



# JSFD

Journal of Sport for Development

<b>“It’s borderline hypocrisy”: Recruitment practices in youth sport-based interventions</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Haydn Morgan, Ioannis Costas Batlle</i>	
<b>“Putting kids first”: An exploration of the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model to youth development in Eswatini</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>Zenzi Huysmans, Damian Clement, Meredith Whitley, Matthew Gonzalez, Tammy Sheehy</i>	
<b>Lasting social value or a one-off? People with intellectual disabilities’ experiences with volunteering for the Youth Olympic Games</b>	<b>33</b>
<i>Roald Undlien</i>	
<b>Yarning with the Stars Project: An Indigenous evaluation protocol for a sport for development and peace program</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>Rose Whitaui, Helen Ockerby</i>	
<b>Understanding female youth refugees’ experiences in sport and physical education through the self-determination theory</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>Anna Fareello, Lindsey Blom, Thalia Mulvihill, Jennifer Erickson</i>	

## Original Research

**“It’s borderline hypocrisy”: Recruitment practices in youth sport-based interventions****Haydn Morgan<sup>1</sup>, Ioannis Costas Batlle<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup> University of Gloucestershire, UK<sup>2</sup> University of Bath, UK*Corresponding author email: hmorgan5@glos.ac.uk***ABSTRACT**

Sport is often promoted as a vehicle through which a variety of social policy outcomes can be achieved. One of the most common outcomes is the enhancement of social inclusion opportunities for marginalized youth populations. While a growing number of studies have examined the potential of sport-based interventions to address broader social concerns, few have focused on the recruitment activities used within such programs to engage youth populations. Drawing on interview data collected within two sport-based interventions delivered in London (UK), which both aimed to engage marginalized young people through sport, this article intends to examine three main issues: first, to explore the practices undertaken by the two organizations to recruit and retain participants in their sport-based interventions, and second, to examine the implications of these practices on participant recruitment strategies. Third, the article contends that within a context shaped by a neoliberal agenda, the necessity to meet predetermined participation targets encourages organizations to use the most efficient means possible to maximize numbers of program participants. However, such recruitment strategies often overlook young people whose social exclusion is more complex or acute, and who, arguably, are in greater need of intervention support.

**INTRODUCTION**

The instrumental use of sport is often touted as a means through which a number of wider social policy objectives can be realized—an assumption which has positioned sport

as a panacea for addressing social concerns (Coalter, 2007, 2012). Within the United Kingdom (UK), government sport policy has actively embraced this discourse, establishing intentions and objectives that reinforce the potential of sport to address social ills (Collins, 2010). However, more critical scholars (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007, 2012; Dacombe, 2013; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Skille, 2014; Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016) have invited research that offers specific insights into the mechanisms that underpin the use of sport-based programs for social change. In response to such invitations, this article examines one aspect of sport-based programs that has received very limited attention within the sport-for-development literature—namely, how participants are recruited to such programs. According to Hartmann and Kwauk (2011), the strategies utilized to recruit and engage participants with sport-based programs are significant for both the retention of participants and the attainment of program outcomes. However, recruitment assumes an even greater importance within sport-based programs that accentuate social inclusion and are “aimed at development among otherwise marginalized, disaffected youth who can be difficult to locate much less engage” (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011, p. 290). As such, it can be assumed that if participation in a sport-based program can be used as a “hook” to address social concerns (Coalter, 2007; Green, 2007), then the recruitment practices used to engage young people in the program become of central importance.

By drawing on research conducted within two charitable organizations in London (UK) that use sport as a means to engage socioeconomically disadvantaged young people, this

**Keywords:** sport; social inclusion; recruitment; neoliberalism; marginalized youth

article explores three main issues. First, the article discusses the approaches undertaken by the two organizations to recruit participants to their sport-based interventions and second, illustrates the influence of predetermined participation targets on recruitment strategy. Third, the article examines how these recruitment practices could be accused of focusing attention and resources on those young people who are more likely to achieve program outcomes, while disregarding individuals whose social exclusion is more complex or acute and in greater need of intervention support (Finlay, Sheridan, & McKay, 2010; Spaaij, Magee, & Jeanes, 2013).

### The Paradox of Sport-for-Development Programs

A recurrent theme within recent sport policy is the amplification of sport's capacity to educate young people, provide vital life skills, and embrace those on the margins of mainstream society (Cope, Bailey, Parnell, & Nicholls, 2017). Academic literature has also noted the attraction of sport to provide positive benefits to marginalized individuals, ranging from informal educational opportunities and increased engagement with the local community to the enhancement of personal relationships and networks (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Whitley, Massey, & Farrell, 2017). More specifically, previous studies have highlighted the potential of sport to contribute to social inclusion<sup>1</sup>—most notably in terms of social assimilation—at two levels. At an individual level, participation in sport has been found to enable the construction of positive relationships between diverse groups (Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015; Hills, Velásquez, & Walker, 2018; Kelly, 2011). Meanwhile, at a community level, social inclusion may occur through urban regeneration programs, which typically involve the construction of sport and leisure facilities that become focal points for community events and constructive neighborhood activity (Hoye, Nicholson, & Houlihan, 2010). In addition, Kelly (2011) observes how sport can further contribute to social inclusion at the individual level as either a means of empowering marginalized young people or providing a pathway to employment. Consequently, such findings often legitimize the role of sport in addressing broader social concerns.

However, more critically, Kelly (2011) acknowledges that sport-based programs of this nature often understate (or indeed, ignore) structural inequalities and attribute nonparticipation as indicative of individual deficit or self-induced exclusion. Consequently, while many critical scholars have argued that sport-based programs aiming to foster social inclusion may appear well intentioned, deeper analysis of such programs reveals, paradoxically, that the

programs often perpetuate, embed, and reinforce social injustice and structural inequality as “natural” (Kelly, 2011; Winlow & Hall, 2013). Moreover, these programs often operate as a form of benign policing (Green, 2007) in accordance with the pervasive, omnipresent ascendancy of neoliberalism as the dominant form of governance (Dean, 2010; Paton, Mooney, & McKee, 2012; Rose, 2000a; Winlow & Hall, 2013). For some authors, the organizing “logic” of global neoliberalism has acted to exacerbate the marginalization from society of particular populations (see Paton et al., 2012; Winlow & Hall, 2013). Indeed, as Nikolas Rose (2000b) suggests, the regulating practices of neoliberal governance are best observed within the realm of inclusion and exclusion.

Building on this argument, Rose (2000a) observes how, under neoliberal thinking, contemporary political government has retreated from its obligation to plan, steer, and answer the problems generated by and within society, toward a governance whereby individuals assume personal responsibility to become more active and enterprising in resolving these problems. This “double movement of autonomization and responsabilization” (Rose, 2000a, p. 1400) outlines how the role of government (and its policies) has shifted to one of facilitation, enabling individuals with freedom to establish and realize their own destiny. For Paton et al. (2012) this “double movement” is indicative of how recent social policy in the UK has encouraged social inclusion to be reimagined under the auspices of neoliberal governance, whereby policy operates to create simplistic binaries that categorize citizens on their ability to contribute to society economically, politically, and morally. Consequently, the problematization of certain people and certain places serves as a convenient and orderly framework through which inequality can be expressed as naturalistic, whereby it is incumbent upon excluded or marginalized populations to accumulate skills, enhance capabilities, and reduce welfare dependency—the hallmarks of a reimagined, responsabilized citizenship (Banks, 2013; Paton et al., 2012; Winlow & Hall, 2013).

Further evidence to highlight the influence of neoliberalism on sport-based programs can be found in the manner in which public bodies (including those within sport) have regulated their practices to meet the demands of an expanded free market and the significant reduction of government responsibility for social needs (Apple, 2001). As Green (2007) notes, at the heart of the neoliberal movement is an agenda to deliver public services in a high quality and efficient manner, through an accent on accountability, inspection, and audit, among other factors (Houlihan & Green, 2009; Phillpots, Grix, & Quarmby,



2011). For Dean (2010, p. 197), the setting of performance indicators to benchmark and regulate practice act as “technologies of performance” that transform professionals into “calculating individuals” seeking the most efficient means possible to achieve these predetermined targets. Consequently, the nature of the relationships between funders and organizations concerned with using sport for social inclusion has (a) restricted what strategies these organizations use, and (b) promoted the interests of funders ahead of initiating social change (Costas Batlle, Carr, & Brown, 2017; Harris, Mori, & Collins, 2009; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013).

### **Engaging Marginalized Populations Through Sport—Approaches to Recruitment**

One area that has received limited academic attention but holds potential to explore how neoliberal principles influence sport-for-development practice is the manner in which young people are recruited to sport-based programs. While the ability to reach or engage a target population has been noted as a central concern for health intervention programs (Glasgow, Vogt, & Boles, 1999), within a sport-for-development context, recent literature has begun to emphasize the importance of exploring participants’ motivations to engage in sport-for development activities (Peachey, Cunningham, Lyras, Cohen, & Bruening, 2014; Rowe, Shilbury, Ferkins, & Hinckson, 2016). However, there is a paucity of research or frameworks that focus on recruitment specifically. Coalter (2012), whose work we draw on to conceptualize our study, offers three broad recruitment categories: (a) “open access”; (b) “relatively open access”; and (c) “targeted,” which are commonly employed in practice.

According to Coalter (2012), the first category contains sport-based programs available to all young people but are offered within designated locales that display characteristics of deprivation. Consequently, open access programs recruit participants through self-selection with the expectation that individuals from the targeted population will be engaged (Coalter, 2012). Despite the clear attraction and widespread deployment of open access recruitment, Coalter (2012) suggests that such programs operate on “an implicit deficit model based on an environmental fallacy” (p. 600), whereby it is falsely assumed all young people residing in targeted locales exhibit or possess the characteristics of deprivation. However, open access strategies can often encourage recruiting staff to focus attention and resources on those who are more likely to achieve program outcomes, while disregarding individuals whose problems are more complex or acute (Finlay et al., 2010; Spaaij et al., 2013). This is

indicative of what has been coined the “Pistachio Effect,” whereby the easiest “nuts” to “open” are prioritized (and engaged), while the more difficult are avoided or abandoned (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Coalter, 2012a; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Nols, 2012b).

In contrast, the second recruitment category, termed by Coalter (2012) as “relatively open access,” operates as an extension of the previously discussed recruitment method by combining the outreach activities of the open access approach with targeted procedures used “to attract young people who [are] clearly at-risk” (Coalter, 2012, p. 600). However, in doing so, the intention is not to stigmatize those at-risk but to integrate them socially into activities that are available to the wider population (Coalter, 2012). Therefore, the intention of this semitargeted approach is to recruit participants to a mainstream program without drawing attention to any specific personal deficits that the targeted population may possess to normalize the experience for this focus group (Coalter, 2012).

The final recruitment category extends further to a “fully targeted” approach, which aims to engage an identified population by utilizing the sport setting as the social context to provide further services that may address issues of social exclusion or integrate the targeted population into mainstream activity (Coalter, 2012). Akin to the principles of sport-plus programs (Coalter, 2008), in this approach, the targeted population is isolated and introduced to a tailored program that is aligned with the interests of this population, as well as the overarching objectives of the program. In theory, such an approach presents potential benefits to the attainment of program outcomes and addresses the issues and limitations that permeate open access recruitment. Indeed, support for these externally driven, deterministic approaches prevail in much social policy (Hylton & Totten, 2013) and receive substantial endorsement at an institutional level, particularly given the strong emphasis of such programs on behavior modification, the construction of trusting relationships with figures of authority (Morgan & Parker, 2017), and the development of qualities associated with good character (Coalter, 2012).

However, critical scrutiny of recruitment practices within the sport-for-development context is limited, as is an understanding of the efficacy and implications of such practices in engaging specific populations. This article will attend to and offer insight into features of these deficiencies. Therefore, within a context shaped by a neoliberal agenda, where the necessity to meet predetermined participation targets may overshadow attempts to engage young people whose marginalization is more complex or acute, there is a

need to explore the practices undertaken by organizations to recruit and retain participants in sport-based programs.

## METHOD

### Critical Realism and Researcher Positionality

Critical realists (Bhaskar, 1978) argue that despite the existence of “a world out there that is observable and independent of human consciousness,” the “knowledge about this world is socially constructed” (Danermark et al., cited in Denzin, 2004, pp. 249-250). Envisaging a “paradigm spectrum” whereby positivism and interpretivism constitute both poles, critical realism sits in the middle (Byers, 2013). This position results in an understanding of reality (ontology) that is stratified into three levels: the empirical, the actual, and the real (Bhaskar, 1978). The *empirical level* (events experienced through human interpretation) are shaped by the *actual level* (events that occur, whether we can observe them or not), which, in turn, are influenced by the *real level* (causal mechanisms within social structures). Consequently, critical realists “seek to explain and critique social conditions” (Fletcher, 2017, p. 11).

Our positionality is underpinned by the thrust to explain and critique social conditions. This entails moving beyond providing “thick descriptions” and instead offering *causal mechanisms* that can explicate social phenomena. As critical sport scholars, our work is driven by exploring how the causal mechanism of neoliberalism *causes* events at the empirical level. However, we are aware of the central limitation of both our positionality and philosophical stance: we must be cautious not to undermine our participants’ accounts by suggesting that a causal mechanism (which we are familiar with as researchers while participants may not be) is shaping their lives (Fletcher, 2017).

### Research Context

To answer our research questions, we opted for a qualitative case study of two youth sport programs. Our case study—an approach well suited to a critical realist framework (Easton, 2010)—was both instrumental (we aimed to understand the issue of participant recruitment) and collective (we combined data from two individual cases) (Stake, 2005). The data from these individual cases pertained to two wider research projects that sought to investigate the impact of a sporting program on social inclusion within youth populations. Both programs were selected as “typical” cases (Yin, 2014) of programs that embrace the logic attached to policy and rhetoric surrounding the potential of sport to address broader social

concerns.

The first program—*Sport4Youth*<sup>2</sup>—aimed to create opportunities for young people on the margins of society, primarily to promote social inclusion and incubate elements of citizenship, such as community cohesion and employability. The program was delivered in seven sites within East London. The research investigated the initial phase of the program by engaging with seven existing and new sports clubs across five boroughs which received support, resources, and expertise from a sport-based charity delivering the program.

The second program was delivered by *SportHelp*, a London-based youth sports charity. *SportHelp* aims to improve socioeconomically disadvantaged young people’s (8-17 year olds) lives through sport by instilling positive life skills. *SportHelp* coaches operate within 30 schools, delivering sport sessions before, during, and after school hours to over 7,000 young people. The participants in this study spanned across two boroughs in West London, and consisted of two after-school basketball programs and two in-school table tennis programs.

### Sampling Strategy

We recruited 18 participants (nine from each program) using purposive sampling (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). This entailed selecting staff from both cases who were either associated with program strategy or design (n = 6) or program delivery, such as coaches/club leaders (n = 12). While such a sample may incite criticism from academics who contend that evaluative research of youth sport programs often amplifies only the voices of the “local elite” (Carvalho & White, 2004, p. 13), the self-reflexive decision to interview program staff at the frontline of program delivery enabled the essence of their dynamic yet direct interaction with young, marginalized people to be captured.

### Data Collection Methods and Procedures

To collect data through semistructured interviews with all 18 participants, we adhered to the following procedures. After obtaining university ethical approval, we contacted *Sport4Youth* and *SportHelp* and were granted access to both organizations by their respective gatekeepers. We subsequently recruited our 18 participants (nine from each program) in person by (a) explaining the purpose of the research and (b) asking them to sign an informed consent sheet. Once the sheets were signed, we conducted the interviews in locations suitable for our participants. In total, the 18 interviews lasted between 32 and 75 minutes with a

mean length of 54 minutes. The interviews were recorded via an iPad application and audio recorder and transcribed verbatim in preparation for detailed analytical treatment.

The interview guide was generated from a prior literature review conducted by the authors and focused on issues around recruitment, social inclusion, and sport as a tool for development (e.g., Coalter, 2012; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). We chose to conduct semistructured interviews for two reasons. First, while the outlined issues were broadly sketched out as the core topics to discuss, we were attentive to the flexibility of the interviews and let ourselves be guided by our participants' expertise. Second, these interviews offered a retrospective vantage point from which program stakeholders could offer firsthand accounts pertaining to their experiences of the program. While the potential limitations of a retrospective approach (e.g., exaggeration/under-reporting and accuracy of recall) are well documented (see Veal & Darcy, 2014), the approach did enable interview participants to reflect on positive and negative "critical" moments that defined their experiences.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using theoretical thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), an approach that aligns with a critical realist ontology and epistemology (Bonnington & Rose, 2014; Fletcher, 2017). To search for themes, we adhered to Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase model. The first three phases (familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, and the early search for themes) were undertaken while keeping the *SportHelp* and *Sport4Youth* data separate. This entailed each of the two authors focusing on a single data set by reading the transcripts in full to gain an overview of the data before coding the transcripts to capture subjective aspects of participant experience. The third phase consisted of an initial search for latent themes relating to recruitment for sport-based programs.

Having completed the first three phases individually, both authors combined the initial themes they had identified to begin phase four: reviewing themes. This phase (and the subsequent ones) were undertaken jointly. After sifting through the combined initial themes, we proceeded to phase five (defining and naming themes) by refining the themes that reflected the data (key issues around sport-based recruitment) from the *SportHelp* and *Sport4Youth* settings. Finally, phase six entailed drawing on extracts from our data set to exemplify the themes we identified, followed by framing these themes within the context of existing conceptual debates (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The three themes that emerged from our theoretical thematic

analysis were influenced by Coalter's (2012) recruitment typologies. The first theme, "Open Access Strategies: Outreach and Word-of-Mouth," illustrated both *Sport4Youth's* and *SportHelp's* utilization of outreach and word-of-mouth approaches to recruit young people. The second theme, "Targeted Strategies: Integrating Identified Young People," outlined how both organizations implemented approaches to target specific subpopulations of young people. The third and final theme, "Prioritizing and Maximizing Participant Numbers," connected to the previous themes by highlighting how, for both sport-for-development organizations, there was an inclination to "play the numbers game" and maximize the number of young people who joined the sport programs.

### Methodological Rigor

Drawing on Smith, Sparkes, and Caddick (2014), we judged the quality of our work against the criteria of width, coherence, credibility, and having a worthy topic. The width of our study is evidenced by the comprehensive use of quotes from our participants, while the coherence is reflected both internally (how the different components of the paper build on each other) and externally (how this research is situated in relation to extant literature and theory). Credibility is manifested by the amount of time both researchers spent during the interview process with *Sport4Youth's* and *SportHelp's* participants,<sup>3</sup> making an effort to represent their views. Finally, the topic of youth sport recruitment is both worthy and timely given it is a fundamental aspect of youth sport programs that is largely under-researched.

A further issue regarding methodological rigor is our analysis. Heeding the warnings of Smith and McGannon (2018) and Braun and Clarke (2013), we avoided "member checking" or any form of "intercode agreement" (even those considered "subjective intercoder agreement" [Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012]) as an indication of rigor. Instead, in alignment with our positionality as critical realists, we jointly reflected on our data set during phases four and five of Braun and Clarke's (2006) steps for thematic analysis. This reflection consisted of conversations, rooted in the theory we had identified in our literature review, as a way of refining and confirming our themes.

## FINDINGS

### Theme 1. Open Access Strategies: Outreach and Word-of-Mouth

The two open access recruitment strategies *Sport4Youth* and *SportHelp* used were outreach (or "taster") programs

word-of-mouth. Outreach programs involved the provision of activities that were accessible to all young people but were offered within identified locations that exhibited characteristics of deprivation (Coalter, 2012). *Sport4Youth's* outreach work took place at a specific club, school, or recognizable community facility (such as a local park), an approach reported as a typical method for recruitment (Glasgow et al., 1999; Pringle, Hargreaves, Lozano, McKenna, & Zwolinsky, 2014). Reinforcing this approach, AJ, a BMX coach, indicated that “a lot of what I do is taster sessions and one offs.” AJ continued,

*A lot of councils are pushing outreach and turning up to random places and doing random things like little competitions, so that the kids go away happy and think “oh I wanna go and do that again” and go and find a BMX club somewhere else.*

Similarly Luca, also a BMX coach, highlighted how taster-sessions comprised a significant aspect of the recruitment undertaken at his club, which were integrated alongside a range of other promotional activities that utilized both social media and more traditional forms of marketing. He noted,

*We do taster sessions run by TFL [Transport for London], we do Facebook, web page, online stuff, all done by volunteers, we do flyers. We sometimes do BMX displays . . . we got 20 bikes in the local park and did a little track on the grass and 300 kids passed by in one day . . . [so] all the school kids in the borough got to know BMX.*

The outreach or taster-session approach was also significant for *SportHelp's* recruitment. Once *SportHelp* had established a program within a school, coaches were tasked with integrating young people into the charity's programs. This was both fundamental and cyclical: the sustainability of the program was directly linked to the number of participants in it. Jake, a table tennis coach, described the significance of the “numbers game” for *SportHelp*:

*Some lunch sessions have 50 kids. But there is no quality there. It's just kids playing table tennis, without any form of regularity. Yet, sessions with 50 kids are praised.*

Alfred, another table tennis coach, echoed the importance of having well-attended programs by recounting how, on arriving at his current school, he salvaged the *SportHelp* table tennis program, which was on the verge of being discontinued due to the limited number of participants. Consequently, *SportHelp* coaches' outreach work took two forms. The first occurred in school assemblies. Coaches would be given a timeslot to talk about the value of the

program to either a year group or a range of year groups. The second involved identifying young people through physical education (PE) sessions. Since the coaches were generally integrated into the PE departments of each school, they contributed to PE sessions with their expertise of the sport they coached. For instance, Karl, a basketball coach, spoke about how the bulk of his recruitment came through running taster sessions that were integrated into formal physical education lessons:

*The PE lessons is how I get to recruit for my club. I asked a PE teacher to get me in all the PE sessions, when they are doing basketball games, and I'll lead a session. I'll introduce myself to them, so they know who I am, I get to find out what the kids are like . . . so, that way I can start handing my letters [out].*

The second open access strategy identified was word-of-mouth advertising, an approach that entails exploiting existing informal social networks to recruit new participants (Scheffler & Ross, 2013). Like outreach programs, word of mouth was central to both *Sport4Youth* and *SportHelp*. BMX Coach Luca revealed that most new members “find out about the [BMX] club by themselves.” Likewise, Alan indicated how word-of-mouth advertising was predominant at his judo club, where young people who were already subscribed members of the club utilized their personal networks to encourage further participation and membership. He expanded,

*You get a little cluster of young people who all might go to the same school, for example, and they're enjoying it [judo], word of mouth gets out and we've found we've had more people come to us through word of mouth than [traditional] advertising.*

Echoing both Luca and Alan, *SportHelp's* coaches described the importance of existing informal networks as a recruitment strategy. For example, Vincent (basketball coach) explained,

*How do I get kids on board? Some kids, they just want to come. They might have played basketball before, and they come to high school and want to give it a go. Their friends entice them to come along.*

Further benefits of word-of-mouth advertising were provided by Raju, the club leader of a *Sport4Youth* sports hub, who indicated that the use of existing social networks helped to generate a sense of trust for new members as well as provide information about their club to young people who lived on other estates or in neighboring boroughs. Raju



explained,

*It's all about word of mouth. So, when the kids go to school they'll tell their other year groups "there's this-that happening, feel free to join"—that's how it works. For example, if you stay in one estate—like the kids in our estate they were like that—they didn't know what was going on in other estates. So for example in Poplar estate there was a football tournament, they wouldn't know about it; if there was a BMX competition down Mile End, they wouldn't have a clue. As we started to speak to other people around other estates it just naturally started picking up, it wasn't hard work, we just had to get the word out.*

## Theme 2. Targeted Strategies: Integrating Identified Young People

The second theme to emerge from the data referred to a more targeted approach to recruitment. This entailed either integrating an identified population of young people within a program that was offered for mainstream, fully accessible participation, or by providing a bespoke offering that was tailored to meet the needs and preferences of a specific group (Coalter, 2012; Kelly, 2011). While the responsibility for this form of recruitment was placed on the program leads in *Sport4Youth*, in *SportHelp*'s case it was the school who would predominantly identify and refer young people to a sports program.

Amber, a program lead for *Sport4Youth*, offered insight into how a more targeted approach was pivotal to the establishment of one specific club involved in *Sport4Youth*. She explained,

*The [multisports hub] program is quite a good example. . . . We know those kids hadn't been targeted before . . . I went down and spoke to them. . . . They're doing bugger all and they're just smoking weed all day and sitting in their council estate . . . so that's one of the best ways of getting to a new group of at-risk young people . . . but it's not always easy, you have to be talking to a lot of people to get there in the end, but that's a good way of getting to a new targeted group.*

Frequently, targeted recruitment to *Sport4Youth* involved a two-phase process involving additional strategic partners who could offer to young people access, expertise, or resources (Baker, El Ansari, & Crone, 2017) to underpin the tailored offering. As Amber explained, the initial phase of the process typically comprised the creation of a "map of partners," which listed local institutions and agencies whose remit was to engage young people who had become socially excluded. She continued,

*We identified organizations that were already working with young people that we know are at risk of crime, antisocial behavior or education failure. We then go and have a conversation with them and talk about what kind of provision we can offer, what we think might work for that group. . . . Normally, the really targeted stuff tended to be a block of six to 10 sessions with a group that we had identified.*

Having identified suitable partners, the second phase of this targeted approach was to tailor the sport-based program to the preferences of the identified population, utilizing sport as a hook for further personal and social development (Green, 2007; Nichols, 2007). As Amber continued,

*It's literally a case of making it as easy and accessible as possible. . . . Is it taking sport to them [the target population] or is it them coming to the club, what works better? Do we need a guardian with them, do we need this that and the other? The more [targeted recruitment] we do, even though it's a lot more time consuming—if we could do a lot of this we would have more impact on these [social outcomes].*

Beatrice, the chief operations officer for *SportHelp*, largely mirrored Amber's approach by emphasizing the importance of creating a sports program bespoke to each school:

*The first thing [we would ask a school head teacher] would be what sport do you think is most relevant for your school, and why? . . . Do you have the right facilities to enable the coach to work effectively? As you can imagine, for something like tennis, it is pretty crucial that they have courts. And then, it is what you want from SportHelp. . . . Do you want us to work with pupils being referred to us who might be struggling? Do you want us to go out and find the kids? It tends to be a mixture, the schools want a mixture of delivery models.*

The "struggling" young people *SportHelp* usually worked with typically demonstrated academic or behavioral difficulties. Such young people would in turn receive referrals to the sports programs under the assumption that joining a sport club could aid in their development (Kelly, 2011). Lisa (a program manager) spoke about this process and clarified how a young person who had been referred to the program was made to understand that participation in the charity's programs was dependent on them improving their behavior or attitude. She noted,

*If, for example, we know a young person has come onto our program, maybe they've been referred by the school, because they have various different issues, let's say anger*

*management, they are truanting, they have passion for table tennis, or basketball, or whatever the sport may be. . . . We will try to use that to hook them into the program, but we would have to make them know that if they aren't complying, then they can't represent us.*

Vincent, a basketball coach, provided a further example of how the charity's recruitment practices benefited the social integration of targeted individuals or groups (young people with behavioral difficulties) by enabling them to join an activity that was accessible for all (sport). Talking about one case in particular, Vincent stated,

*There's a young lad in year seven this year. He started school quite poorly, a lot of referrals, a lot of behavior issues, getting into a lot of trouble, most days in fact. His pastoral support manager, his house leader, or whoever it was, suggested coming along to basketball so that he could learn a bit of discipline, and be part of a team. He can't get enough of it now. He comes in pretty much every morning, even when he doesn't have a session, he likes to come watch the older boys train. It's really given him something to grab hold of, that he enjoys, and values, and that has helped him become a lot better within the school environment.*

Despite the significant benefits *SportHelp* and *Sport4Youth* staff identified when discussing targeted recruitment strategies, they highlighted some challenges implementing the approach presented, in particular in engaging the young people with the activity. As Amber remarked,

*It would lying if I said this sort of stuff was easy because a lot of the time . . . the [young people] would just sit out or not partake if they didn't like it . . . or they'd complain and they'd said "I don't wanna go back there" . . . obviously it wasn't like that for all of them but working with these groups it does take time and you have to build up trust with the coach . . . it's a long process.*

### **Theme 3. Prioritizing and Maximizing Participant Numbers**

The third theme, which encapsulates aspects of the previous two themes, highlighted how both *Sport4Youth* and *SportHelp* were inclined toward a strategy where maximizing the number of participants recruited to the program was the primary objective. Furthermore, there was an indication that the need to increase participant numbers outweighed attempts to engage young people most in need of intervention or who exhibited significant risk factors associated with social exclusion (Farrington & Welsh, 2007).

Amber (a *Sport4Youth* program leader) noted how the preference for recruitment through generally available outreach activities enabled program participation to be maximized while also (partially) attending to engaging the most marginalized young people. She explained,

*It is difficult for us to know for sure . . . but if you're in the middle of an estate the chances are, even if they're not totally deprived, they would still be considered to be in a disadvantaged area and be fairly deprived on the scale of things. I'd like to think that we are still getting to some of those [deprived] people with the [outreach] stuff . . . obviously it's more obvious with the targeted stuff, but it is a numbers game with the outreach stuff, and the more that we can do [the more likely we will reach our targeted population].*

By the same token, AJ, a *Sport4Youth* BMX coach, referred to the convenience that outreach activities offer as a recruitment tool but questioned the impact such approaches have on instigating and sustaining participation in sport as a precursor to enacting social change (Morgan & Parker, 2017). He observed,

*The disparity is huge . . . some boroughs are much more "we need everything going on, we've got funding coming out of our ears for this sort of thing," they just want to hit as many boxes as they can and they'll get anybody in. So doing it just drums up a lot of interest and then the council, or whoever, just hopes people jump in [emphasis added].*

Both Amber and AJ's concerns about maximizing participant engagement as a core recruitment concern were also apparent for *SportHelp*. These issues were captured by Dane, the impact manager at *SportHelp*:

*What our main challenge is, is to balance the needs of the people who pay for the programs to be there in the first place with the needs of the people who access the programs. I think there are a lot of underlying, slightly naïve assumptions about the nature of the issues and the issues the young people encounter, and that's naivety from us, but also from funders, so they will pay on outcomes that are completely impossible to deliver, or don't make a great deal of relevance. The whole sort of, they call it the bums on seats approach, whereby lots of funders, big funders, will fund just through people come through the door. How many people have you had come through the door in the last six months? Oh, 100? Well, get it up to 120 in three months' time, brilliant. 120? Done. Have your money. But that doesn't make a great deal of sense when we are talking about sport-for-development. . . . These are the kinds of*

## DISCUSSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR SPORT-FOR-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE NEOLIBERAL CONTEXT

The testimonies presented indicate how the recruitment strategies of both organizations were inclined toward maximizing participants, which placed the onus on the individuals themselves to instigate engagement with the program. Consequently, by characterizing recruitment approaches as a numbers game, the testimonies capture concisely the concerns that critical commentators (Coalter, 2012; Nudzor, 2010; Spaaij et al., 2013) have raised about the value of implementing outreach recruitment strategies to engage marginalized youth. While a numbers game suggests that there is more potential to attract disadvantaged young people from all backgrounds, the above authors have highlighted how such approaches endorse a heavy emphasis on self-selection. Furthermore, since self-selection is predominantly rooted in having some ties to the community, it would appear that marginalized youth with stronger existing social networks had a higher chance of being attracted to the programs than those lacking in such relationships.

