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Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges

Editors

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Editorial

Introduction to the Special Issue "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges"

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Abstract
"Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges" brings together a unique collection of papers on the subject of sport and social inclusion. The special issue can be divided into three major parts. The first part consists of three papers tacking on a broad perspective on sport and social exclusion, with specific attention to austerity policies, sport-for-change and exclusion in youth sports. The second part of the special issue tackles specific themes (e.g., group composition and dynamics, volunteering, physical education, youth work, equality, public health) and groups (e.g., people with disabilities, disadvantaged girls, youth) in society in relation to sport and social exclusion. The third part consists of three papers that are related to issues of multiculturalism, migration and social inclusion. The special issue is further augmented with a book review on Mike Collins and Tess Kay's *Sport and social exclusion* (2nd edition) and a short research communication. The editors dedicate the special issue to Mike Collins (deceased).

Keywords
poverty; social exclusion; sport; youth

Issue
This editorial is part of the special issue "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges", edited by Dr. Reinhard Haudenhuyse (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium) and Professor Marc Theeboom (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium).

1. Poverty and Social Exclusion

Specific groups of people in society are increasingly being faced with challenges on multiple (life) domains, such as education, employment, personal development, health, social participation and community integration. There is a broad range of definitions for social exclusion, and consequently social inclusion. Based on a scientific literature review Levitas et al. (2007) have defined social exclusion as: "…a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole". From this definition Levitas et al. (2007) further derived a series of interacting domains and sub-domains. The identified domains and sub-domains are:

- Resources:
  - material/economic resources;
  - access to public and private services;
  - social resources.
- Participation:
  - economic participation;
  - social participation;
  - culture, education and skills;
  - political and civic participation.

- Quality of life:
  - health and well-being;
  - living environment;
  - crime, harm and criminalization.

Levitas et al. (2007) also refer to "deep exclusion" when exclusion manifests itself across more than one domain or dimension of disadvantage, resulting in severe negative consequences for quality of life, well-being and future life chances.

In their book *Sport and social exclusion in global society*, Spaaij, Magee and Jeanes (2014) challenge the "long held view" in sport sociology that poverty and material deprivation are at the core of social exclusion (see Collins & Kay, 2014), by contending that social exclusion is a multidimensional set of processes that go beyond the lack of money. This position can however be criticized for confusing root causes and indeed multi-dimensional processes and outcomes of income related (monetary) poverty and its relationship with social exclusion. Levitas et al. (2007) have argued that there is overwhelming evidence that poverty is a major risk factor in almost all domains of exclusion. However, demonstrating causality in social science remains extremely difficult.

The concept of social exclusion is firmly entrenched in European government policy and has increasingly wide currency outside the European Union (EU) in international agencies such as the International Labour Office (ILO), United Nations, UNESCO and the World Bank. Specific policies and programs targeted at people have been set up in order to facilitate participation in employment and universal access to resources, rights, goods and services. Such "social inclusive" policies include, among others: preventing the risks of exclusion, helping the most vulnerable and mobilizing all relevant bodies in overcoming exclusion (Levitas et al., 2007) According to Spaaij et al. (2014), sport may be perceived as rather trivial and peripheral activity, but the role sport could play in promoting social inclusion has been increasingly embraced in international policy and research.

This special issue brings together a unique collection of papers on the subject of sport and social inclusion. The special issue can be divided into three major parts, which we will now briefly discuss.

2. Structure

In the first part we have three papers tacking on a broad perspective on sport and social exclusion. *Mike Collins* and *Rein Haudenhuyse* (United Kingdom, Belgium) describe the recent poverty trends in England, and identify groups that are more at-risk of being poor and socially excluded. They further describe a case study that addresses young people's social exclusion through the use of sports (i.e., Positive Futures) and argue that within a climate of austerity, sport-based social inclusion schemes are likely to become wholly inadequate in the face of exclusionary forces such schemes envision to combat. International renowned sport sociologist *Fred Coalter* (Ireland) takes on a skeptical view on the sport-for-change "movement". The dominance of evangelical beliefs and interest groups, who tend to view research in terms of affirmation of their beliefs, is restricting conceptual and methodological development of policy and practice. Coalter suggests that researchers need to adopt a degree of skepticism and need to reflect more critically on issues of sport, development and social inclusion. In the last paper of the first part *Bethan Kingsley and Nancy Spencer-Cavaliere* (Canada) investigate exclusionary practices in youth sports. In their paper they seek to understand sport involvement of young people living with lower incomes. Based on their findings Kingsley and Spencer-Cavaliere highlight a number of interconnected exclusionary processes in sport, which according to the authors demonstrate the need to reimagine sport in ways that challenge the hegemonic discourses continuing to exclude a large number of young people.

The second part of the special issue tackles specific themes and groups in society in relation to sport and social exclusion. *Kim Wickman* (Sweden) describes the experiences and perceptions of young adults with physical disabilities on sports. People with disabilities seldom get a chance to voice their opinions on their sport experiences. A deeper and gender-sensitive understanding of the context-related experiences of sport is according to Wickman a prerequisite for teachers and leaders to be able to provide adequate, inclusive and meaningful activities. *Hebe Schaillée, Marc Theeboom and Jelle Van Cauwenberg* (Belgium) examine the relationship between peer group composition in sport programmes and positive youth development of disadvantaged girls. Their results indicate that the extent to which disadvantaged girls derive benefits from their participation in sport depends on the group composition. In their contribution to the special issue, *Mette Munk and Sine Agergaard* (Denmark) examine how students' experiences of participation and non-participation in physical education are influenced by complex interactions within the group of students and in negotiations with teachers about the values and practices of physical education. The article argues that an understanding of the variety in students' participation or non-participation is important in terms of future intervention aimed at promoting inclusion processes in physical education. *Evi Buelens, Marc Theeboom, Jikkemien Vertonghen and Kristine De Martelaer* (Belgium) look at the underlying mechanisms and developmental experiences of a sport volunteering program for young people in socially vulnerable positions. The authors conclude that a systematic approach

of the volunteer training program can play an important role in the development of competences of socially vulnerable youths both as a volunteer and an individual. As socially vulnerable youngsters participate less frequently in sports activities than their average peers, youth work organisations often try to guide the young people they reach to local sports clubs and inclusive sports activities. In relation to this subject *Niels Hermens, Sabina Super, Kirsten Verkooijen and Maria Koelen* (The Netherlands) describe factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action among youth workers and local sports clubs that are preconditions for the success of this specific type of intersectoral action. In the final paper of the second part, *Anna Aggestål and Josef Fahlén* (Sweden) focus on how public health promotion is being constructed, implemented and given meaning within the Swedish Sport Confederation. Aggestål and Fahlén results indicate how discourses on democracy, equality and physical activity are used to legitimize the Swedish Sport Confederation role in public health. Also, how these discourses pose challenges for organized sport in meeting objectives of public health.

The third part of the special issue consists of three papers that are related to issues of multiculturalism, migration and social inclusion. *Jorge Moraga* (USA) paper pushes beyond the black-white binary in an effort to expand understandings into the relationship between sport, Latinidad, and global capitalism in the 21st century. Moraga makes the case that while the National Basketball Association (NBA) may be another example of browning the sporting gaze, the gaze remains fixed upon Western capitalist notions of identity and representation. *Kyle Rich, Laura Misener and Dan Dubeau* (Canada) discuss a participatory sport event which seeks to connect newcomers to Canada (recent immigrants and refugees) in order to build capacity, connect communities, and facilitate further avenues to participation in community life. With their study, the authors aim to unpack the complex process of how inclusion may or may not be facilitated through sport, as well discussing the role of the management of these sporting practices. *Gamal Abdel-Shehid and Nathan Kalman-Lamb* (Canada) explore the efficacy of sport as an instrument for social inclusion through an analysis of the film "Bend it Like Beckham". According to Abdel-Shedid and Kalman-Lamb, the version of multiculturalism offered by the film is one of assimilation to a utopian English norm. Such a conceptualization falls short of conceptions of hybrid identity that do not privilege one hegemonic culture over others.

The special issues is augmented with a book review and a short research communication. In "Sport, social exclusion and the forgotten art of researching poverty" *Rein Haudenhuyse* (Belgium) critically reviews Mike Collins and Tess Kay's second edition (2014) of their seminal and ground-breaking work on Sport and Social Exclusion (2003). Last but not least, *Daniel Parnell, Andy Pringle, Paul Widdop and Stephen Zwolinsky* (UK*)* insightfully discuss a partnership between an academic institute and a third sector organisation attached to a professional football club in the United Kingdom. The partnership concerns a sport for development intervention. Through this case study, the authors elaborate on the development of third sector-university partnerships and the use of intervention mapping to meet shared objectives in relation to articulating the impact of interventions to funders and for research outputs.

3. Dedication to Mike Collins

We would like to dedicate "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges" to Mike Collins who passed away in the summer of 2014. Mike Collins was a Senior Lecturer in Recreation Management at Loughborough University for over ten years before "retiring" to part-time work in Sports Development and Faith Communities at the University of Gloucestershire. Prior to holding this position he founded and directed the Institute of Sport and Recreation Planning and Management at the same university for five years. He was Head of Research Strategy and Planning at the Sports Council from its founding, and active in the Council of Europe and what is now the Countryside Recreation Network. He then became Professor of Sports Development at the University of Gloucestershire.

Mike Collins was the first author to submit a paper proposal for the special issue and personally contacted us and inquired about the scope of the special issue. Mike was then already hospitalized, in his terminal phase, which is a testament of his strong dedication and personal commitment—even in personal times of sickness and hardship—to those groups and individuals in society that are time and time again denied access to sport, leisure and so many others domains in society. Groups and individuals that are the first in line to bear the brunt of austerity measures across the whole of Europe (and beyond). In relation to this, Clarke and Newman (2012) have pointed out that the economic crisis has not been caused by public spending, but by the greed of bankers and gambling-like cultures of financial centres and political elites, which were in the end bailed out by public money. Problematically, spending cuts within an austerity regime impinge directly on the poor, the sick and the disabled (Levitas, 2012). Including their sport and leisure participation.

It is only fitting that we give Mike Collins (2014, p. 253) the last words:

> *The sports world can leave inclusion to others and be part of the problem of an unequal society, or take hard decisions and demanding steps to be part of the moves to inclusion and be part of the solution.*

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Social Exclusion and Austerity Policies in England: The Role of Sports in a New Area of Social Polarisation and Inequality?

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Abstract
Poverty still counts as the core of social exclusion from sport and many other domains of people's lives. In the first part of this paper, we shortly describe the recent poverty trends in England, and identify groups that are more at-risk of being poor and socially excluded. We then focus on the relationship between poverty, social exclusion and leisure/sports participation, and describe a case study that addresses young people's social exclusion through the use of sports (i.e., *Positive Futures*). Although further analysis is warranted, it would seem that growing structural inequalities (including sport participation)—with their concomitant effects on health and quality of life—are further widened and deepened by the policy measures taken by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in the UK. In addition, within a climate of austerity, sport-based social inclusion schemes are likely to become wholly inadequate in the face of exclusionary forces such schemes envision to combat.

Keywords
austerity; disadvantaged youth; health; social exclusion; social inclusion; sport

Issue
This article is part of the special issue "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges", edited by Dr. Reinhard Haudenhuyse (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium) and Professor Marc Theeboom (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)

1. Introduction

In the European Year of Social Inclusion 2010, the EU confirmed the role of sport as "a driver of active social inclusion" (Council of the European Union, 2010), with particular reference to accessibility, disadvantage and gender. In 2003, Collins and Kay (2003) looked at sport and social exclusion in England and came to the conclusion that poverty was the core of social exclusion, often exacerbated by factors of class, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, being at-risk of involvement in crime, and location (i.e., urban or rural). Looking again in 2013, the authors concluded that poverty was increasing after excessive government borrowing, the excesses of the international bankers and the stringent cost cutting measures of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition (Collins & Kay, 2014). This paper begins by tracing trends in poverty, the prospects of austerity policy measures on poverty and social exclusion, with specific attention to sport participation. We then illustrate efforts to combat social exclusion through the lens of a case study (i.e., *Positive Futures*). The policy focus of the paper is on England, but may also be of relevance to Scotland and Wales (and even to other

European regions). Budgetary cuts have happened everywhere. However, the Scottish and Welsh governments have managed this differently. Further research should look at such differences and the short to long term effects on local trends in poverty and sport participation for the whole of Britain.

In terms of social inclusion and sport, two dimensions can be distinguished. The first dimension is "*inclusion in sports"*, which refers to, for example, trends or policy measures in terms of participation in sport regarding groups that are less likely to participate. The second dimension is "*inclusion through sport"*, which refers to, for example, programs or policy measures that are aimed at using sports to "include" deprived, poor or disadvantaged people. Inclusion may then refers to improving people's position on multiple domains, for example, education, employability, housing, health, leisure. *Development-through-sport* is a concept that is closely related to such a conceptualisation.

The first part of the paper will briefly look at the dimension *inclusion in sport* and how this is related to trends in poverty and the austerity political climate in England. The analysis we make, needs to be seen as an exploratory discussion on the possible impact of austerity measures, and may also have relevance for regions beyond England. From the discussion it will however become clear that further long-term and in-depth research is required which focuses on the impact of austerity measures under the current government regime on sport participation, poverty and social exclusion. For example, questions need to be addressed if austerity measures (not only in England, but across Europe) accelerate existing trends in poverty and social exclusion, and how such measures are related to sport participation trends, with specific attention to leisure participation of people living in poverty? And more importantly: did the taken austerity measures accelerate such trends? And if they did, how? On the other hand, in the second part, which discusses the case study *Positive Futures,* we focus on *inclusion through sport*. Based on existing research, we will critically look how such a sport-based intervention can contribute in improving young people's position. Here too the question needs to be addressed—but is beyond the scope of this paper—if and how austerity measures have an impact on the potential of sport-based interventions which target specific disadvantaged groups in society (incl. the goals such programs have and the living conditions of the targeted groups)? Such questions remain however marginal in existing (sport) policy research.

2. Trends in Poverty

Poverty limits peoples' life choices and excludes them from many leisure possibilities and money is listed as the most significant constraint. Money to pay for the costs of playing sports, childcare, transport and so forth (Collins & Kay, 2014). Many scholars indicate that inequality, poverty and social exclusion are closely linked with each other (e.g., Dierckx & Ghys, 2013; Giddens, 2001, p. 768; Van Haarlem & Raeymaeckers, 2013; Vermeulen et al., 2012). Poverty arises when a person has a deficit of economic means compared to the general life standards, resulting in this person becoming socially excluded on various life domains such as education, work and health (Dierckx & Ghys, 2013; Van Haarlem & Raeymaeckers, 2013). Poverty is often the root cause of further social exclusion and, in turn, the reproduction of poverty (Ghys, 2014). In other words, the core of social exclusion lies in poverty. Prior to the 1970s in England, as in many countries, the poor were found overwhelmingly in three groups that overlapped: the elderly who had made no private pension provision and were dependent on state pensions; the chronically sick; and the long- term unemployed. But now the poor consist of a much more mixed, dynamic and super-diverse group (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2013; Jenkins, 2015; Vertovec, 2007). The Office of National Statistics (ONS, 2013) summarized the state of poverty for the whole of the UK as shown in Table 1.

This demonstrates that old-age pensioners have been relatively protected but after the recession child poverty is rising again, and likely to grow more. The large growth has been in the working poor because of increased part-time working, especially amongst women and of low-paid jobs in service trades. Economist Guy Standing (2011) referred to such groups in precarious employment as "the precariat".

Table 1. Poor children, adults, and pensioners, 1994−1995 to 2011−2012 (% and "relative income", number below 0.6 median after housing costs, in real terms).

	Working age adults		Children		Pensioners	
	%	No (millions)	%	No (millions	%	No (millions
1994−1995	23	7.5	37	4.7	36	3.6
1997−1998	20	6.7	34	4.4	31	2.9
2003−2004	14	5.0	20	2.5	10	1.1
2007−2008	14	5.2	19	2.5	9	1.0
2011−2012	21	7.9	17	3.5	14	1.6
Change 1998−1999 to 2011−2012	+2	1.3	-7	-0.9	-1	-0.1

Source: ONS (2013).

Additionally the Office showed that:

- 28% of children live in poor households, half in workless ones;
- 43% of single parents are "poor";
- The highest levels of poor families can be found in London (because of the highest and rising housing costs), with a marked north-south divide (see also Dorling et al., 2007);
- Ethnic minorities are likely to be strongly represented in the poorest fifth (29% black, 35% Asian but 49–51% of Pakistanis/Bangladeshis often from rural, unskilled backgrounds); and
- A quarter of disabled people in the poorest fifth.

Gender, disability and ethnicity seem to have an additional, summative effect on social exclusion. In this respect, we could use the term "deep exclusion", which Levitas et al. (2007, p. 117) defined as "exclusion across more than one domain or dimension of disadvantage, resulting in severe negative consequences for quality of life, well-being and future life chances". A group that remains largely invisible in sport policy documents, sport research publication and participation surveys are asylum seekers and people without legal staying permits (Collins, 2013). Their invisibility is in stark contrast with their precarious societal positions (see Amara et al., n.d.) for one of the few sport related reports on sport, social inclusion and refugees)

3. The legacy of the Coalition: The Great Deluge?

In this section we will briefly sketch the prospects, under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat government's austerity policy measures, of specific groups in society that are at greater risk of being poor and socially excluded. The focus will be on (work-poor) households, young people, women, people with disabilities and people with a non-western ethnic background. We take a brief look at the short-term impacts that the Coalition's attempts to reduce public expenditure in the aftermath of the banking crash and world recession have made to different aspects, and specifically in relation to sports. Is David Cameron's *Big Society* emerging, or perhaps something else is emerging from the abyss of heavy cuts on public expenditure and skewed taxes on work?

The concept "*Big Society*", refers to a political ideology that, broadly taken, wants people to take a more active role in their communities, transfer more power to local governments and integrate the free-market into all domains of public life. From a more critical viewpoint, one could call it "a-do-it-yourself-society", where consequently the government is expected less to "interfere". A *Big Society* logically implies a "Small Government" with the overall aim of forcing down public spending. Clarke and Newman (2012) rightfully point out that the economic crisis has not been caused by public spending, but by the greed of bankers and gambling-like cultures of financial centres, which were in the end bailed out by public money.

The formation the Coalition government in 2010 has together with the promotion of the *Big Society*, resulted in unprecedented spending cuts (Levitas, 2012). Levitas (2012, p. 320) argued that rather than being a necessary response to the economic crisis, the cuts constitute a neo-liberal shock doctrine, that contributes to the progressive destruction of collective provision against risk. Problematically, spending cuts impinge directly on the poor, the sick and the disabled (Levitas, 2012). Using 12 indicators, the National Children's Bureau (2013, p. 1) damningly concluded that the inequality that existed fifty years ago still persists, and has in some respects become worse. Regardless of which index is used (e.g., Gini coefficient), the rise in inequality between 1961 and 2011 has been substantial (Jenkins, 2015). At first sight somewhat surprising, inequality declined during the most recent recession in 2010. But the reason for this is attributed to large income falls for those at the top compared to those at the bottom (Jenkins, 2015). Bluntly put, during and after the recession (and the austerity measures) the rich got a bit less rich (except those at the very top) and the poor stayed mainly poor. Unless a new course of action is taken there is a real risk of sleepwalking into a world where inequality and disadvantage are so deeply entrenched that our children grow up in a state of "social apartheid". In his book *Inequality and the 1%*, Dorling (2014) argued that inequality brings with it a culture that divides and makes social mobility almost impossible. He contends that the 1% on top have a dramatic impact on the lives of the 99%; and this by reducing people's life expectancy, educational and work prospects, as well as their mental health. Dorling further shows that inequality and poverty in the UK is increasing. He writes: "Since the great recession hit in 2008, the 1% has only grown richer while the rest find life increasingly tough. The gap between the haves and the have-nots has turned into a chasm. While the rich have found new ways of protecting their wealth, everyone else has sugared the penalties of austerity." Jenkins (2015, p. 22) argued that the problem is that the (very) rich may increasingly opt out of, or be less willing to contribute to the collective pot that finances benefits and services, but instead deploy their resources to secure outcomes that are favourable to their own interests via politics, media, or the law. In his study on distribution of income between 1961 and 2011 in the UK, Jenkins (2015) draws attention to the stagnation in real income growth for those at the bottom while at the same time incomes at the top are growing. He continues by stating that there is a growing literature arguing that income inequality growth is harmful because it weakens the fabric of our society and social cohesion in its broadest sense. The fabric refers to a shared experi-

ence of a common education system, health service, and pensions, etc. (Jenkins, 2015).

Cuts to the incomes of families with children, whether in paid work or not, have according to Levitas (2012) been draconic under the austerity policy of the Coalition government. In relation to precarious employment and work-poor households, the Office of National Statistics (UK) suggested there were 250,000 people on zero-hour contracts (i.e., with no guaranteed work), but a Chartered Institute of Personnel Development survey suggested over a million, with half of employers in hotels, leisure and catering having at least one person on such terms. Having no job or a low-paid and insecure job reduces and puts strains on the income of families and their children. According to Padley and Hirsch (2013, p. 5), 2009–2013 has seen the most sustained reduction in income since 1945, with abolition of the weekly Educational Maintenance Allowance of £10–30 per pupil weekly. Capping total annual welfare payments at £26,000 per family was in 2011, according to senior political correspondent of *The Guardian* Andrew Sparrow, likely to add 40,000 families to the homeless lists awaiting housing. Cooper and Dumpleton (2013) estimated that over 500.000 families had become dependent on aid from food banks, mostly offered by churches.

Regarding young people, the Prince's Trust (2014) found that amongst those Not in Education, Employment or Training (the so-called NEETS)—estimated to be around a total of 430,000 in the UK—a fifth reckoned they had nothing to live for, two in five said unemployment had led to panic attacks, self-loathing and thoughts of suicide, a fifth of the young women had self-harmed, one in five had turned to drugs or alcohol for solace, while more than half had no parental role model. Poverty carries a female face, since ¾ of the poorest billion people of the world are women, and, as such, women have a greater vulnerability to poverty. The Women's Resource Centre (2013, p. 33) reported "the government's policies have had a negative impact on women through the loss of jobs, income and services. For example, as most public sector employment is predominantly female, public sector cuts can be expected to affect women disproportionately (Clarke & Newman, 2012). Furthermore, the caring for elderly family members, children or the sick is largely done by women, who are as such more reliant on public services (Clarke & Newman, 2012). Additional measures announced will intensify these losses for all but the richest women. This will, amongst others, reduce women's opportunities for sport participation. Collins and Kay (2014) furthermore identified disabled people as a group that is often confronted with deep social exclusion. The authors showed the additive effects of gender and class on disabled people's leisure participation, noting that disabled people are in situations partly determined by social structures, policies and "disabling" attitudes (Collins & Kay, 2014, p. 140). It is well established that on average disabled people and the households in which they live face greater financial disadvantage in terms of income than their counterparts (McKnight, 2014). Collins and Kay state that disability often implicates extra living, travel and care costs, and consequently, many disabled people and their families depend on welfare benefits, which according to the authors makes them by definition "poor". Even those who are active in the labour market, are disproportionately likely to be employed in work that is poorly paid, low-skilled and part-time (see Haudenhuyse (2015), in this issue). Problematically many disabled people are currently having benefits reduced or removed, yet two in five are restored after appeals. Of the new fitness-for-work tests, one of the architects, Professor Paul Gregg declared in *The Guardian* (on the 23th of February 201) them to be "badly malfunctioning…a complete mess" and in need of revision, having caused "a huge amount of anguish" because of their stringency. In relation to people from "minority" ethnic background, it has been stated that they suffer a disproportionate risk of social exclusion (Cabinet Office, 2000). People from minority ethnic background have a higher risk/chance for living in the most deprived areas, below average (and poverty-line) incomes, being unemployed or excluded from school, living in bad and overcrowded housing conditions. The Audit Commission (2011) reckoned that 47% of the cuts local authorities need to do would come from planning, housing and cultural services, despite them comprising only a sixth of all services, meaning real cuts and price increases. King (2012) foresaw closures and more outsourcing. Perry (2011) pointed out that services for migrants have already been cut heavily by the Coalition.

4. Social Exclusion in Sport: Poverty, Leisure Time Spending and Sport

Poverty limits and affects leisure spending, evidencing the particularly heavy effects on lone parents and pensioners, as shown in Table 2. While most research has focused on people below the 60% of median European threshold, Barry (2002) reminded readers that there was an upper threshold. Above this threshold affluent people detach themselves from the rest of society (see also Dorling, 2014). For instance, by buying expensive exclusive memberships to ensure personal service, no crowding and privacy- in 5-star hotels and private resorts, spas, health clubs golf, sailing and rackets clubs as so on.

YouGov (2012) showed life transitions remained the largest reason for dropping out from sports (Sport England, 2013, p. 13), most of which are not amenable to sports policy. The interest in playing varied much less by socio-economic group than actual participation, leading Sport England (2013, p. 23) to conclude "as a result, this is a key driver for many local authorities". Maybe the old lessons of taking sport to the people

and their doorsteps or communities, tapped by schemes like Action Sport in the 1980s, and Street Games in the UK currently, is worthy of further attention. And perhaps more importantly, worthy of more structural investments. Disadvantaged areas tend to have weak sporting infrastructure and lower sport participation rates. Poor young people are less likely to be club members, compete, and be coached (see Figure 1). Additionally, young people from low-income families volunteered a quarter less in sport clubs than the English average and at barely half the rate of those in prosperity. The *Big Society* agenda stresses voluntarism as a key component of associational life, but also as substitute for services that are government funded (e.g., social work, caring for the sick) (Ockenden, Hill, & Stuart, 2012). Data illustrates that volunteers in general are predominantly "white males", showing that sport volunteering is both biased in relation to gender and ethnic-background. In relation to this, Figure 2 shows the Volunteering Equity Index, which Street Games adapted from Sport England's equity index using *Active People* 2 data.

Table 2. Family expenditure on recreation 2011.

Type of household/£ per week	Single adult working age	Pensioner couple	Couple with 2 children	Lone parent, one baby 0–1
Total (excl. housing, childcare)	241	303	706	767
Social & cultural spending (%)	44	49	109	56
MIS excluding rent/childcare £	201	241.	471	284
Disposable income as % of MIS on Minimum wage*	72	NA	84	87
MIS as % of median income	82	58	82	85
Lacking Minimum Income Standard, million *(% of group*)	1.35 (*34*)	0.8 (8)	1.84 (*23*)	0.83 (*57*)

Note: * after council tax, rent & any childcare costs. Sources: Hirsch (2011), and Padley and Hirsch (2013).

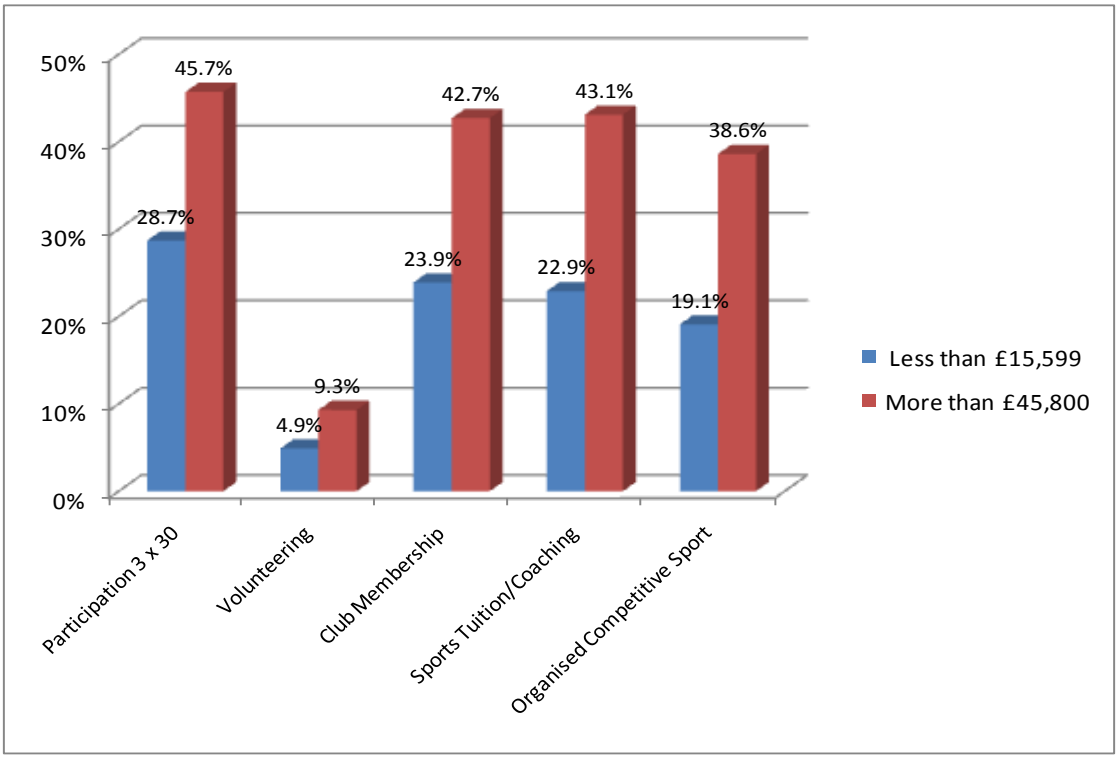

Figure 1. Features of sports participation by 16–25s by income, 2008–2009 (source: Sport England, 2009).

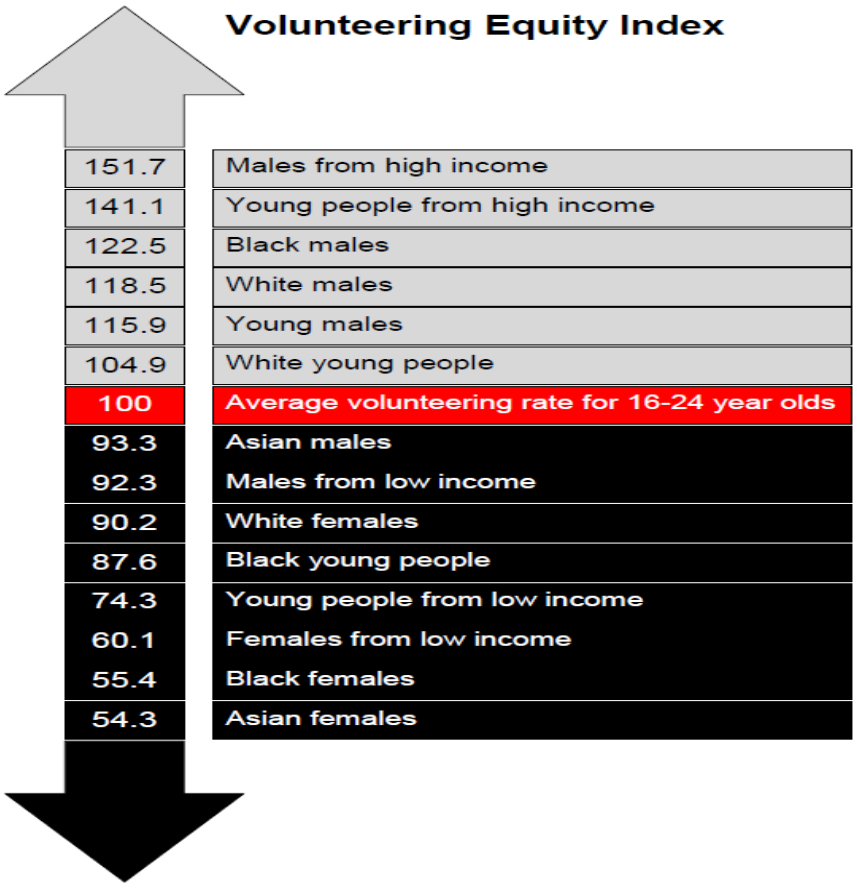

Figure 2. Volunteering Equity Index: Regular volunteering by different groups (sources: Sport England (2009) and Street Games (2009)).

Taking into account that people from a non-western ethnic background and women in general are more likely to be confronted with poverty/social exclusion, and less likely to be volunteering and participating in sports, the perspectives of the austerity measures on such (and other) groups in society, in terms of sport participation, are simply bleak. Such empirical realities have formed the basis of policies targeted at specific groups in society in poverty and social exclusion. To not only include them in sports, but also to combat the negative outcomes of poverty and social exclusion—both on an individual and community level—through sports-based interventions. The latter one is the focus of the next section.

