



JSFD

Journal of Sport for Development

Soccer for peace: Evaluation of in-country workshops with Jordanian coaches <i>Blom, Gerstein, Stedman, Judge, Sink, Pierce</i>	1
Book Review: Global sport-for-development: Critical perspectives <i>Crawley</i>	13
Reflections from scholars on barriers and strategies in sport-for-development research <i>Peachey, Cohen</i>	16
Girls just wanna have fun: Understanding perceptions of effective strategies and outcomes in a female youth-driven physical activity-based life skills programme <i>Bean, Forneris, Fortier</i>	28
Improving life satisfaction, self-concept and happiness of former gang members using games and psychological skills training <i>Hanrahan , Francke Ramm</i>	41

Original Research

Soccer for peace: Evaluation of in-country workshops with Jordanian coaches

Lindsey C. Blom¹, Lawrence H. Gerstein², Kelley Stedman³, Lawrence Judge⁴, Alisha Sink⁴, David Pierce⁵

¹ Ball State University, School of PE, Sport, & Exercise Science, The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, USA

² Ball State University, Department of Counseling Psychology, The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, USA

³ Ball State University, Social Science Research Center, USA

⁴ Ball State University, School of PE, Sport, & Exercise Science, USA

⁵ Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, Department of Kinesiology, USA

Corresponding author email: lcbloom@bsu.edu

Abstract

The Soccer for Peace Programme used a sport plus approach to teach Jordanian coaches how to develop and instill citizenship, peaceful living, and leadership skills in youth through football. Through the program, which is based on sport-for-development theory (SFDT) and a train the trainer approach, coaches learned how to create a positive environment for their teams. Specifically, the programme was designed to improve coaches' skills in developing citizenship behaviours and peaceful living skills in their athletes; advance coaches' knowledge about technical and tactical aspects of coaching football; and to promote mutual understanding. Upon completing the programme, coaches (n = 115) reported being more knowledgeable about football and peaceful living skills, satisfied with their experience, as well as prepared and confident to teach their new knowledge to athletes. Coaches' participation also affected their comfort when working with someone of another gender, but not another culture (mutual understanding). Limitations, implications, and future research ideas are also discussed.

Background

When the concept of peace is discussed, the focus is often centered on the absence of violence; violence otherwise termed as negative peace.^{1,2} Positive peace, on the other hand, involves actively challenging environments and societal norms that foster inequities to prevent further cycles of violence and conflict.^{2,3} Positive peace is particularly relevant in the development of peace-building strategies, which typically involve a grassroots, positive approach.

These strategies create a structure of peace by addressing the underlying causes of conflict within social, psychological and economic environments, and are often focused person-to-person.^{1,4} Sport is a growing positive peace strategy.

Lyras^{5,8} sport-for-development theory (SFDT) is a useful framework for developing effective sport-based positive peace programmes that help build peace. The foundation of SFDT is based upon the facilitation of human development and inter-group acceptance, which in turn is rooted in the theories of Allport⁹ and Maslow's¹⁰ hierarchy of needs. More specifically, Ryan and Deci's¹¹ work is grounded in Maslow's theory emphasizing the need for individuals to feel connected to others, competent to meet their potential, and safe and autonomous in their surroundings in order to promote psycho-social growth and developmental potential. Lyras⁸ recommended using these concepts to design effective sport for development and peace (SDP) programmes.

To understand the varying purposes of SDP programmes, Coalter⁶ developed three categories. His *sport plus* category, which is most relevant to the current study, involves the use of sport in conjunction with non-sport-related education. In this use of sport, the focus of the programme is cooperative, inclusive and mastery-based rather than competitive and outcome-based.^{5,12} Such a focus challenges the status quo, provides an important step needed for peace-building, and mirrors the more typical non-sport based peace-building strategies that focus on inter-group acceptance.³

Keywords: sport-plus; life skills; sport for development; Middle East

In the current study, researchers evaluated a *sport plus* intervention with the goal of using soccer, also known as football, as a medium to teach children concepts such as citizenship, conflict resolution and leadership skills. Designed with the concepts of SFDT, the current programme focused on teaching Jordanian grassroots coaches how to create a positive environment within their football teams. Coaches were targeted as main participants in a train-the-trainer approach, since coaches are instrumental in teaching these skills as they are often highly respected, viewed as experts, and typically have a lot of direct interaction with youth.¹³ Furthermore, research indicates that when U.S. coaches have been trained on how to foster a positive sport environment, they demonstrate more positive coaching behaviours post-training,^{13, 14} and youth athletes display increased self-esteem¹⁵⁻¹⁷ and more enjoyment in their sport experience.^{14, 16}

Internationally, Sugden¹⁸ found similar results that emphasize the importance of training coaches in SDP programs as evident in the evaluation of the Football 4 Peace programme, which is designed “to use values-based football coaching to build bridges between neighbouring Jewish and Arab towns and villages in Israel” (p. 405). He found that the facilitators or coaches who were knowledgeable and sympathetic were able to conduct important off-pitch activities and those who were more intimately involved were able to express the positive benefits of the programme. Schulenkorf and Sugden¹⁹ also indicated the importance of proper role models to get youth to engage as did Pink and Cameron²⁰ who found corresponding results with their Future in Youth (FIY) soccer project. Coaches felt more competent in their coaching abilities and were more motivated to coach local youth upon completion of the training programme. However, they did express concerns regarding the barriers to the programme’s sustainability that related to support, transportation and parental attitudes.

Cultural Context for Current Programme

In accordance with recommendations and best practices from previously conducted SDP programmes,^{18, 21-23} the current SDP programme was designed to teach coaches how to incorporate teachable moments and deliberate activities into practice that will further develop their athletes as well as inter-group relations. Specifically, coaches were instructed on how to help youth identify positive team expectations and provide them with constant visual reminders, reinforce problem-solving skills, and support the acknowledgement of others’ feelings, which are all peace-

building strategies. Additionally, coaches were taught how to promote empathy, actively listen, mutually respect one another, appreciate diversity, find common ground, and ask questions to identify areas of needed growth among their athletes.^{18, 24, 25}

The programme took place in Jordan, an Arab kingdom located in the Middle East with an area slightly smaller than the state of Indiana.^{26, 27} Jordan is a constitutional monarchy whose governmental members are appointed.²⁷ Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, the Palestinian territories, and Israel all border Jordan with the Palestinian territories and Israel sharing control of the Dead Sea with the Kingdom.²⁶ The majority (98%) of Jordanians consider themselves Arab, and the other two percent consider themselves Circassian or Armenian.²⁷ Arabic is the official language, while English is widely understood among those in the upper and middle classes.

Few things are closer to the Jordanian heart and psyche than the sport of football.²⁹ Prince Ali bin Al Hussein, the head of the Jordanian Football Association (JFA) and the Vice-President of FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or in English, International Federation of Association Football) explained that although in general their Ministry of Education does not allocate significant monetary resources to sports, football is the most popular sport and he emphasized building its infrastructure.³⁰ FIFA reports that as of 2013, there are a total of 121,191 football players in Jordan and of those players, 4,941 are registered with the football association while 116,250 are unregistered.³¹ Most people on every street, from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, play football. It has become even more popular because of the vast improvement in the country’s national football team.²⁹ There also are football-related Little Leagues and Youth Clubs that have become very popular; the Jordan Football Association, the governing body of football in the country, supervises and administers some of them.

Using a train-the-trainer approach, this study was designed to assess two sets of in-country workshops provided through the Sport for Peace and Understanding in Jordan (SPUJ) programme. This programme was designed to teach coaches how to develop citizenship behaviors and conflict resolution skills in youth through the game of soccer. The particular goals of the programme were for coaches to increase their mutual understanding of working with individuals from diverse backgrounds, incorporate possible applied conflict resolution skills in their coaching, and teach methods of coaching soccer effectively. Programme effectiveness was

evaluated through three main metrics: a) Increases in content knowledge, b) Increases in mutual understanding scores, and c) Increases in perceived abilities of coaches.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited with the help of in-country organizations to ensure a targeted recruitment effort. A total of 115 Jordanian coaches participated in this study. The majority of the coaches were male ($n = 75$, 68.8%) around 36 years of age ($M=35.78$, $SD=8.74$). The female coaches ($n = 34$, 31.2%) were approximately 27 years of age ($M=27.23$, $SD=7.80$), with six participants who did not report their gender. Overall, coaches ranged from 20 to 49 years of age. The coaches were primarily Arab (81.1%, $n = 78$), from Jordan (80.3%, $n = 102$), and had an average of seven years coaching experiences ($M = 7.33$, $SD = 7.09$). Evaluation data indicated that approximately 22 coaches attended both sets of in-country workshops.

Instruments

Evaluation involved measuring coaches' knowledge gains, mutual understanding, perceived abilities, and satisfaction through a pre/post-test descriptive design.

Knowledge. A multiple-choice, criterion-referenced pre/post-test of subject material assessed coaches' knowledge gains. Content experts, who were responsible for training the Jordanian participants in football-specific coaching and peaceful living skills, developed the test measurements. The football items addressed strength and conditioning along with technical and tactical training topics, while the peaceful living items pertained to both the good citizens' curriculum and the peaceful living curriculum.

Mutual Understanding. Mutual understanding was operationalized as a lack of social avoidance and rejection, which is a dimension of "social distance." The construct of social distance was measured through an adapted version of the Bogardus' Social Distance Scale,³² which was determined as the most appropriate device to use based on its reliability and validity.³³⁻³⁷ The evaluation involved a series of Likert statements (see Results section for specific examples) using a 4-point scale (1 "Strongly Disagree" to 4 "Strongly Agree").

Perceived Abilities and Satisfaction. Instrumentation also included coaches' self-reported assessment of their

perceived levels of the efficiency, effectiveness and satisfaction with the overall programme using a 4-point Likert-type scale, (1 "Strongly Disagree" to 4 "Strongly Agree"). Self-reported "preparedness" implied how efficient instructors were at delivering quality information to the participants where participants perceived a real increase in their personal skill sets. Self-reported "confidence" illustrated the participants' perceived ability to return to their individual context and incorporate the skills learned and served as a reflection of the effectiveness of instruction.

Programme

The programme was designed for coaches to learn how to develop citizenship behaviours and peaceful living skills in their athletes through the game of football. In a "train-the-trainer" approach, the coaching clinics were constructed to integrate information on technical football skills with techniques on building citizenship and peaceful living skills. The curriculum was based on curricula developed by the Indiana Soccer Association, the Peace Learning Center (PLC) of Indianapolis, and Ball State University's Center for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS). The curriculum also included topics suggested in the SFDT:⁸

- **Citizenship Development:** The Indiana Soccer Association Human Development (HD) Project: The Indiana Soccer Association developed this curriculum with the purpose of introducing techniques and drills that coaches could use to develop good citizenship alongside strong and healthy habits in their players through the game of football. "HD" stands for *human development* and *high definition* meaning that football organizations can offer more than just a picture of good football.
- **Leadership:** Based on the social learning theory³⁸ and flow theory,³⁹ the curriculum included coaching techniques that can be used to foster cooperation, autonomous behaviours, feelings of competence, enjoyment, and motivation among individual athletes. Furthermore, discussions included positive coaching practices and methods for establishing a mastery-oriented environment.
- **Peaceful Living Skills Curriculum:** This component of the programme was based on the definition of Christie, Wagner, and Winter⁴⁰ that peace is the nonviolent resolution of conflict and the pursuit of social justice, which are considered to be peacemaking and peace building, respectively. In order to serve as positive role models, which is an important component of SFDT,

coaches learned skills that relate to the ability to live peacefully with others such as assuming personal responsibility, understanding conflict, communicating effectively, respecting cross-cultural differences and similarities, and using the STEP method (a synthesis of conflict resolution and mediation techniques) to effectively resolve conflict.⁹ Coaches subsequently learned how to promote these skills within their athletes.

It is important to note that many Jordanian education institutions, especially primary and secondary schools, stress rote memorization as a primary mode of instruction. However, the project team's experiences with Jordanian students suggested that children and adults were both capable of and excited about active learning techniques such as role-playing as well as large or small group discussions. Consequently, the study employed a problem-based educational approach using physical activities as a way to encourage the full engagement of coaches and players during the clinics. At the end of the coaches' clinics, the newly trained coaches in conjunction with the project staff led clinics for local youth football athletes using the material from the earlier training sessions.

Analysis

All instrumentation used and the methodology described was approved by the researchers' Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to its administration. Instruments were translated into Arabic and administered to participants either in classrooms or on the football field during the exchange visits. Participants were instructed to use a combination of their initials and birthdate to accurately pair pre/post-tests. Upon return, all data were entered and analyzed using SPSS by external evaluators.

Knowledge tests were scored by traditional criterion-referenced measures, where there is a 'right' answer to each question, and a 'wrong' answer, yielding a percentage of correct responses. However, knowledge-test outcomes were analyzed more as norm-referenced measures of individual achievement where the percentage correct (regardless of the baseline) was not measured against a pre-determined standard (i.e., grading scale) but rather against their own [pretest] score for signs of improvement in their performance on content knowledge assessments. Different measures were used for each exchange with results from the first exchange demonstrating football (12 items) and peace (2 items) knowledge, while the second exchange included measures with a more balanced curricula (4 football skills related items, 5 peaceful living skills related items).

Responses to the mutual understanding and perceived abilities items were considered relative to the 2.5 best-practice standards indicating item agreement; if the remaining decimal fraction is greater ($>$) than 1/2 unit of measurement, it is necessary to round and to increase the preceding digit by 1. In this practice, a 2.5 is necessary to equate to "agreement" or a "3" as represented on the Likert-scale. Responses were then recoded according to those that met "agreement." The total number of participants who met the standard was then recalculated as a percentage of the whole.

Non-parametric tests and inferential analyses were used to examine individual subject differences that were observed between pre/post-test scores. Gains in mutual understanding were analyzed through participants' paired pre/post-test responses to social distance scale items.

Results

The study's focal point were the results determining individual participant increases in observed scores of content knowledge (including overall improvement on the post-test, and improvements on the post-test items specific to football content and peace curricula), observed decreases in social distance scores (indicating increased mutual understanding), and measures of participants' self-perceived preparedness and confidence to apply the taught skills.

First, determining the characteristics of the distribution was a critical step in the post-hoc selection of the appropriate test statistic. Results of a skewness test did not reveal normal distribution for any of the pre/post-test data associated with the project's two success metrics: knowledge gains (including overall [football plus peaceful living skills] scores; content-specific [football or peaceful living skills] scores; and mutual understanding (social distance items), which were found to violate normality. Neither a Log-10 transformation nor a square root transformation distributed this positively skewed data normally; thus, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was determined as the most robust selection for this series of analyses. Due to the normality violation, nonparametric tests were utilized for further analysis.

Results of a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test indicated that there was a significant increase in the coaches' overall (football plus peaceful living skills) post-test performance, $Z = -5.49$, $p < 0.001$. Similarly, content-specific comparisons of coaches' pre/post-test performance followed this trend where football content achieved a significant

Table 1. Paired Characteristics of Coaches' Knowledge Gains

	<i>Pre-test</i>		<i>Post-test</i>			
	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean Percent Correct</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean Percent Correct</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>p value</i>
Overall Content	98	48.54%	98	58.51%	-5.49	<.001
Soccer Content	98	36.50%	98	42.30%	-3.92	<.001
Peaceful Living Skills Content	98	35.90%	98	42.65%	-3.56	<.001

Table 2. Paired Characteristics of Coaches' Mutual Understanding Scores

	<i>Pre-test</i>		<i>Post-test</i>		
	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>p value</i>
I feel comfortable when talking to people from another culture.	95	3.48	94	3.57	.21
It would (not) bother me if a person from a different culture moved next door to me.	93	3.39	90	3.42	.75
I can work well with people from different cultures.	94	3.43	92	3.52	.14
If someone from a different culture was qualified, I would feel comfortable having them supervise me in my job.	94	3.48	97	3.61	.16
I feel comfortable when working with a person of the opposite gender.	95	3.24	94	3.39	.05

increase on the post-test ($Z = -3.92$, $p < .00$) as did content that was related to peaceful living skills ($Z = -3.56$, $p < .00$). These results suggested that the programme increased performance on the post-test or knowledge gains achieved among coaches (see Table 1).

Results of a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test for mutual understanding indicated that only the last item, ("I feel comfortable when working with someone of the opposite gender"), achieved significance, $Z = -1.95$, $p = .05$. Thus, coaches were more comfortable working with the opposite gender after engaging in the programme. Pre- and post-programme means for each social distance item appear in Table 2.

To operationalize the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, coaches were asked to consider "preparedness"

and "confidence" relative to coaching tactical and technical football skills, promoting physical fitness and developing citizenship behaviours and peaceful living skills among youth. These constructs of preparedness and confidence are based on the attributional theory of achievement motivation. Weiner's⁴¹ work identifies behavioral preparation and self-confidence as the dominant achievement attributes in motivating others. The Jordanian coaches' ability to replicate and incorporate lessons learned (football and peaceful living skills) into their personal coaching style were largely operationalized based on these motivational constructs. The theory also accounts and allows for emotion as a causal factor to motivation, not a bias. In this case, for example, the self-reported items related to "feeling prepared and/or confident" are considered dominant attributes and not social desirability.

Items were collapsed into a single compendium score of coach “preparedness” to implement football-related and peaceful living skills into their coaching. Results indicated that 88% ($n = 88$) of the coaches reported feeling prepared to implement the football skills highlighted in the programme into their coaching (vs. 12%, $n = 12$). The subscale (see Table 3) focused on coaches’ “preparedness” regarding football-related skills, which included five items

($\alpha = .53$). All coaches who responded to the peaceful living skills items indicated preparedness to implement these skills into their coaching (100%, $n = 103$). The subscale designed to assess coaches’ peaceful living skills “preparedness” included five items ($\alpha = .61$). These less robust observations of internal consistency related to these items may be due to the variable levels of coaches’ experience.

Table 3. Coaches’ “Prepared” Post-Programme Survey Results

	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>α</i>
<i>Prepared</i>			
Prepared to Implement Soccer Skills	100	3.24	0.53
<i>Items:</i> I feel prepared to better teach individual defending skills to my players.			
I feel prepared to better teach individual attacking skills to my players.			
The workshop prepared me to use the most effective method of coaching my players on the field.			
I feel prepared to incorporate conditioning and fitness skills into my coaching style.			
I feel prepared to incorporate nutritional skills into my coaching style.			
Prepared to Implement Peaceful Living Skills	103	3.70	0.61
<i>Items:</i> The workshop prepared me to assist my players to develop into good citizens through soccer.			
The workshop prepared me to encourage peaceful living skills among players.			
I feel prepared to incorporate peaceful living skills into my coaching style.			
I feel prepared to incorporate human development activities into my coaching style.			
I feel prepared to incorporate youth development skills into my coaching style.			