Such observations cohere strongly with contemporary (neoliberal) notions of personal responsibility being the starting point for social inclusion (Paton et al., 2012; Rose, 2000a). Therefore, while the benefits of the outreach recruitment were clearly articulated, the data also revealed some limitations with this approach, most notably the necessity for an existing social network to instigate engagement. Indeed, both Amber and AJ (*Sport4Youth*) conceded that open access recruitment favored young people with strong parental support in particular, a feature that has been reported as lacking within socially excluded youth populations (Nudzor, 2010). As an example, Amber, the program lead at *Sport4Youth* observed,

*It's more likely for a young person who has very encouraging parents or someone who is prepared to drop them off that's going to turn up [to a sport-based program].*

Therefore, the limitations and concerns of this skewed numbers game emerged from the data of this study in two ways: first, in relation to the effectiveness of open access approaches to recruiting populations of young people who are notoriously difficult to locate and engage (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011); and second, through an acknowledgement that such approaches were often employed for the mere fact that they provided a convenient and resource efficient means by which to attain a breadth of organizational outcomes while still (partially) addressing the objectives of

a social inclusion initiative. Such findings reveal how the ubiquitous presence of neoliberal governance and the necessity for providers to exceed agreed, quantifiable targets, acted as an over-riding constraint to the recruitment methods employed by the two charities and regulated their practices through “technologies of performance” (Costas Batlle et al., 2017; Dean, 2010). Indeed, as Thorpe and Rinehart (2013) observe, survival within competitive markets with shrinking levels of funding require organizations to employ corporate-inspired strategies “that resonate strongly with the neoliberal focus on market solutions” (p. 134). Consequently, the financial sustainability of such organizations often hinge on the extent to which they can attain predetermined performance indicators (Green, 2007; Houlihan & Green, 2009), rather than by the extent to which they can provide opportunities for social assimilation and inclusion. As noted, this paradox was best articulated by Dane, an impact manager at *SportHelp*, when he highlighted the “bums on seats approach” that was so evident in his recruitment practices.

Such findings highlight how the two sporting organizations examined in this article were inclined toward open access or outreach recruitment approaches (Coalter, 2012), because of their potential to provide the most efficient means to meet participation targets. However, further support as to how the market-oriented approach of neoliberalism and the preference for competition over collectivism (Peck & Theodore, 2012) influenced recruitment was provided by Amber, the program lead at *Sport4Youth*, when reflecting on some of the more targeted approaches to program recruitment. When discussing her recruitment practices when working with key partner agencies, she noted,

*If you work with a [PRU (pupil referral unit)], that PRU probably gets contacted by people like us all the time saying “we really want to get access to your kids.” So these kids are dealt all these different opportunities and they don't necessarily see them as valuable, they are probably like, “I did paintballing last week and now I'm doing this this week.” . . . Almost because these at-risk kids are the ones that everybody wants to be working with, you face these things where people are fighting over them for their stats and their numbers.*

Consequently, it would appear that the incentive for sport-based programs to engage marginalized young people in order to meet numerical performance indicators and demonstrate their worth for further investment presents two additional yet interrelated problems. First, where open access recruitment is implemented, the preoccupation with attaining predetermined targets stimulates recruitment



practices that reflect the aforementioned Pistachio Effect (Haudenhuyse et al, 2012a; Haudenhuyse et al., 2012b), where attention and resources are often focused on segments of the targeted population that are most easily identified and more likely to achieve program outcomes, rather than those whose needs may be more complex (Collins & Haudenhuyse, 2015; Spaaij et al., 2013).

Second, and as mentioned, the recruitment practices of the two organizations often position the individual as the primary initiator for their own destiny, to further reflect the double movement of autonomization and responsabilization (Rose, 2000a) apparent within previous critiques of programs designed to enhance social inclusion. As such, these recruitment practices illustrate a “politics of conduct,” whereby inclusion is conditional upon potential participants assuming individual responsibility for social inclusion and socioeconomic mobility (Paton et al., 2012). This was underlined by the testimony of Karl, a basketball coach with *SportHelp*, who spoke of one young man who he had tried to engage in his program:

*I was calling his parents, I was talking to his brother, I was trying everything, contacting his friends . . . but, he just didn't want to help himself. And if he doesn't want to help himself, I can't help him at all. It's tough. I tried other stuff to get through, but I just couldn't. He shut down every door [emphasis added].*

Consequently, in recruiting young people to sport-based programs, an inherent tension exists whereby the pressure to exceed predetermined performance indicators (and the dire consequences of failure) far outweigh the surface-level intentions of such programs, which are often associated with enabling social mobility for its participants (Collins, 2010; Kelly, 2011). This tension was captured poignantly and passionately by Dane, the impact manager at *SportHelp*:

*To be honest, if I was being crude, it would be borderline hypocrisy [emphasis added]. . . . It is actually more difficult to develop people the more people you have on your program.*

Clearly, the testimonies of staff from both programs highlight the overarching necessity for charitable organizations to meet preagreed participation targets to unlock additional or future funding streams (and optimize organizational survival) as a primary objective. Furthermore, the findings indicate how this primary objective influenced decisions regarding recruitment strategy to promote an efficient and short-term focus, as opposed to a more developmental strategy that was

cognizant of the significant time and investment needed to assimilate the most marginalized young people into mainstream activity (Kelly, 2011).

## CONCLUSION

This research adds to the growing literature concerned with correspondences between participation in sport and the enhancement of social inclusion. However, in order to consider the mere potential of sport participation to enact social change, it is imperative that the target population is engaged with relevant programs, which places center stage the recruitment strategies that are adopted within the program. Within this article, insights into the recruitment practices from two charitable organizations engaged with sport-for-development programs have been presented. The findings suggest that while a breadth of approaches were employed, the primary purpose of recruitment strategies was inclined toward the maximization of program participants to increase the potential to receive additional funding support.

While these findings present scope for policy makers and program designers to glean insights that may assist in contributing to program outcomes, two principal observations emerge. First, the reliance on community sports clubs and a volunteer workforce to be the transformative agents of change and deliver the outcomes of critical social policy programs is problematic (Morgan & Bush, 2016; Nicholson, Hoyer, & Houlihan, 2011), most pertinently given the propensity for many community sports clubs to concentrate their recruitment activities around open access approaches, involving word-of-mouth strategies. Consequently, for young people to accrue the social benefits of sport-for-development programs, there is a heavy reliance on the statistical probability (i.e., a numbers game) of possessing an existing personal contact from within the sporting community. Furthermore, there is a need for the young person to connect with a sports club that prioritizes youth development over sport-based outcomes.

The second insight relates to the need to deviate away from the short-term, outcome-oriented approaches that permeate the design and evaluation of these programs. While short-term, numerically focused approaches to sport policy have received significant criticism elsewhere in the literature (Collins & Kay, 2014; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), the current study has revealed that the focus on maximizing participants, alongside the apparent difficulties and failings attached to targeted recruitment strategies, has, to some extent, encouraged the recruitment of those young people most likely to achieve program outcomes (Collins & Haudenhuyse, 2015; Spaaij et al., 2013).

However, within a neoliberal-informed context, where organizational survival is at the behest of market solutions, the freedom of choice to employ strategies that may enable deep-rooted social change could be compromised (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2013). Clearly, the strategies adopted to recruit young people to sport-based programs become pivotal as an initial step toward achieving program outcomes and demonstrating the potential for sport participation to contribute to enhanced social inclusion. Therefore, if sport is to assume a role as a hook for the development of social inclusion (Schulenkorf et al., 2016), then it is at the juncture of initial engagement where the influences of neoliberal principles require the most consideration to ensure that those in most need of intervention are engaged by and benefit from sport-based programs.

To address the central limitation of our study—the lack of extant work on recruitment practices—we propose that future directions for the sport-for-development literature further focus on recruitment practices and strategies. It would be useful to emulate recent work that has explored participants' motivations to engage in sport-for-development activities (e.g., Rowe et al., 2016) to identify barriers that associated organizations face when recruiting participants and understand how these barriers can be circumvented. Equally, it is important to broaden our understanding of recruitment strategies across different sport-for-development contexts. Our work focused on sports programs in an urban setting of the global north. Having insights into recruitment approaches and tensions in both rural settings and the global south would further contribute to the literature.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of this paper, we understand social inclusion to be concerned with enabling access to mainstream activity and the generation of opportunities within society (see Haudenhuyse & Theeboom, 2015; Morgan, Parker, & Roberts, 2019).

<sup>2</sup>In the interests of anonymity, pseudonyms have been used throughout.

<sup>3</sup>In addition to the time spent with participants during the interview process, both researchers spent considerable time within the clubs and settings where intervention activities took place. These interactions (ranging between one and three hours per visit) occurred in the weeks leading up to the start of data collection and continued throughout the data

collection process. While these interactions had nothing to do with the data collection per se, this informal engagement enabled both researchers to familiarize themselves with the research context and the eventual interview participants (and vice versa).

## REFERENCES

- Apple, M. W. (2001). *Educating the "right" way: Markets, standards, God, and inequality*. New York: Routledge.
- Baker, C., El Ansari, W., & Crone, D. (2017). Partnership working in sport and physical activity promotion: An assessment of process and outcomes in community sports networks. *Public Policy and Administration*, 32(2), 87–109.
- Banks, C. (2013). *Youth, crime and justice*. London: Routledge.
- Bean, C., & Forneris, T. (2016). Exploring stakeholders' experiences of implementing an ice hockey programme for Inuit youth. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 4(6), 6–19.
- Bhaskar, R. (1978). *A realist theory of science* (2nd Edition). Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Bonnington, O., & Rose, D. (2014). Exploring stigmatisation among people diagnosed with either bipolar disorder or borderline personality disorder: A critical realist analysis. *Social Science and Medicine*, 123(7), 7–17.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic Analysis. In H. Cooper (Ed.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology: Vol 2. Research designs* (pp. 57-71). American Psychological Association.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. London: SAGE.
- Byers, T. (2013). Using critical realism: A new perspective on control of volunteers in sport clubs. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 13(1), 5–31.
- Carvalho, S., & White, H. (2004). Theory-based evaluation: The case of social funds. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25(2), 141–160.

- Coakley, J. (2011). Youth sports: What counts as “positive development?” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 35(3), 306–324.
- Coalter, F. (2007). *A wider social role for sport: Who's keeping the score?* London: Routledge.
- Coalter, F. (2008). Sport-in-development: Development for and through sport. In *Sport and social capital* (pp. 39–68). London: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Coalter, F. (2012). “There is loads of relationships here”: Developing a programme theory for sport-for-change programmes. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(5), 594–612.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Collins, M. (2010). From “sport for good” to “sport for sport’s sake”: Not a good move for sports development in England? *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 2(3), 367–379.
- Collins, M., & Haudenhuyse, R. P. (2015). Social exclusion and austerity policies in England: The role of sports in a new area of social polarisation and inequality? *Social Inclusion*, 3(3), 5–18.
- Collins, M., & Kay, T. (2014). *Sport and social exclusion* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cope, E., Bailey, R., Parnell, D., & Nicholls, A. (2017). Football, sport and the development of young people’s life skills. *Sport in Society*, 20(7), 789–801.
- Costas Batlle, I., Carr, S., & Brown, C. (2017). “I just can’t bear these procedures, I just want to be out there working with children”: An autoethnography on neoliberalism and youth sports charities in the UK. *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(9), 853–865.
- Dacombe, R. (2013). Sports clubs and civic inclusion: Rethinking the poverty of association. *Sport in Society*, 16(10), 1263–1278.
- Dean, M. (2010). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*. London: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. (2004). Reviewed work: Explaining society: Critical realism in the social sciences by Berth Danermark, Mats Ekstrom, Liselotte Jakobsen, and Jan ch. Karlsson. *Contemporary Sociology*, 33(2), 249–250.
- Easton, G. (2010). Critical realism in case study research. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(1), 118–128.
- Farrington, D. P., & Welsh, B. C. (2007). *Saving children from a life of crime: Early risk factors and effective interventions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Finlay, I., Sheridan, M., & McKay, J. (2010). Young people on the margins: In need of more choices and more chances in twenty-first century Scotland. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(5), 851–867.
- Fletcher, A. J. (2017). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: Methodology meets method. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 20(2), 181–194.
- Forde, S. D., Lee, D. S., Mills, C., & Frisby, W. (2015). Moving towards social inclusion: Manager and staff perspectives on an award winning community sport and recreation program for immigrants. *Sport Management Review*, 18(1), 126–138.
- Glasgow, R. E., Vogt, T. M., & Boles, S. M. (1999). Evaluating the public health impact of health promotion interventions: The RE-AIM framework. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(9), 1322–1327.
- Green, M. (2007). Governing under advanced liberalism: Sport policy and the social investment state. *Policy Sciences*, 40(1), 55–71.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. London: Sage.
- Harris, S., Mori, K., & Collins, M. (2009). Great expectations: Voluntary sports clubs and their role in delivering national policy for English sport. *Voluntas*, 20(4), 405–423.
- Hartmann, D., & Kwauk, C. (2011). Sport and development: An overview, critique, and reconstruction. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 35(3), 284–305.
- Haudenhuyse, R., & Theeboom, M. (2015). Introduction to the special issue “Sport for social inclusion: Critical analyses and future challenges.” *Social Inclusion*, 3(3), 1–4.

- Haudenhuyse, R. P., Theeboom, M., & Coalter, F. (2012a). The potential of sports-based social interventions for vulnerable youth: Implications for sport coaches and youth workers. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 15(4), 437–454.
- Haudenhuyse, R. P., Theeboom, M., & Nols, Z. (2012b). Sports-based interventions for socially vulnerable youth: Towards well-defined interventions with easy-to-follow outcomes? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(4), 471–484.
- Haudenhuyse, R. P., Theeboom, M., & Skille, E. A. (2014). Towards understanding the potential of sports-based practices for socially vulnerable youth. *Sport in Society*, 17(2), 139–156.
- Hills, S., Velásquez, A. G., & Walker, M. (2018). Sport as an analogy to teach life skills and redefine moral values: A case study of the "Seedbeds of Peace" sport-for-development programme in Medellín, Colombia. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 6(10), 25–37.
- Houlihan, B., & Green, M. (2009). Modernization and sport: The reform of Sport England and UK Sport. *Public Administration*, 87(3), 678–698.
- Hoye, R., Nicholson, M., & Houlihan, B. (2010). *Sport and policy: Issues and analysis*. London: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Hylton, K., & Totten, M. (2013). Community sport development. In *Sport development: policy, process and practice* (3rd ed., pp. 80–126). London: Routledge.
- Kelly, L. (2011). "Social inclusion" through sports-based interventions? *Critical Social Policy*, 31(1), 126–150.
- Morgan, H. J., & Bush, A. J. (2016). Sports coach as transformative leader: Arresting school disengagement through community sport-based initiatives. *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(5), 759–777.
- Morgan, H. J., & Parker, A. (2017). Generating recognition, acceptance and social inclusion in marginalised youth populations: The potential of sports-based interventions. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20(08), 1028–1043.
- Morgan, H., Parker, A., & Roberts, W. (2019). Community sport programmes and social inclusion: What role for positive psychological capital? *Sport in Society*, 0(0), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1565397>
- Nichols, G. (2007). *Sport and crime reduction: The role of sports in tackling youth crime*. London: Routledge.
- Nicholson, M., Hoye, R., & Houlihan, B. (2011). Conclusion. In R. H. & B. H. M. Nicholson (Eds.), *Participation in sport: International policy perspectives* (pp. 294–308). London: Routledge.
- Nudzor, H. (2010). Depicting young people by what they are not: Conceptualisation and usage of NEET as a deficit label. *Educational Futures*, 2(2), 12–25.
- Paton, K., Mooney, G., & Mckee, K. (2012). Class, citizenship and regeneration: Glasgow and the Commonwealth Games 2014. *Antipode*, 44(4), 1470–1489.
- Peachey, J. W., Cunningham, G., Lyras, A., Cohen, A., & Bruening, J. (2014). Exploring participant motivations to take part in an elite, multinational, sport-for-development event. *Event Management*, 18(2), 153–168.
- Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2012). Reanimating neoliberalism: Process geographies of neoliberalisation. *Social Anthropology*, 20(2), 177–185.
- Phillpots, L., Grix, J., & Quarmby, T. (2011). Centralized grassroots sport policy and "new governance": A case study of County Sports Partnerships in the UK—unpacking the paradox. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 46(3), 265–281.
- Pringle, A., Hargreaves, J., Lozano, L., McKenna, J., & Zwolinsky, S. (2014). Assessing the impact of football-based health improvement programmes: Stay onside, avoid own goals and score with the evaluation! *Soccer and Society*, 15(6), 970–987.
- Rose, N. (2000a). Community, citizenship, and the Third Way. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43(9), 1395–1411.
- Rose, N. (2000b). Government and control. *British Journal of Criminology*, 40(2), 321–339.
- Rowe, K., Shilbury, D., Ferkins, L., & Hinckson, E. (2016). Challenges for sport development: Women's entry level cycling participation. *Sport Management Review*, 19(4), 417–430.
- Scheffler, M. B., & Ross, S. D. (2013). The word-of-mouth phenomenon: Its presence and impact in a sport setting. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 6(1), 1–18.



Schulenkorf, N., Sherry, E., & Rowe, K. (2016). Sport for development: An integrated literature review. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30(1), 22–39.

Smith, B., & McGannon, K. R. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: Problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 11(1), 101–121.

Smith, B., Sparkes, A. C., & Caddick, C. (2014). Judging qualitative research. In L. Nelson, R. Groom, & P. Potrac (Eds.), *Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 192–202). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Spaaij, R., Magee, J., & Jeanes, R. (2013). Urban youth, worklessness and sport: A comparison of sports-based employability programmes in Rotterdam and Stoke-on-Trent. *Urban Studies*, 50(8), 1608–1624. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098012465132>

Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 443–466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Thorpe, H., & Rinehart, R. (2013). Action sport NGOs in a neo-liberal context: The cases of Skateistan and Surf Aid International. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 37(2), 115–141.

Veal, A. J., & Darcy, S. (2014). *Research methods in sport studies and sport management: A practical guide*. London: Routledge.

Whitley, M. A., Massey, W. V., & Farrell, K. (2017). A programme evaluation of "Exploring Our Strengths and Our Future": Making sport relevant to the educational, social, and emotional needs of youth. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 5(9), 21–35.

Winlow, S., & Hall, S. (2013). *Rethinking social exclusion: The end of the social?* London: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). London: Sage.

## Original Research

**“Putting kids first”: An exploration of the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model to youth development in Eswatini****Zenzi Huysmans<sup>1</sup>, Damien Clement<sup>1</sup>, Meredith A. Whitley<sup>2</sup>, Matthew Gonzalez<sup>1</sup>, Tammy Sheehy<sup>3</sup>**<sup>1</sup> West Virginia University, USA<sup>2</sup> Adelphi University, USA<sup>3</sup> Central Virginia Community College, USA*Corresponding author email: zenzi.huysmans@gmail.com***ABSTRACT**

This exploratory study examined the potential of using sport as a creative and engaging context to facilitate life skills development in socially vulnerable youth in Eswatini, who face major context-specific challenges to their healthy development. The sport for development program was designed using the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model with adaptations made to fit the cultural context. Participants in the program were local coaches ( $N=3$  males) and socially vulnerable youth ( $N=48$ , 25 females and 23 males) aged 11-15 years old, recruited from a community-based organization. Coaches were trained as the primary implementers of the program. Data collection employed a mixed-methods approach that triangulated data from surveys, learning quizzes, focus groups, and interviews. Findings supported the potential value of the program in cultivating the development and possible transfer of personal responsibility (e.g., self-direction skills such as goal setting and decision making) and social responsibility (e.g., interpersonal skills such as respect, self-control, conflict resolution, and caring) behaviors. The study provided preliminary support for the contextual utility of engendering these developmental outcomes in an environment where youth are facing a major health threat (i.e., HIV/AIDS) and community challenges (e.g., gender-based violence, poverty). Continued investment in long-term sport for development programming in Eswatini is warranted.

**INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a formative period in the healthy

development of youth and can lay the foundation for future well-being and fulfilment when the appropriate social and structural support systems are provided (Holt, 2008; Fatusi & Hindin, 2010). In developing countries, this youth demographic (aged 10-24 years old) makes up the largest proportion of the population (UNFPA, 2015). However, young people in these areas are facing significant health-related challenges as well as limited resources to support their development (Fatusi & Hindin, 2010). In the Kingdom of Eswatini, a small country in Southern Africa, youth comprise 36% of the population (WHO 2013; Mavundla, Dlamini, Nyoni, & Mac-Ikemenjima, 2015). While youth in Eswatini struggle with the more universal challenges associated with adolescence (e.g., social identity development, peer pressure), these youth are also faced with major context-specific challenges. These include economic and resource concerns, such as high poverty rates (63%), low school attendance (only half of youth attend school), and unemployment (42.6% for youth aged 15-24) (Mavundla et al., 2015; Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs, 2015).

Eswatini has the highest global prevalence of HIV/AIDS, with almost 30% of adults infected (UNAIDS, 2016). This not only puts youth, and especially young females, at significantly higher risk for infection (AVERT, 2014; Underwood, Skinner, Osman & Schwandt, 2011), but also has psychosocial and economic effects, including caring for sick parents, experiencing increased financial pressure, and dropping out of school to earn a living (AVERT, 2014; Foster & Williamson, 2000). Furthermore, high adult mortality rates due to the HIV epidemic have resulted in a youth population composed of almost 50% orphans and

**Keywords:** sport for development; life skills education; sub-Saharan Africa; community challenges[www.jsfd.org](http://www.jsfd.org)

vulnerable children (AVERT, 2014). Many Eswatini youth therefore lack guidance and mentorship from adult role models to support their healthy development, which is concerning as it occurs within a context of health and resource challenges and exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as parental neglect or substance use, death of a parent, and child abuse. Thus, investing in youth development and mentorship initiatives in Eswatini should be prioritized.

### **Sport as a Tool for Youth Development in Eswatini**

Although there are government-led youth development policies and initiatives in Eswatini, youth buy-in is limited (Mavundla et al., 2015; Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs, 2015), suggesting a need to engage young people in their own development through creative, fun, and intentional programs. Sport for development (SFD) programs may be one innovative, practical, and well-liked avenue through which to achieve this goal (Beutler, 2008). Although evidence-based practice is not yet the norm, given the limited efficacy data (Langer, 2015; Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Blom et al., 2019), extant literature supports the potential role of sport as a vehicle for youth development (Schulenkorf, Sherry, & Rowe, 2016; Svensson & Woods, 2017). Sport for development initiatives are conceptualized as contexts where youth can actively engage in their own development and create meaningful learning outcomes for themselves (Coakley, 2011; Côté & Hancock, 2016). Moreover, when youth have access to positive peer connections and empathetic coach-youth relationships, sport participation can result in positive developmental outcomes (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Hermens, Super, Verkooijen, & Koelen, 2017; Whitley, Massey, & Wilkison, 2018). Through the creation of constructive and positive environments, sport participation may buffer the negative impacts of ACEs and developmental traumas (Hughes, Ford, Davies, Homolova, Bellis, 2018; Whitley et al., 2018), build resilience (Bellis et al., 2018), and help youth grow into civically engaged and conscientious adults (Coakley, 2011). For socially vulnerable populations, sport participation can also help youth develop the life skills needed to overcome the challenges of everyday life and “succeed in the different environments in which they live, such as school, home, and in their neighborhoods” (Danish et al., 2004, p.40). Thus, SFD programs may be a potential vehicle through which to support the healthy development of youth in Eswatini.

Several studies in Eswatini indicate a large percentage of youth hold positive attitudes toward sport and its benefits on health and well-being (Ndlangamandla, Burnett, &

Roux, 2012; Toriola, 2010). However, only a small percentage of youth actually participate in sport or physical education in school, with half of youth not even attending school (Ndlangamandla et al., 2012; Toriola, 2010). Further, female engagement is lower because they feel less competent, particularly during secondary school. This is partly affected by a culture of male dominance combined with a lack of female role models in sport (Toriola, 2010). In addition, financial, structural, and equipment barriers also limit higher overall youth sport participation levels (Ndlangamandla et al., 2012; Toriola, 2010). Therefore, despite youth enjoyment of sport and awareness of its benefits, there are significant systemic and cultural barriers that limit youth sport participation, especially for young females. Further, there is limited programming that utilizes sport as a context for youth development in Eswatini.

Successful implementation of SFD initiatives in South Africa suggests potential for these programs to create meaningful developmental outcomes for Eswatini youth. South Africa, which borders Eswatini, is a comparable youth context, with 66% of the population below the age of 35 and similar developmental challenges (e.g., high unemployment, poverty, HIV, youth-led households) (UNFPA South Africa, 2011). Extant literature indicates that sport participation helped South African youth develop valuable intrapersonal and interpersonal life skills as well as overcome significant community challenges through the creation of a positive, supportive climate (Whitley, Hayden, & Gould, 2013; Whitley, Hayden et al., 2016). Research with a coaching club in eastern South Africa demonstrated positive program experiences (e.g., social connection with peers, sense of safety and belonging) and life skill acquisition (e.g., confidence, self-discipline, decision making, communication) (Draper & Coalter, 2016). Burnett's (2014) work also emphasizes the positive impact SFD programs can have on youth prosocial behavior within an environment of trusting teacher-learner relationships. These South African findings are consistent with North American studies supporting the potential for youth sport participation to facilitate cognitive, emotional, and social life skills outcomes, with a specific focus on socially vulnerable youth (Hermens et al., 2017; Holt et al., 2017; Martinek & Hellison, 2016). Therefore, SFD programs may be an effective approach in Eswatini to create positive youth experiences and support meaningful life skills outcomes.

### **Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model**

Within SFD, a well-established life skills instructional model is Hellison's (2011) Teaching Personal and Social



Responsibility (TPSR) model. The TPSR model is designed to help youth develop the necessary life skills to take more responsibility for their well-being and for the welfare of others. A multitude of SFD programs have used the TPSR model in various contexts (e.g., in-school, after-school, community-based), with socially vulnerable or at-risk youth as the primary beneficiaries (Caballero-Blanco, Delgado-Noguera, & Escartí-Carbonell, 2013; Gordon & Doyle, 2015; Martinek & Hellison, 2016). Studies (primarily qualitative) have reported outcomes related to self-control, effort, reaching goals, leadership, and helping or cooperative behaviors (Bean, Kendellen, & Forneris, 2016; Cryan & Martinek, 2017; Escartí, Gutiérrez, Pascual, & Marín., 2010; Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Boutet, & Borbee, 2019). Further, qualitative accounts of participant experiences indicate high levels of enjoyment, caring adult relationships, and feelings of safety and belonging (Escartí et al., 2010; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016; Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Boutet et al., 2019). Some research, albeit inconsistent, also supports the transfer of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills such as self-control, emotional regulation, effort, respect, and social skills to other domains (e.g., school, home, peer groups) (Bean et al., 2016; Caballero-Blanco et al. 2013; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Hemphill & Richards, 2016; Whitley, Coble et al., 2016). Hellison (2011) also recognized that the life skills foci of any TPSR program are social constructions, which should be modified to adapt to the cultural context as long as the core TPSR spirit is retained (Martinek & Hellison, 2016; Gordon, 2009).

Despite the potential for TPSR programs to support youth development, there are concerns with the methodological rigor of research related to TPSR program efficacy (Caballero-Blanco et al. 2013; Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Boutet et al., 2019). Further, the majority of TPSR programs have been implemented in Western contexts where youth challenges are culture-specific (Gordon & Doyle, 2015), with a recent TPSR program in South Africa lacking efficacy data (Whitley, 2012). Thus, the implementation and evaluation of an SFD program guided by the TPSR model in Eswatini could add to the growing evidence base, particularly given the collaborative and methodologically rigorous approach. Additionally, this may meet the need for more creative and effective platforms to address the developmental challenges facing youth in Eswatini.

### Current Study

The current exploratory study was a part of a larger examination of youth participation experiences, developmental outcomes, and implementation successes and

challenges of a short TPSR-based SFD program for socially vulnerable youth in an Eswatini community. The findings were intended to inform the design of longer term and more sustainable SFD programming in Eswatini. The current manuscript focused on the following research question: What are the immediate life skills and developmental outcomes of a short SFD program in Eswatini observed across the five responsibilities levels of the TPSR model?

### METHODS

This exploratory study was guided by a social constructionist paradigm (Crotty, 1998), which posits that we create and construct meaning through our interactions with our social and cultural context. A central aim of constructionist research is to understand the lived experience of the research participant as expressed from their viewpoint (Ponterotto, 2005). This epistemological stance was chosen because this study was exploring the application of a Western-derived model in a non-Western context, where youth life experiences and SFD program experiences would be shaped by the social and cultural context.

### Positionality

The emphasis on co-construction of meaning in social constructionism necessitates the examination of the primary researcher's background that may influence the research process (Creswell, 2007; Ponterotto, 2005). The primary researcher was born and raised in Eswatini, but her ethnic heritage is European. Consequently, she was raised in a home environment that subscribed to European belief systems and a social environment rooted in Swazi culture. Her educational background ranges from a local primary school to an international high school to university education in the United States. These experiences shaped her approach to the research process including her choices related to methodology, program implementation, and data analysis, which reflect an emphasis on including multiple perspectives in data collection, collaborating with the local community in program design, and honoring the social construction of knowledge and truth. From the participants' perspective, she was likely considered both an outsider, given her ethnicity and researcher identity, as well as an insider, due to her ability to speak conversational SiSwati and her Eswatini background.

### Setting

The study took place at a nonprofit youth organization operating in a small community in the Lobamba region of Eswatini. This community is characterized by high levels of

poverty, limited employment opportunities, and many orphans and vulnerable youth. The organization provides psychosocial services and school funding support for socially vulnerable youth, with access to a vegetable garden, sheltered outdoor play area, and soccer field. The organization also facilitates skill-building workshops on various topics (e.g., HIV/AIDS, abuse, grief, health). To assist with literacy development, the organization provides preschool education and afternoon classes for primary school-aged children.

### Participants

Participants were youth and local coaches in the Lobamba region of Eswatini. Forty-eight youth ( $N=48$ , 25 females and 23 males), all single or double orphans (as a result of the HIV/AIDS epidemic), aged 11-15 years old ( $M=12.6$  years old) participated in the SFD program, with a subset ( $N=33$ , 22 females and 11 males) also agreeing to participate in the research component. Although the group size for the SFD program was intended to be 15 youth based on recommendations for TPSR group activities and the creation of caring climate (Cryan & Martinek, 2017), all youth who expressed interest were allowed to participate, given the program's ethos. Eligibility criteria included: (a) attendance at an afternoon literacy class at the youth organization, (b) conversational English language proficiency, (c) 10-15 years old, and (d) signed guardian consent and youth assent. The organization suggested English language proficiency as a criterion, given it is the primary instruction language in school and is needed for professional success in Eswatini. Youth participation in the program did not require involvement in the research component.

Coach participants (2 Eswatini, 1 Zimbabwe; all male;  $M=27.3$  years old, range=25-30) had an average of 5.67 years (range=2-12) of coaching experience in basketball, soccer, volleyball, athletics, badminton, and aerobics. Coach eligibility criteria included: (a) at least two years of experience coaching a youth sport team, (b) at least 18 years old, (c) both English and SiSwati language proficiency, and (d) participation in both the program and research components. Although one coach disengaged from the program after the first week due to a full-time employment opportunity, he was still included in the research component. Two coaches had no prior training in positive youth development, while the third coach had partially completed a course in positive youth development.