5. Social Inclusion through Sport: Sports-Based Interventions

Collins and Kay concluded that successful interventions addressing social exclusion need time and resources to deal with the major structural issues underlying exclusionary processes and actions, in five different ways (Collins & Kay, 2014, pp. 212-223). Firstly, many sport projects—where resources are modest— run programs for only three years. Which is an understandable lifespan for politicians seeking re-election but only just long enough for many programs to be established, let alone show their outcomes. Collins and Kay (2014) call for policymakers to better resource projects and lengthen the policy span to 7 or 10 years. There is also a tendency to start too many new things to demonstrate political virility, confusing recipients and partners about priorities. There are however exception. For example in England, Sport England's recent initiative (Sport England, n.d.) to establish a satellite sports club in every secondary school and college linked to a community "hub club" has a 2012–2017 timespan and a £48m budget with an enabling officer in each of the 48 County Sport Partnerships. Unfortunately, such exceptions are not a prelude for an overall policy change, as Kelly (2012) and others (e.g., King, 2012; Levitas, 2012) indicated that in the UK significant funding cuts have led local authorities to suspend many of their own youth (leisure) services and cut grants to other providers, and additionally funding has become more narrowly focused on the early years. Secondly, Coalter (2001, 2007, pp. 19-23, 2011) has criticized sport-based interventions for using a-theoretical monitoring and evaluation approaches (if any monitoring and evaluation are integrated at all). Furthermore, there remains a lack of research projects using control groups, measuring longitudinal effects and understanding if, and if so, how

programs resonate with different participants, and why? As Coalter (2007) argued there is a clear need for seeking clear logic models and theories of change in relation to sport-based or sport-plus programs in relation to the outcomes such programs wish to attain. Thirdly, in urban areas exclusion and targeted groups are often concentrated, but in rural areas particularly they are dispersed making policies difficult and expensive to target. In any case the areas of concentration may still contain a minority of targeted people. This raises the need for a mixture of people and area-based policies. However it needs to be noted that several authors have raised some pertinent questions in relation to interventions targeted at "disadvantaged or at-risk neighbourhoods and youth"; It is argued that such interventions and policy discourse perpetuate a negative representation of young people and their neighbourhoods and further instigate processes of territorial stigmatization (e.g., Wacquant, 2008), further legitimating interventionist policies (Kelly, 2012). Fourthly, there is a need for sustainable programs, which is easier when funders are tied together in partnerships, and local people are involved at all stages from diagnosis to delivery (Lindsey, 2008). Fifthly and finally, sport has neither the political "clout" nor the policy salience to make major changes on its own, needing the support of political economic and organisational partners (Pierre & Peters, 2001). Sports clubs are the obvious primary partners but schools, youth and community groups, health and welfare bodies, churches and faiths, trades unions are relevant partners in terms over delivering socially inclusive sport activities. Theeboom, Haudenhuyse and De Knop (2010) have, for example, argued that, in Belgium, the traditional sport sector has never played any significant role in the provision of sport opportunities for underprivileged young people. Instead other providers (e.g. the sectors of young people, education, integration, social affairs, and crime prevention) have gradually become involved in the organisation of specific community sport initiatives (Theeboom et al., 2010). This is perhaps surprising, as most of these "new" providers are traditionally not linked to sports provision. On the other hand this is not so surprising, considering the fact that many of such organisations have historically integrated sport activities in their services and programs, long before there were policy-led sports-based programs for socially excluded groups.

In the next section we will briefly discuss the *Positive Futures* program. In discussing this case we will, as already mentioned in the introduction, focus on the "*inclusion through sport*" aspects of the program. Social inclusion in sport describes processes that occur in a sporting context (e.g., equal participation, improved sport skills), whereas social inclusion through sport refers to opportunities that can arise from participating in sport for the involvement within other contexts (e.g., personal/social development; changed behaviour; community regeneration/social capital). It can be noted that a combination is also possible, and often implied. In the sense that offering socially excluded groups accessible sporting opportunities will automatically contribute to wider effects "beyond sport".

6. Case Study Positive Futures

Positive Futures was established in 2000 countrywide by the Home Office Drugs Directorate, in partnership with Sport England and the Football Foundation and numerous locals, amongst the most important Youth Offending Teams and Youth Improvement Programs. It was intended to promote sport and physical activity, reduce drug abuse, and modify lifestyles. It was aimed specifically at the most vulnerable and at-risk youth (aged 10−19), in one-fifth of the most deprived areas in England. Crime Concern defines *Positive Futures* as a "national sport and activity based social inclusion program" (Crime Concern, 2006, p. 6). Though as the program wound on, a wider range of youth were referred from schools, or self-referred. It was monitored by consultants MORI (UK based research company active in multiple research domains), and from 2004 evaluated by Substance (UK-based social research company working in the youth, sport, community and personal development sectors). In 2003 by the end of Phase 1 there were 63 projects. Seventeen of them were in high crime areas. With a combined annual budget of £3.9m, 26,000 youth were reached, which means an average of 420 per scheme. More than nine out of ten were under 17 and almost one in five from black and minority ethnic background (a term commonly used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent). Phase 2 (spanning from 2003−2006) comprised 56 projects financed by £15m from the Home Office Drugs Directorate and Football Foundation. Four in five of attending youngsters took part in sport, notably football and basketball, one in eleven in educational activities (notably arts and anti-drug advice sessions), and one in twelve in recreations (notably outdoor pursuits and trips). In *Cul de sacs and Gateways* (Home Office, 2002, p. 4) *Positive Futures* was described as: "a relationship strategy, based on the principle that engagement through sport and the building of mutual respect and trust can provide cultural 'gateways' to alternative lifestyles." The crucial mentor/leader was a community sports coach. A particular case was made for the ability of football to build relationships through team working. This report aimed to secure more funding, to receive better support from regional agencies, to focus on 17−19s, since most young people hitherto contacted had been aged 10 to 16, to develop a training element, and to implement better monitoring and evaluation. Sport England's evaluation of the 24 projects it co-funded (Chapman, Craig, & Whaley, 2002), showed that increases in sport participation, demonstrating the potential importance of sport as a "hook" for youth (see also Nichols,

2007). Furthermore, in relation to inclusion in sport the evaluation revealed however that girls comprised only a quarter of attenders.

In 2008 the Home Office decided to cease managing *Positive Futures*. The program was tendered and 91 projects were handed over to charitable voluntary agency Crime Concern, renamed Catch 22 and provided with funding till 2011. *Taking it on* (Home Office, Substance, & Catch 22, 2008) recorded 60,000 youth involved, 22% female, now 54% from black minority ethnic groups, and two-thirds self-referred. Football still occupied a third of the provided sessions, but more were multi-sport, and fitness and dance. It recorded specific acts of protection by *Positive Futures* against 20 risk factors for disadvantaged communities identified by the Youth Justice Board (UK). A decade of support is to be applauded, but as with so many local programs, politicians and senior civil servants who are always looking for new messages and projects might see it as "done that, demonstrated that". While this substantial effort and millions of pounds confirmed most strongly all the lessons drawn out by Nichols (2007) and McCormack (2000), it added some modest further understanding. Now that *Positive Futures* is rolled into a much wider portfolio of youth support programs for 96,000 youth in a budget of £53m (Catch 22, 2013), it is now longer identifiable on its own. In 2012–2013 it was involved with new local environmental improvement projects. In 2012 the project installed a national Youth Advisory Board to give young people a voice within the program.

Initially *Positive Futures* was aimed at "young people aged 10–19 with a focus on engaging those young people who are marginalized within the community" (Crime Concern, 2006, p. 8). Local *Positive Futures* projects tended to combine "crime reduction" and "social inclusion" objectives. However, Crabbe (2006a) noted a shift towards a crime reduction/prevention emphasis between 2001 and 2006. Resonating with the overall political ideology—with a punitive "war-on-crime" discourse—of the "*Big Society*". As such, *Positive Futures* has been more recently described as Britain's largest national youth crime prevention program. More recently, the discourse of the program seemed to have completely shifted towards an early interventions approach for potential drug addicts and juvenile delinquents. For example, the website states that: "Positive Futures is a prevention and diversionary program. Funded by the Home Office, the program targets and supports 10–19 year olds who are at risk of becoming drawn into substance misuse and crime". As indicated, *Positive Futures* uses a bottom-up locally embedded philosophy, through which local partnerships can envisage their own project. Although working to national strategic aims, *Positive Futures* projects are locally managed and delivered. They are also highly diverse (Kelly, 2012). Because there is such a diversity of different *Positive Futures* projects, Kelly (2012) argued that it is questionable whether it makes sense to speak of *Positive Futures* as a "program" rather than a collection of projects adopting quite different models of provision. This, amongst others presents challenges for researchers interested in establishing the most effective features of the program in relation to combatting social exclusion through sport-based activities (e.g., Crabbe, 2006b).

7. Inner-Workings of *Positive Futures*

Tim Crabbe and his research team did extensive evaluation research and several evaluation reports between 2005 and 2008 on Positive Futures. For example, Crabbe (2005) assessed organisational case studies of different *Positive Futures* projects, and they argued that *Positive Futures* should not be driven by referral routes, but use "flexible, pragmatic outreach approaches". Crabbe (2006a) found no ready-made model for partnerships, but argued that voluntary sector forms were often more flexible and appropriate than publicly-imposed ones. In terms of impact they concluded that: "Projects working with fewer participants are more likely to have a significant impact on a higher proportion of those they work with than projects working with large numbers" (Crabbe, 2006b, p. 3). The authors contributed this to a function of the quality of mentoring context with fewer participants could achieve. A striking conclusion was that *Positive Futures* could also provide physically and emotionally safe places in "danger zones of racialized and territorial conflict" (2006, p. 4). Crabbe (2006b) further opined that the value of sport could only be realised within a social and personal developmental approach. Frontline grassroots youth work experience was necessary to handle the contrasting nature of both diversionary and developmental work. Laura Kelly conducted field research (Kelly, 2011, 2012) within three *Positive Futures* projects and a pilot site in England. All the projects studies ran predominantly sports-based activity sessions in areas of deprivation, especially estates where most residents are housed by the local authorities. The field research revealed that different key partner agencies were involved in providing the program locally, including: sports providers; local youth justice services; social services departments; education providers; and substance misuse services. Kelly (2012) concluded that partnerships with other practitioners meant resources could be shared, referral pathways managed, and young people better supported. In addition, building links with community members was felt by the program providers to help projects recruit local volunteers and mediate tensions between adults and young people living in the same neighbourhoods. Interview data further indicate young people with learning or behavioural difficulties were known to take part in activities. Because of the range and appeal of the provided sport activities, Kelly argued that that young women could

be marginalized, since projects usually focused on young people with visible "street lives" (Kelly, 2011). These findings resonate with the evaluative research of Chapman et al. (2002) on *Positive Futures*.

In relation to social inclusion in sport, Kelly's research indicated that *Positive Futures* workers acted as referral agents to sports clubs and specialist youth services. The *Positive Futures* projects Kelly included both the large, open-access community sports activities (where were participant–practitioner ratios were often high and were often staffed by coaches employed on a sessional basis and intensive referral-based provision), but also more specialized services. Kelly (2012) argued that: "while relationship building was highlighted by both interviewed young people and practitioners within many aspects of *Positive Futures* work, varying levels of support were available in different parts of the projects data collected from staff and young people at those sites also contain references to relationships, staff working on a one-to-one basis with young people were able to offer much more intensive support, for example by telephone or after standard working hours". Throughout the several evaluation reports that Crabbe and colleagues produced, strategies enabling coaches and youth workers to build relationships with young people were often identified as key mechanisms. These one-to-one and targeted services were reported to be more likely to work with young people experiencing multiple difficulties. Such findings correspond with other research on *Positive Futures* project (Crabbe, 2006b; Nichols, 2007). For example, Nichols (2007) concluded that the researched *Positive Futures* project had an impact through the process of long-term personal development, and that the quality of the relationship between youths and sports leaders was crucial. The quality was said to be highly dependable of the skills and enthusiasm of the staff. However, this requires long-term funding to attract and retain the, as Nichols (2007, p. 118) called: the "right calibre of staff and give them time to build up relationships with young people". Problematically, the changing arrangements of funding both on a national and local level—which is typical for programs such as *Positive Futures*—makes it difficult to create the sufficient and most optimal conditions for this, as program providers may spend more time looking and applying for funding rather than delivering, monitoring and evaluating services in order to attain the highest quality in terms of participant-sport leader relationships.

The field research conducted by, for example, Kelly (2012) showed some evidence that projects changed young people in terms of improved pathways to education and employment opportunities, however: "All studied sites were able to demonstrate beneficial impact in the form of personal testimonies, project-produced case studies and partner reports. As previous work from this project has explored, however, outcome data collated by the studied projects suggest that (known) successful outcomes were restricted to a relatively small number" (Kelly, 2011). In terms of social inclusion through sport, Kelly (2012) argued that *Positive Futures* workers act as "advocates" and "mediators" with the potential to influence policy and practice. Kelly recommends that research into the using sport as a social inclusionary intervention, should focus and generate more understanding regarding the extent to which youth workers and sport practitioners facilitate influence on policies and practices affecting participants.

8. Critical Perspectives

From a more critical perspective, *Positive Futures* could be viewed as, what Ramon Spaaij (2013) referred to as, interventions that are part of a neoliberal policy repertoire aimed at generating social order in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Disadvantage that is instigated by a government retrenching in (social) services to the public and austerity measures. The impact of individualized intervention programs, such a *Positive Futures*, is according to Kelly (2012) limited by their sheer inability to alter substantially the adverse socio-cultural contexts in which social exclusion occurs. Or as Coalter argued (2013), it is perhaps more effective and realistic to change the odds, instead of expecting time and again disadvantaged groups to beat insurmountable odds through limited-focused sport-based interventions. Related to this, Nichols (2007) argued that *Positive Futures* programs were not designed to deal with multiple problems young people face, such as housing and employment, but notwithstanding this sport leaders had to deal with such daily realities in order for participants to be able to stay on the program. More problematically, since *Positive Futures* explicitly aims at a focusing on engaging those young people who are marginalized within the community" (Crime Concern, 2006, p. 8), Kelly (2012) suggested that in order to secure funding, managers and practitioners will feel pressurized to emphasize the riskiness or level of disadvantage of their participants. This has, according to Kelly (2012) at least two problematic (unintended) outcomes. Firstly, as already indicated above, the discourse of interventions targeting the most at-risk or vulnerable young people perpetuates a negative representation and territorial stigmatization of specific groups in society and the neighbourhoods they live in. Secondly, new models of funding and a payment-by-results accountability risk introducing new incentives, as Kelly (2012, p. 114) put it, that "focus on less challenging (potential) participants and prioritize short-term interventions over long-term relationship building". What is more, research has illustrated how youth programs pursuing fixed externally defined outcomes potentially have the perverse effect of excluding those who differ most from a desired developmental trajectory or pro-

gram endpoint (Coussée, Roets, & De Bie, 2009; Tiffany, 2011). This is especially relevant if such a trajectory or endpoint is conceptualized based on mainstream conventions and practices regarding education, employment or positive youth development, conventions and practices that are perpetuated by the same institutions (for example, schools and career services) that make young people vulnerable in the first place (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Nols, 2013). In this context, Tiffany and Pring (2008) have argued that the most marginalized young people are less likely to participate in highly structured and pre-described leisure activities. This paradoxical consequence of strategies that concentrate on implying individual solutions to social exclusion has been coined by Tiffany (2011) as a "*Pistachio Effect*", in which the harder nuts to crack are, at best, left until later, or at worst, simply disregarded.

This stark scepticism and criticism is by no means an argument to stop funding or implementing programs like *Positive Futures*, as sport can bring joy and achievement for many people who have not had much of either in other spheres of their lives so far. According to Collins and Kay (2014) if such programs can be a policy partner and a tool (albeit a small one) for combatting social exclusion, to be effective, sport-based inclusionary programs need to be much more people-focused; longer term, better led, and designed with and not just for the people and organization intended to be beneficiaries. Additionally, as Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Coalter (2012, p. 450) indicated sport-based practices could be viewed as contexts that, through working with youth, provide us the understanding how the structures and arrangements of society exclude young people in the first place. Such an understanding is according to Haudenhuyse et al. (2012) critically important if we wish to meaningfully intervene in the lives of young people living in poverty and being confronted with social exclusion. However, under an austerity regime, the individualization and moralization of broad societal problems such as poverty, the—often unintended—negative representations of youth facing social exclusion and living in deprived areas, the exclusion of harder-to-include youth (as an organizational survival strategy fuelled by a payment-by-results logic) and the underfinancing of sport-based programs, are likely only to worsen under what has been described as a "neo-liberal shock doctrine" (see Levitas, 2012). According to Ekholm (2013), research on sport as a means for wider social "inclusionary" outcomes should be "approached from a social constructionist perspective, focusing on the construction of meaning, knowledge and the significance of sport in terms of ideology and welfare" (p. 115). Ekholm (2013, p. 115) argues that such an approach could further problematize and critically expose the underlying assumptions, distinctions, ideologies and research positions that constitute the conceptions surrounding sport as a means for social inclusion.

9. Concluding Thoughts

When writing this paper, Eurostat (2015) published a report showing the progressing of the EU 2020 targets the European Union set out for itself in 2010. The key objectives of the EU 2020 strategy are expressed in the form of five targets in the areas of employment, research & development (R&D), climate change & energy, education and poverty reduction, to be reached by 2020. In relation to employment rates and people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, the Eurostat report shows a distancing in these two domains from the targets the EU set out. The Europe 2020 strategy has set the target of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. However, the Eurostat progression report indicates that the EU is in terms of poverty and social exclusion drifting away from the targets it set out for itself. In other words, between 2008 and 2013 more people have been driven into poverty and social exclusion. Although The United Kingdom has not adopted specific national Europe 2020 targets, Eurostat (2015) shows that after the deterioration in employment rates during the economic crisis (2008 to 2011), the indicator increased again to 74.9% in 2013, exceeding the EU average of 68.4%. Furthermore, according to Eurostat (2015) the development in the area of poverty has been equally unfavourable, with the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion peaking at in 2013. Amongst all the European countries (incl. eastern European countries such as Bulgaria and Romania) only Italy scores worse than the UK. Recently, Jenkins (2015) estimated that UK and EU-15 poverty rates are expected to increase by around two percentage points in the following four years.

Our opening sentence began with stating that 2010 was the European Year of Social Inclusion, through which the EU confirmed the role of sport as "a driver of active social inclusion" (Council of the European Union, 2010), with particular reference to accessibility, disadvantage and gender. But in Britain, sport's puny policy leverage—what Coalter (2013, p. 18) called "epiphenomenal, a secondary set of social practices dependent upon and reflecting more fundamental structures"—is powerless against the structural forces listed above. And one must expect it to suffer inequity and exclusion to at least as great as other sectors of society. Levitas (2012) argued that since the austerity measures of the Coalition government, all local authority services are at risk of reduction or complete disappearance, including youth clubs and other leisure provisions. Sport services have always been "under threat", but King (2013) argues that the reductions to local government finance and the political orientation away from state provision, will lead to sport services facing their most serious threat to date. In contrast to the previous Labour government that prioritized sport as an instrument to tackle social exclusion and widening participation, the Coa-

lition government has discontinued area-based grants that supported interventions to promote social inclusion in and through sport (King, 2012, p. 352). According to King (2012), the Coalition government reduced local governance finance via a 28% cut to the department for Communities and Local Government budget over four years. Such cuts have led to the curtailment of sport services as an area of discretionary spend. This rolling back in Sport-for-All and Sport-for-Good policies (and programs), is in stark contrast with the Coalition governments support for the 2012 Olympic games, of which the impact on the wider sport participation of people living in England and the assumed urban regenerative outcomes are debatable to non-existent (Collins & Kay, 2014).

While the economy is better in Britain than in Greece, Portugal or Spain and many other countries, this litany suggests that social polarization is again increasing (Dorling, 2010, 2014).The social divides in health, lifespan and quality of life so graphically illustrated by Marmot (2010, 2011)—including sport and leisure—seem unlikely to reduce for a long time. Looking globally, Piketty (2013) took a more radical view that capitalism seeks to gather wealth into ever-fewer, powerful hands, outstripping the attempts of super-managers in financial services, oil trading, biotechnology, electronics, etc., to pay themselves ever-larger salaries and bonuses, and without thought for inequity. Hills, Sefton and Stewart (2009) spoke of a "tide turned but mountains left to climb". But the tide is on the flood again, increasingly raising moral issues, for example, that inequity is unjust (Rawls, 1971) as well as economic ones, for example, that poverty is a waste and inefficient (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Against such unsurmountable odds, the question can be raised what sport, as a puny policy leverage (Houlihan & Lindsey, 2013) can possible mean against wider powerful social structures generating inequity and exclusion. And this on the one hand in terms of *inclusion in sport* and addressing processes of social exclusion that hinders people from doing sports, which are mainly beyond the scope of sport policy and seem to be further worsened by the austerity measures. But on the other hand, also in terms of *inclusion through sport* and addressing the implications of austerity measures on the closure of sport-based social inclusion schemes (such as *Positive Futures*), and their increasing inadequacy in the face of social exclusion.

It is important to note that the research conducted for the case study of *Positive Futures* is from 2012 (although field data were gathered earlier). The above-described trends in poverty in England since the financial crash need to be situated from 2008 and onward. It is likely that the impact of the austerity measures did not influence projects such as *Positive Futures* during the time field research was conducted in the reported studies. The impact of any policy measure is likely to manifest itself only after some time. For example, according to Sabatier (2007) the impact of most policy measures can take up to 10 years. Although we might argue that some policy measures in terms of, for example, welfare benefits or social support policy measures for people living in poverty (e.g. social housing) can have a more direct short-term effect on the lives of people in poverty. More research would be needed to see how this and other case studies can be positioned in relation to more current poverty trends and the effects of policy measures taken in 2010. These points notwithstanding, the case study described here focuses on the possible impact and frictions of "austerity" policies on poverty, social exclusion and sport. And in particular the implications this could have on interventions targeted to combat social exclusion or promote social inclusion and the broader contexts in which sports-based interventions are run.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Commentary

Sport-for-Change: Some Thoughts from a Sceptic

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Abstract
Sport's historic attraction for policy makers has been its claims that it can offer an economy of remedies to seemingly intractable social problems—"social inclusion", "development". Such usually vague and ill-defined claims reflect sport's marginal policy status and its attempts to prove its more general relevance. The dominance of evangelical beliefs and interest groups, who tend to view research in terms of affirmation of their beliefs, is restricting conceptual and methodological development of policy and practice. There is a need to de-reify "sport" and to address the issue of *sufficient conditions*—the mechanisms, processes and experiences which might produce positive impacts for some participants. This requires researchers and practitioners to develop approaches based on robust and systematic programme theories. However, even if systematic and robust evidence is produced for the relative effectiveness of certain types of programme, we are left with the problem of *displacement of scope*—the process of wrongly generalising micro level (programme) effects to the macro (social). Although programme rhetoric frequently claims to address *social* issues most programmes have an inevitably individualist perspective. Further, as participation in sport is closely related to socially structured inequalities, it might be that rather than sport contributing to "social inclusion", various aspects of social inclusion may *precede* such participation. In this regard academics and researchers need to adopt a degree of scepticism and to reflect critically on what we and, most especially, others might already know. There is a need to theorise sport-for-change's limitations as well as its "potential".

Keywords
displacement of scope; programme theory; scepticism; sport-for-change

Issue
This commentary is part of the special issue "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges", edited by Dr. Reinhard Haudenhuyse (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium) and Professor Marc Theeboom (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)

1. Inflated and Vague Promises

Despite claims that sport-for-development or sport-for-change is "new", the historic rationale for investment in sport has consistently been based on supposed externalities—sport's presumed ability to teach "lessons for life", to contribute to "character building" (President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, 2006) and its supposed ability to contribute to the reduction of a variety of social problems. Sport's attraction for policy makers has been a perception that it can offer an economy of remedies to seemingly intractable social problems (e.g., crime, "social inclusion", "development").

Despite the absence of systematic, robust supportive evidence (Coalter, 2007; President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, 2006), sports evangelists have made wide-ranging, if rather vague and ill-defined, claims about sport's capacity to address issues of personal and social development. In part this reflects Weiss's (1993) contention that inflated promises are most likely to occur in marginal policy areas which are seeking to gain legitimacy and funding from mainstream agencies. For example, Houlihan and White (2002) contend that sport tends to be opportunistic and reactive—a policy taker and not a policy maker. In such circumstances "holders of diverse values and dif-

ferent interests have to be won over, and in the process a host of inflated and unrealistic goal commitments are made" (Weiss, 1993, p. 96).

These processes were given a major boost by two broad shifts in social policy in the late 1990s. Firstly, starting in the UK, but soon spreading worldwide (Bloom, Grant, & Watt, 2005; The Australian Sports Commission, 2006), was a shift from the traditional welfare approach of developing sport *in* the community, to seeking to develop communities *through* sport (Coalter, 2007) as sport promoted itself as being able to contribute to the new, ill-defined, "social inclusion" agenda**.**

The second opportunity arose with the United Nations' embrace of sport to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Like the concept of social inclusion, the MDGs shifted the focus of investment from economic capital to social capital, with a focus on personal and "social inclusion" issues—strengthening education, improving community safety and social cohesion, helping girls and women and youth at risk and addressing issues of public health (including HIV and AIDS) (Kidd, 2008). Such people-centred objectives resonated with many of sport's traditional claims about contributing to personal and social development. However, as with social inclusion, the concept of sport-for-development remains "intriguingly vague and open for several interpretations" (Kruse, 2006, p. 8).

Kruse's comment indicates that, despite sport's new opportunities (and its opportunism), there are a number of unresolved issues with the assertions made by the conceptual entrepreneurs of sport-for-change. For example, Coakley (2011, p. 307) argues much of the rhetoric of sports evangelists can be viewed as "unquestioned beliefs grounded in wishful thinking". Hartmann and Kwauk (2011, pp. 285-286) refer to "anecdotal evidence, beliefs about the impact of sport in sound bites of individual and community transformation, packaged and delivered more often than not by those running the programs".

2. From Faith to Theory

Firstly, the presumed developmental impacts and outcomes of such programmes tend to be vague, ill-defined and lack the clarity and intellectual coherence that evaluation criteria should have. There is a general conceptual weakness, with a widespread failure to offer precise definitions of "sport"; a failure to consider the nature, extent and duration of *participation* to achieve presumed impacts; the precise nature of *individual impacts* (i.e., the effect of sport on participants) and the nature of their presumed causal relationship with *outcomes* (the resulting individual behaviour change). Such variety and lack of precision raise substantial issues of validity and comparability and reduce greatly the possibility of cumulative research findings.

This conceptual imprecision is accompanied by methodological weaknesses. It must be admitted there are *generic* methodological difficulties in defining and measuring the impacts and outcomes of many social interventions and attributing cause and effect in any simple and straightforward way. However, such basic issues of social science methods are often ignored, especially by the evangelists. In part this is because some view research in terms of affirmation rather than understanding or critique. In the words of Johan Koss, President of Right to Play, "we invite people to do research into things like sport and development, sport and peace. We need to prove what we say that we do" (van Kampen, 2003, p. 15). Or, UNICEF (2006, p. 1) arguing that there was "a shared belief in the power of sport-for-development [and] a shared determination to find ways to document and objectively verify the positive impact of sport".

These beliefs exist despite the existence of an extensive body of sport and related research which raises fundamental questions about the validity of the overly generalised assertions about sport's capacity to achieve certain developmental impacts (Coalter, 2007). It is significant that such research is frequently ignored on the basis of the spurious, legitimating, claim that this is a "new" area of policy and practice.

More fundamentally and related to the lack of clarity is the issue of *sufficient conditions.* Participation in "sport", however defined and however provided, is a necessary but not *sufficient* condition to obtain any supposed benefits. In this regard Coakley (1998, p. 2) argues that we need to regard "sports as sites for socialisation experiences, not causes of socialisation outcomes" and Hartmann (2003, p. 134) argues that "the success of any sports-based social intervention program is largely determined by the strength of its non-sport components". It might be argued that the widespread use of *sport plus* approaches (Coalter, 2007) indicates a recognition of the developmental limits of "sport". Consequently, there is a need for more systematic, analytical information about the various mechanisms, processes and experiences associated with participation in "sport". We require a better understanding about what sports and sports' *processes,* produce what *impacts,* for which *participants* and in what *circumstances.* One possible approach to such issues is provided by a *theory of change* (Granger, 1998), or programme theory (Coalter, 2013a; Pawson, 2006; Weiss, 1997).

A programme theory seeks to identify the components, mechanisms, relationships and sequences of causes and effects which programme providers presume lead to desired impacts and outcomes—a theory of value, attitude and behaviour change. It seeks to understand the nature of *sufficient conditions*—the processes and experiences necessary to maximise the potential to achieve desired impacts. Such an approach:

- Assists in the formulation of theoretically coherent, realistic and precise impacts related to programme processes and participants;
- Enables the identification of *critical success factors* enabling a more informed approach to programme design and management;
- Explores potentially generic mechanisms, thus providing a basis for generalisation in order to inform future programme design.

3. Displacement of Scope and Structural Inequalities

However, even if systematic and robust evidence is produced for the relative effectiveness of certain types of programme, even if we can identify the *generic mechanisms* which enable some programmes to contribute to the personal development of some participants (Coalter, 2013b; Pawson, 2006), we are left with the problem of *displacement of scope* (Wagner, 1964). This refers to the process of wrongly generalising micro level (programme) effects to the macro (social). This in part relates to old debates within social science about the relationship between the individual and the social, or even between values, attitudes, intentions and behaviour.

Although programme rhetoric frequently claims to address *social* issues—crime, social exclusion, "development"—most programmes have an essentially, and inevitably, individualist perspective. Weiss (1993, p. 103) suggests that many social interventions fail because they are "fragmented, one-service-at-a-time programs, dissociated from people's total patterns of living". Further, Weiss's (1993, p. 105) more general comment about social policy interventions and their "blame the victim" perspectives can be viewed within the context of sport-for-change programmes:

> We mount limited-focus programs to cope with broad-gauge problems. We devote limited resources to long-standing and stubborn problems. Above all we concentrate attention on changing the attitudes and behaviour of target groups without concomitant attention to the institutional structures and social arrangements that tend to keep them "target groups".

In relation to such structural issues the work of Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) raises even more fundamental issues. Their core argument relates to the central importance of the *relative inequality* of income and low levels of social mobility in explaining a range of social problems. Their data illustrate that many of the problems commonly associated with social exclusion (and to which sport offers solutions)—crime, obesity, poor general health, poor educational performance, weak community cohesion—are strongly correlated with societal levels of relative inequality, with more equal countries having much lower levels of such problems. Further, it is clear that sports participation is related to structural issues underpinning social inclusion. For example, van Bottenburg, Rijnen, & van Sterkenburg (2005) illustrate that the level of educational achievement is the most important determinant of sports behaviour. Also given the very strong relationship between social class and educational opportunity, it is not surprising that there is a strong relationship between social class and sports participation. Also, the level of female sports participation is clearly strongly correlated with the relative status of women in society (Coalter, 2013c; van Bottenburg et al., 2005)—one which is closely related to levels on inequality.

Such consistent relationships between social structure and sports participation have led one major international review of the effectiveness of sports policy interventions (Nicholson, Hoye & Houlihan, 2011, p. 305) to conclude that:

> It is evident…that government policies designed to increase sports participation have had limited success….Some have had success…within small communities or specific cohorts…[but] the same level of success has not been apparent within the mass population….It is also clear that governments and researchers don't know enough about the way in which complex systems of organisations function to either induce or disrupt sports participation patterns.

Such persistent differentials raise important issues for policies of 'sport and social inclusion', whose success depends on achieving the necessary condition of increased participation in sport by many socially marginal and consistently "under-participating" groups. In this regard van Bottenburg et al. (2005, p. 208) raise significant questions about using sport to address social issues via an individualistic perspective, by arguing that exercise and sport are thoroughly social phenomena and that "the choice to take part in sport, how, where, what and with whom is directly related to the issue of how people see and wish to present themselves…socio-culturally determined views and expectations also play a role here".

The broad conclusion to be drawn from the above analyses is to reverse the current fashion for arguing that sport can contribute to increased "social inclusion" and suggests that various aspects of social inclusion *precede* such participation. Further, even if sport provides some degree of individual amelioration for some of these problems, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009, p. 26) offer a salutary warning about neo-Liberal, individualized approaches to such problems:

> Even when the various services are successful in stopping someone reoffending…getting someone

off drugs or dealing with educational failure, we know that our societies are endlessly re-creating these problems in each new generation.

4. A Need for Scepticism

Black (2010, p. 122) argues that the recent expansion of sport-for-development policy and practice has not been underpinned by "critical and theoretically-informed reflection" and others have suggested that there is a need to step back and to reflect critically on what we and, most especially, others might already know (Coakley, 2011; Crabbe, 2008; Tacon, 2007). In this regard Portes (2000, p. 4) argues that "gaps between received theory and actual reality have been so consistent as to institutionalize a disciplinary skepticism in sociology against sweeping statements, no matter from what ideological quarter they come". The need for scepticism is nowhere more relevant than in the area of sport-for-change. Such an approach can contribute to the intellectual and practical development of sport-for-development by placing it within a much wider world of knowledge and research and by theorising its limitations as well as outlining its "potential".

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Exclusionary Practices of Youth Sport

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Abstract
Youth who live with lower incomes are known to experience social exclusion in a range of social settings, including sport. Despite efforts to reduce financial constraints to participation, increasing opportunities in these ways has not led to increased involvement. There is a need to move beyond a discussion about barriers and explore the quality of young people's engagement within sport. The present study consequently sought to understand the sport involvement of young people living with lower incomes. Interpretive description informed the analysis of transcripts generated from interviews with ten youth (aged 13-18 years) and six parents. Three themes captured the ways income had a prominent influence on the sports involvement of young people. Sports settings generally required that young people acquire abilities from an early age and develop these concertedly over time. The material circumstances in which youth were brought up impacted the extent to which they could or wanted to participate in these ways. The final theme outlines the experiences of young people in sport when they possessed less cultural capital than others in the field. The findings of the study collectively highlight a number of interconnected exclusionary processes in sport and demonstrate the need to reimagine sport in ways that challenge the hegemonic discourses continuing to exclude a large number of young people.