Results for the self-reported “confidence” items indicated that nearly 93% of the coaches (number of participants that met 2.5 standard recalculated as a percentage of all participants) were confident regarding their ability to integrate football-related skills into their coaching that was highlighted in the current programme ($n = 90$). The subscale (see Table 4) focused on coaches’ confidence to implement football-related skills included seven items ($\alpha = .77$). Again, 100% of responding coaches were confident that they could integrate peaceful living skills content into their coaching ($n = 98$). The subscale designed to assess coaches’ confidence to implement peaceful living skills included

eight items ($\alpha = .80$).

Participant satisfaction also was considered to be a critical part of the evaluation process. The subscale related to coaches’ satisfaction with football-related content consisted of five items ($\alpha = .83$) with almost 91% ($n = 90$) of the coaches indicating positive ratings of satisfaction with the football-specific content and its delivery. Peaceful living skills content and delivery was also very positively rated (across the six related items [$\alpha = .63$]) with 100% of responding coaches ($n = 102$) indicating satisfaction with this aspect of the programme (see Table 5).

Table 4. Coaches' "Confident" Post-Programme Survey Results

	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>α</i>
<i>Confident</i>			
Confident to Implement Soccer Skills	97	3.34	0.77
<i>Items:</i> I feel confident that I can teach individual defending skills to my players.			
I feel confident that I can teach individual attacking skills to my players.			
I feel confident that I utilize effective methods of coaching my players on the field.			
I feel confident I can identify opportunities to reinforce conditioning and fitness skills during practice.			
I feel confident I will integrate conditioning and fitness skills into my coaching style.			
I feel confident I can identify opportunities to reinforce nutritional skills during practice.			
I feel confident I will incorporate nutritional skills into my coaching style.			
 Confident to Implement Peaceful Living Skills	 98	 3.64	 0.80
<i>Items:</i> I feel confident that I can help my players develop into good citizens.			
I feel confident that I can encourage peaceful living skills among players.			
I feel confident I can identify opportunities to reinforce peaceful living skills during practice.			
I feel confident I will incorporate peaceful living skills into my coaching style.			
I feel confident I can identify opportunities to reinforce human development activities during practice.			
I feel confident I will incorporate human development activities into my coaching style.			
I feel confident I can identify opportunities to reinforce youth development skills during practice.			
I feel confident I will incorporate youth development skills into my coaching style.			

Discussion and Implications

This SDP programme utilized a sport-plus, train-the-trainer approach whereby trained coaches returned to their communities to teach athletes peace building and conflict resolution through football. The approach was grounded in

theory from sport for development, social learning, sport psychology, youth development and leadership. Overall, the findings provide support for the success of the SPUJ programme as well as ideas for future programme development.

Table 5. Coaches' "Satisfied" Post-Programme Survey Results

	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>Mean</i></u>	<u><i>α</i></u>
<i>Satisfied</i>			
Satisfied with Soccer Content and Delivery	99	3.29	0.83
<i>Items:</i> I am satisfied with how the instructors introduced methods of coaching my players on the field.			
I am satisfied with how the instructors introduced ways to teach individual defending skills to my players.			
I am satisfied with how the instructors introduced ways to teach individual attacking skills to my players.			
I am satisfied with the conditioning and fitness skills instruction I received from this workshop.			
I am satisfied with the nutritional skills taught during this workshop.			
Satisfied with Peaceful Living Skills Content and Delivery	102	3.67	0.63
<i>Items:</i> I am satisfied with the instructors' teachings on developing players into good citizens.			
I am satisfied with how the instructors introduced peaceful living skills.			
I am satisfied with how the instructors encouraged me to coach peaceful living skills among players.			
I am satisfied with the instructors' teachings on how to consider developmental aspects of players.			
I am satisfied with the peaceful living skills instruction I received from this workshop.			
I am satisfied with the human development activities taught during this workshop.			

Programme Evaluation

Results indicated that from the programme's beginning to its conclusion, coaches increased their content knowledge and also became more willing to work with someone of a different gender. The majority of coaches also reported feeling prepared and confident in their ability to use their newly learned skills and satisfied with their training overall. Upon more in-depth analysis of the data, it became apparent that the coaches' knowledge levels were only moderately improved. However, these findings were not surprising given the abbreviated amount of time coaches spent learning various football and peaceful living skills in the programme. After the first stage of the programme, results indicated that participants failed to transfer connections between the general subject of football and peaceful living skills. Thus,

the results suggested the workshop taught *football and peaceful living skills*, not *football with peaceful living skills*. In order to achieve educational objectives, the lessons on the football field needed to be applicable to situations outside of the football field.¹⁰ Modifications were subsequently made to the second training in Jordan to allow coaches to participate in four days of training and spend more time integrating football with peaceful living skills. Data indicated that adequate attention was given to each singular subject and how they could converge to promote strong citizenship and peaceful living skills through the game of football.

Inconsistent with expectations and in contrast to the knowledge gains achieved by coaches through their

programme participation, no change occurred in four out of the five coaches' self-reported mutual understanding and social distance responses (i.e., comfort when talking to, working with, living next to, or being supervised at work by people from another culture). Perhaps there was not enough time for enculturation considering the first training session was only two days long and the second session just four days.^{42, 43} Additionally, these workshops did not include direct activities to promote mutual understanding, rather it was indirectly addressed through team-building activities and group work. Clearly, merely participating in a sport was not enough to increase mutual understanding.^{6, 7}

Coaches did report, however, increased mutual understanding on one item related to comfort when working with someone of the opposite gender. From a cultural perspective, this result is noteworthy, as women and men do not work together regularly in many contexts in Jordan, suggesting that it is possible to promote egalitarian activities between genders at least in the context of football. While this was not a direct topic of conversation during the training, both the project director and one of the lead soccer instructors from the SPUJ programme were women. Perhaps, this modeling of interaction might have demonstrated another approach to gender work-based interaction. Parents, community members, and religious leaders have expressed widespread concern with female participation in sports, which is a common theme in other international SDP programmes.^{20, 22}

It is notable that it was a challenging task to accurately measure mutual understanding under short-term circumstances and interventions in this programme. Bias also was introduced, as questionnaires were confidential but not anonymous due to its design. It was difficult for the programme to facilitate a significant increase in mutual understanding through a short workshop measured through a pre/post-test quantitative design. Scores improved as participants spent more time with key project personnel as was the case in the latter exchange. It is recommended that statements in future projects be specific to interactions such as "through this training, I learned to work with others from different cultures."

The next set of findings provided stronger support for the programme's effectiveness. At the conclusion of the programme, 88% of the coaches stated they were prepared to incorporate the football skills they had learned into their coaching and 100% reported being able to incorporate the peaceful living skills learned during the programme. Furthermore, after completing the programme, the coaches

were confident about their ability to teach the football and peaceful living skills they had acquired through the programme. More specifically, 93% of the coaches reported being confident with respect to the football skills, and 100% in terms of the peaceful living skills. These results suggest the participant coaches thought that they had the knowledge, ability, and self-efficacy to teach what they had learned to their athletes. Coaches were also very satisfied with the programme, reporting high positive ratings for the football (91% of coaches) and peaceful living (100% of coaches) content addressed in the programme.

SDP Programme Development

From a SDP programme development viewpoint, several lessons were learned that led to some modification between the first and second training sessions and to recommendations for future programmes. Lessons learned included methods to better integrate content and application, address organizational change and consistency in evaluation.

Based on the current findings that will enhance learning, future curriculum must include a balance of technical content alongside the programme's application or experiential components, which includes effective methods to deliver both components. Focus needs to be placed on each of these components individually. Much more time needs to be devoted to coaches practicing the desired behaviours. Future projects need to give greater consideration to developing curriculum that blend topic areas cohesively so that coaches' lessons of these critical "life skills" are seamlessly integrated with the football practice exercises employed in culturally applicable ways; Coalter²² and Sugden¹⁸ recommend this approach as well. Lyras and Peachey⁵ recommended inclusive and collaborative programming among expert groups and stakeholders, which may assist with this integration in culturally relevant ways. Furthermore, experiential activities combined with didactic presentations in real-time seems to be appealing to coaches, who tend to be action and movement-oriented. It is also important for future programmes to integrate break times that include physical movement and "fun" activities.

To facilitate adequate learning time, it is important that content is streamlined and the agenda is flexible enough to allow time for interpretation. The first set of workshops involved real-time interpreting on the field and only a few pre-work discussions with the interpreters.⁴⁵ The time taken to interpret instructions took away from instructional time,

leaving some material uncovered. This may have affected the overall satisfaction rating of participants if they were disappointed by the perceived gaps in the material. Allowing more time for interpretation may have helped increase participant satisfaction and knowledge gains.

Future projects may wish to consider revising content lessons, devising a time sensitive agenda, and creating smaller work groups where this is possible.

Another lesson learned was the importance of including deliberate discussion time and goal-setting regarding organizational and sustainable change. This was insufficiently addressed during the first programme exchange due to unexpected delays delivering the content and the limited time in each city. For these reasons, there were no formalized discussions with the Jordanian coaches regarding long-term changes during the first exchange. By altering the format of the second exchange in Jordan, more sufficient time was devoted to sustainability discussions. Through this process, Jordanian coaches were given helpful hints and specific examples in which they could fully implement the skills that they learned into their coaching styles. These discussions are crucial for sustainable change.^{20, 44, 45} In Jordan, religious and parental concern over girls participating in sports is a major barrier to sustainable change. This barrier must be addressed without imposing western ideology, so it is recommended that western programme staff collaborate more with in-country partners such as parents in future programmes. For example, this method would better promote the discussion of parental concerns and assure them that the norms and values linked with the Islamic faith will be followed during their daughter's potential or actual involvement in the programme.¹⁸ However, it should be noted that SDP programme staff should be cautious in promoting a western agenda that fosters the participation of women in sport (see Caudwell⁴⁶ for a more thorough discussion).

Finally, the importance of consistency among instruments is critical. While each programme exchange had its own purpose, the foundation of measurement must be the same, yet maintain a degree of flexibility.⁴⁶ It is only through consistency of questions and items that longitudinal results can be interpreted. This is especially the case for items assessing "preparedness" and "confidence" constructs. Consistent verbiage related to contextualizing these constructs is necessary to obtain valid data on the percentage of participants meeting the expected outcome. Using diverse items to assess similar constructs across different training sessions makes determining the psychometric properties of composite variables less

intuitive, resulting in some subscales with low internal consistency.

Conclusion

SDP initiatives are not only seen as catalysts but as main instruments in positive peace-building strategies. Results from this study show that an international *sport-plus* SDP programme, which was designed to increase coaches' ability to use football to teach conflict-resolution skills to their athletes, led to coaches' satisfying experiences, knowledge gains, confidence in using their newly learned skills, and increased comfort and openness to working interactions between men and women. Utilizing sport as a tool to promote empathy, leadership, communication, peace-building skills and collaboration among diverse populations may provide young athletes with the skill-sets needed to become productive and well-rounded adults who are better prepared to contribute to society. Conversely, the implications of missing an opportunity to capitalize an avenue such as sport in order to initiate social change may result in continued social segregation, fear of other cultures, and the inability to meaningfully interact with those who hold different values and perspectives. In planning future initiatives to impact social development, leaders of organizations need to consider the value of training sport coaches as a vehicle to deliver positive messaging to young people to help shape grassroots development. Additionally, researchers and practitioners might consider further discussion about the debates related to neo-colonialism in SDP work and the impact it has on programmes overall.

References

1. Galtung J. Peace education: Problems and conflicts. In: Haavelsrud M, ed. *Education for Peace, Reflection and Action*. Guilford: IPC Science and Technology Press;1975:80-87.
2. Galtung J. Peace studies and conflict resolution: The need for transdisciplinarity. *Transcult Psychiatry*. 2010;47(1):20-32. doi:10.1177/1363461510362041
3. Christie DJ, Tint BS, Wagner RV, Winter DD. Peace psychology for a peaceful world. *Am Psychol*. 2008;63(6):540-52. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.63.6.540.
4. Gawerc MI. Peace-building: Theoretical and concrete perspectives. *Peace Change*. 2006;31(4):435-78. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0130.2006.00387.x

5. Lyras A, Peachey JW. (2011). Integrating sport-for-development theory and praxis. *Sport Manag Rev.* 2011;14:311-326
6. Coalter F. Sports clubs, social capital and social regeneration: 'Ill-defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes'? *Sport in Soc.* 2007;10:537-59. doi:10.1080/17430430701388723.
7. Coakley JJ. *Sport in society: Issues and controversies.* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Irwin/McGraw-Hill; 1998.
8. Lyras A. Characteristics and psycho-social impacts of an inter-ethnic educational sport initiative on Greek and Turkish Cypriot youth. PhD [dissertation]. Storrs (CT): University of Connecticut; 2007.
9. Allport GW. *The nature of prejudice.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley; 1954.
10. Maslow A. *Motivation and Personality.* 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row; 1970.
11. Ryan RM, Deci EL. Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *Am Psychol.* 2000;55:68-78.
12. Henley R. Helping children overcome disaster trauma through post-emergency psychosocial sports programs (Swiss Academy for Development Report). Biel/Bienne: Swiss Academy for Development; 2005.
13. Conroy DE., Coatsworth JD. Coach training as a strategy for promoting youth social development. *Sport Psychol.* 2006;20:128-44.
14. Smith RE, Smoll FL, Barnett NP. Reduction of children's sport performance anxiety through social support and stress-reduction training for coaches. *J of Appl Dev Psychol.* 1995;16:125-42.
15. Coalter F. *Sport for development: What game are we playing?* London: Routledge; 2013.
16. Conroy DE, Coatsworth JD. The effects of coach training on fear of failure in youth swimmers: A latent growth curve analysis from a randomized, controlled trial. *J Appl Dev Psychol.* 2004;25:193-214.
17. Smoll FL, Smith RE, Barnett NP, Everett JJ. Enhancement of children's self-esteem through social support training for youth sport coaches. *J Appl Psychol.* 1993;78:602-10.
18. Sugden, J. Teaching and playing sport for conflict resolution and co-existence in Israel. *Int Rev Sociol Sport.* 2006; 41:221-40.
19. Schulenkorf N, Sugden J. Sport for development and peace in divided societies: Cooperating for inter-community empowerment in Israel. *Eur J Sport Sci.* 2011; 8:235-56.
20. Pink M, Cameron M. Motivations, barriers, and the need to engage with community leaders: Challenges of establishing a sport for development project in Baucau, East Timor. *Int J Sport Soc.* 2013; 4:15-29.
21. Whitley MA, Forneris T, Barker B. The reality of evaluating community-based sport and physical activity programs to enhance the development of underserved youth: Challenges and potential strategies. *Quest.* 2014;66:218-32.
22. Coalter F. *Sport for development: An impact study.* International Development through Sport, UK Sport & Comic Relief. Stirling, UK: 2010.
23. LeCrom CW, Dwyer, B. Plus-sport: The impact of a cross-cultural soccer coaching exchange. *J of Sport Development.* 2013;1(2):1-14.
24. Aber JL, Brown JL, Henrich CC. Teaching conflict resolution: An effective school-based approach to violence prevention. 1999. Available at: <http://www.hawaii.edu/hivandaids/Teaching%20Conflict%20Resolution.pdf>
25. Rookwood J. Soccer for peace and social development. *J Social Justice.* 2008;20:471-479.
26. Wikipedia. Jordan. Wikipedia website. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jordan#cite_note-57. Updated November 20, 2013. Accessed November 18, 2013.
27. CIA. The world factbook: Jordan. CIA website. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>. Updated November 5, 2013. Accessed November 18, 2013.
28. Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, D.C. Jordan-US relations overview. The Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, D.C. website. <http://jordanembassyus.org/page/jordan-us-relations-overview>. Updated 2013. Accessed November 19, 2013.
29. Wikipedia. Sport in Jordan. Wikipedia website. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sport_in_Jordan. Updated November 5, 2013. Accessed November 11, 2013.
30. Johnston P. Soccer-ambitious Jordan eye World Cup breakthrough. Yahoo News website. <http://news.yahoo.com/soccer-ambitious-jordan-eye-world-cup-breakthrough-111905551--sow.html>. Published November 11, 2013. Accessed November 14, 2013.
31. FIFA. Country info. FIFA website. <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=jor/countryInfo.html>. Updated 2014. Accessed November 11, 2013.

32. Parrillo VN, Donoghue C. Updating the Bogardus social distance studies: A new national survey. *Soc Sci J*. 2005;42(2):257-71.
33. Bogardus ES. Social distance and its origins. *Sociol Soc Res*. 1925;9:216-25.
34. Bogardus ES. A social distance scale. *Sociol Soc Res*. 1933;22:265-71.
35. Bogardus ES. Changes in racial distance. *Int J Public Opin Res*. 1947;1:55-62.
36. Bogardus ES. Racial distance changes in the United States during the past thirty years. *Sociol Soc Res*. 1958;43:127-35.
37. Bogardus ES. Comparing racial distance in Ethiopia, South Africa, and the United States. *Sociol Soc Res*. 1968;52:149-156.
38. Bandura A. Human agency in Social Cognitive Theory. *Am Psychol*. 1989;44:1175-84.
39. Csikszentmihalyi M, Robinson RE. The art of seeing: An interpretation of the aesthetic encounter. Malibu, CA: J. P. Getty Museum; 1990.
40. Christie DJ, Wagner RV, Winter DDN. Introduction to peace psychology. In: Christie DJ, Wagner RV, Winter DDN, eds. *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall; 2001:1-15.
41. Weiner B. An Attributional Theory of Achievement Motivation and Emotion. *Psychological Review*. 1985; 92(4): 548-573.
42. Amara M, Aquilina D, Henry I, Taylor M. Sport and Multiculturalism. Brussels: European Commission, DG Education and Culture; 2005.
43. Langley CS, Breese JR. Interacting sojourners: A study of students studying abroad. *Social Science Journal*. 2005;42(2):313-321.
44. Burnett, C, Uys, T. Sport development impact assessment: Towards a rationale and tool. *J Res Sport, Physical Education, Recreation*. 2000;22(1):27-40.
45. Coalter F. Sport and community development: A manual. Edinburgh, Scotland: Research Unit SportScotland;2002.
46. Caudwell J. On shifting sands: The complexities of women's and girls' involvement in Football for Peace. In: Sugden J, Wallis J, Eds. *Football for Peace: The challenges of using sport for co-existence in Israel*. Oxford: Meyer & Meyer Sport;2007:97-112.

