athletes' made reference to holistic preparation, specifically knowledge of their competitors, one athlete explains how this gave him confidence in winning:

I had looked up how far each of the competitors had previously jumped and I had jumped against most of them before so I knew I was going in furthest jumper so that gave me confidence in winning.

Performance Accomplishment

Previous successful performances from competitions and training were identified as a source of confidence. Several athletes' gained confidence from competition accomplishments; one athlete discussed the importance of beating rivals:

I think I am confident in my own technique and depending on who I am competing against and I have competed with them before and I know I can beat them I am pretty sure I can do it again and I can only use that as a motivator as if in the first few rounds of a competition, they are beating me then that gives me confidence as I know I can go on to throw further.

Training accomplishments were also identified as a source of confidence; this is highlighted by one Paralympic gold medallist: "Knowing that I could throw over the world record in training gave me huge confidence to be able to do it in competition."

Coaching

The athletes' coach was identified as a source of confidence by 14 athletes'. One male athlete relied on their coach to motivate and handle the athlete right where as three athletes' found belief in their coach to establish an appropriate training programme. Ten athletes' derived confidence in social support from their coach, this included recognition when the athlete had done well, for example:

I also get confidence from my coach, if he says I'm doing something well and it looks good and is technically good by hitting good distances, then that's a source of confidence.

Receiving encouragement/belief from the coach was also identified as a source of confidence by three athletes', one athlete stated:

I had my coach with me though out my time there and that gave me confidence as he is like a support base. So if I wasn't feeling very confident then he would bring me up to the level I had been before again, so that was good.

Experience

Three athletes' derived confidence from their years of experience competing. This is evident in the following quote, cited by an athlete reflecting upon their build up to the commonwealth games: "I think also my past experiences of running in Beijing gave me a lot of confidence for running well in Delhi."

Social Support

Ten athletes' generated confidence from social support which included support from their family, friends and training partners. For example, one athlete cited:

"My team mates around me really supported me, because if I know people are watching and supporting me, it gives me confidence when performing."

Innate Factors

Two athletes' identified innate factors as a source of confidence. Innate factors represented athletes' beliefs that they were born with an innate ability. For example,

I was also actually brought into the sport due to my natural ability as well, so that brings confidence and people seeing I have a talent, just thriving on that has led to where I am now.

Competitive Advantage

Four athletes' identified competitive advantage as a source of confidence. Specifically this included seeing opponents injured or perform badly as three athletes stated. For example:

When I see my opponents throw bad before me, makes me feel confident. Especially if he throws less than my personal best or less than what I am throwing at the time as it makes me feel I can beat him.

Athlete Specific Factors

Three athletes' derived confidence which could not be categorised into the above global dimensions. The raw data themes identified by the athletes included: being selected for Great Britain development funding, sport overall had brought an athlete confidence and a regular routine in training. One of these themes is captured: "Sport has definitely brought more confidence to me as before I did sport I didn't have any confidence what so ever, I couldn't look anyone in the eye."

4.3 Sport confidence debilitating factors

The factors debilitating sport-confidence salient to both elite and non-elite athletes' were categorised into the following global themes: Poor preparation, injury/illness, poor performance, pressure and expectation, psychological factors and athlete specific factors (seen in figure 9.). Pressure and expectation and psychological factors were both identified as the factors most responsible for debilitating athletes' confidence levels.

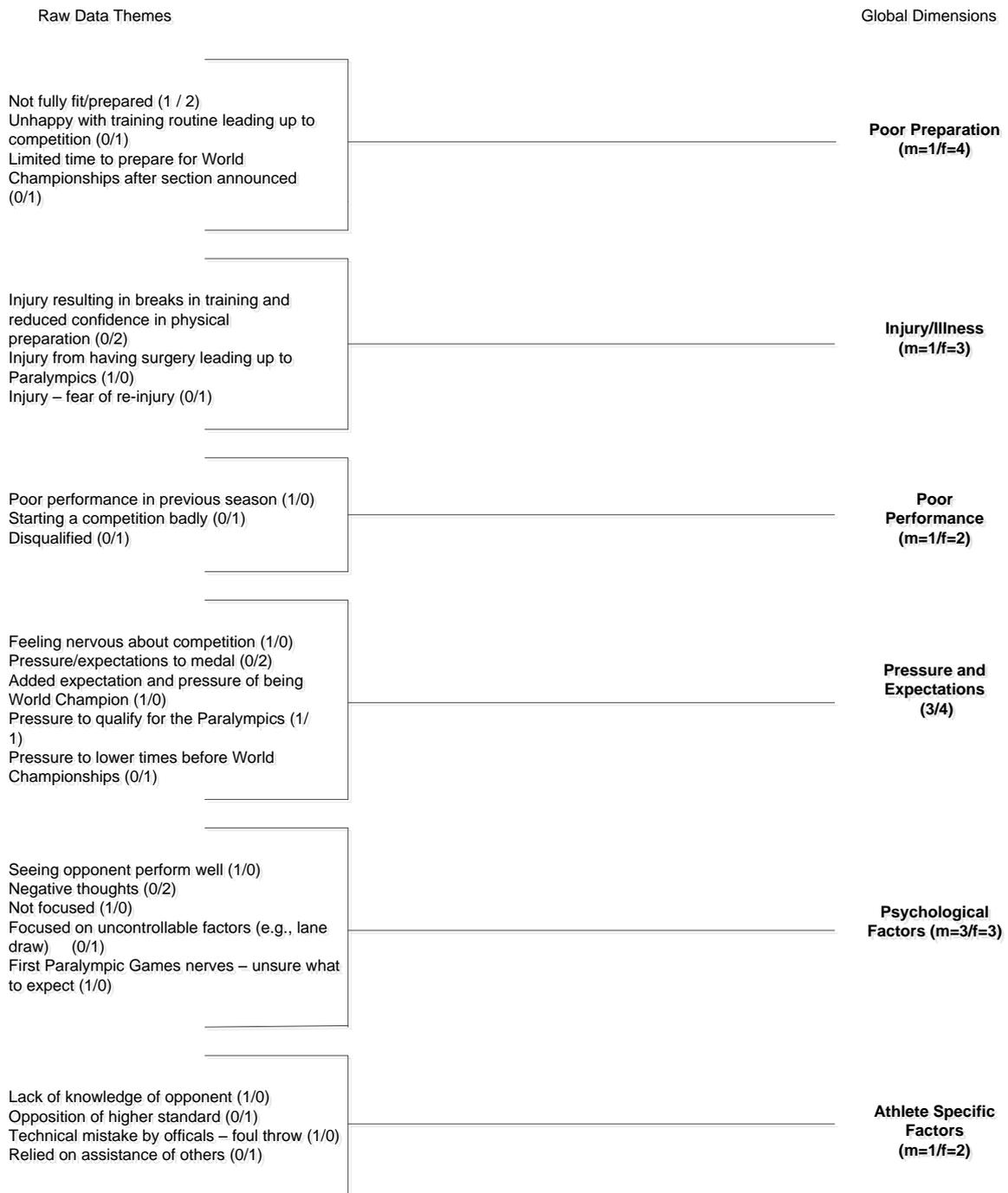


Figure 7. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence identified by elite level athletes.