Keywords
ability; cultural capital; exclusion; low-income; sport; youth

Issue
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1. Introduction

Sport has been used as a tool to address the social exclusion of young people[1] in wider policy agendas (Collins & Kay, 2003; Dagkas & Armour, 2012). Social exclusion has been defined generally as occurring when individuals are unable to participate in relationships and activities due to a lack of resources, rights and services (Levitas at al., 2007). Hailed for its capacity to provide opportunities for connection and belonging, sport is positioned as having the potential to mitigate some aspects of social exclusion and engage young people who may be excluded in other areas of their lives (Collins & Kay, 2014).

Despite this, sport itself remains a site of social exclusion (Dagkas & Armour, 2012). Exclusion within and from sport has been specifically conceptulized as a process that negatively impacts a person's rights, recognition, resources and/or their opportunity to participate (Spaaij, Magee, & Jeanes, 2014). It is worth considering exclusion in opposition to inclusion, which

[1] The terms "young people" and "youth" are used synonymously and interchangeably (Dagkas & Armour, 2012) to describe individuals between the ages of 13 and 18 years, as defined by the practice-based partners in the study.

has been described as the sense of belonging to, participating in, contributing to and accessing sporting activities (Spaaij et al., 2014). In light of this, social exclusion not only involves a lack of opportunties to participate in sport, but can also include experiences of othering in sporting contexts (MacDonald, Pang, Knez, Nelson, & McCuaig, 2012).

Research examining social exclusion in sport has found that exclusion tends to be mediated by income, gender, (dis)ability, ethnicity and sexuality (e.g., Collins & Kay, 2014; Goodwin & Peers, 2012; Kay, 2014). Trends have indicated lower participation rates for any individuals that diverge from the white, middle class, able, heterosexual male norms that pervade sport (Collins, 2008). Many young people are therefore known to experience exclusion from sport. Girls, for example, have reported experiencing exclusion in sport as a result of male dominance and the (re)production of stringent gender expectations (Kay & Jeanes, 2008). These same gender expectations and the heteronormative masculine ideals that result are known to alienate a great many individuals who do not resonate with them (Wellard, 2006). Inextricably tied up in these ideals are narrow expectations of ability that support goals of competition and aggression (Hay, 2012; Wellard, 2006). Such ideals impact the sporting experiences of a large number of young people, including those experiencing disability (Goodwin & Peers, 2012). As a final example, income, the focus of the present paper, can influence both young peoples' desire and capacity to participate in sport (Bourdieu, 1991). The findings from this research suggest that a great number of young people experience exclusion both from and within sport and these experiences require further exploration (Collins & Kay, 2014; Spaiij et al., 2014).

1.1. Unequal Sporting Chances

Young people's relationship with sport and the extent to which they experience exclusion are influenced by dominant societal discourses that are (re)produced through sport. As mentioned, sport has a tendency to support the participation of those who fit dominant white, middle class, able, heteronormative, male discourses, while undermining the involvement of those who do not (DePauw, 1997). Neither the amount of sport opportunities nor the profits that can be accrued through sports participation (e.g., a sense of belonging, enjoyment or acclaim) are therefore equally available to all young people (Bourdieu, 1984). In particular, living with a lower income has the potential to undermine the involvement of young people and make the profits of sport more difficult to attain (Collins & Kay, 2014).

The term "living with a lower income" is used here to describe individuals who have less economic and cultural capital as a result of their income. Not simply an objective categorization, a lower income (a young person's own income or that of their parents) is experienced subjectively, and can influence much broader matters of education, housing, and values (Bourdieu & Waquant, 2013). Young people who live with lower incomes are known to experience social exclusion from and within sport. As a result, there is an important need to understand the ways sport reproduces these processes of social exclusion so they can be challenged (Spaaij et al., 2014).

1.2. Participation and Barriers

Research exists that has begun to explore the exclusion of young people living with lower incomes from sport. However, these studies have largely been limited to concerns about low participation rates (Donnelly, 1993; Spaaij et al., 2014), which have been predominantly attributed to financial "barriers" such as the cost of sports, lack of transportation, and the time commitment necessary to participate (Penney, 2001). Although a useful starting point, this research explains only a small part of a much larger process of social exclusion. Such narrow approaches may also unintentionally and erroneously attribute differences in participation to low motivation when opportunities are provided (e.g., through fee assistance programs) but youth do not participate (Ingham, Chase, & Butt, 2002). As a consequence, these young people may be labelled as deviant and problematic (MacDonald, 2003; Wright, MacDonald, & Groom, 2003). A focus on individual attitudes cannot sufficiently explain the ways young people's circumstances intersect with their desires and the opportunities available to them (Wright et al., 2003). Accordingly, drop-out narratives may mask and potentially exacerbate the discourses in sport that privilege the participation of some young people while undermining that of others, making motivations of choice neither a simple (nor equal) proposition.

1.3. Hidden Requirements in Sport

Characterizing sport as a level playing field where all young people can aspire to the same goals of participation does not accurately represent the ways sport has the potential to exclude (Evans & Bairner, 2013). Far from equal, there are hidden requirements for sport engagement that disproportionately impact young people living with lower incomes (Bourdieu, 2010). These hidden requirements go beyond the need for financial resources and involve, among a range of demands, early participation, particular abilities, and appropriate clothing. Rather than consider the experiences of young people as a matter of the individual, there is consequently a need to consider the empirical experiences of young people living with lower incomes *within* the cultural context of sport (Ingham et al., 2002). By considering the ways in which sport is an unequal play-

ing field for young people experiencing lower incomes, we can begin to see how they may be impacted by exclusion (Spaaij et al., 2014).

Youth are likely to move in and out of sport at different times in their lives, making exclusion a fluid process rather than a discrete end point (MacDonald, Pang, Knez, Nelson, & McCuaig, 2012). Evans and Bairner (2013) have recognized the importance of exploring these varied experiences, stating the need to question how sports are "read and received in specific contexts of opportunity, by specific social groups, with specific needs and resources to access them" (p. 152). However, our understanding of the many ways young people living with lower incomes actually experience sport is thus far inadequate (MacPhail, 2012). This is a critical omission given that complete exclusion from sport is an unlikely scenario for most young people (Spaaij et al., 2014). The majority of young people have *some* experience of sport, whether this occurs casually with friends, in an organized community setting, or at school. Yet our understanding of these experiences remains sparse.

1.4. Experiences of Young People in Sport

Although the number of studies exploring the sport experiences of young people living with lower incomes is limited, there are several researchers whose work begins to uncover some of the processes of exclusion that youth might encounter. Coakley and White (1999) interviewed fifty-nine young people (aged between 13–20) to understand the decision-making processes that influenced their sport involvement. Approximately three-quarters of the youth were living with lower incomes. The researchers found that young people's participation was indeed influenced by more than only financial constraints. Among other factors, youth spoke about the need for adequate physical skills, in addition to their desire for activities that were not tightly controlled by adults.

As part of a collection of studies, Macdonald et al. (2012) examined the place and meaning of sport for young people. They interviewed Indigenous, Asian and Islamic youth between the ages of 10 and 16 in Australia and Hong Kong. The findings from these interviews suggested that despite participants' desire for inclusion, factors such as cost, geographical dis/location, cultural constraints and racism made participation difficult. The impacts of financial resources in this study were, however, limited to a discussion about cost and transportation as barriers.

Finally, Quarmby and Dagkas (2013) explored the place and meaning of physical activity for young people between the ages of 11 and 14 living with lower incomes in lone-parent families. They found that the availability of financial resources impacted participation in a number of ways, beyond the difficulties associated with cost and transportation. For example, they found that the material conditions of young people's lives influenced the value they placed on physical activity.

These studies offer an important starting point from which to begin understanding the sport experiences of young people who live with lower incomes and the ways in which these experiences may be exclusionary. However, greater exploration of how these young people experience sport is required (MacPhail, 2012). Such research would provide a deeper understanding of the exclusionary practices of youth sport so they can be challenged in relevant and meaningful ways. In the present study we consequently set out to explore the sport experiences of young people living with lower incomes, questioning how sport itself may be implicated as an unequal, differentiating and exclusionary practice. A brief overview of Bourdieu's work is provided to explain how it was used to inform the analysis of data in the study.

2. Theoretical Framework

The work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1991, 2010, 2013) was used to inform the analysis of the empirical data and provide a framework for understanding the experiences of young people in sport. Bourdieu's concepts of *capital, field* and *habitus* helped to uncover some of the ways in which income influenced young people's experiences of sport, beyond just the availability of financial resources to purchase opportunities.

Sport participation requires a certain amount of both economic capital and cultural capital for youth to gain opportunities for sport and have enjoyable experiences when they do. *Economic capital* includes not only resources of money but also related privileges such as the availability of spare time. *Cultural capital* is the profit or privileges that can be gained through the expression of particular ways of being that are valued in a cultural *field* (Bourdieu, 1984). Cultural capital includes the possession of ability in its broadest sense, i.e., performing in ways that were valued in a sport context. It also results from the possession of values and desires that are aligned with those reproduced in sport. The acquisition of cultural capital in sport and across other fields (e.g., education, family life) occurs at an early age and is influenced by a person's *habitus,* a system of tastes and preferences that defines the attachment of meaning to social practices (Bourdieu, 1991).

Habitus is strongly influenced by the material conditions of a person's life (Bourdieu, 1984). The habitus of individuals are consequently shaped by the subjective ways they experience their incomes (Bourdieu & Waquant, 2013). A young person's habitus can shape the ways they attach meaning to sport and influence the extent to which they can acquire cultural capital in a particular field. Because capital is unequally distributed to maintain its value, young people have to com-

pete for sporting capital with other participants who may have more favourable material conditions for accumulating the profits that are available through sport.

Bourdieu's concepts of capital, field and habitus helped to draw lines between the individual and shared experiences of young people and how these were mediated by their lower incomes. The ways material conditions can shape habitus and contribute to an unequal distribution of capital uncovers some of the ways sport continues to be a site of exclusion for young people living with lower incomes.

3. Methods

3.1. Developing the Research

The purpose of this study was to understand the sport experiences of young people living with lower incomes. A community-based approach informed the research process to bring together a more diverse set of knowledge and expertise across practice-based and academic contexts (Cargo & Mercer, 2008). The first author (a university researcher) initiated a partnership between two municipal accessibility coordinators and a youth initiatives coordinator from a provincial recreation association. Partners met 1–3 times per month depending on the stage of the project over a period of two-and-a-half years. The partnership collectively developed the scope of the project, which included the research questions, methods, timelines, responsibilities, goals, and ethics (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998). Interpretive Description (Thorne, Reimer Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997) was the method chosen for the project with the intention of generating knowledge that could bridge academic and professional contexts. Relevant literature was drawn upon to provide "scaffolding" through which to ground the study (Thorne, Reimer Kirkham, & O'Flynn, 2004, p. 5). The design of the research was additionally shaped by the practice-based knowledge provided by the partners (Thorne et al., 1997).

We conducted the research in a community where the Department of Recreation and Culture had introduced fee assistance for recreation for residents experiencing lower incomes (and in which two of the partners worked). Passes were provided that enabled free use of local recreation facilities and a reduced rate on program registration (25% of the original cost). Those who received passes were also referred to other services to reduce barriers to participation, such as the provision of additional funding for equipment, bus passes, and registration in sports programs outside those offered by the Department (e.g., by schools, community leagues, private clubs). We were particularly interested in understanding the experiences of the young people living in the community (between the ages of 13–18) whose parents had received fee assistance. According to facility-use records, young people had the lowest participation out of all those who had received assistance and we believed this might have represented a larger pattern of involvement. Parents and children under the age of 13 were comparatively the highest users.

Ethical approval for the project was granted from a University Research Ethics Board during the initial stages of the partnership and a modified ethics proposal was approved once the scope of the project had been determined. Partners additionally engaged in discussions throughout the project about the most appropriate way to conduct the research, reflecting a relational ethics approach (Boser, 2007).

3.2. Participants

Given an expressed need in the literature to consult young people about their sport experiences (MacPhail, 2012), we prioritized interviews with young people (between the ages of 13–18) in addition to speaking with parents about the fee assistance they received. The community where the research took place was affluent and predominantly white, with a rapidly growing population of approximately 92,000 residing in the urban centre and surrounding rural areas (Municipal Census Report, 2012). To recruit participants one of the accessibility coordinators sent 150 letters to young people whose families had received fee assistance and consented to being contacted by the Department. To receive fee assistance, the parents of these young people had attended an intake meeting at their local Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) branch and expressed their desire for assistance due to a lack of disposable income (more often than not this was determined by an income cut-off).

In total, 10 young people (13–18 years) and 6 parents participated in either a group or individual interview. All of the parents we spoke with were mothers, five of whom were raising their children as single parents. Single parent in this sense meant that parents were divorced or separated from their partners and were no longer living with them. The extent to which their ex-partners were part of their children's lives varied across families. Two of the three young people interviewed without their parents present shared that their fathers had left home when they were younger. One was also living apart from her mother as a result of alcohol addiction.

The study participants had experienced lower incomes for varying amounts of time. Some of the parents previously had higher incomes and found themselves in newer circumstances as a result of separation, disability, and/or abuse. Other parents and young people had lived with a lower income over a more sustained period of time. The housing circumstances of the families were largely unknown, but two of the in-

terviews took place in housing cooperatives in the urban centre. In terms of employment, four of the parents worked (one of these women was concurrently pursuing higher education). Two parents experienced disability and could no longer work. As such they received an assured disability income of approximately $16,200 annually (compared to the median family income of $94,460 in the province) (Statistics Canada, 2012).

The material conditions of the participants' lives are significant in this study because they are understood to shape the habitus of individuals over time. They are thus likely to have influenced the young people's relationship to sport and the extent to which they could accrue cultural capital (Bourdieu & Waquant, 2013). In terms of participation, only one of the youth participants was continually engaged in structured activity, some moved from program to program in search of positive experiences, and others were not involved in sport at all at the time of the interviews.

3.3. Data Collection

The study comprised one individual interview and seven group interviews. Young people could choose to take part in an individual or group interview, with or without their parent. Two interviews were conducted without parents present. There were challenges with the group interviews—for example, one of the parents felt unable to discuss income-related topics in front of her child and waited until she was out of the room to do so. However, the majority of youth stated a preference for a group interview. Youth aged 14 and above were permitted to consent to an interview without the additional consent of a parent, in line with the view that young people have the capacity to make informed decisions about their own interests and consistent with other community-based research approaches (e.g., Flicker & Guta, 2008; Roddy Holder, 2008).

The interviews took place in a number of locations that included the community library, recreation centres and participants' homes. Interviews were semi-structured and as such, an interview guide was used as a foundation from which to ask young people about their experiences of physical activity more generally, a term we felt would best capture the range of young people's experiences and encompassed sport, exercise, and play. Questions asked young people what physical activity meant to them, how important they felt it was to their lives, the nature of their participation, the opportunities available to them, and the extent to which it met their desires. Through these questions, participants often discussed sport-like activities, such as hockey, gymnastics, soccer, dance, and basketball. Follow-up questions were asked to explore these experiences in more depth. Parents were also invited into the discussion about their children's involvement. To avoid insensitivity, questions related to income were not asked unless parents first raised the topic. During the interviews without parents, young people all raised the issue of income themselves. The interviews each lasted approximately one hour and were audio taped and transcribed for analysis.

3.4. Analysis

Initial immersion in the data, which comprised numerous readings and re-readings of the transcripts, revealed that youth had multiple experiences of exclusion in and from sport across varying levels and ages. At this stage of the analysis, an iterative approach was adopted in order to navigate between the data and a broad body of literature (Thorne, 2008). For example, social theory was drawn upon to better understand the influence of class relations and how these were working at an individual level while simultaneously working in ways that connected young people through their experiences living with lower incomes. A constant comparative technique was applied to make these relationships more apparent (Thorne et al., 2004). Through this process it became evident that the exclusion experienced in and from sport by young people was closely tied to cultural capital and was mediated by their lower incomes. Bourdieu's work (1984, 1991, 2010, 2013) was drawn upon to inform the remainder of the analysis. In particular the concepts of field, habitus and capital were considered to examine the influence of material circumstances on young people's experiences of sport. Using this lens, the exclusionary practices of sport became more apparent. The data was thus organized into three themes to demonstrate the ways the young people in the study experienced social exclusion in and from sport. These themes are presented below as, *The Fundamental Isn't Even There, The Way You're Brought Up,* and *One of the Worst.* Pseudonyms have been used in place of participants' real names to protect their identities.

4. The Sport Experiences of Young People

The accounts provided by the participants in the study called attention to the prominent influence of cultural capital on young people's experiences. Ability, as a form of cultural capital, appeared necessary for meaningful involvement. Evans (2004) has described ability as the possession of a range of attributes that are valued in the sport setting. One study participant, Brittany, who was 15 years old, described ability as a particular form of knowledge. She described this in relation to her own capacity to be involved saying, *"I would like sports but I don't know how they work. Soccer is the only one I really understand"*.

Knowing how sports "work" required learning how to engage in a culture in which particular ways of being—dispositions, appearances and actions—were de-

sired (Hay, 2012). Knowledge was not only about learning the constitutive rules in the setting, it also included knowing how to perform field-specific skills (such as ball-handling skills, offensive strategy, etc.) in addition to performing in less obvious ways (such as conforming to particular sports "etiquette") (Hay & Hunter, 2006). Without these necessary forms of ability, young people experienced exclusion within and from sport.

Themes were created using the participants' own words and demonstrate the ways young people experienced social exclusion as a result of the demand for particular ways of being in sport. The first theme, *The Fundamental Isn't Even There,* describes the ways participants perceived the importance of acquiring sporting abilities at an early age for successful participation. *The Way You're Brought Up* paints a picture of young people's upbringing and the conditions of their existence (Bourdieu, 1984) that influenced their desire to participate in sport and their capacity to acquire cultural capital in order to do so. Finally, *One of the Worst* describes the experiences of young people when their abilities did not match up to those expected in the field.

5. The Fundamental Isn't Even There

This introductory theme offers examples of the ways parents and young people perceived the need to be involved in sport early to shape the fundamental ways of being necessary for participation. Ability served as cultural capital for young people who acquired it, creating a dissonance between those with more capital and those with less. This theme demonstrates the need for ability across varying sporting contexts and is divided by three subheadings: "*Dealing with a Four-Year Age Gap",* "*At the Level of a Six Year Old" and* "*You Can't Go in As a Newbie*".

5.1. Dealing with a Four-Year Age Gap

We begin this theme by outlining an example about the need for early involvement in hockey. One of the parents, Julia, recognized that developing sporting abilities in hockey started at a very young age. She recalled her older son's first experiences playing as a child. When Paul was as young as 8 years old she could see the disparity between his abilities and those of the other children on his team. She said,

> [Paul] started to play hockey when he was 8. Most people here, because of the affluent society that we live in, have their children already [participating], probably when they're between 3 and 4…so you're dealing with a four year age gap. Some of those kids, like I said, started at 4 and he's coming in at 8 and not knowing how to skate. The fundamental isn't even there.

Paul did not have the foundational skills for hockey other peers his age had developed. In this account, Julia acknowledged the role of affluence on early skill development. The availability of economic resources is an obvious facilitator for providing opportunities. Further to this, however, the development of sporting ability is part of a broader process of "concerted cultivation" for middle class parents who tend to have a high level of involvement in their children's lives to ensure they grow up with adequate amounts of cultural capital (Lareau, 2011, p.2). Enrolling children in a variety of activities, including sport, is part of this cultivation process. As a result of the affluent area in which he lived, Paul found himself competing for capital with peers who had been cultivating their sporting abilities from a very young age and across a variety of contexts.

Julia contrasted Paul's experiences to those of her other son, Steven, who began shaping his hockey abilities at an earlier age. She explained, "Steven came in to play hockey at a very young age, so he started in Tom Thumb…[the] youngest level…." Not only did Steven join a hockey team, he was also in a free community program in which families could learn to skate. Julia said, "We enrolled [him] in the 'Can Skate' program. And so that's where he started to, got the technique". She described Steven's skating ability and the impact this had for him in terms of his experiences in hockey: "Steven is much, his fluidity is different, and so, and they saw potential in him, and he was a bigger child, as in stature. And so yeah he did really well". Steven's physicality as a bigger child and the skating fluidity he was able to develop early on were cultural resources that put him on a more equal level with his peers. This cultural capital led Steven to gain recognition from coaches and experience some success in hockey.

5.2. At the Level of a Six Year Old

Jacqueline and her mum, Caroline, also recognized the need to acquire particular abilities from an early age to participate in a range of sports. Jacqueline was 13 years old and had been deterred from joining some activities because of a deemed lack of ability. She said, "For a couple of years I haven't joined anything, because I'm not into soccer, and you really have to start at an early age to do gymnastics and hockey and stuff like that...." Discussing gymnastics later in the interview, her mum, Caroline, said, "…for a 14 year old to go in and start gymnastics she would be out of place, cause she'd be at the level of a six year old kind of thing". The acquisition of abilities necessary in gymnastics had not begun early enough for Jacqueline. Learning to perform in these ways was such a concerted process that Jacqueline and her mum perceived there to be no way Jacqueline could enter such a setting with any real expectation of fitting in. Caroline specifically articulated an eight-year gap between the abilities of

other participants and those of her daughter. Particular ways of being consequently had an age attachment that could be used as an ideological stick against which youth could be measured. Jacqueline described the expectations of ability in gymnastics for someone her age saying, "…the older you are, the harder the program is. I've seen girls my age, they're supposed to learn how to cartwheel on balance beams. I can't even do a cartwheel. So balance beam, cartwheel. No, couldn't do that". As young as 13, the cultural capital necessary to access a gymnastics program were beyond those available to Jacqueline and had been for a number of years.

5.3. You Can't Go in As a Newbie

The final aspect of the theme presents Scott's experiences of needing to join particular programs or teams early on in life. Scott, who was 15 years old, perceived this need across a number of contexts. Similar to Jacqueline, Scott chose not to join or try out for certain activities because he believed it would not be a place he belonged based on a lack of acquiring cultural capital early on in that particular field. To make this assessment, he compared himself to other young people he imagined would be in the setting. Discussing a particular BMX club he knew about and had had an interest in joining he said, "…they're extremely organized, very organized. And you can tell that there's kids there that have been there, you know, since they were really little". Scott was able to perceive both the nature of the environment ("extremely organized") and the manner in which cultural capital in such a setting would have been acquired ("since they were really little"). As such, he determined the club was a place he did not belong. Neither Jacqueline nor Scott had actually been in the sport settings they discussed, but had a clear sense of what these settings would entail and the ways they themselves were different from the other participants who attended. Self-exclusion therefore sometimes occurred based on taken-for-granted assumptions about the forms of ability necessary for participation.

Scott also enjoyed playing basketball and spoke about the team at his school. He had chosen not to try out for the team that coming year. He explained his reasoning behind this decision saying,

> Yeah there is a team, but unfortunately in grade ten, they're going to pick all the kids that were on the teams in 7, 8, and 9, because again, they want to win. You can't go in as a newbie, and expect to get a spot.

Scott recognized that not playing on the team in previous years would prevent him from being involved at his current age because he had not acquired the cultural capital necessary for participation. Contrary to the previous example in which he had a sense he would not fit in, Scott had been provided a more overt indication that he did not belong on the school basketball team having tried to join during grade 7 without success.

In addition to early and consistent participation, the context in which the refinement of abilities took place also appeared consequential. One sporting environment was not always equal to another when it came to transferring the ability gained in one context into a different context (Bourdieu, 1984). Scott described increasing his soccer ability while playing at lunchtime with friends. He said, "I progressed. What really helped me was, like grade 2, 3, 4 and 5, we always played soccer in the field [at lunchtime]…" Despite acquiring cultural capital in the context of playing soccer at lunchtime with friends, this did not transfer into a different field: "…I got pretty good doing that but never with an actual team". The ways of being that were deemed capital in a casual setting did not necessarily transfer as capital into a more organized setting. This was also evident in the example Scott provided about the "extremely organized" BMX club. Consequently, early involvement in and of itself did not necessarily ensure entry into a range of environments. Instead, early and consistent opportunities to participate across a variety of settings were needed to refine abilities in ways that were valued in a range of contexts. For Scott's soccer, this may have meant early participation in a more organized setting, such as playing on an "actual team".

6. The Way You're Brought Up

The following theme illustrates how young people's life circumstances and the ways they were "brought up" impacted their experiences of sport. The theme is divided into three sub-headings—*Parental Values, An Issue of Survival,* and *I Wish I Had Known*—to show how the study participants' conditions of existence influenced the meaning they attached to sport and the role it played in their lives. Sylvia, a study participant who was 18 years old, explained how upbringing could influence sport participation saying,

> I guess it's all in the way you're brought up. You know, [it] doesn't matter if it's different beliefs, or like just personal preferences. Some people you see come from wealthier families, [they] get to partake in more activities, because they can…

In this articulation, Sylvia highlights the interplay between personal values, material conditions and sport involvement. Beliefs and preferences, such as the value of concerted cultivation, served as cultural capital for some of the young people in the study because they aligned with the values that were reproduced through sport (Bourdieu, 1984). Sylvia, however, appeared to have fewer of these cultural resources than the other study participants.

6.1. Parental Values

Beliefs and preferences, such as the value of concerted cultivation, can serve as cultural capital when they align with the values that are reproduced through sport (Bourdieu, 1984). Parental values and the values they impart on their children can therefore impact a young person's sport participation. Sylvia spoke several times about the ways her parents' values impacted her involvement in sport. She said,

> The only team I was ever a part of really was that little softball league….Yeah. I think it, everything just kind of goes hand in hand with everything. Like you know everything just depends on personal values, parental values, how wealthy your family is.

In contrast to many of the other young people in the study, Sylvia's parents did not make concerted efforts to support her involvement in sport. Sylvia's father had left home when she was 11 and her mother was "not sober". As such, Sylvia had not really ever been involved in sport. Although she did not speak too much about the context of her life growing up, she did share that she had been, "on welfare for most of my life". She described her current circumstances, saying

> Well my biggest priority right now is helping my boyfriend pay rent. We live together, because [I] can't live with my mum. So we live together and we have to pay rent, and we have to pay the bills, and we have to buy groceries. So in order to do that I have to work, and go to school so that when I'm out of school I can continue going to [university]. And then get a career for myself, because I don't want to have the same disadvantages as my parents, and my sisters, my grandparents and all my friends. I want to have something going for myself. So that's my priority is getting on that path.

Sylvia did not view sport as playing a role in getting her on that path and instead viewed it as a privilege that was available to people who had more wealth. Bourdieu (1984) refers similarly to the tastes of freedom deriving from material conditions that allow a certain distance from necessity. Sylvia's life was not one that allowed such tastes of freedom. Instead it was a life coloured by necessity, with priorities such as working to pay rent and completing high school. Sport did not have a high value-attachment in Sylvia's world and she instead appeared to distance herself from it.

Interestingly, the parents who participated in the study *did* attach a high value to the role of sport in their children's lives even though their material conditions did not allow much distance from necessity. This may have been a result of living in an affluent community, which put pressure on parents to maintain a particular way of living to avoid stigmatization. In addition, some of the parents discussed having had previously higher incomes. Their changing life circumstances may have therefore resulted in a change in social position that was not necessarily accompanied by a simultaneous shift in values (Bourdieu, 2010). Such incongruence led to difficulties when parents believed in the value of sport participation for their children but did not necessarily have the material conditions to support it. In the following sub-theme, parents describe some of the life circumstances that made concerted participation in a variety of sports generally unattainable for their children.

6.2. An Issue of Survival

Two of the parents, Julia and Janet, described the material conditions that pushed sports to the fringes of their lives. Julia had separated from her partner and left with her sons to live in a temporary shelter before moving into the housing cooperative where they were living at the time of the interview. She described their lives at the shelter as a time of survival, during which sport was not a consideration:

> You know, like I said, when you were in the environment that we were in, it was an issue of survival, so a lot of people in that scenario, they're not looking at that (opportunities for sport). They are more looking at what's ahead of them, relative to where to live and we were in that situation too.

Trying to find opportunities for her sons to be involved in sport was not a realistic endeavor during this time in their lives.

Janet also spoke about a change in life circumstances that made sport participation for her children extremely difficult. She explained,

> I had gone out into the work world and then my son got hurt, which changed everything….And my son was quite young and he needed a lot of, like we were at the hospital, there was a lot of that. So, it was, it's hard to go from like a $70,000 paying job, down to like, we were on social assistance for a while. Because it's just the way it was, like we, it was either, I take care of the kids and you know, and one with a handicap and that, and it was just, it was hard. It was a hard adjustment for the family, hard adjustment for me. We were in the middle of a huge lawsuit, so there was nothing, like really literally nothing. Like it was like, we were at the food bank, you know, and we had done that. And I remember there were times…where we didn't have money to put gas in the car, to go across [town], which is not very far…

Even later on when Janet had returned to work, having

each of her children consistently participating in sport was not a possibility because of the requirements of time associated with involvement. She said, "I'm a single mum, so I find it difficult to try and keep up with my kids schedules all the time. I work with the federal government, so it's like you know, I'm coming home and then it's like you know, going here, going there". Asked if and how it impacted their participation she said,

> ….I had to cut it down, and I'd have to say to them, okay so one can play at one time, you know, because my boys, when they wanted to play outdoor soccer, they were almost on competing nights, and then there's was one of me and I had to be in two different places. So you'd have to say…okay so, this one [is] your turn to play, your turn to play, your turn, your turn. Because I couldn't keep up to it, you know.

6.3. I Wish I Had Known

Caroline also explained how her family's life changed and the impact this had on their sport involvement. She described how her two younger children, Tori (12 years) and Jacqueline (14 years), had not had early and consistent opportunities for involvement in sport after separating from her partner. She compared their involvement to her two older children, Carter (19 years) and Mitch (16 years), who had been able to play soccer every year from an earlier age. She said,

> I got divorced 4 years, separated 4 years ago, so it was a very different lifestyle. So whereas [Carter] and [Mitch] got to be participating in soccer, outdoor soccer every year, I think [Jacqueline's] gymnastics, all that kind of thing, as of four years ago, and I don't get any financial support, so I'm just living on my salary, I had to go back to work. So money is different.

Caroline spoke about the fee assistance available that could have helped provide earlier opportunities for her daughters. However, not knowing about the many forms of assistance meant that she had only recently applied for funding to support her daughter's involvement. She explained,

> …I wish I had known that there were other grants available for things like the outdoor soccer... It would have been really nice to know it, and I guess in hindsight, maybe I should have clued in, but at the time I didn't, at the time [it] was just sort of a whole new sort of world, and what was out there.

Highlighting the significance of lost time in terms of sport participation, she added, "[Tori] is 12 ½ now and her brothers started [soccer] when they were 8". As indicated by the previous theme, this lost time meant Tori had missed out on the opportunity to acquire the cultural capital necessary to put her in a position to compete with her peers.

At the time of the interview Caroline was waiting to hear whether she had secured the funding necessary for Tori to register on a soccer team. Tori's involvement was dependent on receiving this funding and without it she would not be able to play:

> I'm just waiting now to hear back to see if we've been accepted or not, but I really have my fingers crossed because I would love to give the opportunity, she loves soccer....Someone had mentioned that there were grants out there, so I hadn't known beforehand. I wish I did, I wish I had known four years ago, because I would have had her, definitely in that then.

Although fee assistance had the potential to provide sporting opportunities for young people, it could not guarantee early or concerted involvement. Funding was annually determined and required a new application with each new sporting opportunity. Jennifer illustrated the inefficiencies of this process saying,

> Yeah it's not always easy to get funding for [participation in sport]. They have X amount of dollars, depending on how many people have donated, and last year, I was hoping to get him in for the spring session. They didn't have any funding left, so he couldn't play.

Some of the parents were consequently in a continuous cycle of applying for funding to try to initiate and maintain their children's participation in a system that did not guarantee their efforts would pay off. The likelihood of young people having early and consistent involvement in sport over time was extremely slim, if possible at all. Participation, if it did occur, was therefore usually sporadic and occurred in select activities. This led to instances in which young people's abilities in sport were not comparable to those of their peers.

7. One of the Worst

This final theme describes young people's experiences with/in sport when their abilities did not match up to those of their peers. This theme is divided into four subheadings—*It Just Kind of Ruined It, Didn't Make the Cut, Lumped in* and *Afraid of What People Would Say*—to highlight how young people's conceptions of their (in)abilities were shaped in relation to others and were mediated by the processes of differentiation inherent to sport.