Coaches were recruited by the primary researcher using purposive and snowball sampling through email and phone and from the coaching connections established during the

needs assessment (see below). Coaches of a similar ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and background were recruited, as the literature suggests they are more likely to be viewed as mentors, which is an important predictor of positive youth development outcomes (Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2007). While every effort was made to recruit a female coach, this was not possible given the limited number of female coaches in Eswatini. During recruitment, the trusted adult role model position of the coaches in the lives of socially vulnerable youth was emphasized. Only coaches who seemed invested in this mentorship and educator role were asked to participate. Coaches received a financial incentive (\$120), reimbursement for travel costs, and a certificate for program participation.

### Needs Assessment

To involve the community in the systematic planning and design of the sport program, a needs assessment was conducted in Eswatini the preceding year (Porter, 2015). Data were collected using focus groups with youth ( $N=12$  groups, 6 groups of males and 6 groups of females) and interviews with youth coaches ( $N=9$ , female=2, male=7), community members ( $N=6$ , female=4, male=2), and key informants ( $N=6$ , female=3, males=3). The following findings from the needs assessment guided the development of the SFD program: (a) sport is beloved by Swazi youth, so using sport to engage youth in development was identified as an appropriate platform; (b) a range of life skills (i.e., self-belief, social and personal responsibility, goal setting, decision making, self-efficacy, emotional expression) were identified as valuable to include in programming to address the most salient youth challenges; (c) youth between 15-24 years old have already developed a strong set of social beliefs that impact their behavior, so it would be more effective to engage younger ages in programming; and (d) Swazi youth lack caring and empathetic adult mentors, so coaches could be valuable adults to engage and integrate into youth programming.

### Sport for Development Program

The SFD program took place for 75-100 minutes every weekday for three weeks, with a total of 15 sessions. Although three weeks was a short amount of time to achieve sustainable program outcomes (Bean et al., 2016), this SFD program was intended to explore potential program outcomes and implementation approaches in order to inform more long-term programming in Eswatini. Sessions were run after school either on the youth organization's soccer field or outdoor play area. Key programmatic features of the TPSR model guided the

Table 1. Overview of SFD program curriculum

Session #	Responsibility level theme for session	Life skill focus of session	Sport/physical activity
1	Introduction to responsibility levels	Getting to know one another	Ice breakers, warm-up games
2	Levels I and V	Respect, emotion regulation	Volleyball
3	Levels I and V	Respect, emotion regulation	Yoga and stretching
4	Levels II and V	Teamwork, communication	Soccer
5	Levels III and V	Goal setting, confidence	Basketball
6	Levels I and V	Responsibility, self-talk	Soccer
7	Levels II and V	Teamwork, communication	Cooperative games/physical fitness drills
8	Levels III and V	Decision making, courage, peer pressure	Basketball
9	Levels III and V	Future orientation, hard work, confidence	Volleyball
10	Levels IV and V	Social skills: compassion, caring, responding to others; Helping others	Ultimate Frisbee
11	Levels I, II, and V	Respect, appreciating differences, relaxation	Athletics
12	Levels III and V	Goal setting, perseverance	Volleyball
13	Levels IV and V	Social skills: compassion, caring, conflict resolution	Netball
14	All levels	Leadership	Soccer
15	Debrief All levels	Recap of all sessions	Mini-competitions

*Note.* **Relational time:** brief period dedicated to building the relationship between the coaches and the youth. **Awareness talk:** coaches engage youth in discussion and active learning activities centered on responsibility level and life skill focus of the day. **Physical activity:** structured participation in sport where youth learn sport-specific competencies and integrate life skills lessons into sport. **Group reflection:** youth and coaches gather to discuss life skills lessons of the day and how they can be transferred to everyday life. **Self-reflection:** youth briefly self-reflect on how the life skills lessons applied to their own life and what they enjoyed about the day's activities.

development of a standard curriculum (See Table 1), along with the information gathered during the needs assessment. Specifically, the SFD program used the standard TPSR daily structure: (a) relational time (10 min), (b) awareness talk (25-40 min), (c) physical activity (35 min), (d) group reflection (10 min), and (e) individual reflection (5 min). The standard responsibility levels were also incorporated into programming: (a) respecting others (level I), (b) effort

and cooperation (level II), (c) self-direction (level III), (d) helping and leadership (level IV), and (e) transfer (level V) (See Table 2). Each session focused on a specific responsibility level and life skill. As the weeks progressed, the responsibility level increased in behavioral complexity (i.e., moving from respect to effort to self-direction to helping and leadership). The final level, transfer, was included in every session as it is an integral component of



Table 2. Responsibility levels of the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) Model

Responsibility level	Description of responsibility level
I – Respecting others	The overall aim of this level is to create a safe learning environment where the rights of others are respected. The emphasis of this responsibility level is on self-control, managing emotions and behaviors, the right to peaceful conflict resolution, the right to be included regardless of skill level, gender etc., and the right to have cooperative peers.
II – Effort and cooperation	This level emphasizes the role of effort in helping students improve themselves and their life situations, as well as the role that students have in choosing to put forth effort (i.e., self-motivation) and take responsibility for their growth. This level teaches students the importance of cooperation in creating a positive learning environment where participation, mastery, and improvement is emphasized over comparison to others. Developmental outcomes center on self-motivation, exploration of effort and new tasks, and getting along with others.
III – Self-direction	The aim of this level is to help youth take responsibility for their own well-being (less teacher-directed) and the amount of effort they place on different tasks. This level helps build youth capacity to look within themselves and acknowledge areas of improvement in order to subsequently work toward unique personal goals. Developmental outcomes include on-task independence, goal-setting progression, and courage to become self-aware and resist peer pressure.
IV – Helping and leadership	Emphasis in this level is on helping students develop interpersonal skills of sensitivity and compassion. Students at this level understand that others may have different viewpoints, needs, and feeling from their own. More complex helping behaviors may involve leadership and contributing to the well-being of others. Key developmental outcomes include caring and compassion, sensitivity and responsiveness, and inner strength.
V - Transfer	The overall aim of this level is applying the developmental outcomes and skills from the first four levels in other areas of life and being a positive role model for others, especially younger kids. This final level of the model is the most important in facilitating the holistic development of youth.

Note. Adapted from *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Through Physical Activity*, by Don Hellison, Copyright 2011 by Don Hellison.

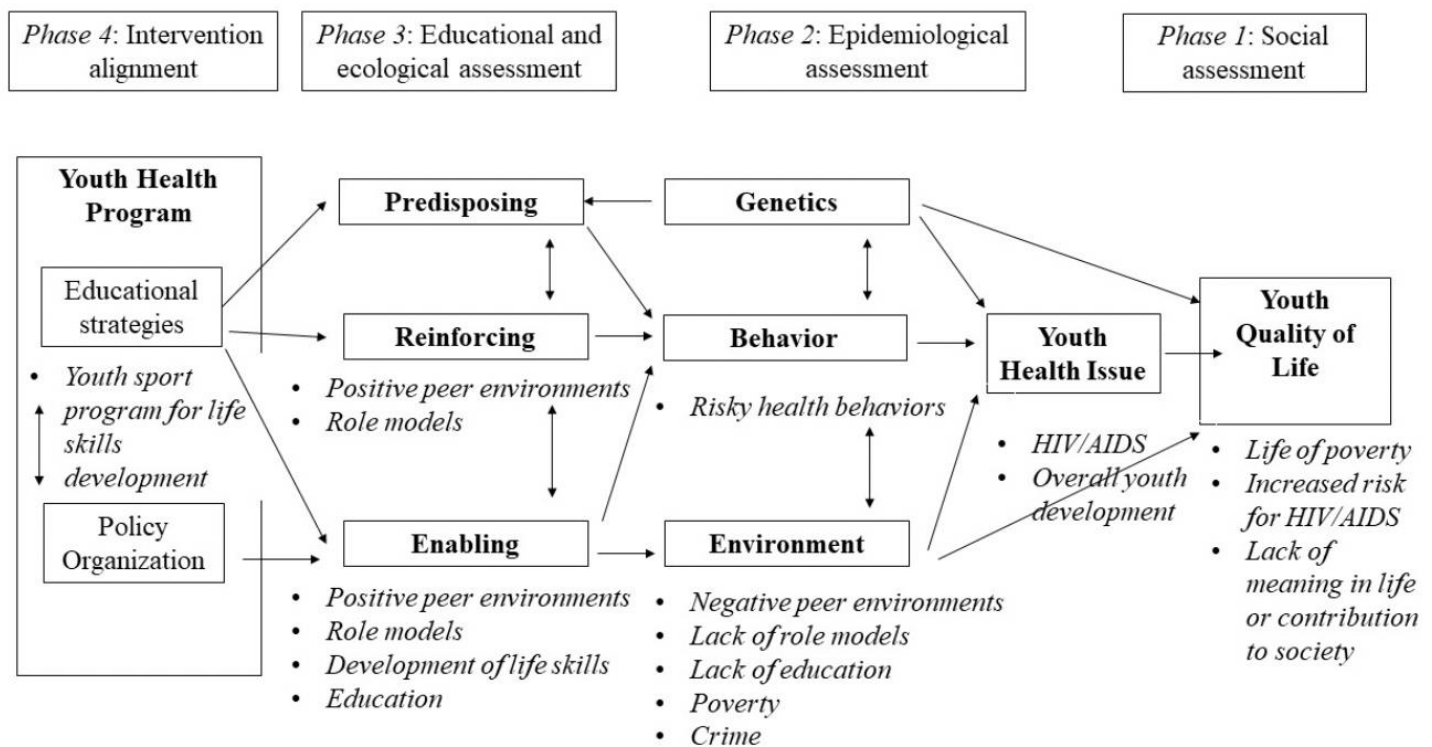
the TPSR model and previous programs have recommended its integration into as many sessions as possible (Bean et al., 2016; Whitley, Coble et al., 2016; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010).

Specific design elements from successful TPSR programs also informed the development of the SFD program, along with implementation adjustments to align with the cultural context. These included an extended awareness talk due to the slow-paced and deliberate manner of conversation in Eswatini (Nwosu, 1988), structured and active learning activities during the awareness talk (Bean, Forneris, & Halsall, 2014; Bean et al., 2016), visual learning aids (Whitley, Coble et al., 2016; Whitley & Gould, 2010), and primary instruction in SiSwati as opposed to English. Based on the needs assessment findings, a logic model (Figure 1) was also developed to theoretically ground the program, which supports stronger youth development outcomes (Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Boutet et al., 2019). Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001) and the positive youth development (PYD) framework (Holt et al., 2017) informed this logic model. The former emphasizes human agency and youth actively engaging in their own development, while

the latter stresses the value of creating positive sporting environments with empathetic adult-youth relationships where youth are treated as inherently capable of becoming successful.

Local coaches were trained as the primary program implementers and were responsible for all aspects of SFD program implementation, with the primary researcher available for assistance if necessary. Coaches were chosen for this role given their sport skill expertise and ability to connect with youth as insiders and relatable mentors. A train-the-trainer approach (Blom, Gerstein et al., 2015) was used where the primary researcher trained coaches on program implementation over three days (Bean et al., 2014; Cryan & Martinek, 2017). This training utilized a multi-method learning approach that integrated several learning strategies (e.g., experiential learning, discussion, self-reflection, didactic presentations; Blom, Judge, et al., 2015; Pearce et al., 2012), with topics including positive youth development principles, TPSR core values, themes, teaching strategies, and TPSR program examples. Coaches also reviewed the proposed session outlines for the SFD program, revising its design to ensure contextual relevance.

Figure 1. Logic model (PRECEDE) guiding program design



## Instruments

All instruments (i.e., coach and youth focus groups, teacher interview) developed for the study were reviewed by an SFD professional with significant experience in TPSR programming and qualitative methodologies. All written instruments were translated into SiSwati and were back-translated by three youth in the same age bracket as the program participants.

**Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire:** The Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire (PSRQ) (Li, Wright, Rukavina, & Pickering, 2008) is a 14-item self-report measure of personal and social responsibility composed of two scales (i.e., personal responsibility, social responsibility) with seven items each. Items are scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) with total scores ranging from 14 (low social and personal responsibility) to 84 (high social and personal responsibility). It is a psychometrically valid instrument with adequate internal consistency (0.79-0.81) in Western settings (Li et al., 2008).

**Multidimensional Scales of Perceived Self-Efficacy:** The Multidimensional Scales of Perceived Self-Efficacy (MSPSE) (Bandura, 1990) is a self-report measure of personal and social self-efficacy and is composed of 57 items and nine subscales representing Bandura's nine proposed domains of self-efficacy. A 7-point Likert scale is

used to rate responses to each item from 1 (not well at all) to 7 (very well). For each self-efficacy domain, scores are summed and averaged to yield a minimum score of 1 (low self-efficacy) and a maximum score of 7 (high self-efficacy). For the current study, the five most relevant subscales (32 items total) were chosen that aligned most strongly with the research question and study objectives (Escartí et al., 2010): enlisting social resources, self-regulated learning, self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure, self-assertive self-efficacy, and social self-efficacy. The MSPSE has demonstrated adequate validity and internal consistency ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ) for all subscales (Choi, Fuqua, & Griffin, 2001).

**Student learning quiz:** The student learning quiz (Hellison, 2011; Wright & Burton, 2008) is a brief assessment of three life skills or responsibilities that the youth learned during the SFD program. Youth are first asked to identify three life skills they may have learned during the program and then give examples of how each life skill might be applied in a domain outside the SFD program.

**Coach focus group:** A focus group was conducted with the coaches to explore their observations of youth learning during the SFD program as well as their experiences implementing the program. The focus group guide was developed using previous studies exploring implementation processes and outcomes of TPSR programming (Bean et al., 2016; Wright, Jacobs, Ressler, & Jung, 2016).

*Youth focus groups:* Youth focus groups centered on youth reflections of personal development, including what they may have learned in the program, and how they may have applied those skills in other life domains. The youth focus group guide was developed from questions used in previous studies (Bean et al., 2014, Bean et al., 2016; Whitley, Coble et al., 2016).

*Teacher interview:* A semistructured interview was conducted with the afternoon class teacher. The interview objective was to gather information on any transfer of learning observed in the youth after program participation and was developed from previous TPSR research assessing transfer (Bean et al., 2016).

## Procedures

Study approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of West Virginia University and the Ethics Board of Eswatini. Permission was also obtained from the director of the Eswatini youth organization. All participants in the research component of the study completed consent and/or assent procedures (in English or SiSwati) prior to participation.

Prior to data collection, the primary researcher conducted a three-day training for the coaches and a separate training for the two staff members of the youth organization who would assist with data collection. These two individuals spoke fluent SiSwati and had established relationships with the youth, which has been found to promote more honest feedback from youth (Heath, Brooks, Cleaver, & Ireland, 2009).

Data collection employed a mixed-methods approach. Pre- and post-program, youth participants completed two surveys: the PSRQ (Li et al., 2008) and the MSPSE (Bandura, 1990). The primary researcher and teacher jointly guided this 30-minute survey administration process, with the teacher explaining (in SiSwati) the survey instructions and orally administering the surveys by reading each item out loud due to the youths' low reading comprehension levels.

During the SFD program, youth completed a weekly written student learning quiz, administered by trained coaches. After the program, two single gender focus groups were conducted (17 females and 15 males) with the youth participants, which lasted 25 and 27 minutes respectively. Two coaches also participated in a 58-minute focus group with the primary researcher, and the coach who left the program took part in a separate interview due to scheduling conflicts. The collaborative approach adopted throughout

the SFD program facilitated a comfort level between the primary researcher and the coaches, which contributed to open and critical evaluation feedback from the coaches before, during, and after the program. Two weeks after program completion, the afternoon class teacher participated in a 20-minute interview with the primary researcher to reassess youth program outcomes. All focus groups and interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in SiSwati or English dependent on participant preference.

## Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using t-tests to examine pre- to post-program changes in personal responsibility, social responsibility, and dimensions of self-efficacy. Content analysis was employed to analyze the focus groups, interview, and learning quizzes (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). Two researchers (including the primary researcher) independently conducted the content analysis after all audio-recordings were transcribed verbatim and translated back to English (Flick, 2014; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This began with each researcher familiarizing themselves with the data, followed by careful re-examination in which key initial thoughts were highlighted. This was followed by open coding of themes and the identification of meaningful quotes (i.e., raw data). These themes were then categorized and organized into lower and higher order themes reflecting their relationships (Flick, 2014). A combined inductive and deductive approach was used to allow for new themes to emerge but also to identify specific themes related to the TPSR responsibility levels (Flick, 2014; Wright et al., 2016). Iterative consensus validation allowed the researchers to compare their initial thoughts, open codes, and lower/higher themes, along with reaching consensus and resolving any differences that arose (Whitley, Hayden et al. 2016). A third researcher served as a "critical friend" (Smith & McGannon, 2018, with the primary role of prompting reflection on alternative data interpretations. On completion of the content analysis, all analyzed data (quantitative and qualitative) was triangulated and integrated in a process of iterative consensus validation involving all three researchers.

## Methodological Rigor

Methodological rigor was enhanced using a relativist perspective (Sparkes & Smith, 2009) and included the following strategies. First, the study topic was identified as one of social significance and worth (Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Tracy, 2010), as the demonstrated youth need in Eswatini is high. Second, the selection and triangulation of the data collection sources was reviewed and approved by a leading researcher in SFD youth programs. Third, consistent



Table 3. Youth pre- and post-program descriptive statistics on the PSRQ and MSPSE

	N	Pre score ( $\mu$ ) (SD)	Post score ( $\mu$ ) (SD)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> - value
PSRQ total score (14-low to 84-high)	27	68.04 (4.95)	72.75 (5.57)	-2.891	0.009
MSPSE - Enlisting social resources (1-low to 7-high)	28	5.38 (.93)	5.95 (.84)	-1.538	0.139
MSPSE - Self-regulated learning (1-low to 7-high)	27	5.57 (.83)	6.06 (.52)	-1.571	0.131
MSPSE - Self-regulatory efficacy to resist peer pressure (1-low to 7-high)	28	4.35 (1.29)	4.50 (1.65)	-0.463	0.648
MSPSE - Social self-efficacy (1-low to 7-high)	28	4.81 (1.19)	5.27 (1.39)	-1.413	0.172
MSPSE - Self-assertive self-efficacy (1-low to 7-high)	27	4.10 (1.26)	4.52 (1.22)	-1.958	0.064

*Note.* Although 33 youth participated in the research component of the program, complete data was only available for 27 and 28 youth respectively. This was due to incorrect or partial completion of the measures.

with the emphasis in constructivist approaches on understanding participant construction of meaning (Morrow, 2005), the primary researcher's familiarity with the cultural context of the participants supported deeper understanding of reported experiences. Fourth, the data analysis process included a "critical friend" to promote critical interpretations of qualitative data (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Fifth, an audit trail tracked significant researcher dialogue and changes during the coding process (Tracy, 2010). Finally, credibility was enhanced through thick description of data in the results section (Tracy, 2010).

## FINDINGS

Twenty-eight of the 33 youth (84.8%) completed both pre- and post-surveys. Quantitative analysis indicated that average life skills scores increased from pre- to post-program across all surveys (i.e., all five domains of the MSPSE and the total PSRQ score) (Table 3). However, paired t-tests indicated that only the increase in personal and social responsibility (PSRQ) from pre- ( $M=68.04$ ,  $SD=4.95$ ) to post-program ( $M=72.75$ ,  $SD=5.57$ ) was statistically significant ( $t(21)=-2.891$ ,  $p=0.009$ ). Changes in self-efficacy scores in the domain of self-assertive self-efficacy from pre- ( $M=4.10$ ,  $SD=1.26$ ) to post-program ( $M=4.52$ ,  $SD=1.22$ ) approached significance ( $t(20)=-1.958$ ,  $p=0.064$ ).

Content analysis of the qualitative data yielded 361 raw meaning units related to youth life skills and developmental outcomes. These coalesced under six higher order themes that were organized according to the five responsibility levels of the TPSR model as well as one general theme: (a) level I – respect for others; (b) level II – effort and cooperation; (c) level III – self-direction; (d) level IV – helping and leadership; (e) level V – transfer; and (f) sport-specific outcomes (Figure 2). The following section addresses each of these higher order themes.

### Level I – Respect for Others

Level I of the TPSR model is characterized by youth outcomes and life skills that reflect respect for the rights and feelings of others (e.g., self-awareness, behavioral and emotional regulation). When youth described their learning as a result of the program, several spoke about the value of respect as an interpersonal skill because it allows you to "receive the same treatment," and "makes it easy to work and get along with other people." Youth were also able to give examples of respectful behaviors in educational settings: "At school, I can show respect by listening to other people before speaking," and by "waiting for your teacher to finish speaking before you answer." Notably, some youth were also able to identify that self-respect is equally necessary as, and is often a precursor to, respect for others. Specific to emotional regulation and self-control, several youth were able to accurately define these terms in the learning quizzes as well as discuss in the focus groups how these skills can be applied. For example, one youth defined emotional regulation as "the ability to control your emotions when there are difficult situations at home or at school," while another youth stated that "[self-control] is important in situations where somebody gets you upset. Instead of reacting with violence and hurting them, it is better to just calm yourself down and fix things with dialogue."

### Level II – Effort and Cooperation

Effort and hard work, teamwork, and communication were the most frequently identified program outcomes identified in responsibility level II. In the learning quizzes, youth defined effort and hard work as "putting effort in whatever you are doing even when you are going through difficult times," while teamwork was defined as "working well with other people at home, school, and in the community." In the focus groups, some youth were also able to demonstrate an understanding of the value of effort, teamwork, and communication in creating positive personal and social



Figure 2. Qualitative youth outcomes from program participation organized across the responsibility levels of the TPSR model

HIGHER ORDER THEMES	MIDDLE ORDER THEMES	LOWER ORDER THEMES	LOWER ORDER THEMES	MIDDLE ORDER THEMES	HIGHER ORDER THEMES		
(I) Respect for others (86)	Respect (52)	Respect (50)	Respect (6)	Respect for others (9)			
		Self-respect (1)	Self-control (2)				
		Responsibility (2)	Responsibility (1)				
	Self-control (34)	Self-control (20)		Effort and Cooperation (4)			
(II) Effort and Cooperation (98)		Physiological control (2)	Effort/hard work (1)				
		Emotional regulation (11)	Teamwork (1)				
		Personal responsibility for emotions (1)	Cooperation (1)				
Participation and effort (19)	Participation (1)	Communication (1)	Self-direction (4)	(V) Transfer (23)			
	Effort/hard work (18)						
	Harmony (79)	Cooperation (1)				Goal setting (1)	
		Teamwork (59)				Perseverance (2)	
Communication (19)		Decision-making (1)					
(III) Self-direction (59)	Planning (30)	Self-direction (9)				Helping and Leadership (2)	
		Goal setting (13)	Caring for others (1)				
		Awareness of future (1)	Leadership (1)				
		Decision-making (7)					
	Resilience (29)	Confidence (16)	Transfer (9)		Transfer (9)		
		Courage (3)					
		Perseverance (9)					
		Managing peer pressure (1)					
(IV) Helping and Leadership (60)	Caring & helping (22)	Caring & helping (7)	Sport skill development (2)	Sport-specific outcomes (3)			
		Compassion (13)	How to be physically active (1)				
		Caring for others (2)					
		Conflict resolution (13)					
	Conflict management (36)	STAR (23)					
	Leadership (2)	Leadership (2)					

outcomes. For example, one youth stated that “we work as a team in class in order to solve problems,” while another explained they learned that “when doing something, you have to put in a lot of effort in order to succeed.” Another youth described the value of communication in working well with others.

### Level III – Self-Direction

Level III outcomes (i.e., self-direction) for the current program incorporated life skills related to creating and progressing toward goals (i.e., planning) and demonstrating confidence and perseverance in meeting challenges or making good decisions related to reaching goals (i.e., resilience). Under the theme of planning, which encompassed goal setting and making healthy decisions to progress toward goals (i.e., decision making), youth defined goal setting in their learning quizzes as “choosing what you want to become in the future” and “setting goals for yourself and working hard until you reach those goals.” Decision making was described as “the ability to choose between multiple choices” and “controlling your decisions such as deciding not to succumb to peer pressure.”

In addition to understanding these concepts, several youths spoke in the focus groups about the application of these

planning skills in their lives. One youth referenced “[setting] goals at school and at work,” while another explained that “when [my] friends invite [me] to be involved in mischief, now I have the ability to decide for myself whether I want to be involved in those activities or not.”

Under the theme of resilience and overcoming obstacles to goal attainment, the most frequently cited outcomes were confidence and perseverance. Youth defined confidence as “having faith in ourselves” or being “confident when doing things that I do not trust myself in.” Perseverance was defined by one youth as “the ability to keep going when things are not looking good.” Several youths also described in the focus groups how resilience-related skills applied to their lives. One youth discussed facing challenges head-on rather than running away from them. Another youth described “working hard to realize your goals despite challenges.” Other youth described using confidence “when you are in front of people” or “believing in your own ability when playing soccer with friends.”

### Level IV – Helping and Leadership

This higher order theme was characterized by responsibility level IV outcomes demonstrating the interpersonal skills of caring and compassionate responses to others, conflict

management, and leadership behaviors. Youth provided a range of responses related to compassion, highlighting genuine care for others and specific examples of compassionate behavior. For example, one youth stated, “I learned that to be compassionate means you should feel sorry for others, which includes people who are going through suffering.”

Under the theme of conflict management, youth identified conflict resolution as well as the STAR acronym (Stop, Think, Anticipate, Respond) as program outcomes. During the program, four different animals (i.e., teddy bear, turtle, shark, dove) and the STAR acronym were used to teach youth effective conflict resolution approaches. After the program, some youth were able to define conflict resolution and identify conflict resolution behaviors. One youth defined conflict resolution as “solving problems when they arise as opposed to letting people destroy each other,” while another explained,

*There is a teddy bear, shark, turtle, and a dove. You can use it to understand someone's personality. A teddy bear is soft and always listen to other people's opinion, a turtle hides from problems, a dove is a peacemaker, while a shark has no compassion and is aggressive.*

In reflecting on the STAR acronym, several youth presented two different ways they applied the concept. Some youth applied it as a strategy to find a more effective response to an unpleasant situation such as when someone angers you, while other youth used it as a reminder that they were worthy and valuable despite being subjected to challenging situations. In one youth's words, “you should tell yourself that you are a star in your community and whenever someone mistreats, you should tell yourself you are a star.” For the last theme of leadership, youth described their understanding of leadership as follows: “That we should care for other people and help them out if we are to become leaders.”

## Level V – Transfer

Level V of the TPSR model focuses on the youth's ability to apply what was learned from the first four responsibility levels to life outside of the sport context (i.e., at home and at school). Youth, coaches, and the afternoon class teacher all highlighted the transfer of learning from the sport program to everyday life. One coach stated the following about transfer:

*Yes, it is happening at home and at school. [The youth] tell*

*you, “Hey today I did this at school, and I didn't shout at that person. Instead I just took a moment . . . breathe in, breathe out.” And someone said that when they were writing an exam that day and they didn't get an answer, they did the breathing exercise!*

Specific to transfer of level I responsibility behaviors, one youth described how he applied the life skill of emotion regulation: “In high stress situations, I place my hand over here (pointing to his chest), breathe in, hold my breath for three seconds, and then release.” The afternoon class teacher also described these behavioral changes: “Having participated in the program has made them aware of how they should conduct themselves. For respect it's something I've seen quite a tremendous change in.” Further, the teacher explained that on a more general level of personal responsibility behaviors, responsibility-taking had improved, with youth being more organized, doing their homework on time, and taking more responsibility for consistently attending the afternoon class.

Some transfer of responsibility level II outcomes was also reported by the youth and teacher. In the words of the youth, “we just recently took a test in class and I really applied myself to get good grades,” “I am now able to study well when I am in a group with other students,” and “I use [teamwork] in class when learning and discussing in a group setting.”

A handful of youth also reported transferring level III responsibility behaviors such as goal setting, decision making, and perseverance to their everyday lives. One youth stated, “I now know my purpose/goal for going to school” and “I know how to make better decisions in my life.” Specific to level IV outcomes, some youth identified transferring their care for others into nonsport domains. One youth described “showing remorse to a friend when they have lost a loved one or when someone falls.” The afternoon class teacher spoke about the transfer of caring for others in the following excerpt:

*Previously they wouldn't come to me telling me about someone else [a peer] having a problem with uniform or something but now they are much more comfortable in coming to me and telling me such things.*

Finally, some youth were also able to demonstrate an understanding that different life skills can be applied simultaneously to contribute to success: “I am able to set my goals. Now I know that to achieve these goals, I must have confidence and perseverance and respect.”

## Sport-Specific Outcomes

This final higher order theme was a theme that emerged outside of the TPSR responsibility levels and referred to outcomes related to sport knowledge, sport-skill development, and learning how to be physically active. Several youth described their sport-skill development: “I learned how to play soccer well” and “I learned how to play netball.” Another participant explained, “I liked how when the coaches gave us a lot of information when they introduced us to a new sport, making us more knowledgeable about that new sport.” Transfer of sport and physical activity behaviors to nonsport domains was not identified.

## DISCUSSION

Overall, the developmental outcomes from this exploratory study suggest that despite the SFD program’s short duration, youth gained some life skills outcomes from their participation. Within the context of Eswatini, where youth are facing a major health threat (i.e., HIV/AIDS) and community challenges (e.g., gender-based violence, high teenage pregnancy rates, poverty), the development and transfer of personal and social responsibility behaviors are meaningful program outcomes.

### Program Outcomes and the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model

The present findings suggest potential for the TPSR model to cultivate outcomes across all five TPSR responsibility levels. Quantitative results supported a statistical increase in overall personal and social responsibility from pre- to post-assessment. In addition, qualitative findings identified some outcomes related to level I (respect and self-control), level II (effort, team work, communication), level III (goal setting, decision making, perseverance), level IV (compassion and helping, conflict resolution, leadership), and level V (transfer). Specific to responsibility levels I-IV, these findings support North American and Western research demonstrating the utility of TPSR programming in cultivating personal and social responsibility behaviors (Bean et al., 2016; Caballero-Blanco et al., 2013; Cryan & Martinek, 2017; Escartí et al., 2010; Hemphill & Richards, 2016; Walsh et al., 2010; Whitley, Coble et al., 2016). These findings also contribute to extant TPSR literature as they present preliminary support for the utility of the TPSR model in non-Western contexts, where there is a scarcity of methodologically rigorous research and where community challenges facing youth may differ from Western contexts. The current findings therefore have implications for the potential value of employing a framework such as the TPSR

model in the design of SFD initiatives in Eswatini and beyond.

Specific to level V of the TPSR model (“Transfer”), the findings from the current study suggest that this type of programming may have some efficacy in facilitating transfer of developmental outcomes to domains outside of the sport context. This is noteworthy because there is limited contextual utility of the current study’s outcomes if they cannot be transferred to everyday life (Gould, Carson, & Blanton, 2013). The current study identified a range of outcomes (e.g., respect, emotion regulation, effort, teamwork, goal setting, perseverance, decision making, caring for others) that youth applied to their home life, to their school context, and to their interactions with peers. Within extant TPSR research, there is limited and inconsistent research on whether these personal and social responsibility outcomes successfully transfer to nonsport domains (Bean et al., 2016; Cryan & Martinek, 2017; Gordon & Doyle, 2015; Walsh et al., 2010; Whitley, Massey, Camiré, Boutet et al., 2019). The identification of several transferred outcomes in the current study suggest that the TPSR model has the potential to cultivate life skills that can transfer to nonsport domains.