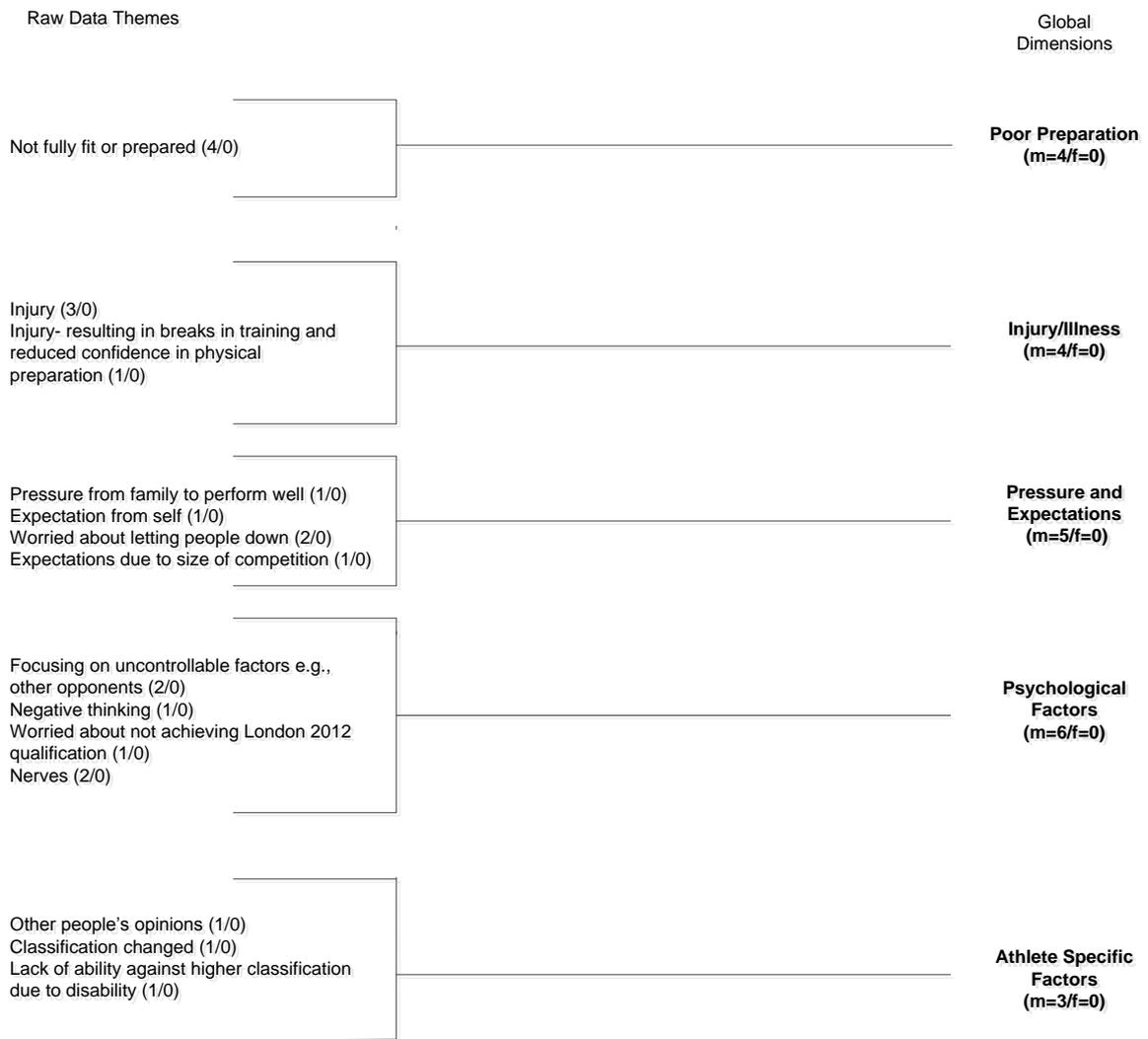


Figure 8. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence identified by non-elite level athletes'.

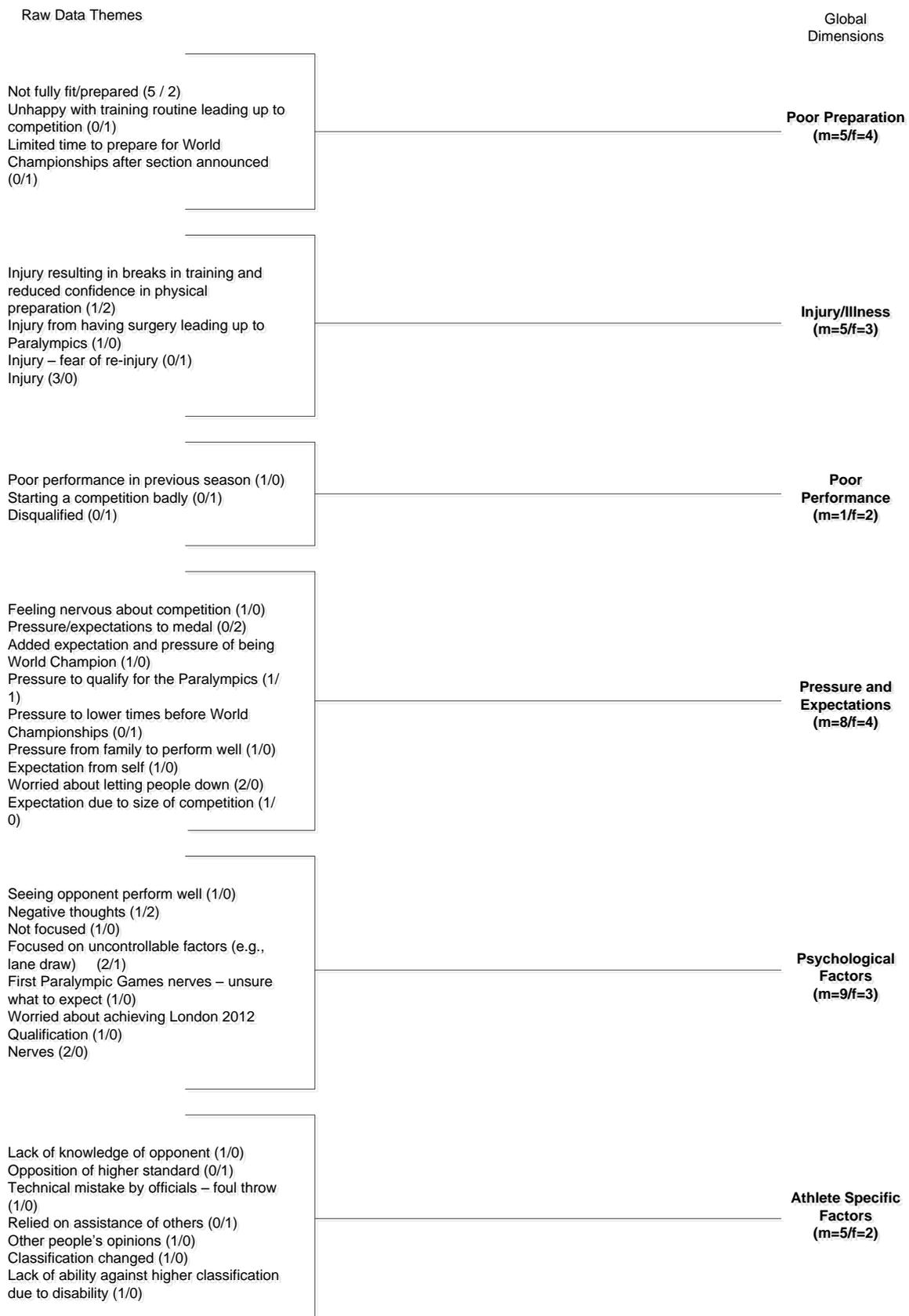


Figure 9. Themes and categories for the debilitating factors of sport confidence

identified by elite and non-elite level athletes’.