7.1. It Just Kind of Ruined It

This sub-theme highlights how young people's experiences were differently impacted depending on the extent to which there was a focus on performance rather than participation. Joining hockey at the age of 8, Paul was already four years behind some of his peers in terms of their skill level. Paul recalled his initial experiences playing hockey saying,

> Yeah so I started out and I wasn't, I played on like the worst like possible team there was, cause I couldn't skate or do anything, and I didn't do good on that team at all. I was probably one of the worst…

Paul's conceptions about his ability were shaped early and were made in comparison to his peers in the setting. Despite determining that he was one of the worst players on the team, he continued to play: "I just wanted to go and play. I didn't think too much about being bad. I just thought I was part of the team, even though I wasn't doing well". The environment he described may have been one that emphasized participation more than performance, which allowed him not to have to "think too much" about his (in)ability. This changed as he got older and the focus on ability increased: "I did well, and I got better, but that kind of became the end of it, because once you get up there that's where they really, really start to take it serious." To Paul, "up there" was a sporting space that resembled one of seriousness. He spoke about playing at this level, describing parents who "live through their kids…" He also described situations where he "got benched a few times for, I don't know." Summing up the experience he said, "…it just kind of ruined it, eventually." The environment portrayed was one that demanded particular ways of being that Paul was not willing or able to perform.

Processes of differentiation that sorted those with ability and those without were heightened in sporting environments that had narrow conceptions of what it meant to be able. Tina described her daughter's participation in gymnastics when she was younger and how she felt the focus on performance led to her daughter's reduced sense of confidence. She said,

> It started to go sour when people put a lot of focus on the technique and not so much the attitude, and how well the child was just willing to participate. It was how well they were perfecting the skill, and they'd focus on that skill and in turn, bring down the child's esteem, instead of just building up their participation. And that really brought down a lot of confidence, in my children, anyway…

Tina believed there should have been a focus on participation rather than the focus on performance that seemed to shape the program.

7.2. Didn't Make the Cut

Scott and his mum similarly described the impact of a performance culture on Scott's experiences in school sport. However, in contrast to Paul and Brittany's experiences, the focus on performance prevented his participation entirely. Jennifer spoke about Scott's attempts to make it onto the school basketball team in grade 7 saying, "he tried to make the basketball team at school, but didn't make the cut because they're really competitive". Asked what he thought of the school sport process, Scott said it was "kind of stressful". He highlighted the public nature of the try-outs explaining, "They wrote numbers on our hands. [Then] they would call us up and we'd have to start doing lay-ups and stuff". His mum, Jennifer, recalling the experience, said to Scott, "Do you remember how packed the gym was? Kids were lined up sitting all the way around, and you could tell right away that your kid wasn't going to make it".

Having kids sitting around the perimeter of the gym turned it into something of an amphitheatre, where abilities were put on display for comparison with others. Following the try-outs, Scott described how the names of those who made it onto the team were written on a piece of paper and hung up on a wall at school: "…after that, we just went back to class and they posted up who made it on the team, on a board in front of the gym." Scott was not selected to play on his school team. His mum, Jennifer, expressed her frustration saying, "It's really discouraging to be told before you've gotten started, that you suck". Julia also spoke about this in terms of her own sons' chances of participating in school activities. She said, "…you're limited because they're only going to pick [the best] for these [school] teams…so if you're not the best at it, what is available for you in the school?" The selection of the "best" players and the lack of availability of alternative options that existed for young people when they were not deemed able enough were reasserted by Scott's mum, who said,

> That school has got to win, so they just take the top people. Where do they go? What do they do? That's really not encouraging kids to play, it's encouraging kids to compete and win. And there's got to be a place for everybody else.

In the following sub-theme, Tina described what such a "place for everybody else" had looked like for her daughter, Brittany, when she participated in gymnastics.

7.3. Lumped In

Lumped in provides an example illustrating how not being fully excluded from sport did not prevent exclusion *within* sport (Spaaij et al., 2014). Tina described her daughter, Brittany's, experiences in a gymnastics pro-

gram that grouped participants according to ability rather than age. She had been involved in gymnastics inconsistently growing up and had not developed the same abilities as other young people her age. As a result, Brittany was placed in a group with much younger children. Tina explained,

> I found room in the budget to put her in gymnastics but her skill level is deemed to be at sort of a beginner level, where it should be at the age of 14…she was lumped in with 5 and 6 year olds, which just does not work. So then that money was sort of just thrown out the window, because she wasn't comfortable being in a group of younger children.

The message conveyed about Brittany's ability by her placement in a program with young children was made extremely clear to her and the other participants: she did not measure up against the standards expected for her age. Not surprisingly, she chose to stop participating in the program. This account additionally highlighted how decisions about young people's sport participation involved a necessary process of weighing the costs against the potential profits of involvement. In this instance, the financial cost had greatly outweighed any benefits and money was deemed to have been "thrown out the window". This paints a picture of how the availability of disposable income (or lack thereof) can impact decisions about sport participation.

7.4. Afraid of What Other People Would Say

As a social setting, the other participants in sport largely influenced the experiences of the young people in the study. The presence of peers provided a measuring stick for comparisons of ability and comprised an audience with the potential to judge. As mentioned previously, Sylvia's relationship to sport was one that had ended quite early in her life. She explained what she believed to be the main reason for not participating saying, "[My] biggest holdback (from joining sport) was I was afraid of what other people would say. I think a lot about what other people are thinking about me". Not fitting in and the fear of judgement made sport a setting in which Sylvia perceived she would have little capital. Describing the impact of this she said, "Being self-conscious, like feeling not as good as you could".

Sylvia described an alternative setting in which she felt she did belong. She had been involved in the army cadets until four years prior to the interview. She described how she felt in that particular environment saying, "…I just, I loved it. I love the people, I love you know, going out on trips. I liked all the different activities they were having us do, and the discipline. I don't know, that's weird to say, but I liked the discipline".

Sylvia went on to say that cadets represented the "type of person I am". Asked further about this she spoke about perceiving differences between her own ways of being and those of other girls that played sports, who she described as "blonde" and "preppy". The use of the term "preppy" to describe young people who participate in sport demonstrated the association Sylvia made between sport involvement and the availability of wealth. Sylvia viewed sport, or at least the sports that might be available in her community, as a symbolic expression of a class position that did not match her own (Bourdieu & Waquant, 2013). Preppy children are considered those who are cultivated, or prepared, for their futures in a very deliberate manner, such as through involvement in sport. Sylvia distanced herself from this culture and related instead to cadets. She said, "That's why I felt like I belonged in a more masculine environment, because this is the way I am". Cadets provided a stark contrast from sport and a place that more closely represented who Sylvia was and the material conditions of her life.

8. Discussion

Sport is often hailed for its capacity to promote a sense of belonging and mitigate processes of social exclusion that may be experienced in other areas of life (Collins & Kay, 2003; Dagkas & Armour, 2012). However, sport itself remains a site in which young people living with lower incomes face exclusion (Collins & Kay, 2014). Although structural barriers to sport have been well documented for youth living with lower incomes, this body of research explains only a small part of a much larger process of exclusion (Wright et al., 2003). As such, further research was required to understand the social exclusion of young people living with lower incomes in sport.

This study sought to further understand the ways sport reproduces processes of social exclusion so they can be challenged (Spaaij et al., 2014). The following discussion considers the ways the study participants experienced exclusion in relation to sport and how these forms of exclusion reflected or departed from those reported in the existing literature.

Previous studies exploring the sport experiences of youth living with lower incomes have predominantly focused on low participation rates and the need for more widely available opportunities for sport (Donnelly, 1993; Spaaij et al., 2014). The youth in the study did indeed struggle to gain sporting opportunities as a result of their limited financial resources, which impacted the availability of time, transportation and money for participating. Fee assistance programs such as the one implemented by the Recreation Department in the current study offset some of these financial-related barriers to increase opportunities for sport (Frisby et al., 2005).

Despite this, young people's exclusion resulted from more than simply a lack of opportunities. Their experiences demonstrated that the nature of these

opportunities was also important. Realistically, youth needed early, concerted and consistent opportunities in particular sporting contexts to develop the necessary abilities to compete with their peers and develop a sense of belonging. However, the material circumstances of their lives made this form of involvement largely impossible. Although fee assistance provided sporadic opportunities for sport, funding was annually determined and therefore rarely supported continuous participation. Increasing the availability of opportunities, as has been advocated for in previous literature (e.g., Dagkas & Stathi, 2007), is unlikely to make sport less exclusionary as long as such narrow demands for ability exist (Hay, 2012). To acquire these forms of ability requires a process of concerted sporting cultivation that was neither achievable nor desirable to most of the young people in the study.

It is also worth highlighting that the processes of exclusion in this study went beyond only the need for ability and were part of a broader demand for cultural capital in sport. The material conditions of the participants' lives shaped each young person's habitus, including their values and desires (Bourdieu, 2010). When a young person's habitus was inconsistent with a particular sporting context, they tended not to have the capital necessary for a sense of belonging in that field. Sylvia, for example, found sports to be "preppy" and avoided them. Scott was deterred from joining a BMX club because he suspected it was "highly organized". These examples demonstrated how some sporting fields did not resonate with the young people in the study and support the suggestion that sporting tastes can be shaped by class (Bourdieu, 2010; Quarmby & Dagkas, 2013). When considered in light of the structural barriers that existed to inhibit involvement, young people were unlikely to make a concerted effort to join activities in which they had already assessed they would not fit. This demonstrates the intersection that occurs between the costs of involvement associated with structural constraints and the available profits or capital that young people could accrue. Without the profits of fitting in and feeling a sense of belonging, overcoming the structural barriers of cost, time and transportation, if at all possible, were simply not worth it.

As a final consideration, the community in which the young people resided was also of particular consequence in relation to the exclusion they experienced in sport. Returning to Lareau's work (2011), the demand for and distribution of cultural capital appeared especially disparate in an affluent community in which a philosophy of concerted cultivation seemed to pervade. Although the parents in the study valued the role of sport in their children's lives and tried to orchestrate as many opportunities as they could, the sporting peers of the youth in the study would likely have had more opportunities than most to acquire cultural capital. This pushed the cultural capital bar even further beyond the reach of the youth in the study than it may have been in a less affluent environment. The context is thus largely significant when considering processes of exclusion in future research.

9. Conclusions

The present study sought to explore the sport experiences of young people living with lower incomes to further understand the processes of social exclusion that exist in sport so they can be challenged in relevant and meaningful ways (Spaaij et al., 2014).

The participants in the study provided some examples of the exclusionary processes that are apparent in sport. Structural barriers, such as the demand for money, time and transportation impacted the young people's involvement. Additionally, youth experienced exclusion because they did not have comparable reserves of cultural capital to other participants in sport. This demand for cultural capital included the need for particular abilities, values and desires that were celebrated in the various sporting fields.

As such, without reserves of economic and cultural capital, young people experienced exclusion in a number of ways. They were denied entry into sport, had less-than-meaningful experiences within sport, or they made choices not to participate. It is clear from their experiences of not belonging that exclusion occurs both outside of and within sport (Spaiij et al., 2014). It is also evident that gaining access to sport does not necessarily ward off other experiences of exclusion (Goodwin & Peers, 2012). Although fee assistance programs provide increased opportunity for sport, they alone are not enough to alleviate social exclusion because of a broader demand for capital that is unequally distributed along class lines. Further, the presence of fee assistance programs might serve to neutralize attempts to challenge the more deeply rooted processes of exclusion that impact the sport experiences of young people living with lower incomes if their limitations are not acknowledged (Jarvie, 2012).

At times, the sports available in the community did not resonate with the young people in the study. Youth often felt they did not belong in these environments and the costs of participating tended to outweigh the profits. As a result they had little desire to pursue sporting opportunities or were deterred from joining. Although a form of self-exclusion, these choices were tied up with the material conditions of young peoples' lives (MacDonald et al., 2012). As Evans (2004) has highlighted, "class does not just determine choice and preference in sport. It also determines a person's physical capacity, 'their ability' to realize those choices and preferences, let alone extend them" (p.102). The nature of choice is not therefore straightforward and blurred lines exist between self-exclusion and enforced exclusion (Spaaij et al., 2014).

To conclude, the purpose of this study was to further

understand the ways sport reproduces processes of social exclusion so they can be challenged (Spaaij et al., 2014). The findings of the study demonstrate the interlaced nature of the exclusionary processes in sport that impact young people living with lower incomes. The material circumstances of participants' lives intertwined with the availability of economic and cultural capital, in turn shaping the extent to which young people felt they "fit" within sport. Cultural capital was not only acquired through sporting opportunities, but was also influenced by upbringing and family values. Exclusion cannot therefore be fully understood in terms of the availability of financial resources or opportunities for sport. Further research about the sport experiences of young people should consequently consider influences of income or class in much broader terms (Bairner, 2007).

In addition, practice-based initiatives intended to make sport less exclusionary should aim to strive beyond the provision of fee assistance and start to challenge the various ways sports privilege a few young people over a great many others. Although situated in terms of income, the exclusionary processes highlighted in the present study are likely to impact more than only young people living with lower incomes. The same narrow expectations defining what it means to be "able" in sport are known to negatively impact those who experience disability (Goodwin & Peers, 2012), those who do not conform to heteronormative ideals (Wellard, 2006), or any young person who performs in ways that are not celebrated in a sporting field. The structures and goals of sport therefore need to be redefined to meet the desires and celebrate the strengths of a wider range of youth.

In order to confront some of the identified exclusionary processes, the power structures that comprise largely unacknowledged scaffolding in sport should be challenged (MacDonald, 2003). Sport must also be reimagined. This will require new ways of thinking to find solutions that acknowledge the complex and interrelated processes that maintain exclusion. In such a scenario, young people would not be conditioned in normalizing ways to fit the dominant structures of sport (Shogan, 1998; Spade, 2012). Instead, these sport communities would disrupt the narrow hegemonic discourses that continue to exclude a great number of young people. Rather than asking the question, "Would *you* like to play *our* game", this version of sport would be grounded in the alternative reflection, "This game is not working. Are you interested in creating a new one?"

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Conflict of Interests

This paper has been prepared as partial fulfillment of a Ph.D. dissertation (in progress).

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Article

Experiences and Perceptions of Young Adults with Physical Disabilities on Sports

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Abstract
People with disabilities seldom get a chance to voice their opinions on their sport experiences. A deeper understanding of the context-related experiences of sport is a prerequisite for teachers and leaders to be able to provide adequate, inclusive and meaningful activities. The aim of this qualitative case study was to examine how young people with disabilities made sense of sport, within both the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement. The study involved 10 young adults (aged 16 to 29 years) with disabilities, five males and five females. All the participants had rich experiences of sport. An inductive approach to qualitative content analysis of semi-structured interviews was used to enable individuals to explain and give meaning to their experiences of sport including those pertaining to gender and inclusion. The findings illustrated that dominating gender and ability norms influenced the interviewees' understanding of themselves in relation to sport; as a consequence, some of the female interviewees had a more diverse, sometimes contradictory experience of sport than the male interviewees. The basic premise of this study is that researchers can develop more insightful understandings of inclusion by studying the subjective meanings that are constructed by people with disabilities in their sport experiences.

Keywords
diversity; physical education and health; social inclusion; sporting bodies

Issue
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1. Introduction

Swedish and international research on children and young people with disabilities in sport activities has, until recently, been more or less a non-issue (Smith & Thomas, 2006). While some research has examined teachers' experiences of Physical Education and Health (PEH), a gap exists in the literature about the experiences of children and young people with disabilities involved in sport activities (c.f., Fitzgerald, Jobling, & Kirk, 2003; Smith & Thomas, 2006). For many children and young people, sport forms a significant part of their lives, shaping their development into members of society and the sorts of people they become. Through sport as a social activity, they can learn to establish and keep friendships, negotiate with others, solve conflicts and develop leadership qualities and self-confidence (Özdemir & Stattin, 2012). However, studies have suggested that children and young people with disabilities tend to be excluded from sport (Kristén, Patriksson, & Fridlund, 2002; Smith & Thomas, 2006; Vickerman, Hayes, & Whetherly, 2003). For example, Vickerman et al. (2003) found that few activities are inclusive and that children and young people with disabilities are only to a limited extent offered opportunities for full participation in sport in comparison with non-disabled people of the same age. The authors also discovered that withdrawals are more frequent among this popu-

lation. In addition, they have generally fewer opportunities to participate due to physical, social and emotional barriers. Their experiences are often limited due to the lack of necessary skills, overprotective adults, social isolation, time-consuming treatment and care, and difficulties in getting to and from training and matches (Taub & Greer, 2000). Additionally, previous studies have shown that mobbing and isolation, inaccessible premises, lack of sports aids and few individually adapted activities contribute to negative experiences and exclusion (Coates & Vickerman, 2010). Crushed self-confidence is quite frequently a result of discrimination (Blinde & McCallister, 1998; Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000).

Research conducted with a focus on lived experiences has shown that children and young people with disabilities have positive experiences of sport in contexts where they are fully included and can develop their physical, mental and social skills (Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000). However, very little research has attempted to define inclusive activities from an individual participation perspective (Maxwell & Granlund, 2011; Smith & Tomas, 2006). This is in particular true of children with complex needs and difficulties in communicating in speech and writing (Fitzgerald et al., 2003). Based on that argument, it is problematic that children and young people seldom have a chance to voice their opinions and hence have limited influence on their sports activities. Such a pattern of systematic invisibility may be explained as a form of "hidden discrimination", a concept that often arises in studies of gender equality (c.f., Husu, 2005). Hidden discrimination implies that children and young people in general, and those with disabilities in particular, are ignored or are not offered the support they need in order to develop, express their views and be considered in contexts that affect them. Hidden discrimination may also imply that nothing happens or that something that ought to happen does not occur, e.g. that individuals are not seen, heard, invited, asked, acknowledged or encouraged to participate in a sports context. Similarly, associations that formally represent children and young people with disabilities may not be given opportunities to express their opinions on issues or decisions that directly or indirectly affect the target group that they represent.

The aim of this study was to examine how young people with disabilities made sense of sport, within both the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement. The following research questions are posed:

- What is the meaning of sport according to the interviewees' experiences?
- Within the operating norms, how can sport be understood with the main focus on gender and ability?

By examining how young people with disabilities made sense of sport, within both the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement, this study contributes to a greater understanding of the role that sport can play in the personal and social growth of children and young people. It also highlights how different notions and expectations of inclusion, diversity, sporting bodies and gender operates in sport. The paper is structured as follows. First, I will outline some conceptual ideas. Then, I present the theoretical considerations and methodology applied in this study. Finally, I discuss the impact of gender and ability norms on the perceptions of sport for young adults with disabilities in accordance with the results of the study.

2. Roles of Sports

Over the past 20 years, the inclusion of students in need of special support in mainstream educational settings has increased in many countries (Fitzgerald, 2005; Smith & Thomas, 2006). Though "inclusion" is a political term more frequently used in the compulsory school system (Maxwell & Granlund, 2011; Nilholm, 2006). It is not at all a foreign concept in the Swedish sport movement. In fact, the Swedish sport movement adheres to the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Wickman, 2011a). The policy programme for Swedish sport, entitled "Sport wills—aims and guidelines for the sports movement", represents a common system of values for the entire sport movement and provides guidelines for the organisation of sport activities in federations and clubs (Riksidrottsförbundet, 2009). Human rights have generally developed into a central subject, and sports and human rights are essentially tied to each other, at least ideologically. Sport is considered as a tool for reducing discrimination, for strengthening youth, and for promoting peace, tolerance and friendship. Furthermore, sports provide individuals with health, recreation and rehabilitation. The Swedish sports movement's policy documents state that sport for children and young people must be conducted from a children's rights perspective and follow the UN's child convention (Unicef, 2008). However, sport has been known to neglect human rights, despite the ideological foundation of sport in equality and fairness (Carlsson & Fransson, 2005). Trondman (2011) described this situation as a sports policy dilemma. He argues that even if it is desirable, it is difficult to steer sports activities towards democracy with the young people's participation, as the sport's internal core logic primarily is about other things, such as training, competition and achievements, based on notions and expectations of what "real sport" is and should be about. This limits the ability to include, for instance sports for disabled and individuals with disabilities since they do not unconditionally meet such expectations.

3. Sporting and Gendered Bodies

Children develop early an awareness of what bodies are regarded as accepted and desired, which has consequences for how they conceive of and understand themselves and each other in relation to sport. As Evans, Rich, Allwood and Davies (2007) have argued, distinctions between "able" and "non-able" participants can be seen to relate to specific social and political meanings in and around sport, gender and young people's participation, which circulate through a range of dominating notions and understandings of what "real sport" is and should be about (Wickman, 2008, 2011b). Such distinctions are important since they relate to the allocation of resources as well as according value to specific bodies (Clark, 2012). Dominating notions and understandings of "being good at sport" might therefore be seen as representing particular ideals of sporting participation and as containing particular signifiers about who might embody such an identity and what physical performances this requires. Consequently, sporting participation requires both an affective investment, as a sense of "fit" with dominant ideas of athleticism, and an embodied sense of capacity, as a set of skills and competencies gained through participation and practice over time (Clark, 2012; Shilling, 2004). According to Redelius, Fagrell and Larsson (2009) what is regarded as a capable, functional and achieving body is also evident in the teachers' marking where boys with experience of organised sport are favoured and girls' interests are ignored in the planning of the teaching. PEH is a popular school subject, and the majority of students have positive experiences of participation (Karlefors, 2012; Larsson, 2004). Although the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement have different goals for their sports activities, it is unclear where the dividing line lies between them (Peterson, 2005). Many teachers have been or are active as leaders in the sports movement in their leisure-time, and many have also competed in sports. This probably contributes to organised sport's norms, values and ideals having an impact on the PEH lessons in schools (Olofsson, 2007). The sports activities of schools may hence be said to be strongly influenced by the logic of competitive sport (Olofsson, 2007). For this reason, it is important that children and young people with disabilities be given access to sport, not only because this implies that the norm of capability is challenged through a widened representation of bodies capable of performing sport, but also because sport is one of the few institutions in society where people with disabilities can change their bodies from earlier characterisations as "defective" and "pathological" to signalling precisely empowerment and capability (Hargreaves, 2000).

Even though sports have the potential to encourage and enable both men and women to experience their bodies as powerful, autonomous instruments, women are allowed to be athletic only if they also engage in bodily practices to maintain their feminine image. For example, there are studies suggesting that women's contemporary involvement in sport and exercise is often accompanied by expectations of creating particular kinds of slim "fashionable dressed for success bodies" (Cole 1994, p. 16). In a similar way since the late 1980s, the multifaceted interaction of masculinities, gender and sport has been investigated by several researchers. Summarizing the findings of many of these studies, Rowe (1998) concluded that "sport has been an integral element of self-sustainable forms of exclusivist male culture, lubricating a closed system of male bonding and female denigration" (p. 246). These exclusivist practices have always been evident in sports for people with disabilities, who have been excluded from mainstream sport in various ways and to different degrees. As DePauw (1997) pointed out:

> Historically, disabled people were excluded from sport given their "inability" to meet the socially constructed ideals of physicality, masculinity and sexuality. Those disabled individuals who were initially to some extent "included" were those who seemed the closest to the ideals, usually the White male with lower spinal cord injuries who competed in wheelchairs (p. 421).

Current research shows that sport and PEH still embody masculine ideals of physical strength and domination. This allows (some) disabled men the opportunity to exhibit key characteristics associated with the able-bodied concepts of masculinity, such as competitiveness, endurance and proper control of the body (Huang & Brittain, 2006; Schell & Rodriguez, 2001), thereby confirming their masculinity which might otherwise have been brought into question by their disability. Likewise, disabled men seek to demonstrate "physical prowess" through their sport participation (Huang & Brittain, 2006). According to Messner (1992), given that "winning has been premised on physical power, strength, discipline, and willingness to take, ignore, or deaden pain", elite male athletes have a tendency to "experience their bodies as machines and as instruments of 'power' and 'domination'" (p. 151). Sport provides an interesting case to study in terms of diversity as there is a tension between performance (winning) and participation (recreation). Sports clubs contest competitions with the goal of winning which can work against the inclusion of people with diverse backgrounds and abilities (Spaaij et al., 2014).

Consequently, this paper builds on earlier studies which have shown the importance of gender and ability norms that are culturally and socially constructed to support dominant heterosexual masculinities (Butler, 1990; Oakley, 1972) and notions of the non-disabled body as the ideal body (Garland-Thomson, 1997; Sey-

mour, 1998). This means that both gender and ability norms are constructed of masculine values such as strength, discipline, dominance and perseverance, which set the tone for how to conceive of and understand what "real sport" is and should be about (c.f., Schell & Rodriguez, 2001; Wickman 2008, 2011a, 2011b).

4. Methodology

Qualitative researchers explore human phenomena in natural social settings and seek to grasp the meaning individuals make of their life experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). An inductive qualitative design was used with a case study approach. According to Patton (2002) it permits the researcher to study selected issues in depth and detail and offer an understanding and insight into real, local meaning and experience of young adults with disabilities.

5. Data Collection

I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews because the intention of this study was to understand sport from the subjects' point of view and to uncover their lived world experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The semi-structured interviews were organised around a set of topics (i.e., background, the subjects' family and social life and their experiences of sport) formulated in an interview guide that was flexible enough to allow participants to develop the conversation in ways that were salient to them. As such, these interviews resulted in a range of expressions (e.g., notions, emotions, opinions, experiences and stories) that were amenable to analysis. I developed a semi-structured interview guide from the existing literature to retain a core of standardized questions and to ensure that the same basic themes were illuminated with each person interviewed. However, the interview guide remained flexible to allow for the exploration of participant experiences and any new issues that arose (Patton, 2002). Each respondent was interviewed individually in 55–110 minutes. In order to develop a thorough understanding of the case, a case study approach usually involves the collection of multiple sources of evidence, most commonly qualitative (and quantitative) techniques. The use of data triangulation has been advocated as a way of increasing the internal validity of a study (Patton, 2002). Due to the time restrictions a decision was taken to avoid the temptation to collect as much data as possible and instead prioritise adequate time to data analysis and interpretation of the qualitative interviews which offered a rich source of information. The reliability, validity and overall rigour of the analysis were strengthened by two fellow researchers independently reviewing the data followed by individual decisions and agreements on key themes. That I have just used one data source, limits this study concerning the validation of its results.

5.1. Participants

A purposeful snowball sampling strategy was utilized to recruit participants. Initially, I made contact with the permanent secretary of a local disability sport club to discuss how to get in contact with young men and women with disabilities. In order to delimit the study, participants with physical impairments (wheelchair users) were selected. Then I sent an introductory email to a disability sport club member email list inviting participation and asking individuals to identify other individuals to extend the scope of participants. This recruited a range of young people with physical impairments who had great experiences of sport from both the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement. All in all, 10 participants were selected through snowball sampling, a method that involves using networks to identify the sample (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Snowball sampling methodology (SSM) is a technique for finding research subjects where one subject gives the researcher the name of another, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so forth (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). In this method, the sample group grows like a rolling snowball. Since the intention with this study was to seek interviewees from a small research population with specific characteristics, which were recognized by the population's individuals, SSM was an invaluable option. Notwithstanding these significant advantages, SSM has some distinct limitations. SSM is sometimes referred to as a "second best" methodology. A common claim is that is results in problems with representativity since it is not random; as a result, some researchers have noted that most snowball samples are biased and cannot be generalized (Kaplan, Korf, & Sterk, 1987). Despite this significant limitation, Cohen and Arieli (2011) claimed that it is possible to increase the representativity of SSM by sufficient planning of the sampling process and goals, initiating parallel snowball networks and using quota sampling. In the present study, careful planning of the selection process occurred in relation to the study's purpose and goals. However, in this case, I decided not to apply parallel snowball networks and quota sampling due to the study's qualitative approach, scope and target group.

The study I present here is based on data from interviews with five young women and five young men with physical impairments. I conducted the interviews between March and October 2012. I have given all the participants fictitious names: Daniel 16 years, Peter 22 years, Axel 16 years, Elina 19 years, Kent 17 years, Lisa 28 years, Maja 19 years, Moa 29 years, Stefan 21 years and Vilma 20 years. All the respondents had congenital impairments and they were wholly or partly dependent on a manual wheelchair or a power chair. They came from Swedish middle-class families and had rich experiences of sport at different levels and from both schools and club activities. They had been involved in

both team sports and individual sports since childhood and had parents and siblings who had experiences from different sports. In that sense, they all had been raised in sports families. At the time of the interviews, the majority were still taking part in sport, but three (one man and two women) had quit for various reasons. Direct quotations from interviewees (identified with pseudonyms) are used to illustrate the various themes and concepts from interviews.

5.2. Ethical Considerations

The research presented in this study has been organised to conform to the requirements of Vetenskapsrådets regler och riktlinjer för forskning (The Swedish Research Council. Rules and Guidelines for Research) (2006). The guidelines are not intended to replace the researcher's own appraisal or responsibility but rather to serve as the basis of the researcher's reflections and insights into his or her responsibilities. In addition, an ongoing discussion with research colleagues about ethical adjustments has taken place throughout the entire research process. In regard to the The Swedish Research Council. Rules and Guidelines for Research (2006), the fundamental individual protection requirements have been concretised into four general primary requirements for research, namely the information, approval, confidentiality, and the right of use requirements.

I informed the participants about the study and my institutional connection. Further, I gave them information making it clear that the results would be presented in research articles. I ensured that the participants knew they were free to terminate an interview at any time without having to provide a reason for doing so. Additionally, I personally conducted all the interviews, recorded the responses using a digital-recorder, and transcribed the interviews. At the end of each interview, the interviewee was allowed to add anything he or she believed to be of importance. When all interviews were conducted, I transcribed the data and anonymised the participant, removing all identifying information except for gender and age. After completing the transcription, I gave the interviewees the opportunity to review the transcripts and make corrections or additions. No data were changed or retracted as a result. These procedures are accepted among qualitative researchers (Gratton & Jones, 2010; Kvale, 1996). The participants' real names have not been used in this study in order to avoid the risk of inadvertent disclosure of identities. However, this was a small group of young people with disabilities all living in the same city; as such, they are in a vulnerable position. In particular, the risk of internal identification was taken into consideration. In a few cases, I removed information from transcripts, such as when the interviewees had given information about another person involved in the study that may be readily identifiable to others. I removed this information to avoid the risk of harm or distress to the participants. These considerations have been balanced against the fact that the interviews were opportunities for the interviewees to verbalise their experiences and make their voices heard.

5.3. Data Analysis

Data were analysed using thematic content analysis. In the analysis process, we as researchers, moved between discrete entries in transcripts, whole transcripts, and across the different transcripts. Analysis began with specific observations progressing towards the emergence of a general pattern (Patton, 2002). The unit of analysis was primarily the complete experiences, ranging from one word to several sentences. Unique experiences in the data were coded and then rebuilt into larger interpretive themes (Patton, 2002). The themes were developed from the data and generated from relevant literature external to the study. In short, findings emerged out of the data through our interactions with the data. We intended to identify core consistencies and meanings in the qualitative material by reading and re-reading the text and by asking which themes were predominant.

6. Results

Based on the content analysis, I have constructed themes for presenting the results as follows: 1) Establishing oneself in sport, 2) Self-perceptions, 3) Sport on unequal terms, and 4) Limited by others.