Book Review

Global sport-for-development: Critical perspectives

Schulenkorf N, Adair A (eds). *Global Sport-for-Development: Critical Perspectives*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan; 2014. 280pp., £68 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-137-28962-9

Review by Michael Crawley¹

¹ University of Edinburgh, UK

Corresponding author email: michael.crawley@ed.ac.uk

Global Sport-For-Development: Critical Perspectives is an intuitive, empirically grounded and well-structured text, which offers a welcome blend of critical theory and reflective development practice. The book's focus is on Sport For Development (S4D) projects, which are projects that are intended to act as a 'conduit' or 'vehicle' for achieving various social, cultural, economic or health-related outcomes as opposed to offering sports development or participation for its own sake. Given the ever-increasing number of S4D projects, this book is a much-needed addition to the field, and will appeal both to scholars from a variety of disciplines and to S4D practitioners. The book is divided into two principle parts: a 'Framework' section (chapters 2 - 5), which offers a conceptual background of the S4D field, and a 'From the Field' section (chapters 6 - 12), which focuses on the practical issues faced by those implementing S4D interventions.

In Chapter 2, Giulianotti and Armstrong map the various ways in which the S4D sector is structured and orientated, cataloguing the various institutions and forms of engagement (technical, practical, and critical) that are currently at play within a disparate, multi-level sector. They apply two broad theories, 'global civil society' and 'glocalisation', to this mapping exercise, which offers an interesting engagement with power relations and cultural processes and opens up questions about the extent to which S4D interventions are shaped towards local needs. They

conclude that a more influential role for radical NGOs and social movements would allow the S4D sector to forge "more critical or 'glocal' projects, more creative partnerships, and more democratic relationships with their user communities" (29). However, their confidence that such organisations can be "empowered to engage selectively and innovatively with the more transnational features" of the S4D movement may understate the power relations involved and overlook the potential for such organisations to be co-opted.

In Chapter 3, Darnell and Hayhurst advocate a post-colonial feminist research ethic, which contends that many of the current social and political problems with which S4D is engaged have their roots in the colonial project and that S4D interventions can play a role in reproducing inequalities. They urge practitioners to think critically about the language of 'empowerment' and to consider the ways in which neoliberal practices are reproduced rather than resisted through the emphasis that S4D programmes place on "the promotion and education of individual capital, and the building of skills necessary to survive within such structures of violence"(45). They also offer a nuanced critique of the politics of representation within S4D, noting that the current call for increased monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has a tendency to reinforce "unjust hierarchies of knowledge production" while also urging practitioners to think carefully about the ways in which they represent "beneficiaries."

Coalter elaborates on the importance of critical reflection in the representation of S4D in Chapter 4. He warns that the 'studied vagueness' of much writing on sport is compounded by the 'amorphous' concept of 'development' (65) and claims that there is a fundamental problem of displacement of scope in much discussion of S4D interventions, whereby micro-level changes to individual behaviour are conflated with importance and complexity of the social relations facilitated with projected changes at the meso- and macro- levels. He shares the concerns of Darnell and Hayhurst that focusing on selective individual testimonies and measurements of self-efficacy are misleading since "any social intervention will produce individual successes" (71), and also tend to reproduce neoliberal values. Coalter follows Levermore (2008) in suggesting that we consider multiple levels of 'sports-for-development' in terms of its effects not only on individuals but on broader processes involving social capital and collective organisation.

Sugden argues in chapter 5 that in the context of conflict resolution and peace-building through sport, sociologists are ideally placed to offer a nuanced understanding of historical context and the complex relationship between sport and political and civil society. He uses Salomon's 'ripple effect' to conceptualise communication across international, regional and grassroots levels, mapping the complexities of these networks in diagram form. In general, the opening chapters provide a sense of the scope of both the existing initiatives and the critical frameworks that can be applied to them. The introductory chapters provide vital context for the case studies to follow, even if connections made to the broad social processes and theoretical paradigms are at times expressed in vague technical terms and lack explicit empirical grounding.

The second section of the book opens with Wallis and Lambert's reflections on *Football for Peace* in Israel. They offer experiential insights into the organisation, application and development of the project, which evolved a coaching methodology emphasising the promotion of five key pro-social values through 'research cycles of action-evaluation-reflection-adaptation' (103). They are also candid in their critique of certain aspects of project delivery such as asking why local coaches often became disengaged with the project and noting research showing that very few local coaches could actually read the training manual, which was not translated into Arabic until 2008. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a theme that emerges throughout the book, and Wallis and Lambert argue that much of this work fails to assess the project's key aims of targeted behavioural,

attitudinal and emotional change on an individual level. They also note that much research is conducted by 'research parasites' with short-term access and who merely use the project to increase their own academic prestige.

Mwaanga and Mwansa's contribution applies a Foucauldian concern with discourse to the study of S4D rhetoric, and argues that hybrid notions of Ubuntu and Christian values can challenge top-down, neoliberal discourses, which champion the individual over the collective. However, their uncritical presentation of 'economic empowerment' through small business loans to individuals somewhat confuses this critique of neoliberal practice.

In Chapter 8, Jeanes and Magee discuss the lack of research which foregrounds the lived experience of those participating in S4D projects. Their in-depth interviews with Zambian female footballers indicate the complex nature of ideas about 'empowerment', identity formation and gender roles, whilst exposing a lack of alignment between the organisational aims and what the women participating sought from playing football.

The necessity to engage more with the needs of communities is further addressed in Chapter 9 through Richards and Foster's discussion of a football-based intervention in Gulu, Uganda. They note that the formative evaluation of the programme, which involved consultation with local people, was actually carried out *retrospectively*, because "at the time it was completed, the programme objectives and design had already been finalised in order to secure funding for the programme" (163). This fundamental disconnect between local knowledge and external intervention meant that the project, whilst successful in terms of organising a competitive football league, failed to address peace-building. We should note that whilst the project appeared to have some success in promoting physical activity through football, when it was considered purely through the lens of a peace-building agenda, it could be seen to have failed as a S4D initiative as defined by the book's introduction.

Kaufman, Rosenbauer and Moore's contribution presents the perceptions and experiences of six practitioners in carrying out M&E programmes in the Caribbean. They outline a tendency to focus on monitoring during interviews and note that there was little emphasis on outcome evaluation or on sharing findings with individual organisations. In conclusion they set out a variety of ways in which organisations in the Caribbean and elsewhere might improve their M&E practices.

Chapter 11 presents the personal testimonies of Kath and van Buuren, who reflect on the *Soldados Nunca Mais* programme in Rio de Janeiro. They reflect on the role of football as a culturally significant means of bringing people together in Brazil but note that football games alone do not lead to the positive social outcomes they identify. Through a detailed account of one individual, 'Juliano,' who has left the drug trade through the programme, they discuss the through sport as well as the role in which social workers play as 'change agents'.

In the final 'From the Field' chapter, the 'reflective praxis exercise' of Siefken, Schofield and Schlenker examines the importance of developing a hybrid approach combining Western and Pacific Island perspectives for implementing a health promotion programme in Vanuatu. A community participation strategy whereby local women chose their preferred initiative (in this case a team-based, rather than individual, walking challenge) was combined with social marketing tools and the use of pedometers developed in Western health promotion initiatives. Whilst the programme had some success in improving physical activity and local capacity-building, it proved unsustainable due to excessive staff turnover and a loss of government support.

As with any edited volume we can identify some inconsistencies. The first section of the text presents a high level of theoretical critique which sometimes relies on overly broad generalisations and vague connections to broader theoretical discussions but which nonetheless makes frequent references to the politics of representation and the danger of reproducing neoliberal values. This level of critique is rarely matched by the 'From the Field' chapters, which often present issues of 'empowerment' and 'voice' relatively uncritically. The spectre of 'neoliberalism' as in much social scientific writing on development, is only vaguely defined and is deployed unevenly throughout the book, whilst the call for a greater focus on 'radical NGOs,' which challenge hegemonic representations made by Giulianotti and Armstrong, is not answered by the 'From the Field' chapters. Instead, the chapters largely present the views of established development workers. More detailed ethnographies that focus on participants in S4D programmes would add a valuable dimension to the text and go further towards tying together the concerns of authors across the two sections of the book. We must hope that this valuable contribution to the field spurs more writing that precludes the need for separate 'Framework' and 'From the Field' sections, since critically engaged writing on S4D should be able to provide both of these facets at once.

Original Research

Reflections from scholars on barriers and strategies in sport-for-development research

Jon Welty Peachey¹, Adam Cohen²

¹ University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

² Texas Tech University, USA

Corresponding author email: jwpeach@illinois.edu

Abstract

Although there is a plethora of literature calling for changes and improvements to the methodology and theory in sport-for-development (SFD) research, a first-hand account of the initial barriers and challenges faced by scholars in SFD research has not been undertaken, nor has there been a synthesis of strategies that scholars have tapped to overcome these issues. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine barriers and challenges that scholars encounter when they initially consider engaging in SFD research. Additionally, this study serves to explore strategies that are used to overcome these barriers and challenges. We interviewed eight well-established SFD scholars for this study. The initial barriers to engaging in SFD research are scholars' perceptions that SFD organizations have had negative experiences working with academics and challenges posed by the higher education system. A number of concrete strategies were identified for targeting these barriers and working within higher education to advance SFD research. Drawn from the findings, implications for engaging in the SFD field are elucidated and future research directions are outlined.

While the ideology of sport-for-development (SFD) has been around for centuries, dating back to the tradition of the Olympic truce that suspended wars and postponed legal debates, the field has only recently emerged as a subject of heightened attention, both in practice and in academia. Research articles and commentaries have been published in journals within the sport management field and other interdisciplinary journals. In addition, several books

focusing specifically on SFD and a journal dedicated to this topic (*Journal of Sport for Development*) have recently emerged. These research efforts and the overarching goals and effectiveness of SFD have been met with intense scrutiny. Several scholars have offered critiques of SFD, its efficacy, and noted challenges in conducting research in this space.¹⁻⁶

Although there is a plethora of literature calling for changes and improvements to methodology and theory in SFD research along with increased calls for the need to monitor and evaluate outcomes (which is different than research per se, explained below), little attention has been paid toward the initial barriers and challenges faced by scholars when considering adopting SFD as their research agenda. In a self-reflective article on the difficulties researching marginalised populations, Sherry⁷ light-heartedly noted how she “found [herself] reaching for the ‘compulsory’ glass of wine at the end of the day . . . and began to wonder if perhaps it was not just [her] research participants using alcohol as a crutch” (p.281). Additionally, scholars have noted how the academic tenure and reward system can impede research agendas, compelling them to focus on quantity over quality in publications and spend time attempting to acquire grants versus collecting data or working on manuscripts.⁸ The genesis of this manuscript emerged after a few debriefing sessions between the authors as we considered how best to navigate through the SFD research space. We encountered initial barriers and frustrations engaging in SFD research, generating curiosity as to the perceptions of other scholars with regards to barriers they encountered and how they navigated them.

Keywords: sport for development; sport for development and peace; sport for social change; monitoring and evaluation

Despite these experiences of SFD researchers, a first-hand account of the initial barriers and challenges to engaging in SFD research faced by scholars has not been undertaken. In addition, there has not been a synthesis of strategies scholars have tapped to overcome these issues. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine barriers and challenges encountered by scholars when initially considering engaging in research in SFD and to explore the strategies that were used to overcome these barriers and challenges. To guide this investigation we developed two research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceived barriers and challenges that may discourage scholars from initially engaging in SFD research?

RQ2: What strategies are employed by these scholars to address and overcome the perceived barriers and challenges to initial engagement in SFD research?

Background

The growth of SFD within the past few decades has rapidly expanded both in practice and within academia.⁹ Whilst the focus of this article does not permit for an extensive review of the SFD literature, it is important to recognise the research, both theoretical and practical, which has contributed to a better understanding of SFD across contexts. Before doing so, it may be helpful to distinguish between research and evaluation, as these terms are often confused. Research in SFD is not just about conducting program evaluations and publishing the results or providing feedback to organisations, which is a common misconception. Rather, research more broadly is undertaken to produce knowledge, build theory, and enhance an understanding of a phenomenon, which may or may not include programme evaluation (e.g., Hayhurst's¹⁰ study of SFD organisations and programmes). In the current study, we were interested in scholars' perceptions of initial barriers to conducting *research* in SFD and strategies for addressing these barriers. As such, scholars were explicitly asked to talk about research in SFD and not just evaluation, although the discussion illustrates that some scholars in this study also seemed to equate research with evaluation, whether intentionally or not.

Most individuals reading this article are likely aware of the cliché in academia "publish or perish". While the thought of perishing is mildly extreme, there is a very real awareness of academics on the need to publish in order to succeed and obtain tenure and promotion. In one study highlighting perceptions of faculty regarding academic pressures, Miller,

Taylor, and Bedian¹¹ note tenure-track faculty "emphasize productivity at the expense of creativity and innovation" (p. 435). The authors continue to suggest the trepidation of unconventional research potentially results in studies that lack substance or restate obvious questions. In another assessment on the culture of academic pressure, Carson, Bartneck, and Voges⁸ highlight the negative impact that competition can have on academics who compete for the same funding dollars and top tier journal publications. Specifically, they indicate constant rejection can lead to lowering standards and publishing becomes more vital than discovery and knowledge acquisition. Specifically, along with guiding the direction of ideas and findings, the peer-review process is crucial in determining individual advancement and achievement.¹²

Moving forward, some SFD research and evaluation has begun to highlight the impact sport can possibly have on various societal issues. Research has illustrated the importance of sport in increasing social capital and also minimising the social exclusion of marginalised populations, such as individuals suffering from homelessness, and those recovering from drug and alcohol addiction.¹³⁻¹⁵ Other literature has detailed the impact sport can have towards fostering intercultural exchange, particularly with countries and regions in war torn areas.¹⁶⁻¹⁸ Beyond simply elucidating the ability of sport to potentially yield a positive impact on society, scholars have begun to focus on the importance of how sport is implemented.⁶ Recognising that sport alone is not capable of creating societal change, Coalter² recommends to avoid making "overly romanticized, communitarian generalisations about the 'power' of sport for development" (p. 1386). While sport can serve as a valuable mechanism in certain sport-plus or plus-sport programming, it is not realistic to assume it can by itself solve large-scale problems,¹⁻² and should be packaged with other educational and cultural activities to achieve optimal effect.^{6, 19}

Several scholars have offered critiques of SFD, its efficacy, and noted challenges in conducting research (and evaluation).^{1,6} Coalter¹⁻² critiques the academic process and outcomes of many SFD initiatives, suggesting the necessity of a more 'logical' approach to monitoring and evaluation along with programme implementation. As stated by Cornelissen,²⁰ "one of the biggest problems with the sport-for-development movement is the lack of an evidentiary base, and the often substantial gap between theory and practice" (p. 507). Several well-established scholars have reflected on the direction of research in the field and the role of sport within the SFD context.^{2, 21-22}

Whilst there have been many claims about the positive benefits sport can have throughout society, there have also been numerous critiques on the lack of empirical evidence and calls for stronger monitoring and evaluation efforts.^{1-2, 23} As Black²⁴ notes, "emphasis on practice has come, for the most part, at the expense of critical and theoretically-informed reflection" (p. 122). These efforts are seemingly easier said than done, as effective research and evaluation can be expensive, complex, and time-consuming for scholars with multiple competing demands of research, teaching, and service.⁹ And of course, it must be reiterated that not all SFD research is evaluation work (nor should it be), and the critiques and basic research carried out by some SFD scholars make significant contributions to the field and theory building, beyond just monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Literature critiquing SFD commonly suggests that the value and impact of sport should not be overestimated or overvalued.^{2,25} In a review and critique of the SFD field, Hartmann and Kwauk²⁵ draw forth two critical reflections. First, they suggest that sport participation and programming does, and should, not guarantee positive impact, noting these gains need to materialise within proper conditions and suitable resources. Second, they note sport initiatives should collaborate with non-sport programming for a wider range of development goals to be accomplished. This opinion is supported by Schulenkorf and Sugden,²³ who argue that involvement of passionate leaders and change agents is a more critical component than the act of sport itself, and that greater focus on ancillary aspects of sport events should occur. More specifically, Hartmann²⁶ suggests "the success of any sport-based social interventionist programme is largely determined by the strength of its non-sport components" (p. 134).

In an effort to stress the potential of SFD along with the necessity for stronger findings, Levermore²⁷ claims "more evaluation is required to determine the exact nature of [sport's] potential" (p. 189). Kay⁵ stressed four major issues within SFD research and evaluation that have emerged in recent years: (a) the belief that sport provides social benefits beyond direct participation, (b) rhetoric and policy endorsing the ability of sport has heightened expectations of practitioners in the field, (c) benefits claimed often overreach the research that was conducted, and (d) the necessity for stronger data to further prove or disprove the impact of sport. Literature has also illustrated the need for academics to assist in the monitoring and evaluation efforts of SFD organisations or initiatives due to these organisations' lack of time, limited staff and lack of research-based skills.^{6,15} In

addition to conducting research for the sake of knowledge production in SFD, scholars can also play a role to advance research agendas that encompasses broader, long-term assessment of benefits and challenges of participants.²² While many SFD organisations have become more skilled at evaluating and quantifying outcomes, scholars may still be able to bring more complex and sophisticated methodologies to their SFD work. Thus, practitioner/scholar engagements and collaborations could be crucial for continuing to build the credibility of the SFD field.⁹ However, as evidenced above, there could be barriers to conducting research in SFD, some of which may be posed by the higher education system. Therefore, this research was undertaken to help shed further light on the barriers and challenges initially encountered by scholars when they first consider engaging in SFD research, with the view towards uncovering strategies employed to help address these issues.

Method

To gain insight into the barriers, challenges, and strategies encountered and employed by scholars when they initially consider engaging in SFD research, we conducted a qualitative investigation with eight international, well-established SFD scholars. Qualitative methods were adopted for this exploratory study because this enabled us to ask probing and clarifying questions in order to gather rich data.²⁸

Participants and Procedures

Eight SFD scholars were ultimately selected to take part in semi-structured interviews. In an effort to identify potential interviewees for our research we began by locating peer-reviewed articles incorporating the term "sport-for-development" through a Google Scholar search. We also conducted key word searches for "sport for social change" and "sport-for-development and peace" to further identify published articles related to SFD. To narrow down the list of scholars, the next step entailed locating articles with high citation rates published in peer-reviewed journals both inside and outside of sport, such as the *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *Journal of Sport for Development*, *Journal of Sport Management*, *Sport Management Review*, and *Third World Quarterly*. Finally, we aimed to identify academics publishing from a range of research perspectives (e.g., international policy development, community sport, youth sport and development, social inclusion, and conflict resolution), along with representing different geographic locations (e.g., North America, Europe, Australia, and Africa).