Notably, the current study also identified sport-specific outcomes as an important program component, which is not originally a responsibility outcome within the TPSR model. During the earlier needs assessment, youth in Eswatini reported high sport enjoyment and a desire for exposure to and knowledge of multiple sports. This suggests that the physical outcomes from the current study are valued outcomes and may justify continued investment in SFD programming in Eswatini. For youth who have experienced developmental traumas, sport’s physicality can help reintroduce physical stress to the body in a socially acceptable and safe way (Whitley et al., 2018). Experiencing visible physical progress may also help youth develop a stronger sense of competency, which facilitates long-term sport involvement and a greater likelihood that youth may accrue life skills through sport participation. Although the current program did not measure changes in sport-specific skills due to the short program duration, future programs may consider including a psychomotor assessment component or a physical fitness test.

### Contextual Utility of Program Outcomes in Eswatini

The findings from the current study are consequential because these developmental outcomes have contextual utility in addressing the major challenges facing youth in Eswatini. Specifically, this type of SFD programming may support outcomes that are valuable in the efforts to lower

youth's—and particularly adolescent females'—susceptibility to HIV. Results across both genders supported youth outcomes related to respect, self-control, communication, and decision making (TPSR levels I and III). This is notable because research in Eswatini has indicated that, to address the HIV epidemic, both female and male youth need to be included in prevention efforts. Female youth need to be taught sexual negotiation, decision making, and communication skills that will allow them to effectively advocate for their own right to use condoms and develop healthy intimate relationships (Buseh, Glass, & McElmurray, 2002; Jones, 2006). For male youth, understanding the impact of one's actions on others (e.g., family members, peers) and learning to self-regulate one's own behavior are key components of HIV/AIDS reduction (Buseh et al., 2002; Jones, 2006; Mofolo, 2011). This suggests that SFD programming, when implemented in the long term, has the potential to cultivate personal and social responsibility behaviors, which are valuable for HIV prevention efforts.

Results from the current study also suggested that SFD programming may support the development of life skills centered on persistence in the face of barriers, cooperation with others to create change, and civic contribution to the community (i.e., TPSR levels II - IV). In challenging environments such as those experienced by Swazi youth, cooperating with others and taking personal ownership of one's future are pivotal skills for youth (Whitley, Hayden et al., 2016). Further, learning outcomes that reflect a future orientation (e.g., goal setting, decision making) are foundational skills for adults who make healthy decisions for themselves (Gordon, Jacobs, & Wright, 2016). Extant literature in Eswatini also indicates the necessity of self-efficacy, confidence, and resilience for socially vulnerable youth in Eswatini to lead happy and meaningful lives (Motsa & Morojele, 2017).

Additional contextually relevant findings from the current program include the cultivation of social and interpersonal skills (i.e., TPSR level IV), which are necessary precursors to developing a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement (Gano-Overway, 2014). Social and emotional learning outcomes such as interpersonal skills are valuable educational outcomes that help youth become emotionally intelligent adults who can build lasting and positive social connections (Gordon et al., 2016). Further, the development of conflict resolution skills may have significant contextual utility in Eswatini, as aggression (i.e., fighting, bullying) is the most prevalent behavioral challenge in Swazi schools (Mundia, 2006). Aggressive behaviors are disruptive to the educational process, so the development of positive conflict

resolution skills through SFD programming may be consequential. Finally, the cultivation of leadership through the current SFD program may be meaningful as leadership is central to developing compassionate and civically engaged young people who are able to navigate increasingly challenging environments (Martinek & Hellison, 2009; Gould & Voelker, 2012). Overall, the developmental outcomes identified in the current exploratory study are meaningful, as the contextual reality in Eswatini necessitates the ability to work hard despite the presence of challenges, be resilient in the face of hardship, care for the well-being of others, and take initiative in creating community change.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Methodological limitations begin with the short duration of the program. Although some significant outcomes were identified, three weeks may not have been enough time for changes to occur in constructs such as self-efficacy or for the transfer of outcomes to be sustained over the long term. While TPSR program length has ranged from several weeks to nine months, longer term programming (approximately nine months) is optimal for transference to occur (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004). However, extant literature also identifies 10 sessions as the minimum required for transference, with the current program comprising 15 total sessions. Nonetheless, these findings should be cautiously interpreted as assessments of transfer also relied on youth self-report and the afternoon class teacher's observations. Further concerns included the use of quantitative measures that had not been previously applied in the sub-Saharan context (highlighting potential validity issues), along with no control group to provide comparative results, suggesting a need for caution in interpreting the study findings. Nevertheless, this was an exploratory study in Eswatini, with the findings designed to inform the development of more rigorous, long-term, and sustainable programming.

The study was also limited by one coach dropping out and the large number of youth participants, which was more than twice the intended group size. The high ratio of youth to coaches reduced the number of opportunities for quality one-on-one interactions between the youth and coaches, which may have altered the youth participation experience, the coach-athlete relationship dynamic, and the potential for developmental outcomes to occur. Future programs should reflect on the question of what is more important: to provide a positive youth development opportunity to as many youth as possible or to provide a higher quality opportunity to fewer youth who may be most able to develop and benefit? In a low resource context such as Eswatini where youth



need is very high, this is not a simple question to answer. Increasing the number of coaches involved in the program may be the best way to meet the youth need. In addition, future programs should consider more effective ways to include female coaches who are pivotal role models for the female youth. These female coaches might be recruited from local club sport leagues or universities. Alternatively, the program could include a peer leadership component where older female students could assist with program implementation and serve as role models while simultaneously developing their own leadership abilities.

A final study limitation was the individual focus placed on the youth to develop life skills. This approach is limited as a young person's ability to become successful and "transform themselves" does not lie completely within their own control (Coakley, 2011). Future programming may consider adopting a systems approach, which recognizes the role of macrolevel societal structures (e.g., community norms, organizational structures, policies) in both enabling and preventing long-term changes in youth development (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Massey, Whitley, Blom, & Gernstein, 2015). Ultimately, the individual development of young people must be combined with broader efforts in community development (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2015). Extending SFD programs to include partnerships with organizations that engage parents in collectively working toward changing school and community contexts (Collective Parental Engagement) may be one useful approach (Jacobs, Ivy, Lawson, & Richards, 2017). Research with socially vulnerable youth in Eswatini emphasizes the necessity of developing social relationships within the community and engaging teachers and the larger institutional structures surrounding these youth to effectively support their educational and life aspirations (Motsa & Morojele, 2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

The current exploratory study provided preliminary support for the value of using the TPSR model in the implementation of an SFD program in Eswatini. Findings validated the potential of this type of SFD programming in eliciting developmental outcomes that align with all five of the TPSR responsibility levels. This further supports the use of the TPSR model as a framework for the design of SFD initiatives on a global scale as well as in a novel context such as Eswatini. The program outcomes suggest that, when implemented in a longer term and sustainable format, the model may facilitate developmental outcomes that meet local contextual challenges. Future long-term programs should strongly consider including female coaches,

integrating a peer leadership component, and involving the community (i.e., teachers and parents/guardians) in a collective effort to create supportive and empowering social contexts for youth in Eswatini. These programs may also consider assessing long-term transfer of life skills outcomes and measuring psychomotor and sport-specific skill development.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sport equipment was purchased for use in the program thanks to the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) Gualberto Cremades International Research Grant. This included volleyballs, basketballs, soccer balls, netballs, Frisbees, scrimmage vests, cones, a volleyball net, and a video camera. This equipment was gifted to the youth organization after completion of the sport program.

## REFERENCES

- AVERTing HIV and AIDS (AVERT). (2014). HIV and AIDS in Swaziland. Retrieved from <http://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/sub-saharan-africa/swaziland>
- Bandura, A. (1990). *Multidimensional Scales of Perceived Self-Efficacy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 1-26.
- Bean, C. N., Forneris, T., & Halsall, T. (2014). Girls just wanna have fun: A process evaluation of a female youth-driven physical activity-based life skills program. *SpringerPlus*, 3, 401.
- Bean, C. N., Kendellen, K., & Forneris, T. (2016). Moving beyond the gym: Exploring life skill transfer within a female physical activity-based life skills program. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 28, 274-290.
- Bellis, M. A., Hughes, K., Ford, K., Hardcastle, K. A., Sharp, C. A., Wood, S...Davies, A. (2018). Adverse childhood experiences and sources of childhood resilience: A retrospective study of their combined relationships with child health and educational attendance. *BMC Public Health*, 18, 792.
- Beutler, I. (2008). Sport serving development and peace: Achieving the goals of the United Nations through sport. *Sport in Society*, 11(4), 359-69.

- Blom, L. C., Gerstein, L., Stedman, K., Judge, L., Sink, A., & Pierce, D. (2015). Soccer for peace: Evaluation of in-country workshops with Jordanian coaches. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 3(4), 1-12.
- Blom, L. C., Judge, L., Whitley, M. W., Gernstein, L., Huffman, A., & Hillyer, S. (2015). Sport for development and peace: Experiences conducting U.S. and international programs. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 6, 1-16.
- Burnett, C. (2014). The impact of a sport-for-education programme in the South Africa context of poverty. *Sport in Society*, 17(6), 722-735.
- Buseh, A. G., Glass, L. K., & McElmurry, B. J. (2002). Cultural and gender issues related to HIV/AIDS prevention in rural Swaziland: A focus group analysis. *Health Care for Women International*, 23(2), 173-184.
- Caballero-Blanco, P., Delgado-Noguera, M. A., & Escartí-Carbonell, A. (2013). Analysis of teaching personal and social responsibility model-based programmes applied in USA and Spain. *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 8(2), 427-441.
- Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J. A., Lonczak, H. S., & Hawkins, J. D. (2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591, 98-124.
- Choi, N., Fuqua, D. R., & Griffin, B.W. (2001). Exploratory analysis of the structure of scores from the multidimensional scales of perceived self-efficacy. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 61(3), 475-489.
- Coakley, J. (2011). Youth sports: What counts as “positive development?” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35(3), 306-324.
- Coalter, F. (2015). Sport-for-change: Some thoughts from a skeptic. *Social Inclusion*, 3(3), 19-23.
- Côté, J., & Hancock, D. J. (2016). Evidence-based policies for youth sport programmes. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 8(1), 51-65.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.
- Cryan, M., & Martinek, T. (2017). Youth sport development through soccer: An evaluation of an after-school program using the TPSR model. *The Physical Educator*, 74, 127-149.
- Danish, S., Forneris, T., Hodge, K., & Heke, I. (2004). Enhancing youth development through sport. *World Leisure Journal*, 46(3), 38-49.
- Draper, C. E., & Coalter, F. (2016). “There’s just something about this club. It’s been my family.”: An analysis of the experiences of youth in a South African sport-for-development programme. *Internal Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 51(1), 44-60.
- Elo, S., & Kyngas, H. (2008) The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107–115.
- Escartí, A., Gutiérrez, M., Pascual, C., & Marín, D. (2010). Application of Hellison's teaching personal and social responsibility model in physical education to improve self-efficacy for adolescents at risk of dropping out of school. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 13(2), 667-676.
- Fatusi, A. O., & Hindin, M. J. (2010). Adolescents and youth in developing countries: Health and development issues in context. *Journal of Adolescence*, 33, 499-508.
- Flick, U. (Ed.). (2014). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Foster, G., & Williamson, J. (2000). A review of current literature of the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in sub-Saharan Africa. *AIDS*, 14(3), 275-284.
- Gano-Overway, L. (2014). The caring climate: How sport environments can develop empathy in young people. *Organizing through Empathy*, 167-183.
- Gordon, B. (2009). Merging teaching personal and social responsibility with sport education: A marriage made in heaven or hell? *ACHPER Healthy Lifestyles Journal*, 56(3/4), 13–16.
- Gordon, B., & Doyle, S. (2015). Teaching personal and social responsibility and transfer of learning: Opportunities and challenges for teachers and coaches. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 34, 152-161.

- Gordon, B., Jacobs, J. M., & Wright, P. M. (2016). Social and emotional learning through a teaching personal and social responsibility based after-school program for disengaged middle-school boys. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 35, 358-369.
- Gould, D., Carson, S., & Blanton, J. (2013). Coaching life skills. In P. Protrac, W. Gilbert, & J. Denison (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sports coaching* (pp. 259-270). London, UK: Routledge.
- Gould, D., Collins, K., Lauer, L., & Chung, Y. (2007). Coaching life skills through football: A study of award-winning high school coaches. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 19(1), 16-37.
- Gould, D., & Voelker, D. (2012). Enhancing youth leadership through sport and physical education. *JOPERD*, 83(8), 38-41.
- Hartmann, D., & Kwauk, C. (2011). Sport and development: An overview, critique, and reconstruction. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35(3), 284-305.
- Heath, S., Brooks, R., Cleaver, E., & Ireland, E. (2009). *Researching young people's lives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hellison, D. R. (2011). *Teaching personal and social responsibility through physical activity*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Hellison, D., & Walsh, D. (2002). Responsibility-based youth programs evaluation: Investigating the investigations. *Quest*, 54, 292-307.
- Hemphill, M. A., & Richards, A. R. (2016). "Without the academic part, it wouldn't be squash": Youth development in an urban squash program. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 35, 263-276.
- Hermens, N., Super, S., Verkooijen, K. T. & Koelen, M. A. (2017). A systematic review of life skill development through sports programs serving socially vulnerable youth. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 88(4), 408-424.
- Holt, N. L. (2008). *Positive youth development through sport*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Holt, N. L., Neely, K. C., Slater, L. G., Camiré, M., Coté, J., Fraser-Thomas, J...Tamminem, K. A. (2017). A grounded theory of positive youth development through sport based on results from a qualitative meta-study. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 10(1), 1-49.
- Hsieh, H. F. & Shannon S. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15, 1277-1288.
- Hughes, K., Ford, K., Davies, A. R., Homolova, L., & Bellis, M. A. (2018). *Welsh adverse childhood experience (ACE) and resilience study*. Public Health Wales NHS Trust.
- Jacobs, M. J., Ivy, N. I., Lawson, M., & Richards, K. R. (2017). Enhancing the transfer of life skills from sport-based youth development programs to school, family, and community settings. *Journal of Amateur Sport*, 20-43.
- Jones, L. (2006). Sexual discourse and decision-making by urban youth in AIDS-afflicted Swaziland. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 5(2), 145-157.
- Langer, L. (2015). Sport for development: A systematic map of evidence from Africa. *South African Review of Sociology*, 46(1\*), 66-86.
- Li, W., Wright, P., Rukavina, P. B., & Pickering, M. (2008). Measuring students' perceptions of personal and social responsibility and the relationship to intrinsic motivation in urban physical education. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 27, 167-178.
- Martinek, T., & Hellison, D. (2009). *Youth leadership in sport and physical education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Martinek, T., & Hellison, D. (2016). Teaching personal and social responsibility: Past, present and future. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 87(5), 9-13.
- Massey, W. V., Whitley, M. A., Blom, L., & Gerstein, L. H. (2015). Sport for development and peace: A systems theory perspective on promoting sustainable change. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 16(1/2), 18-35.
- Mavundla, S., Dlamini, N., Nyoni, N., & Mac-Ikemenjima, D. (2015). *Youth and Public Policy Swaziland*. Youth Policy Press.



Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs (2015). *Swaziland State of the Youth Report 2015*. UNFPA.

Mofolo, T. (2011). Investigating the factors contributing to the disempowerment of women in Swaziland: Perceptions of Swazi women and non-governmental organisations operating in Swaziland. *Africa Insight*, 41(2), 110-129.

Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 250-260.

Motsa, N. D., & Morojele, P. J. (2017). High aspirations amidst challenging situations: Narratives of six vulnerable primary school children in Swaziland. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 1-15.

Mundia, L. (2006). Aggressive behaviour among Swazi upper primary and junior secondary students: Implications for ongoing educational reforms concerning inclusive education. *International Journal of Special Education*, 21(3), 58-67.

Ndlangamandla, E. D., Burnett, C., & Roux, C. J. (2012). Participation of learners in Swaziland school sports. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, 18(4), 900-911.

Nwosu, P. E. (1988). Negotiating with Swazis. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 1(3), 145-154.

Pearce, J., Mann, M. K., Jones, C., Van Buschbach, S., Olf, M., & Bisson, J. I. (2012). The most effective way of delivering a train-the-trainers program: A systematic review. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 32(2), 215-226.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 126-136.

Porter, C. M. (2015). Revisiting Precede-Proceed: A leading model for ecological and ethical health promotion. *Health Education Journal*, 1-12.

Schulenkorf, N., Sherry, E., & Rowe, K. (2016). Sport for development: An integrated literature review. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30, 22-39.

Smith, B., & McGannon, K. R. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: Problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 1-21.

Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2009). Judging the quality of qualitative inquiry: Criteriology and relativism in action. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 10, 491-497.

Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2014). Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From process to product. New York, NY: Routledge.

Svensson, P. G., & Woods, H. (2017). A systematic overview of sport for development and peace organisations. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 5(9), 36-48.

Toriola, O. M. (2010). Children's perception of physical education and school sport in Swaziland. *The Shield (International Journal of Physical Education and Sport Science)*, 5, 96-107.

Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "big-tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16, 837-851.

UNAIDS. (2016). Country facts sheets - Swaziland. Retrieved from <http://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

Underwood, C., Skinner, J., Osman, N., & Schwandt, H. (2011). Structural determinants of adolescent girls' vulnerability to HIV: Views from community members in Botswana, Malawi, and Mozambique. *Social Science & Medicine*, 73(2), 343-350.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2015). 10 things you didn't know about the world's population. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/04/10-things-didnt-know-worlds-population/>

United Nations Population Fund South Africa (UNFPA South Africa) (2011). Young People. Retrieved from <http://southafrica.unfpa.org/en/topics/young-people-1>

Walsh, D. S., Ozaeta, J., & Wright, P. M. (2010). Transference of responsibility model goals to the school environment: Exploring the impact of a coaching club program. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 15(1), 15-28.

Whitley, M. A. (2012). The Ikhaya sport programs in the Kayamandi Township. *Agora para la Educación Física y el Deporte*, 14(1), 115-136.

Whitley, M. A., Coble, C., & Jewell, G. S. (2016). Evaluation of a sport-based youth development programme for refugees. *Leisure/Loisir*, 40(2), 175-199.

Whitley, M., & Gould, D. (2010). Psychosocial development in refugee children and youth through the personal-social responsibility model. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 1(3), 118-138.

Whitley, M. A., Hayden, L. A., & Gould, D. (2013). Growing up in the Kayamandi Township: I. The role of sport in helping young people overcome challenges within their community. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 5(3), 373-397.

Whitley, M. A., Hayden, L. A., & Gould, D. (2016). Growing up in the Kayamandi Township: II. Sport as a setting for the development and transfer of desirable competencies. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 14(4), 305-322.

Whitley, M. A., Massey, W. V., Camiré, M., Blom, L. C., Chawansky, M., Forde, S., Boutet, S., Borbee, A., & Darnell, S. (2019). A systematic review of sport for development interventions across six global cities. *Sport Management Review*, 22, 181-193.

Whitley, M. A., Massey, W. V., Camiré, M., Boutet, S., & Borbee, A. (2019). Sport-based youth development interventions in the United States: A systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, 19(89).

Whitley, M. A., Massey, W. V., & Wilkison, M. (2018). A systems theory of development through sport for traumatized and disadvantaged youth. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise*, 38, 116-125.

World Health organization (WHO) (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/countries/swz/en/>

Wright, P. M., & Burton, S. (2008). Implementation and outcomes of a responsibility-based physical activity program integrated into an intact high school physical education class. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 27(2), 138-154.

Wright, P. M., Jacobs, J. M., Ressler, J. D., & Jung, J. (2016). Teaching for transformative educational experience in a sport for development program. *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(4), 531-548.

## Original Research

## Being a part of it: People with intellectual disabilities as volunteers in the Youth Olympic Games

Roald Undlien<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Corresponding author email: roald.undlien@inn.no

### ABSTRACT

During the Youth Olympic Winter Games event in Lillehammer, Norway, a group of students with intellectual disabilities worked as volunteers. The teachers of the class functioned in a social entrepreneurial manner, using the event to create social value for this particular group. Qualitative interviews were conducted with the group of students (n=12), and observations were made during the event. The students' teachers (n=3) and the head of volunteers (n=1) from the organizing committee were also interviewed for triangulation, thus verifying the interpretation of the data. This study demonstrated that social value was created through the practical tasks the students with intellectual disabilities were given, especially in relation to the Olympic context of the event, and the job itself was more important than those for whom they were doing it or why. Other important sources of social value were for the students to be outside of the classroom and to be cooperating and learning from each other within the group. Last, the students had the opportunity to aid and assist, instead of being aided and assisted, and to give something back to the local community.

### INTRODUCTION

Sports are employed increasingly as an entrepreneurial mechanism to promote important social issues such as developing a global society (Ratten, 2015). Creating a "better world" by finding solutions for social problems or inequality and, in particular, creating social value, are also the main hallmarks of social entrepreneurs (Dees, 2001; Guo

& Bielefeld, 2014; Helmsing, 2015; Sullivan Mort, Weerawardena, & Carnegie, 2003). Traditionally, social value is viewed as something that benefits people whose needs are not being met by any other means. Social entrepreneurs aim to create social value by stimulating societal change or meeting needs through a process of combining resources innovatively with the intent to explore and exploit opportunities to develop social value (Mair & Marti, 2006). According to Schenker, Gerrevall, Linnér, and Peterson (2014), sports are both suitable and capable of addressing and contributing to solving social problems and are used increasingly in this social entrepreneurial manner.

At the Youth Olympic Winter Games (LYOG) held in Lillehammer in 2016, several actors saw an opportunity to work as social entrepreneurs to create social value for various target groups (Undlien, 2017). According to Hulgård and Lundgaard Andersen (2014), social entrepreneurship is about creating social value by doing something new, with a high level of influence by participants and often with the involvement of elements of civil society such as the volunteer sector. By participating as volunteers in the LYOG, several foundations, organizations, and other actors were able to gain advantage and momentum for their entrepreneurial projects working toward social change and the creation of social value for their respective target groups (Undlien, 2017). Among these groups was a high school class for people with intellectual disabilities (ID).

Internationally, volunteerism has been used to promote the social inclusion of vulnerable groups in mega-sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic

Games (Darcy, Dickson, & Benson, 2014; Nichols & Ralston, 2011). In a Norwegian context, promoting social inclusion through volunteerism is less common. For instance, at the FIS World Cross Country Championships in 2011, 16% of the volunteers were in a catch-all category, such as the unemployed, civil workers, conscripts, and those with disabilities. However, no distinctions were made among various groups within the category. Moreover, Norwegians have often been labeled the world champions of volunteering (Skille, 2012), and sports represents the largest arena for volunteer work in Norway, with a volunteer effort equivalent to 23,000 FTEs (St. Meld. nr. 39 (2006-2007)). Research shows that, within sports, people with disabilities are underrepresented as volunteers (Eimhjellen, 2011). Moreover, this research does not distinguish between people with intellectual disabilities (ID) and those with physical disabilities. Little is known about people with ID and volunteerism in sports (although some research on people with ID and volunteerism in other contexts has been conducted (Patterson & Pegg, 2009; Roker, Player, & Coleman, 1998).

People with ID as volunteers is new and not visible within the Norwegian sports context; thus, they are labeled “nontraditional” volunteers in this study. To discuss the nontraditional, it is necessary to first consider the traditional. According to Folkestad, Christensen, Strømsnes, and Selle (2015), the traditional Norwegian volunteer is a highly educated, married man between the ages of 35 and 49, with children and a high income. At past major Norwegian sporting events (e.g., the world skiing championship in 2011), the majority of volunteers were employed men with a university degree (Skille, 2012).

Participating in volunteer work can be an important arena for promoting integration and social inclusion (Eimhjellen, 2011). In Norway, a political objective is that everyone, independent of functioning, should have equal opportunities to be part of different social and cultural arenas, including the volunteer sector (Söderström & Tøssebro, 2011). Still, it is not traditional to consider issues related to social responsibility and social value in the context of marginalized groups in relation to larger sports events. The official political platform of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF), for the period 2015–2019 does not emphasize or mention social responsibility related to larger events, nor does it consider using events to create social value for marginalized groups through volunteering (Norges Idrettsforbund, 2015).

Enabling people with ID to volunteer at major sporting events allows an opportunity for a new discourse. They can be seen as useful and contributing to society. As volunteers,

they are not necessarily seen as people with an intellectual disability who rely on aid and assistance on a daily basis. Opportunities for people with ID to be a part of new discourses, such as volunteering, can be seen in relation to what Grue (2001) describes as “to make oneself known,” a strategy for mastering one’s life situation. Within this perspective, people with disabilities are given the opportunity to influence how others see them by choosing the context they want to be part of instead of being placed in a discourse by others (“to get known”). In this way, attention is directed away from the disability and toward the aspects the disabled person wants to display. Furthermore, this allows persons who are disabled to resist being labeled as “disabled.” Thus, we can say that volunteering is a potential source of social value for people with ID. Through volunteering, they might “make themselves known” by visually demonstrating their potential, mastering specific tasks, and developing new skills, thereby influencing how they are perceived by others—in other words, becoming a volunteer at an Olympic event and someone who is useful, instead of a boy/girl with an intellectual disability in need of aid to accomplish daily living activities.

The aim of this study is to contribute to the field of volunteerism and social entrepreneurship in order to identify the possibilities of these perspectives in the context of nontraditional groups and their participation as volunteers in sports events. Little is known about how people with ID experience being volunteers at major sporting events and especially how volunteering can contribute to creating social value for this population. It is hoped that this study will contribute to filling this gap.

The following research questions were developed:

- How can social entrepreneurs create social value for people with intellectual disabilities through volunteer work at a major sporting event?
- How do people with ID experience working as volunteers at a major sporting event?

## BACKGROUND

The present study’s interviews revealed that the mother of a student with ID came up with the idea for her daughter’s class (for students with ID) to volunteer as other students do. She discussed this with the head teacher, who contacted the head of volunteers for the Lillehammer Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee (LYOGOC), and the volunteer project for students with ID was initiated. The program was not adapted for the target group; rather, they enrolled as regular volunteers. The Olympic Games have



had a strong standing in Lillehammer since the games in 1994, and LYOG was seen as a significant opportunity to be part of the same story, resulting in several actors with social entrepreneurial projects wanting to be included in the event (Undlien, 2017). This made participation in the games especially attractive, thereby pushing potential entrepreneurs such as the high school teachers to develop new approaches for taking part.

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) differs from other Norwegian sporting events in several aspects but particularly for having a wider range of tasks needing to be completed. According to the LYOGOC's head of volunteers, they needed a broad spectrum of volunteers as the event was so diverse; thus, there were many options for identifying appropriate tasks. However, it was clearly expressed on behalf of the group that the tasks they were assigned had to be meaningful (tasks that actually needed to be done) while simple enough that all students could learn and master the necessary skills. Together with the LYOGOC, the class's teacher identified the task of collecting and recycling trash at the largest venue for the event. Trash is generated wherever people gather for several days, but a large-scale event like the YOG is likely to generate a huge amount, and the job of recycling and cleaning up will thereby be more extensive than for smaller-scale events.

### **Social Entrepreneurship**

Social entrepreneurship is receiving an increasing amount of attention within the field of sports management (Bjärsholm, 2017). However, according to Weerawardena and Mort (2006), it remains an ill-defined concept. Entrepreneurs are considered people who are able to discover and exploit new possibilities and have the motivation and dedication necessary to pursue them while being willing to take the risks involved (Martin & Osberg, 2007). Broadly, social entrepreneurship can be seen as a process involving innovative use and a combination of resources to pursue opportunities to enact social change and/or address social needs (Mair & Marti, 2006). Furthermore, Dees, Emerson, and Economy (2002) argue that social entrepreneurship is about creating social value and especially finding new and better ways to do so.

It is common to discuss social innovations when talking about new elements that social entrepreneurs bring to the table to create social value. An innovation is often created across three sectors: state, market, and civil society. Social innovations can be seen as new ideas that comply with social needs while creating new forms of social

relationships or cooperation (Hulgård, 2007), while Pol and Ville (2009) take a somewhat wider stance on the subject, defining social innovations as ideas with the potential to improve the quality or quantity of life.

There are several definitions of the concept of social value. Young (2006, p. 56) defines it as something that “benefits people whose urgent and reasonable needs are not being met by any other means.” Hence, it is important for social entrepreneurs to create social value by stimulating social change or meeting social needs through a process of combining resources in a new way that aims to explore and exploit opportunities to create social value (Mair & Marti, 2006). According to Martin and Osberg (2007) entrepreneurs are attracted to a suboptimal equilibrium where the entrepreneur sees the opportunity for a new and improved solution, service, or process, while others may perceive it as an inconvenience to be tolerated.

According to Young (2006), value has five crucial features from a social entrepreneurial point of view. First, value is subjective and a matter of real life experiences. Second, social value is negotiated between stakeholders; third, it is open for reappraisal, and fourth, it includes incommensurable elements. Fifth, (social) values are inseparable from social activity. As Dees (2001, p. 4) notes, “It is inherently difficult to measure social value creation.” However, social value is created through activities and services that target marginalized groups, which often experience that the market and political systems fail to meet their needs (Young, 2006).

### **Sports Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship**

Previously, the association between innovation, entrepreneurship, and sports has received little attention. However, Ratten (2011b) has made an effort to address this omission. According to Ratten (2011b), in a sports context, social entrepreneurship occurs when sport as a whole field starts to address social change or social problems, and thus social entrepreneurship or other entrepreneurial activities conducted in a sporting context may be referred to as sports entrepreneurship. Defined as “the mindset of people or organisations actively engaged in the pursuit of new opportunities in the sports-context” (Ratten, 2012, p. 66), sports entrepreneurship has a social entrepreneurial nature. Innovation plays a crucial role in social entrepreneurship, as solutions to social problems often involve doing something new (Hulgård & Lundgaard Andersen, 2014). Innovation also lies within the core of an entrepreneurial sports process, as it emphasizes the creation of new ventures or the maintenance of an organization (Ratten, 2012). In addition,

Sullivan Mort et al. (2003) emphasize proactiveness and risk taking as central to social entrepreneurship, and the same characteristics are the hallmarks of sports entrepreneurs (Ratten, 2011a).

### **Volunteerism as a Theoretical Concept**

The subject of volunteerism in sporting events is one of the most prominent research topics of sports management (Wicker, 2017). This study relies on the works by Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) and Hustinx (2010), which have attempted to conceptualize volunteerism in a theoretical framework. Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) separated volunteers into two main categories: reflexive/modern and collective/traditional volunteers.

The reflexive volunteer often volunteers for events with a short time frame and chooses the activity as a means to express his or her identity. The main reason for volunteering is often to extend networks and/or to improve one's work resume to appear more attractive to potential employers. Frequently, the reflexive volunteer has no or little affiliation with the organization or event for which he or she is volunteering (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003).