6.1. Establishing Oneself in Sport

Learning is not something that only occurs in defined learning episodes, such as in PEH at school or in being taught how to do a specific sporting exercise in the local sport club. Instead, meaningful learning, is an unavoidable part of social life and participation in practice and transformative. It involves learning "how to do" practices through participating in them (Light, 2010). From this perspective, young men and women with disabilities participating in sport learn far more than just the sport specific techniques. They also gain a range of deep, implicit, social, cultural, and personal experiences that challenge their self- esteem and their understanding of themselves according to dominating gender norms (Butler, 1990; Oakley, 1972). Under the first theme, examples are given of how the male and female interviewees came into contact with organised sport along with what made them stay or what made them quit. Peter, Axel and Daniel come from families where sport is important. As shown by the quotations below, the parents' support and engagement were their chief reasons for practising sport:

Very much because of my mother. She was very anx-

> ious that her children should be doing some sport….If she couldn't drive me herself, she made sure that I arrived in some other way and so on. And missing a training session—that was out of the question. And I'm happy about that because I've always liked practising sport, so I'm glad that she pushed me on so that I really took part every time. (Peter 22 years)

Axel trained in different activities seven days a week. He said that he practised to feel fit and to meet his friends. Like Peter, it was his mother that made him start training:

> It was thanks to my mother that I began doing the sport itself with floorball eight years ago….She took care of it and, well, she rang my previous coach and said "Hello, my son wants to start training", and then I could come and check it out, though I didn't want [to] but she just pressed on. And then, after a training session, I said that I didn't want to, but then she said, "Give it five training sessions", and after that, I have just continued. (Axel 16 years)

Daniel' father has been important to him. It was he who encouraged Daniel to start training and who has been there on the way though his sport. Daniel said that earlier on he had to commute to a bigger town to be able to play floorball. In order to make it possible for him to avoid long journeys, his father organised a team in his hometown and took on the task of coaching:

> My dad has always believed in me and wanted me be a member of the national team, and he has also always fought for me to be able to take part. For when national team coaches have called and asked, people involved in the national team, what it's been like in our training sessions, he has always boosted me. (Daniel 16 years)

Four of the five interviewed women had positive experiences with sport, but their stories were not as equally natural as the men's. This gives the impression that it has not always been self-evident for the women to establish themselves in the space of sport. Elina has a motor disorder causing her to have to use her wheelchair only partially. At the time of the interview, she was not practising any sport:

> Well, I've done swimming for several years, but I don't swim now. I've stopped. But I love playing wheelchair basketball. It's one of the most fun things I know. I love sport. Very much! (Elina 19 years)

I asked her why she stopped doing sport, and she answered:

> I probably was and, still am, tired of it. But I'm thinking of taking it up again. Because it's like this when you've stopped for a rather long time, then it's rather difficult to start again. (Elina 19 years)

Moa, who no longer practised sport nor planned to start again, said that all physical activity during her childhood and adolescence was justified by a habilitation purpose. Experiencing social fellowship in sports contexts or choosing an activity based on what seemed interesting and fun never came into question. Joy and physical activity were incompatible things to her; everything was more or less "physiotherapy". She said that she quickly learned to adapt to the adults' will without questioning or initiating her own suggestions, which had a negative effect on her self-esteem. She expressed that she was so demanding on herself that sport did not suit her. In addition to her motor disorder, Moa also has a visual impairment that makes her almost totally blind, which has made it even more difficult to find social contexts where she could share her experiences with others who have similar preconditions and experiences. She explained:

> I started doing water training when I was five years old and riding when I was two years old, but then there were two people who had to hold me so that I stayed on the horse's back. There was nobody who pepped me up; it was just a matter of course that I should do it until I sort of cracked up when I was 14…it was physiotherapy, and that was that. Then I started doing group training; it was probably the first time I really made a choice myself. It was fun as long as I saw myself as a beginner, but then when the demands increase, I began thinking of what I achieved, or perhaps mostly what I didn't achieve. Then I quit because I always felt that I was a failure. (Moa 29 years)

According to the interviews, it is clear that the men have had greater support from parents, teachers and trainers in their sporting activities than the women had. The results also indicate that they are more likely than their female counterparts to perceive and understand sport as a natural ingredient in their lives both during childhood and in current life. The women's stories reveal a major doubt and struggle for a place in sport. This can be linked to gender and ability norms that are culturally and socially constructed to support heterosexual masculinities (Butler, 1990; Oakley, 1972). All the interviewees quoted above started doing sport when they were relatively young. When Peter, Axel and Daniel described how it happened and on whose initiative, it was obvious that the parents were important. The results thereby support the research that has shown that it is most often adults close to the child who express and protect the child's needs (Fitzgerald et al., 2003). Moa's story is, however, an exam-

ple of negative discrimination and of how such inadequate treatment and lack of understanding of the child's needs result in crushed self-esteem (Blinde & McCallister, 1998; Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000).

6.2. Self-Perceptions

The golden M is a universal symbol. Wherever we go in the world, we know that the rounded yellow letter symbolises McDonald's. It is not necessary to be a devoted fast food freak in order to imagine at first sight of the M what the restaurant's interior fittings look like, what is included on the menu and how the burgers taste. Correspondingly, the wheelchair is a universal symbol of disability and of what the person sitting in the wheelchair can manage, or perhaps *cannot* manage. It is therefore inevitable for a person who has a disability and uses a wheelchair to relate to other people's and her/his own conceptions of the wheelchair's symbolic value. This section demonstrates the interviewees' experiences of the body, their physical and psychological development, and their capability in accordance to dominating notions of ability. Developing implies discovery of both one's potentials and one's limits. The interviewees expressed in different ways that sport sometimes made them painfully aware of the limitation that disability implies with regard to participation and independence. Through challenges in sports contexts, they have experienced what they can do, what is possible and what is impossible and what can be done in a different way or with the aid of support.

Stefan gave examples of the self-perception he gained by being confronted with his potential and limits and by his journey there, which was not completely painless:

> And I know that disabled people will hate me for saying this because some disabled people want to believe [that] we are just like all other people, but my philosophy is roughly like this: "But if you are just like all other people, why don't you stand up and walk?"….I mean, what I try to teach in boxing is what I experience that many disabled people lack; that even if it's difficult to accept one's impairment—for I think that it is myself, very difficult; I mean I was forced to realise when I was 16 years old that I could no longer brush my teeth because I missed so much that I could get holes in them. That was really difficult, but I realised that I had to get help to brush my teeth; otherwise, I would get holes, and that would cause terrible problems. It's the same way with the training and everything else in life: realise your limits so that you can function as well as possible on that basis. (Stefan 21 years)

Like Stefan, Vilma has also challenged herself in various sports contexts. Her experiences have given her valuable self-perception and influenced her self-esteem:

> I know that I'm actually not exactly like all other people. I cannot do exactly the same things as all others…and I have been feeling lately that it has had a negative effect on my self-esteem. Because since I have so many ambulatory friends, I try to keep up with everything they do, but sometimes I have to do things in a completely different way and that can, of course, many times be difficult. But I've probably felt that I want to try to find myself: who am I? But also that I cannot play the part of someone who is not me because that can also be rather difficult. (Vilma 20 years)

When I asked them if they had any strong positive experience of a sports context where they had been acknowledged and would like to describe, Peter gave the following answer:

> I had been doing airgun shooting for a couple of months, and my paternal uncle who shoots on the national team was going to take me with him to the shooting range and I would be able to try shooting with his gunpowder weapon because I was going to start shooting with gunpowder at the time. I would be allowed to shoot, and he would stand beside me and sort of teach me some tips and tricks. I shot five shots. He goes and fetches the target, looks at it and then says, "I've got nothing to teach you!" (he laughs). (Peter 22 years)

This experience confirmed Peter and his ability to perform. Lisa described when she was acknowledged in connection with a floorball match and how important this was for her self-esteem:

> One thing that I remember even today…it's one of the last floorball matches we took part in, and I was appointed the player of the team that day. And also that our coach asked, "Where the hell have you been all my life?" I thought that was a great moment. From being hardly noticed on the floor to being appointed the player of the team, that's a very great step because I never really managed to score a goal and things like that. (Lisa 28 years)

At the time of the interview, Stefan had experienced a relatively severe cereberal palsy and used a motor chair in his everyday life and in connection with training. He trained boxing seven days a week and also worked as a coach for both people with motor disorders and ambulatory participants in a boxing club in the town where he lived. He said that the training radically changed his life:

> And just one thing is that I can now sit up. I couldn't sit up very well before. I had to have one of those four-point belts, one of those that cover the whole

> chest. And I still sat askew, although it was fastened, like. And another thing, my hands were very much askew and pointed inwards….Now they are out here [he shows his hands]. And before I couldn't even hold a glass without dropping it because my hands were shaking like hell. Now I can hold a glass with one hand if I want to. So, I think I have made several advances. (Stefan 21 years)

Kent felt that sport helped him to dare to test his limits. It helped him to gain stronger self-confidence. He stated that he knew what he could manage on his own and what he must ask people close to him to help him with, both in the sport context and in other situations in life:

> The fact that I feel secure and test all limits, I think that is because I'm engaged in sport, actually during my whole childhood and adolescence. Because then I know I can drive that fast, I can move that much, I can do that much. (Kent 17 years)

The above quotations indicate that some of the interviewees had very positive experiences of sport. Being physically strong increases the chances of attaining autonomy and independence. Challenging oneself in various sports contexts also seems to increase one's self-confidence and self-knowledge, which gives inner security. Like this study, previous research has shown that children and young people with disabilities have positive experiences of sport in contexts where they are fully included and can develop their physical, mental and social skills (c.f., Kristén et al., 2002). As Hargreaves (2000) argued, sport is one of the few institutions in society where women and men with disabilities can change themselves to become more independent and autonomous. The above quotations might hence be interpreted as if sport contributes to strengthening the individual's experience of capability in relation to normative conceptions of sport and the body. However, corresponding experiences were not found among the female interviewees. This finding can be interpreted to mean that disabled men seek to demonstrate physical prowess, power and mastery over their own bodies through their sport participation (c.f., Huang & Brittain, 2006; Messner, 1992) and that this construction of the self can be linked to the gender (Butler, 1990; Oakley, 1972) and ability norms (Garland-Thomson, 1997; Seymour, 1998).

6.3. Sport on Unequal Terms

This section tells participants' experiences in school subject PEH. Peter was critical. During his upper secondary years, he had PEH in a group consisting only of students with motor disorders. He said that he is competitive that he was not given any challenges and that most activities were playful. He said that on several occasions he tried to make the teachers agree to spend one or a few lessons on the ice-skating rink so that he and the other students would be able to try out sledge hockey, but that this did not lead to any result:

> Now I have a mark in sport that I don't think I have deserved since I feel that I have not been challenged at all. (Peter 22 years)

We continued our talk and discussed the importance of different policy documents that regulate sport and the possibility of influence. Peter then answered:

> Well, if you can make it work, it's very good. But it is precisely that, to make people follow it….Because then you get away from the feeling I have, that I have a mark in sport that I haven't deserved at all….The last year I refused to take part every time they played tag, which was most of the time, and I've still got a Pass with Distinction. If you refuse to take part in nine out of ten lessons, you shouldn't get a mark. You know, you start doubting yourself and what you've really achieved in all the subjects you've got marks in. (Peter 22 years)

Why did Peter get a pass with distinction? What were the teachers aims with this? Probably it wasn't their aim to undermine his confidence, probably completely the opposite, but nevertheless he started doubting his abilities in all subjects because he received a grade he felt he didn't deserve. Just like Peter, several of the interviewees stated that they had difficulties in voicing their opinions on the subject of PEH at school and that the teachers neglected their interests, views and preconditions. Vilma put it like this:

> In lower secondary school, I was not allowed to take part, or my teachers…she said to me that I couldn't be together with the class because I sat on a wheelchair and then she wouldn't be able to give me a mark….I was very, very disappointed because I felt that I wanted to be with [the] class, and she said that I could have PEH alone with her. Then I said that that wouldn't develop me at all. So we mailed her and my mother called her. I could have like two lessons alone with her and I thought it was terribly dull, but then I also said, "Please, can't I get a chance to prove who I am?" You don't even know for 100 per cent who I am. It feels as if you are discriminating against me". Then I was allowed to be together with the class and in the end I got a Pass with Distinction as my mark. (Vilma 20 years)

Sports days are a further example of sports contexts where the interviewees experienced isolation. Maja, who attended an ordinary class in lower and upper secondary school but in a group with only students with motor disorders in the physical education lessons,

had the following experiences:

> In lower and upper primary school, I was nearly always at home on sports days. I thought it was very sad because I wanted to be with the others….My friends asked me where I was, but then I had to say that they hadn't arranged anything for me. But in lower and upper secondary school, I took part in the sports days because then I was in a wheelchair class. It was not until then that they [the teachers] cared about it and that I felt I was secure. (Maja 19 years)

Several of the interviewees stated that they had negative experiences of the subject of PEH and that they had been exposed to both open and hidden discrimination (c.f., Husu, 2005). They felt that it was more or less up to the students themselves to find solutions to what was considered a problem, namely the students' inadequate preconditions for taking part in ordinary lessons. The above quotations also visualise how they experienced that the teacher looked upon them and treated them differently in relation to their classmates. The interviewees also said that they felt insecure in connection with the subject of PEH, since they seldom knew in advance what would happen, how the lesson was organised and if they could participate under the same conditions as their classmates. It is possible that the interviewees regarded organised sport as more accessible and positive than the teaching of PEH offered by schools or that they expected that education, which is compulsory, would offer greater opportunities for co-determination, influence and individual development than organised sport. Another conceivable explanation might be that the interviewees had not wanted to be separated from their classmates and that in contexts where this happened they experienced direct isolation. Some interviewees stated that exclusion in connection with the PEH lessons further strengthened the experience of being different. It is also one reason why several of them during their school years chose, to the extent that it was possible, to have PEH in a special group with only students with motor disorders. As research has shown, children and young people develop an early awareness of what bodies are regarded as "capable in sport", which has consequences for how they conceive of and understand themselves and each other in relation to the practice of sport, as illustrated by the above quotations (Redelius et al., 2009). The negative experiences of PEH do not seem to have impacted on the interviewees' willingness to participate in sports and leisure. This is possibly explained by the fact that all of them came from social contexts in which sport has played a central and important role in every-day life.

6.4. Limited by Others

This section shows that the interviewees had challenges in regard to sport participation. Some of the factors that they mentioned as obstacles to their opportunities for doing sport included the need for assistance, home care and subsidised transportation service for the disabled. Daniel travelled together with his coach to and from the wheelchair floorball, and that arrangement worked well for him because he did not have to think about booking transportation service or catching the local buses, which would be time-consuming for him, since he lived on the outskirts of the town. For the interviewees who lived in boarding houses or in special dwellings, they must adapt their leisure time to some extent to the staff's working timetable. Daniel said:

> It's very difficult. When I've been training and things like that, I have to rush home so that it will work for them [the staff]. For this reason, I've been at home quite a lot only to make it work for them. (Daniel 16 years)

Peter's situation resembled Daniel's. He said that he has tried out most sports and that sport means a lot to him, above all the social fellowship and the possibility to discuss things that affect his existence together with people who also have disabilities. At the time of the interview, he was not engaged in any sport primarily because it was difficult for him to leave his home. He lived in a flat of his own, but he was in need of home care. In his narrative, it became obvious that his home was not only a place for freedom, recreation and rest but also a place of work for home care and assistance companies, for which reason his leisure-time must be weighed against his need for help.

> The way things are now, it's very difficult to have staff coming home and working at my place. So I'm often stuck at home. It's not very often that I go away to do things….It's the home care, so it's not possible for them to meet me somewhere else to help me. So I have to be at home when they come, and they come very often. (Peter 22 years)

Axel's parents drove him to and from the training when he was younger and lived at home. At the time of the interview, he had moved to a bigger town, attended upper secondary school and stayed at a boarding house, traveling to and from the training sessions by himself. To get to boxing and athletics, he used his manual wheelchair, but getting to floorball required using a transportation service. Many of the interviewees have experienced problems with the transportation service. Since the transportation service must be booked ahead of time, it is difficult to take part in activities spontaneously. Although the taxi was always booked in advance, they often had to wait for a long time, and several of the interviewees experienced worry and stress about never being quite certain that the taxi would arrive at the time

agreed on. Most of them had sometimes been badly treated by taxi drivers in connection with transportation service journeys. It is a difficult situation to be alone many times in a limited space together with a person they do not know and are dependent on:

> Well, it's always that they arrive too late and that they can't find the way…those are probably the most usual things. But sometimes they have also been unpleasant. It was perhaps a few years ago, it was a taxi driver who got bloody angry because…I don't quite know what happened, but in the end he was so pissed off that he threw the wheelchair….When I calmed down, I talked to the police because such things shouldn't happen. But if the wheelchair had broken, I had nothing else. I would have had to creep or something; it wouldn't have worked. (Kent 17 years)

Previous research has pointed out that children and young people with disabilities are excluded from sport due to factors that can be related to the disability in itself and to the need for help and support that it implies (Taub & Greer, 2000; Vickerman et al., 2003). As the interviewees confirmed, the time required for treatment and care and transportation difficulties are real obstacles to taking part in sport. Their experiences thereby show that there are a number of surrounding factors that cannot be directly connected with sport but still have consequences for the individual's opportunities to participate. There are of course a number of factors that facilitate or prevent participation for children in general regardless of disability, but the above quotations confirm what previous research has shown, namely that there are conditions that are specific for children and young people with disabilities.

7. Conclusions

In this paper, my intention was to examine how young people with disabilities made sense of sport, within both the compulsory school system and the voluntary sports movement. The small sample was not representative but rather, provided valuable insights into one particular social, disability and sports context. On the whole, the interviewees have had good experiences of sports within the voluntary sports movement and confirmed that, in many ways, it has been and continues to be an important part of their lives. Their experiences indicate that those who have gone on doing sport began early in life. With the support of adults, they have overcome many of the barriers described by previous research. The factors that encouraged the majority of them to stay in sport are the social environment, the chance of greater autonomy, the independence that the training has contributed to, and the acknowledgement they have been given in various ways through feeling capable in a sports context. Those who have quit or taken a break from sport stated in all cases but one that they had done so for reasons that could not be directly attributed to faults and shortcomings in sport. Such examples are difficulties in solving the logistics of home care, assistance companies or transportation services or that the practice of sport has been incompatible with a demanding school situation. A break from sport does not therefore always have to be a direct consequence of qualitatively inferior or unsatisfactory activities. On the other hand, the interviewees themselves are a product of the sports practice and its prevailing norms and ideals.

A general pattern in the interviewees' experiences is that all of them, to a varying degree, had been dissatisfied with the teaching of the school subject of PEH. Above all, their dissatisfaction arose from the teacher's deficient ability to adapt the teaching to the student's needs. The interviewees were excluded from the teaching, experienced insufficient opportunities for participation and co-determination or thought that the teaching lacked challenges and was too playful. In their opinion, the teacher's expectations of the student's sports performance were unclear, which is perhaps the most remarkable aspect. The deficiencies of the education may, on the other hand, have structural causes and be a matter of, for example, resources, time and working conditions. This result raises questions about the training the teachers themselves received. Are their actions a failure of their own abilities or a failing of the training system they went through to become teachers? Since this wasn't the focus of this study I cannot give a clear answer on this question.

All in all, the challenges in sport have for most of the interviewees led to strengthened self-perception. The experiences that emerged in the interviews indicate that it is important that children and young people with disabilities are given opportunities to explore their limits and potentials but also that they are acknowledged for their sports achievements. However, to a degree this is also true of non-disabled children in sport in that the activity allows them to explore their own physical boundaries at that point in their development and in relation to their peers. Openness and dialogue between performers, leaders and parents are prerequisites for the functioning of sport in practice. As the interviews showed, several of the participants were satisfied with their practice of sport, which indicates that there are environments where words are actually turned into action.

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Conflict of Interests

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Article

What Makes a Difference for Disadvantaged Girls? Investigating the Interplay between Group Composition and Positive Youth Development in Sport

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Abstract
It has been suggested that group composition can influence the experiences of individual group members in social programmes (Weiss, 1998). The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between peer group composition in sports programmes and positive youth development (PYD) in disadvantaged girls, as well as to determine whether it was moderated by personal characteristics. Two hundred young women aged between 10 and 24 completed a questionnaire including, among others, the "Youth Experience Survey for Sport" (YES-S) (MacDonald, Côté, Eys, & Deakin, 2012) and questions regarding participants' socio-economic characteristics (i.e., nationality, education, family situation). Multilevel regression analyses were performed to take into account the hierarchical data structure. At the group level, a higher percentage of girls from a low educational track and with a migration background predicted greater PYD, as indicated by higher levels of personal and social skills, cognitive skills and goal setting. Results showed interaction effects between the respondents' family structures on the participant and team levels. The overall statistical models for the different developmental domains accounted for variance ranging from 14.7% (personal and social skills) to 30.3% (cognitive skills). Results indicated that the extent to which disadvantaged girls derive benefits from their participation in sport also depends on the group composition. The interaction effects between the group composition and individual characteristics suggest that when girls participate in a group of similar peers, those from non-intact families will derive more benefits than their counterparts from intact families.

Keywords
disadvantaged girls; group composition; peers; positive youth development; sport

Issue
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1. Introduction

Organised leisure activities have been described as unique learning environments that can foster positive youth development (PYD) (Holt, 2008). Participation in organised youth sport is one vehicle for PYD that is gaining increasing attention in academic literature (Holt & Jones, 2008; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, &

Jones, 2005). It has been indicated that involvement in sports in an organised context is particularly valuable for disadvantaged young people in general (e.g., Blomfield & Barber, 2010), and could also be beneficial for disadvantaged girls in particular. To date however, there is little understanding of the developmental experiences young females in disadvantaged positions have when they participate in sport. Research in the domain of PYD has expressed the importance of studying development of youth by using an ecological perspective. Garcia Bengoechea and Johnson (2001) suggested that the process-person-context-time (PPCT) model, conceptualized by Bronfenbrenner (1999), is an appropriate framework to examine youth sport as a developmental process. According to this model, the form, power, content, and direction of the processes affecting development vary systematically as a joint function of, amongst others, (a) the developmental outcomes under consideration, (b) the environment or context in which the processes are happening and (c) the characteristics of the developing person. Disadvantaged girls are, however, involved in different sport contexts. The objective of the present study was to investigate if the context makes a difference for disadvantaged girls. In line with the factors of the PPCT-model we will briefly review literature related to developmental outcomes (i.e., domains of learning experiences), one environmental or contextual factor (i.e., peer groups) and the characteristics of the developing persons (i.e., characteristics of disadvantaged girls) under consideration in this study.

1.1. Domains of Learning Experiences in Sport

To date, researchers in the PYD domain have used different theoretical approaches to explore the developmental potential of organised sport. More specifically, studies have used the 5 C's measurement model (Lerner et al., 2005), the developmental assets framework (Leffert et al., 1998) and the interpersonal domains of learning experiences (Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006) to assess and evaluate the effects associated with organised participation in sport. Dworkin, Larson and Hansen's (2003) domains of learning experiences have been used extensively to study PYD in organised youth activities. They examined growth experiences among adolescents through participation in organised activities including sport which they defined as "experiences that teach you something or expand you in some way, that give you new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of interacting with others" (p. 20).

Larson et al. (2006) found that youth sport is a context for identity work, emotional regulation, and teamwork, but also that young people reported significantly more negative experiences involving negative peer interaction, inappropriate adult behaviour and stress in sport compared to other organised activities. The authors also indicated that higher levels of involvement were associated with higher rates of learning experiences. Despite the extensive amount of published material on PYD in general (e.g., Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Holt, 2008; Lerner, Lerner, & Benson, 2011; Perkins & Le Mesenstrel, 2007), to date there has been only limited research on the experiences young people derive from taking part in organised sports activities (e.g., Bruner, Eys, Wilson, & Côté, 2014; Fraser-Thomas & Côté, 2009; MacDonald et al., 2012). For example, Wilkes and Côté (2010) found differences in self-reported learning experiences among young people who participated in different sports contexts. Female youth sports participants in recreational programmes scored significantly lower in several domains of learning compared to those in competitive and school programmes. They argued that the time commitment of participants, training and background of coaches, and competition and volunteer opportunities within competitive and school sports programmes positively mediated the relationship between participation in sport and learning experiences. These findings support most PYD literature reporting that the structure of the environment should be examined in order to understand how participation is experienced by young people (Hansen & Larson, 2007). A majority of the sport-related youth studies in the PYD domain have focused on the impact of coaches and coach-participant relationships. Research has been related, for example, to coaching behaviour (Gould & Carson, 2011), motivational climate (Gould, Flett, & Lauer, 2012) and caring climate (Gould et al., 2012). Although it has often been indicated that peers in organised activities (including sport) can be a positive source of influence for youth development compared to other sources (such as coaches and parents), their position has received only moderate attention from researchers (Denault & Poulin, 2007; Holt & Jones, 2008; Holt & Sehn, 2008; Partridge, 2011; Smith, 2003).

1.2. Peer Groups

According to Denault and Poulin (2007), very few studies have examined peer relations in organised sports programmes. There are some studies that have examined the quality of dyadic relationships or friendships in sport (e.g., Weiss, Smith, & Theeboom, 1996; Zarbatany, Ghesquire, & Mohr, 1992) and the role of specific group processes such as peer acceptance, perceived integration in the peer group or perceptions of group cohesion (e.g., Bruner et al., 2014). Interestingly, Denault and Poulin (2007) found no qualitative differences in friendships in terms of duration and support received from friends in and outside sport. Their study also revealed that individual and team sports attract other youths, which resulted in different dyadic relationships (i.e., types of friend) and group dynamics (i.e., integra-

tion in the peer group). Among other things, they concluded that team sport participants felt more socially integrated, mostly because of age and gender similarities and that their perceptions of social integration were linked to their well-being (e.g., self-esteem). Based on these findings they concluded that more homogenous and cohesive groups in team sport might be a context particularly suited for positive peer interactions and friendship formations. The findings of Denault and Poulin's study (2007) indicated that peer group characteristics that are related to participants' age and gender can positively moderate the relationship between organised sport involvement and self-reported well-being, which may contribute to youth development in this context. Weiss (1998) suggested that a number of other influential characteristics, such as participants' socio-economic status, racial/ethnic background and attitudinal data aggregated on the group-level, could explain why youth may have different outcomes depending on which group they were in. This is in line with Rhodes' (2005) argument that the response of a young person within a social context is, in part, shaped by the ecology of his or her family and surrounding community. For example, susceptibility to peer pressure varies among adolescents exposed to different family structures and parenting styles (Peskins, 1967) and positive peer support is more likely to occur among individuals who share similar characteristics such as ethnicity and education level (Rivera, Soderstrom, & Uzzi, 2010).

1.3. Disadvantaged Girls

We will now focus our attention on disadvantaged girls, primarily for two reasons. First, because research indicates that the participation levels of boys and girls differ greatly, with the latter consistently lower (Green, 2010). Second, because researchers have found low organised sports participation levels among disadvantaged youth in general and girls in particular (e.g., Sabo & Veliz, 2008). The low participation of disadvantaged girls in sport is of further concern as it has been indicated that involvement in organised sport can be very beneficial for these youth (see Barber, Abbott, Neira, & Eccles, 2014). Most research on youth in sport has focused on white middle-class populations (Gould et al., 2012). However, studies relating to young people's involvement in youth activities and sport have found that associations between participation and positive indicators are strongest for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (Marsch & Kleitman, 2002). For example, Blomfield and Barber (2010) examined the links between developmental experiences, self-conception, and schools' socio-economic status. While the developmental experiences provided to youth in activities, such as sport, were found to positively predict self-worth, social self-conception, and academic self-conception among all youth, these links were much stronger for adolescents from low SES schools.

2. Study

In this study conducted in Flanders (the northern, Dutch-speaking part of Belgium), we explore the experiences of disadvantaged girls, a group of youngsters marginalized in the domain of sport. Girls who are underserved in the domain of sport often have a migrant background, are in low educational tracks (i.e., technical/vocational programmes) and grow up in single parent households (Sabo & Veliz, 2008; Scheerder, Taks, & Lagae, 2007; Smith, Thurston, Green, & Lamb, 2007). We also specifically focus on female participants because several researchers found that girls and boys experience sport differently across a number of constructs (e.g., win orientation, parents' belief in their child's sporting abilities, amount of recognition from their fellow team members, coaches, school or community for their athletic accomplishment), which could result in different developmental experiences (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005; Gould & Carson, 2011). Despite disadvantaged girls' marginalisation in the domain of sport, researchers assume that this group gains more from their involvement than affluent youth (Blomfield & Barber, 2010; Marsch & Kleitman, 2002). However, generalisations about the developmental potential of "sport" are unhelpful because the probability that disadvantaged girls become involved in different types of sport may vary substantially. Activities with a working or lower class image (e.g., soccer, basketball, urban dance, street sports) and activities that are associated with the use of explicit strength (e.g., martial arts and power lifting) (Hellison & Georgiadis 1992; Janssens & van Bottenburg 1999; Lagendijk, 1991; Theeboom, De Knop, & Wylleman, 2008) have been found to be popular for certain youth in vulnerable positions. Full-contact martial arts (e.g., kick boxing, MMA) and urban dance styles (e.g., popping, locking) appeared to be particularly popular in an organised leisure context for girls with disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g., Beaulac, Kristjansson & Calhoun, 2011; Elling, 2012; Theeboom et al., 2008). The popularity of these types of sport seems to be related to socially vulnerable girls' orientation towards the body and the fact that such activities are valued within these youngsters' subcultures (Elling, 2012; Hellison & Georgiadis, 1992; Nakeyshaey, 2005). Moreover, disadvantaged girls can participate in different types of sports programmes (Coalter, 2012; Holt, et al., 2011). We refer to the degree to which sports programmes are targeted at disadvantaged girls. In some sports programmes, disadvantaged girls are almost absent or unrecognizable; in contrast, other sports programmes specifically serve these girls. It is interesting to investigate to what extent such intergroup variations have an impact on the

experiences that disadvantaged girls derive from their participation in sport. Therefore, we (1) assessed what developmental experiences disadvantaged girls report from their participation in sport; (2) examined the relationships between peer group composition and reported experiences among these girls participating in sport; and (3) studied whether these relationships between peer group composition and reported developmental experiences were moderated by the individual characteristics of participants (relating to participants' household structure, educational level and migration background). The following hypotheses are examined based on the earlier research related to (1) the developmental potential of organised sport, (2) the contextual influences within youth sport (i.e., peer groups), and (3) research on the positive impact of organised sport on disadvantaged girls:

- Hypothesis 1: organised sports programmes are settings capable of promoting positive development in girls.
- Hypothesis 2: in sports programmes where there are more similarities between disadvantaged girls, these young people feel more socially integrated are more likely to provide positive peer support and therefore feel less socially isolated, and this may translate into a stronger relationship between a specific target group and positive developmental experiences.
- Hypothesis 3: individual characteristics of disadvantaged girls—migration background, low educational track, non-intact family—will moderate the relationship between group composition and reported developmental experiences. Disadvantaged girls versus affluent girls derive more benefits in a group with a higher percentage of similar peers (in terms of their migration background, low educational level and family structure).

3. Method

3.1. Participants

A number of specific selection criteria were used to ensure enough disadvantaged girls females in this study. The programmes were selected based on the reported popularity of the sport type for these girls, the specificity of the targeted group and the degree of accessibility. Coaches and coordinators were consulted to gather information about two sampling criteria used to identify those programmes that reach disadvantaged girls (i.e., target group) and the extent to which the programmes specifically serve these girls (i.e., degree of accessibility). A total of 56 sports programmes in Flanders were contacted for this study. The sampling criteria related to the programmes' target groups and their actual degree of accessibility resulted in a selection of 15 sports programmes in Flanders. The selection included six Flemish urban dance programmes and nine full-contact martial arts programmes. Programmes that were not selected for this study did not meet the above-mentioned selection criteria, were not reaching girls, or did not provide the selected types of sport (i.e., full-contact martial arts or urban dance).

The response rate in the present study was very high (99% (202/200 = 0.99)). The average number of participants within each programme was 14 (ranging between 6 and 27) (M = 14.3, SD = 8.77). In the present study, data were collected from 200 female respondents. The sample included 142 (71.00%) urban dance and 58 (29.00%) martial arts participants. Their age was between 10 and 24 years (*M* = 15.47 yrs., SD = 2.15). All respondents attended a minimum of once a week (*M* = 2.99, SD = .79) and had practiced their sport for at least one year (*M* = 2.69 yrs., *SD* = 1.21). 51.4% of the respondents who were in secondary education (*n* = 183, 16 primary education, 1 missing) were on a low educational track (i.e., in technical or vocational secondary education). 20.1% of the respondents that provided information regarding their migration background (*n* = 189, 11 missing) were born abroad with most of them of Moroccan, Polish, Turkish or Italian descent. There are several reasons why the authors choose to use nationality and not ethnicity but the main reason was a practical one, namely that several girls (especially the younger ones) were not able to provide the relevant information to take into account their ethnicity (such as the place of birth of their parents, whether or not they belonged to second or third generation). 13.1% lived in a non-intact family (*n* = 199, 1 missing) (i.e., not with both their biological parents) with the majority (76.9%) living with their mother. The others were living either with their father (*n* = 2), in an orphanage (*n* = 2), with their grandmother (*n* = 1) or independently under supervision (*n* = 1). Additional descriptive statistics of the sample are displayed in Table 1.

3.2. Measures

Two measures were used for this study. A demographic survey was used to collect the independent variables. The "Youth Experience Survey for Sports" (YES-S) (MacDonald et al., 2012) was used to collect the dependent variables. In addition, each questionnaire received a code related to the sports programme in order to facilitate categorisation. The following sociodemographic factors were assessed: age, gender, nationality, educational level and household structure. Nationality was determined based on a child's place of birth and dichotomized and dummy coded into Belgians and participants with a migrant background. Educational levels of the participants were assessed using a 7–point scale ranging from primary to tertiary education (including college and university).

Table 1. Additional descriptive statistics of the sample (*N* = 200).

Variables		*n*	%
Migration background [a]	Belgian	151	79.9
	Born abroad	38	20.1
Secondary school programme [b]	Academic [d]	89	48.6
	Applied	94	51.4
	Technical	51	54.3
	Vocational	43	45.7
Family structure [c]	Both biological parents	173	86.9
	Non-intact family	26	13.1
	Mother	20	76.9
	Father	2	7.7
	Grandmother	1	3.8
	Orphanage	2	7.7
	Independently under supervision	1	3.8

Notes: [a] *n* = 189, 11 missing values; [b] *n* = 183, 16 primary education, 1 missing value; [c] *n* = 199, 1 missing value; [d] "Academic" refers to the general six-year high school programme and is contrasted to the technical and vocational high school programmes, available for high school education in Flanders. In the result section comparisons will be made between two groups including participants within an "academic" and those in an "applied" (i.e., technical/vocational) high school programme.