Poor Preparation

Nine athletes’ identified poor preparation as a factor responsible for debilitating their confidence levels. Seven athletes’ identified not being fully fit/prepared as a debilitating factor; one athlete stated that this was due to injury:

“Going back to competing after my injury, in my head I knew I wasn’t injured but I still felt low confidence..not physically prepared to be back racing.”

Injury/Illness

Injury/illness was a confidence debilitating factor identified by seven of the sixteen athletes’ interviewed. Injuries identified included: adductor tears, back injuries, shin splints. One athlete stated: “I got injured before London which lowered my confidence down before I competed.”

Additionally three athletes’ discussed how their injury decreased their confidence in their preparation, for example one athlete stated:

Again having shoulder surgery in the year, it took a lot longer to overcome. So my confidence in my technique wasn’t there due to the amount of time I had out.

Poor performance

Three athletes’ recognised poor performance as a confidence debilitating factor; this included having poor performances in the previous season and starting a competition badly. Additionally one athlete highlighted: “Being disqualified knocked my confidence..”

Pressure and Expectations

Pressure and expectation was one of the most cited factors for debilitating athletes' levels of sport confidence, as 12 athletes' identified. Two non-elite male athletes' were worried about others, for example: "I felt low confidence..I was worried I was going to let people down."

Elite level athletes' discussed the pressure and expectation placed upon them to qualify for the London 2012 Paralympic Games, this is captured below:

"Everyone was trying to get qualifying times for London. I think that because I had to keep trying to get that time and if it didn't happen I became least confident, so there was definitely a pressure to go and get the qualifying times."

Two athletes' highlighted the pressure they felt placed upon them to medal at the Paralympics, additionally a 2011 World Champion added:

"The added expectation of being world champion, I had never had that added pressure before and so I found that quite difficult going into without my usual thought process before going into London as I had always been chasing before London so it was a different scenario."

Psychological Factors

The other most cited confidence debilitating factor was the global dimension, psychological factors. The responses included; seeing their opponent perform well, negative thoughts, nerves and focusing on uncontrollable factors. As one athlete stated:

It was in the European Championships in the 200m, I did the heat of the 200m and I qualified in the top two. But for the final I got a really rubbish lane draw, I got the outside lane; I couldn't understand why I had been given the outside lane. I felt that it was so wrong as it should be the first two who qualify fastest get the middle lanes, it's supposedly the better lanes. So that's when I was least confident...no one ever achieves a medal from lane eight to be honest. I felt like I shouldn't be here as they

had got it wrong. It just felt that it wasn't my being that put me at a disadvantage.

Two elite athletes' highlighted psychological factors associated with the Paralympic Games, as one athlete discussed:

"Psychologically I was affected in confidence as I was still very young in my discipline and going into my first games I was very nervous. Even though I was at my best physical form, psychologically I was not 100 % confident in myself at everyone has doubts, it's only human."

Athlete Specific Factors

Lastly, seven athletes' identified confidence debilitating factors, unique to them. Therefore these factors could not be categorised into the above global dimensions. These included: lack of knowledge of opponent, opposition of a higher standard, technical mistake by officials, relied of assistance of others and others opinions. Two athletes' identified factors unique to Paralympic sport, this included: classification being changed and lack of ability against higher classification. For example:

I went into classification the day before and my classification got changed so it changes the people and standards I was throwing against and it lowered my confidence from there really.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

5.0 Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to identify the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors salient to athletes' within the organisational culture of disability sport. This chapter in the current study is presented in multiple sections. First, each construct of sport-confidence (e.g., type, source, debilitating factor) is discussed separately and compared to previous research. Following this, the theoretical and practical implications are presented which lead onto the study's strengths, limitations and future directions.

5.1 Sources

In support of previous findings (e.g., Hays et al., 2007) eight sources of sport-confidence were identified in the current study. These were categorised into: preparation, performance accomplishments, coaching, social support, innate factors, experience, competitive advantage and athlete specific factors. No support was given to self-awareness and trust (cf. Hays et al., 2007) as sources of sport confidence in the current study. In corroboration with previous findings, preparation, coaching and performance accomplishments were the most cited sources of sport-confidence whereas innate factors, experience and competitive advantage were the least cited sources of sport-confidence identified within the current study.

Preparation was identified by 15 of the athletes' interviewed with most athletes' deriving confidence from mental and physical preparation. Following the research done by Hays et al. (2007), two athletes identified holistic preparation as a source of confidence. Although, Hays et al. (2007) suggested that the holistic approach was unique in her study, due to the nature of the world class sample; allowing such resources (e.g., video analysis) to be easily accessible. Irrespective of this, both athletes who identified this as a source of confidence were non-elite level athletes'. It can therefore be speculated, that resources are more available to those within disability sport

Alongside preparation, coaching was the second highest confidence source cited by the athletes'. The credibility, enthusiasm and, knowledge of Olympic-level coaches had previously been identified by Gould et al. (1999), as vital to athletes' confidence. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the athletes' in the current study derived confidence from their coaches' by way of social support, athlete handling and belief in their coach to establish an appropriate training programme. Although here, no strong gender comparisons can be made, due to the low number of females participating in the current study, similarities between previous studies (e.g., Vealey et al., 1998; Hays et al., 2007) can be made with regard to social support. More specifically, research found that female's principally derived confidence from their coaches' encouragement and advice, rather than support given from friends, family and training partners. Whereas social support, identified by males, was equally derived from coaching, as well as, the support provided by friends, family and training partners. These findings suggest that female athletes' would benefit from a socially supportive coaching figure; previous findings (e.g., Martin et al., 1999) suggested coaches should adopt a democratic coaching style. Overall, it is apparent that coaches should be supportive of the gender differences between athletes in order to maintain athletes' levels of sport-confidence.

In accordance with previous research (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Vealey et al., 1998; Wilson et al., 2004; Hays et al., 2007) performance accomplishments were identified as a source of sport confidence for eleven of the sixteen athletes' interviewed. This is inconsistent with previous research (e.g., White and Duda, 1994), where no gender differences were identified. These findings suggest that the majority of athletes' derive their confidence from competition accomplishments, specifically focusing on the outcome (e.g., winning). The results of the current study raise awareness of the possible organisational differences in motivational climate and/or goal orientation of those competing at elite level in disability sport. Previous research including that concerning world class athletes' conflict with these findings (e.g., Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002; Greenleaf et al., 2001) as they identified that focusing on effort and personal improvement is a key component to successful Olympic performances.