Initially, 12 well-established scholars were identified as possible study participants. A personal email was sent to each with an invitation to take part in a one-on-one phone or Skype interview. We followed up with two reminder emails one and two weeks later after making initial contact. In the end, eight scholars volunteered to be interviewed and take part in this investigation. Additionally, each professor gave permission to have their names and institutions included in findings and reports: Dr. Cora Burnett, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Dr. Simon Darnell, University of Toronto, Canada; Dr. Wendy Frisby, University of British Columbia, Canada (now retired); Dr. B. Christine Green, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, U.S.; Dr. Mary Hums, University of Louisville, U.S.; Dr. Roger Levermore, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology; Dr. Nico Schulenkorf, University of Technology, Australia; and Dr. Emma Sherry, La Trobe University, Australia. Each audio recorded interview lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

The semi-structured interview guide was developed from the limited SFD literature that particularly articulated barriers and challenges to engaging in SFD research and potential strategies for addressing these challenges and barriers,^{1-2, 6, 15, 17, 29-31} and from the literature outlining challenges posed by higher education.^{8,11} Interview questions revolved around topics such as the challenges encountered when considering whether to embark upon SFD research, potential barriers posed by the higher education system, and strategies employed to address these challenges.

Data Analysis

During the initial stage of data analysis, we coded the transcripts to a priori themes drawn from the aforementioned literature on SFD and higher education systems focused on research challenges and potential strategies for addressing these challenges.^{1-2, 6,8, 11,15,17, 29-31} The authors expected additional themes to materialise from the data,³² which led both authors to utilise a more inductive and open coding process to analyse the transcripts line-by-line to identify data demonstrating the challenges, barriers, and strategies. All of these codes were then collapsed into prominent themes.^{28, 32}

Coding and analysis were performed by both authors independently. Following the individual coding process, the authors discussed their findings three times in an attempt to debate and then agree upon themes and enhance the dependability of the analysis. To conclude the coding

process, the authors identified key quotations that best characterised the emergent themes.³³ Data saturation was achieved by continuously acquiring data until the data set was complete, which was indicated by replication or redundancy.³⁴ To enhance the dependability and credibility of the study, triangulation of investigators was employed, and member checks were carried out with the scholars.³⁵ They had the opportunity to review their transcripts to ensure accuracy and representativeness as well as the interpretations of the study. None of the scholars had any changes to their transcripts and they agreed with study findings and interpretations.

Results

Barriers and Challenges to Initially Engaging in Sport-for-Development Research

The results of the current study revealed that scholars perceived two major barriers and challenges to initially engaging in SFD research (research question one); the perception that practitioners have had challenging experiences working with academics in the past and thus are reluctant to engage in research and evaluation exercises with academics, and the perception that the higher education system presents substantial barriers to engaging in SFD research for scholars. These two themes are explored in detail below.

Perceived challenging experiences working with academics. All scholars perceived that many practitioners – across a variety of contexts, from local community-based organisations to international level NGOs – have not always had positive experiences working with academics. Because of these challenging experiences, a barrier can be erected that scholars may find difficult to overcome when making initial overtures to SFD organisations. Several scholars spoke about their perceptions regarding the suspicion practitioners have about those in higher education based upon their previous experiences working with academics. Frisby's comment is illustrative of this suspicion as she reflected upon the local, grassroots organisations in particular that she has worked with in Canada:

They can see through you and there is some suspicion around, and rightly so, academic researchers and service providers who've maybe come in and out of their life and exploited them and got what they needed for their careers and moved on...I hear stories of previous researchers who have come in and said we're going to give back in some way, and [SFD organisations] never hear back from them.

Speaking in general about the SFD field, Green commented on her perception of this suspicion: “I think the key is, we have a lot to overcome in terms of an image of an academic. I think we’re initially perceived as users . . . we need money to do something that’s of value to me.” While Burnett also shared her perception about the suspicion national and international NGOs have about academics in terms of “exploiting others . . . these are the ethical issues I think,” she also mentioned that some practitioners (local, national, international) may believe that academics are abusing the SFD community: “I think working with NGOs is very difficult. . . . They say to me you are abusing our community. You ask the same questions, but you don’t bring the balls, you don’t bring the equipment. What’s wrong with you?” Specifically, Burnett is referring to her context of South Africa and southern Africa, drawing from her knowledge of several practitioner and academic engagements carried out in this part of the world that were not perceived as helpful by practitioners. In addition, Burnett expressed her opinion about some scholars in the Global North who have a sense of entitlement and such privilege may contribute to the negative perceptions SFD practitioners may hold of academics: “There is ignorance and entitlement of some academics from the Global North, especially post-graduate students delivering papers with great confidence and ignorance, not having been in the field.”

Furthermore, some of the scholars perceived that the unhelpful deliverables many in higher education provide to organisations contribute to these not-so-positive experiences of working with academics. These unwieldy deliverables are often not user-friendly and the research and evaluation results are not communicated to organisations in appropriate forms for their use, as Green opined, drawing from her experiences working with youth sport organisations: “I think that’s a challenge. Are we producing evaluation results that they can use in their funding request or marketing materials so they can improve their programmes? . . . The type of report you produce might be very different.” Schulenkorf also spoke about his perception of the SFD field in general, and that where and how scholars publish their findings are not accessible or meaningful to practitioners:

We publish it in some obscure journal that has an impact factor of this or that and has absolutely no meaning to the people that are there. So unless you’re able to use your data and use your findings and communicate them back in a more meaningful way to the participants and to the people that we’re helping out who are organising the projects, there’s not much point in actually doing so. . . . It’s important to get away from the academic writing to get the

message across.

One other contributing factor was identified by Hums as a lack of involvement and credibility of researchers among practitioners. Here, Hums spoke from her experience working with adaptive sport and human rights through sport organisations. Due to previous challenging experiences working with scholars in these contexts, Hums perceived that these organisations learn not to trust academics, causing academic researchers to often lose credibility in the eyes of the organisations, which presents a fundamental challenge to engaging in research with them: “I think one of the issues we have is lack of credibility, sort of street credit within the industry. I think that makes a big difference in our work being accepted.”

Perceived barriers and challenges posed by the higher education system. Scholars in this study perceived barriers and challenges posed by the higher education system to be a second contributing factor discouraging scholars from initially engaging in SFD research. Levermore began by explaining how, in his opinion, SFD is not regarded very highly in some academic circles, which may discourage scholars from considering SFD as a viable line of research:

You have those who are real development experts who think it’s a bit of a Mickey Mouse sideshow and it’s not important . . . One of the reasons they get put off by sport-for-development is that some of the people . . . think that sport can solve anything. It’s just taken as a little bit of a joke.

Similarly, Darnell shared his perception about how SFD is regarded by mainstream development experts:

[Development scholars] don’t really consider sport to be part of the development studies field . . . I think this [SFD] is something that attracts people who have backgrounds in sport rather than people who have backgrounds in critical development studies. . . . If you just turn up and have kids throwing balls around, people from the broader development paradigm would be sceptical about it.

Additionally, all scholars identified academic pressures and rewards as a key constraint which may discourage researchers from engaging in SFD research, due to the possible lengthy time commitments for project development and for carrying out the research longitudinally, and due to the fact that goals of higher education systems may not necessarily be aligned with goals of the research. For instance, Schulenkorf shared his view drawn from personal experience:

From a university perspective, while they applaud you and go 'that's very nice' . . . and you may get a pat on the shoulder. What matters here is the research outcome and ideally in an 'A' journal . . . and clearly the impact you are trying to achieve is very different to the one the university wants to have.

Schulenkorf is alluding to the fact that many SFD scholars are engaging with organisations over the long term to conduct their research or evaluate programmes and provide recommendations to these organisations for programme improvements and development. However, these goals may be at odds with designing research to publish quickly in top-tier journals. Levermore also provided his opinion on the perceived lower-tier status of SFD research within top tier journals: "The problem with sport-for-development is that it's not easy to get into the big management journals, and as a result of that, you don't get rated highly [by the institution] for the research exercise." Frisby agreed with Schulenkorf and Levermore, commenting that the academic reward system may discourage young scholars from pursuing research methodologies used in SFD, such as participatory action research (PAR), that take considerable time: "I think the other thing is the reward system in the Academy . . . pumping manuscripts out quickly and PAR work is not quick. For graduate students, it is much tougher to do." Darnell, who was a doctoral student of Frisby's, also commented on the publication pressures: "I guess this is one of the pressures of research, you have to get the publications out. When the project is over we move onto the next thing, but I wonder if there is more we should be doing with following up [with SFD organisations]."

In addition, lack of resources for conducting SFD research, in terms of university and external funding options (grants and contracts), were also identified as barriers preventing some scholars from engaging in SFD research. For example, Sherry shared her view: "One of the things with this type of research is it is incredibly difficult. It's very hard to get money, and any money that you do get is on an absolute shoestring." For Darnell, he perceived that in-depth research in SFD did not lend itself easily to funding: "While you're doing that in-depth, critical work, the funding passes you by and then you are left with nothing." Levermore agreed: "There's not much money out there for the field, and the projects take a long time, and we need to do our teaching and have other demands." Drawing from her experience in seeking funding over 20-plus years, Hums shared that "who's going to give money to a pencil-headed professor who wants to study . . . implementation of the Convention of Rights to people with disabilities?" Finally, Hums also

gave her perspective on trends in academia to gain tenure and the necessity to pursue grants, which may prove difficult in the SFD sphere:

When I started it was all about publications. Actually, when I started it was about solo publications . . . now collaboration is okay but they want you to be first author . . . in terms of the tenure ride they want you to get money.

Strategies to Address Perceived Barriers and Challenges

Whilst the scholars identified two key barriers and challenges to initially engaging in SFD research, they also perceived several important strategies for overcoming these barriers and challenges (research question two).

Strategies for addressing negative experiences of practitioners. As mentioned, scholars in this study perceived that SFD practitioners have had negative experiences working with academics, which may diminish their interest in allowing scholars to conduct research with or evaluate their organizations. To help overcome these potential negative perceptions, all scholars in the current study spoke to the necessity of spending time building relationships, trust, and credibility with organisations and practitioners. For example, Frisby shared about her approach working with marginalised and disenfranchised populations to help allay suspicions that practitioners may have of academic researchers:

It's trust. It all goes back to building trust, that this is going to be a safe place for them. Many of them are quite suspicious about that, and if you can't do that with a partner, you know the project is not going to move forward.

Levermore agreed: "It is just about networking and developing trust with practitioners." Similar to Frisby and Levermore, Burnett also emphasized the importance of developing trust with NGOs in her South African context:

We have to develop trust. To build that trust, we have to negotiate understandings with the NGOs we work with. . . . I take six months to orient them to the development framework. I say I will not publish anything unless you give me the go ahead. . . . So, it's all a process of engagement and trust that you have to build up.

Thus, it appears one of the key strategies to carrying out effective research is to spend the requisite time necessary to build strong relationships, trust, and credibility with practitioners.

In this same vein, Burnett not only perceived the importance of developing user-friendly tools to assist practitioners with the research process, but also the necessity of having impartial researchers involved in the process: “They need user-friendly tools to capture M&E (monitoring and evaluation), but need outsiders to link to existing data and do an impact assessment without undue bias.” Finally, Hums shared her opinion that theory should be deemphasized because this can be beyond the scope of a practitioner’s interest, and that scholars should focus on hard data and results to provide tangible information to assist in day-to-day operations such as acquiring funding: “I think [those in the SFD field] need, not theories about management evaluation; we need someone to actually go in and say, you know we’ve seen this. We need numbers [for the practitioners].”

Strategies for working with and within the higher education system. The scholars also shared their opinions on various strategies for working with and within the higher education system to facilitate engagement with SFD research. Following your passion was a theme that emerged from conversations with many of the scholars, as typified by Frisby on the course of action she took when first carving out her research agenda:

If this is your passion . . . I would say just go for it. I did my traditional thing and started going down this path . . . and they all advised me against going this route because it didn’t fit with the norms of the Academy . . . but I just kept going. . . . You’ll find ways, because people working in other fields run into challenges and they find a way to work around it. We need to do the same.

Frisby continued by giving advice on developing an SFD publication plan very early in one’s career to help navigate the higher education system:

If you get so involved in this work that you’re not conforming to the norms in the system of academia, you’re not going to be in academia for very long. . . . Come up with a publication plan pretty early in a project. . . . I can think of eight or 10 [scholars] who did this sort of work by just starting at their Master’s or their PhD and have been very successful because they built in a plan for the writing.

Similarly, Levermore encouraged new SFD scholars to think outside the box and be creative as they design studies and engage with organisations: “Do something that has not been done by anybody else. Think outside of the box, and use your strengths. . . . Keep an open mind that sport doesn’t

always do good.” Levermore also suggested scholars consider how their SFD research will link to mainstream research agendas in order to gain credibility and traction for their work within the higher education system: “If you are doing something like this, keep it linked to the mainstream to give yourself as many opportunities as possible. . . . Speak general, and engage with the mainstream community as much as you can.” Along these lines, Darnell shared how he drew from other disciplines for his work, and encouraged other scholars to do likewise: “The issues we are tackling [in SFD] are ones development studies people have been paying attention to for a long time. . . . I try to draw from this broader perspective and encourage others to do the same.”

Scholars in this study also advocated that SFD scholars should collaborate with other researchers, both inside and outside of the field and from different geographic areas in order to best advance knowledge and address issues related to academic pressures through building a supportive, collaborative group of researchers. For instance, Sherry shared that “someone in the States could learn from Africa, from someone in India, and the more we can cross culturally collaborate probably the stronger the research will be in the long run.” Burnett agreed: “We need to find people to grow the field together. We work a bit in isolation. I think we should really pull together to exchange knowledge.” Darnell added: “I think collaboration between researchers is really significant. This field can be lonely, and you get to the end of a project and think, ‘did I actually make a contribution?’” Relatedly, Levermore thought that new SFD scholars should reach out to senior development and SFD scholars to collaborate with them, as these individuals can help guide longer-term projects and potentially have access to funding:

It’s an entirely different pond, an entirely different ball game with senior researchers. Because they’ve already got that experience, they’ve got that credibility that allows them to do 5-10 year research projects. And they can get access to resources.

Many of the scholars in this study also mentioned that it was vital to involve students in SFD research and field work, not only to train and encourage young potential scholars and practitioners in SFD theory and practice, but to also gain credibility for SFD within academic circles as student interest grows. For example, Hums iterated that “I hope we can get the SFD message into our classrooms so that the people who are future sport managers and scholars get SFD on their plate in an understandable way.” Burnett also thought that “we really need to engage students and get

them out there into rural areas. Get them into compromising contexts so that they can learn, but under guidance.” In addition, Levermore advocated for involving international students in SFD research to better position the relevance of SFD within curricula and academic disciplines:

Involve students from Indonesia or the Phillipines, or Malaysia, or from South America . . . because we are focusing on very few geographic areas at the moment. We have to explore what's really going on elsewhere to give viability to SFD in academia and practice.

In terms of research funding, Darnell urged scholars to consider third party funding for their projects, instead of relying on SFD organisations:

The structure I was imagining is that we would be bringing our own kind of third party funding. You find an organisation that is willing to partner with you, but then you have to go and get the money from somewhere else.

Burnett also raised an interesting criticism of SFD scholars about not getting into the field and being on the ground with the research, and challenged researchers to do this when engaging in SFD research and working within the higher education system:

The most irritating is you have entitled people who have fantastic theoretical perspectives, but they just want to push the context to fit the theory. I think that's total ignorance. I think people are not making their hands dirty, not being in the field, not understanding what they are writing about.

Finally, given Burnett's challenge above to scholars to get out into the field more, Sherry provided a cautionary note about becoming too imbedded when conducting SFD research:

I became particularly embedded. I would have participants ringing me up because they were about to commit suicide. . . Things happened in my life that made me less involved. I have a better understanding of the role I can have to help and sometimes that's just listening. I can't fix it. I'm not trained to fix it.

All of these strategies helped the scholars in this study navigate the challenges of the higher education system, or point towards new ways to do so.

Discussion

Noted scholars have discussed challenges of SFD, primarily

from a programme design, implementation and impacts assessment perspective.^{1-6, 23, 36} Work outside of the SFD context has also examined challenges posed by the higher education system for scholars in carrying out research agendas primarily due to the academic reward system.^{8, 11} What has not been undertaken before, however, is a first-hand account of the initial barriers and challenges encountered by scholars when considering engaging in SFD research and a synthesis of the associated strategies for addressing them. As the current study elucidates, many of these initial barriers and challenges to engaging in SFD research emanate from the higher education system itself. We believe it is critical to obtain a lay of the land in SFD research and to identify barriers and challenges currently encountered by active scholars in the field, and the strategies they are employing to effectively engage in SFD research, in order to advance SFD research, knowledge, and academic engagement.^{6, 19}

Our first research question was concerned with identifying the perceived barriers and challenges experienced by scholars that may discourage them from initially engaging in SFD research. It was intriguing that all scholars in this study perceived that SFD organisations across a variety of contexts have had challenging experiences working with academics, which may cloud the ability and effectiveness of researchers to engage with organisations in research. This is a disconcerting finding and it is likely related to the pressures and time demands placed upon researchers by their institutions to publish or perish and to be prolific in publishing efforts while balancing many other demands of teaching and service inherent in the faculty role.³⁷ Unfortunately, these actions may undermine the credibility of the higher education system in the eyes of practitioners and inhibit the ability to advance knowledge and theory building in SFD if practitioners are disinclined to engage with academics for long-term research efforts. However, it must be noted that when asked specifically about examples of negative experiences practitioners have had when working with academics, the scholars in this study were reluctant to cite specific examples of organisations or academics, preferring to speak more broadly about their perceptions. It could be that SFD organisations have not had positive experiences working with all of the scholars in this study as well or even with the authors of the current study. Even these well-established scholars, as well as the authors, may not be beyond succumbing to the pressures of the academic reward system, which could perpetuate practitioner suspicion of academics engaging in research with SFD organisations in order to further their own interests.

Furthermore, while scholars in this study were specifically asked to reflect upon challenges and strategies for conducting *research* in SFD, it is apparent through some of the quotes that even these well-established scholars could equate research with programme evaluation. As noted earlier, research and evaluation are not one and the same. This could be problematic for the SFD field if scholars assume that monitoring and evaluation is the most significant form of SFD research and neglect engaging in basic research and critical reflections for the sole purpose of advancing knowledge and building theory.

In addition, scholars perceived that a key challenge and barrier to engaging in SFD research originated from within the higher education system. The institutional pressures discussed above may discourage scholars from pursuing innovative or novel SFD research agendas in lieu of easier or cleaner studies. As noted, the threat of competition or fear of rejection can often alter a scholar's research.⁸ Whilst a principal barrier was posed by the higher education system, as perceived by these scholars, there are systemic issues here within higher education systems not necessarily unique to discouraging SFD scholars, but which may discourage scholars in other fields as well from taking on long-term, meaningful projects requiring immense time and energy due to the pressures and demands of the higher education environment. However, it is important for SFD scholars to advocate for their research agenda and its value with department chairs and deans. Perhaps as individuals in key decision-making roles come to understand the nature and demands of SFD research and evaluation, there will be adjustments and considerations incorporated into the promotion and tenure guidelines to account for the long-term nature of the projects and the limited funding available. When this occurs, more scholars could feel free to move into the SFD field earlier in their careers. Greater consideration could also be given to service and public engagement initiatives when weighting promotion and tenure requirements, which could promote stronger engagement with practitioners.