The traditional volunteer has strong roots in the Norwegian context and is a long-term volunteer who often does work on the basis of solidarity and contributing to the local society. Unlike reflexive volunteers, they frequently have strong affiliations with the organizations for which they volunteer. Furthermore, patriotism is an important value for them (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003).

Hustinx (2010) has further developed the theoretical framework of volunteerism by introducing another category of volunteers, institutionally individualized volunteers. According to Hustinx (2010), new organizational and institutional models affect volunteerism today, resulting in a type of volunteer she describes as institutionally individualized. Organizations dependent on these types of volunteers are increasingly adapting their activities to be flexible according to volunteers' preferences. This is a kind of volunteerism where the institutional association of the individual, in this case the students' school, becomes important to whether the person volunteers or not and for whom he or she volunteers.

## **METHODS**

### **The Case Study**

In order to answer the present study's research questions, a

case study was conducted with a high school class for students with ID (n=12) volunteering at the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). This is considered a single case study of one complex case with several perspectives and is studied to learn about the participation of people with ID as volunteers. Several actors were involved in order to ensure the class's participation as volunteers, to facilitate a positive experience, and to identify tasks for them so they could contribute in a meaningful way. Therefore, the perspectives of the teachers (n=3) as facilitators for the students were included. The head teacher was interviewed prior to the event, while the other teachers were included in interviews following it.

Last, the perspective of the head of volunteers for the event's organizing committee was included to gain a broader picture of the participation of students with ID as volunteers. The selection of the case was information oriented and related to the author's expectation about the information content that this specific case might provide. The goal of this kind of selection is to maximize the utility of information from a single case (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Triangulation is about controlling conclusions drawn from one source of data by gathering data from other sources (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2004). By including several sources (the class's teachers and the head of volunteers for LYOGOC), triangulation of the data was ensured in order to validate the answers to the research questions.

According to Flyvbjerg (2006), choosing few cases to study may be fruitful, as atypical cases often reveal more information as they include more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation being studied. The case for this study was chosen strategically, as the group of students with ID stood out from traditional volunteers. They were special because of the circumstances of their participation (the school played a crucial role in this), in addition to their abilities to explain what they were doing and why. Furthermore, people with disabilities (including people with ID) do not usually volunteer at sporting events and are considered marginalized in the society (Eimhjellen, 2011). They also have unmet social needs and a need for social change (to be fully included in society) and are thus a suitable group to study in a social entrepreneurial context.

The case was conducted through qualitative interviews and participant observations. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) interviews may provide a fruitful method if the aim is to seek a better understanding of someone's subjective experiences and self-perception in the social world. However, some challenges that will be discussed

below became apparent.

### **Qualitative Interviews and People with ID**

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2004), it is only through conversation (e.g., interviews) that we can create generality about the social arena. However, numerous challenges and methodological issues arose when conducting qualitative research with people with ID. They may lack verbal language, forcing the researcher to rely on observation as a research method and paving the way for new challenges. When completing observations, researchers don't necessarily "see everything you notice, you don't notice everything you see, and sometimes you see something else than what you noticed" (Sundet, 2010, p. 123). In addition, the cognitive levels of interviewees with ID may pose difficulties for understanding complex questions or grasping the reach of questions (Ellingsen, 2010).

The initial interviews with the students with ID revealed that it was challenging for most to talk about something that had not yet happened. Furthermore, several students had difficulties expressing themselves orally and, in particular, finding the words to describe their feelings and experiences. Yet it was important to include their voices, as this is a group that is seldom heard within qualitative research (Ellingsen, 2010). Thus, it was decided to interview them again in real time as they were performing their volunteer work, in addition to observing them during the LYOG, to acquire appropriate data.

### **Observation**

When conducting participatory observation, the researcher interacts with the person(s) to be studied while studying and observing as the person(s) acts in a certain environment (Fangen, 2010). Participant observation is often used to study subjects in the context of their worlds. Although language may be important within participant observation, there is also an option to study situations from the perspectives of individuals with ID who are nonverbal. The aim is to discover and explore the meaning that the subjects make of their world (Biklen & Moseley, 1988). Throughout the study, the interviews and observations were divided into two main subjects, social entrepreneurship and volunteerism.

### **Social Entrepreneurship and Volunteerism**

Social entrepreneurship occurs when a person or organization recognises a suboptimal situation or problem for a specific social group and combines resources in a new

way to address it (Martin & Osberg, 2007). Thus, it was important to identify who saw the opportunity for the students to volunteer and who worked to make it happen. In other words, who was the social entrepreneur in this case? In addition, it was interesting to see whether the students with ID could picture the event as something that would somehow change their current social world for better or worse. Moreover, this author wished to understand how involved they had been throughout the process and their level of influence.

Regarding volunteerism, the interview questions were mainly related to the students' expectations, especially the eventual outcomes they hoped to achieve by participating in the event (e.g., making new friends or just having a positive experience). Important topics included things they were looking forward to and, to some extent, eventual concerns that some of them had. Other subjects were about the event itself to understand the extent to which they knew for what and whom they were volunteering. This was relevant in order to understand their participation in relation to Hustinx and Lammertyn's (2003) categories.

### **Sampling**

Although this author had no previous affiliation with the high school class, their main teacher was approached after a tip from an informant in another study (also regarding the LYOG). A meeting was scheduled in which the aim of the study was explained to the main teacher. To follow up, a written notice stating the aim of the study, the methods to be used, and its duration was sent to all parents/guardians of the students, as well as the school administration. This form also served as informed consent to participate in the study, giving all the students the possibility not to participate or to withdraw their participation at any point with no repercussions. Furthermore, for the ethical considerations of the study, it was reported in and approved by the Data Protection Official for Research in Norway prior to data collection. In addition, all names and personal information were anonymized during the transcription of the interviews. Moreover, all names of the interviewees are changed and anonymized in this article.

### **Data Collection**

The initial data collection was interviews with the group of 12 students, which were divided into smaller groups of three to four students. The 12 students were 16–19 years old with six boys and six girls. Each interview lasted between 10 and 30 minutes.

Observations were conducted during the LYOG, and the

group of 12 students was divided by the teachers into smaller groups of five or six students. The observations were made over the five days the event lasted. The students' working sessions usually lasted from 09:00–15:00, with a 30-minute lunch break, and observations were conducted during these hours with this author fully included as part of the group. Since the author had talked with the students before the event, they were comfortable with the author, who quickly gained the trust of several students. They frequently requested help from the author, for example with mittens, shoes, or even advice about where to pick up trash next, or asked permission to do things. The observations were recorded as handwritten field notes in a notebook.

When observing, situations promoting joy, positive new experiences, and learning were of particular interest, as social value may be conceptualized as positive, subjective everyday experiences (Young, 2006). Some students could not use words to express themselves at all but clearly indicated their emotions using body language (e.g., smiling, hugging, skipping, and jumping as they walked, or wearing a frown, displaying tiredness, being displeased). The observations focused on specific situations and circumstances in which the students displayed joy or displeasure.

Another important aspect of the observations was the social element. As the aim of the study was to identify how the event itself could be used to create social value, it was important that the observations were focused on the event itself. Thus, interactions or situations of interest had to be a direct result of the event rather than just two friends enjoying a conversation, as they would have done in school. Those instances when subjects of conversations concerned something they had experienced together during the event were especially interesting. Thus, the subject of the observations had to be social (interaction), and context specific for the event. Hence, situations that were particularly interesting for this study involved positive or negative experiences resulting from social interaction with each other within the group and with other volunteers, participants, or people involved with the event.

### Analysis

The analysis was theory driven, using the perspective of social entrepreneurship, social value, and volunteerism as concepts. Furthermore, it aligned with what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) call a “bricolage” approach, in which transcriptions of all the interviews are made and analyzed, and additional observations are used while focusing on the bigger picture. Bricolage is an eclectic approach that

generates meaning by applying theoretical terms ad hoc (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The observations and conversations at this particular event were utilized to discover aspects of the link between volunteerism and social value in general. Selected parts of the interviews and observations, in particular, were studied to find relevant structures and patterns for this study.

Furthermore, the observations were analyzed from a social value perspective, looking specifically at how positive experiences could be seen in a larger picture, for instance, to move toward social change or meet a social need. Examples are skills the students with ID learned throughout the event that might assist them to live independently as adults in the future or other aspects that might promote inclusion in sports settings and society as a whole.

Value was studied in terms of positive experiences (Young, 2006). In the analysis, these experiences and descriptions were recontextualized by looking at how people with ID are positioned in the society and attempting to observe how the experiences of value related to the event could be useful in the students' everyday lives.

The concept of social entrepreneurship was used as a possible interpretation of the described or observed experiences. In other words, the context that the interviewees described was recontextualized by applying the theoretical lens of this study in an attempt to highlight new angles and gain new insights about the theoretical fields of this study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Themes or outcomes to be included in the findings section were selected through a set of criteria. These had to be positive or negative situations that were context specific (YOG itself) and in which the students interacted within the event, especially in relation to their specific tasks as volunteers.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### People with Intellectual Disabilities as Volunteers

The volunteers of this study differed from the existing conceptual groups of volunteers, such as the “reflexive” and “traditional” categories of Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003), as some were unable to describe what they were volunteering for or why. From Hustinx's (2010) perspective, there are also similarities to institutionally individualized volunteers, as the school was crucial for this group's participation as volunteers.

The group of students had several elements in common with Hustinx and Lammertyn's (2003) “traditional volunteer,” as



the interviews showed that several of them talked about the importance of contributing to the local community. This may be illustrated by the following quotes: “It is good that we have the YOG, so that the youth get more things to do,” and “We get to do something for our town.” Some students even perceived their own efforts in a bigger picture when several talked about the global importance of recycling trash—not just tidying up the arena, as some of them emphasized, but doing their part to “save the globe,” as illustrated by the quote: “We are picking up garbage for the environment.” By contrast, some students had difficulties describing the value of their work and were unable to answer questions about why they were doing a particular task and if they saw the value in doing it.

Observations showed that this was a group with a high morale for working, and there was joy in doing physical labor. The main social value was closely connected to the actual tasks, such as picking up trash and recycling. The job itself was more important than who they were doing it for or why. Like the reflexive volunteers, these volunteers did not have a close affiliation with the organization or event for which they were working (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003). For some students, the main value was instead being outside the classroom and doing something practical; regarding the most fun about being a volunteer at the YOG, one said, “Not being in school.”

The students knew they were there to pick up trash, but it might be that they considered it to be part of school rather than a voluntary act, as the school was the main facilitator and their main source of information. One may argue that the efforts of this group were not done voluntarily at all since they often couldn’t explain why they were volunteering or simply claimed “because the teacher told me so.” However, there were students in the class who refused to be part of the project, indicating that those who participated actually wanted to do so, even though it was difficult to express why.

Several of the students also had difficulties understanding what they were actually volunteering for. They had talked in school about volunteering in general prior to the event and especially volunteering at the LYOG. Still, they were struggling with the difference between the “regular” Olympics and the Youth Olympics. For instance, all were asked before the event, “What are you looking forward to the most in volunteering at the YOG?” One student answered, “to seeing Marit Bjoergen and Therese Johaug<sup>1</sup> competing.”

Although not fully aware of the extent of the event for

which they were volunteering, the students did not expect to get anything in return for their time and effort. As Carl said, “It’s not the best job I’ve had, we don’t get any money for this (laughing).” Moreover, as Jens said, “It has been fun to help out.” These statements imply that they understood the concept of volunteering and helping out while not expecting or getting something in return for their time and effort, according to Mannino, Snyder, and Omoto (2011).

Observations and interviews showed that even those students with little or no verbal language could recognize the colors and symbols of the event. “Youth Olympic car,” said one of the girls (with limited verbal language) when she spotted a car from the organizing committee, wearing the same colors as her uniform. She could recognize the volunteer uniforms, the cars, the flags, and the mascot, knew that all of them were interconnected, and saw herself as part of that bigger picture. She had a sense of belonging to a bigger community, even though it was hard for her to describe what this community actually was.

### Challenges for the Volunteers and Their Environment

The observations conducted during the LYOG also showed several limitations in the students’ volunteer efforts linked to the nature of their disabilities. Some were rather passive in their work efforts, but small facilitations could change the picture drastically. A waste-picker was a tool that made a huge difference for some students, changing their efforts from nonexistent to high intensity.

Another challenge appeared in the electronic registration of the volunteers, a small task for the regular volunteer but time demanding for one person doing the job for 12 others. Every student needed a great deal of assistance registering personal information and retrieving pictures for accreditation. The main teacher, doing all this in addition to her regular tasks as a teacher, still saw what Baron (2006) describes as an entrepreneurial opportunity and, in doing so, activates a set of characteristics often associated with entrepreneurs. Among these are optimism and willingness to take a risk believing that all will turn out favorably for the entrepreneur (Baron, 2006).

Many people with ID rely heavily on close follow-up with one or more assistants, which can be challenging from an organizational perspective. In this case, the teachers followed the students, aiding them as little as possible (to ensure maximum learning) but still being present as a safety net for the students. Thus, the school was crucial for the participation of these students. However, it is becoming increasingly common that third parties, such as institutions,

<sup>1</sup>Athletes on the senior national team for cross-country skiing and therefore not eligible for participating in the YOG.

mobilize and organize volunteer groups (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2010). In this case, some students did not function, refusing to do anything unless a specific teacher was present.

Several other challenges for the students with ID appeared during the observations conducted throughout the event. Some tended to be more interested in talking with people and watching the crowds than working. Others needed many repeated instructions to become efficient workers. One student, who became a leader, expressed challenges attached to getting co-students to do what they were supposed to be doing. When asked about the biggest challenge of volunteering, he said, “making people do what they are supposed to.” However, a little facilitation in finding the proper tasks (for instance, driving the wheel cart instead of picking up trash) could make the difference between total passiveness and full-speed activity. This implied that the group was dependent on people around them who knew them and what they could and could not do and could find solutions when things were about to turn negative. Last, since it was the teachers who had to facilitate this within their work hours, this is clearly a limitation of this kind of volunteering, as the volunteer efforts of the students could happen only during regular school hours.

According to the teachers, every day that is different, when regular schedules and routines are broken, results in negative experiences for these students. This event, however, was considered positive for all those involved. When writing about the power of the Olympic Games, Chalip (2006) uses the term “liminality.” Although Chalip does not clearly define liminality, he describes it as the feeling of being part of something outstanding and a heightened sense of fellowship and community among those present (Chalip, 2006, p. 110). A sense of unity and being part of something bigger than themselves, almost like the experience of liminality, may have influenced the students to do their very best, making everyone pull in the same direction.

From the event organizers’ perspective, there were few or no challenges involved with including this kind of nontraditional volunteer in the event. Quoting the head of volunteers, “There were far more challenges in dealing with the regular class of 10B<sup>2</sup>, down here at junior high, than with this group.” Furthermore, she emphasized that having a group of volunteers with ID demanded a little extra from the leader in charge of clean up and recycling, especially in finding suitable tasks that were also meaningful. However, as soon as the tasks were found, the event organizers had a group that, quoting the head of volunteers, “displayed a

profound amount of joy and enthusiasm, and there were so many people telling positive stories having met this particular group during their working hours.”

### The Teachers as Social Entrepreneurs

Acknowledgement of risk but still being willing to “go for it” because of a highly possible favorable outcome is characteristic of social entrepreneurs (Dees, 2001; Sullivan Mort et al., 2003) as well as sports entrepreneurs (Ratten, 2011a). The teachers for the group acknowledged that there was risk involved in the volunteer project (e.g., students refusing to work or having negative experiences). As one teacher said, “This has exceeded all expectations. There hasn’t been any nonsense with anyone!” The quote indicates that there was an expectation or precaution that not every student might function well as a volunteer. In general, people with ID are dependent on a high degree of predictability and rather fixed frames for their everyday lives in order to maintain or achieve a good life quality (Albrecht & Devlieger, 1999). The YOG, by contrast, is an event that deals with several potential X-factors (such as interaction with an unpredictable number of unfamiliar people, different languages and cultures, and sudden practical tasks that need to be solved). On the event organizer’s part, there is an expectation that the volunteers will actually do what is expected of them. Still, in an entrepreneurial manner, the teachers focused on how to optimize their efforts with the resources at hand spotting and exploiting possibilities as they appeared (Martin & Osberg, 2007). The observations showed few or no instances where the students expressed negative feelings attached to their tasks.

Within social entrepreneurship literature, the focus has traditionally been on firms or nonprofit organisations (NPOs). In this context, the emphasis has been on how to create social value for a specific group while creating profit or making an economic impact. Others argue that social entrepreneurs can also be individuals independent of organizations or firms (Sullivan Mort et al., 2003), such as the teachers in this study. The high school for this study is a county-driven institution, and thus the state and government have a strong influence on how it works. Governmental enterprises often work entrepreneurially, for example, to improve education for special groups, health care, and other low-cost services for the common good. They do, however, frequently face rigid bureaucracies that can restrain entrepreneurial activities (Lee, 2014). The teachers in this study, although working in a state-run high school, had freedom of action that often NGOs also enjoy (Lee, 2014).

<sup>2</sup>10B is the name of a tenth grade class. At larger junior high schools, there may be up to four parallel classes, usually labeled A through D.

This allowed them to engage in activities outside of school, as long as they could state the importance for the students. However, they had to think in an entrepreneurial manner, and see possibilities for new approaches (Baron, 2006).

Social innovations are highly important for social entrepreneurs, as they represent new ways of addressing a social need or problem that is not currently being met, often through new forms of cooperation (Hulgård & Lundgaard Andersen, 2014). In this study, the teachers engaged in a new activity, volunteerism, by cooperating with an organization that was partly a governmental and partly a private enterprise, the LYOGOC. Thus, the teachers displayed an entrepreneurial mindset in setting out to do something new and seeking new partners for cooperation while acknowledging that it wouldn't necessarily succeed (Martin & Osberg, 2007).

The teachers, and one in particular, did more than was expected of them to make the volunteer project happen. The main teacher said in one of the interviews before the event, "Had I known in advance how much work it would be, I would never have done it. But I think that it will be worth the effort, seeing the joy they get in return." Social entrepreneurship is about working toward social change and addressing social needs (Mair & Marti, 2006). The scope of this project is rather small and doesn't address people with ID as a whole group. However, it might be a first step on a path where people with ID are included in settings in which currently they are not present. This project did not result in a radical change, but those involved were left with highly subjective, valuable experiences and a significant positive learning outcome, according to their teachers. The project was, to some extent, used to display what the teachers felt was social inequality and to create valuable and positive everyday experiences to promote learning for these particular students.

Social entrepreneurship often has an economic dimension in addition to the creation of social value (Hulgård, 2007). The economic impact of this particular project is rather small, however, it is still present. Volunteer work, in its very nature, is about people using their time and effort to aid or assist someone without the expectation of compensation in return (Mannino et al., 2011). For the LYOGOC, volunteers do jobs the organization would otherwise have to pay for. The job that the students did during the event needed to be done, one way or another, and their volunteer effort saved money for the organizers. The students, for their part, learned new skills and improved their work resumes and networks, and demonstrated what they were capable of, thus becoming more attractive to potential employers.

## Social Value through Volunteerism

The term social value is problematized by, among others, Young (2006) in describing this particular kind of value as subjective and almost private. Regarding the class of students with ID, volunteering at larger events can be a source of value by being an arena to promote cooperation and learning to interact with others (for example, in the lunch line or in conversation with the trash recycling leader about what kind of trash goes where). However, the main value might be the work itself and the chance to be someone who assists instead of being assisted.

Furthermore, this experience allows students to choose for themselves what kind of discourse they want to be part of—as a "volunteer at an Olympic event doing an important job" instead of a "student with an intellectual disability with several limitations." Furthermore, the volunteer uniform also contributed to erasing differences among the various volunteers. For instance, those students with Down Syndrome became more like the others, despite their physical characteristics related to their disability. The uniform also contributed to letting students partake of the "volunteer context," which can also be described as "to make oneself known" where the students have opportunities to resist being placed in a certain context, for instance, as "disabled" (Grue, 2001). Moreover, volunteerism might provide an arena where people with ID can experience increased inclusion and an experience of "being normal," thus addressing a social need (the need to belong).

In addition, the LYOG was a valuable arena for exposure, as the volunteers with ID got the opportunity to raise awareness about their potential as a work force. People with ID working as volunteers can also be seen as a social innovation as defined by Pol and Ville (2009). Applied to this case, we can see a new form of cooperation (between the LYOGOC and the local high school), with a potential for increased quality of life for the students concerned, all made possible through this kind of new cooperation and blending of sectors (Hulgård & Lundgaard Andersen, 2014).

This approach may not be appropriate for every individual with ID, but with the prerequisites and circumstances they had, it worked successfully for this group. For instance, one of the girls showed remarkable capacity for physical labor while displaying profound joy and happiness. The observations showed that when she was working, she really had no time to talk to others; instead she rushed to offer assistance where needed because, as she said, "I *have* to help!" Moreover, she smiled the most when she was feeling useful; the heavier the load, the better. As one teacher said,

<sup>3</sup>Emphasis implying that the vast amount of garbage made it the most fun.

“Katrine, strong as a bear, carrying these huge bags of garbage with a huge smile on her face. That’s when she laughed, when she could run while carrying the biggest bags. She was ecstatic because that’s what she likes!” In response to the question of what had been the most fun, Katrine herself said, “to pick up garbage. *A lot!*” Another student, when asked the same question, simply replied, “really, it was good just being here,” implying that it was valuable just to be part of this large event, with so many activities to take part in for volunteers as well as spectators. In addition, watching athletes from all over the world, seeing their various team uniforms, and listening to their languages created impressions quite outside the ordinary and were positive experiences.

The goal of the project was for students with ID to learn and master new skills relevant for finding an occupation later on, to experience unity, and to be a part of the same discourse as their nondisabled peers. The teachers of this class emphasized that it is important for these students to be part of the same contexts and discourses as other youths. In addition, by cooperating on very specific tasks, such as opening a rubbish bin (in this case, a three-person job) they got a chance to act together in a new way to solve real world problems through cooperation. As one of the boys said to one of the girls, “You are strong; we are lucky that you are here.” This implies that there is value in solving practical jobs together, in a “real” setting. Thus, the LYOG was an arena where the students could appreciate each other’s skills in a new environment. All of these are potential sources of social value that is not possible to create inside a classroom.

According to Young (2006), social value is about activities and services valued by a group whose needs are not adequately served by the market or the political system. It is arguable whether all people *need* to volunteer. However, it may be argued that volunteerism is part of the “normal” discourse, as a huge number of people in Norway volunteer on a regular basis (Skille, 2012). Furthermore, according to Bogdan and Taylor (1999), contributing to the society through (for instance) volunteering is important for being part of the community. By volunteering, people get together and form social networks, and there is widespread belief that participation in sports may foster social integration in society (Elmose-Østerlund & Ibsen, 2016).

Observations during the event revealed several situations where the students with ID needed to interact with other volunteers. Many people with ID live highly organized lives and are part of only a few restricted social networks (Søderstrøm & Tøssebro, 2011). The LYOG was an arena where the students were part of a real world setting instead

of practicing skills within the confines of a classroom. At the LYOG, they had to interact with many different people from different countries while accomplishing the tasks that needed to be done (such as loosening garbage bags from cans, transporting them to the correct place, and opening the dumpster). The main learning outcome of the volunteer project was closely related to being part of the real world. According to the teachers, being part of society and being as independent as possible are also main concepts that the students needed to learn during their school years.

Several students also got to show other sides of themselves during the event. The teachers were particularly impressed by how one of the boys, Sander, developed during the event. He was also the one who volunteered the most before, during, and after the event. As one of the teachers said, “Really, all of them should have been working for five days in a row; maybe we would have had different learning curves for them as well.” As for Sander, the teachers described him as being unable to make his own choices. However, during the LYOG this was not visible, as he became a leader of the group, deciding where to go at what time and the order in which the garbage cans would be emptied. Through volunteering at this event, this particular student got an opportunity to develop new personal characteristics, make independent choices, engage in conversations with other (nondisabled people), and categorize rubbish. All are activities that he normally would not undertake. For the teachers, this led to the discovery of new potential for meaningful work for this particular student.

In regard to finding meaningful occupations for other students, this was one of the main tasks of the school, which is constantly searching for relevant settings where their students with ID might be placed and trained in order to prepare them for life after school. Through the students’ volunteer efforts, the teachers discovered skills and characteristics among their students that they had no knowledge of before the event. Thus, the teachers became aware of several work places to approach for place-and-train arrangements.

Social value is, according to Young (2006), inseparable from social activity. For the students with intellectual disabilities in this study, being part of as many social activities as possible may (arguably) be highly important. Sander may be an example as the one volunteer who participated in most of the activities and also the one with the highest reward in terms of personal development. By volunteering in the LYOG, all students received an opportunity to experience what Chalip (2006) describes as



liminality, the sense of being part of something bigger than oneself. With the history of Lillehammer hosting the Olympic Games in 1994, the students got to see themselves as part of that context as well. When talking about the event, almost all the students consistently used the term “the Olympic Games” instead of “Youth Olympics.” They had learned about the YOG in school before the event, and the abbreviation “YOG” was written nearly everywhere in the arena. Still, they called the event “the Olympic Games,” implying that they saw themselves mainly in an Olympic context. This might also imply that the Olympic context is more valuable than the YOG context.

Finally, the main social value for the students in this study might be the positive experiences and new skills they learned that may help them to live rich, empowering, and diverse lives—in other words, to partake in society. By relying on more empirical studies, contributions are being made in understanding the concept of social value while revealing the potential of sports in a social arena to create this kind of value.

## CONCLUSION

In the beginning, the following questions were raised:

- How can social entrepreneurs create social value for people with intellectual disabilities through volunteer work at a major sporting event?
- How do people with ID experience working as volunteers at a major sporting event?

There is a possibility for social entrepreneurs to create social value for people with ID through participating as volunteers in a major sporting event, as this is a real event, involving real people. It is also about letting marginalized groups participate in the society alongside others and to be a part of discourses that focus on being useful, rather than on their disabilities. Through this, they can learn valuable practical and social skills that may aid them in the everyday life outside of school. People with ID experienced volunteering at the YOG as an exclusive event with rich possibilities to contribute on different levels (locally as well as globally). Furthermore, the event was viewed as a positive and meaningful experience by the volunteers, much due to a careful selection of the tasks they were set to do and through facilitation by persons that knew them well. Additionally, the job they were set to do was experienced as important on its own, not being influenced by whom they were doing it for. Last, it allowed the students to cooperate on practical tasks that needed to be solved, letting them display and

develop personal characteristics that were new to themselves and their teachers.

## REFERENCES

- Albrecht, G. L., & Devlieger, P. J. (1999). The disability paradox: High quality of life against all odds. *Social Science & Medicine*, 48(8), 977-988.
- Baron, R. A. (2006). Opportunity recognition as pattern recognition: How entrepreneurs “connect the dots” to identify new business opportunities. *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, 20(1), 104-119.
- Biklen, S. K., & Moseley, C. R. (1988). “Are you retarded?” “No, I’m Catholic”: Qualitative methods in the study of people with severe handicaps. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 13(3), 155-162.
- Bjärsholm, D. (2017). Sport and social entrepreneurship: A review of a concept in progress. *Journal of Sport Management*, 31(2), 191-206. doi:10.1123/jsm.2017-0007
- Bogdan, R., & Taylor, S. J. (1999). Building stronger communities for all: Thoughts about community participation for people with developmental disabilities. Paper presented at the President’s Committee on Mental Retardation’s Forgotten Generations Conference, Washington, DC.
- Chalip, L. (2006). Towards social leverage of sport events. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 11(2), 109-127.
- Darcy, S., Dickson, T. J., & Benson, A. M. (2014). London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: Including volunteers with disabilities—A podium performance? *Event Management*, 18(4), 431-446.
- Dees, J. G. (2001). The meaning of social entrepreneurship. Retrieved from <https://entrepreneurship.duke.edu/news-item/the-meaning-of-social-entrepreneurship/>
- Dees, J. G., Emerson, J., & Economy, P. (2002). *Enterprising nonprofits: A toolkit for social entrepreneurs*. New York: Wiley.
- Eimhjellen, I. S. (2011). *Inkluderende av funksjonshemmede i frivillige organisasjoner*. Oslo: Senter for forskning på sivilsamfunn og frivillig sektor.

Ellingsen, K. E. (2010). Begrensninger og forskningsmetodiske kneiker. In R. Gjærum (Ed.), *Usedvanlig kavlitativ forskning-metodologiske utfordringer når informanten har utviklingshemming* (pp. 209-240). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Elmose-Østerlund, K., & Ibsen, B. (2016). Social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs in Europe: Introduction to the project. Retrieved from [https://www.kenniscentrum.sport.nl/publicatie/?social-inclusion-and-volunteering-in-sports-clubs-in-europe&kb\\_id=21611&kb\\_q=](https://www.kenniscentrum.sport.nl/publicatie/?social-inclusion-and-volunteering-in-sports-clubs-in-europe&kb_id=21611&kb_q=)

Fangen, K. (2010). *Deltagende observasjon* (2nd ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 12(2), 219-245.

Folkestad, B., Christensen, D. A., Strømsnes, K., & Selle, P. (2015). *Frivillig innsats i Noreg 1998-2014 : Kva kjenneteikner dei frivillige og kva har endra seg?* Oslo: Senter for forskning på sivilsamfunn og frivillig sektor.

Grue, L. P. (2001). Motstand og mestring: Om funksjonshemning og livsvilkår. Retrieved from <http://www.hioa.no/Om-HiOA/Senter-for-velferds-og-arbeidslivsforskning/NOVA/Publikasjoner/Rapporter/2001/Motstand-og-mestring.-Om-funksjonshemning-og-livsvilkaar>

Guo, C., & Bielefeld, W. (2014). *Bryson series in public and nonprofit management : Social entrepreneurship: An evidence-based approach to creating social value*. Somerset, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2004). *Feltmetodikk: Grunnlaget for feltarbeid og feltforskning* (3rd ed.). Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag.

Haski-Leventhal, D., Meijjs, L. C., & Hustinx, L. (2010). The third-party model: Enhancing volunteering through governments, corporations, and educational institutes. *Journal of Social Policy*, 39(1), 139-158. doi:10.1017/S0047279409990377

Helmsing, A. H. J. (2015). Conditions for social entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Social Quality*, 5(1), 51-66. doi:10.3167/IJSQ.2015.050104

Hulgård, L. (2007). *Sociale entreprenører: En kritisk indføring*. København: Hans Reitzels forlag.

Hulgård, L., & Lundgaard Andersen, L. (2014). *Sosialt entreprenørskap og sosial innovasjon*. København: Nordisk Ministerråd.

Hustinx, L. (2010). Institutionally individualized volunteering: Towards a late modern reconstruction. *Journal of Civil Society*, 6(2), 165-179. doi:10.1080/17448689.2010.506381

Hustinx, L., & Lammertyn, F. (2003). Collective and reflexive styles of volunteering: A sociological modernization perspective. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 14(2), 167-187.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju* (2nd ed.). Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.

Lee, S. H. (2014). A social exchange theory of non-governmental organizations as social entrepreneurs in rural entrepreneurship. In P. H. Phan, J. Kickul, S. Bacq, & M. Nordqvist (Eds.), *Theory and empirical research in social entrepreneurship* (pp. 73-112). Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University on Entrepreneurship.