Achievement goal theory suggests individuals use their individual differences to evaluate their competence in achievement settings and the effects of their behaviour in achievement settings (Nicholls, 1984). When an individual evaluates their competence in relation to others, for example, beating others they possess an ego orientation. However when an individual evaluates themselves according to self-referenced criteria, such as effort, they possess a task orientation. Therefore, it can be speculated that the athletes' in the current study evaluated their success in relation to others and gain confidence from this. In addition, past research can imply, athletes' within disability sport may have a different social environment compared to past research on world-class athletes, as Ames (1992) recognised an individual's social environment can affect the criteria used. For example, athletes' within disability sport may perceive that the achievement environment emphasises norm-based evaluation and competition with others, leading them to adopt an ego-involved state (Ames & Archer, 1988). Overall, it is recognised that different social contexts, such as sport and education can have different motivational climates (e.g., Roberts, 2001; Standage et al., 2003). It can therefore be speculated that different social/organisational contexts within sport, for example world class Olympic and Paralympic athletes' can have differences in motivational climates.

The other sources of sport confidence identified which were not commonly cited included; innate factors, experience and competitive advantage. Competitive advantage, which included uncontrollable sources (e.g., seeing their opponents perform badly), was identified as a source of confidence predominately derived by the non-elite level athletes'. Vealey et al. (1998) implied that focusing upon these uncontrollable sources could lead to fragile perceptions of control and competence. Athletes' and coaches' should be cautious of this and try to focus upon factors within the control of athletes' and coaches', to assist the athlete in the transition to elite level as Gould et al., (1999) recognised Olympic level athletes' may be vulnerable to instabilities.

5.2 Types

With regard to the types of sport confidence, the findings supported sport confidence as a multi-dimensional construct, as previously identified by Hays et al. (2007). The types of sport-confidence identified by the athletes' were consistent with Hays et al.'s (2007) findings: achievement, skill execution, physical factors, psychological factors, superiority to opposition and, athlete specific factors. Although, no support for tactical awareness was provided in the current study. External types of sport confidence (e.g., feeling superior to their opposition) were only identified in non-elite level athletes' whereas elite level athletes' were predominately confident in their skills and physical factors.

Overall, the athletes' within the current study identified multiple types of sport-confidence, supporting the conceptualisation of sport-confidence as a multi-dimensional construct. Thomas et al. (2011) characterised robust sport-confidence as; multiple types of sport-confidence which are consistent over time regardless of confidence debilitating factors. Previous research by Jones et al. (2007), identified that elite athletes' possess beliefs in two types of confidence: the achievement of goals and, feeling superior to their opposition. However, the study's findings provide support for Jones et al.'s research although, whilst also supporting previous research (e.g., Thomas et al., 2011) as multiple types of sport-confidence were identified, as opposed to just two types. Therefore athletes' who possess multiple types of sport-confidence are more prone to developing a robust sport-confidence. This directly relates to the study's findings, which supported previous research (e.g., Hays et al., 2007), that types of sport-confidence are evident based belief systems grounded within the sources of sport-confidence. Therefore it can be speculated that athletes' in the current study may possess a degree of robust sport-confidence due to citing multiple types of sport-confidence.

5.3 Confidence debilitating factors

In addition to identifying the types and sources of sport-confidence salient to disabled athletes', the study also identified confidence debilitating factors. All the previous debilitating factors, identified by Hays et al. (2009), emerged in the current study's findings, these included: Poor preparation, injury/illness, poor performance, pressure and expectations, psychological factors and athlete specific factors. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Hays et al., 2009) these factors are directly related to the sources of sport confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Vealey et al., 1998; Hays et al., 2007). For example, performance, coaching, preparation, experience, psychological factors and athlete specific factors have all been cited as sources of confidence and confidence debilitating factors. It is important to recognise these similarities as an athletes' level of sport-confidence may increase, or, decrease due to the same source of confidence or confidence debilitating factor. Unlike previous studies (e.g., Hays et al., 2009) the confidence debilitating factors did not appear to be influenced by gender as there were no significant differences in findings. However it is important to note that a low number of females participated in the current study.

Pressure and expectation was one of the highest factors responsible for debilitating athletes' levels of sport-confidence. The citing's between elite and non-elite level athletes' differed, specifically, elite athletes' commonly identified pressure and expectations in relation to the Paralympics (e.g., Pressure to qualify for the Paralympics). By way of contrast, non-elite level athletes' experienced pressure and expectation in other competitions. It is speculated that this is due to the Paralympic Games delivering a completely different competition environment, due to the high importance and public awareness, compared to other competitions. Previous research with Atlanta and Nagano U.S. Olympians has uncovered possible factors related to this, such as, media distractions and disruptions to routines (Greenleaf et al., 2001). Psychological factors, such as mental preparation (e.g., imagery, competition stimulation, mental plan for dealing with distractions) have been recognised to significantly influence Olympic performance (Greenleaf et al., 2001; Orlick & Partington, 1988). This suggests sports psychologists should work alongside athletes' in developing their mental

preparation months in advance prior to a Paralympic Games. Although, it should be highlighted that other factors (e.g., quality training, and Olympic accommodation) influence performance at the Games, therefore psychological investigations on how these factors interact should be examined (Greenleaf et al., 2001; Orlick & Partington, 1988).

Alongside pressure and expectations, psychological factors were also cited as one of the highest factors responsible for debilitating sport confidence. Many of the psychological factors identified can be recognised as distractions to the athletes' performance (e.g., focused on uncontrollable factors, negative thoughts, and not focused). A possible explanation for focusing on uncontrollable factors, such as lane draw, is that an athlete may derive their confidence from uncontrollable sources (e.g., perceived competitive advantage). This similarity reveals that an athletes' sport-confidence may increase or decrease due to the factors out of their control. Vealey et al. (1998) discovered that athletes' who derive their confidence from uncontrollable sources (e.g., seeing an opponent perform badly) might acquire fragile or unstable perceptions of control and competence. Previous research identified, Olympic wrestlers described their worst matches with reasoning such as; lack of focus and negative thoughts, whereas wrestlers referred to peak mental states involving high levels of concentration and focusing/refocusing techniques when describing their best performances (Gould et al., 1992). From this, it can be speculated that athletes' could benefit from working with practitioners to develop a mental plan in order to deal with distractions they face. Previous research (e.g., Greenleaf et al., 2001) found this benefited the performance of Olympic athletes'. Specifically, that practitioners should encourage the athletes' to derive confidence from multiple types and sources of confidence, rather than just focusing upon uncontrollable types/sources, to allow them to obtain an understanding on how and why they perform successfully. This will enable them to progress towards developing a robust sport confidence.

5.4 Implications

Results of the current study revealed both theoretical and practical implications to emerge. Theoretically, the current study's findings supported previous research (e.g., Hays et al., 2007) by demonstrating the multi-dimensional nature of sport-confidence. The study supported the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors identified in previous research (e.g., Vealey et al., 1998; Hays et al., 2007; Hays et al., 2009). Although differences in the current study have appeared regarding the number of types, sources and confidence debilitating factors identified. Overall, this study supports the notion within Vealey and Chase's (2008) model; that organisational factors influence athletes' sport confidence.

Practically, the findings provide an insight that can assist sports psychologists working with athletes' within the organisational subculture of disability sport. The present study provides further evidence that demographic and organisational factors influence the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors developed by athletes'. These factors need to be taken into account when evaluating athletes' confidence levels. It is important for athletes' to distinguish between their own types, sources and confidence debilitating factors, as this will allow the athlete to recognise what lowers their confidence. This will help them understand why and when the confidence debilitating factors occur, and their overall impact upon the athletes' sport-confidence.

