

Humility and Openness to Learning

Tim - Age 35 - Hmong - 10 Years Coaching HS, 7 College.

“It's like you carry on the legacy of those that have passed as a way to guide you toward the things that you want in your life. You remember the ones that have passed, the sacrifices that they made to get you and your family here.”

David - Age 42 - Latino/Mixed - 20 years coaching.

“It's important for them to see people like them, that are believable, people that were really born down the street and that worked their way up.”

Fighting with a Purpose

Jabbar - Age 40 - Pacific Islander - 18 Years Coaching

Discussing fighting against colonization: “You had people coming to your island....Coming after you, trying to take over that island.... It's just one of those things that it just feels like there was always a fight, you know? I think that was the warrior mentality.”

Tim - Age 35 - Hmong - 10 Years Coaching HS, 7 College.

“You work hard for the things that you want because you know my parents were immigrants and refugees. They are always preaching about working hard to accomplish the American dream and instill those values.”

Abstract:

This study explores the significance of the warrior mentality, examining coaching perspectives from Latinx, Polynesian, and Asian American communities. Through semi-structured interviews with 70 diverse coaches across the United States, aged 27-67 (Avg: 42), averaging 16.3 years of coaching experience, the research uncovers the manifestation of the warrior mentality through four core values: 1) respect for family, 2) fighting with a purpose, 3) tenacity and toughness, and 4) humility and openness to learning. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling and word of mouth. Interviews, lasting 45-120 minutes, were conducted via Zoom, audio-recorded, and transcribed. Transcripts underwent thematic analysis and were discussed within the research team to arrive at consensus surrounding initial themes. The study contributes to a nuanced understanding of how the warrior mentality influences football and broader life implications within distinct cultural contexts, particularly in Latinx, Asian, and Polynesian communities.

Setting and Procedure:

- Participants recruited through purposive, non-parametric sampling, and word of mouth.
- Semi-structured interviews of three primary research questions, lasting between 45 to 120 minutes via zoom.
- Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.
- Transcripts analyzed using thematic analysis similar to Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Demographics:

- 70 diverse coaches from across the United States (22 African American, 21 Latinx, 20 White, 3 Asian, 3 Polynesian, 1 Native American)
- Age range from 27 - 67: (Avg age: 42).
- Average number of years coaching: 16.3 (Range: 1-45)
- Most reported working as teachers and coaches
- A large majority of the coaches worked in rural, low income schools.

Discussion:

Embodiment of the Warrior Mentality in Football:

Respect for Family:

- Coach Jabbar, a Polynesian football coach, explained how players must manage both familial responsibilities and football commitments. The demand for respect and dedication to family creates a challenge amidst the expectations set by football, but their adeptness at balancing these demanding expectations epitomizes the warrior mentality.

Fighting with a Purpose:

- Coach Spike, a Latino football coach working along America's Southwestern border, describes how he assisted players in crossing the border daily for school and football practice. This coach's unwavering commitment, along with the dedication of his players, underscores the resilience and determination inherent in the warrior mentality.

Tenacity and Toughness:

- Coach Jabbar, a Polynesian football coach, explained how the warrior mentality contributes to players in the game itself, stating, "When you're in the trenches, that's where you have to be the warrior of all warriors. You're either physical or you're on the bench." This connection bridges the cultural and societal aspects of embodying a warrior mentality with the physical demands of the game.

Humility and Openness to Learning:

- Coach Taylor, a Samoan football coach, draws a parallel between football and the respect shown to elders. As an illustration, players lower their heads to Taylor when receiving feedback on the field, reflecting a cultural norm observed when interacting with elders. This behavior not only demonstrates humility but also underscores its association with the warrior mentality. Despite being “warriors” on the football field, these players exhibit a humble approach to the game, mirroring their humility in navigating life's challenges.

The Warrior Mentality:

A Framework for Understanding Latinx, Asian, and Pacific Islander Football Coaches' Experiences On and Off the Field

Emmalee Sheppard, Hunter Kowal and Rachel Ocampo Hoogasian
Counseling and Applied Psychology~ Arizona State University

Rachel.Ocampo.Hoogasian@asu.edu

“In essence the **warrior mentality** could be described as an approach to football and life that is learned and earned through the generational transmission of knowledge surrounding sacrifice, struggle, persistence, and connection.”
(Ocampo Hoogasian in preparation)

Respect and Family

Taylor - Age 35 - Samoan - 12 Years Coaching

“You know, the younger generations would typically take care of the elders. Something known as the Fa'a Samoa, which is kind of the Samoan way, it's very much about hierarchy and respect towards elders.”

Michael - Age 31 - Korean American- 9 Years Coaching

“So, the whole, respect your elders thing, it's all about family, like there's nothing more important than family...Like whatever you're pursuing it's got to be your best effort for the family.”

Tenacity and Toughness

Coach T - Age 52 - Latino - 28 Years Coaching

“They're working their butts off to help their families and when the chili season or the onion season's over, we get them. They're tough as nails because of all that, so we hang our hat on those kinds of kids.”

Jabbar - Age 40 - Pacific Islander - 18 Years Coaching

“When you're in the trenches, that's where you have to be the warrior of all warriors. You're either physical or you're on the bench.”

ASU College of Integrative
Sciences and Arts
Arizona State University

CISA
Student
Showcase

Literature:

- *It's All About the Relationship: Honoring the Wisdom of High School Football Coaches and the Life-Transforming Work They Do with Young People* (Ocampo Hoogasian, in preparation).
 - This poster represents a chapter within the above book that aims to highlight the important work of diverse coaches with high school football players.
- The warrior mentality is not a new idea, but there is a lack of research when discussing the behavior in terms of coaching or multicultural paradigms.
- “The Dance of the Warrior”, Indigenous Cultures & Their Traditional Protocols in Sports; A look into the MAORI HAKA and the Hawaiian HA'A KOA
 - This dissertation showcases the Hawaiian Warrior mentality and touches on similar struggles that were found in the current research as well (2021).
- Strader, E., Lundquist, J., & Dominguez-Villegas, R. (2021). Warriors Wanted: The Performance of Immigrants in the US Army. *International Migration Review*, 55(2), 382-401. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0197918320949819>
 - This research titled “Warriors Wanted” discusses how immigrants perform equally well or better than native born soldiers. This was included as a majority of the current research deals with a military or police perspective. The proliferation of a consistent mentality in multiple cohorts of people supports more research into how environment and ethnicity can impact a warrior mindset.