Our second research question delved into the strategies employed by these scholars to address and overcome the perceived barriers and challenges to initially engaging in SFD research. A few scholars have previously identified challenges with conducting SFD research and evaluation,^{1-4, 9} but we believe this is the first effort to identify initial barriers and challenges and then to synthesise strategies for addressing these challenges drawn from scholars who have been working in SFD for a considerable time. A key strategy emerged to address the negative perception

practitioners may have of academics due to previous unhelpful experiences working with them, which is for scholars to take time to build relationships and trust with practitioners. This relationship focus of taking time to develop trust and understanding could be critical to effective SFD research when working with organizations centred upon marginalised populations who may have been abused by society in the past.^{13, 15, 38}

The scholars identified a number of key strategies for working with and within the higher education system and several in particular warrant further elucidation. First, Levermore and others encouraged SFD scholars to collaborate together to enhance the credibility of the field and to link their work to mainstream development efforts in order to gain credibility and acceptance. We might suggest that SFD scholars also consider linking to other fields as well, such as sociology, business, psychology, health care, social work, and others to further gain traction within academic circles for SFD. There is much merit in broadening the scope of publication outlets for SFD research, as well as collaborative partners, as doing so can only help provide further legitimacy to this emerging field. Further, there is opportunity to utilise theory and research from these other fields within SFD to advance both scholarship and practice. Additionally, the scholars encouraged SFD researchers to get into the field and to connect with practitioners, participants, and organisations outside of their typical confines of higher education. We concur, as this strategy can assist with translating theory into practice, which is the age old dilemma within many academic circles. In particular, SFD is at a point where further theory building and development must be undertaken^{6, 19} and this can only be done effectively if scholars situate themselves in and among those programmes they are attempting to theorise about.

Implications and Recommendations

There are a number of key implications and recommendations for scholars engaging in SFD research that can be drawn from this study. It will be imperative for researchers to develop the human side of research, taking time to build trust and sustainable relationships with organisations, practitioners and programme participants. In turn, building and sustaining these relationships will help establish viable forms of academic engagement, which can move the SFD field forward, practically as well as theoretically. It must be noted, however, that developing the human side of research could be seen as counterintuitive to advocating for the objectivity of research. For SFD scholars,

this could prove difficult terrain to negotiate because science and academia call for objectivity and dispassionate engagement, while effective research in SFD seems to warrant building strong relationships and engagement with practitioners and likely research subjects. Maintaining objectivity is perhaps even more challenging when one considers that many SFD scholars are calling for more immersive and action forms of qualitative research. SFD scholars should also think in terms of long-term engagement and involvement, not necessarily performing speedy research with quick data collection and academic publications, which provide limited use for practitioners. By so doing, scholars can give attention to their target populations and organisations (interests, needs, skills, resources) and consider their research as a service to advance the SFD field and not just their own interests. For SFD practitioners, it is important to understand that scholars may have, in some instances, ulterior motives for engaging in research mainly to further their own interests related to the pressures and rewards of the academic system. Practitioners should do due diligence before engaging with scholars and recognise that in most cases, scholars will also need to derive benefits from the engagement.

Scholars must provide the deliverables that have been promised to practitioners in a timely fashion, and also be sure the deliverables are in the proper format for the organisation. Simply regurgitating scholarly manuscripts published in academic journals for impact reports when doing evaluations will do little by way of providing helpful and usable feedback for organisations or overcoming the negative perceptions practitioners may hold of academics. It will also be beneficial for SFD scholars to form collaborations with other academics from a variety of disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology, anthropology, business management) to enhance their engagement and effectiveness in SFD research through employing multidisciplinary lenses, epistemologies and perspectives. Similarly, scholars in the Global North can collaborate with scholars in the Global South and other areas to gain a better understanding of socio-cultural contexts and nuances. In addition, an important implication from this study is that SFD scholars should involve their students in research efforts and bring the SFD agenda into the classroom. These efforts will help inspire new practitioners and scholars in the field, and assist in enhancing the relevance and credibility of SFD within academic circles. Finally, as discussed earlier, it will be important for SFD scholars to constructively challenge the academic reward system, helping administrators understand the complexities in the field and the lengthy gestation period that SFD research often entails.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study does have its limitations, which can be addressed with future research. Admittedly, only a small sample of SFD scholars participated in this study and shared their views about initial barriers, challenges and strategies. We cannot suggest the challenges and strategies identified here are the only ones encountered and recommended by SFD scholars, and we welcome future commentary expanding on our findings. We recognise the scholars in this study mostly represent perspectives of the Global North. As initial barriers and challenges could be linked to socio-cultural contexts, future research should endeavour to gain perspectives from additional scholars representing even more diverse SFD content areas and geographic locations (i.e., the Global South) to help further our understanding of the field. Additionally, research can focus specifically on the differences in academic constraints to engaging in SFD research, since the academic reward and tenure systems can vary across contexts. There is also the possibility that social desirability bias could have occurred.²⁸ In addition, researcher bias may have transpired, as our own personal experience was the genesis for this research. As this is an exploratory and interpretive study, and as is commonly done in qualitative research, it is recognised that the authors may have their own biases and interpretations that influenced the findings.²⁸

Stemming from this research, future investigations could gather perspectives from SFD practitioners as to their barriers, challenges, and strategies for working with academics, because their perspectives may counter those presented by the scholars in the current study. It would also be interesting to ascertain the motivations for engaging in SFD research among scholars working in the field, and importantly, the reasons why they remain involved in SFD in spite of the challenges and barriers illuminated in this study and other works. There is much work yet to be done in SFD and many scholars are needed to join in these efforts.

References

1. Coalter F. Sports clubs, social capital and social regeneration: 'ill-defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes'? *Sport in Society*. 2007;10:537-59.
2. Coalter F. The politics of sport-for-development: limited focus programmes and broad gauge problems? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 2010;45:295-314.

3. Darnell S. Power, politics and “sport for development and peace”: investigating the utility of sport for international development. *Sociology of Sport Journal*. 2010;27(1):54-75.
4. Darnell S. *Sport for development and peace: A critical sociology*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic; 2012.
5. Kay T. Developing through sport: evidencing sport impacts on young people. *Sport in Society*. 2009;12(9):1177-91.
6. Lyras A, Welty Peachey J. Integrating sport-for-development theory and praxis. *Sport Management Review*. 2011;14:311-26.
7. Sherry E. The vulnerable researcher: facing the challenges of sensitive research. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 2013;13(3):278-88.
8. Carson L, Bartneck C, Voges K. Over-competitiveness in academia: a literature review. *Disruptive Science and Technology*. 2013;1(4):183-90.
9. Levermore R. Evaluating sport-for-development approaches and critical issues. *Progress in Development Studies*. 2011;11(4):339-53.
10. Hayhurst L. The power to shape policy: charting sport for development and peace policy discourses. *International Journal of Sport Policy*. 2009;1(2):203-27.
11. Miller AN, Taylor SG, Bedeian, AG. Publish or perish: academic life as management faculty live it. *Career Development International*. 2011;16(5):422-45.
12. Bedeian AG, Van Fleet DD, Hyman HH. Scientific achievement and editorial board membership. *Organizational Research Methods*. 2009;12(2):211-38.
13. Sherry E. (Re)engaging marginalised groups through sport: The Homeless World Cup. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 2010;45:59-71.
14. Sherry E, Stryboch, V. A kick in the right direction: longitudinal outcomes of the Australian Street Soccer Program. *Soccer & Society*. 2012;13(4):495-509.
15. Welty Peachey J, Lyras A, Borland J, Cohen A. Sport for social change: investigating the impact of the Street Soccer USA Cup. *ICHPER-SD Journal of Research*. 2013;8(1):3-11.
16. Schulenkorf N, Thomson A, Schlenker K. Intercommunity sport events: vehicles and catalysts for social capital in divided societies. *Event Management*. 2011;15(2):105-19.
17. Sugden J. Anyone for Football for Peace? The challenges of using sport in the service of co-existence in Israel. *Soccer & Society*. 2008;9(3):405-15.
18. Welty Peachey J, Cunningham G, Lyras A, Cohen A, & Bruening J. The influence of a sport-for-development event on prejudice and change agent self-efficacy. *Journal of Sport Management*. 2014;29(3):229-44.
19. Coalter F. ‘There is loads of relationships here’: developing a program theory for sport-for-change programmes. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 2013;48:594-612.
20. Cornelissen S. More than a sporting chance? appraising the sport for development legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. *Third World Quarterly*. 2011;32(3):503-29.
21. Chalip L. Towards social leverage of sport events. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*. 2006;11: 109-27.
22. Kidd B. A new social movement: sport for development and peace. *Sport in Society*. 2008; 11(4):370-80.
23. Schulenkorf N, Sugden J. Sport for development and peace in divided societies: cooperating for inter-community empowerment in Israel. *European Journal for Sport and Society*. 2011;8(4):235-56.
24. Black DR. The ambiguities of development: implications for ‘development through sport’. *Sport in Society*. 2010;13(1):121-29.
25. Hartmann D, Kwauk C. Sport and development: an overview, critique and reconstruction. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*. 2011;35(3):284-305.
26. Hartmann D. Theorising sport as social intervention: A view from the grassroots. *Quest*. 2003;55(2):118-40.
27. Levermore R. Sport a new engine of development? *Progress in Development Studies*. 2008;8(2):183-90.
28. Creswell JW. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among 5 traditions*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2012.
29. Darnell S. Global citizenship and the ethical challenges of ‘sport for development and peace’. *Journal of Global Citizenship and Equity Education*. 2012;2(1):1-17.
30. Frisby W, Millar S. The actualities of doing community development to promote the inclusion of low income populations in local sport and recreation. *European Sport Management Quarterly*. 2002;2:209-33.
31. Kidd B. Cautions, questions, and opportunities in sport for development and peace. *Third World Quarterly*. 2011;32:603-9.

32. Thomas DR. A general inductive approach for analysing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*. 2006;27:237-46.
33. Strauss A, Corbin J. Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory. 2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage; 1990.
34. Bowen GA. Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: a research note. *Qualitative Research*. 2008;8(1):137-52.
35. Miles MB, Huberman AM. Qualitative data analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 1994.
36. Schulenkorf N, Edwards D. Maximising positive social impacts: strategies for sustaining and leveraging the benefits of inter-community sport events in divided societies. *Journal of Sport Management*. 2012;26(5):379-90.
37. Smith P. Killing the spirit: Higher education in America. New York, NY: Viking Penguin Publishing; 1990.
38. Cohen A, Welty Peachey J. The making of a social entrepreneur: from participant to cause champion within a sport-for-development context. *Sport Management Review*. 2013;18:111-125.

Original Research

Girls just wanna have fun: Understanding perceptions of effective strategies and outcomes in a female youth-driven physical activity-based life skills programme

Corliss Bean¹, Tanya Forneris¹, Michelle Fortier¹

¹ University of Ottawa, Department of Human Kinetics, Canada

Corresponding author email: cbean@uottawa.ca

Abstract

The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) programme was designed to help female youth increase their physical activity and develop life skills. Although in recent years there has been a rise in community-based physical activity programmes for youth, there remains a dearth of evaluation and research to understand the impact of such programmes. The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore the contextual factors viewed by participants as important in the delivery of GJWHF and the perceived developmental outcomes resulting from participation in the programme. The study specifically sought to examine whether the programme was perceived as embodying Petitpas et al's framework for positive youth development. Results indicate that the programme supported the framework. It was found that the GJWHF programme provided a trusting and caring environment, afforded positive and supportive leaders, and helped foster positive developmental outcomes in youth participants (i.e. a positive future orientation, a sense of identity, and life skills including teamwork and leadership). Overall, the results provide initial evidence that the programme may be having a positive effect on the development of female youth participants.

Background

Research has shown that participation in community-based sport and physical activity programmes can lead to enhanced psychosocial development and health outcomes for the participants.^{1,2} However, recent data reveal that only seven percent of Canadian youth are meeting the Canadian

Physical Activity Guidelines, which recommend 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day.² Therefore, the data suggest that youth should be provided with more community-based programmes that offer organized physical activity and sport.² Based on the current statistics, Active Healthy Kids Canada recommends that policymakers, funders and programmers target adolescent females, particularly those from low-income families, because this group has the lowest rates of physical activity.² In addition to physical activity levels, female youth also score consistently lower on indicators of psychosocial development compared to their male counterparts.³ For example, beginning in grade six, levels of self-confidence markedly decline so that by grade 10 only approximately 14% of females report that they believe in themselves.³ Furthermore, although it can be argued that all female youth need opportunities to enhance their development, female youth from low income families are particularly vulnerable. These youth have greater risks of dropping out of school, experiencing mental health problems, having difficulties with the law, and engaging in risk-taking behaviour.³⁻⁵

As a result, there has been a call for increased community physical activity and sport programming for female youth.⁶ It appears, however, that simply providing opportunities may not be sufficient. Sport and physical activity programmes must be deliberately structured to encourage youth to develop positive outcomes.^{7,8} Incorporating a positive youth development (PYD) approach into youth programmes can enhance developmental outcomes.^{9,10} PYD is a strength-based approach with the perspective that all youth have the potential for positive and healthy

Keywords: programme evaluation; positive youth development; physical activity; community programming; female youth

development.^{11, 12} As such, PYD programmes focus on promoting positive behaviours in youth while also working to decrease problem behaviours.¹³ Providing youth with opportunities to facilitate these behaviours may allow them to acquire positive life skills (i.e. goal setting, time-management, self-regulation, communication, and problem-solving) that enable them to lead meaningful lives and positively contribute in society.^{11, 12, 14}

An argument for integrating a PYD approach specifically into physical activity and sport programmes is based on research, which has found that PYD programmes emphasize mediating variables such as social support and enjoyment for physical activity and sport.^{15, 16} Furthermore, reviews have shown that these psychosocial determinants of youth physical activity such as social support and enjoyment are the same psychological and social variables significantly associated with later adult participation in physical activity.^{16, 17} Thus, youth physical activity interventions that focus on integrating a PYD framework may be effective in enhancing both the physical and psychosocial development of youth.

The PYD framework for sport programmes designed to enhance psychosocial development by Petitpas et al¹⁸ was used to guide the development of *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun* (GJWHF), the programme on which this research is based. This framework outlines three specific components that should be incorporated into PYD programmes in order to enhance development: (a) context, (b) external assets, and (c) internal assets. First, Petitpas and colleagues assert that youth need to be engaged in a challenging and motivating activity within a physically and psychologically safe environment (context). Second, these youth also need to be surrounded by responsible and caring adult mentors and a positive peer group (external assets). Finally, the teaching of life skills (internal assets) is critical in helping youth develop the capacity to successfully cope with various life situations. In addition, Petitpas et al¹⁸ stress the importance of evaluation to ensure that a programme produces the desired outcomes (research and evaluation).

The GJWHF programme is a community-based youth-driven programme designed to help female youth increase their physical activity and develop life skills; Bean, Forneris, and Halsall¹⁹ provides a complete program description. This programme was developed in collaboration with the local Boys and Girls Club (BGC). The BGC is a non-profit community-based organization that focuses on providing opportunities for youth (ages 5-18) from low-income families. Similar to the data reported above, a 2008-2009 annual report produced by the local

BGC identified a gap within physical activity programmes indicating that approximately three times more male members participated in physical activity programming compared to female members.

Along with a call for increased programming, there is also a need for evaluation of physical activity and sport programmes that integrate a PYD approach.²⁰ The purpose of this study was to explore the contextual factors identified by participants as important in the delivery of GJWHF as well as the perceived developmental outcomes resulting from participation in the programme. More specifically, this study sought to examine whether the programme was perceived as embodying Petitpas et al's¹⁸ framework.

Methods

This research used a mixed-methods approach. An embedded design was employed, such that quantitative data played a supportive role into a larger qualitative study.²¹ The qualitative data was intended to provide depth of understanding of the participants' perceptions of processes and/or components that may help explain perceived psychosocial outcomes. The quantitative data was intended to gain an understanding of whether the youth perceived the programme as helping them develop specific life skills that were intentionally incorporated into the programme (e.g., goal setting, emotional regulation, relationship skills, future orientation and identity).

Context

The GJWHF programme targeted female youth ages 11 to 14 years from a local BGC located in a city in Eastern Ontario, Canada. The programme was implemented from September 2011 to May 2012 and involved one 75-minute session per week. A total of 31 sessions were planned and 30 of these sessions were carried out. One session was cancelled due to bad weather during the winter months. Within each programme session the youth participated in one life skills activity and one sport or physical activity that was designed to reinforce the life skill of the session. For example, the life skills relaxation and managing emotions session was reinforced by a yoga session: throughout the yoga activity discussions of how yoga can facilitate relaxation and managing emotions were integrated, such as breathing exercises. The GJWHF programme was developed using a youth-driven approach in which the youth were provided a voice in decision-making. Specifically, each week the youth selected the sport and/or physical activity that they wished to engage in and program

staff would select the life skill that was best associated with that sport or physical activity.

Participants and Procedures

Two categories of participants were recruited for this study: female participants of the GJWHF programme and programme leaders. While attendance rates fluctuated from five (during March break) to 14 youth, there was an average rate of 10.4 participants over the course of the programme. All youth were invited to participate in the study and parental consent forms were distributed by the BGC staff and completed by participants' parents before the programme's launch. Participating youth completed assent forms at the beginning of the first programme session. The programme leaders completed assent forms prior to their participation in the interview.

Twelve youth agreed to participate in the research and obtained parental consent (mean age = 11.75, SD = 1.19). The girls were from low-income families in a major city in Eastern Ontario. As this was the first year the programme was run, all of the participants were new yet their length of participation in the BGC ranged from two months to nine years. All five female leaders implementing the GJWHF programme were recruited and agreed to participate in the study. The leaders ranged in age from 21 to 46 years old (individual leaders' ages: 21, 21, 25, 29, 46). Three of the leaders were students from a local university (two senior undergraduate students and one graduate student) and two were regular staff at the BGC. The leaders outside of the BGC who had less experience working within the BGC environment completed a standardized volunteer training with the BGC. All five leaders were required to attend three training sessions that focused on the planning and implementation of the GJWHF prior to the commencement of the programme.

Youth (n=10) participated in a qualitative semi-structured interview at the end of the programme. To avoid interrupting participation in GJWHF, the youth were interviewed at their home clubhouse on a night in which the programme did not occur. All five leaders participated in a semi-structured interview that took place outside of programming hours at a place and time convenient for them. The youth interviews lasted between 25 and 45 minutes, while the leader interviews lasted from 35 to 90 minutes. All of the interviews were recorded using a digital audio-recorder. On the last day of the program, all youth (n=12) completed an additional two-page paper-based questionnaire, administered by the lead researcher.