The current study also provides a useful insight into athletes' sport-confidence for coaches' working with this population. Specifically, coaches are a major contributor to athletes' sources of confidence (e.g., 14 athletes' in the current study cited coaching as a source of confidence). However, the coach can also be a factor responsible for debilitating athletes' sport-confidence due to poor preparation (e.g., unhappy with training routine) and pressure and expectations (e.g., worried about letting people down). Therefore, coaches should be aware of their impact upon athletes' sport-confidence. This can be implemented by allowing sports psychologists to observe and monitor coaches' behaviour in a training environment.

Overall, the study highlights the need for strategies tailored towards athletes' specific needs, to be developed to maintain an athletes' sport confidence and protect against the confidence debilitating factors. The results of the current study support previous research (e.g., Vealey *et al.*, 1998; Hays *et al.*, 2007) on the importance of the sources of confidence upon athletes' overall sport-confidence levels. These sources are sport specific and have been influenced by the athletes' demographic and organisational factors, supporting the notion within Vealey and Chase's (2008) conceptualisation of sport-confidence. Thus, it is important that practitioners consider the needs of the athlete whilst facilitating sport confidence when implementing an intervention. Consequently, the interventions developed should either: be targeted towards increasing an athletes' range of confidence sources and types or recognising their current types and sources of confidence prior to a competition, which might enable athletes' to develop robust sport-confidence.

5.5 Strengths and limitations

The main strength of the current study was it expanded the current literature on confidence debilitating factors as previous research had been limited due to the secondary purpose within Hays *et al.*'s (2009) study. Additionally the current study expanded the existing literature by investigating confidence debilitating factors within the organisational culture of disability sport, due to Vealey and Chase's (2008) conceptualisation of sport confidence, which recognised that an athletes' characteristics and organisational culture affect the manifestation of sport confidence within athletes'. Although it is important that, the nature of the sample should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings, regarding athlete characteristics and organisational culture of disability sport. Specifically, all athletes' represented the sport of athletics, which allowed generalisability issues to emerge as athletes' representing other sports (e.g., team sports, swimming etc.) within the organisational culture of disability sport were not incorporated within the present study.

An additional limitation regarding the sample in the current study, relates to the differences in gender. Previous studies (e.g., Hays *et al.*, 2007, 2009) have highlighted gender differences in the identification of types, sources and confidence debilitating factors (e.g., Hays *et al.*, 2007, identified mostly males were confident about beating their opponents). However, within the current study gender differences were identified, although special consideration should be given when interpreting the findings, as only four elite female athletes' took part in the study.

A further strength of the current study was the method in which it was conducted. This enabled in-depth knowledge of the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors salient to athletes' within disability sport. This is due to the current study's procedure; firstly pre-interview booklets enabled athletes' to reflect upon their experiences and, to gain an insight into the types of questions that were going to be asked prior to the interview. Moreover, the researcher followed an interview guide for each interview, and this provided consistency across all interviews, allowing for more appropriate comparisons to be made. (deleted word) The current study is limited and can only serve as a basis for confidence debilitating factors, because of the focus on the identification on factors debilitate sport confidence, rather than how and why they debilitate an athletes' sport confidence. Another limitation can also be highlighted and that is the current study's retrospective design. These retrospective designs are more commonly associated with issues regarding memory and accuracy in recalling past experiences.

5.6 Future directions

The present study is currently the only research to primarily focus on identifying confidence debilitating factors. Therefore further research investigating the factors responsible for debilitating confidence is required. This will further increase our knowledge of the similarities between the confidence debilitating factors, the sources of confidence (Hays *et al.*, 2007) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and, how they are responsible for increasing, or, debilitating athletes' confidence levels.

Overall, the study's findings highlight the importance for strategies to be developed, in future research, to protect an athletes' sport confidence against confidence debilitating factors.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

6.0 Conclusion

Vealey and Chase's (2008) conceptualisation of sport confidence recognised that athlete characteristics and organisational culture affect the manifestation of sport confidence. The framework also indicated several factors (e.g. personal and environmental factors) that may debilitate an athletes' sport confidence. Previous research into confidence debilitating factors in sport has been limited due to the secondary purpose within Hays et al. (2009) research. Therefore this study is currently the only research to primarily focus upon identifying the confidence debilitating factors.

To summarise, the current study provided an in-depth account of the types, sources and confidence debilitating factors salient to athletes' within the organisational culture of disability sport. The findings revealed no significant differences between the elite and non-elite level athletes within disability sport, regarding their types, sources and confidence debilitating factors identified. The current study's findings supported previous research (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Vealey et al., 1998; Hays et al., 2007; Hays et al., 2009) and identified six types of sport confidence, eight sources of sport confidence and six confidence debilitating factors. Although the current study identified differences from previous research, regarding the number of types, sources and confidence debilitating factors identified. Therefore, this study supports the notion within Vealey and Chase (2008) model; that organisational factors influence athletes' sport confidence.

Overall, the present study provides a view that could be of use to sports psychologists and coaches working together with athletes', within the organisational culture of disability sport. The current study would widen their knowledge of the specific factors responsible for increasing or debilitating their athletes' confidence levels. Overall, the current implications highlight the need for strategies to be developed to protect an athletes' sport confidence against confidence debilitating factors.

Reference List

- Ames, C. (1992). Achievement goals, motivational climate, and motivational processes. In G. C. Roberts(Ed.), *Motivation in sport and exercise* (pp. 161–176). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Ames, C., & Archer, J. (1988). Achievement goals in the classroom: Student's learning strategies and motivation processes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **80**, 260–267.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological Review*, **84**, 191-215
- Bandura, A. and Adams, N. (1977). Analysis of Self-Efficacy Theory of Behavioural Change. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, **1** (4), 287-310..
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman
- Bull, J., Shambrook, J., James, W., and Brooks, E. (2005). Towards an understanding of mental toughness in elite English cricketers. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **17**, 209-227.
- Durand-Bush, N. and Salmela, H. (2002). The Development and Maintenance of Expert Athletic Performance: Perceptions of World and Olympic Champions. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **14**, 154-171.
- Ezzy, D. (2002). *Qualitative Analysis Practice and Innovation*. London: Routledge.
- Feltz, D. (2007). Self-confidence and sports performance. *Exercise and Sport Science Reviews*, **16**, 423-457
- Gayton, W.F. and Nickless, C.J. (1987). An investigation of the validity of the trait and state sport-confidence inventories in predicting marathon performance. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, **65**, 481-482.
- Gould, D., Dieffenbach, K., and Moffett, A. (2002). Psychological characteristics and their development in Olympic champions. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **14**, 172-204.
- Gould, D., Eklund, R., & Jackson,S. (1992). 1988 U.S. Olympic wrestling excellence: I. Mental preparation, precompetitive cognition, and affect. *The Sport Psychologist*, **6**, 358-382.