Mair, J., & Marti, I. (2006). Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight. *Journal of World Business*, 41(1), 36-44. doi:10.1016/j.jwb.2005.09.002

Mannino, A. C., Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (2011). Why do people get involved? Motivations for volunteerism and other forms of social action. In D. Dunning (Ed.), *Social Motivation* (pp. 127-146). New York: Taylor & Francis.

Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 5(2), 28-39.

Nichols, G., & Ralston, R. (2011). Social inclusion through volunteering: The legacy potential of the 2012 Olympic Games. *Sociology*, 45(5), 900-914. doi:10.1177/0038038511413413

Norges Idrettsforbund. (2015). *Idrettspolitisk dokument 2015-2019*. Retrieved from [https://www.idrettsforbundet.no/globalassets/idrett/idrettsforbundet/om-nif/idrettspolitisk-dokument-2015-2019/57\\_15\\_nif\\_idrettspolitisk-dokument-2015-2019\\_lr\\_0909.pdf](https://www.idrettsforbundet.no/globalassets/idrett/idrettsforbundet/om-nif/idrettspolitisk-dokument-2015-2019/57_15_nif_idrettspolitisk-dokument-2015-2019_lr_0909.pdf)

Patterson, I., & Pegg, S. (2009). Serious leisure and people with intellectual disabilities: Benefits and opportunities. *Leisure Studies*, 28(4), 387-402. doi:10.1080/02614360903071688

Pol, E., & Ville, S. (2009). Social innovation: Buzz word or enduring term? *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 38(6), 878-885. doi:10.1016/j.socec.2009.02.011

Ratten, V. (2011a). Social entrepreneurship and innovation in sports. *International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 1(1), 42-54. doi:10.1504/IJSEI.2011.039811

Ratten, V. (2011b). Sport-based entrepreneurship: Towards a new theory of entrepreneurship and sport management. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 7(1), 57-69. doi:10.1007/s11365-010-0138-z

Ratten, V. (2012). Sport entrepreneurship: Challenges and directions for future research. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Venturing*, 4(1), 65-76.

Ratten, V. (2015). Athletes as entrepreneurs: The role of social capital and leadership ability. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 25(4), 442-455.

Roker, D., Player, K., & Coleman, J. (1998). Challenging the image: The involvement of young people with disabilities in volunteering and campaigning. *Disability & Society*, 13(5), 725-741.

Schenker, K., Gerrevall, P., Linnér, S., & Peterson, T. (2014). Sociala entreprenörer i en match utan regler. *Svensk Idrottsforskning: Organ för Centrum för Idrottsforskning*, 23(4), 41-44.

Skille, E. (2012). En sammenlikning mellom frivillige under Ski-VM og andre frivillige. In D. V. Hanstad (Ed.), *Ski-VM 2011 - Planlegging og gjennomføring* (pp. 157-180). Oslo: Akilles forlag.

Söderström, S., & Tøssebro, J. (2011). *Innfridde mål eller brutte visjoner? Noen hovedlinjer i utviklingen av levekår og tjenester for utviklingshemmede*. Trondheim: NTNU, Institutt for samfunnsforskning.

St. Meld. nr. 39 (2006-2007). *Frivillighet for alle*. Oslo: Kulturdepartementet.

Sullivan Mort, G., Weerawardena, J., & Carnegie, K. (2003). Social entrepreneurship: Towards conceptualisation. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 8(1), 76-88.

Sundet, M. (2010). Noen metodiske dilemmaer: Bruk av deltagende observasjon i studier av mennesker med utviklingshemming. In R. Gjærum (Ed.), *Usedvanlig kvalitativ forskning/metodologiske utfordringer når informanten har utviklingshemming* (pp. 123-136). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Undlien, R. (2017). The Youth Olympic Games as an opportunity for sports entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 17(4-6), 283-307.

Weerawardena, J., & Mort, G. S. (2006). Investigating social entrepreneurship: A multidimensional model. *Journal of World Business*, 41(1), 21-35. doi:10.1016/j.jwb.2005.09.001

Wicker, P. (2017). Volunteerism and volunteer management in sport. *Sport Management Review*, 20(4), 325-337. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2017.01.001>

Young, R. (2006). For what it is worth: Social value and the future of social entrepreneurship. In A. Nicholls (Ed.), *Social entrepreneurship: New models of sustainable change* (pp. 56-73). New York: Oxford University Press.

## Evaluation

## Yarning with the Stars Project: An Indigenous evaluation protocol for a sport for development and peace program

Rose Whitau<sup>1</sup>, Helen Ockerby<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shooting Stars: Education Through Netball, Glass Jar Australia, Australia

Corresponding author email: [rose.whitau@shootingstars.org.au](mailto:rose.whitau@shootingstars.org.au)

### ABSTRACT

In Australia, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their non-Indigenous peers is significant in terms of attendance, retention to Year 12, and literacy and numeracy skills, with the gap widening in regional and remote contexts. School-based, “academy-style” engagement programs work to close this gap by providing holistic support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students while requiring a certain level of school attendance by program participants. Shooting Stars is an engagement program based in seven remote and regional schools in Western Australia, where it uses netball and other incentives to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls in their education, while promoting their health and wellbeing. Shooting Stars evaluates the efficacy of its services through collation of attendance data, participant case studies, and yarning circles. The methods used in the yarning circles research were developed over 18 months in collaboration with Shooting Stars participants, localized Shooting Stars steering committees, and Shooting Stars staff. This paper presents the evaluation protocols for the Shooting Stars program, focusing on the yarning circles’ methods in order to provide a framework or model of Indigenous evaluation methods for others working within this space.

### INTRODUCTION

First, it is right that we introduce ourselves. We, the authors, are both Indigenous women: RW is of New Zealand Māori (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe, Waitaha) and Pākehā (New Zealand European) descent and HO is of Aboriginal Australian (Bardi-Jawi and Nyoongar) descent. We both

work for the Shooting Stars program from which we receive financial remuneration. RW was the regional manager for the Shooting Stars program in the Mid West, Gascoyne, and Goldfields regions from January 2016 to January 2018, was a contract researcher for the Shooting Stars program from January 2018 to August 2019, and is now the Shooting Stars research manager. HO has been the regional manager of the Kimberley region for the Shooting Stars program since January 2016. We have given much of our blood, sweat, and tears to the establishment of the Shooting Stars program, and we are heavily invested in the program and the participants’ success.

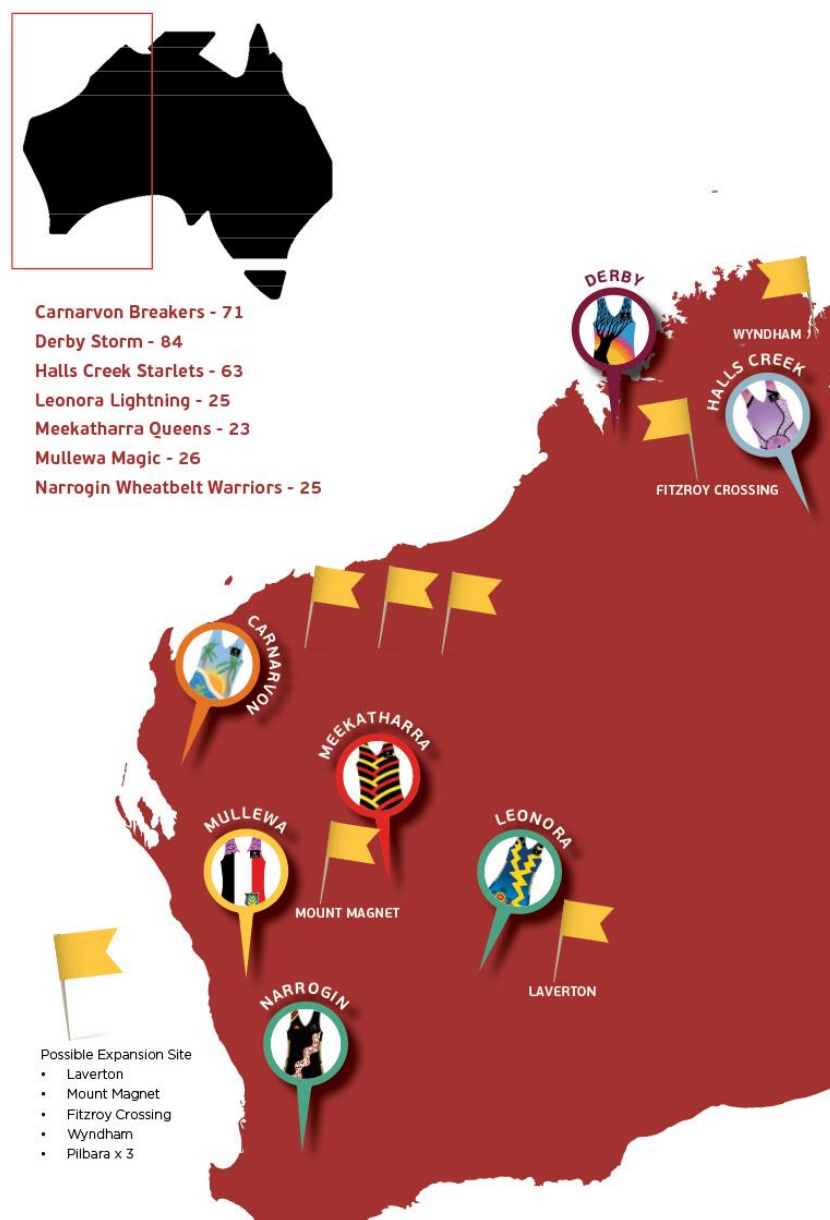
### Background

In Australia, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander<sup>1</sup> students and their non-Indigenous peers is significant in terms of attendance, retention to Year 12, and literacy and numeracy skills, with the gap widening in regional and remote contexts (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017; Commonwealth of Australia, 2017; Commonwealth of Australia, 2018). School-based, “academy-style” engagement programs, such as the Clontarf Foundation and Role Models Australia, work to close this gap by providing holistic support services to Aboriginal students while requiring a certain level of school attendance by program participants. Funding is currently biased toward boys’ programs, with \$40 million granted to the mentoring and support of young men in June 2017, compared to \$9 million for young women (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017). In 2017, the Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs found that the common elements among successful engagement programs were “flexibility, cultural safety, buy-in from the family and connection with community”; yet

**Keywords:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education; sport for development and peace; youth engagement program; yarning circle; netball; evaluation protocol



*Figure 1. Map of Western Australia with Shooting Stars sites and approximate participant numbers at time of writing, with inset of Australia*



how the success of these programs was measured was not defined, with the committee also stating that they were consistently surprised and concerned about the lack of data available regarding attendance and education outcomes for Indigenous students” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017, p. 47).

Engagement programs that use sport as a “hook” are part of the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) movement. Distinct from sports development, which aims to develop sport per se, SDP aims to use sport to tackle development issues—in this case, engagement with education (Coalter, 2009; Darnell, 2012). There are currently two main critiques of the SDP movement. The first is that there are

few theoretical frameworks for evaluation across both top-down broad-scale and bottom-up local-scale initiatives (Black, 2010; Kay, 2009; Kidd, 2008). The benefits of sport are often listed, usually within Western, “white,” and colonial modes of understanding, without evaluation. The second is that development initiatives, and SDP programs by proxy, tend to propagate Western, colonial paradigms, with white developers developing the black underdeveloped world. This is particularly true when working in Indigenous contexts, where Indigenous populations are targeted, yet Indigenous voices are rarely heard within SDP theorisation, policy, and evaluation processes (Black, 2010; Kay, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Rossi & Rynne, 2014). It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the history of social/economic

Figure 2. The Shooting Stars program logic model: Program activities, outcomes, and evaluation tools



development and its idiomatic pitfalls; however, what can readily be drawn from the literature is that development programs need to be both embedded within and driven by the communities within which they serve, and these programs need to undergo regular self-reflection (where that reflection is undertaken collaboratively by staff, participants, and their communities).

### The Shooting Stars Program and the Yarning with the Stars Project

Shooting Stars, an initiative of Glass Jar Australia and Netball Western Australia, uses netball and other incentives as rewards to encourage young Aboriginal girls to improve their school attendance, while promoting their health and wellbeing. First established as a pilot project in Halls Creek in July 2014, Shooting Stars now reaches over 350 girls and is embedded in seven remote/regional schools across Western Australia: Carnarvon Community College, Derby District High School, Halls Creek District High School, Leonora District High School, Meekatharra District High School, Mullewa District High School, and Narrogin Senior High School (see Figure 1). At all of the schools except for Narrogin (16% Aboriginal), students are predominantly

Aboriginal (75 to 100%).

The Shooting Stars program is site specific, with staff adapting a key set of deliverables to the requirements and interests of the respective host school, community, and students. Figure 2 depicts the program logic model, including program activities, outcomes, and evaluation tools. The program comprises two netball and two health and wellbeing sessions per week per age group. Netball is used as a hook to engage potential participants. The health and wellbeing aspect of the Shooting Stars program is grounded within the Shooting Stars curriculum framework, underscored by the three values of the Shooting Stars program: pride, respect, and success. Once registered with the program, participants are encouraged to improve or maintain their school attendance through a system of structured rewards, such as interschool sports carnivals, bush trips, and movie nights. Rewards are also used to reinforce positive classroom behavior, and teachers are actively encouraged to provide feedback to Shooting Stars staff on participant behavior in class. In conjunction with the proactive program based on these deliverables, staff work responsively within the school context, providing support for participants. For example, Shooting Stars staff will

advocate for participants during behavior management meetings and Shooting Stars staff are regularly engaged by their host school to mitigate behavior issues throughout the school day. The Shooting Stars room at each site is a safe space for all Shooting Stars participants and is often the place nominated by the school for participants on behavior management plans to de-escalate.

The four key outcomes of the Shooting Stars program are:

1. Participants maintain/improve their school attendance (target minimum 80%);
2. Participants maintain/improve a positive attitude toward their education, health and wellbeing, and future;
3. Empower Aboriginal Women: The number of Aboriginal women gainfully employed or undertaking higher education is increased (e.g., grow the number of young women completing Year 12 at each site; increase Glass Jar Australia's Aboriginal staff rate to 100%);
4. Embed the Shooting Stars Program in Communities: Family, communities, local service providers, and schools are engaged in Shooting Stars program delivery of events and reward trips.

Shooting Stars evaluates the success of the program through collation of attendance data, participant case studies, and yarning circles. Attendance data collection is straightforward: the data are taken directly from the Department of Education's Integris system. Participant case studies are shared only with the main funding body—the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC)—under strict confidentiality agreements. This paper presents the protocols for the yarning circles research—the Yarning with the Stars project, which draws on Western and Indigenous research methods to provide qualitative evaluation for this program. The three key aims of the Yarning with the Stars project, are:

1. To evaluate the progress and efficacy of the program in order to complete funding requirements;
2. To enable communities and participants to drive the direction and content of their local program by creating activities that directly influence outcomes;
3. To disseminate the results of the yarning circles method externally in order to:
  - a. Provide other organizations working in the Indigenous education/youth/sport space with a

framework or model for applying Indigenous evaluation methods;

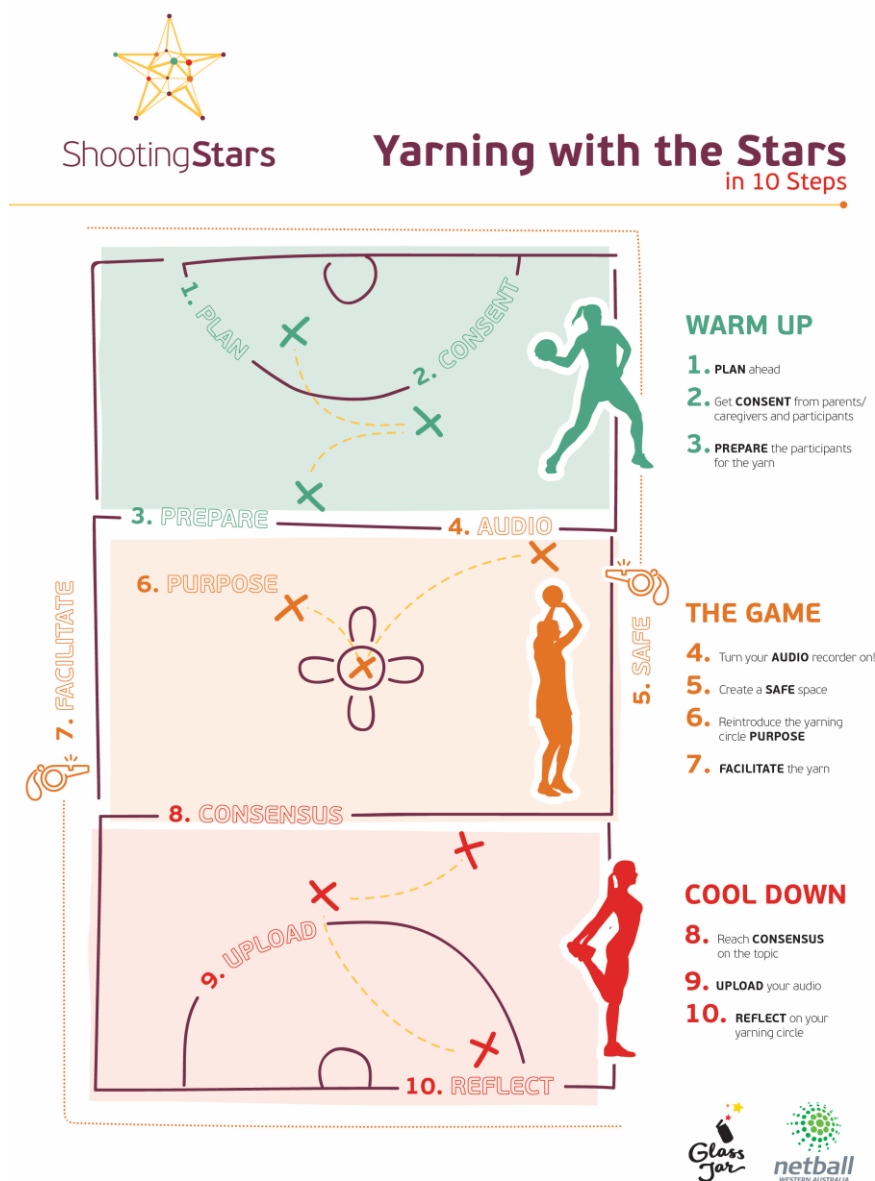
- b. To grow the capacity of Shooting Stars staff and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to conduct and drive local research initiatives; and,
- c. To validate Shooting Stars yarning methods in order to build the prestige of the program and enhance future funding opportunities

## METHODS

Essential aspects of Indigenous research include: respect; inclusive decision making; equality of input and control (including the objectives, processes, and data interpretation); privileging Indigenous voices, perspectives, and knowledge systems; and benefits for all who participate (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 1999). We selected yarning circles as the primary mode for data collection because they provide a culturally responsive research space in which both information can be collected and relationships can be built (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). To yarn is to converse—in a mutual, reciprocal dialogue, where interjections, interpretations, and additions are welcome (Geia, Hayes, & Usher, 2013; Rogers, 2017). Yarning is being used more and more frequently as a qualitative research tool (e.g., Bessarab and Ng'andu, 2010; Carlson & Frazer, 2018; Rogers, 2017). The yarning circle, a “focussed, directed discussion based on principles of respect, inclusion and democratic participation” (Carlson & Frazer, 2018, p. 44) has an ancient history in Aboriginal Australia. Similar practices, such as *hui* in Aotearoa/New Zealand, occur in other Indigenous nations throughout the world (Aseron, Greymorning, Miller, & Wilde, 2013).

In the Shooting Stars Yarning with the Stars project, there are three groups of people involved in the yarning process: Shooting Stars staff, Shooting Stars steering committees, and Shooting Stars program participants. Shooting Stars staff are predominantly Aboriginal (85% at time of writing), all are women, and all come from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, cultural heritage, work background, education, and life experience. At each site, Shooting Stars steering committees are comprised of Shooting Stars staff, host school representatives, Aboriginal community representatives, and relevant local stakeholders. Steering committee representatives are also diverse in terms of age, cultural heritage, work background, education, and life experience. Shooting Stars program participants are all girls and young women, predominantly Aboriginal (75 to 100% depending on site demographics), vary in age and education

Figure 3. Yarning with the Stars project: Yarning in ten steps



from Year 3 to Year 12, and currently live in a remote/regional area.

In considering this research and its diverse participants, we identified that a culturally responsive, decolonized methodology, which gives epistemological equality to western, Aboriginal, and other ways of knowing, being, and doing, was paramount. We selected relatedness as a theoretical framework because it is situated within Aboriginal ways of knowing, being, and doing, and is both inclusive and subjective, requiring “identities, interests, and connections to determine our relatedness, drawing on what we know through elders and community, as proper ways of being” (Martin, 2003, p. 210). Relatedness is a suitable framework since the central tenet of the Shooting Stars program is the relationships connecting individuals and

communities, with staff embedded within the communities where this research is conducted. Comprising both insiders and outsiders in these communities, we, as Shooting Stars staff, are able to use relatedness to acknowledge our position and privilege others' knowledge alongside our own. Similarly, the program participants are from diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, which are often quite transient. Relatedness provides an inclusive, subjective space for the participants to relate to each other and staff and a method by which to privilege their ways of knowing, being, and doing. Finally, relatedness theory helps us to understand that the implications of this research will continue past its undertaking (Martin, 2003), which belies the sustainability that is built into the program so that it will have a positive legacy beyond the discontinuation of funding.



There are two types of yarning circles conducted in this research: “yarning about yarning” yarns, in which the yarning circle methods are discussed, and yarning circles, in which participants’ attitudes toward their education, health and wellbeing, and future are gauged. Yarning circles are audio recorded (no video or photos are taken for safety and confidentiality). The audio files are transcribed by Digital Transcripts. We, the authors, cross-code the transcripts to establish a collaborative coding tree, using NVivo for Mac qualitative software, and prepare biannual reports on the yarning circles, in which data are presented thematically, with representative quotes, word clouds, tables, and figures.

### Yarning in Ten Steps

We developed a simple ten-step process to aid staff when conducting yarning circles (see Figure 3). This ten-step process divides yarning into three stages in relation to netball session planning, which staff are all familiar with. The first phase, the “warm up,” comprises planning, informing parents/caregivers and participants in order to get their consent, and preparing the participants for yarning. The preparation phase could occur in the moments prior to the yarning circle, for example, an icebreaker activity, or could involve several health and wellbeing sessions over several weeks. These preparation methods have varied and evolved across time and between sites from simple questions and brainstorming on butcher’s paper to photovoice (e.g., Wang, 2006), where participants take photos that represent specific elements and bring these to the yarning circle for discussion. Staff have used both Indigenous tools (e.g., message stick) and non-Indigenous tools (e.g., scaffolding and differentiation techniques) to make sure that the yarning space is always safe, inclusive, and accessible to participants.

The second phase, “the game,” is the yarning circle itself, where staff turn the audio on and reintroduce the yarning circle topic. During this phase staff act as a yarning circle “umpire,” creating and monitoring boundaries with the participants to keep them safe and facilitating the conversation to help it flow. While staff have done all that they can in the first phase to ensure that the circle will be safe, it is after the topic has been reintroduced that staff will set yarning circle boundaries with the girls. Staff start each yarn by discussing not just the purpose of the yarn and how it will work, but also by identifying, and helping the participants to identify their relatedness. Together, the facilitator and the participants establish what they know to be appropriate and proper ways of acting in the circle—the “rules” that the umpire upholds for the duration of the game. The umpire as facilitator has been a very useful analogy for

our staff, who were initially feeding a lot of answers into the yarning circles but who now understand that like the umpire, the facilitator’s role is not to play the game, but to enable the game/yarn to proceed in fairness and safety.

Facilitation does not stop when the audio turns off—consensus must be facilitated in the third and final phase or “cool down,” which also comprises uploading the yarning circle audio to a secure folder and reflecting on the yarning circle process. The session plan template, which staff use for netball training, health and wellbeing classes, and yarning circles, includes a small section for staff to write two to three sentences about what worked and did not work.

### Participant and Steering Committee Yarning Circles

From December 2016 to December 2018, the main topic across participant and steering committee yarning circles was school—what participants’ attitudes were toward school and what barriers they faced in attending school and/or remaining in class. The results have been used to improve program delivery. Reports generated during this time period were discussed during steering committee yarns, where they were used as context for the yarning circle about participants’ attitudes toward school and the barriers that the participants had discussed. From these yarns, staff and steering committees selected two of the top five barriers identified across the Shooting Stars program sites for Shooting Stars to focus on in 2019: bullying and alcohol/drugs. Shooting Stars has now employed a full-time Aboriginal curriculum developer both to write health and wellbeing sessions specifically for this purpose and to train staff to deliver these sessions.

Shooting Stars has also used yarning circles to make program changes and additions based on direct feedback from steering committees and participants. Changes to program delivery vary from the adjustment of netball training times and the inclusion of others (such as boys or girls from other schools) in netball games to the development of the Shooting Stars Leadership Project. The development of the Shooting Stars Leadership Project by the Shooting Stars leaders themselves has further embedded yarning within the program’s logic model, since yarning now directly contributes to empowering Aboriginal women to lead projects within their communities and to make the changes that they have identified. For example, in Carnarvon, one student noticed a lack of education around sexually transmitted diseases among her peers, so for her Leadership Project in 2018, she organized for a nurse to run a health and wellbeing session on sexual health. The yarning circles enable participants to drive the direction and content

of their local program in three ways: through analysis of summary reports of participant attitudes; through direct feedback from steering committees and participants; and via the Leadership Project, in which the participants both identify the need and drive the change. The yarning circles are themselves a tool for empowering the participants, since they provide a platform for student voice and agency, where student feedback is honored and acted upon (Bahou, 2011; Bamblett, Harrison, & Lewis, 2010; Fielding, 2004).

Yarning circles have been a central part of the Shooting Stars evaluation protocol since December 2016. The appropriate approvals had been sought from host schools and institutions, and the results of the yarning circles were shared internally or with key stakeholders (schools, funding bodies, steering committees) under strict confidentiality agreements. In August 2018, a formal ethics approval was sought from, and granted by, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, so that the results of the research could be publicly disseminated moving forward.

### Challenges and Limitations

The reality of staff-driven research has proven to be both the greatest limiting factor for this project and its greatest asset. Our relationships with our participants and communities are not simply an advantage over an external researcher, who must spend a large quantity of time building rapport with their participants (see, e.g., Sharif, 2001), it is through these relationships, and our relatedness, that we are truly able to decolonize our program's theorization, policy, practice, and evaluation. However, facilitating participant and steering committee yarns provides an additional administrative pressure on staff, who are already time poor. Operating within the school context, staff must respond to behavioral events ad hoc, which can throw a day's planning out the window. Therefore, while staff have planned and discussed the tools they will use for their yarning circles and how they will make them contextual, staff time and access to those participants might become restricted and improbable during the week that those activities were planned. While running yarns on reward camps does alleviate some of this pressure, only participants who are readily engaged in the program and have earned the camp (participants with school attendance 80% and above or an improvement of 20% or more from the previous term and those who have made positive behavior decisions in class) will be present in the yarn. Additionally, staff capacity, turnover, and time between opportunities for training mean that staff are at different levels of understanding and engagement with the research, its methods, and its possibilities.

The biggest learning for us has been a reflection on how the professional development around yarning circles is delivered to and with Shooting Stars staff. In the beginning, we facilitated the first staff yarn without ever having conducted a yarning circle ourselves. We assumed that because social and therapeutic yarning (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010) is the Shooting Stars Program Coordinator's bread and butter that the yarning circle would be a straightforward activity. We discussed theory, the reasons behind the yarning circles—with little reference or instruction to staff in how they would be delivered on the ground, besides ethical necessities such as consent and participant safety. Over time, and with staff feedback, we have learned what practical information is useful for staff, who have the skills and relationships to facilitate yarning circles successfully but are often daunted by the prospect of "doing research" and are self-conscious in front of the audio recorder.

### CONCLUSIONS

The methods described here are predominantly based on Indigenous principles and practices, while combining Indigenous (yarning circles, storytelling, knowledge-sharing through art and objects) and non-Indigenous (scaffolding learning, differentiation, audio-recording and transcription, thematic analysis) data collection and processing methods. The perspectives, protocols, and cultural values of Aboriginal people, particularly women, have been central to the development of this learning and research process. The research aims and methods, while restricted by funding reporting requirements, are flexible and open to negotiation from all three groups (Shooting Stars staff, steering committees, and participants) in various stages throughout the research process.

Yarning circles are not just a culturally responsive way to evaluate program success and to tailor engagement and/or Sport for Development and Peace programs to local contexts, they provide a platform for student voice and self-determination. The ten steps presented here could be related to any sport and delivered by any coach familiar with session planning, warming up/cooling down, and the role of an umpire; however, cultural competency training would be required for non-Indigenous staff members, and all staff would need support in applying the theoretical framework of relatedness. Yarning itself can be as simple as sitting down with a cup of tea and a question or more complex, with participants bringing photos that they have taken of a specific theme. Other organizations can also adapt the methods to their specific circumstances. For Shooting Stars, the essential element is the relationship that is built between facilitator and participant before, during, and after the yarning has taken place.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Henceforth “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” will be abbreviated to “Aboriginal.”

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Both of the authors work for the Shooting Stars program, from which we receive financial remuneration. We are heavily invested in the program and the participants' success.

## FUNDING

The Shooting Stars program is funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. The Yarning with the Stars Project receives additional funding from Horizon Power and Lotterywest. None of these funding bodies contributed to the research process.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, we would like to thank our participants, staff, steering committees, schools, and communities for their participation in this research project. Figure 1 was produced by Ferdinando Handojo. Figures 2 and 3 were produced by Ashton Murphy. We would like to thank Professor Colleen Hayward AM and two anonymous reviewers for their invaluable comments on earlier versions of this manuscript.

## REFERENCES

Aseron, J., Greymorning, S. N., Miller, A., & Wilde, S. (2013). Cultural safety circles and Indigenous Peoples' perspectives: Inclusive practices for participation in higher education. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 6(4), 409-416.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017). Schools, Australia, 2017, Key Findings. Available from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproduct/s/4221.0Main%20Features22017?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4221.0&issue=2017&num=&view>.

Bahou, L. (2011). Rethinking the challenges and possibilities of student voice and agency. *Educate* (January), 2-14.

Bamblett, M., Harrison, J. & Lewis, P. (2010). Proving culture and voice works: Towards creating the evidence base for resilient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia. *International Journal of Child and Family Welfare*, 13(1-2), 98-113.

Bessarab, D., & Ng'andu, B. (2010). Yarning about yarning as a legitimate method in Indigenous research. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*, 3(1), 37-50.

Black, D. R. (2010). The ambiguities of development: Implications for “development through sport.” *Sport in Society* 13(1), 121-129. doi: 10.1080/17430430903377938

Carlson, B., & Frazer, R. (2018). Yarning circles and social media activism. *Media International Australia*, 169(1), 43-53.

Coalter, F. (2009). Sport-in-Development: Accountability or development? In R. Levermore and A. Beacon (Eds.), *Sport and International Development* (pp. 55-75). London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Commonwealth of Australia. (2017). House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs. The power of education: From surviving to thriving. Educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Commonwealth of Australia. (2018). Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Closing the Gap Prime Minister's Report 2018.

Darnell, S. (2012). *Sport for development and peace: A critical sociology*. London & New York: Bloomsbury.

Fielding, M. (2004). Transformative approaches to student voice: Theoretical underpinnings, recalcitrant realities. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(2), 295-311.