Ethical Approval

The University of Ottawa's Office of Research Ethics and Integrity approved all study procedures in this research.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews. Separate interview guides were developed for the youth and programme leaders. The youth participants' interview guide focused on exploring their programme experience and their perceptions of how participation in GJWHF impacted their development. The interview guide included questions such as: 'What did you learn in the programme?'; 'What did you like/not like about the programme?'; 'Do you feel any differently from participating in the programme? Has the programme helped you develop different skills? How?'; 'What was your experience like working with the programme leaders?'; 'What do you believe has impacted you the most during this programme?'; 'Do you plan to use the skills you've learned in the programme in any areas of your life? In what ways?'; 'What do you think would make the programme better?'

The interview guide for the programme leaders focused on their experiences implementing the programme and their perceptions of the impact GJWHF had on the youth. The interview guide included questions such as: 'In your opinion, what successes did you experience related to implementing the GJWHF programme?'; 'In your opinion, what difficulties did you experience related to implementing the GJWHF programme?' 'Do you believe the GJWHF programme had an effect on the youth? In what ways?'; 'What strategies did you use to keep the youth engaged in GJWHF? Which strategies were the most effective?'; 'What suggestions do you have for improving the GJWHF programme?'. The interviewers also used probes to further explore areas of the participants' experiences further. For example, probes such as 'Can you tell me more about that?', and 'Can you give me an example of what you mean?' were often used to facilitate further discussion.

Youth Experiences Survey (YES) 2.0. Questionnaire items were derived from the YES 2.0 scale. The YES 2.0 was originally designed to assess the experiences of youth participating in different extracurricular activities and youth programmes focusing on examining various domains of socio-emotional development.²² It should be noted that the YES 2.0 does not test whether learning actually occurs, only whether participants report experiences that are related to its occurrence,²² which is why it is used as strictly a post-measure.

Psychometric testing from a previous study with 1822 grade 11 students across 19 high schools within the United States with diverse demographics has indicated that the YES 2.0 is a valid and reliable instrument.²³ Although the YES 2.0 has 17 subscales and a total of 70 items, only the subscales relevant to the objectives of GJWHF were used in this study. Specifically, participants responded to 31 items from 11 subscales: ‘identity exploration’, ‘identity reflection’, ‘goal setting’, ‘effort’, ‘problem-solving’, ‘time management’, ‘emotional regulation’, ‘physical skills’, ‘diverse peer relationships’, ‘prosocial norms’, and ‘linkages to community’. The youth responded to the items on a 4-point Likert scale (1: Not at all; 4: Yes, definitely; see Appendix for full questionnaire).

Data Analysis

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and then subjected to an inductive-deductive content analysis.²⁴ Content analysis allows researchers to identify themes that have been shown to be important in the existing literature while also allowing themes to emerge inductively that could provide new insight. For this paper, Petitpas and colleagues’¹⁸ framework for planning youth sport programmes that promote psychosocial development was used to guide the deductive analysis. As stated earlier, this framework outlines three specific components that should be incorporated into PYD programmes in order to enhance development – (a) context, (b) external assets, and (c) internal assets.

An iterative process was used for the content analysis. First, the researcher read the transcripts to become familiar with the data. Second, the researcher read the transcripts again and made notes in the right hand column of responses related to the purpose of the study. Next, the researcher read the transcripts for a third time and began to group responses into broader themes. Finally, these broad themes were organized and pertinent quotations were identified that supported the emerging themes. Trustworthiness of the data was assured through a collaborative approach to analysis.²⁵ Two independent coders who were familiar with qualitative content analysis, but not involved in the programme reviewed the transcripts and identified themes after the first author did the original analysis. The three coders met to discuss the analyzed data and to resolve any coding discrepancies. Minor changes to the initial analyses resulted in moving a few quotations from one theme to another as it was deemed that the quotations provided stronger support for an alternative theme. For each quotation, identification codes were created to identify the participants’ roles (P =

youth participant; L = leader) and the order in which they were interviewed. For example, the identification code P-3 would indicate that the individual was a youth participant and was interviewed third.

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated for each of the subscales on the YES 2.0. The data was examined to reinforce the qualitative data.

Results

Given that this research used an embedded mixed-methods approach where the qualitative data took on a primary role, the results section will first present the qualitative results followed by the quantitative results.

Qualitative Results

From the inductive-deductive content analysis, seven critical factors emerged as themes. Three of the themes related to contextual factors perceived as being effective: (1) Importance of a Girls’ Only Environment; (2) Establishment of a Trusting and Caring Environment; and (3) Positive Leader Support. The remaining four themes that emerged were related to perceived outcomes of the programme and included: (4) Emergence and Strengthening of Friendships; (5) Positive Future Orientation; (6) Identity; and (7) Development of Leadership and Teamwork.

Importance of a Girls’ Only Environment. The notion of a safe and trusted environment was reinforced by the programme’s inclusion of only female youth. The all-girls’ environment seemed to be a strong reason why the youth attended as they shared that this environment was more comfortable. When asked what she liked best about the programme, one youth stated it was “just us girls...so we don’t have to be around boys because boys can be annoying...this one [programme] is only girls so you can say whatever you like and do whatever you want” (P-7). Another youth shared a similar experience: “it was a programme for girls and it was pretty much for the girls to be comfortable about themselves...and you can share things and it’s a way to have fun” (P-5). One of the GJWHF programme leaders, who was also a staff member at the BGC, stated:

The girls just needed to feel comfortable, just be all girls...There are no boys so they can just be themselves...There is less female participation in other programmes at BGC that are co-ed and sometimes they (the girls) think ‘the

...guys aren't going to pass to me'. I think they're just more comfortable. (L-2)

Establishment of a Trusting and Caring Environment. The development of a trusting and caring environment also appeared to be influenced by having a programme that was only for female youth, which emerged as a second theme related to programme assets. The youth in the GJWHF perceived an element of trust from the group and the programme in general. Two youth shared: "if there was an activity I didn't feel comfortable with, I would have still done it 'cause I felt a trust and everything" (P-6), while another youth stated:

It was really relaxed...we can tell you guys stuff and we know you won't go and gossip about it after we tell you, or like if we want it to be confidential, then it is—not another soul but you—and we trust that about the youth leaders. (P-3)

In addition to trust, the youth discussed how the programme environment was also caring. This was particularly evident during the relational activity that took place at the beginning of each session. Two youth discussed how they could share their feelings during this activity: "I really liked the Rose and Thorn thing and I liked how my friends were there too. I liked that I could say what was really bothering me out loud" (P-1) and "I liked doing the Rose and Thorn activity because we got to say whatever was on our mind and everybody was listening" (P-7).

Overall the youth felt that the leaders were individuals whom they could trust, since they created an environment that helped the youth share their experiences in a safe way and incorporated activities like Rose and Thorn that allowed the youth to listen and support one another.

Positive Leader Support. A predominant theme that emerged from both the participant and leader interviews was positive leader support. The youth discussed the experience of having supportive leaders whereas the leaders discussed the support they felt from their co-leaders. With regard to the youth experiencing support from the leaders, two subthemes emerged: leaders who were supportive and leaders who challenged appropriately. First, the youth highlighted: "the leaders were very supportive. They (the leaders) were listening to what we were saying and asking questions about what we were saying" (P-7). Two youth also expressed that they felt comfortable and encouraged by the leaders: "what I really liked about the programme is that when you come in they make you feel welcome" (P-5) and:

It was good to get to know [the leaders]...helped us all learn our life skills and helped us be active, taught us what girls are meant to do, meant to be here, and girls can have fun too and it helped me figure out who I am. (P-4)

Finally, one youth talked about her experience with the programme leaders:

It was like you've known them (the leaders) for a long time because they were so comfortable with you and you'd feel comfortable with them...I felt very supported by the leaders because when (name of leader), I was kinda not doing it (an activity), they'd help you to do it properly and they'd support you through it. (P-5)

Second, the youth appreciated that the leaders challenged them appropriately. While being pushed out of their comfort zone, they still felt supported by the leaders who did not push the youth too much, which is evident by this quote:

They (the leaders) didn't tell you to stop, but if you wanted to stop, they didn't make you feel bad about it. They wanted to push you to your limit, and if you could go over the limit, they'd congratulate you for it, but if we couldn't go over the limit, the leaders would be fine and they'd be like 'well you tried your best'. (P-6)

Another youth underlined this similar notion: "even though you may not want to try something, they still ask you to or try and convince you to do it, unless you actually really, really don't want to" (P-5). Third, the youth felt encouraged to try new activities, as explained by one youth:

There were times when I didn't want to do stuff, and people would just be like 'come on you gotta do it—you can try new things'. And I'd be like 'well you can't learn if you don't try new things' so I'd just be like 'alright'. (P-3)

Additionally, the youth felt they were treated age-appropriately by the leaders. It was discussed how in past programmes the youth had been treated as children instead of the maturing adolescents that they are growing into. As one youth stated:

Having youth leaders who don't act like way too mature. They don't act like we're a bunch of five year olds and they're instructing us to do something...Whenever we participate in basketball or something, we have the choice of whether we can participate or not, 'cause other groups they'd be like 'oh you have to do it and that's final' and it's sort of sets us back because we're like 'hold up, why are

...you treating me like this—I'm thirteen calm down, I'm not five'. But not in this group. (P-3)

Therefore, in addition to creating a trusting environment for the programme, an important asset based on the perceptions of the youth was to have supportive leaders that challenged them appropriately to try new activities in a psychologically safe environment.

Moreover, both the leaders and youth felt supported within the programme. The leaders expressed how working as a team and supporting one another made leading the programme more enjoyable. One leader shared: "there were a lot of really positive things; I definitely enjoyed working with all of the other leaders. I thought the other women were really committed to the girls and to the programme and that's always really good" (L-4).

Furthermore, one of the leaders expressed the benefit of having a strong staff network over the course of the programme:

We had great support within our group...The two staff that work at the BGC were great in chatting with the girls beforehand, reminding them, making sure they're prepared, trying to recruit people. It's been great in terms of the support from the other leaders; you know you're not going in there blindly or on your own. The support staff, the programme coordinators that work at the clubhouses, have complimented us on this...there have been really open lines of communication which has been helpful. (L-5)

Emergence and Strengthening of Friendships. From participation in the programme, many friendships emerged between the youth from both clubhouses. Two youth indicated: "it was a positive experience because you got to know people that you never knew or would probably never meet in your entire life" (P-3) and "I liked how none of the girls fought together; we all became friends when we got there even if we didn't know the other girls" (P-4). A leader observed, "what was really important is that the girls enjoy coming here and interacting with each other and having a really good time" (L-4). Furthermore, two leaders supported this statement by indicating: "we didn't expect the friendships that have emerged coming out of that. The social aspect has been really great" (L-5) and "Meeting other girls from the other clubhouse was neat...Even (name of a participant) and a couple of the girls, they are buddies already, you know, which I think is good. They weren't

friends before the programme and now they are" (L-3).

In addition, the youth also discussed how the programme strengthened some of the friendships they had already established. Two youth shared: "one thing is that you get closer to your friends when you're doing activities" (P-2) and "being with my friends, as my friends are always there for me and I just wanted to have fun with my friends" (P-7).

Positive Future Orientation. Another theme that emerged from the interviews was that the programme helped the youth think more positively about their own future. Many youth outlined how the support from the leaders and participation in the programme helped facilitate this change. One youth stated: "in a positive way, like I know my future is important, but you guys kinda enforced that it was really important and that you can't wait and you only have one life. You only live once" (P-6). Another youth reinforced this notion by saying: "Before this programme, I didn't—I knew what my future was going to be, but I didn't believe it. And then after this programme, like I believe my future is going to be what I want it to be" (P-2). Moreover, the youth continued to emphasize how beneficial this programme was for its participants by saying:

I would [recommend this programme] because—I think it would be great because it would give you a chance to learn something in life that you wouldn't actually learn in school so it can change you and give you a reason to do something. (P-5)

Finally, a leader explained that the youth:

Got to know and test themselves...when we did goal setting – about goals they have for themselves in the future and so they know it's something they can accomplish for school or for sports or anything; that gives them an objective, something to look forward to. They were mostly long-term goals, but I think just seeing the girls want to have a goal was good. (L-2)

Identity. The youth and leaders perceived the programme as helping the youth to develop a sense of identity. Two youth highlighted that GJWHF "helped [me to] express myself so I can be me" (P-7) and "the programme is [a positive thing for girls] because they get to learn who they are and that they have a spot on this earth" (P-4). Another youth indicated that the life skills activities often helped her to shape who she was:

I liked how we had our books and we worked in them...ever since I've written those things, I'm like that. So if I wrote 'nice', I'm nice. And say I wrote 'sporty', now I'm more

...sporty...taking time in the programme to reflect on different characteristics about me has made me think about them a little bit more. (P-4)

Finally, a leader indicated that the life skill activities helped to facilitate the process of understanding themselves: “it would get a few of them to reflect more on their thinking, their behaviour, and who they are. And I think that’s a big part of it” (L-3).

Development of Leadership and Teamwork. The youth and leaders also discussed individual life skills they believed developed as a result of participation in GJWHF. The life skills of leadership and teamwork seemed to be the predominant skills. One youth explained: “It helped me be a leader...and it helped me to accomplish things, like my goals and that you can be confident no matter what” (P-10).

Additionally, one leader explained that the youth who had more experience acted as leaders and helped those with less experience:

It was always nice to see when the girls would help each other out. We went skating and I think that was the time when they showed the most help towards each other because there was a lot of different levels of ability and some of them had never skated before, but the other girls who were better would always wait for them and try and teach them. (L-2)

Teamwork was identified as a skill that was developed. One youth stated she “learned how to be better teammates and work as a team in sports” (P-2), while another youth said she learned “teamwork, we used teamwork when we played the games that the girls made up in our groups” (P-7). Furthermore, one youth talked about a specific activity in which she recalled working together as a team with the other GJWHF participants:

When we did the game where you hold people’s hands and the doctor has to untangle you...I liked that game ‘cause it was kinda like a challenge because there’s times where the people who are tangled are trying to get untangled and when the doctor has to get you untangled. I liked it because it was a challenge for the group. (P-5)

Quantitative Results

The descriptive statistics (M, SD) of the modified YES 2.0 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for the YES modified 2.0 (n=12)

Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation
YES 2.0		
Identity Exploration	3.33	0.47
Identity Reflection	3.06	0.79
Goal Setting	3.15	0.69
Effort	3.14	0.62
Problem Solving	2.76	0.79
Time Management	2.78	0.60
Emotional Regulation	2.93	0.68
Diverse Peer Relationships	3.00	0.70
Prosocial Norms	3.32	0.88
Linkages to Community	3.14	0.56
Physical Skills	3.60	0.95

Note: 1=Not At All, 2=A Little, 3=Quite a Bit, 4=Yes, Definitely

From the descriptive results of the YES 2.0, it appears that the youth perceived the GJWHF programme as helping them develop a number of skills: eight of the subscales had a mean score above 3.0 (labelled Quite A Bit) on a 4-point scale (labelled Yes, Definitely). The largest mean score (M=3.60; SD=0.95) was for ‘physical skills’, meaning that the youth perceived the programme as providing opportunities to be physically active. The mean score on the ‘prosocial norms’ subscale (M=3.32; SD=0.88) also indicated that the youth perceived the GJWHF programme as helping them learn about assisting others along with the development of morals and values. The mean scores further indicated that the youth perceived the GJWHF programme as helping with ‘identity exploration’ (M=3.33; SD=0.47), which measures being able to try new activities, and ‘identity reflection’ (M=3.06; SD=0.79), which relates to thinking more about the future and ways in which participation in the programme might serve as a positive development opportunity in their lives. In addition, based on the mean scores from the ‘effort’ (M=3.14; SD=0.62) and ‘goal setting’ (M=3.15; SD=0.69) subscales it appears that youth perceived that participation in the programme helped them learn about goal setting and how to challenge themselves to put forth effort. Finally, the youth perceived the GJWHF programme as helping them meet new friends from different backgrounds (‘diverse peer relationships’, M=3.00; SD=0.70) and to make connections in their community (‘linkages to the community’, M=3.14; SD=0.56). The remaining subscales in which the average scores were below a ‘3’ (scoring between the labels “A Little” and “Quite a Bit”) included ‘emotional regulation’ (M=2.93, SD=0.68), ‘time management’ (M=2.78, SD=0.60), and ‘problem solving’ (M=2.76, SD=0.79).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the contextual factors that the participants identified as important in the delivery of GJWHF as well as the perceived developmental outcomes resulting from participation in the programme. Specifically, it sought to examine whether the programme was perceived as embodying Petitpas et al's¹⁸ framework. Results from this study indicated that overall, the GJWHF programme met the guidelines set forth by Petitpas et al¹⁸. The participants perceived the programme as providing both a positive context including supportive external assets (leaders) and an opportunity to learn a number of life skills. Bean et al¹⁹ suggest that an all-female environment can facilitate a higher level of comfort than in a mixed-gender environment thereby raising confidence levels and increasing levels of physical activity participation. The results from this study are consistent with these findings. It was evident from this study that the GJWHF programme provided a psychologically safe environment based on two of the qualitative themes: the establishment of an environment that a) was comprised of only girls, and b) fostered trust and support. The youth enjoyed the all-girls aspect, which they explained helped them feel more at ease while enabling them to be themselves. They also expressed feeling comfortable when discussing the programme's environment. These results concur with previous findings that suggest a female youth's social environment can impact self-perceptions and confidence levels.^{26, 27}

Eccles and Barber²⁸ and Petitpas et al¹⁸ have asserted that an important component of creating a safe context involves ensuring that youth find a valued role within the group. This appeared to be the case in the GJWHF programme as the youth often discussed how they were able to develop new relationships and strengthen existing friendships within the programme. The leaders discussed how they observed participants helping others who were less experienced with some activities. Results from the YES 2.0 further supported the qualitative findings as the mean scores on the subscales of 'diverse peer relationships' and 'linkages to their community' were above 3.0. These results have valuable implications, given that past research has shown that peer support is an important factor with regard to participation in youth programmes and physical activity.^{26, 27, 29}

Similar to Petitpas et al¹⁸, other PYD researchers have recognized that it is the quality of relationships youth can form with caring adults that is most likely to lead to positive developmental outcomes of youth.^{8, 30} According to Petitpas and colleagues,¹⁸ strong external assets (programme leaders)

are critical in influencing the opportunities of youth to experience success and gain confidence. The results of this study indicated that the GJWHF leaders were strong external assets for the youth. The youth perceived the leaders as supportive because the leaders listened to them and challenged them appropriately. Past research has shown the involvement of positive leaders to be important for fostering PYD outcomes.^{31, 32} Therefore, based on findings from this research, we advocate for youth girls-only programmes to incorporate supportive female leaders as role models as one way to way to increase programme effectiveness for fostering PYD outcomes.