- Gould, D., Guinan, D., Greenleaf, C., Medbery, R, and Peterson, K. (1999). Factors affecting Olympic performance: Perceptions of athletes and coaches from more and less successful teams. *The Sport Psychologist*, **13**, 371 – 394.
- Gratton, C., and Jones, I. (2004). *Research methods for sports studies*. London: Routledge.
- Greenleaf, C., Gould, D., and Dieffenbach, K. (2001). Factors Influencing Olympic Performance: Interviews with Atlanta and Nagano US Olympians. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **13**, 154-184.
- Griffith, N., Keogh, J., and Maybee, R. (1984). Performer Perceptions of Movement Confidence. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, **6**, 395-407.
- Hardy, L., Jones, G. and Gould, D. (2001) *Understanding psychological preparation for sport: Theory and practice of elite performers*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hays, K., Maynard, I., Thomas, O and Bawden, M. (2007). Sources and Types of Confidence Identified by World Class Sport Performers. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **19**, 434-456.
- Hays, K., Thomas, O., Butt, J. and Maynard, I. (2010) The Development of Confidence Profiling for Sport. *The Sport Psychologist*, **18**, 373-392.
- Jones, G., Hanton, S., and Connaughton, D. (2007). A Framework of Mental Toughness in the World's Best Performers. *The Sports Psychologist*, **21**, 243-264.
- Kingston, K., Lane, A. and Thomas, O. (2010). A temporal Examination of Elite Performers Sources of Sport-Confidence. *The Sports Psychologist*, **18**, 313-332.
- Maddux, J. E. (2000). Self-Efficacy: The Power Of Believing You Can. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds). *Handbook of positive psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Maddux, J. E. and Gosselin, J. T. (2003). Self-efficacy. In M.R. Leary and J.P Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 218-238). New York: Guilford Press.

- Mail Online (2012). *Favourite Wiggins confident and ready to put last year's Tour agony behind him* [on-line]. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/othersports/article-2166380/Tour-France-2012-Bradley-Wiggins-confident.html> [04/03/13].
- Martin, S., Jackson, A., Richardson, P., and Weiller, K. (1999). Coaching Preferences of Adolescent Youths and Their Parents. **11**, 247-262.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Thomas, O., Lane, A., and Kingston, K. (2011). Defining and contextualizing robust sport-confidence. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **23** (2), 189-208.
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984). Achievement motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice and performance. *Psychology Review*, **91**, 328-346.
- Orlick, T., and Partington, J. (1988). Mental Links to Excellence. *The Sports Psychologist*, **2**, 105-130.
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (2nd edn.), London: Sage.
- Roberts, C. (2001). Understanding the dynamics of motivation in physical activity: The influence of achievement goals on motivational process. In G. C. Roberts (Ed.), *Advances in motivation in sport and exercise* (pp. 1–50). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Standage, M., Duda, J. L., & Ntoumanis, N. (2003). Predicting Motivational Regulations in Physical Education: the interplay between dispositional goal orientations, motivational climate and perceived competence. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, **21**, 631–647.
- Sparkes, A. C. (1998). Validity in qualitative inquiry and the problem criteria: Implications for sport psychology. *The Sport Psychologist*, **12**, 363-386.
- Vealey, R. S. (1986). Conceptualization of sport-confidence and competitive orientation: Preliminary investigation and instrument development. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, **8**, 221-246.
- Vealey, R.S. (2001). Understanding and enhancing self-confidence in athletes. In R.N. Singer, H.A. Hausenblas and C.M. Janelle (Eds.), *Handbook of sport psychology* (pp. 550-565). New York: Wiley.
- Vealey, R.S. & Chase, M.A. (2008). Self-confidence in sport. In T,horn (3rd Eds.), *Advances in Sport Psychology* (pp. 66-97). Leeds: Human Kinetics.

- Vealey, R., Hayashi, S., Garner-Holman, M. and Giacobbi, P. (1998). Sources of Sport-Confidence: Conceptualization and Instrument Development. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, **20**, 54-80.
- White, A., and Duda, L. (1994). The relationship of gender, level of sport involvement, and participation motivation to task and ego orientation. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, **25**, 4-18.
- Wilson, R.C., Sullivan, P.J., Myers, N.D., & Feltz, D.L. (2004). Sources of sport-confidence of master athletes. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, **26**, 369–384.
- Yahoo Sport (2012). *Stephen shattered as javelin style ruled illegal* [on-line]. <http://uk.eurosport.yahoo.com/news/stephen-shattered-javelin-style-ruled-illegal-210553225.html> [04/03/13]

APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CSS Reference No:

Title of Project: Perceptions of the debilitating factors of sport-confidence in disabled athletes

Name of Researcher: Victoria Silk

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated [/ /] for this evaluation study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that it is possible to stop taking part at any time, without giving a reason.
3. I also understand that if this happens, our relationships with the Cardiff Metropolitan University, or our legal rights will not be affected
4. I understand that information from the study may be used for reporting purposes, but I will not be identified.
5. I agree to take part in this study on the perceptions of the debilitating factors of sport-confidence in disabled athletes.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature of person taking consent

* When completed, one copy for participant and one copy for researcher's files.

APPENDIX B
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research participant information sheet

Project Title: Confidence in Disabled Athletes

This document provides a run through of:

- 1) the background and aim of the research,
- 2) my role as the researcher,
- 3) your role as a participant,
- 4) benefits of taking part,
- 5) how data will be collected, and
- 6) how the data / research will be used.

The purpose of this document is to assist you in making an *informed* decision about whether you wish to be included in the project, and to promote transparency in the research process.

1) Background and aims of the research

Self-confidence is important in sport; it can be gained from sources such as: performance accomplishments, social support, coaching, experience, trust, self-awareness etc. However factors such as injuries and illnesses, poor preparation, poor performances, coaching and self-doubt can be responsible for debilitating sport confidence. This study aims to examine the Perceptions of the Debilitating Factors of Self-Confidence in Disabled Athletes.

2) My role as the researcher:

The project involves me, Vicky Silk, the researcher, conducting a semi-structured interview which will take up to 20 minutes of your time.

3) Your role as a participant:

Your role is to participate in the interview as honestly as possible. The interview will include questions about your experiences of past competitions where you have experience high levels of confidence as well as those where you have felt little confidence and the reasoning behind this. The completion of the interview is not

compulsory, and you do not have to respond to every question should you wish not to.

4) Benefits of taking part:

The information we obtain from this study will allow better insight into the identifying the factors responsible for debilitating sport confidence experienced by disabled athletes. The data collected from each participant in the interview is available for any of the participants if they wish to see it.

5) How data will be collected:

As mentioned above, data will be collected solely from the answers you provide in the interview.

6) How the data / research will be used:

In agreeing to become a voluntary participant, you will be allowing me to use your responses to the questionnaires and include them within a larger data set that includes the data of other participants. Your personal data will be anonymous and will not be reported alone, but within the total sample of participants.

Your rights

Your right as a voluntary participant is that you are free to enter or withdraw from the study at any time. This simply means that you are in full control of the part you play in informing the research, and what anonymous information is used in its final reporting.

Protection to privacy

Concerted efforts will be made to hide your identity in any written transcripts, notes, and associated documentation that inform the research and its findings.

Furthermore, any personal information about you will remain confidential according to the guidelines of the Data Protection Act (1998).