The 7-point scale consisted of the following response options: (1) Primary or elementary education, (2) General or academic secondary education, (3) Artistic secondary education, (4) Technical secondary education, (5) Vocational secondary education, (6) Higher education (non-university or university), (7) I don't know. Participants were classified into high (i.e., academic) versus low (i.e., applied) educational tracks depending on their secondary school programme. We opted for a dichotomous categorisation wherein we compared students in general or academic education with students in all other tracks or streams together. The data related to this scale was dichotomized and dummy coded into academic secondary education and applied secondary education. Household structure was assessed using a 4-point scale (i.e., both biological parents; one biological parent or alternately by both; a guardian; an orphanage), and the opportunity was provided for participants to mention any other situation in which they lived. This was dummy coded into "intact family" (i.e., with both biological parents) and "non-intact family". The survey also assessed the respondents' frequency of sport involvement; their level of sports experience and their involvement in organised non-sports activities. The intensity was assessed including a 4-point scale ranging from "not every week" to "at least 3 times a week". This was dichotomised and dummy coded into "not every week" and "at least once a week". The level of experience was assessed including a 4-point scale ranging from "less than one year" to "more than five years". This was also dichotomised and dummy coded into "less than one year" and "at least one year". Participation in organised non-sports activities during leisure time was assessed using four categories. These categories of organised non-sports activities were based on existing research (e.g., Hansen & Larson, 2007; Larson et al., 2006) and included: performance and fine arts (drama, band), academic activities (tutoring, chess club, debate club), faith-based and service activities (volunteering), and community and vocational clubs (Scouts). If a specific activity was not listed in a category, the participant could type in the name of the activity.

YES-S was constructed to assess the positive and negative developmental experiences occurring in the domain of sport. It is comprised of five scales (including four positive scales and one negative one) and 37 items that fall within these scales. These include: (1) personal and social skills (e.g., "I became better at giving feedback"); (2) cognitive skills (e.g., "This activity increased my desire to stay in school"), (3) goal setting (e.g., "I observed how others solved problems and learned from them"), (4) initiative (e.g., "I learned to focus my attention"); (5) and negative experiences (e.g., "I was treated differently because of my gender, race, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation"). For each item, participants used a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ("not at all") to 4 ("yes, definitely") to describe the extent to which they felt a given experience is characteristic of their involvement in sport. Since no validated Dutch version exists of the YES-S, a forward and back translation method was used. It was translated from English to Dutch by bilingual Dutch and English speakers, retranslated and modified by the researchers if necessary.

3.3. Procedures

Coach(es) and/or youth worker(s) from each sports programme provided assistance for organising the survey, but were not present during the actual completion. Before administrating the survey, parents and coaches were informed about the purpose of the study. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, that participation was voluntary and that their information would not be shared with members of the coaching staff or parents. During adminstration researchers provided assistance to help complete the survey (i.e., explained the Likert-scale, etc.) and ensured that each participant completed her questionnaire without being influenced by her peers. Some items were formulated in a simplified way (in italics under the original question) or provided with additional information. The selection of these items was based on a preliminary study involving eight young adoles-

cents (aged between 10–12 years) from different socio-economic backgrounds. On average, the administration took between 20 to 30 minutes.

3.4. Data Analysis

To account for the hierarchical data structure (participants clustered within sports clubs), multilevel regression analyses were performed using MLwiN 2.30. This software package is specifically designed to conduct multi-level analysis and is used in various research domains (e.g., education sciences). For the outcomes "personal and social skills", "cognitive skills", "goal setting" and "initiative", multilevel linear regression analyses were performed (Steele, 2008). A stepwise approach was followed to construct a final model. First, three separate models were constructed including the individual- and group-level variable of one of the three indicators of a girl's disadvantaged background and their interaction effect. Second, those main and interaction effects that proved to be significant in the first step, were entered into one combined model. Third, this model was simplified by deleting the non-significant effects that did not improve the model fit (based on the likelihood ratio test). The significance of individual parameters was tested by Chi²-tests. Since the outcome "negative experiences" was heavily positively skewed, this variable was dichotomised around its median (= 1.20). Values equal to or lower than the median were coded "1" (no negative experiences) and values above the median were coded "0" (negative experiences). Multilevel logistic regression analyses were performed to analyse the odds of having reported no negative experiences. The same stepwise approach as described above was followed to construct the final model. Parameter estimates were obtained via Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) procedures (burn-in length = 50,000 and monitoring chain length = 200,000) (Browne, 2012). To facilitate interpretation, significant interaction effects were illustrated using MLwiN's customized prediction function (Rasbash, Charlton, Jones, & Pillinger, 2009). All analyses were adjusted for the participants' ages and types of sport. Since the level of involvement in sport appeared to be related to "initiative" experiences during exploratory analyses, all analyses for "initiative" were adjusted for the level of sport involvement. The frequency of sport involvement and involvement in organised non-sports activities were not related to any of the YES-S dimensions, and therefore they were not included in any of the models. The level of significance was determined at 0.05. To estimate the local effect size of significant relationships, the proportional reduction in variance statistic (PRV) was calculated for the explained variance at the participant and team levels and for the total variance (Peugh, 2010). The PRV represents the reduction in variance in the dependent variable attributable to the inclusion of the corresponding independent variable. The percentage of explained variance by the total model was also calculated. It should be noted that the percentage of variance explained by the total model can be smaller than the sum of the explained variances of the predictors (Peugh, 2010). When a significant interaction effect was present, PRV was calculated for the inclusion of the two main effects and the interaction effect.

4. Results

4.1. Reliability and Descriptive Statistics

Reliability estimates (i.e., Cronbach alpha values) are displayed between brackets in Table 2. Based on previous research conducted with youths, values of .60 and higher were considered to be adequate (Wilkes & Côté, 2010). Data collected for the present study demonstrated that the YES-S had acceptable to high internal consistency measured by Cronbach's Alpha (.66–.85). Secondly, Table 2 provides the descriptive statistics for the dependent variables. Considering that the YES-S used a 4-point Likert scale, ratings for positive experiences were relatively high (Total *M* = 2.90), and ratings for negative experiences were low (*M* = 1.31). The highest positive subscale scores were found for initiative (*M* = 3.37), followed by personal and social skills (*M* = 2.90), goal setting (*M* = 2.70) and cognitive skills (*M* = 2.14).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for dependent variables (means with standard deviations and reliability values between brackets) (*N* = 200)

Dependent variables	Total
YES-S Positive experiences [**.852**] *M (SD)*	2.90 (.45)
Personal and social skills [**.790**] *M (SD)*	2.90 (.46)
Cognitive skills [**.724**] *M (SD)*	2.14 (.71)
Goal setting [**.746**] *M (SD)*	2.70 (.68)
Initiative [**.667**] *M (SD)*	3.37 (.54)
YES-S Negative experiences [**.846**] *M (SD)*	1.31 (.43)

4.2. Relationships between Developmental Experiences and Group Composition

Table 3 summarizes the results of the multilevel regression analysis[1].

[1] Multilevel modelling takes into account the different levels in a hierarchical sample (i.e., group and participant level), by separating the variance attributable to these different levels. This technique was used to explore the relationship between the group composition and participants' reported experiences.

Table 3. Results of the regression model predicting positive developmental experiences.

Positive YES-S Subscales	Significant predictors and moderators	*b* (*SE*)	*p*	% Variance explained by null model		% Variance explained by predictor			Variances in final model[1]		% Variance explained by final model		
				Participant level	Team level	Participant level	Team level	Total	Participant level σ 2 (*SE*)	Team level σ 2 (*SE*)	Participant level	Team level	Total
Goal Setting	Intercept	2.654 (0.109)		94.7	5.3				0.372 (0.040)	0.002 (0.010)	16.0	92.0	20.1
	Group-level secondary education	0.007 (0.002)	0.007*			2.1	80.0	4.1					
	Individual secondary Education (ref = academic)	-0.095 (0.106)	0.37										
	Group-level family structure	-0.013 (0.004)	0.001*			12.3	80.0	13.8					
	Individual family structure (ref = intact family)	-0.816 (0.298)	0.006										
	Group-level * Individual family structure	0.059 (0.013)	0.001*										
Personal and Social Skills	Intercept	2.618 (0.122)		91.9	8.1				0.173 (0.019)	0.007 (0.008)	10.8	58.8	14.6
	Group-level secondary education	0.004 (0.002)	0.04*			0.0	46.2	3.2					
	Individual secondary education (ref = academic)	-0.052 (0.072)	0.47										
	Group-level family structure	-0.004 (0.003)	0.20			6.0	0.0	5.3					
	Individual family structure (ref = intact family)	-0.426 (0.207)	0.04										
	Group-level * Individual family structure	0.028 (0.009)	0.002*										
Cognitive Skills	Intercept	1.865 (0.115)		85.4	14.6				0.357 (0.038)	0.000 (0.000)	18.3	100.0	30.3
	Group-level secondary education	0.007 (0.002)	0.001*			4.8	100.0	5.8					
	Individual secondary Education (ref = academic)	-0.106 (0.107)	0.32										
	Group-level nationality	0.006 (0.003)	0.04*			1.9	100.0	2.5					
	Individual nationality (ref = Belgian)	0.191 (0.132)	0.15										
Initiative	Intercept	3.331 (0.098)		94.3	5.7				0.246 (0.026)	0.004 (0.008)	11.5	76.5	15.3
	Group-level family structure	-0.005 (0.003)	0.14			2.0	42.8	3.1					
	Individual family structure (ref = intact family)	-0.269 (0.246)	0.27										
	Group-level * Individual family structure	0.021 (0.010)	0.04*										

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; [1] The multilevel model was a random intercept model.

For goal setting, a small proportion of the variance (5.3%) appeared to be related to the team level. The remaining 94.7% of the total variance regarding goal setting experiences could be attributed to differences between participants. We found a significant main effect for group-level educational track. The percentage of team members from a low educational track was significantly positively related to goal setting; an increase of 1% in the percentage of team members from a low educational track was related to an increase in goal setting by 0.007 (*SE* = 0.002, *p* = 0.007) on a 4-point Likert scale. In addition, the analysis revealed a significant interaction effect (*b* = 0.059, *SE* = 0.013, *p* = 0.001) between the participant's and group-level family structure. This implies that the relationships between group-level family structure and goal setting differed according to participant's family structure (see Figure 1).

Among participants that lived in non-intact families, goal setting significantly increased with an increasing proportion of team members living in non-intact families. An increase in the percentage of participants in a team living in non-intact families of 1% was related to an increase in goal setting of 0.046 (*SE* = 0.012, *p*<0.001) on a 4-point Likert scale. The opposite was observed for participants that lived in intact families. Among participants that lived in intact families, goal setting significantly decreased with an increasing proportion of team member living in non-intact families. An increase in the percentage of participants in a team living in non-intact families of 1% was related to a decrease in goal setting of 0.013 (*SE* = 0.004, *p* = 0.001) on a 4-point Likert scale. Our model highlights that 80.0% of the variance at the group level and 12.3% of the variance at the individual level was explained by the interaction between the family structure on both the participant level and the team level. The overall model for goal setting explained 92.0% of the variance at the group level and 16.0% of the variance at the individual level. Overall, 20.1% of the variance in goal setting was explained.

For personal and social skills, 8.1% of the variance appeared to be explained by the team level. The analysis showed a significant positive relationship between the percentage of team members in a low educational track and personal and social skills. The analysis also revealed a significant interaction effect (*b* = 0.028, *SE* = 0.009, *p* = 0.002) between the respondent's family structure at both the participant and team levels (Figure 2).

Among participants that lived in non-intact families, an increase of 1% in the proportion of participants in a team living in non-intact families was related to an increase in personal and social skills of 0.024 (*SE* = 0.009, *p* = 0.007) on a 4-point Likert scale. Among participants that lived in an intact family, no significant relationship (*b* = -0.004, *SE* = 0.003, *p* = 0.20) was found between the amount of participants in a team that lived in non-intact families and personal and social skills. Our model highlights that none of the variance (0.0%) at the group level and 6.0% of the variance at the individual level is explained by the interaction between the family structure on both the participant level and team level. The overall model explained 58.8% of the variance at the group level and 10.8% of the variance at the individual level. Overall, 14.7% of the variance in personal and social skills was explained.

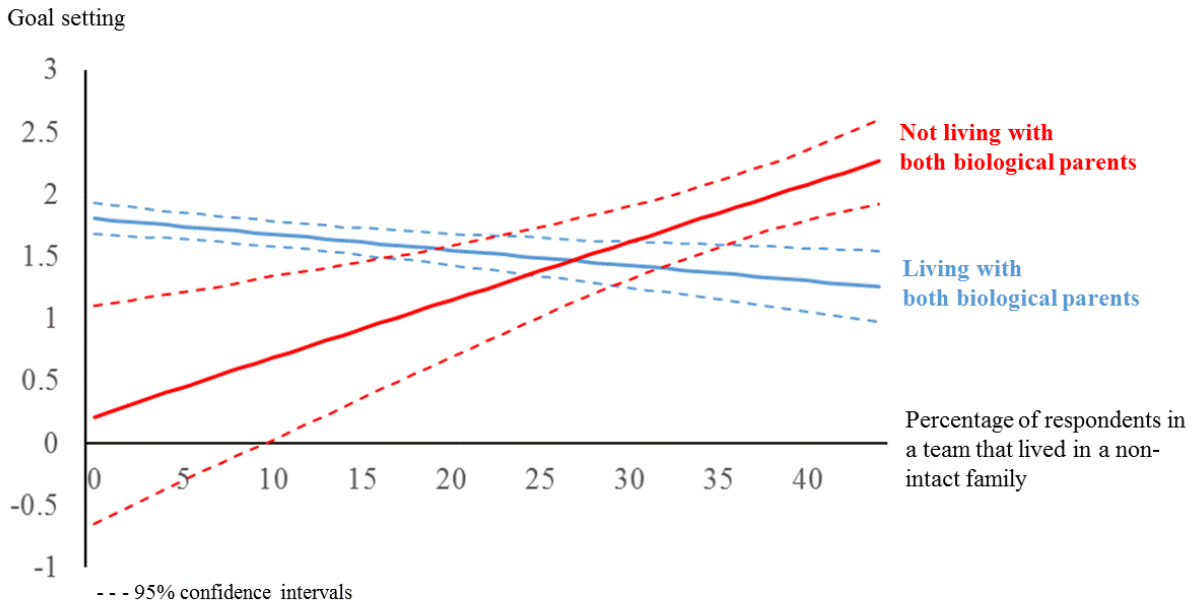

Figure 1. Interaction effect for goal setting between the respondents' family structures on the participant and team levels.

For cognitive skills, 14.6% of the variance was explained by the team level. A significant positive relationship between the amount of participants on a low educational track and cognitive skills was observed. Another significant positive association was observed between the percentage of team members with a migrant background and cognitive skills. The overall model for cognitive skills explained 100.0% of the variance at the group level and 18.3% of the variance at the individual level. Overall, 30.3% of the variance in cognitive skills was explained.

For initiative, 5.7% of the variance was explained by the team level. No significant main effects for group level predictors were found. However, the analysis revealed a significant interaction effect (b = 0.021, SE = 0.010, p = 0.04) between the respondents' family structures at the participant level and at the team level (see Figure 3).

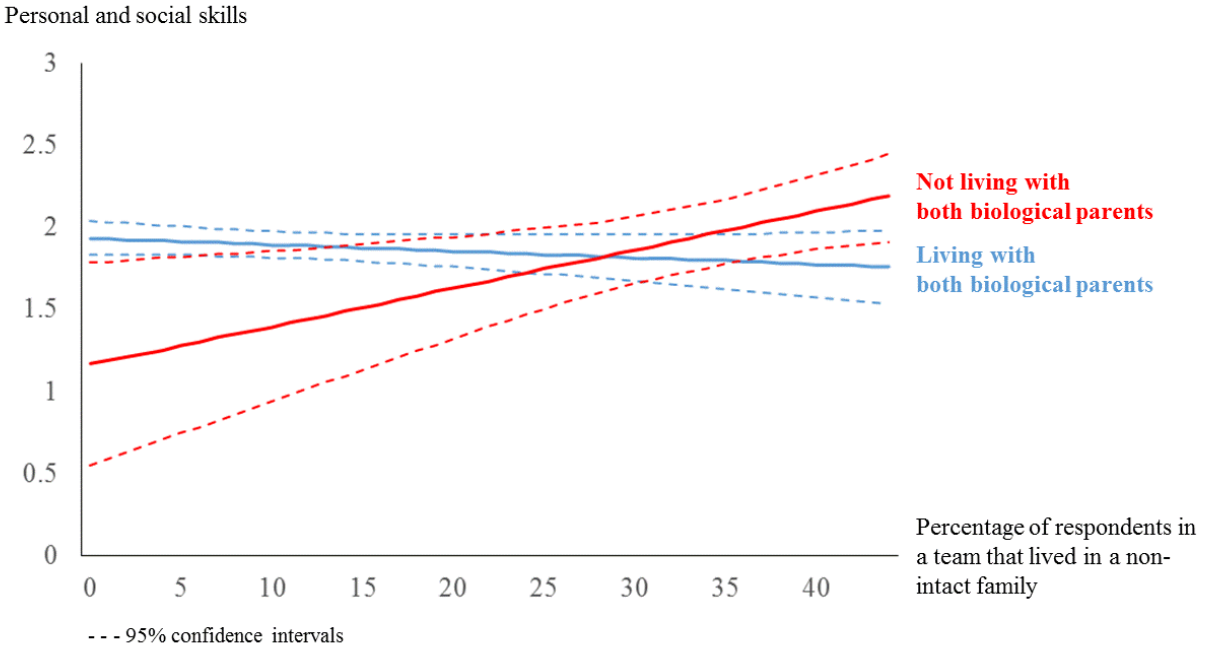

Figure 2. Interaction effect for personal and social skills between the respondents' family structures on the participant level and team level.

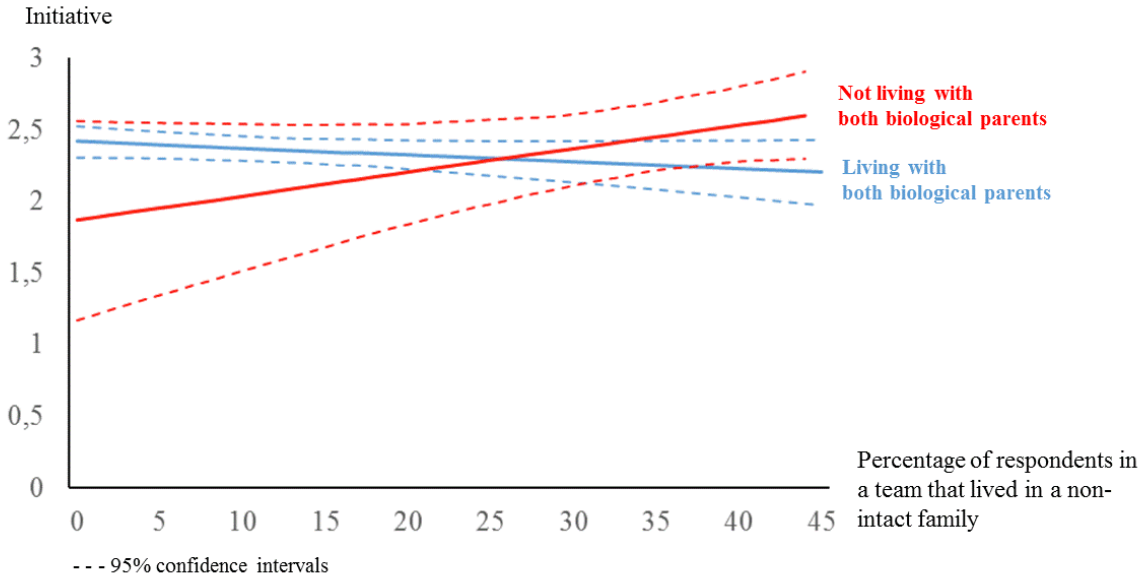

Figure 3. Interaction effect for initiative between the respondents' family structures on the participant level and team level.

Among participants that lived in a non-intact family, an increase in the percentage of group participants living in non-intact families of 1% was related to an increase in initiative of 0.016 (*SE* = 0.010, *p* = 0.04) on a 4-point Likert scale. Among participants that lived in an intact family, no significant relationship was found between the amount of participants in a team that lived in non-intact families and initiative (*b* = -0.005, *SE* = 0.003, *p* = 0.14). Our model highlights that 42.8% of the variance at the group-level and 2.0 % of the variance at the individual level could be explained by the interaction between the household structure on the participant level and the team level. The overall model explained 76.5% of the variance at the group level and 11.5% of the variance at the individual level. Overall, 15.3% of the variance was explained.

For the model related to negative experiences, no significant main effects of the group level predictors nor significant interaction effects were found.

5. Discussion

In this study conducted in Flanders, we looked at disadvantaged girls. As mentioned earlier, these girls often have a migrant background, are in low educational tracks (i.e., technical/vocational programmes) and grow up in single parent households (Sabo & Veliz, 2008; Scheerder, Taks, & Lagae, 2007; Smith, Thurston, Green, & Lamb, 2007). These three personal characteristics were included as separate variables in this study and provided specific insights regarding disadvantaged girls' reported gains in organised sport. This study was designed to assess what developmental experiences disadvantaged girls report from their participation in sport and to measure the relationships between disadvantaged girls' reported gains and the composition of their activity peer group. It was also set up to investigate whether these relationships between group composition and reported developmental experiences were moderated by participants' individual characteristics (i.e., participants' family structures, educational levels and migration backgrounds).

According to Fraser-Thomas and colleagues (2005), there are different paths to positive youth development through sport, and youth may experience group environments differently even though they are engaged in the same sport context. Qualitative research in the domain of PYD supports this as well (e.g., Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Our results suggest that the relationship between group composition and reported developmental experiences is moderated by the individual's family structure. Findings related to the goal setting domain show that both girls from non-intact and intact families derive more benefits in a group with more participants with a similar family structure. With Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory (2000) in mind, we could suggest that family structure is one of the individual characteristics that maintains and reinforces belonging among peers. According to their theory, a sense of belonging is one of the fundamental psychological needs (along with autonomy and perceived competence) to initiate an individual's innate tendencies towards development. Our findings also concur with Deci and Ryan's (2000) claim that all three psychological needs are essential, but that the degree to which they are fulfilled varies from one context to another. The results of the present study seem to suggest that feelings of belonging for girls are most likely to be realised through having things in common (such as a similar family structure). It appears that this interconnection in the group environment facilitates a more positive learning environment. Research in after-school programmes and community sport also underlines the value of belonging for promoting positive developmental outcomes (e.g., Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009). Researchers have suggested that young people who feel they belong to learning environments report higher enjoyment, interest, happiness, enthusiasm, and more confidence in engaging in learning activities, whereas those who feel isolated report greater frustration, anxiety, sadness, and boredom during academic engagement, which affects their performance (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). However, we should also mention that no relationship was found in two cases for girls from intact families (i.e., personal and social skills, initiative). It could perhaps be that other psychological needs of the self-determination theory (i.e., autonomy or perceived competence) have more influence in facilitating such developmental experiences among girls from intact families. It is also important to mention that our findings related to the interaction effects suggest that girls from non-intact families in a group of peers with a similar family situation will still derive more benefits than girls from intact families in a group of similar peers. These findings confirm, in part, our third hypothesis and indicate that researchers investigating the relationship between sports participation and PYD should take into account characteristics at the individual level and the group level, as well as the interaction between both levels in order to understand if some girls derive more benefits than others from their participation in organised sport. Similar to other empirical research (e.g., Blomfield & Barber, 2010), our findings related to interaction effects have shown that disadvantaged youth gains more than affluent youth from their participation in organised activities (such as sport).

Next to the findings related to participants' family structure, we also have some interesting results related to girls from a low educational track or with a migrant background. The results of our study showed, for example, a significant positive relationship between the percentage of team members in a low educational track and personal and social skills. Similar results were found for cognitive skills and goal setting. These find-

ings partially confirm our second hypothesis because we found significant relationships for only two variables (i.e., participants' educational levels and migration backgrounds). But what might explain these significant positive relationships? One possible explanation is that the more homogenous groups (in terms of low educational track and migration background) could have reported more developmental experiences as a result of a more positive peer sports climate that is facilitated by a specific coaching climate implemented in these programmes. This could, perhaps, imply that programmes that reach heterogeneous groups could facilitate as much PYD in these domains by implementing a similar coaching climate.

Heterogeneous and homogeneous activity peer groups are related to mixed and separate sports clubs. We should, therefore, also point to research related to the social capital theory on bonding and bridging processes in mixed and separate sports clubs. For example, Theeboom and his colleagues (2012) investigated the development of social capital among ethnic minorities in mixed and separate sports clubs. These investigators highlighted that mixed sports club members indicated more that they learned to make contact with others, became self-confident and learned about other ethnic groups, while members of separate sports clubs appeared to have more personal non-sports-related conversations with other members and helped each other more often outside the sporting context. Based on such findings researchers concluded that separate sports clubs are not necessarily more beneficial for participants' development than mixed sports clubs (Theeboom, Schaillée, & Nols, 2012; Verweel et al., 2005).

Another finding of this study is that respondents did not have many negative experiences. This is an important finding, particularly for disadvantaged girls, as it is known from a large body of research that negative experiences can contribute to negative stress; and that youths who experience multiple simultaneous stressors are more likely to become depressed, use substances, engage in risky sexual activity or manifest other problems (e.g., Chassin et al., 2004). It has been reported that, compared to other youngsters, disadvantaged youth is often characterised by more negative experiences in their institutional contacts (Vettenburg & Walgrave, 2009). For example, youths with a migrant background skip school more often (Vogels & Bronneman-Helmers, 2000), have lower academic scores and are seven times more likely to end up on a low educational track compared to other students (Stevens, De Groof, & Burssens, 2006). Similarly, youths on lower educational tracks appear to have lower perceptions of school membership (Smerdon, 2002) and a lower sense of belonging in class (Van Houtte & Maele, 2012) compared to those in higher educational tracks. Several of the above-mentioned studies suggest commonalities among youth in disadvantaged situations (e.g., regarding educational tracks). We need, however, to be cautious with regard to over-generalisation (e.g., with regard to migration background and to youths' experiences of and reaction to institutional contacts). Although homogeneous groups within sports programmes might be very similar to the homogeneous student populations in vocational schools (i.e., lower-class students and students from ethnic minority groups), there are several reasons not to expect similar influences. For example, sport is a leisure activity implying voluntary engagement. There is often an interest to look for similar cultural capital among peers and coaching staff. For example, Ramsahai (2008) referred to the need to first construct a strong (ethnic) identity before building up sustainable relationships with other minority or majority groups.

The YES-S means and standard deviations show that the girls involved in this study perceived initiative, personal and social skills, and goal setting as the benefits they most often derived from their participation in sport. The hypothesis that sports participation can facilitate developmental experiences independently of girls' disadvantaged background could therefore be confirmed. These results compare favourably with Gould et al.'s study (2012), which showed that the positive experiences of teamwork and social skills, physical skill development and initiative were most experienced by underserved youth sports participants. Though the instruments used in both studies are theoretically different, it has been indicated that the YES-S and YES 2.0 share similarities (MacDonald et al., 2012). The YES-S factors consist of YES 2.0 items related to the concepts of "initiative", "positive peer relationships", "adult network and social capital", and "teamwork and social skills" outlined by Hansen and Larson (2005). The initiative subscale of the YES-S is based on the notion of initiative, as described by Larson (2000). He argued that initiative will develop in youth who are intrinsically motivated by the activity, who invest high amounts of attention and effort, and participate in an activity for a significant amount of time. The other two factors of the YES-S may prove to be very valuable because experiences in these domains of learning (e.g., receiving feedback) could also have positive effects in other facets of young people's lives (Danish, Fazio, Nellen, & Owen, 2002; Gould et al., 2012). There is, however, a broad consensus among sports psychologists that life skills, defined as the skills that are required to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life (Hodge & Danish, 1999), are not necessarily transferred into other social settings. Danish, Petitpas and Hale (1990) argued that the sports experience should be designed is such a way that participants can transfer what is learned into other domains such as school, home, and/or a workplace. They suggested that in order to facilitate such a transfer, it is necessary to help participants in recognising the skills that they have acquired

through sport and to clarify the use of these skills in other life domains. A variety of skills such as effective communication with peers and adults or effective decision-making can be learned in a sport context and transferred into other life domains. According to Gould and Carson (2008), coaches play and influential role in the process of coaching life skills through sport and developed a five-component model for understanding this process. Their model emerged from an extensive review of the literature on positive youth development through extracurricular activities and sport and could be used to evaluate sports programmes' efficacy regarding life skills transfer.

Like all studies, this study has several limitations that must be considered. First, we looked at girls involved in urban dance or martial arts programmes. Although we controlled for the type of sport, this could mean that these two different sports offer distinct social contexts and opportunities for socialisation. For example, a martial arts participant may spend a greater amount of one-on-one quality time with a peer than an urban dance participant. On the other hand, the broader social system of an urban dance team may provide learning experiences that are not available in a dual sports activity such as martial art. Second, taking into account that we wanted to investigate the influence of group composition, it was essential to include all participants. This resulted in substantial age differences in our population (i.e., 14 years). Although we controlled for this variable, it does not rule out that the experiences of a 10 year-old from participating are probably different from those of a 24 year-old in the same group. Several studies showed that over the course of their development, adolescents report to be less susceptible to peer influence in general (e.g., Sumter, Bokhorst, Steinberg, & Westenberg, 2009). This suggests that over time adolescents gain more autonomy from their peers as a result of increasing psychosocial maturity. Third, although self-reporting has been regarded as a good method to assess youth experiences in sports activities, this methodology also has limitations such as response bias (e.g., social desirability, inaccurate memory). Fourth, our findings are based on correlational data at a single point in time, and do not allow for conclusions of direction or cause. The relevant causal relationships can be further explored by using, for example, longitudinal data. Future studies could investigate the relative importance of different contextual variables (e.g., type of sport) by exploring the extent to which each factor can have an effect on reported experiences.

6. Conclusions

The point of departure of this study has been the relevance of group composition for the experiences that disadvantaged girls derive from their participation in sport. We perceived this as a relevant question because it has been suggested that preference should be given to contextual factors that can be changed or manipulated, rather than fixed attributes over which programmes have little control (Weiss, 1998). There is some research evidence indicating that the contextual variable (i.e., peer group) studied here can be changed through specific recruitment strategies and by changing the location where the activities take place (e.g., Schaillée & Theeboom, 2014). Findings of the present study suggest that the peer group composition in organised sport can contribute to girls' experiences, but how they matter can only be fully understood in the contexts of the participants' lives in combination with the characteristics of their fellow team members. Investigating the moderating effect of participants' disadvantaged backgrounds in facilitating PYD is a relevant topic as it would provide more insights into effective coaching and organisational strategies to be used to create supportive and rich learning environments for young people. As communities and organised sports programmes are very diverse, gaining such deeper understanding is essential. According to Armour (2011), coaches or those working with young people, need to continuously critically examine the ways sports activities are provided in terms of creating positive and valuable experiences for youths. More research is however needed that specifically focuses on the value and meaning disadvantaged girls give to specific and varied forms of participation in sport.

The findings reported in this paper are based on 10–24 year-old girls' perceived experiences. But there are several important questions that remain unanswered. For instance, we have not investigated whether the developmental experiences in a same-group environment differ according to the ages of the participants. Nor do we know whether there are certain developmental experiences that are more prevalent at a given developmental stage (e.g., older adolescents). It should also be recognised that the group composition examined here only represents a small subset of the programme level variables that are likely to affect youth developmental experiences. The statistical models of our study show that about 14.6-30.3% of the experiences in the different developmental domains are linked to the group composition; thus the majority of these positive experiences have to be explained by other contextual factors. The group composition is likely to be part of a complex web working with other contextual factors in leading to positive youth development in a sports context. Other important factors are, for example, the young person's motivation (Hansen & Larson, 2007) and the perceived relationships between the athletes and their coaches (Petitpas et al., 2005). However, differences relating to perceived cognitive skill experiences at the team level cannot be further explained by other contextual fac-

tors, while such differences for other domains of learning (e.g., personal and social skills) can still, at least in part, be explained by other aspects which may differ at the team level (e.g., motivational coaching approach). The multilevel approach used in this study permitted a simultaneous examination of the influence of individual characteristics on girls' PYD at individual and group levels. With variability in PYD at both the individual and team levels, future research should not overlook the impact of the interdependent nature and influence of the social context of sports programmes on PYD. But despite this variability, the results of this study clearly suggest that organised sports programmes can be an important context for promoting positive youth development among disadvantaged girls.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Processes of Inclusion and Exclusion in Physical Education: A Social-Relational Perspective

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Abstract
Existing research on inclusion and exclusion processes in physical education (PE) has particularly focused on exclusion from PE as something being done to students and attributed to specific social categories such as (female) gender, (low) physical skills or (minority) ethnic background. This article aims to develop a social-relational perspective on inclusion and exclusion processes defined as students' participation or non-participation in PE interpreted as a community of practice. In so doing, the article examines how students' experiences of participation and non-participation in PE are influenced by complex interactions within the group of students and in negotiations with teachers about the values and practices of PE. The article is based on an embedded single-case study carried out over the course of 6 months through weekly observations of PE classes in a multi-ethnic school, as well as focus group interviews with students and teachers. Using Etienne Wenger's conceptual tools, we show that a student's degree of participation in the community of practice of PE-classes is closely related to the legitimacy of the student and the extent to which the student experiences PE as meaningful. Some students were excluded from PE because they did not have the physical skills and social relations necessary to gain legitimacy from other students. Others chose not to participate because PE was not meaningful to them. This latter type of non-participation from students who experienced lacking meaningfulness was evident in PE classes that had little transfer value and limited prospect for students to develop the knowledge, skills or the understanding necessary to move towards full participation in the classes. Thus, the article argues that an understanding of the variety in students' participation or non-participation is important not only in terms of how we talk about students as passive victims or active agents, but also in terms of future intervention aimed at promoting inclusion processes in PE.