Geia, L., Hayes, B. & Usher, K. (2013). Yarning/Aboriginal storytelling: Towards an understanding of an Indigenous perspective and its implications for research practice. *Contemporary Nurse*, 46(1):13-17.

Kay, T. (2009). Developing through sport: Evidencing sport impacts on young people. *Sport in society*, 12(9), 1177-1191.

Kidd, B. (2008). A new social movement: Sport for development and peace. *Sport in Society*, 11(4), 370-380.

Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Martin, K. (2003). Ways of knowing, ways of being and ways of doing: A theoretical framework and methods for indigenous research and indigenist research. *Journal of Australian Studies*, 76, 203-214.

Rogers, J. (2017). Photoyarn: Aboriginal and Maori girls' researching contemporary boarding school experiences. *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, (1), 3-13.

Rossi, T., & Rynne, S. (2014). Sport development programmes for Indigenous Australians: Innovation, inclusion and development, or a product of "white guilt"? *Sport in Society*, 17(8), 1030-1045. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2013.838355

Sharif, B. (2001). The ambiguity of boundaries in the fieldwork experience: Establishing rapport and negotiating insider/outsider status. *Qualitative inquiry*, 7(4), 436-447.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Wang, C. C. (2006). Youth participation in photovoice as a strategy for community change. *Journal of community practice*, 14(1-2), 147-161.



## Original Research

## Understanding female youth refugees' experiences in sport and physical education through the self-determination theory

Anna Farello<sup>1</sup>, Lindsey C. Blom<sup>1</sup>, Thalia Mulvihill<sup>1</sup>, Jennifer Erickson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ball State University, USA

Corresponding author email: afarello@bsu.edu

### ABSTRACT

As female youth from refugee backgrounds are forced to migrate and resettle, they face unique challenges not often addressed by their host community. Participating in physical activity (PA), however, may pave a pathway to healthy resettlement. Nine Burmese females from refugee backgrounds participated in semistructured interviews and discussed their experiences in sport and physical education and how those experiences relate to their sense of belonging, autonomy, and relationships, as well as their ability to adapt. Participants then completed a photovoice task where they photographed highlights and challenges they have faced in PA. Photographs were analyzed and discussed in a follow-up interview. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. Resulting dimensions such as sport incompetence, growth mindset, importance of autonomy and choice, and desired peer relationships support Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. Practical implications for PE teachers, coaches, and school administrators are discussed. These results inform school districts of potential barriers and future interventions that could help this population better resettle and encourage participation in sports and physical activity.

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2019, nearly 26 million refugees worldwide have been displaced from their home countries, with only 92,000 officially resettled (U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019). Refugees are "forcibly relocated from their origin country, arriving in their host country after internal displacement, migration through other countries, or living in refugee camps for significant periods amidst hazardous

conditions" (Edge et al., 2014, p. 35). Among other things, refugees can experience and/or witness violence, torture, injury, imprisonment, and homelessness (Hadfield et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2016; Tribe, 2005). Perhaps the most vulnerable group of refugees is youth, who represent the largest percentage of forced migrations (U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019). This population must cope with identity disruption (Keddie, 2011), making social connections with peers and adults (Olliff, 2008; Palmer, 2009), learning a new language (Shakya et al., 2010), and adapting to a new school system (Prior & Niesz, 2013). Because these obstacles can threaten their overall well-being, practitioners and researchers are looking for strategies and solutions that could mitigate these concerns. The field of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) suggests participation in physical activity (PA) and sport may be a strategy, especially for female youth (Collison et al., 2017; Stura, 2019; Whitley et al., 2016; Whitley & Gould, 2011). Therefore, the purpose of the present research was to better understand the role of PA and sport in the resettlement of female youth with refugee backgrounds.

Research in SDP and other fields suggest PA, exercise, and/or sport are potential ways individuals from refugee backgrounds can cope with various resettlement challenges (Anderson et al., 2019; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Olliff, 2008; Palmer, 2009; Robinson et al., 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). Worldwide, grassroots SDP programs are growing in numbers and quality (Svensson & Woods, 2017). However, programs targeting displaced youth are less common (Ha & Lyras, 2013; Ubaidulloev, 2018; U.N. Refugee Agency, 2019). Thus, organized sport could improve its outreach to involve more youth from refugee backgrounds, as sport and general PA could be helpful in the resettlement process.

**Keywords:** qualitative research; autonomy; belonging; relationships; photovoice

Further, many of the benefits of sport, exercise, and PA are similar to the factors that help refugees better resettle in their host country, including enhanced autonomy, a sense of belonging, connections with peers and adults, and resilience. Autonomy, for instance, can buffer against negative psychological outcomes (Bean et al., 2014; Edge et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2016; Pieloch et al., 2016) and can be fostered by autonomy-supportive coaches and PE teachers (Bean et al., 2014; Beni et al., 2017; Elbe et al., 2018). Feeling a sense of belonging also aids youths' resettlement (Hadfield et al., 2017; Mohammadi, 2019) and could be a product of group PA participation (Block & Gibbs, 2017; Dukic et al., 2017; Nathan et al., 2010; Robinson et al., 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). Additionally, social support from peers and important adults (e.g., coaches, teachers, parents) is crucial for youth refugees' psychological well-being and adaptation (Hadfield et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2016). In sport, supportive environments that accept youth refugees and their culture are more conducive to positive PA experiences (Dagkas et al., 2011; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Whitley et al., 2016). Finally, characteristics that refugees often exhibit during migration, such as resilience, may be helpful for effective resettlement (Jani et al., 2016; Pieloch et al., 2016) and may result from regular PA or sport participation (Fader et al., 2019; Griciūtė, 2016; White & Bennie, 2015). The literature can be synthesized into a few components that connect PA to resettlement: autonomy, peer and adult relationships, and a sense of belonging.

However, these positive outcomes are far from guaranteed by simple sport or PA participation. Critical insights of sport as an empty signifier suggest sport has the power to positively influence and develop youth when it is programmed in a way that implicitly and explicitly fosters such values (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2015). Without proper attention to positive youth development, sport can elicit negative experiences such as social exclusion (Collison et al., 2017; McKay et al., 2019), increased stress (Merkel, 2013), and injuries (McKay et al., 2019; Merkel, 2013), causing youth to quit sports (Merkel, 2013; Aspen Institute Project Play, 2018). For youth from refugee backgrounds who are already less likely to play sports (O'Driscoll et al., 2014), programming is more important to help this population appropriately resettle (Anderson et al., 2019; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Robinson et al., 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). Bean and colleagues (2018) found sport programs offering more opportunities for athletes to enhance their autonomy and relatedness were rated as "high quality." Similarly, refugee youth in a program based on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model expressed increased feelings of belonging and trusting relationships with adults since joining the program (Whitley et al., 2016). Asylum

seekers in Australia reported similar sentiments about participating in their football program (Dukic et al., 2017; McDonald et al., 2019). Thus, youth may gain autonomy, peer and adult relationships, and/or a sense of belonging from sports programs, but they need to be properly designed to infuse such constructs. Ultimately, using PA as a means of healthily resettling relies on both the newcomers and the receiving country and community (Brenner & Kia-Keating, 2016; Spaaij, 2013; Stone, 2018). The collaboration between these two parties may be one solution for how individuals from refugee backgrounds can use sport to resettle effectively.

While all youth refugees may experience adversity as they migrate, female refugees confront additional challenges. Compared to males, they may have fewer opportunities to receive an education, are further behind in educational level (U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019), and are limited in activities outside the home due to traditional gender roles and culture (Palmer, 2009; Robinson et al., 2019). Vulnerability and safety concerns often make mothers reluctant to allow their daughters to participate in community activities or after-school programs, thus restricting their autonomy and peer interactions (Caperchione et al., 2011; Palmer, 2009; Robinson et al., 2019). For these reasons, it is not surprising that SDP programs worldwide lack girls' participation (Collison et al., 2017). The sport involvement of girls from refugee backgrounds is understudied, with research often focusing on boys (Dwyer & McCloskey, 2013; Elbe et al., 2018; Fader et al., 2019; Stura, 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). Consequently, girls may be at a disadvantage in the sport domain and should be given a voice.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The components of autonomy, peer and adult relationships, and a sense of belonging that connect physical activity to resettlement highlighted in this study align with Ryan and Deci's (2000) theory of self-determination (SDT), originally developed to explain intrinsic motivation. The theory's three main components are competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When an individual feels knowledgeable and capable in a specific area of her life, has the agency to act, and has peers and other important relationships, her psychological well-being is high. For refugee youth, autonomy is rare because parents are protective of their children in a new place (Palmer, 2009; Pieloch et al., 2016). Furthermore, they usually have little knowledge of their new culture, and language discrepancies make peer relatedness difficult (Hadfield et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2016). The apparent challenge in reaching self-determination makes SDT of particular interest to female

youth from refugee backgrounds.

An additional foundation of this study was the use of photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1997), a visual method that illuminates participants' daily lives and their communities (Yam, 2017). It is especially effective in research with participants who have little money, power, or status (Dávila, 2014; Strack et al., 2004), such as youth with refugee backgrounds. Photovoice can aid youth in articulating thoughts and feelings through photographs and subsequently guide discussion (Strack et al., 2004).

### Present Study

A currently understudied area is how refugee background female youth's experiences in PA reflect intra- and interpersonal factors and how these factors might play a role in their school and community. A review by O'Driscoll and colleagues (2014) found only 12% of their studies focused on sport participation in migrant populations, while Ha and Lyras (2013) noted most resettlement studies have not investigated sport participation in youth from refugee backgrounds. More important, it is uncommon to ask youth, let alone those from refugee backgrounds, about their experiences and how they could be improved (Couch, 2007; Erden, 2017; Jeanes et al., 2015; Strack et al., 2004). Some researchers have called for a better understanding of the PA needs and preferences of youth immigrants and youth from refugee backgrounds, as well as the recognition of their complex, rich, and strengths-based narratives (Ryu & Tuvilla, 2018; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004). Educational institutions facing increased numbers of immigrant and refugee youth would benefit from understanding how these individuals could better function in PA environments (Lleixà & Nieva, 2018; Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015). Communities with refugee populations may also benefit from understanding some barriers their youth face with PA so they can increase engagement.

The nature of the relationships between PA engagement and supportive factors for resettlement have been presented, which can help youth overcome such challenges and work toward self-determination and psychological well-being. Thus, the purpose of the present research was to better understand the role PA plays in the resettlement of female youth from refugee backgrounds. Two research questions guided a larger study, but only the first is presented: What are female youth refugees' experiences in sport, physical activity, and/or physical education in relation to their sense of autonomy, relationships with peers and adults, and sense of belonging? This question was conceptualized using SDT

(Ryan & Deci, 2000), and explored through basic qualitative methodology, which focuses on understanding participants' experiences, uses interviews to collect data, and presents findings as themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Methods included an initial semistructured interview, a photovoice task, and a follow-up interview.

## METHODS

### Participants

This study focuses on girls from Burma, a country in Southeast Asia, who resettled in the United States. Burma is a diverse country with several ethnic groups, the largest being Burman, Chin, and Karen (Barron et al., 2007). Citizens commonly flee Burma due to human rights violations (Barron et al., 2007), religious persecution (Gibbens, 2017), and government repression (MacDonnell & Schmidt, 2012) to find safety in Thai refugee camps. Female youth were recruited via convenience sampling through a partnership with an urban school district in the Midwestern United States. An English as a nonnative language (ENL) coordinator was the main contact, as the school district asked for information to help their students from refugee backgrounds. As outlined by McLaughlin and Black-Hawkins (2004), a school-university partnership allows both parties to benefit from the research and requires communication and collaboration at important stages throughout the study. As such, the ENL coordinator aided the first author in identifying potential participants who met the following criteria: (a) had a refugee background; (b) had been in the United States for at least one year; and (c) were proficient English speakers. Because all potential participants preferred English to their native language and expressed themselves clearly, the authors felt an interpreter during interviews was unnecessary. Furthermore, these criteria were developed to facilitate an efficient data collection process so the school district could receive the results within the school year.

Nine female youth from refugee backgrounds participated, with an average age of 14.8 years ( $SD = 0.83$ ). Eight were born in Thai refugee camps; the ninth was born in Burma but spent her formative years in a Malaysian refugee camp. Participants' average length of time since resettlement was eight years ( $SD = 2.2$ ) in the United States, and 6.9 years ( $SD = 3.1$ ) specifically in the Midwest. The most common PAs reported were walking daily ( $n = 6$ ), soccer ( $n = 4$ ), and running ( $n = 3$ ).

## Instruments

The primary instrument in this qualitative study was the interviewer. A demographic form, semistructured interview guides for the initial and follow up interviews, and recording devices (i.e., digital audio recorders and digital cameras) were used. Three supporting researchers contributed to data analysis.

**Interviewer.** The interviewer and first author was a 23-year-old woman in her second year studying Sport and Exercise Psychology, with a minor in counseling, at a Midwestern university in the United States. Her history of participating in several organized sports led to her belief that PA is integral to one's physical and psychological well-being. Furthermore, she has qualitative and quantitative research experience in positive youth development and sport for development and peace organizations, which have provided opportunities for her to see the power of sports when they are appropriately designed.

**Demographic Form.** A demographic form was distributed when participants met the first author for the initial interview. It asked for participants' age, country of birth, number of years since resettlement, and types and frequency of PA in which she engaged.

**Interview Guides.** Two semistructured interview guides helped navigate the conversations while still allowing flexibility if a certain topic warranted probing questions. These guides aimed to situate the participant, rather than the interviewer, as the expert on her experiences (Dávila, 2014). The initial interview guide contained four parts. Part I asked simple, introductory questions that became more complex as rapport was built (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). In part II, participants were asked what PA, exercise, and sport meant to them, and what role each played in her life. Part III questioned participants' experiences in Physical Education (PE) class in school, the types of PA in which they engage during class, and how they would ideally structure PE. For part IV, participants reflected on the main differences between life in their refugee camp and their current community and how living in the United States had influenced their perceptions of PA, sport, and exercise. The final question explored what the girls believed would help them feel more successful (e.g., psychologically healthy, supported).

At the end of the initial interview, participants were given instructions on how to complete the photovoice process, which is a qualitative method that enhances dialogue through photographs (Wang & Burris, 1997). Participants were asked to take photos with the following guidelines: (a)

up to 10 of people, places, and things representing challenges they have faced with PA, sport, and/or exercise; and (b) up to 10 photos of people, places, and things that represent highlights they have experienced with PA, sport, and/or exercise since moving to the Midwest.

Before starting the follow-up interview, participants shared relevant updates since the initial interview. The participant was then asked to retrospectively explain the meaning behind her photos using the SHOWeD method (Strack et al., 2004). This method asks photographers: "What do you see here? What is really happening here? How does this relate to our lives? Why does this situation, concern, or strength exist? and What can we do about it?"

**Recording Devices.** An Olympus DM-720 digital voice recorder was used to record interviews. For the photovoice task, participants received one KINGEAR High Definition Digital Camera for capturing photos related to PA barriers and highlights. The camera was returned to the first author after the follow-up interview.

**Research Team.** The research team consisted of the second author and three Masters-level students studying Sport & Exercise Psychology at a Midwestern university. All three students had experience working with youth in a sport setting and were actively conducting research either with youth or in PA. Before data analysis, the students were briefed on relevant literature about female youth from refugee backgrounds, this population's reported engagement in PA, and details of the current study. The second author is a faculty member with an extensive background in positive youth development, sport for development, and sport for peace. She is well published in these domains and was integral to the entire research process. The other two authors are faculty members who reviewed the themes. One is an expert qualitative researcher, and the other has a strong background in working with and researching refugee populations.

## Procedures

After obtaining approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, recruitment began. Written parental consent forms in English were given to the school's ENL coordinator who distributed them to potential participants and collected them if permission was granted. Because working with a vulnerable population warrants consent in multiple manners (Block et al., 2013; van Liempt & Bilger, 2012), consent was explained to participants verbally, in writing at a sixth-grade level, and with the ENL coordinator who relayed the process to potential participants. The first author then visited the school to speak to eligible



participants about the study, answer questions, and begin building rapport. Completed parental consent forms were collected, and interested participants provided their contact information and a preferred interview time for the following week. Before collecting data, literature searches on Burmese culture were conducted to provide cultural context for the interviews and increase the interviewer's awareness, as suggested by Dávila (2014).

The initial interviews were conducted either at the participant's home ( $n = 5$ ) or their high school ( $n = 4$ ) during school hours. The initial meeting with the participant included five components: (a) written parental consent, if not previously collected, (b) verbal explanation, distribution, and collection of the participant's written assent, (c) participant completion of the demographic form, (d) the interview, and (e) photovoice instructions. The goal of the initial interview was to gather information about the participant's refugee experience, such as how they participate in PA, what their past and current experiences in PA have been like, and the easiest and toughest aspects of resettling in the United States. Member checking, a qualitative technique to ensure the accuracy of the information received, was utilized throughout both interviews (Thomas et al., 2010). To comply with core ethical principles, interviews were prefaced by assuring participants they only had to answer questions with which they were comfortable and to the extent with which they were comfortable (Block et al., 2013). The interviewer intermittently asked clarifying questions and paraphrased longer sections of their stories to confirm that information was accurate, thus increasing trustworthiness of the data.

Following the interview, the photovoice process was explained. The participant received a digital camera and was taught how to zoom, capture a photo, and charge the camera. She was then prompted to take up to 20 photos of highlights and challenges she has faced in PA before the follow-up interview, between one and two weeks later.

The goal of the follow-up interview was to discuss the content of the photos based on the questions listed previously (Strack et al., 2004). The digital camera was plugged into a laptop to enlarge the photos, which were analyzed chronologically. The final piece of both interviews thanked participants and asked if they would like to add, modify, or provide feedback on anything they had discussed (Dávila, 2014; van Liempt & Bilger, 2012). Both interviews were audio recorded then transcribed verbatim by hand. On completion of both interviews, participants chose a piece of sport equipment worth up to \$15.

## Research Design and Analysis

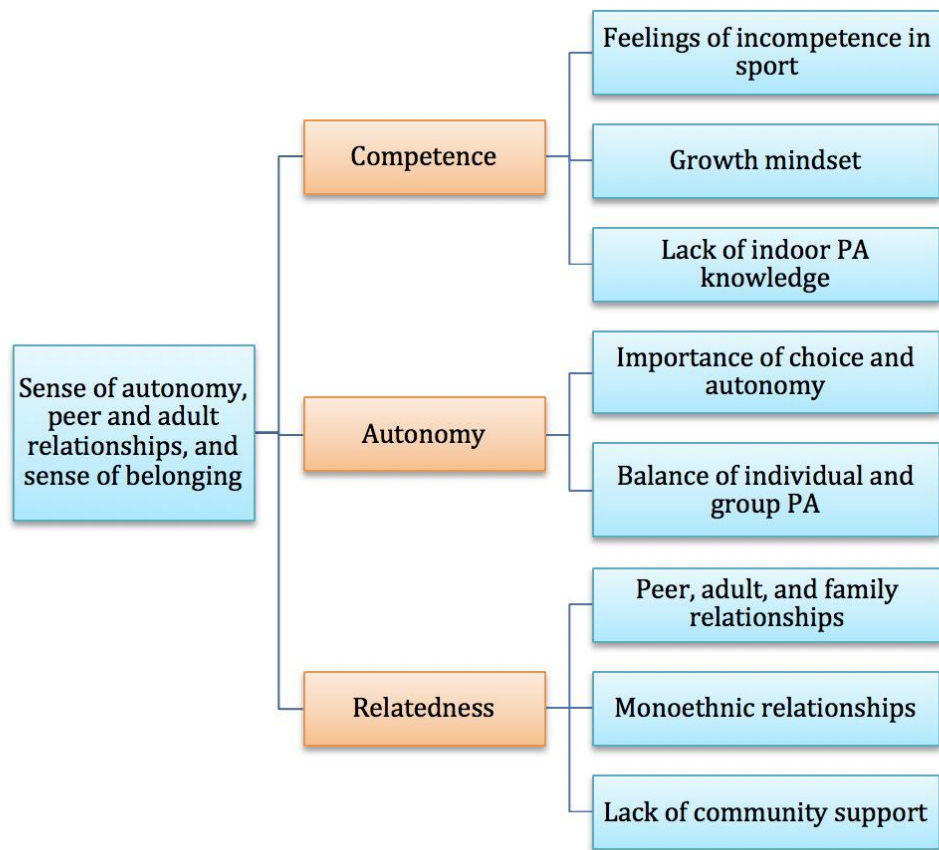
The data from this basic qualitative study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) was analyzed using thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach allowed the research team to identify commonalities throughout the interviews and organize them into first-order themes, second-order themes, and dimensions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Thomas et al., 2010). To understand the data more fully, participants' experiences in PA and sport were examined within a sociocultural context, encompassing their relationships, autonomy, and sense of belonging.

The audio recordings from both sets of interviews were listened to multiple times (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012), then transcribed verbatim into Microsoft Word by the first author and her team of three female graduate students. Each team member transcribed two initial interviews. Though time constraints prevented participants from being included in the triangulation process, the first author clarified participants' responses and member checked throughout the interviews to increase trustworthiness (Thomas et al., 2010).

The coding procedure mainly used a deductive approach. Self-determination theory guided the formation of the dimensions, while the subdimensions were created inductively. The first author merged her written observations (i.e., intonations or nonverbal cues) from the interviews with the transcriptions (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Any information related to the research question and constructs (i.e., peer relationships, adult relationships, autonomy, sense of belonging) was highlighted (Thomas et al., 2010) along with any other raw data that needed to be coded. Each team member read transcriptions from three participants (six interviews) multiple times to ensure comprehension and enhance credibility and trustworthiness. Then first-order themes were created based on highlighted content from the first author (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Thomas et al., 2010). These themes were clustered by conceptual similarity into 10 to 20 second-order themes (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012) before the first author merged the team member's themes with the themes she had created separately.

To create the final dimensions and subdimensions, each second-order theme was written on an index card, which the research team and first author organized into piles by conceptual similarity (Thomas et al., 2010). All members agreed with the organization of the second-order themes before the resulting dimensions and subdimensions were triangulated with the second author to ensure credibility. The first author then identified raw data quotes

Figure 1. Summary of dimensions and subdimensions



exemplifying each subdimension.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This article addresses one of two research questions about female youth refugees' experiences in PA, exercise, and/or sport in relation to their autonomy, relationships with peers and adults, and sense of belonging. Data analysis was primarily deductive and secondarily inductive. The research team's immersion into the data and extraction of commonalities from the perspective of a youth female refugee aided in the thematic analysis process. Specifically, three dimensions from SDT (competence, autonomy, and relatedness) and eight subdimensions (feelings of incompetence in sport; growth mindset; lack of indoor PA options and accessibility; importance of choice and autonomy; balance of individual and group PA; peer, adult, and family relationships; monoethnic relationships; and lack of community support) were identified (see comprehensive list in Figure 1 and quotes in Table 1).

### Competence

The first component of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000) is competence, or the ability to perform a certain task. This

dimension resulted in three subdimensions: (a) *feelings of incompetence in sport* were connected to feelings of exclusion in school and in the community; (b) approaching PA opportunities with a *growth mindset* fostered competence; and (c) the *lack of knowledge* regarding indoor PA exercises and training also appeared to hinder the refugees' ability to stay active during the winter season.

**Feelings of incompetence in sport.** Nearly every participant mentioned that not knowing how to participate in a specific sport or activity made her feel a sense of not belonging. One participant in particular said:

*For physical [PE class], there are a lot of skillful people, not a lot of nice people when it comes to game. I make mistakes sometimes, and they say something that makes me want to be out of the team so I don't—so I feel like I don't fit in. (004-Initial)*

In this case, the participant reported her classmates made rude comments if she made a mistake during PE class, which might discourage PA participation. Similarly, another participant stated that when playing volleyball in PE, "I'm not belong to it when I can't serve because serve is the most important thing. Yeah. And when you don't understand the

Table 1. Verbatim extracts from interviews with participants

Subdimension	Verbatim interview extract
Incompetence in sport	It's challenging because we also do football in PE too, which we have play like together with a group with the class, so you have to practice throwing football which I'm bad at it doing. (010-Follow-up) When the sport is to play football, and I can't—I don't like to play football. So I just felt left out 'cause I didn't know how to play, and didn't like want to. (001-Initial)
Growth mindset	I think they're [PE classes] great because they help you learn about different sport and how they work. And then help you go through stuff, like one time I was running and I was so tired and then they motivate you. (015-Initial) I don't like running but conditioning helps me to be a better runner, and it helps me to think I can run faster, like improving. (002-Initial)
Lack of indoor PA options and accessibility	If the weather's good, I tend to go out more, but if like, the weather's like bad, like I tend to stay inside I guess. (007-Follow-up) If it's like cold or something like that, I don't wanna do anything. Like, I just wanna lay in my bed and like do nothing because it's like, cold. (002-Follow-up)
Importance of choice and autonomy	I feel great when I make the decision that I wanna do something. Like, it help you a lot, just like, you only do something that you wanna do. But not somebody chose for you. That's a good thing to do. (005-Initial) They have like three different PE teacher. I have [name] which is really cool, he just give us free time when we went to gym to work out, they have like the running thing [treadmill]. (010-Initial)
Balance of individual and group PA	Swimming by yourself, you get things done, but at the same time you're not having that much of fun. And if you're swimming with a friend, it's takes time longer because you talk and distract, but you're also having fun. I prefer both. Like, I will swim with them to have fun, but swim alone to get things done. (012-Initial) I think I like [PA] with somebody because it's like, more fun, more enjoyable to do it. And being alone, like being alone's a little bit better I guess 'cause you can like, think to yourself. (001-Initial)
Peer/family relationships	Teams means like working together, uh help each other, being there for each other, positive words, like, team's like everybody's there and you don't forget one another. You go all together, you move as team, play as a team. So I like playing with a team better. (004-Initial) I choose soccer because like, my friends, most of them play soccer, and like I got—I see them, how they work and stuff. (005-Initial) In summer me and my brother play a lot of outdoor sports like volleyball and just try to do something active instead of like staying home and being on my phone. (001-Follow-up)
Monoethnic relationships	We've known each other for a long time. And we enjoy um, the same sport. . . . She's supportive, um caring, and honest. (001-Initial)
Lack of community support	We don't go out in the neighbor that much. But sometime during summer, I will walk around the neighborhood to get some air. (015-Initial) We just stay in our house. We don't bother other people. (009-Initial)

score. . . . I feel like I'm not good at it so I'm not belong to it whenever this happen" (010-Initial). For these two girls, feeling incompetent in sport may relate to the differences between the popular sports available for youth in their home country and the United States, as well as the setting in which they are learning (Anderson et al., 2019). Sports such as volleyball, American football, and badminton played in PE are unfamiliar to them, so naturally they require more

time to learn the rules, vocabulary, and sport-specific skills. This desire for competence in motor skills is consistent with Beni and colleagues' (2017) link between meaningful PA experiences and feeling knowledgeable and capable of performing certain sport skills. Competence can be achieved through sport participation (Beni et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2019), especially in a conducive learning environment. For example, coaches and teachers could first introduce



Figure 2. Photograph of a soccer ball, representing *feelings of incompetence in sport*.



*"I want to do soccer but like, I'm not confident enough, and then like, I'm trying to practice more to get better so I can like, try out probably next year" (Participant 001).*

universal sports before culture-specific ones to young people from refugee backgrounds (Hertting & Karlefors, 2013). If the well-known sports are used as a basis of knowledge for future sport units in PE class, participants may feel more competent in their abilities and more included. Further, competence may emerge in sport settings that are health-focused (Anderson et al., 2019), culturally sensitive (Dagkas et al., 2011), and cater to participants' needs (Anderson et al., 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). Participants' responses also support findings from a review on the resources refugee youth may need to integrate successfully into their new culture (Rivera et al., 2016). Refugees who felt competent in many areas of their life were more likely to exhibit high levels of resilience. While the cognitive and behavioral consequences of this perceived incompetence in PA activities were beyond the scope of this study, the pervasiveness of the perceived incompetence in the interviews cannot be ignored. SDT is clear that competence is, at its core, a basic human psychological need (Ryan & Deci, 2000), so sport and school coaches should foster it as such.

Despite reporting little knowledge of common U.S. sports, most participants exhibited positive attitudes toward PA, particularly during PE classes. When asked about their perceptions of PE class, for instance, most of the girls stated they enjoyed it. Barr-Anderson and colleagues (2008) found that about half of their 1500 female youth participants also enjoyed PE, partially depending on its perceived benefits and the girls' self-efficacy. If the girls in the present study

feel competent in PE activities, then they might believe they can effectively take part in the class. One in particular learned how to play tennis after moving to the United States: "When you learn with the team and you work hard, it's become like a family to you and you really love it" (010-Initial). Here, the resulting competence from learning to play a new sport alongside her teammates helped her feel included and generated positive feelings. When this results in a fun, enjoyable PA experience, youth are more likely to continue doing it (Beni et al., 2017; Hertting & Karlefors, 2013; Robinson et al., 2019).

**Growth mindset.** Participants' feelings of incompetence in PE activities seemed to be countered at times with a growth mindset, defined as a positive approach to a task where individuals believe practice will improve how they perform that task (Mrazek et al., 2018). This mindset includes seeing obstacles as challenges rather than threats, repeatedly trying tasks despite failure, and being motivated by others' success (Dweck, 2006). Many of the participants shared their intent to improve their skills and learn new sports because it was enjoyable. When asked what she would try if she could do any PA she wanted, one said, "I want to do soccer but like, I'm not confident enough, and then like, I'm trying to practice more to get better so I can like try out probably next year" (001-Follow-up).

Though fear of not making the soccer team impacted her decision to try out, she admitted she still wanted to work on her skills to feel prepared for future tryouts. This notion is



supported by a study in which learning new skills was the most commonly cited reason that refugees in Australia participated in PA and sports (Olliff, 2008). Olliff (2008) also found sport and recreation to be a platform for capacity building, problem solving, and working on personal development, all of which overlap with a growth mindset. By approaching tasks with a growth mindset, perhaps this participant finds herself more intrinsically motivated to do PA. Though some girls demonstrate the growth mindset by confronting challenges wholeheartedly, others admitted avoiding activities or sports in which they feel incompetent. It would be important, therefore, for SDP programs and PE classes to provide an environment conducive to refugee students being appropriately challenged, providing enough information about the rules and skillsets for novel activities, and adapting to youths' needs (Anderson et al., 2019; Barr-Anderson et al., 2008; Whitley et al., 2016).