Contact

If you require any further details, or have any outstanding queries, feel free to contact me on: ST10001410@cardiffmet.ac.uk

APPENDIX C
PRE-INTERVIEW BOOKLET

Pre-Interview Booklet

Name:

Age:

Date:

Background and Interview Instructions

This study aims to examine the types of things you are confident about, the sources of information you use to gain belief and the factors that remove your confidence. It will involve myself, Vicky Silk, conducting a semi-structured interview which should only take up to 20 minutes of your time.

Your role is to participate in the interview as honestly as possible. The interview will include questions about your past experiences of competitions where you have experienced high and low levels of confidence as an athlete. In order to gain an accurate account of your experiences, please be aware that there are no right or wrong answers and I would much rather appreciate no answer than one that you feel I'm hoping to hear.

Your personal rights within this interview include: answers collected from your interview will be reported anonymous, you are a voluntary participant so you are able to withdraw from the study at any point, if you do not understand a question then feel free to ask and I will explain it to you, transcripts and final reporting's of your interview will be available if you wish and there is no time limit on the interview.

Prior to the interview

This pre-interview booklet has been designed to allow yourself to reflect and write down your experiences of sport confidence in order to familiarise yourself with the types of questions which will be asked and to think about your answers. These answers you write down will be kept confidential and it is understandable that you may change your mind/ have any additional thoughts during the interview.

Introductory questions

1. What is your discipline in athletics?

2. How long have you been competing in athletics?

3. What are your major achievements to date?

Confidence

4. Do you feel confidence is essential in order for you to perform well?

5. Would you consider yourself as a confident athlete?

6. Describe what you think a confident sprinter/thrower needs to be confident about in order to perform well?

7. Think about a confident sprinter/thrower you know, such as your sporting idol, what do you think they are confident about?

Most Confident Phase

8. Describe a time you felt most confident leading into an athletics competition

9. What types of things were you confident about leading into an athletics competition?

10. Why did you feel confident about these types of things?

Least Confident Phase

11. Describe a time in your athletic career when you felt least confident

12. Why did you feel least confident during this period?

13. Did anything happen prior to the competition that made your confidence levels decrease?

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

Perceptions of the Debilitating Factors of Sport-Confidence in Disabled Athletes

Name:

Age:

Date:

Time started:

Time Ended:

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The study aims to examine the types of things you are confident about, the sources of information you use to gain belief and the factors that remove your confidence. The interview will include questions about your past experiences of competitions where you have experienced high and low levels of confidence as an athlete. You are reminded about your rights as a participant, these include: answers collected from your interview will be reported anonymous, you are a voluntary participant so you able to withdraw from the study at any point, if you do not understand a question then feel free to ask and I will explain it to you, transcripts and final reporting's of your interview will be available if you wish and there is no time limit on the interview. A Dictaphone will be used to record the interview, which only I will use to produce accurate results.

Introductory questions

1. What is your discipline in athletics?
2. How long have you been competing in athletics?
3. What are your major achievements to date?

Confidence

4. Do you feel confidence is essential in order for you to perform well?
5. Would you consider yourself as a confident athlete?

-Probe: Why, how?

6. Describe what you think a confident sprinter/thrower need to be confident about in order to perform well?
7. Think about a confident sprinter/thrower you know, such as your sporting idol, what do you think they are confident about?
-Probe: Why? What makes you think this?

Types and Sources of Sport confidence

This section will now get you to identify the types of things you are confident about and the sources of information you use to gain belief. Feel free to use your pre-interview booklet to help formulate your responses.

8. What types of things would you say you are confident about as an athlete?

-Probe: performing certain skills, winning, physical factors (such as: strength, speed, height, work hard), psychological factors (pre-performance routines, dealing with nerves, expectations), superiority to opposition (feeling better than others, knowing you are better), tactical awareness (making correct judgements regarding your performance) or anything else.

-Probe: You can pick more than one type

-Why/how?

9. You have now identified your types of confidence, can you now identify where each type of confidence comes from?

-Probe: Preparation (physical or psychology training), Performance Accomplishment (beating opponents, past performances), Coaching (When your coach praises you etc) , Social Support (friends, family, training mates), Natural ability, Past experiences, Competitive Advantage (seeing opponents perform bad), Trust, Self-Awareness (knowledge of the competition etc, knowing what you're doing), Anything else(Athlete Specific Factors)

-Probe: Don't feel you have to just pick one source as you may feel your type of confidence comes from more than one source.

-Probe: How/why?

Most confident phase

10. Describe a time you felt most confident leading into an athletics competition

-Probe: What was the outcome?

-Probe: Do you feel your confidence affected the outcome?

11. What types of things were you confident about leading into the competition?

-Probe: performing certain skills, winning, physical factors (such as: strength, speed, height, work hard), psychological factors (pre-performance routines, dealing with nerves, expectations), superiority to opposition (feeling better than others, knowing you are better), tactical awareness (making correct judgements regarding your performance) or anything else.

12. For each of the types of confidence you have identified in your pre-interview booklet, can you explain where each type of confidence came from?

-Probe: Preparation, Performance Accomplishment, Coaching , Social Support, Innate Factors, Experience, Competitive Advantage, Trust, Self-Awareness, Athlete Specific Factors and/or External Factors.

-how/why?

13. During the athletics competition, did anything happen prior or whilst you were competing that made you confidence increase?

14. Do you have any other information about your most confident phase that has not been covered?

Least confidence phase & Debilitating Factors

15. Describe a time in your athletic career when you felt least confident
- Probe: *What was the outcome?*
 - Probe: *How long did you feel least confident?*
16. What types of things made you feel least confident at the time leading up to the competition?
- Probe: *Skill Execution, Lack of Achievement, Physical Factors, Psychological Factors, Opposition, Tactical Awareness, Athlete Specific Factors, Preparation and/or Injury/Illness*
17. Where do you feel your lack of confidence came from for each of the types of confidence debilitating factors?
- Probe: *Poor Performance, Injury/Illness, Poor Preparation, Coaching, Pressure and Expectations, Psychological Factors and/or Athlete Specific Factors*
18. During an athletics competition where you felt least confident, did anything happen prior or whilst competing which lowered your confidence?
19. Do you have any other information about your most confident phase that has not been covered?

Conclusion

We are coming towards the end of today's session so at this point I want to ask you a few closing questions.

20. How did you feel the interview went?
21. Are there any important areas/factors that we have not discussed?
22. Have you any questions relating to today's topic or process?
23. Did you feel as if you could give your experiences fully?
24. Did I lead you or influence your responses in any way?

25. Are there any further comments or questions you have.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

APPENDIX E
SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT

Interview Transcript: Athlete 15

VS: Victoria Silk

A15: Athlete 15

Introductory questions

1. What is your discipline in athletics?

A15: Sprinting, 100m and 200m

2. How long have you been competing in athletics?

A15: Just over 4 years

3. What are your major achievements to date?

A15: Representing GB at the London 2012 Paralympics.

Confidence

4. Do you feel confidence is essential in order for you to perform well?

A15: It can help some people but can hinder other people if over confident.

5. Would you consider yourself as a confident athlete?

A15: I'm more confident now I'm involved in sport but I wouldn't say I'm the most confident of people.

VS: As an athlete?

A15: But as an athlete, I am more confident now

VS: Why is that?

A15: Because when I first started I didn't know anything or anyone, but now as I am getting more into athletics, it's easier for me as a person and an athlete as I know everyone and I am confident around different people.