Keywords
inclusion; exclusion; meaningfulness; legitimacy; legitimate peripheral participation; situated learning; physical education; sport

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1. Introduction

For many years there have been indications that not all students experience inclusion in physical education (PE), both in Denmark (Munk & Von Seelen, 2012) and internationally (Dagkas & Armour, 2012; Penney, 2002; Stidder & Hayes, 2013). Our understanding of the processes promoting students' experiences of being in-

cluded and/or excluded in PE remains limited. Two general focus points have prevailed in existing research on inclusion and exclusion processes in PE. First of all inclusion and exclusion have primarily been conceptualised as something being done to students (MacDonald, Pang, Knez, Nelson, & McCuaig, 2012). Secondly, a categorical approach to the understanding of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE has been adopted (Penney, 2002). The starting point for the majority of studies has been particular social categories used for the division of students, mostly by gender (with a focus on girls as the problem group); but studies have also referred to skills as the main dividing characteristic (with a focus on the so-called "less skilled" students) or ethnicity (with a focus on ethnic minority students). The categorical approach may be criticised firstly for overlooking important variation within the specific category of students (Flintoff & Scraton, 2006; Penney, 2002). The use of social categories gives the impression that individuals may be considered homogeneous groups based on common characteristics such as gender, ethnicity or skills (Penney & Evans, 2002). Griffin (1985) has already highlighted this while pointing out that traditional generalisations concerning the behaviour of girls and boys posed the risk of camouflaging other (and more important) differences not necessarily related to gender. The use of social categories induces a grouping and not least a uniforming of individuals that seems counterproductive to obtaining a more nuanced understanding of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE (Penney, 2002). This has been expressed in the criticism of what Penney (2002) calls single-issue research, which is believed to provide a simplified representation of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE (Stidder & Hayes, 2013). The relations between students' multiple identities (Penney, 2002) are reflected in interactions between students and in negotiations with teachers about the values and practices of PE classes. More knowledge about those interactions could thus contribute to a further understanding of the complexity of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE.

Our aim is to contribute to a social-relational perspective on inclusion and exclusion processes in PE. We define inclusion as those processes which promote students' participation in the learning processes of PE and exclusion as those processes that promote students' non-participation. The relational perspective leads us to pursue the question of how students' experiences of participation and non-participation in PE are influenced by the complex interactions within the group of students and within the values and practices of PE.

The article is structured in six parts including this introduction. The following section is a review of how existing research has contributed to our understanding of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE. In the third section, we will outline Lave and Wenger's (1991) social-relational learning theory as the basis for the subsequent identification of how students are being positioned or position themselves on the continuum of participation and non-participation in PE. In the fourth section, we will describe our methodological approach, while the fifth section will be concerned with analysis that shows how students' participation or non-participation is influenced by their experiences of meaningfulness and legitimacy that develop in relationship to other students and to the values and practices in PE. The sixth section will serve as a concluding discussion, where prospects for future research will also be examined.

2. Previous Research

As already mentioned, we believe that a categorical perspective on inclusion and exclusion processes during PE lessons has prevailed in existing research. In categorical research, individuals are often grouped based on the single aspect that seems most influential in accounting for the main differences between them. These studies have been important in pointing to differences between groups, although not sufficient for accounting for the complexity within them and for identifying possible issues across traditional groups of students.

The vast majority of these studies have focused on the exclusion of girls in PE (Flintoff & Scraton, 2006). Several studies have shown that gendered practices and values have a negative effect on girls' participation in PE and that boys' control of the learning environment negatively affects girls' experiences and learning (Evans, 1989; Evans, Lopez, Duncan, & Evans, 1985; Griffin, 1984; Scraton, 1993; Oliver, Hamzeh, & McCaughtry, 2009). Furthermore, recent studies have found that girls often find it incompatible to identify themselves as girls and "doers" of PE at the same time and therefore try to avoid participation in PE (Cockburn & Clark, 2002; With-Nielsen & Pfister, 2011). A similar concern has been raised by O'Donovan (2003), reporting how some girls' ability to benefit from educational experiences in PE is hampered by anxiety related to being socially accepted by peers.

In addition to gender, recent research, especially in England, has focused on the experiences of ethnic minorities in PE, and particular attention has been paid to the exclusion processes related to Muslim girls' participation (or rather non-participation) in PE (Dagkas & Benn, 2006; Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011; McGee & Hardman, 2012). Although Islam does not in general prohibit girls from participating in physical activity (McGee & Hardman, 2012), some Muslim girls do not participate in PE, since the practices and values of PE are not perceived to be compatible with their *cultural* traditions and beliefs, e.g. in relation to girls being together with boys for activities like dancing and swimming (Dagkas et al., 2011), in relation to being physically active during Ramadan (McGee & Hardman, 2012), and

in relation to wearing the PE kit (Dagkas & Benn, 2006).

Other studies have devoted some attention to students that by virtue of lacking physical skills are at risk of being excluded from PE. Quantitative studies suggest that these "less-skilled" students are excluded from both participation and learning (Corbin, 2002; van der Mars, 2006). This is supported by qualitative studies, which show that "less skilled" students are criticised and humiliated by their peers, especially during competitive ball games (Carlson, 1995; Grimminger, 2013; Portman, 1995a, 1995b). Furthermore, some of these studies show how students apply different strategies to avoid such situations. This could be pretending to participate, putting themselves in positions where they avoid interaction with others during ball games or skipping their turn when in a queue (Carlson, 1995; Griffin, 1984, 1985; Portman, 1995a).

While these studies have contributed valuable findings regarding how differences *between* groups of students are reflected in PE, it is widely accepted today that the categorical perspective cannot fully capture inclusion and exclusion processes (Flintoff & Scraton, 2006; Penney, 2002; Penney & Evans, 2002; Stidder & Hayes, 2013). Additionally, particularly within feminist research, an interest seems to have evolved in girls' multiple identities, rather than membership of a single social category (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Flintoff & Scraton, 2006). An example of this is discussed by Knez, MacDonald and Abbott (2012) who point out the diversity within the group of Muslim girls attending PE classes in England. They question the misleading assumption that the cultural and religious beliefs that restrict some Muslim girls' participation in PE are definitive and apply to all within this social category of ethnic minority students. Thereby, they also question the appropriateness of social categorisation. Another example is reported by Hills (2007), who shows how gender, ethnicity and ability interact in girls' experiences of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE classes in English secondary schools, and moreover how these experiences are influenced by the girls' social status and which fellowship group they belong to outside PE classes.

In this article, we will pursue a social-relational perspective on processes of inclusion and exclusion by using the conceptual tools of situated learning originally developed by Lave and Wenger (1991). Others have used this theoretical perspective to describe relations between students in PE and relations between PE and other forms of physical culture (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998; Kirk, 1999; Williams & Bedward, 2002). A recurring argument amongst these authors is that students are alienated from PE in its present form because learning in PE has not kept pace with developments in other areas of the physical culture in which students are involved outside the framework of the school. However, Wenger's theoretical perspective, and particularly the significance of students' feelings of alienation or not, have not yet been thoroughly empirically investigated. In particular, inclusion and exclusion processes in PE have not been empirically investigated in a Nordic context. The Nordic context represents a special case in the sense that a large proportion of students participate in sport in their leisure time (in Denmark, 81% of 13–15-year-old adolescents) (Laub & Pilgaard, 2013). Still, it is worth inquiring into (in this case Danish) students' experiences of inclusion and exclusion processes in PE, since school sport and leisure sport are organisationally and educationally separated, being structured by voluntary coaches and professional teachers, respectively.

3. Theory

In this study the relational understanding of inclusion and exclusion processes is based on the theoretical framework and concepts developed by Lave and Wenger (1991). Lave and Wenger introduced the idea of *situated learning; t*heir work also outlined the concept of *legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice, which* was further developed by Wenger in 1998. Originally the concept was developed on the basis of five case studies on learning in apprenticeships. However, Lave and Wenger (1991), as well as others (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998), have suggested that the theory could also be beneficial in analysis of schooling, as well as other specific educational forms. This is consistent with our aim to examine how the theory could be applied to learning in PE classes.

In line with Kirk and MacDonald (1998), we understand a community of practice as "any collectivity or group who together contribute to shared or public practices in particular spheres of life" (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998, p. 380). The group of students and teachers in a PE class would be an example of a community of practice. These students and teachers are at the same time part of other communities of practice such as the school, sports clubs etc. To describe the class as a community of practice allows us to identify the social relationships, practices and values that shape students' participation or non-participation within this community and to explore the community's relationships to other overlapping communities of practice such as the broader context of school, leisure exercise and sports in which students also participate.

Legitimate peripheral participation describes engagement in a social practice that entails learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As stressed by Lave and Wenger (1991), the term legitimate *peripheral* participation does not imply that there is a centre or core of a community of practice. On the contrary peripherality is a way to acknowledge that there are "multiple, varied, more or less engaged and inclusive ways of being located in the field of participation defined by a community" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 36). With this perspective different levels of participation in PE do not only

derive from members facing structural limitations but also from students having different interests in PE, making diverse contributions to the activities of PE and holding varying viewpoints about PE. This is consistent with our aim of contributing to the development of a social-relational perspective on processes of inclusion and exclusion in PE, as experienced by students and taking the values and practices in PE into account.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), legitimate peripheral participation is a crucial condition for learning. Thus, Wenger (1998) defines four categories of participation; the insiders and the peripherals, both of which are characterised by legitimate peripheral participation; and the marginalised and outsiders, both of which are not characterised by legitimate peripheral participation. We can presume that these four categories could also be identified in the community of practice of a PE class, so the criteria for identifying the four types of participation in our empirical data could be deduced from Wenger's description of the patterns of participation and non-participation typical for insiders, peripherals, the marginalised and outsiders. Thus, *Insiders* are the students who fully identify with the practices in PE; they are students who have a strong commitment to PE, who make an effort to achieve a good result and who have the greatest responsibilities. The *peripherals* also contribute to practices in PE, although they do not perform at the same level as the insiders, nor do they have the same level of responsibilities. Still, the peripherals' experiences of participation are stronger than their experiences of non-participation. In contrast, the *marginalised* are identified by their non-participation rather than their participation; their contributions are very limited and it is hard for them to identify with practices in PE. *Outsiders* are characterised by full non-participation; they do not show up for PE classes or place themselves outside of the activities of the class e.g. on benches or mats along the walls or in rooms nearby the gym.

Of importance for the processes of inclusion and exclusion, Wenger (1998) states that two conditions are critical for members of a community of practice to be considered as legitimate peripheral participants and therefore included in the learning processes within that community. The first is that members are ascribed legitimacy by other members and the second is that members experience the activities within the community as meaningful. The focus in our analysis of students' participation and non-participation in PE is firstly an identification of ways in which students gain legitimacy and are deprived of legitimacy in PE and secondly which conditions matter for students to experience PE as meaningful.

4. Method and Material

A case study was conducted to examine the complex relationships involved in students' participation or non-participation in PE. The single case study was chosen because of its potential to cover a complex phenomenon through various methods, along with the options for bringing forward unknown relationships and variables leading to a rethinking of the phenomenon being studied (Stake, 1981).

The case school was selected through purposive sampling "based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most" (Merriam, 1998, p. 48). The students in the school should represent a variety in gender, ethnicity and physical skills level as we know from earlier research that these are some of the variables that could affect the processes of inclusion and exclusion in PE. Furthermore, the school was selected on the basis of accessibility and geographic proximity. The case school is situated in a medium-sized city in Denmark. A majority of children are from the lower classes and a relatively high percentage of students have ethnic minority background (approximately 40%).

To enrich and validate the findings, multiple types of material were gathered through different research methods. This study is based on observations of PE classes in the 6–8th grades (pupils aged 11–14) over a period of six months, as well as 6 focus group interviews with selected students from these classes and 5 individual interviews with the PE teachers responsible for the observed classes. The use of observations along with teacher and student interviews also served to triangulate data.

To be more specific, a total of 42 PE lessons, each lasting 90 minutes, were observed over a period of six months. In the 6th grade, 18 lessons were observed, in the 7th grade it was 13 lessons, while 11 lessons were spent with the 8th grade. The smaller number of observations in the 7th and 8th grades were a consequence of the school's cancellation of lessons caused by holidays, school arrangements etc. All observations were made by the first author as a non-participant. The focus of the observations was the variety in students' participation and non-participation, and special attention was given to relations between students, between students and teachers and between students and the content of PE. Short notes were taken during the lessons and the observations were further described as soon as possible after the end of the observed lesson. Throughout the six-month period, several "informal conversational interviews" (Patton, 1990) with teachers and students also took place before, during and after the PE classes. At first, the observer initiated the conversations with students, but gradually students approached the first author at their own initiative. The conversations were recorded as notes at the end of each informal conversation (Patton, 1990).

Approximately three months into the period of ob-

servations, the relevant teachers (2 females and 3 males) were interviewed individually. The aim of these interviews was to unfold the teachers' interpretations of the processes of inclusion and exclusion and to collect knowledge about the ways teachers structure the values and practices of PE. At the end of the interview, teachers were asked to indicate their students' levels of participation in a diagram, so that the most participatory students were placed closest to the inner circle and the least participatory students were placed furthest to the inner circle (see Figure 1). This was followed by questions inquiring into the teachers' understandings of participation and non-participation in PE and the positions taken up by different students. The intention was not to have all students placed in the diagram, but to gain knowledge about typical positions of participation and how these positions were categorised and talked about by teachers.

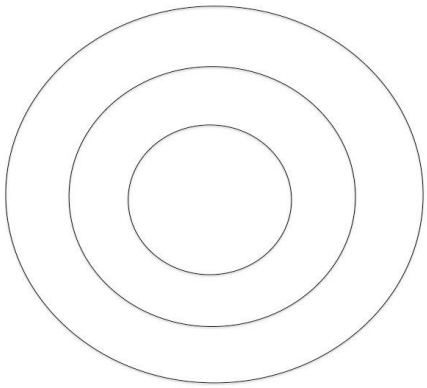

Figure 1. Diagram of students' levels of participation in PE. The circles indicate different levels of participation with the inner circle representing the most participatory students and the outer circle representing the least participatory students. Students not participating at all were placed outside the diagram.

In the last month of the observation, students were selected for focus group interviews. By this time, the observer had become familiar with the students and the students had gained trust in the observer; they initiated conversations, asked questions and seemed happy to share their experiences in PE. Two focus group interviews (each with 6–9 students) were conducted in each of the three PE classes and a total of 46 students were interviewed. On the basis of observations, students from each of the four categories of participation defined by Wenger (1998) were invited. It was intended that students that seemed to contribute considerably and be highly valued in PE, as well as students that seemed to contribute less and be less valued in PE were represented in each interview. Furthermore, students were selected to represent specific characteristics of each class observed in terms of ethnic origin, skill level and gender. As the composition of the focus group is important to facilitate an active and free-flowing discussion during the interview (Morgan, 1996), PE teachers reviewed the composition of each focus group to ensure that it would not interfere with the students' will to talk freely. The composition of the focus groups tried to balance both the importance of homogeneity (Morgan, 1996) and heterogeneity (Krueger, 1994).

Students were informed about the aim of the interviews and procedures for confidentiality. Three of the 50 students invited did not want to participate in the interview, and one student did not attend school on the day of the interview. The aim of the focus group interviews was to inquire into students' experiences of their own and other students' participation and non-participation in PE. Thus, students were asked questions about what could encourage or discourage their participation (and non-participation). Furthermore, at the end of the interviews, each student was given a diagram (see Figure 1), and asked to position him or herself in the diagram, to indicate their level of participation. After having placed themselves, students were given a shared diagram and asked in confidence to position at least three of their classmates in each of the diagram's circles as to gain further knowledge about typical positions of participation and non-participation and how these positions were categorised and talked about by students.

All interviews were conducted in a quiet room away from the gym to ensure participants felt comfortable. The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. All interviews were conducted by the first author, tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. In the analysis to follow, all students and teachers mentioned are anonymised and information about individual students and teachers is limited. Data were analysed throughout the research process using the principles of systematic combining (Dubois & Gadde, 2002), which has been described as an iterative process between the case, the empirical world, the framework and the theory or model being developed (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

5. Results and Analysis

In the process of analysing the forms of participation and non-participation identified through observations, interviews and diagrams we developed Figure 2. The model served as the starting point for further analysis of the dynamic interactions between students and the values and practices of PE that were influencing students' participation and non-participation in PE.

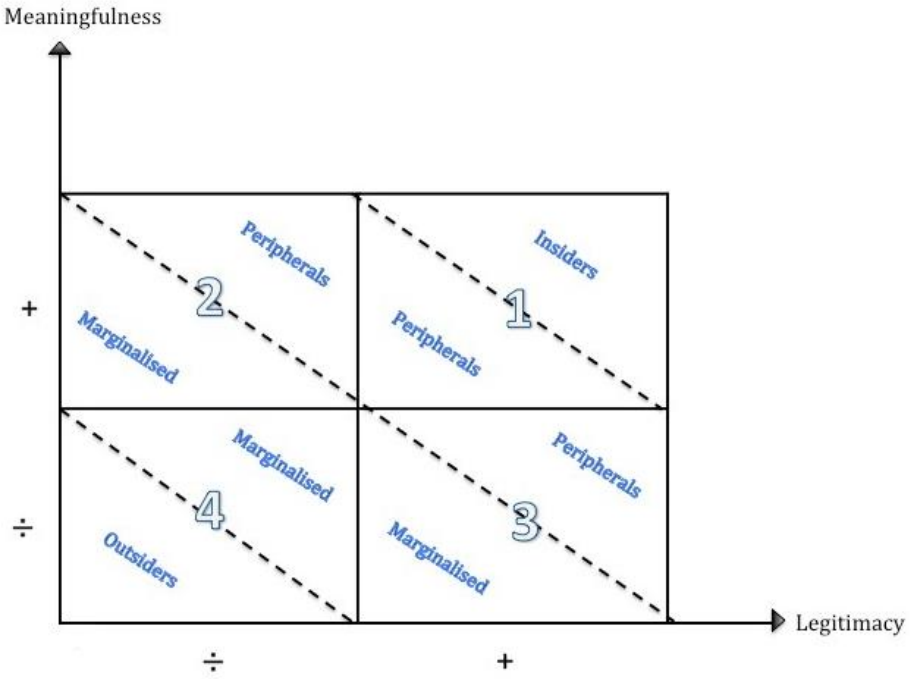

Figure 2. Students' positions of participation in PE.

In Figure 2, Wenger's (1998) four positions of participation are located in relation to the degree of perceived legitimacy and meaningfulness. In the first field of the figure, students' participation is characterised by both legitimacy and meaningfulness. Here the degree of perceived legitimacy and meaningfulness becomes the determining factor in students' positioning as an insider or peripheral. In the second and third fields of the figure only one of the two conditions of inclusion is sufficiently met. What becomes crucial for students' positioning as either peripheral or marginalised participants in the second field of the figure is the degree to which legitimacy is lacking and in the third field of the figure the degree to which meaningfulness is lacking. In the fourth field of the figure, neither of the two conditions is sufficiently met; what becomes crucial for students' positioning as either a marginal participant or an outsider is the degree to which both legitimacy and meaningfulness is lacking.

In order to show the variations in students' participation and non-participation in PE, the following analysis is structured on the basis of the four categories of participation in Figure 2. However, in practice the borders between categories are of course more fluid. The empirical examples represent practices and interactions repeatedly observed in the PE classes. Furthermore, the examples are chosen to reflect the values expressed by students and teachers in relation to students' participation and non-participation in PE.

5.1. Field 1: Participation with Meaningfulness and Legitimacy

In many of our observations, the processes of inclusion and exclusion in PE classes unfolded in the relationships between students who, in the specific activity of PE, could be described as novices (or newcomers by Wenger (1998)) and masters. In these observations it became clear that the participant position of the novices largely depended on the legitimacy they could be ascribed by the masters. While the relationship between the skilled students (here the masters) and the less skilled students (here the novices) has often been described as exclusionary, this relationship could also encourage learning and provide a chance of making PE meaningful to the novice students in PE.

> *Today the students have been allowed to choose whether to play football or dodgeball. Eight boys and three girls, including Mary, Alice and Michelle, choose to play football. While all the boys play football in their leisure time, Mary, Alice and Michelle do not have any qualifications to the game. The teacher decides that a "girl-score" counts double. To take advantage of this rule, Steven asks Mary and Alice to go to the opponent's goal and place themselves by each of their posts. For long periods of time, the game takes place around the opposite goal; however, Mary and Alice stay at the posts as they have been told. Alice says that it's better to let the boys do the job themselves. Mary and Alice rarely receive the ball and when they do, it is by coincidence. The boys do not seem to see the girls. Sometimes the boys intercept the ball on its way to the girls and sometimes they take over the girls' positions in the field. The same pattern applies to Michelle, who plays as a defend-*

> *er/goalkeeper on the other team. Sometimes the ball randomly comes into Mary, Alice or Michelle's possession and Alice actually manages to score a goal once. It results in loud praise from the boys. Generally the boys praise Mary, Alice and Michelle the few times they touch the ball. The atmosphere is intense, but nobody is yelling at each other if someone loses the ball or misses an obvious opportunity to score. If this happens the students quickly calm each other down. At some point Alice and Michelle indicate that they are thirsty. Typically, Mary and Alice would go and have a sip of water together. However, in this situation Alice asks Michelle to stay until she comes back, so the team does not need to do without both of them, while they are gone.* (Notes from observation, 30 April 2014)

Mary and Michelle both participated in the subsequent focus group interviews. When asked about a good lesson in PE, a lesson that was meaningful to them and in which they learned something, they independently of each other described the lesson in which they played soccer with the boys.

Because of the boys' technical and tactical skills and experience in football, they participated as the masters on the team. They direct and distribute the play, they take most responsibility and they contribute considerably to the way the game is developing (upper corner field 1, Figure 2). On the contrary, the girls' lack of experience with and competence in football place them in the position of newcomers. According to Lave & Wenger (1991, p. 110) the tasks of newcomers "*tend to be positioned at the ends of branches of work processes rather than in the middle of linked work segments*". In that sense, the participation of Mary, Alice and Michelle is enabled rather than restricted by their tasks being short and simple, the costs of their errors being small and their responsibility for the activity as a whole being little. As newcomers Mary, Alice and Michelle are highly dependent on the boys recognising them as legitimate members of the community of practice. The teams only consist of 5–6 players and so the girls' contribution to the game becomes significant although limited. The teacher's decision to double up a girl score further contributes to the legitimacy that the experts of the team acknowledge for Michelle, Mary and Alice because it raises the value of their contribution. Although the contribution of Mary, Michelle and Alice is limited, they themselves also seem to have a feeling that the role they have on the team is meaningful and valuable to the other players. This is, for example, reflected when Mary and Alice choose not to leave the game at the same time when they get thirsty and in the way all three of the girls talk seriously about the tasks they are given in the match. That Michelle, Alice and Mary are able to participate in a legitimately peripheral way (lower corner field 1, Figure 2) entails that they despite being newcomers have access to the mature practice of the experts (Wenger, 1998). So the newcomers' authentic experience of being participants in a "real" football match together with masters, could in part explain the positive experience of learning expressed by Michelle and Mary in relation to the specific lesson described.

Despite Mary and Michelle's expressed experience of learning, the situation described seems problematic for several reasons when examined from a gender perspective. First of all, the teacher's rule "girls' scores count double" stigmatizes the group of girls as non-competent. The teacher states the rule before the game has even started and so takes for granted that all girls are less competent than boys at playing football. This way of structuring the values and practices in PE, also found in other studies (see e.g., Scraton, 1992; Flintoff & Scraton, 2006; Hay & MacDonald, 2010), could contribute to a stereotyping of girls' competence in PE lessons. Furthermore, the teacher does not intervene in the situations in which boys clearly take over the responsibility the girls have been given. As described by Wenger (1998), mutual engagement can be a vehicle for both sharing ownership of meaning and for denying negotiability. If negotiability is denied, like in the case of not recognising the contributions of some members of the community of practice in PE, members develop "an identity of non-participation that progressively marginalises them" (Wenger, 1998, p. 203). Over time Michelle, Alice and Mary therefore risk losing their sense of legitimacy, thereby shifting from the position of peripherals (lower corner field 1, Figure 2) to a position of marginalisation (lower corner field 2, Figure 2). However, this risk is not only related to the relationship between genders but between novices and masters in general. For Mary, Alice and Michelle to experience a continued sense of meaning and legitimacy, they must have an opportunity to not only experience "the masters' game" but to develop their own communicative, technical and tactical competence as football players and, in this way, obtain greater legitimacy. For this to happen, it seems necessary for the teacher to play a more active role than was the case in this observation and others.

Finally, we have to be aware that although Mary and Michelle expressed an experience of participation in the case described, this could also be a result of Mary's and Michelle's desire to be viewed positively by the interviewer and the other students participating in the interview. Grimminger (2014a) has described how less sporty children use different defence strategies and deny non-recognition experiences in order to explain their own role and to maintain personal control. In the next section, we will examine in-depth how and why students are deprived of legitimacy in PE and how this affects students' participation and non-participation.

5.2. Field 2: Participation without Legitimacy

Although the relation between the novices and the masters, as shown in our first example, could be a vehicle for learning, this relation could also be the reason for some students' experiences of non-participation. Lave & Wenger (1991) ascribe this duality to the relation of power involved in legitimate peripherality.

> *As a place in which one moves toward more intensive participation, peripherality is an empowering position. As a place in which one is kept from participating more fully it is a disempowering position.* (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 36)

The empowering position of peripherality is clearly expressed by Andrew, a peripheral student, as scepticism towards the interviewer's question about the option of separating the less skilled from the more skilled students in PE.

> *Try to imagine that all the less skilled were in here, then how could we learn? You can learn from the skilled, how they do things.* (Andrew, authors' translation)

In that sense Andrew acknowledges the potential of learning from more adepts practitioners like the masters. However, in other cases the students were very aware of the disempowering position of being kept away from participation. These cases were mainly related to experiences of not being ascribed sufficient legitimacy and are, for example, reflected in the way John describes his experience of being in a marginal position in PE (lower corner field 2, Figure 2).

> *Usually it is only just the skilled students who play together all the time. And then all the others, that is the ones who are not that skilled, they never get the ball. They never ever get the ball. Well, maybe they get it once, but then they should throw it back to the same people for them to shoot, and it just continues like this.* (John, authors' translation)

Situations of more skilled students being restrictive for the less skilled students' participation in PE as described by John, were very easily recognised in our observations. So, only seldom were the skilled students aware of ascribing legitimacy to the less skilled students, for example by passing the ball to the less skilled students. Furthermore, in situations where this occurred the less skilled students often rejected the possibility to participate in the game.

> *The students are playing Danish Dodgeball. Tom, a less skilled student, and Paul, a highly skilled student, stand next to each other. Tom catches the ball. He turns immediately towards Paul and asks him if he wants to shoot the ball. Tom shrugs and says, no, I don't care. Not until then does Paul shoot the ball.* (Notes from observation, 23 April 2014)

Paul's behaviour was the exception rather than the rule among the skilled students. This is consistent with Hills' (2007) study, reporting that even though some students, like Paul, made a conscious attempt to include the less skilled students in PE, exclusion seemed to have been the normative practice among the skilled students. In our interviews, the skilled students did reflect on not passing the ball to the peripherals being an unacceptable form of exclusion. However, many of them did not blame the skilled students but rather the less skilled students for this exclusionary relationship.

> *We give them the ball, but they give it back to us straight away. If I have the ball, they say, "no, you throw, I can't make it, you throw.* (Louise, authors' translation)

The behaviour of the less-skilled students described above could possibly be explained by earlier experiences of not being ascribed legitimacy or more broadly speaking not being recognised in PE. Grimminger (2014a) has shown that non-recognition experiences, among which could be experiences of non-legitimacy, are negatively associated with both physical self-conception and self-esteem, however, only among sporty children. In our interviews some students, especially the more skilled ones, acknowledged that the behaviour of the less skilled students could be based on a lack of self-esteem developed in PE over the years; they did not, however, seem to acknowledge their own part in this. Rather both the skilled students and the less skilled students explained their non-participation as not trying hard enough. This way of denying their lack of legitimacy in PE has been described by Grimminger (2014) as a strategy of "self-handicapping" and self-protection.

The significance of physical skills for the recognition and participation of students in PE have also been described by others (Carlson, 1995; Griffin, 1984, 1985; Grimminger, 2013; Grimminger 2014b, Hills, 2007; Portman, 1995a, 1995b). Even if physical skills are undoubtedly important for the legitimacy ascribed to students, in our observations and interviews with students it also became clear that students' physical skills were neither a guarantee nor a prerequisite for the legitimacy ascribed. Legitimacy, as in the following observation, also seemed to be ascribed and deprived through students' social relationships.

> *The students play Danish dodgeball. Susan, Michael and Kelly are all on the same team. Kelly and the other girls on the team often play the ball to Susan,*

> *who often ends up shooting the ball. In the position beside Susan stands Michael. He tries hard to get hold of the ball and to make the others pass to him. He waves his hand and shouts "Pass to me! I am really good!" While still not having received the ball, Michael runs in front of Susan to snatch the ball. When Kelly receives the ball, she really has to make an effort to pass Susan the ball over the head of Michael. Kelly manages to pass the ball to Susan, but the pass has taken too much time and all the opponents have moved away. Susan turns angrily towards Michael and asks him not to block the pass.* (Notes from observation, 23 April 2014)

It is pivotal for the understanding of this observation that Michael's skills in Danish dodgeball are not different from Susan's. What presumably separates Michael from Susan in this observation are the communities of practices of the two outside of PE. Susan is a friend of Kelly and the other girls on the team—Michael is not. Generally, Michael is not popular among the girls in the class; in PE they often turn their back on him or look at him without sympathy. So the relations between the girls and between Michael and the girls hamper Michael's participation, placing him in a peripheral position (upper corner field 2, Figure 2) and at risk of being marginalised (lower corner field 2, Figure 2) in this specific case. The significance of social relations or popularity among peers has also been reported in studies by Hills (2007), Grimminger (2013) and O'Donovan (2003). Hills (2007) found that girls' physical skills, as well as girls' social relationships, were important in shaping their involvement in PE and for the power relations between the included and the excluded students. The relevance of social relations was also confirmed in our interviews when students talked about team selection - a strategy described as a typical way of being ascribed legitimacy or not in PE (Grimminger, 2014b). When asked who they would typically choose when they were forming the teams on their own, students explained that some students chose "the highly skilled" and others chose "their good friends". While the strategy of choosing best friends was typically described as something done by girls, the strategy of choosing the highly skilled was typically described as something done by boys. In addition to the different preferences of boys and girls also highlighted in Grimminger (2014b), the students we interviewed also described how preferences of team selection differed between skilled and less skilled students.

> *The skilled ones, they just want to have the best team and the ones, who don't really bother about the game, they just want to be together with someone they like.* (Louise, authors' translation)

So which students are being ascribed legitimacy and from whom students prefer to be ascribed this legitimacy, seem to be related to the physical skills of students as well as their social relations.

When comparing the experiences of Michelle, Alice and Mary in our first example with the experience of Michael in our second example, it is interesting to note that students' experiences of being ascribed legitimacy are not directly proportional to the number of times they touch the ball. Participation by Michelle, Alice and Mary as well as Michael was characterised by only touching the ball a few times during the game. While Michelle, Alice and Mary experienced sufficient legitimacy, this was not the case for Michael. So students' experiences of legitimacy are not only a result of how much legitimacy they are ascribed, but also of how much legitimacy they expect to be ascribed. Sufficient legitimacy is thus not absolute but relative; it is based on a subjective experience and therefore cannot be judged solely on the basis of observation but also requires analysis of the meaning students attach to PE.

5.3. Field 3: Participation without Meaningfulness

In the classes we observed, there was generally a strong focus on the social activity and less focus on development of students' physical capabilities and on promoting theoretical insight and reflection. As illustrated in the next empirical example, this lack of focus on the improvement of students' skills and knowledge became highly significant for why some students did not experience the meaningfulness of PE and therefore adopted a marginal position (lower corner field 3, Figure 2).

> *Since the students from 7th grade were planning to go on a trip and part of the program would involve physical activities, the teachers had planned that all students should go for a 3km run in every PE lesson in the period between students' autumn holiday and their summer break. The teachers had pointed out a route of 1 km and students were asked to run three laps. The teachers had a protocol whereby it was noted every time a student completed a lap. Since the teachers knew that some of their students would have difficulties running due to being overweight, obese and/or having poor physical fitness, they allowed students to choose their own pace and to run with whomever they wanted.*

In the observation period in this study, many students took up a marginal position (lower corner field 3, Figure 2). They made no attempt at running, but were strolling along in smaller or bigger groups. A few students sped up when they passed the teachers; others were just looking up while continuing to chat. During the interviews, several students described how they deliberately skipped PE in that unit or intentionally forgot their sportswear or made up injuries to avoid par-

ticipation. Elisabeth is one of the students that sometimes ran the whole 3km and sometimes choose to stroll along with some of her classmates. She tells me that she does not feel like running but that it is important for her to have a good relationship with the teachers. However, that kind of meaningfulness does not seem to be sufficient to maintain Elisabeth in a peripheral (upper corner field 3, Figure 2) rather than marginalised position (lower corner field 3, Figure 2). Elisabeth clearly expresses that she does not believe the teachers when they tell them that the running program can make students improve their physical fitness.