**Lack of indoor PA options and accessibility.** Similar to feeling they have insufficient knowledge of sports rules and skills in PE class, participants shared barriers to PA relating to wintertime, namely, poor weather conditions. This barrier is consistent with findings on the link between changing seasons and PA behaviors in youth, with warmer weather correlating to more time engaged in PA compared to colder weather (Harrison et al., 2017). To further illustrate this, one individual stated, "If the weather's good, I tend to go out more, but if like, the weather's like bad, like I tend to stay inside I guess" (007-Follow-up). Most participants shared this sentiment and did not know how to conduct indoor PA, one participant even preferring lying in bed to doing anything else. While PE class gives them an opportunity to use special equipment such as a treadmill, hand weights, and a stationary bike, participants do not have access to such resources at home and very limited access to transportation to visit a gym, according to several girls. One potential reason for this resistance to find PA alternatives could be a lack of what Yam (2017) called "health literacy," or general knowledge about caring for one's health. Results from O'Driscoll and colleagues' (2014) review suggest it is possible that more knowledge about indoor activities would encourage PA. Thus, without knowing the benefits and ways to engage in PA, they are less likely to participate. Moreover, poor and/or inaccessible PA infrastructure is common in communities with families from refugee backgrounds (Jeanes et al., 2015; Langøin et al., 2017), and SDP researchers have identified proper facilities as an essential component of effective programming (Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Svennson & Woods, 2017). If communities do have winter sports programs, however, increased awareness might encourage PA. It may be difficult to disseminate this information to families from

refugee backgrounds, as they may feel discomfort toward novel PA (Wieland et al., 2015). It may fall on school administrators and community outreach programs to include this group and make PA more accessible (Dagkas et al., 2011; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Robinson et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2015).

Some participants, however, took an extra step to do PA in winter. An individual who took a photograph of her phone said she uses it for, "like stretching, like how to do some stretches. You watch YouTube" (012-Follow-up). Another individual photographed a space in her room where she does squats and core exercises daily: "I just wake up, take shower in the morning and this is like, something that I do every single day in the morning, in the evening" (010-Follow-up). These represent exceptions to this subdimension. Most of the girls were unsure of how to conduct themselves in the wintertime and resorted to sedentary activities that were simple and familiar. This finding agrees with research indicating lack of access to information about PA, which could lead to discomfort with becoming physically active, were significant PA barriers for refugee families (O'Driscoll et al., 2014; Wieland et al., 2015).

### Autonomy

Ryan and Deci's (2000) second component of SDT is autonomy, or the feeling of having control of one's life. They indicate that individuals learn better, and can thus increase competence, if they feel autonomous throughout the learning process. Two important subdimensions emerged from the current data: (a) importance of choice and autonomy, and (b) the balance of individual and group PA opportunities.

**Importance of choice and autonomy.** All but one participant said that she is more likely to do PA if she chooses it and less likely if someone else chooses. This accords with White et al.'s (2018) study results that linked forced PA to negative affect. Because most refugees involuntarily flee their homeland and are placed in a new country, they have no control over their situation (Edge et al., 2014). Participation in PA, however, seemed to mitigate this feeling of lack of control. One individual stated,

*I feel great when I make the decision that I wanna do something. Like, it help you a lot, just like, you only do something that you wanna do. But not somebody chose for you. That's a good thing to do. (005-Initial)*

Having the power to make decisions brings about positive emotions for this individual, which is consistent with how

Figure 3. Photograph of roller skates representing importance of autonomy and choice.



*"It's like a calming activity. 'Cause like roller skating you don't need like, other people to be with you to like do it. . . But I go with her [dog] sometimes" (Participant 007).*

SDT works to incite motivation. Research has shown that fostering independence can buffer against negative psychological outcomes (Bean et al., 2014; Edge et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2016; Pieloch et al., 2016), thus reinforcing the importance of encouraging youth from refugee backgrounds to make their own choices. Research also supports the notion of choice in sport, where coaches or teachers can aid positive youth development by including athletes when making decisions (Bean et al., 2014; Beni et al., 2017; Elbe et al., 2018). Consequently, youth from refugee backgrounds may benefit in and out of sport from making decisions about their sport participation (Elbe et al., 2018).

**Balance of individual and group PA.** It was clear that participants generally valued both group and individual PA opportunities. When asked which type she preferred, one participant said, "I think I like [PA] with somebody because it's like, more fun, more enjoyable to do it. And being alone, like being alone's a little bit better I guess 'cause you can like, think to yourself," (001-Initial). It is apparent that there are benefits to doing PA with a friend or family member, such as feeling joy through camaraderie (Beni et al., 2017; Olliff, 2008), in addition to benefits to doing PA by herself, such as personal reflection time. Another participant echoed this notion when describing a photograph of her roller skates: "It's like a calming activity. 'Cause like roller skating, you don't need other people to be with you to do it" (007-Follow-up).

She later described how she enjoys practicing basketball with her siblings, which is a fun challenge. This preference for balance is logical but not fully supported by research. Many studies promote group bouts of PA, as it can be effective in creating social capital for refugees who may already be at a social disadvantage (Anderson et al., 2019; Block & Gibbs, 2017; Nathan et al., 2010; Olliff, 2008; Whitley et al., 2016). It is possible that the participants in this study are old enough to see and appreciate the benefits of doing PA alone and as a group.

### Relatedness

The final component of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000) is relatedness. Relationships are certainly important to this group, and research indicates that social connections are absolutely crucial for wellness (Hadfield et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2016; Olliff, 2008; Rivera et al., 2016). The most commonly cited factor that impacted participants' PA participation was peer, adult, and family relationships. Two additional subdimensions were monoethnic relationships and a lack of community involvement and support.

**Peer, adult, and family relationships.** Results from many studies have indicated that the formation of peer relationships can help refugees experience healthy resettlement, whether this occurs in school (Hadfield et al., 2017; Şeker & Sirkeci, 2015; Shakya et al., 2010), the community (Ellis et al., 2016; Spaaij, 2015), and/or sport (Block & Gibbs, 2017; Dukic et al., 2017; Ha & Lyras,

2013; McDonald et al., 2019; Mohammadi, 2019; Olliff, 2008). Unsurprisingly, every participant in the present study commented on how important relationships were to her. This emerged in the realm of her family, peers, and important adults in her life such as teachers or an interpreter. When asked what the best part of participating in PA was, one said,

*The best part is that if you do it with friend, then you're doing it with a friend, and you're having fun, and that's like the best part. Like hanging out with a friend is just an excuse to hang out with a friend, but you're also doing something. (012-Initial)*

For this individual, her friends not only make PA fun, but they motivate and include her. This is consistent with Olliff's (2008) findings where making new friends was a commonly cited reason for refugees participating in sport and recreation. Many participants also noted being with their friends made them feel as if they belonged or "fit in." Considering the uncertainty, fear, and anxiety that migration can bring, connecting with peers may ease those challenges by offering an opportunity for inclusion (Lleixá & Nieva, 2018; McDonald et al., 2019; Mohammadi, 2019).

Relationships for the participants extend beyond peers to their families. In fact, the girls' families were discussed so often they seemed to be prioritized over peer relationships. Participants with siblings close in age spent many afternoons each week playing outside and practicing sports skills together. Those with much older siblings typically cared for their nieces and nephews after school. In one case, babysitting interfered with a participant's ability to play a school sport: "I was trying out to make it to a [soccer] team, but then I quit, 'cause I gotta babysit right after school" (005-Initial). Family and their related obligations appear to be the girls' first priority, which supports research indicating that sociocultural factors, in this case, familial roles and responsibilities, notably influenced ethnic minorities' PA levels (Caperchione et al., 2011; Kay & Spaaij, 2012; Langøien et al., 2017). The closeness within each girl's family appeared to both facilitate and prevent PA, supporting findings by Kay and Spaaij (2012). For instance, one participant reported her family being a major support system for their PA endeavors:

*They [family members] tell me to do soccer, like my uncle too, like, "You should play soccer, you seem to be good at it." Then, "You should play in the USA team," something like that. I'm like how am I supposed to play that, I'm not that skilled. He like, "You gotta practice then, I can help you." (004-Initial)*

This familial support for PA can help motivate refugee girls to engage in healthy extracurricular activities, but family obligations can get in the way of sport participation (Kay & Spaaij, 2012). In a review by Rivera and colleagues (2016), family was portrayed as a potential protective factor to refugees' migration, as well as a fragile unit that the stresses of migration could break apart. Proper sport orientations for athletes and their families would ensure understanding and solidify expectations (Bean et al., 2014; Dagkas et al., 2011), and discuss ways to mitigate the financial strains and distress sports can elicit (Bean et al., 2014). While harrowing migration experiences might bring families together, family time may be detrimental to youth's psychological well-being if it is mutually exclusive from PA participation.

**Monoethnic relationships.** Because refugees are typically relocated en masse, ethnic groups might live in concentrated areas, encouraging monoethnic relationships (Weng & Lee, 2015). In other words, refugee communities interact with those most similar to them, to preserve culture and traditions and maintain comfort in a new place (Weng & Lee, 2015). For those in this study, monoethnic relationships were the most common type of peer relationship. Two participants met when they moved to the United States 10 years ago and have been friends since: "We've known each other for a long time. And we enjoy um, the same sport. . . . She's supportive, um caring, and honest" (001-Initial). After several other interviews, the girls were mentioning one another's names when asked about certain experiences, suggesting the individuals had fewer nonrefugee friends and mostly spent time with one another and their families. In the sport domain, a case can be made for monoethnic sports teams because they allow people to share a culture and language, feel a sense of belonging, and feel accepted (Fader et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2015). This may engage youth with refugee backgrounds in a safe environment with familiar people. Jeanes et al. (2015) found refugee youth in Australia preferred playing informally to structured sport club teams, which could apply to this population considering their various responsibilities.

**Lack of community support.** The relationships refugees build on the interpersonal and community levels can be crucial for their sense of belonging and successful resettlement. Several participants in their interviews said they had little to no contact with their neighbors or community. When asked how her community perceives PA participation, one responded, "We just stay in our house. We don't bother other people" (009-Initial). Another's response was, "We're not that friendly. I mean, we're friendly but we just don't know that much people [in the



community]” (002-Initial). Two girls did express that their community was supportive of their sport and PA participation, but the majority were at a loss when asked to describe how they interact with people who live near them. To clarify, it did not seem like the girls’ communities were purposefully unsupportive or hostile toward them; rather, it seemed there was an absence of interaction and support. It has been argued that communities need to do more to reach out and include families and youth with refugee backgrounds (Dagkas et al., 2011; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Robinson et al., 2019; Spaaij, 2015). SDP practitioners echo this by wanting to engage with community stakeholders as well (Whitley et al., 2019). Weng and Lee (2015) suggest first recognizing this population’s capacity to contribute, because they want to be involved. Then, communities could create grassroots programs and partner with schools to increase involvement (Brenner & Kia-Keating, 2016; Robinson et al., 2019).

Two participants mentioned getting more involved with their communities. They wanted to meet more people and become more integrated with those living near them. This can occur through sport, as playing with community members can connect people of similar backgrounds and build intercultural understanding (Fader et al., 2019; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004) and can be a gateway to additional participation, such as volunteering (Stone, 2018). Thus, not knowing about or having community support may impact participants’ ability to resettle.

### Practical Implications

Results from the interviews reveal several implications for practitioners, school-related personnel, and the field of SDP. The data imply that female youth from refugee backgrounds may benefit from opportunities to be autonomous, learn common U.S. sports in a nonjudgmental environment, and connect with nonrefugee classmates. To facilitate choice and autonomy, PE teachers and coaches could provide youth with leadership opportunities, work with community programs, and teach decision-making skills (Elbe et al., 2018; Pieloch et al., 2016). For instance, coaches could have athletes choose a skill to focus on first, like shooting, passing, or dribbling. For a population with little control over their situation, an autonomy-supportive environment can increase motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

To combat feelings of incompetence in sport and lack of indoor PA options and accessibility, PE teachers and coaches could collaborate and establish at-home routines for

students during winter, which could enhance knowledge and competence. Refugee families have expressed a major barrier to PA was not knowing how to start (Wieland et al., 2015). Thus, refugees’ general lack of experience and knowledge of PA (Langøien et al., 2017) warrant increased accessibility and education on the potential benefits of PA. This could be done through SDP programs, which often combine education and sport to teach life skills, but practitioners must be cautious of both positive and negative outcomes (Svennson & Woods, 2017).

Coaches, PE teachers, school administrators, and SDP practitioners have the power to elicit positive PA experiences for female youth from refugee backgrounds. Careful planning and heightened awareness of this population’s needs can fulfill these girls’ psychological needs. Helping these students connect with nonrefugee classmates through mixed-group sports drills, PE teams, and learning U.S. sports rules can enhance social capital and a sense of belonging (Anderson et al., 2019; Block & Gibbs, 2017; Nathan et al., 2010; Olliff, 2008; Whitley et al., 2016). SDP practitioners, sport coaches, and teachers can use these findings to ensure programs are sensitive to the group’s culture, finances, social preferences, and physical abilities. The result is an understanding of the experiences of their refugee students (Spaaij, 2013) and an ability to foster autonomy, relationships, and belonging.

### Limitations and Future Directions

While there were some valuable findings, several methodological limitations may have impacted the results of this study. First, participants were sufficiently settled in their communities and spoke fluent English. Selection bias existed in choosing to work with this group because their refugee experiences were far removed ( $M = 8$  years), and their seeming integration into the U.S. lifestyle could impact the extent of their PA experiences. In addition, there was a lack of meaningfulness in participants’ photos, which authors attribute to potentially ambiguous photovoice instructions, participants not doing enough daily PA to photograph, and lack of time. Future researchers should ask about the barriers to taking photos to gain insight about this limitation. Additionally, providing digital cameras, which are arguably obsolete, for photovoice may have made it uncomfortable to take photos in public places. Completing the task may have been easier if participants use their personal camera devices (e.g., smart phones).

In the future, researchers might focus on female youth refugees’ resettlement as it relates to only sport, exercise, or PE class, rather than all three. This might increase clarity



about how sport, exercise or PE class truly impacts resettlement. In addition, it would be beneficial to investigate refugees' use of indoor and outdoor space, as they may be used differently compared to youth born in the United States. Having participants write down key words about each photo immediately after taking it may add depth to the follow-up interview, as opposed to a purely retrospective discussion. Finally, it is worth exploring the self-identification of the term "refugee." By understanding how those who society calls "refugees" actually identify with that term, and for how long after they migrate they continue to identify with it, coaches and teachers can treat and address them in a culturally sensitive manner.

## CONCLUSION

This manuscript reports the findings from one research question related to a larger study investigating the role that PA, exercise, and sport play in female youth refugees' autonomy, belonging, and relationships. Themes resulting from semistructured interviews were deductively analyzed using SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The following subdimensions emerged: feelings of incompetence in sport; growth mindset; lack of indoor PA options and accessibility; importance of choice and autonomy; balance of individual and group PA; peer, adult, and family relationships; monoethnic relationships; and lack of community support. The results from this study support SDT and photovoice as viable ways of understanding this population's PA and sport experiences. However, future researchers planning to use SDT may consider an additional theory such as Sport for Development Theory (Lyras & Peachey, 2011), Critical Feminist Theory (Erden, 2017) or a socioecological framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to more comprehensively conceptualize female youth's experiences. Nonetheless, these results support sport and PA as a way for female youth with refugee backgrounds to feel autonomous and competent as they practice PA-related skills and connect with others. This work attempts to add to the scant literature on this unique population's PA experiences and to the growing body of research on SDP with refugees (Collison et al., 2017; Clutterbuck & Doherty, 2019; Ha & Lyras, 2013; Whitley et al., 2016). It provides further insights to this group's preferences and needs in PA, so SDP practitioners may consider them for programming. Though generally content with their PA experiences, feelings of incompetence in PE class warrant additional support from PE teachers and peers. Community support could help expand this group's social networks in and out of PA. School administrators and coaches should work to understand this population's familiarity with PA and how a

lack of experience may explain their level of engagement. By learning what prevents and encourages their participation, PE classes and sports practices can be modified to reflect the needs of this group (Anderson et al., 2019; Whitley et al., 2016). For a population that will always be present and dynamic in the United States, it is necessary for teachers and coaches to initiate conversations with their youth from refugee backgrounds about how they might prefer to engage in PA and sport.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## FUNDING

Funding for this study was provided by the Hollis Fund through Ball State University's Aspire Internal Grants Program. The funding source had no involvement in the in the study design, analysis, writing, or decision to publish.

## REFERENCES

- Anderson, A., Dixon, M. A., Oshiro, K. F., Wicker, P., Cunningham, G. B., & Heere, B. (2019). Managerial perceptions of factors affecting the design and delivery of sport for health programs for refugee populations. *Sport Management Review*, 22(1), 80-95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.06.015>
- Aspen Institute Project Play. (2018). *State of play 2018: Trends and developments*. [https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2018/10/StateofPlay2018\\_v4W EB\\_2-FINAL.pdf](https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2018/10/StateofPlay2018_v4W EB_2-FINAL.pdf)
- Barr-Anderson, D. J., Neumark-Sztainer, D., Schmitz, K. H., Ward, D. S., Conway, T. L., Pratt, C., Baggett, C. D., Lytle, L., & Pate, R. R. (2008). But I like PE: Factors associated with enjoyment of physical education class in middle school girls. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 79(1), 18-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2008.10599456>
- Barron, S., Okell, J., Yin, S. M., VanBik, K. Swain, A., Larkin, E., Allott, A. J., & Ewers, K. (2007). *Refugees from Burma: Their backgrounds and refugee experiences*. Cultural Orientation Resource Center. <http://www.culturalorientation.net/content/download/1338/7825/version/2/file/refugeesfromburma.pdf>

- Bean, C., Fortier, M., Post, C., & Chima, K. (2014). Understanding how organized youth sport may be harming individual players within the family unit: A literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 11(10), 10226-10268. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph111010226>
- Bean, C., Harlow, M., Mosher, A., Fraser-Thomas, J., & Forneris, T. (2018). Assessing differences in athlete-reported outcomes between high- and low-quality youth sport programs. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 30(4), 456-472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2017.1413019>
- Beni, S., Fletcher, T., & Ní Chróinín, D. (2017). Meaningful experiences in physical education and youth sport: A review of the literature. *Quest*, 69(3), 291-312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2016.1224192>
- Block, K., & Gibbs, L. (2017). Promoting social inclusion through sport for refugee-background youth in Australia: Analysing different participation models. *Social Inclusion*, 5(2), 91-100. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i2.903>
- Block, K., Warr, D., Gibbs, L., & Riggs, E. (2013). Addressing ethical and methodological challenges in research with refugee-background young people: Reflections from the field. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 26(1), 69-87. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fes002>
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brenner, M. E., & Kia-Keating, M. (2016). Psychosocial and academic adjustment among resettled refugee youth. In A. Wiseman (Ed.) *Annual Review of Comparative and International Education 2016* (pp. 221-249). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Caperchione, C. M., Kolt, G. S., Tennent, R., & Mummery, W. K. (2011). Physical activity behaviours of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women living in Australia: A qualitative study of socio-cultural influences. *BMC Public Health*, 11(1), 26-26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-11-26>
- Clutterbuck, R., & Doherty, A. (2019). Organizational capacity for domestic sport for development. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 7(12), 16-32.
- Coakley, J. (2011). Youth sports: What counts as "Positive development?" *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 35(3), 306-324. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723511417311>
- Coalter, F. (2015). Sport-for-change: Some thoughts from a sceptic. *Social Inclusion*, 3(3), 19-23. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v3i3.222>
- Collison, H., Darnell, S., Giulianotti, R., & Howe, P. D. (2017). The inclusion conundrum: A critical account of youth and gender issues within and beyond sport for development and peace interventions. *Social Inclusion*, 5(2), 223-231. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i2.888>
- Couch, J. (2007). Mind the gap: Considering the participation of refugee young people. *Youth Studies Australia*, 26(4), 37-44.
- Dagkas, S., Benn, T., & Jawad, H. (2011). Multiple voices: Improving participation of Muslim girls in physical education and school sport. *Sport, Education and Society*, 16(2), 223-239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2011.540427>
- Dávila, L. T. (2014). Representing refugee youth in qualitative research: Questions of ethics, language and authenticity. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 8(1), 21-31.
- Dukic, D. McDonald, B., & Spaaij, R. (2017). Being able to play: Experiences of social inclusion and exclusion within a football team of people seeking asylum. *Social Inclusion*, 5(2), 101-110. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i2.892>
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success* (1st ed.). New York: Random House.
- Dwyer, E., & McCloskey, M. L. (2013). Literacy, teens, refugees, and soccer. *Refuge*, 29(1), 87-101.

- Edge, S., Newbold, K., & McKeary, M. (2014). Exploring socio-cultural factors that mediate, facilitate, & constrain the health and empowerment of refugee youth. *Social Science & Medicine*, 117, 34-41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.07.025>
- Elbe, A., Hatzigeorgiadis, A., Morela, E., Ries, F., Kouli, O., & Sanchez, X. (2018). Acculturation through sport: Different contexts different meanings. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 16(2), 178-190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2016.1187654>
- Ellis, B., Abdi, S., Lazarevic, V., White, M., Lincoln, A., Stern, J., & Horgan, J. (2016). Relation of psychosocial factors to diverse behaviors and attitudes among Somali refugees. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 86(4), 393-408. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000121>
- Erden, O. (2017). Building bridges for refugee empowerment. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 18(1), 249-265. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-016-0476-y>
- Fader, N., Legg, E., & Ross, A. (2019). The relation of sense of community in sport on resilience and cultural adjustment for youth refugees. *World Leisure Journal*, 61(4), 291-302.
- Gibbens, S. (2017, September 29). Myanmar's Rohingya are in crisis: What you need to know. National Geographic. <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/09/rohingya-refugee-crisis-myanmar-burma-spd/>
- Griciūtė, A. (2016). Optimal level of participation in sport activities according to gender and age can be associated with higher resilience: Study of Lithuanian adolescents. *School Mental Health*, 8, 257-267. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-015-9155-y>
- Ha, J. P., & Lyras, A. (2013). Sport for refugee youth in a new society: The role of acculturation in sport for development and peace programming. *South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation*, 2013, 35(2), 121-140.
- Hadfield, K., Ostrowski, A., & Ungar, M. (2017). What can we expect of the mental health and well-being of Syrian refugee children and adolescents in Canada? *Canadian Psychology-Psychologie Canadienne*, 58(2), 194-201. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000102>
- Harrison, F., Goodman, A., van Sluijs, E., Andersen, L., Cardon, G., Davey, R., Janz, K. F., Kriemler, S., Molloy, L., Page, A. S., Pate, R., Puder, J. J., Sardinha, L. B., Timperio, A., Wedderkopp, N., & Jones, A. P. (2017). Weather and children's physical activity; how and why do relationships vary between countries? *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 14(1), 74. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-017-0526-7>
- Hertting, K., & Karlefors, I. (2013). Sport as a context for integration: Newly arrived immigrant children in Sweden drawing sporting experiences. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(18), 35.
- Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *Qualitative Report*, 17(6), 1-10.
- Jani, J., Underwood, D., & Ranweiler, J. (2016). Hope as a crucial factor in integration among unaccompanied immigrant youth in the USA: A pilot project. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 17(4), 1195-1209. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-015-0457-6>
- Jeanes, R., O'Connor, J., & Alfrey, L. (2015). Sport and the resettlement of young people from refugee backgrounds in Australia. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 39(6), 480-500.
- Kay, T., & Spaaij, R. (2012). The mediating effects of family on sport in international development contexts. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 47(1), 77-94.
- Keddie, A. (2011). Supporting minority students through a reflexive approach to empowerment. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 32(2), 221-238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2011.547307>
- Langøien, L. J., Terragni, L., Rugseth, G., Nicolaou, M., Holdsworth, M., Stronks, K., Lien, A., & Roos, G. (2017). Systematic mapping review of the factors influencing physical activity and sedentary behaviour in ethnic minority groups in Europe: A DEDIPAC study. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 14(99), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-017-0554-3>
- Lleixà, T., & Nieva, C. (2018). The social inclusion of immigrant girls in and through physical education: Perceptions and decisions of physical education teachers. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1563882>

- Lyras, A., & Peachey, J. W. (2011). Integrating sport-for-development theory and praxis. *Sport Management Review*, 14, 311–326. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2011.05.006>
- MacDonnell, M., & Schmidt, S. (2012). *Refugee families from Burma*. Head Start/ECLKC. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/cb-refugee-families-burma-eng.pdf>
- Marshall, E., Butler, K., Roche, T., Cumming, J., & Taknint, J. (2016). Refugee youth: A review of mental health counselling issues and practices. *Canadian Psychology-Psychologie Canadienne*, 57(2A), 308-319. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000068>
- McDonald, B., Spaaij, R., & Dukic, D. (2019). Moments of social inclusion: Asylum seekers, football and solidarity. *Sport in Society*, 22(6), 935-949.
- McKay, C. D., Cumming, S. P., & Blake, T. (2019). Youth sport: Friend or foe? *Best Practice & Research Clinical Rheumatology*, 33(1), 141-157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.berh.2019.01.017>
- McLaughlin, C., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2004). A schools-university research partnership: Understandings, models and complexities. *Journal of in-Service Education*, 30(2), 265-284. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580400200319>
- Merkel, D. L. (2013). Youth sport: Positive and negative impact on young athletes. *Open Access Journal of Sports Medicine*, (4), 151-160.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th edition.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mohammadi, S. (2019). Social inclusion of newly arrived female asylum seekers and refugees through a community sport initiative: The case of Bike Bridge. *Sport in Society*, 22(6), 1082-1099. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1565391>
- Mrazek, M. D., Mrazek, A. J., Ihm, E. D., Molden, D. C., Zedelius, C. M., & Schooler, J. W. (2018). Expanding minds: Growth mindsets of self-regulation and the influences on effort and perseverance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 79, 164-180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2018.07.003>
- Nathan, S., Bunde-Birouste, A., Evers, C., Kemp, L., MacKenzie, J., & Henley, R. (2010). Social cohesion through football: A quasi-experimental mixed methods design to evaluate a complex health promotion program. *BMC Public Health*, 10(1), 587-587. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-10-587>
- O'Driscoll, T., Banting, L. K., Borkoles, E., Eime, R., & Polman, R. (2014). A systematic literature review of sport and physical activity participation in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) migrant populations. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 16(3), 515-530.
- Olliff, L. (2008). Playing for the future: The role of sport and recreation in supporting refugee young people to “settle well” in Australia. *Youth Studies Australia*, 27(1), 52-60.
- Palmer, C. (2009). Soccer and the politics of identity for young Muslim refugee women in south Australia. *Soccer & Society*, 10(1), 27-38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970802472643>
- Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2012). A practical guide to using interpretative phenomenological analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Czasopismo Psychologiczne*, 18(2), 361-369.
- Pieloch, K., McCullough, M., & Marks, A. (2016). Resilience of children with refugee statuses: A research review. *Canadian Psychology-Psychologie Canadienne*, 57(2A), 330-339. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000073>
- Prior, M. A., & Niesz, T. (2013). Refugee children's adaptation to American early childhood classrooms: A narrative inquiry. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(20), 1-17.
- Rivera, H., Lynch, J., Li, J., & Obamehinti, F. (2016). Infusing sociocultural perspectives into capacity building activities to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. *Canadian Psychology-Psychologie Canadienne*, 57(2A), 320-329. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000076>
- Robinson, D. B., Robinson, I. M., Currie, V., & Hall, N. (2019). The Syrian Canadian sports club: A community-based participatory action research project with/for Syrian youth refugees. *Social Sciences*, 8(6), 163. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8060163>



- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Ryu, M., & Tuvilla, M. R. S. (2018). Resettled refugee youths' stories of migration, schooling, and future: Challenging dominant narratives about refugees. *The Urban Review*, 50(4), 539-558. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-018-0455-z>
- Şeker, B. D., & Sirkeci, I. (2015). Challenges for refugee children at school in eastern Turkey. *Economics & Sociology*, 8(4), 122-133. <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2015/8-4/9>
- Shakya, Y. B., Guruge, S., Hynie, M., Akbari, A., Malik, M., Htoo, S., Khogali, A., Mona, S. A., Murtaza, R., & Alley, S. (2010). Aspirations for higher education among newcomer refugee youth in Toronto: Expectations, challenges, and strategies. *Refuge: Canada's Periodical on Refugees*, 27(2), 65-78.
- Spaaij, R. (2013). Cultural diversity in community sport: An ethnographic inquiry of Somali Australians' experiences. *Sport Management Review*, 16(1), 29-40.
- Spaaij, R. (2015) Refugee youth, belonging and community sport. *Leisure Studies*, 34(3), 303-318.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2014.893006>
- Stodolska, M. & Alexandris, K. (2004). The role of recreational sport in the adaptation of first generation immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 36(3): 379-413.
- Stone, C. (2018). Utopian community football? Sport, hope and belongingness in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers. *Leisure Studies*, 37(2), 171-183.
- Strack, R. W., Magill, C., & McDonagh, K. (2004). Engaging youth through photovoice. *Health Promotion Practice*, 5(1), 49.
- Stura, C. (2019). "What makes us strong": The role of sports clubs in facilitating integration of refugees. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 16(2), 128-145.
- Svensson, P. G., Woods, H. (2017). A systematic overview of sport for development and peace organisations. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 5(9): 36-48.
- Thomas, J. R., Nelson, J. K., & Silverman, S. J. (2010). *Research methods in physical activity*. (6th ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Tribe, R. (2005). The mental health needs of refugees and asylum seekers. *Mental Health Review Journal*, 10(4), 8-15.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/13619322200500033>
- Ubaidulloev, Z. (2018). Sport for peace: A new era of international cooperation and peace through sport. *Asia-Pacific Review*, 25(2), 104-126.
- U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). *Figures at a glance: Statistical yearbooks*. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html?query=figures%20at%20a%20glance>
- U.N. Refugee Agency. (2019). Sport Programmes and Partnerships: International Olympic Committee. <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/sport-partnerships.html>
- van Liempt, I. V., & Bilger, V. (2012). Ethical challenges in research with vulnerable migrants. In C. Vargas-Silva (Ed.) *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration* (pp. 451-466). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Wang, C., & Burris, A. M. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education and Behavior*, 24(3), 369-387.
- Weng, S. S., & Lee, J. S. (2015). Why do immigrants and refugees give back to their communities and what can we learn from their civic engagement? *Voluntas*, 27, 509-524.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-015-9636-5>
- White, R. L., & Bennie, A. (2015). Resilience in youth sport: A qualitative investigation of gymnastics coach and athlete perceptions. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 10(2-3), 379-393.  
<https://doi.org/10.1260/1747-9541.10.2-3.379>
- White, R., Parker, P., Lubans, D., MacMillan, F., Olson, R., Astell-Burt, T., & Lonsdale, C. (2018). Domain-specific physical activity and affective wellbeing among adolescents: An observational study of the moderating roles of autonomous and controlled motivation. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 15(1), 87-13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-018-0722-0>

Whitley, M. A., Coble, C., & Jewell, G. S. (2016). Evaluation of a sport-based youth development programme for refugees. *Leisure*, 40(2), 175-199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2016.1219966>

Whitley, M. A., Farrell, K., Wolff, E. A., & Hillyer, S. J. (2019) Sport for development and peace: Surveying actors in the field. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 7(11),1-15.

Whitley, M. A., & Gould, D. (2011). Psychosocial development in refugee children and youth through the personal-social responsibility model. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 1(3), 118-138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21520704.2010.534546>

Wieland, M. L., Tiedje, K., Meiers, S. J., Mohamed, A. A., Formea, C. M., Ridgeway, J. L., Asiedu, G. B., Boyum, G., Weis, J. A., Nigon, J. A., Patten, C. A., & Sia, I. G. (2015). Perspectives on physical activity among immigrants and refugees to a small urban community in Minnesota. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 17(1), 263-275. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-013-9917-2>

Yam, A. E. (2017). *Using photovoice as participatory action research to identify views and perceptions on health and well-being among a group of Burmese refugees resettled in Houston* (Publication No. 10284921) [Doctoral dissertation, Texas Women's University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.



**JSFD**  
Journal of Sport for Development