6. Describe what you think a confident sprinter/thrower need to be confident about in order to perform well?

A15: They need to know that they can do the best of their abilities on the day so they won't be disappointed when coming off the track.

7. Think about a confident sprinter/thrower you know, such as your sporting idol, what do you think they are confident about?

A15: Usain Bolt is my sprinting idol, he is confident about being the fastest man in the world to date so that is pretty confident.

Types and Sources of Sport confidence

8. What types of things would you say you are confident about as an athlete?

VS: performing certain skills, winning, physical factors (such as: strength, speed, height, work hard), psychological factors (pre-performance routines, dealing with nerves, expectations), superiority to opposition (feeling better than others, knowing you are better), tactical awareness (making correct judgements regarding your performance) or anything else.

VS: You can pick more than one type

A15: I'm level headed so I don't feel pressure at any stage, like when I went to London; I didn't feel any pressure what so ever.

VS: Why is that?

A15: I knew that if I had got to confident or worried to much about my competition then my performance would not have shown what I was able to

do. I am pretty confident about my speed to; the fitness isn't there yet, but my natural speed, I think if I can get the stamina and fitness there then I could be a really good sprinter.

9. You have now identified your types of confidence, can you now identify where each type of confidence comes from?

VS: Preparation (physical or psychology training), Performance Accomplishment (beating opponents, past performances), Coaching (When your coach praises you etc) , Social Support (friends, family, training mates), Natural ability, Past experiences, Competitive Advantage (seeing opponents perform bad), Trust, Self-Awareness (knowledge of the competition etc, knowing what you're doing), Anything else(Athlete Specific Factors)

VS: Don't feel you have to just pick one source as you may feel your type of confidence comes from more than one source.

VS: You identified dealing with your nerves

A15: Sport has definitely brought more confidence to me as before I did sport I didn't have any confidence what so ever, I couldn't look anyone in the eye. But now sport is more of a job, which I enjoy, rather than just a hobby, so therefore there is more of a routine. If it was just on a once off basis, then I would say the confidence level would drop. Every training session is set so I know everyone that I am training with. It's just that, that's brought my confidence, knowing what I'm doing.

VS: So you mentioned your speed as well?

A15: I've always been fast, I haven't been as fast as mainstream kids in school but I have been fast, it's just been natural speed really. I haven't done anything to improve the speed really it has just always been there from the start.

VS: How did you know you were fast?

A15: My football coach had expressed how fast I was before I started athletics. That is how I got into doing the athletics really because of my speed.

VS: Does that give you confidence then?

A15: I've always known I was fast but not as fast as mainstream kids. Winning my first competition really put me on a high so I knew if I get developing the speed then I could be a very good sprinter.

Most confident phase

10. Describe a time you felt most confident leading into an athletics competition

A15: It was the second UK School Games that I attended. I knew that if I could just start the race then I was the fastest in the field. No one really was that fast compared to me, I had a two second personal best over everyone.

VS: What was the outcome?

A15: I won the 200m with a bigger lead than expected.

VS: Do you feel your confidence affected the outcome?

A15: It quite possibly could have been. I wouldn't put it all down to confidence but it did help in a way knowing. I didn't get over confident, I knew I was the fastest there but I didn't treat it like that, I treated it like I was already going to be chasing someone else.

11. What types of things were you confident about leading into the competition?

VS: performing certain skills, winning, physical factors (such as: strength, speed, height, work hard), psychological factors (pre-performance routines, dealing with nerves, expectations), superiority to opposition (feeling better than others, knowing you are better), tactical awareness (making correct judgements regarding your performance) or anything else.

A15: I knew that I would get a medal basically. There were fewer participants in the disability races than the able-bodied races. Depending on what some ones time was, because it was a mixed classification race, so if I came first I might not of got a medal, but leading into it I was the closest to my world record than them to their world records.

VS: Anything else?

A15: No that is about it really. Like I said, I'm not the most confident but sport has definitely brought the confidence out in me to do more than I would have not doing sport.

12. For each of the types of confidence you have identified in your pre-interview booklet, can you explain where each type of confidence came from?

VS: Preparation, Performance Accomplishment, Coaching , Social Support, Innate Factors, Experience, Competitive Advantage, Trust, Self-Awareness, Athlete Specific Factors and/or External Factors.

A15: I came up against most of my competitors before so I knew that I was faster than them and I don't normally do it but I was looking up their progress before the race on the power of 10 to see what they were doing. But when it came to the race, even if I am the fastest in the race, I never treat it like I am; I'm always trying to chase someone down, because if I go in their being over confident then it could hinder me.

13. During the athletics competition, did anything happen prior or whilst you were competing that made you confidence increase?

A15: On the bend it was, knowing I could take everybody on the bend.

14. Do you have any other information about your most confident phase that has not been covered?

A15: No, it was not being too confident but having that level of confidence that I could do my best. It was keeping me in the background away from my other competitors

Least confidence phase & Debilitating Factors

15. Describe a time in your athletic career when you felt least confident

A15: It was my first competition when I started, in Blackpool 2010. I didn't have any experience of a competition, so I didn't have much confidence or experience so I felt a bit sheepish.

VS: what was the outcome of the competition?

A15: I won four gold medals.

VS: How long did you feel least confident for?

A15: It was leading up to it. It was the night before and prior to the event, mainly because I hadn't been away from my family before. So leading up to it I was getting more nervous and it just didn't show on the track.

16. What types of things made you feel least confident at the time leading up to the competition?

VS: Skill Execution, Lack of Achievement, Physical Factors, Psychological Factors, Opposition, Tactical Awareness, Athlete Specific Factors, Preparation and/or Injury/Illness

A15: I was injured at the time of my first competition, as I had injured my back a couple of days before, so I literally couldn't walk the day before the race. Also I hadn't been running long, so my technique was probably lacking as I didn't had any experience so I didn't feel I knew how to run really.

17. Where do you feel your lack of confidence came from for each of the types of confidence debilitating factors?

VS: Poor Performance, Injury/Illness, Poor Preparation, Coaching, Pressure and Expectations, Psychological Factors and/or Athlete Specific Factors

A15: It was more the psychological factors really, I wasn't aware of anything really when it came to my first competition as it was all new.

VS: And you mentioned lack of preparation?

A15: Yeah, not knowing what to do.

18. During an athletics competition where you felt least confident, did anything happen prior or whilst competing which lowered your confidence?

A15: No not really because there was only a small crowd there and they were all cheering me on along with hearing my father supporting me so that brought my confidence up.

VS: But nothing else made your confidence levels drop anymore?

A15: No

19. Do you have any other information about your least confident phase that has not been covered?

A15: No, everything has been covered.

Conclusion

VS: We are coming towards the end of today's session so at this point I want to ask you a few closing questions.

20. How did you feel the interview went?

A15: It was good.

21. Are there any important areas/factors that we have not discussed?

A15: I wouldn't say so, no.

22. Have you any questions relating to today's topic or process?

A15: No

23. Did you feel as if you could give your experiences fully?

A15: Definitely

24. Did I lead you or influence your responses in any way?

A15: It was just bringing it out, like what I thought. You helped make it clearer.

25. Are there any further comments or questions you have.

A15: No

VS: Thank you for your participation in this study.