Within Petitpas et al's¹⁸ framework, the notion of external assets typically refers to relationships between youth and adults. In this study, however, it appeared that the leaders themselves also perceived their co-leaders as external assets. The leaders talked about having developed greater expertise, and gained more confidence as a programme leader through their relationships with the other leaders. Therefore, it appears that fostering a positive team environment can benefit the leaders, which ultimately and indirectly impacts the youth participating in the programme.¹⁹

Finally, according to Petitpas and colleagues,¹⁸ programmes should incorporate intentional teaching of life skills, helping youth develop a sense of identity and apply skills gained to environments outside of the programme. Both the qualitative and quantitative results illustrated that the youth perceived the programme as helping them gain a positive future orientation, a sense of identity, and life skills, pertaining to goal setting, prosocial norms, leadership, and teamwork. More specifically, in the interviews the youth discussed that they developed friendships, a positive future orientation, and a sense of identity. These themes were supported by the questionnaire results, which demonstrated mean scores of above 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on the 'diverse peer relationships', 'identity exploration', and 'identity reflection' subscales. Recent research has found that hope or a positive future orientation is a strong predictor of positive PYD trajectories³³ and that acquiring a sense of identity is a key developmental milestone for a successful transition into adulthood.³⁴ For example, Schmid et al³⁵ suggest that youth's hopeful future expectations may be an essential ingredient to thriving across adolescence and into adulthood. In addition, the youth perceived the programme as helping them be physically active, which research has identified as an important element for enhancing their overall health and well-being.³⁶⁻³⁹ Moreover, it is important to note that while mean scores for 'problem solving' and 'time management' were scored slightly below a three, any

perceived development of these skills were inherent in program participation and such skills were not intentionally taught within the program structure. In contrast, 'emotional regulation' (mean score fell just below a three) was a skill that was purposefully integrated into the GJWHF program structure. A reason for this lower mean score could be based on the age of the youth, as adolescence is a time for many youth to experience emotional challenges and dysregulations;⁴⁰ however, a qualitative study conducted with the GJWHF program that explored life skill development and transfer found that program participation helped youth learn how to manage their emotions within the program and believed they were able to transfer this to other life domains, such as school.⁴¹

In summary, findings from this study suggest that if researchers and practitioners work to implement programs that incorporate the strategies identified above, strong relationships can result particularly in programmes targeting female youth. Previous PYD literature has supported this finding, indicating the importance of positive social relationships and their influence and overall impact on development.^{11, 30, 42, 43} Building positive and supportive relationships with adults outside of one's family that foster a sense of belonging are critical aspects that impact developmental outcomes. More specifically, Ullrich-French and McDonough³⁰ assert that interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in person-context interactions and as a result these interpersonal relationships are critical to fostering developmental outcomes in youth.

Limitations

Study limitations must be recognised. First, selection bias may have resulted given that 10 of 12 participating youth were interviewed due to scheduling challenges. Although the data collected were from youth who consistently participated in the programme, the data is based on one particular programme; therefore, the generalizability of the results are limited. Second, as is often the case in programme evaluation, the data were based on self-report through interviews and questionnaires and therefore results were based on perceptions as opposed to observational data. There is always the potential of social desirability with self-report measures. However, the researchers tried to limit this potential by reminding the youth before completing the questionnaire that there were no right or wrong answers and that it was important to be honest. It was observed by the researchers that some of the youth did not enjoy completing the quantitative measure and at times these youth had difficulty staying focused, which could explain the

variability in responses. Third, limitations surround the YES 2.0 questionnaire. Given its usage as a post-only measure, the questionnaire hindered the researchers' ability to gauge changes in outcomes immediately from before to after the programme. In addition, the small sample size and lack of a control group limited the researchers' ability to isolate the effects of the programme and generalize results beyond the study population.

Conclusion

Findings from the first year evaluation of GJWHF suggest that youth participants and leaders alike perceived the programme to incorporate several effective implementation strategies and to succeed in facilitating positive outcomes for youth. The results of this study support Petitpas et al's framework¹⁸ and indicate that programme components—such as creating a positive context and ensuring the programme is led by strong external leaders who support and challenge the youth appropriately while teaching life skills—provide a foundation for achieving PYD outcomes. In future programme development and evaluation, PYD researchers and practitioners should focus on creating a safe and supportive context and training strong leaders on how to effectively teach life skills. Incorporating such factors can help to ensure that youth have access to effective programming that will enhance their development.

Acknowledgements

Financial support for this research project was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

References

1. Coalter F. A wider social role for sport: who's keeping the score?: Taylor & Francis; 2007.
2. Gray CE, Larouche R, Barnes JD, Colley RC, Bonne JC, Arthur M, et al. Are we driving our kids to unhealthy habits? Results of the active healthy kids Canada 2013 report card on physical activity for children and youth. *International journal of environmental research and public health*. 2014;11(6):6009-20.
3. Public Health Agency of Canada. Young people in Canada: Their health and well-being 2004. Available from: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/dca-dea/publications/hbhc-2004/pdf/hbhc_summary_2004_e.pdf.
4. Statistics Canada. Children and youth in Canada 2001 [2 February 2015]. Available from: <http://publications.gc.ca/Collection/Statcan/85F0033M/85F0033MIE2001005.pdf>.
5. Canadian Council of Learning. Lessons in learning—Good news: Canada's highschool dropout rates are falling 2005. Available from: <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/LessonsInLearning/Dec-16-05-Good-News.pdf>.
6. Public Health Agency of Canada. Curbing childhood obesity: A federal, provincial and territorial framework for action to promote healthy weights. Ottawa, Ontario: Government of Canada, 2010.
7. Danish SJ, Forneris T, Hodge K, Heke I. Enhancing youth development through sport. *World Leis J*. 2004;46(3):38-49.
8. Gould DR, Carson S. Life skills development through sport: Current status and future directions. *Int Rev Sport Excer Psychol*. 2008;1(1):58-78.
9. Education Alliance: Business and Community for Public Schools. Positive youth development: Policy implications and best practices. Charleston, WV: The Education Alliance; 2007.
10. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Personal and social assets that promote well-being. In: Eccles J, Gootman J, editors. *Community programs to promote youth development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 2002. p. 66-84.
11. Catalano RF, Hawkins JD, Berglund ML, Pollard JA, Arthur MW. Prevention science and positive youth development: competitive or cooperative frameworks? *J Adolesc Health*. 2002;31(6):230-9.
12. Lerner RM, Almerigi J, Theokas C, Lerner JV. Positive Youth Development A View of the Issues. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*. 2005;25(1):10-6.
13. Benson PL. All kids are our kids: What communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents. 2nd ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; 2006.
14. Lerner RM, Lerner JV, Almerigi J, Theokas C, Phelps E, Gestsdottir S, et al. Positive Youth Development, Participation in Community Youth Development Programs, and Community Contributions of Fifth-Grade Adolescents. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*. 2005;25(1):17-71.
15. Trost SG, Owen N, Bauman AE, Sallis JF, Brown W. Correlates of adults' participation in physical activity: review and update. *Med Sci Sports Exerc*. 2002;34(12):1996-2001.
16. Van der Horst K, Paw M, Twisk JW, Van Mechelen W. A brief review on correlates of physical activity and sedentariness in youth. *Med Sci Sports Exerc*. 2007;39(8):1241.
17. Sallis JF, Prochaska JJ, Taylor WC. A review of correlates of physical activity of children and adolescents. *Med Sci Sports Exerc*. 2000;32(5):963-75.
18. Petitpas AJ, Cornelius AE, Van Raalte JL, Jones T. A framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development. *The sport psychologist*. 2005.
19. Bean CN, Forneris T, Halsall T. Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: a process evaluation of a female youth-driven physical activity-based life skills program. *SpringerPlus*. 2014;3(1):1-15.
20. Kidd B. A new social movement: Sport for development and peace. *Sport in society*. 2008;11(4):370-80.
21. Creswell JW. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2013.
22. Hansen D, Larson R. *The Youth Experience Survey 2.0: Instrument Revisions and Validity Testing*. 2005.
23. Hansen DM, Larson RW, Dworkin JB. What adolescents learn in organized youth activities: a survey of self-reported developmental experiences. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. 2003;13(1):25-55.
24. Krippendorff K. *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications; 2013.
25. Creswell JW. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2012.
26. Davison KK, Jago R. Change in parent and peer support across ages 9 to 15 yr and adolescent girls' physical activity. *Med Sci Sports Exerc*. 2009;41(9):1816-25.
27. Coleman L, Cox L, Roker D. Girls and young women's participation in physical activity: psychological and social influences. *Health Educ Res*. 2008;23(4):633-47.

28. Eccles JS, Barber BL. Student Council, Volunteering, Basketball, or Marching Band What Kind of Extracurricular Involvement Matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 1999;14(1):10-43.
29. Forneris T, Bean CN, Snowden M, Fortier M. Using Youth-Driven Programs to Encourage Physical Activity in Adolescent Girls: A Preliminary Study. *Revue phénEPS/PHenex Journal*. 2013;5(1).
30. Ullrich-French S, McDonough MH. Correlates of long-term participation in a physical activity-based positive youth development program for low-income youth: Sustained involvement and psychosocial outcomes. *J Adolesc*. 2013;36(2):279-88.
31. Larson RW. Positive youth development, willful adolescents, and mentoring. *J Community Psychol*. 2006;34(6):677-89.
32. Eccles JS, Gootman JA. Community programs to promote youth development. Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 2002.
33. Schmid KL, Phelps E, Kiely MK, Napolitano CM, Boyd MJ, Lerner RM. The role of adolescents' hopeful futures in predicting positive and negative developmental trajectories: Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. *The journal of positive psychology*. 2011;6(1):45-56.
34. Erikson EH. Identity: Youth and crisis: WW Norton & Company; 1968.
35. Schmid KL, Phelps E, Lerner RM. Constructing positive futures: Modeling the relationship between adolescents' hopeful future expectations and intentional self regulation in predicting positive youth development. *J Adolesc*. 2011;34(6):1127-35.
36. Trost SG, Loprinzi PD. Exercise—Promoting healthy lifestyles in children and adolescents. *J Clin Lipidol*. 2008;2(3):162-8.
37. Etnier JL, Salazar W, Landers DM, Petruzzello SJ, Han M, Nowell P. The Influence of Physical Fitness and Exercise Upon Cognitive Functioning: A Meta-Analysis. *J Sport Exerc Psychol*. 1997;19:249-77.
38. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Physical activity and the health of young people 2006 2006. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/physicalactivity/facts.htm>.
39. MacDonald DJ. The role of enjoyment, motivational climate, and coach training in promoting the positive development of young athletes. Canada: Queen's University (Canada); 2010.
40. Zeman J, Cassano M, Perry-Parrish C, Stegall S. Emotion regulation in children and adolescents. *J Dev Behav Pediatr*. 2006;27(2):155-68.
41. Bean CN, Kendellen K, Forneris T. Moving beyond the gym: Exploring life skill transfer within a female physical activity-based life skills program. in preparation:28.
42. Gould D, Carson S. Coaching Behaviors and Developmental Benefits of High School Sports Participation. *Hellenic Journal of Psychology*. 2010;7:298-314.
43. Gould D, Flett R, Lauer L. The relationship between psychosocial developmental and the sports climate experienced by underserved youth. *Psychol Sport Exerc*. 2012;13(1):80-7.

Appendix 1. The modified Youth Experiences Survey (YES) 2.0 issued to GJWHF youth participants

Based on your recent involvement please rate whether you have had the following experiences in the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program.

Age: _____.

Gender: _____.

Race/Ethnicity (Check all that apply)

___ White/Caucasian

___ Black/African American

___ Asian

___ Aboriginal

___ Hispanic/Latino

___ Other _____.

Your Experiences In.....			
[Activity]			
Not At All	A Little	Quite a Bit	Yes, Definitely
1	2	3	4

IDENTITY EXPERIENCES**Identity Exploration**

1. Tried doing new things	1	2	3	4
2. Tried a new way of acting around people	1	2	3	4
3. I do things here I don't get to do anywhere else	1	2	3	4

Identity Reflection

4. Started thinking more about my future because of this activity	1	2	3	4
5. This activity got me thinking about who I am	1	2	3	4
6. This activity has been a positive turning point in my life	1	2	3	4

INITIATIVE EXPERIENCES**Goal Setting**

7. I set goals for myself in this activity	1	2	3	4
8. Learned to find ways to achieve my goals	1	2	3	4
9. Learned to consider possible obstacles when making plans	1	2	3	4

Effort

10. I put all my energy into this activity	1	2	3	4
11. Learned to push myself	1	2	3	4
12. Learned to focus my attention	1	2	3	4

Problem Solving

13. Observed how others solved problems and learned from them	1	2	3	4
14. Learned about developing plans for solving a problem	1	2	3	4
15. Used my imagination to solve a problem	1	2	3	4

Time Management

16. Learned about organizing time and not procrastinating (not putting things off)	1	2	3	4
17. Learned about setting priorities	1	2	3	4
18. Practiced self-discipline	1	2	3	4

*Appendix 1. continued***BASIC SKILL**

Emotional Regulation					
19. Learned about controlling my temper		1	2	3	4
20. Became better at dealing with fear and anxiety		1	2	3	4
21. Became better at handling stress		1	2	3	4
22. Learned that my emotions affect how I perform		1	2	3	4

Physical Skills					
23. Athletic or physical skills		1	2	3	4

Interpersonal Relationships

Diverse Peer Relationships					
24. Made friends with someone of the opposite gender		1	2	3	4
25. Learned I had a lot in common with people from different backgrounds		1	2	3	4
26. Got to know someone from a different ethnic group		1	2	3	4
27. Made friends with someone from a different social class (someone richer or poorer)		1	2	3	4

Prosocial Norms					
28. Learned about helping others		1	2	3	4
29. We discussed morals and values		1	2	3	4

Linkages to Community					
30. Got to know people in the community		1	2	3	4
31. Came to feel more supported by the community		1	2	3	4

How honest were you in filling out this survey?

Very honest	Pretty honest	Honest some of the time	Honest once in a while	Honest not at all
4	3	2	1	0

Original Research

Improving life satisfaction, self-concept and happiness of former gang members using games and psychological skills training

Stephanie J. Hanrahan¹, Maria de Lourdes Francke Ramm²

¹ University of Queensland, Australia

² Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico

Corresponding author email: steph@hms.uq.edu.au

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of games and mental skills training on Mexican former gang members and drug users' self-concept, life satisfaction, perceived control, and happiness. Male ($n = 9$) and female ($n = 10$) former gang members aged 15-29 ($M = 19.95$) participated in ten sessions containing games to improve communication, trust, and problem-solving; and the development of mental skills such as imagery, self-talk, goal setting, activation control, and self-confidence. Within an uncontrolled pre/post design, questionnaires were completed in the first and tenth sessions. Results indicated significant improvements in happiness, life satisfaction, and self-concept (physical appearance, close friendship, behavioral conduct, scholastic competence, athletic competence, social acceptance, and global awareness). Mental skills training and games appear to be an effective combination for improving the quality of life of former gang members.

Introduction

Gang members on probation are more likely to have a history of illegal drug use and abuse and are more prone to reoffend than non-gang members on probation, and are unlikely to have finished high school or been employed at the time of their sentencing.¹ This type of information has led many policymakers and practitioners serving youth to focus on problem reduction or prevention. Approaching youth with the goal of avoiding or reducing problem behaviors such as drug use, unemployment, school dropout, and gang membership usually involves a deficit view of

young people.² A deficit view sees people as having weaknesses that need to be avoided or diminished, and does not focus on developing strengths, skills, and behaviors that enable individuals to develop their capabilities for positive contributions to self and society. Taylor et al.³ provided evidence that gang members possess the potential for positive development and have assets that may be used to promote positive behavior and development.

Poverty status has been found to have a significant effect on gang membership.⁴ Individuals living in poverty experience continuously adverse circumstances that lead to a perceived lack of control resulting in helplessness, hopelessness, and diminished will power.⁵ Individuals who feel they do not have the ability to control events or their behaviors tend to believe they are not responsible for what happens in their lives. Developing self-regulation skills may encourage individuals living in poverty and high crime areas to become active participants in their own lives. In a study of youth living in poverty in the United States, Buckner, Mezzacappa, and Beardslee⁶ found that self-regulatory skills and self-esteem were related to resilience even after controlling for differences in chronic strains and the experiences of negative life events. Self-regulation can be beneficial in terms of dealing with stress in a proactive manner and coping with stressors that have already occurred.⁷

In terms of interventions that may promote self-regulation, physically active games can help develop the skills of problem-solving and decision making under pressure,⁸ and have been shown to be superior to social recreation

Keywords: psychological skills; Mexico; marginalized youth; well-being

programs in terms of enhancing attitudes and actions regarding cooperation and trust.⁹ Games allow for the concurrent development of physical and intellectual capacities, which in turn enhance self-awareness, self-esteem, and enjoyment.¹⁰ Adolescents' self-reported physical activity has also been associated with perceived life satisfaction¹¹ and health-related quality of life.¹² Adding psychological skills to an intervention may also be helpful because they have been linked with psychological wellbeing.¹³ Developing skills such as goal-setting and self-confidence may help individuals establish a sense of mastery. Mastery is the ability to manage and control life circumstances that significantly affect the individual.¹⁴ Mastery arises from successful coping with stressors and is related to having a sense of control and self-direction, but can be impaired by exposure to difficult conditions.¹⁵

The purpose of this study was to determine if a program combining physically active games and psychological skills training could enhance the life satisfaction, happiness, perceptions of control, and self-concept of ex-gang members. The intervention was based on the program of physically active games and psychological skills that Hanrahan¹⁶ found significantly enhanced the life satisfaction and self-worth of Mexican teenage orphans.

Method

Participants

Twenty individuals (9 males and 10 females) aged 15-29 ($M = 19.95$; $SD = 4.93$) from an organization called Raza Nueva in Monterrey, Mexico, voluntarily took part in the study. Raza Nueva is a project that seeks, by means of personal contact, to help young gang members leave their situations of violence, drug addiction, and delinquency. The mission of the organization is "that the young gang members find a new life in Christ and become motivated, not only in study and work, but also to become developers of peace in their neighborhoods, with their own gangs, and with the gangs with whom they have had conflict"¹⁷ Many of the participants began taking and/or selling drugs at a young age, and some were the victims and/or perpetrators of physical violence (e.g., stabbings). Some of the participants were previously incarcerated. Participants were involved with Raza Nueva for a mean of 1.17 years (range = 1 month to 3.5 years). Four of the participants worked part-time at Raza Nueva, but had formerly been gang members themselves. The other fifteen participants were all ex-gang members. Because Raza Nueva has no formal membership roster, it is not possible to indicate what percentage of gang members with access to Raza Nueva volunteered to take

part in the program. Information about the program was distributed by Raza Nueva; interested people showed up at the pre-established time. The study's investigators had no previous contact with any of the participants.

Instruments

Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents

Based on Harter's Self Perception Profile for Children,¹⁸ Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA)¹⁹ was designed to measure multiple dimensions of self-concept in the adolescent stage of development. The SPPA measures a variety of self-concept dimensions (e.g., physical appearance, social acceptance) as well as global self-worth. Researchers^{20 21 22} have tested the psychometrics of the English version of the SPPA, resulting in support of slightly different subscales. Pastor, Balaguer, Atienza, and García-Merita²³ tested a Spanish version of the SPPA with students aged 15 to 18 years of age and found support for six clearly differentiated self-concept dimensions (i.e., scholastic competence, physical appearance, athletic competence, behavioral conduct, close friendship, and social acceptance) as well as a one-dimensional subscale of global self-worth. Cronbach alphas ranged from .62 to .90. The items pertaining to Job Competence from the original SPPA were omitted in the Pastor et al. version of the scale because they were believed to be irrelevant to the majority of the participants. Because job competence was also irrelevant to the majority of participants in this study, the Spanish translation from the Pastor et al. study was used. Items were scored on the subscales obtained in the previous Spanish study, thus ignoring the items designed to measure romantic attraction that are included in the English version of the scale. The mean age of the sample was less than 20 years old, making the choice of scale age-appropriate for the sample.

Satisfaction With Life Scale

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) was developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin²⁴ to measure life satisfaction without the potentially confounding factors of apathy or enthusiasm. The original English version has been found to have good test-retest reliability and internal consistency.²⁵ Atienza, Pons, Balaguer, and García-Merita²⁶ translated the SWLS into Spanish, the only change being the use of a 5-point rather than the original 7-point Likert scale. A confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the model fit was acceptable. The Spanish version of the SWLS was also found to have good internal consistency and construct validity.²⁶

Mirowsky-Ross 2X2 Index

The Mirowsky-Ross 2X2 Index measures sense of control over one's own life.²⁷ The measure is not biased by self-defense or self-blame or by the tendency to agree with statements regardless of content. The 2X2 balanced measure ensures that defense bias and agreement bias are eliminated. Mirowsky and Ross²⁷ demonstrated that the index has good content, criterion, and construct validity. The index contains two subscales (one about good outcomes and one about bad outcomes) with the items claiming control balancing the items that deny control.²⁸

Happiness Measure

Studies about happiness have employed diverse methods to evaluate this construct, often using five, seven, or ten-point Likert scales. Fordyce²⁹ developed a measure of happiness with two items: a) General level of happiness, and b) Percentage of time one feels happy, unhappy, or neutral. Overall the Happiness Measures have good stability, convergent validity, construct validity, and discriminative validity, but the first item has been reported to have stronger convergent validity with other indices of subjective wellbeing in 26 of 30 reported correlations.²⁹ For our study we only used the first item that asks respondents to indicate on a figure of a staircase, with the top step (10) indicating a life that is completely happy and the bottom step (0) indicating an unhappy life, the step on which they are currently situated. Diener and Diener³⁰ reported that Fordyce's Happiness Measure (a one-time self-report measure) did not lead to excessively high estimates of happiness compared with other methods, and that it provided similar results to daily experience sampling.

Procedure

Ethical clearance was obtained from the first author's university (Clearance # 2014001134). All participants received an information sheet (in Spanish) about the program that made it clear they were free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the start of the program.

The program consisted of ten sessions of approximately 2 hours each, held on weekdays for 2 weeks. The Raza Nueva staff members were invited to come 30 minutes early to each session to provide an opportunity for them to ask questions or make suggestions and to review the purpose of the previous session and outline the objectives of the current session. This extra time was allocated to make sure that

what the facilitator was doing in the program was relevant to the participants, but also to increase the chances that the staff members would be comfortable running the program on their own in the future. The authors were the facilitators of the sessions. Both are registered psychologists and had previous experience working with disadvantaged populations. Between one and four volunteers from a local university attended each session to help with small group discussions, provide one-on-one support, and expose them to the program for possible future use with Raza Nueva or other organizations. In the month prior to the program with Raza Nueva, the same volunteers were exposed to the program when it was run at a group home.

Within an uncontrolled pre/post research design, the participants completed the questionnaires in the first and final sessions, using codes instead of names to ensure anonymity. The overarching theme for the program was "control the controllable." Individual sessions contained worksheets, discussions and activities related to mental skills traditionally used in sport psychology such as optimal activation, goal-setting, concentration and attention, imagery, self-talk and self-confidence. Regular use of small groups encouraged participants to apply material to their own situations and to learn from each other. Small group discussions included topics such as aspects of their lives they have or have not controlled, factors they should consider trying to control, progression or obstacles towards their short-term goals and future plans, positive experiences, examples of how they have been able to refocus their attention, the possible purposes of imagery scripts, the purposes of affirmations, what they can do to make others in the group feel better about themselves, and changes they have made during the program. Each participant received a folder in which to keep written exercises and handouts. Stickers were used as rewards for punctual attendance and the completion of homework activities. All sessions also contained active games, the majority of which were designed to develop communication, trust, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.³¹ Through the course of the program, games were introduced in a sequence that moved from icebreakers to deinhbitizers/energizers to trust and empathy games, and finally to initiative activities. In the first session, participants each described an area of their life that they would like to improve as well as an activity or sport they enjoyed. Many of these descriptors were then used by the facilitator and volunteers in future sessions to make the content of the sessions relevant to the participants. Each session ended with a thought for the day, and sometimes the assignment of a small amount of homework; Hanrahan^{32 33} highlighted much of the information used in

the content of the sessions. Although the organization through which the participants were contacted was Catholic, the program coordinator made no mention of religion during the intervention.

Results

Attendance

Participation in the program was entirely voluntary. There were a total of ten sessions, and participants attended between four and ten of them. The mean attendance was 8.47 sessions ($SD = 1.6$; $Mdn = 9$). All participants completed the questionnaires in the first session and all but one completed the questionnaires in the final session.

Paired Sample Statistics

The pre- and post-test means for happiness, life satisfaction, physical appearance, close friendship, behavioral conduct, scholastic competence, athletic competence, social acceptance, global self-worth, and sense of control over good and bad outcomes are presented in Table 1. The paired sample T-test results are also in Table 1. There were significant improvements in all of the tested variables except for sense of control. The change in perceived control of positive outcomes approached significance. The changes in means between time 1 and time 2 were all in the expected direction.

Table 1. Pre- and Post-test Means, Standard Deviations, and Paired Sample Tests

Scale	n	Pre Mean (SD)	Post Mean (SD)	t	Sig.
Happiness	18	7.22 (1.44)	8.39 (1.38)	3.70	.002
Life Satisfaction	17	3.71 (0.62)	4.32 (0.68)	34.03	.001
Physical Appearance	18	2.81 (0.75)	3.14 (0.63)	2.92	.010
Close Friendship	16	2.94 (0.96)	3.58 (0.55)	3.22	.006
Behavioral Conduct	17	2.35 (0.68)	3.00 (0.60)	4.18	.001
Scholastic Competence	15	2.42 (0.69)	3.00 (0.60)	3.26	.006
Athletic Competence	14	2.60 (0.61)	3.00 (0.74)	2.73	.017
Social Acceptance	18	3.11 (0.52)	3.43 (0.47)	3.31	.004
Global Self-Worth	11	2.71 (0.46)	3.24 (0.46)	3.76	.004
Control Good Events	18	1.72 (1.58)	2.11 (1.62)	1.87	.079
Control Bad Events	17	0.41 (1.18)	0.50 (1.49)	0.29	.779

Discussion

Happiness, life satisfaction, and self-concept significantly improved from pre-program to post-program. Not only did global self-concept significantly increase, but so did physical appearance, close friendship, behavioral conduct, scholastic competence, athletic competence, and social acceptance self-concepts. The issue of self-concept was not specifically targeted in the program, although there was a session about techniques that can be used to increase self-confidence. In a similar study with orphans, the only self-concept scales that showed significant improvement were global self-concept and physical appearance self-concept.¹⁶ It is possible that the orphanage, which had sporting facilities on site and required school attendance, already provided opportunities for the development of scholastic and athletic competence that were not readily available to the former gang members in the present study. The physically active games allowed for experiences of success for participants of all fitness and ability levels, a characteristic that is possibly the cause of the increase in athletic competence self-concept. Similarly, the completion of the worksheets and brief homework assignments related to mental skills may have been related to perceptions of scholastic competence. In terms of the increases in close friendship and social acceptance self-concepts, the former gang members possibly had few social opportunities outside of the program. Although the participants may have been participating in other activities through Raza Nueva, these activities would not have taken place on a daily basis. Previous research indicates that conventional social opportunities are limited in impoverished urban areas, which lead youth to deal drugs as much for socialization as for income.³⁴ Although well beyond the scope of the present study, it may be that providing alternative social opportunities in gang areas, such as those available in the program used in this study, may help to decrease crime. In this study, close friendship and social acceptance self-concepts significantly increased alongside behavioral conduct self-concept. The behavioral conduct self-concept scale included items such as, 'Not doing things I shouldn't,' and 'Doing the right thing.' There is no way of knowing from this study if the participants' actual behavior changed; it may have been that after participating in the intervention program they wanted the researchers to perceive them as engaging in desirable behaviors and avoiding undesirable behaviors.

The significant increase in happiness is particularly noteworthy given that the participants' mean pre-test happiness score of 7.32 was already higher than the

normative mean of 6.92 reported by Fordyce²⁹ with a sample of 3050 American community college students. Similarly, the mean pre-test life satisfaction score of 3.78 was well above the midpoint of the scale, and was comparable to that found in Spanish students from Valencia.²⁶ Unfortunately no mean scores for Mexican socially disadvantaged groups could be found with which to make comparisons, but nevertheless, the former gang members could not be described as unhappy or dissatisfied with life. Even so, happiness scores were significantly higher at the end of the program than they were at the start.

In a study of happiness in everyday life, Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter³⁵ found that teenagers from working class and impoverished backgrounds were happier than upper-middle class and upper-class teenagers, suggesting that material wealth may be an obstacle to happiness. Although the mean pre-test happiness scores of the former gang members were above the normative mean, the participants still represent a disadvantaged group. Just because they did not score below the norm for happiness before the intervention does not mean that they could not benefit from even higher levels of happiness. After all, it may be easier to increase the wellbeing of individuals in this population than it is to change socioeconomic factors.

It is rather ironic that the only dependent variable that was mentioned directly within the program (i.e., control) is the only one that did not significantly change. The theme for the program was “control the controllable,” and participants had more than one discussion about which factors in their lives were controllable or uncontrollable. In the second session of the program there was 100% agreement that it was much easier to think of things they could not control than things they could control. It is possible that the findings may have been different if the participants had explicitly revisited the idea of control near the end of the program. Throughout the program, however, participants were introduced to techniques related to control (e.g., thought stopping, attention and concentration, goal setting, relaxation and activation, self-confidence development). In a similar intervention program with Mexican orphans, the participants were able to list many more controllable factors at the end of the program than they could at the beginning of the program,¹⁶ but that study did not include a psychometric measure of control.

There is no way of knowing whether the mental skills training or the games were the primary cause of the changes in the dependent variable, or if both components are required for change. Future research could implement only

the games with one group and only the mental skills training with another, to see if one section of the program on its own is as effective as the full program. It is doubtful, however, that attendance at a program within this population would be as high without the opportunity to play and run around. Although the games used in the program were designed to develop trust, communication, and problem solving skills, they were also intended to be fun. Given the limited opportunities that many of the participants had previously had to play, it may be that it was the playfulness of the program that resulted in such significant changes in the dependent variables. Although play can have long-term developmental meaning or value, it also has personal, experiential value that may be of equal, if not greater, importance.³⁶

Future research should also address the limitations of the present study. The two biggest limitations are the lack of a control group, and the absence of follow-up data. Without a control group, it is possible that some unknown extraneous factors lead to the changes described above. Another limitation is that the program was run through a faith-based organization, so it may be that the intervention may not be generalizable to former gang members who are not involved in such faith-based organizations. Nevertheless, Mexico has the second largest Catholic population in the world, with roughly 85% of citizens being Catholic.³⁷ Future research, however, could test the intervention through organizations that are not faith based.

Even with these limitations, the study provides insight into the potential effectiveness of mental skills training and games in enhancing the life satisfaction, happiness, and self-concept of former gang members in Mexico. These results indicate the relevance of sport psychology to avenues outside of traditional sport. Although the results cannot demonstrate unequivocally the effectiveness of the intervention, they do demonstrate the feasibility of implementing such an intervention in this context.

References

1. Adams S, Olson D. Analysis of gang members and non-gang members discharged from probation. *On Good Authority*. 2002; 6(2): 1-4.
2. Lerner R M. Promoting promotion in the development of prevention science. *Applied Developmental Science*. 2001; 5(4): 254-257.

3. Taylor CS, Lerner M, von Eye A, Bobek L, Balsano AB, Dowling EM, Anderson PM. Internal and external developmental assets among African American male gang members. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 2004; 19: 303-322.
4. Vowell PR, May DC. Another look at classic strain theory: Poverty status, perceived blocked opportunity, and gang membership as predictors of adolescent violent behavior. *Sociological Inquiry*. 2000; 70(1): 42-60.
5. Lefcourt HM. Locus of control: Current trends in theory and research. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum; 1976.
6. Buckner JC, Mezzacappa E, Beardslee, W.R. Characteristics of resilient youths living in poverty: The role of self-regulatory processes. *Development and Psychopathology*. 2003; 15, 139–162.
7. Eisenberg N, Fabes RA, Guthrie IK. Coping with stress: The role of regulation and development. In: Wolchik SA, Sandler IN, editors. *Handbook of children's coping: Linking theory and intervention* (pp. 41–70). New York: Plenum Press; 1997.
8. Howarth K. Qualitative study of the teaching of thinking skills in physical education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Temple University; 1996.
9. Witman JP. The efficacy of adventure programming in the development of cooperation and trust with adolescents in treatment. *Physician & Sportsmedicine*. 1987; 15(7): 22-29.
10. Light R, Fawns R. Knowing the game: Integrating speech and action in games teaching through TGfU. *Quest*. 2003; 55: 161-176.
11. Valois RF, Zullig KJ, Huebner ES, Drane JW. Physical activity behaviors and perceived life satisfaction among public high school adolescents. *The Journal of School Health*. 2004; 74(2), 59-65.
12. Spengler S, Woll A. The more physically active, the healthier? The relationship between physical activity and health-related quality of life in adolescents: The MoMo study. *Journal of Physical Activity & Health*. 2013; 10(5): 708-715.
13. Petlichkoff LM. Self-regulation skills for children and adolescents. In: Weiss MR, editor. *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective* (pp. 269-288). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology; 2004.
14. Pearlin LI, Schooler C. The structure of coping. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 1978; 22: 337-356.
15. Richards M, Hatch SL. A life course approach to the development of mental skills. *The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. 2011; 66B(S1): 126-135.
16. Hanrahan SJ. Using psychological skills training from sport psychology to enhance the life satisfaction of adolescent Mexican orphans. *Athletic Insight*. 2005; 7(3). Retrieved from www.athleticinsight.com
17. Raza Nueva. Mission, Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/pages/Raza-Nueva/155326897851571?sk=info&tab=page_info
18. Harter S. The self-perception Profile for Children: Revision of the Perceived Competence Scale for Children. Denver, CO: University of Denver; 1985.
19. Harter S. Manual for the Self-Perception Profile for Children. Denver, CO: University of Denver; 1988.
20. Eiser C, Eiser S, Harvermans T. The measurement of self-esteem: Practical theoretical considerations. *Personality and Individual Differences*. 1995; 18(3): 429-433.
21. Trent LMY, Rusell G, Cooney G. Assessment of self-concept in early adolescence. *Australian Journal of Psychology*. 1994; 46(1): 21-28.
22. Worrell FC. Measures of self-concept. Lincoln, NE: Buros Institute of Mental Measurements; 1997.
23. Pastor Y, Balaguer I, Atienza FL, García-Merita ML. Análisis de las propiedades psicométricas del Perfil de Autopercepciones para Adolescentes (Harter, 1988) en adolescentes valencianos. [Analyses of psychometric properties of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988) in Valencian adolescents.] *IberPsicología*. 2001; 6.1.1: 1-21.
24. Diener E, Emmons R, Larsen RJ, Griffin S. The Satisfaction With Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*. 1985; 49: 71-75.
25. Pavot W, Diener E. The affective and cognitive contest of self-report measures of subjective well-being. *Social Indicators Research*. 1993; 28: 1-20.
26. Atienza FL, Pons D, Balaguer I, García-Merita M. Propiedades psicométricas de la Escala de Satisfacción con la Vida en adolescentes. [Psychometric properties of the satisfaction with life scale in adolescents.] *Psicothema*. 2000; 12(2): 314-319.
27. Mirowsky J, Ross CE. Eliminating defense and agreement bias from measures of the sense of control: A 2 x 2 index. *Social Psychological Quarterly*. 1991; 54(2): 127-145.
28. Mirowsky J, Ross CE. Life course trajectories of perceived control and their relationship to education. *American Journal of Sociology*. 2007; 112(5): 1339-1382.

29. Fordyce MW. A review of research on the happiness measures: A sixty second index of happiness and mental health. *Social Indicators Research*. 1988; 20: 355-382.
30. Diener E, Diener C. Most people are happy. *Psychological Science*. 1996; 7: 181-185.
31. Hanrahan SJ, Carlson T. *GameSkills: A fun approach to learning sport skills*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics; 2000.
32. Hanrahan SJ. Developing adolescents' self-worth and life satisfaction through physically active games: Interventions with orphans and teenagers living in poverty. In: Schinke R, Hanrahan SJ, editors. *Sport for development, peace, and social justice* (pp. 135-148). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology; 2012.
33. Hanrahan SJ. Using games to enhance life satisfaction and self worth of orphans, teenagers living in poverty, and ex-gang members in Latin America. In: Schinke R, Lidor R, editors. *Case studies in sport development: Contemporary stories promoting health, peace, and social justice* (pp. 91-103). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology; 2013.
34. Spergel IA. Youth gangs: An essay review. *Social Service Review*. 1992; 66(1): 121-140.
35. Csikszentmihalyi, M., Hunter, J. Happiness in everyday life: The uses of experience sampling. *Journal of Happiness Studies*. 2003, 4, 185-199.
36. Elkind D. Thanks for the memory: The lasting value of true play. *Young Children*. 2003; 58(3): 46-51.
37. Toro, R. (2013, February 19). *Livescience: The world's Catholic population*. Retrieved from <http://www.livescience.com/27244-the-world-s-catholic-population-infographic.html>



| **JSFD**
Journal of Sport for Development