> *That is not why. It is just something (the teacher) says. If you only run once a week, it does not make a difference. You also have to run in your leisure time.* (Elisabeth, authors' translation)

So the purpose of these PE activities appears meaningless to Elisabeth. Other students also do not seem to find the purpose of the running sessions relevant either because they already do a lot of physical activity in their leisure time or because they never do any physical activity. Finally, for several students it is the practice of running the three laps rather than the goal of running the three laps that makes PE meaningless. Andrew and Monica are two of the students that find it pointless to run the same lap all over again and in their opinion they only do it to satisfy the teachers. What this signifies is that they are offered only very limited opportunities to develop as runners and thus to move from a marginal to more peripheral or full participation. The prerequisites of moving towards full participation have been described by Kirk & Kinchin (2003):

> *As a legitimate peripheral participant in any community of practice…a learner's trajectory towards full participation can only be realized through the increasing mastery of the goods—the knowledge, skills and dispositions internal to that practice, whether this be tailoring or midwifery or baseball playing.* (Kirk & Kinchin, 2003, p. 230)

In the running classes students were not offered many opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions relevant to running. In fact they were not offered the prospect of any other profits than the possibility of physical activity and improved health. This adds to the concern expressed by Kirk (1994, p. 49) that PE is "being lost in the public health rhetoric". In our interviews, more students questioned the practice of separating running from other sports. They did not mind running but argued that they liked running better when it was a part of doing sports.

The lack of focus on the development of students' knowledge, skills and dispositions were not reserved for the running classes but was also very symptomatic for the way ball games were taught. Generally, the focus of the classes was more on what students should do than on what students should learn. This was also expressed by several of the interviewed teachers; for example one said that "for many years PE has been too much fun and too little learning". In the competitive team game units we observed, very limited time and assistance were offered to students for the development of their skills and knowledge. Rather, most of the time teachers simply let students play the games. In the interviews only one teacher seemed to hold strong goals for the development of students' physical competence, including their technical skills and tactical awareness. On the contrary, many of the teachers expressed a contradiction between giving the students a good experience and paying attention to the improvement of their physical skills or their development of theoretical knowledge. However, while unintentional on the part of the teachers, this practice seemed to deny students the possibility of moving towards full participation in PE and to promote exclusion rather than inclusion. Furthermore, the limited perspective of learning in PE experienced by students made it difficult for many of them to relate PE to learning as the central meaning of school and to their future possibilities of gaining from PE. In our interviews many students questioned the relevance of their participation in PE for their future lives and careers. When contrasting mathematics with PE students said:

> *PE is ok, but you see, we cannot really use it for anything. I haven't learned anything in PE. Mathematics you should use the rest of your life* (Laila, authors' translation)
>
> *You can use it [Mathematics]…*(Elsa, authors' translation)
>
> *In your future…*(Marc, authors' translation)
>
> *To get a job. To get an education* (Laila, authors' translation)

The importance of students believing in the usefulness of learning, has clearly been captured by Alexander (2001) , who states that:

> *It is not enough to say to someone, learn and you will increase your life chances. The learner needs to know that they have the power to apply their learning and to benefit from it.* (Alexander, 2001, p. 30)

That students lacking experiences of meaningfulness in PE could be related to the evidently limited transfer of learning experienced by students in some PE-classes has also been noted by others (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998; Penney & Chandler, 2000; Kirk & Kinchin, 2003).

5.4. Field 4: Participation without Meaningfulness and Legitimacy

Characteristic of several of the students we observed was that during the lesson they moved from being in a peripheral position to becoming marginalised (upper corner field 4, Figure 2) or even outsiders (lower corner field 4, Figure 2). Based on their past experiences, other students *chose* from the beginning of PE classes to be outsiders and did not take part in the joint enterprise of the community of practice (lower corner field 4, Figure 2). The reason for this seemed to be a combination of two circumstances; that students did not experience PE as meaningful and that they were not ascribed the sufficient legitimacy. In contrast to what has been indicated in earlier studies primarily focusing on students who *are excluded*, the students who *chose* not to participate in one or more of the observed lessons in PE were not only low skilled students but also higher skilled students, boys as well as girls and ethnic Danish students as well as students of other ethnicities. While a lack of legitimacy, as earlier argued, was mostly related to the physical skills and social relations of students in this study, the experience of PE as meaningless also seemed to be significant across gender, ethnicity and skills level. This points to the importance of also searching for other reasons for students' participation and non-participation in PE.

Furthermore, through our observations and interviews it became clear to us that the meaningfulness and legitimacy that students believe they could achieve by participating in PE should be seen in relation to the meaningfulness and legitimacy students believe they could achieve by not participating. Some students are tempted by the possible legitimacy they can gain if they choose to be outsiders together. In some of our observations, the outsiders even developed a kind of social community around their non-participation. Access to that community was conditioned on members' non-participation in PE.

> *Sometimes you can feel different because the other students participate in PE and you do not. But on the other hand there are also others who do not participate, and so you are just like them.* (Evelyn, authors' translation)

The legitimacy and experience of meaningfulness that students like Evelyn could gain by participating in PE, was not always sufficient to offset the legitimacy and meaningfulness they could gain by being outsiders. Evelyn was not *being* excluded from PE but she *chose* to exclude herself from it in order to be included in another community of practice. Wenger points to the ways in which one community of practice is developed not only in relation, but even in opposition to another: "each side is defined by opposition to the other and membership in one community of practice implies marginalisation in another" (Wenger, 1998, p. 168). More specifically, O'Donovan (2003) has pointed to the deleterious effects of a PE culture valuing non-participation rather than participation in PE.

The deliberate choice made by students not to participate in PE seemed to be further reinforced by the dominant culture of the observed classes. Students often talked about participating in PE as a choice rather than a necessity. For example, they explained their choice not to participate or not to attend as "having other things I would rather like to do", "feeling tired" or "being busy with after-school jobs". Furthermore, students did not describe any consequences of not participating or failing to attend. The students' experiences of non-participation or non-attendance being without consequence were largely confirmed by our observations. Lessons seldom built upon previous lessons in any direct manner and teachers did not always notice that some students were missing. Furthermore, students were very aware of how easy it was to be exempted by faking an injury, presenting a counterfeit notice from their parents or pretending to have forgotten their PE clothes on days they did not "feel like" participating. The fact that at the time of our data collection there was not any formal evaluation of students in PE in Denmark only seemed to contribute further to students' experience of non-participation and non-attendance being inconsequential and to their experience of participation as meaningless. Many students more or less explicitly conceptualised PE as a break from learning rather than a place for learning. The low status of PE among students, however, does not seem to be limited to Denmark (Flintoff & Sracton, 2001).

In addition to the kind of students mentioned above, we also noted another kind of outsiders or marginalised students (Field 4, Figure 2), those for whom non-participation became an active and conscious act of showing who they were not. Wenger (1998) has argued that

> *We know who we are by what is familiar and by what we can negotiate and make use of, and we know who we are not by what is unfamiliar, unwieldy and out of our purview. This is an important point. We not only produce our identities through the practices we engage in, but we also define ourselves through practices we do not engage in. Our identities are constituted not only by what we are but also by what we are not.* (Wenger, 1998, p. 164*)*

While one student had a very visible way of showing his non-identification with PE, for most others, mainly less skilled students, non-identification was simply expressed by being indifferent to PE. In the observations, the former did not seem to take any notice of neither being ascribed legitimacy or not. Also, when talking to

students, what happened in PE did not seem to matter to them. Even if this could be an act of self-handicapping, based on our observations and informal talks with students, it seems more likely that both participation and non-participation in PE only contributed very little to the self-identification of these students. Wenger (1998) has described this in relation to other communities of practice.

> *Realizing that you are not a claims processor may contribute in a small way to your sense of self but, unless you are trying to become one, that realization remains inconsequential.* (Wenger, 1998, p. 165)

So in the case of these students, not being a sports person only contributed in a small way to their sense of self. This has also been evidenced by Grimminger (2014a), who reported that PE had no self-relevance among less sporty children.

In contrast to the students showing their non-identification with being a physically active person through indifference to PE, another boy had a more visible way of showing his non-identification. In our observation he could be very destructive of the teaching, both by answering back to teachers and through acting in defiance of what was asked of him. He wanted to send a message of "try me and I will show you that you can never make me become a sporty person" to us, as well as to the teachers and other students. In the interviews and our informal conversations with him, he made a big point of both showing what he was not (a person who liked PE) and what he was (a person who liked playing computer games). He told us that he only wanted to participate in PE if he could have "a computer with a lot of games, a refrigerator with candy and coke and a comfortable beanbag". He contrasted the values and practices of the community of practice of PE with the values and practices of the community of practice of computer gamers, which he wanted to be part of. That the incompatibility of identities can restrict participation in PE is confirmed by studies showing that some girls feel caught between the values of feminism and the values of masculinity in PE (Cockburn & Clark, 2002; With-Nielsen & Pfister, 2011; O'Donovan, 2003).

6. Concluding Discussion

This case study aimed to contribute to a social relational-perspective on inclusion and exclusion processes in PE. In order to understand the complexity of students' participation and non-participation, a case was selected in which there was a highly differentiated composition of students and a variety in gender, skills and ethnicity that, according to earlier studies, was critical for students' participation and non-participation in PE. On the basis of Etienne Wenger's conceptual tools, we showed that a student's degree of participation in PE-classes is closely related to the legitimacy ascribed to them and the meaningfulness of PE, as experienced by the student. While some students were excluded from PE as they did not have the physical skills and social relations necessary to be ascribed legitimacy, others *chose* not to participate because PE was not meaningful to them.

The present study focused on how students' experiences of participation and non-participation in PE are influenced by the complex interaction between the students themselves and the values and practices of PE. The findings of the study provide a number of insights into how students are excluded from participating in learning processes in PE and why some students choose not to participate; the latter finding has not gained much attention in earlier research in this field.

In the case of students being excluded from participation, we found that interactions between students were important for how they were ascribed or deprived of legitimacy in PE. Other studies have pointed to team selection proceedings as an opportunity for students to transmit recognition and non-recognition (Hills, 2007; Grimminger, 2014b). As teachers often formed the teams in the classes we observed, there was seldom an opportunity for students to do this in the study. However, we found that legitimacy was often ascribed to and deprived from students during games when teams had already been formed. We found that being passed to or passed over, as well as being or not being assigned a privileged position were typical ways of being ascribing or depriving someone of legitimacy. Hills (2007) has pointed to such practices as important for processes of inclusion and exclusion in PE. In contrast to studies focusing on the exclusion of low skilled students, we found that even if students' physical skills were important, they were neither a guarantee nor a prerequisite for the legitimacy the students were ascribed. In accordance with recent studies on processes of inclusion and exclusion in PE (Grimminger, 2013; Hills, 2007; Grimminger, 2014b), we found that in addition to students' physical skills, legitimacy was also ascribed and deprived on the basis of students' social relations. So a highly skilled student with the "wrong" social relations could risk being excluded from participation, while a less skilled student with the "right" social relations could avoid being excluded from participation.

In addition to students being excluded, we also became aware of several students *choosing* not to participate. In addition to the possibility of the choice being a defensive strategy (Grimminger, 2014a), we can also point to other possible reasons. First of all, students chose not to participate in PE in situations where the learning practices and/or values of PE are not meaningful to them. In such cases, non-participation could be either a reaction to not wanting to be identified with sport and physical activity; not having access to the de-

velopment of the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for moving towards full participation; or the experience of learning in PE not having any or only a limited relevance in other communities of practices. Secondly, some students seemed to have reached the conclusion that the potential of achieving legitimacy and meaningfulness was greater if they chose not to participate in PE. In fact, in some of the observed classes a social community was built around not participating. Students' deliberate choices not to participate seemed further reinforced by their experiences of non-participation not having any consequences and by the notion that PE was more like a break than a school subject. It seems reasonable that this typical notion of PE among students could partly be explained by the fact that grades and exams have not until recently been a practice in PE in Danish schools. While the use of assessment has been criticised in other studies on PE (Hay, 2005), it seems in this study that the lack of grades and exams could actually be contributing to students choosing not to participate in PE.

While this study agrees with others in relation to the importance of inquiring into students' multiple social categories, there also seem to be some nuances in the way inclusion and exclusion processes were expressed in this study compared to others. First, contrary to findings identified through our literature review, the ethnic minority background of many of the students we observed and interviewed did not seem to be decisive in whether or not they participated, either among girls or among boys. In the interviews, many of the students reacted without understanding our questions about how and whether the variation in students' ethnicity was influential in their PE-classes. Working with a very compound multi-ethnic group, ethnicity seemed to disappear. Secondly, the way in which sport and motor skills have been described as crucially important for students being deprived of legitimacy in PE did not seem as visible and humiliating in our case as described by, for example, Grimminger (2013) in her study of PE in lower grade and middle grade classes in Germany. Students generally seemed very appreciative of each other and to disapprove of jeers in PE. If students failed, this was normally not met by anger and if someone complained it was him/her rather than the one who had failed who was met by disapproval. The context-dependency of case studies could explain why the results of this study regarding certain aspects differ from those of other studies on inclusion and exclusion in PE. Thus, the location of the case in a Nordic physical education context and the composition of the student body are reflected in the values and practices of PE expressed by students and teachers in this study, in the interactions between students observed in this study, and in the conclusions drawn about students' experiences of participation and non-participation.

In our findings we have distinguished between those students excluded from participation in PE and those who actively choose not to participate. Based on our findings, we find this distinction important in relation to how we talk about students as passive victims or active agents. Furthermore, we find the distinction relevant to future practices in PE. In our interviews with teachers, they expressed a much greater concern over the challenge of including students choosing not to participate than including students who are excluded from participation; this was also supported by Scraton (1992) and Cockburn and Clarke (2002). While some didactical strategies aimed at ensuring the legitimacy of all students in PE, for example varying the methods of dividing classes into teams (see Grimminger, 2014b) and moderating the rules of competitive team games (see e.g. von Seelen, 2012), have already been suggested, only recently researchers have begun to discuss how to make PE more meaningful to students (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998; Penney & Chandler, 2000; Penney, Clarke, & Kinchin, 2002; Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Penney, 2003). Reproducing and transforming other communities of practice known by students outside school has been argued to be one way of making PE more meaningful to students, for example by enabling students to transfer learning from PE to opportunities to do sports in their spare time (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998). Some researchers have suggested Sports Education as one curriculum model, building on these principles (Kirk & MacDonald, 1998; Siedentop, 1994). However, others have questioned the nature and extent of transfer achievable for students in this curriculum model and have suggested that connections to communities of practice other than that of sport should be sought (Penney & Chandler, 2000; Penney et al., 2002). Furthermore, we agree with Penney and Chandler (2000) that connections of learning should not only be provided between PE and extra-curricular activities outside school, but also between learning in different units of PE, and between learning in PE and other curriculum areas, seeking to make PE more meaningful to students in school. After our data collection ended, the PE curriculum in Denmark was changed in favour of (among other things) a more thematic approach to PE, which has been suggested as one way of pursuing connectedness and meaningfulness for PE (Penney & Chandler, 2000). However, further studies are needed to develop strategies to enhance students' experiences of meaningfulness in PE and to empirically explore whether these strategies could include more of the students who choose not to participate in PE.

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Conflict of Interests

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Article

Socially Vulnerable Youth and Volunteering in Sports: Analyzing a Brussels Training Program for Young Soccer Coaches

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Abstract
A considerable number of young Europeans live or risk ending up in socially vulnerable situations. Different social channels (e.g., education, on the job training, leisure) exist through which youths can enhance their chances to improve their social position. There is a growing belief that sports in particular can help personal and social development of socially vulnerable youths. Nevertheless, there is little understanding of the mechanisms through which sports can foster development. In addition to participating in sports, volunteering in sports is also regarded as providing developmental opportunities for socially vulnerable youths. Today, however, there is an underrepresentation of socially vulnerable youths in volunteering and volunteer training programs. A case study in Brussels was set up within a volunteer soccer training program focused on socially vulnerable youths. A qualitative research design was used to analyze developmental experiences of participants (n = 11) and program organizers (n = 3). The study also aimed to gain more insight into the mechanisms underlying the program. Participating youths indicated development in both technical and key competences. It is concluded that a systematic approach of the volunteer training program can play an important role in the development of competences of socially vulnerable youths both as a volunteer and an individual.

Keywords
socially vulnerable youth; sports; volunteer training program; youth development

Issue
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1. Introduction

It is estimated that at present 13.0% of young people (aged between 15 and 24) in the European Union are neither in education nor in employment (Eurostat, 2014). Recent data show increased youth unemployment rates in Europe (Eurostat, 2014; ILO, 2013). Low- and unskilled youths in Europe stand fewer chances of getting a job compared to their highly skilled peers. According to Sourbron and Herremans (2013), the opportunities for young job seekers highly depend on their educational qualifications. Dierckx, Coene, Van Haarlem and Raeymakers (2013) indicated that an individual's or head of family's level of education is strongly linked to poverty risk, reflecting the lack of a higher qualification ensuing deprivation. Consequently, a considerable number of young Europeans live or risk ending up in socially vulnerable situations.

1.1. Enhancement of the Social Position

According to Vettenburg (1998), causes of social vulnerability in youths are not only directly linked to the young people themselves, but are also closely associated with the situation in which they live. In other words, the wider societal context, with its institutions (e.g., justice, education, labor market, welfare, unemployment service, health care, etc.), are also potential causes. A number of social inequalities have been reported in relation to Belgian (Flemish) youths, such as in school careers (Vettenburg, 2011) and job opportunities (VDAB, 2012). Besides this necessary change on the institutional level, it has been indicated that a number of social channels exist through which youths can become more resilient and better prepared in dealing with their vulnerable situation, thereby enhancing their chances of getting out of or improving their situation. Lamote et al. (2013) concluded that to break out of the vicious circle of poverty, it is far more efficient to invest in the human capital of vulnerable households than in increased allowances or activation in the job market. Human capital is defined by the OECD (1998, p. 9) as "the knowledge, skills, competences and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity". Coleman (1988, 1990, 1994) described a close relationship between social capital and the development of human capital (i.e., education and employment skills and expertise). He views social capital as "the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organization and that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person. These resources differ for different persons and constitute an important advantage for children and adolescents in the development of their human capital" (1994, p. 300). His interest is in community-based processes surrounding the development of human capital, which is, according to Coalter (2007), frequently emphasized in policy statements about the potential role of sports in social inclusion strategies. Different approaches have been reported with regard to investing in youths' human capital. Undoubtedly the most commonly used strategy is formal education. Heckman (2008) referred to the development of knowledge and skills in childhood as crucial for the efficiency of further development. However, school is often the first institution where it founders. Negative experiences, for example as a result of a distorted relationship between student and teacher (Vettenburg, 2011), often lead to fewer chances to develop knowledge and skills. This, in turn, results in fewer (or no) qualifications, leading to a vulnerable position in the job market. Besides, investment in human capital also occurs through on-the-job training (Heckman, 2000). However, according to Bollens and Heylen (2010), lower qualified employees are often underrepresented in these courses (mostly provided within the private sector) and in most cases only end up in training sessions for the unemployed (within the public sector).

Furthermore, traditionally, the broad domain of leisure has also been regarded as providing an opportunity to positively strengthen the human capital of the youth (e.g., Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Sports, as one of the most popular leisure pastimes among youths (Vanhoutte, 2007), have long been viewed as a means of socialization as well. In addition, there is a growing belief that sports in particular can help the personal and social development of socially vulnerable youths. According to Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Coalter (2012) sports are not only regarded by many youth welfare workers and local policy makers as an ideal way to reach out to at-risk youth, it is also believed that sports provide developmental opportunities for this group. Consequently, in recent years an increasing number of so-called sports-based developmental programs have been set up (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). It has been indicated that these practices—also referred to as "sport-plus" initiatives (Coalter, 2007)—often seem to be more capable than other socio-cultural activities in attracting young people independently of their socio-economic background (Feinstein, Bynner & Duckworth, 2006; Vanhoutte, 2007). According to different researchers (Crabbé, 2007; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom & Nols, 2013; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Spaaij, 2009), sports can provide rich contexts for reaching out to socially vulnerable youth. Next to "sport-plus" initiatives, in which sports are used as the core activity and adapted in various ways to achieve "development" objectives, also "plus-sport" initiatives can be distinguished. In these initiatives social and health programs use sports, and especially its ability to bring together a large number of young people, to achieve some of their objectives (Coalter, 2007).

1.2. The Promise of Sports

However, in recent years, an increasing number of researchers have questioned the strong belief that often exists with regard to the developmental potential of sports (e.g., Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007; Darnell, 2007, 2010a, 2010b; Guest, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2008). Giulianotti (2004), for example, referred to these believers as 'sport evangelists' indicating that they lack a critical perspective on sport's actual value. According to Coakley (2011), sports are too often viewed as a simple and cost effective means of problem solving and improving life quality for individuals and society alike. Coalter (2007) mentioned three main categories of claims of possible outcomes of youth sports participation: (1) personal character development; (2) reforming "at-risk" populations; and (3) fostering social capital leading to future occupational success and civic engagement. Hartmann and Kwauk (2011)

indicated that, despite a general lack of sound empirical evidence, this blind belief in sports has resulted in the provision of various sports-based developmental programs at the local and national level.

Moreover, Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) stated that there is very little understanding of the mechanisms through which sports can foster development through these sports-based practices. According to Coalter (2011), assumptions about how sports interventions contribute to achieving certain outcomes and the ways through which these outcomes can be attained, are seldom clearly formulated. Pawson (2006) indicated that we need to make a shift in the analysis and understanding of these types of social intervention programs from families of programs to families of mechanisms—the processes, experiences and relationships that might achieve desired impacts and, hopefully, outcomes.

1.3. Individual Development Perspective

In an attempt to impart more clarity on development through sports-based initiatives, Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) distinguished two different approaches to the relation between sports and development. They see a "dominant" vision in which many initiatives hold an idealized belief in the positive pro-social power of sports. In this vision, program organizers assume participation in their program automatically and inevitably results in developmental outcomes. Coakley (2011) referred to this view as a "carwash effect"—the assumption that sports participation among at-risk populations cleanses character and washes away personal defects so that young people become "acceptable" to those in mainstream society. Coalter (2013) indicated that an often-mentioned rationale for the fact that many of the sport-for-development programs are aimed at at-risk youth, besides the attractiveness of sports, is program organizers regarding these youths as being "in need of an intervention". He warned however of "the dangers of an environmental determinism that assumes that deprived communities inevitably produce deficient people who can be perceived, via a deficit model, to be in need of 'development' through sports" (Coalter, 2013, p. 3). The dominant vision suggests that the cause of social vulnerability is primarily situated at the individual level. Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) indicated that this vision is fundamentally reproductive; containing programs in which sports essentially reproduce established social relations. This vision is in contrast with an aspect of Vettenburg's (1998) social vulnerability theory which emphasizes the lack of authority of social vulnerable groups to equally participate in the wording of social values and norms. As such, little attention is paid to their specific needs and demands. As a result, these groups can benefit to a lesser extent from the support provided by social institutions in comparison to other groups. According to Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) and Darnell (2010a), there is a need for an alternative approach to developmental sports-based practices that starts by critically looking at existing social hierarchy with its power relations and social inequalities. They labeled this approach "interventionist"; where development is a more radical vision of social change in which participants are empowered to critically take part in the transformation of not only their own experiences of society, but also of society itself.

Contrary to the dominant vision, where coaches are expected to teach values that youths need to better fit into society, the interventionist approach suggests co-education of youngsters, coaches and program organizers. Development, in this sense, is according to Sharma (2008) not something that can be done to or for people, but is seen as a process that must be undertaken with others. According to Hartmann and Kwauk (2011), this more radical vision of development, developed by critical scholars, centers on processes of empowerment, emancipation, and liberation involving the full and active participation of those previously marginalized. Within this interventionist approach, education and social development take on an alternative meaning and application. Following Kincheloe (2008), true education (and by extension development) is no longer defined by the skills and knowledge deposited into learners by teachers, coaches, or social workers, but defined by its emancipatory and liberatory capacity. The social relationships and interactions with participants are considered to be the key factors in the interventionist approach. The ideas of Kincheloe (2008) are closely related to the work of Freire (1970/2008) who endorsed students' ability to think critically about their education situation. Central in Freire's work was the notion to enable students to recognize connections between their individual problems and experiences and the social contexts in which they are embedded. The goal of education, in this perspective, is to raise the awareness of individuals to existing structures and relations of oppression, in other words, to invest in the conscientization of socially vulnerable youths and their critical praxis (i.e., reflection and action upon the world and its structures in order to transform it). According to Hartmann and Kwauk (2011), who based their interventionist approach on the ideas of Freire and Kincheloe, sports are primarily a useful "hook" and can play a role in the development of youngsters. This happens not automatically or on its own, but with appropriate guidance and in combination with other programs and initiatives.

1.4. Voluntary Work in Sports as a Tool for Development

According to Auld (2008), one of the advantages attributed to sports participation is the building or extension of a person's social capital. Auld stated that alt-

hough social capital can be produced anywhere, its production is most commonly associated with the third sector; of which sports is a significant component. Third sector organizations according to Auld (2008), can act as vehicles for individuals to connect with each other and display behavior that often (but not always) has elements of altruism and social responsibility. Putnam (2000) also referred to the importance of volunteering with regard to social capital. Half of the 14 independent measures that comprised what Putnam defined as a "social capital index" were associated with volunteering and voluntary organizations; according to Cuskelly (2008), most of which correlated highly with the overall index score.

Although volunteering holds pro-social behaviors that benefit others (e.g., Institute for Volunteering Research, 2002; Penner, 2002), it is widely believed that helping others is also beneficial for the volunteer as well (e.g., Wilson & Musick, 1999). Smith (2010) stated that besides the social capital gain, volunteer work can also confer human capital. Moreover, Day and Devlin (1998) conceptualized volunteering as a method by which people can invest in their human capital. They concluded that people learn, amongst others, organizational and leadership, and speaking and writing skills through volunteering. Furthermore, according to different researchers (e.g., Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer, & Snyder, 1998; Hart, Donnelly, Younnis, & Atkins, 2007), the outcomes of volunteering for youth include personal development and risk avoidance, highlighting its relevance to development beyond engagement in civic society.

According to MacNeela and Gannon (2014), volunteering is also underpinned by shared characteristics of positive youth development, self-exploration and pro-social ethos. It is not surprising that a number of positive youth development programs have been set up around volunteering. Different researchers (e.g., Eley & Kirk, 2002; Kay & Bradbury, 2009) investigated youth sports volunteering training programs that provided training to equip young people with the skills to perform their roles as volunteers and with the initial confidence to perform these roles. Their findings indicated that involvement in a voluntary training program facilitated social connectedness by providing opportunities for young people to engage with others (i.e., young children, peers, teachers, club members, etc.) in their communities. In addition, fostering a greater awareness of the needs of others and the positive experience to be gained from these interactions was also found to be effective in facilitating social capital. It also proved to be beneficial to the development of human capital (e.g., transferable social skills; increased sense of self-worth; greater sense of altruism and citizenship) (Kay & Bradbury, 2009). Eley and Kirk (2002) demonstrated the advantage of using volunteering in sports as a means for encouraging pro-social behavior, developing leadership skills and citizenship among young people.

Despite the fact that volunteering in sports is regarded as providing developmental opportunities for socially vulnerable youth (Kay & Bradbury, 2009), today there is an underrepresentation of these youths in most programs that work with young volunteers (e.g., Eley & Kirk, 2002; Kay & Bradbury, 2009). However, this is hardly surprising given that it has been reported that education, income and social networks are considered to be the most consistent predictors of volunteering (e.g., Penner, 2002; Taylor, Panagoulas, & Nichols, 2012; Wilson, 2000). Apart from these participation constraints, at present there is no clear understanding of what the actual developmental impact of a voluntary training program on socially vulnerable youth can be. Nor is there insight into the active ingredients (or mechanisms and conditions) under which possible developmental outcomes can be generated for this group. Because of this knowledge gap, a study investigating a training program for young soccer coaches targeting socially vulnerable youth in Brussels was conducted.

1.5. Being Young in Brussels

Before turning to the case study, we will provide some more information regarding the situation of youth living in Brussels, the capital of Belgium and often regarded as the capital of Europe. The city has a young and ethnically diverse population. Almost one third of the population is between 15 and 34 years old (29.8%) and has no Belgian nationality (32.6%) (Brussels-Capital Health and Social Observatory, 2013). In 2009, three out of four of its newborns (74.3%) had a mother of foreign origin (Brussels-Capital Health and Social Observatory, 2013). Similar to most other major European cities, there is a substantial group of young people living in socially vulnerable situations. According to Sourbron and Herremans (2013), the position of the Brussels youth in the labor market is one of the worst in Europe, with 36.4% being unemployed. In Brussels 18.7% of youths are neither in education nor in employment or training (NEET) (Eurostat, 2013), which is much higher than the average for the whole country (Belgium (12.7%)) and Europe (13.0%) (Eurostat, 2013). Half of all young job seekers in Brussels have low qualifications (compared to the Belgian average of 30%) and a majority of them (61.9%) has been looking for a job for more than six months. In Flanders (the northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) the efflux of young adults with no qualifications and therefore fewer chances in the labor market is highest in Brussels (Lamote et al., 2013).

2. Brussels Case Study

The case study described in the present paper analyzed a soccer coach training program for male disadvantaged youth living in Brussels. The program was part of a 6-year project set up by a youth work organization

"Youth and City" ("Jeugd en Stad"—JES), with the aim of strengthening seven Brussels soccer clubs operating in deprived inner-city areas in playing a social role. The clubs, which are primarily run by volunteers of foreign origin, all emphasize the social role they can play in their neighborhood. However, the clubs are all facing a number of challenges, such as dealing with ethnically diverse memberships and the socially vulnerable backgrounds of many of their young players, as well as the negative image they have among local authorities and "native" Belgian clubs. The initial program's strategy of JES in 2007 in order to strengthen the clubs was to support the participating clubs on the organizational level, more specifically to optimize their managerial and structural functioning (e.g., improvement of administrative and communicative competences, overall structure, image, parent involvement, volunteer recruitment, etc.). However, this strategy turned out to be a long term process with limited immediate concrete results. In an evaluation study of this program Haudenhuyse and Theeboom (2008) concluded that these social surplus goals were not achieved as most clubs were dealing with major organizational problems. They concluded that building a club with a clear structure was the primary condition of working towards sport-plus goals; a condition that had not yet been fulfilled at that time. In 2010, a more direct approach was introduced with a focus on developing young volunteers in the participating clubs. This resulted in setting up a coach training program targeting adolescent club members. The program was organized during three consecutive soccer seasons (from September 2010 to May 2013). During each soccer season the program consisted of two clusters of four preparatory courses followed by an intensive week including approximately 40 young children. During the course of the program, 24 preparatory courses and six intensive weeks were organized. As a result, the program focused on individual development. The program organizers considered training volunteers as an indirect route to strengthening the clubs bottom-up. However, the focus of our study was on the volunteer training program (i.e., gaining more insight into the underlying mechanisms) and the developmental experiences of the participating youngsters as individual development was the primary goal of the program.

2.1. Approach Used in the Investigated Program

Central in the approach was the use of a so-called competence model with the intention of enabling the participating adolescents to acquire technical, as well as a number of general "key" competences. The former related to sports didactical, animation and pedagogical skills. The latter referred to competences that are considered to be transferable to other domains of life (e.g., school, leisure, work). Among others, the second type of competences included good listening and communication skills, providing and coping with feedback, personal and social responsibility, showing flexibility and (self)discipline, collaborative behavior, self-reflection, taking initiative, empathy, planning and organizational skills. The basic idea was that through helping young volunteers to acquire these skills, the human capital of the clubs would increase and could bring about changes in the long run, resulting in stronger clubs. Due to its additional emphasis on key competences, in addition to more technical formation, the program distinguished itself from existing sports coach formation initiatives in Flanders. It therefore provided an interesting case to look at the extent to which coach education programs might be able to develop competences of socially vulnerable youths through the use of sports.

2.1.1. Competence Model

Every technical competence domain focused on different technical competences and consisted of five different levels. This tiered approach was aimed at a vertical evolution (i.e., development). The first domain dealt with the competences relating to sports techniques and sports didactics. Youths started as assistant coaches and were gradually given more responsibilities until they became an independent full coach (and in turn had to supervise assistant coaches). Within a second domain, emphasis was on developing an "animator". Based on prior experiences of an existing course developed by the youth work organization, youths gradually learned how to prepare and guide side activities for young children. The course made use of different character roles, each of which addressed different competences. At the simplest levels, youths worked on technical competences relating to the roles of "friend" (empathy with target audience, respect) and "clown" (entertaining, motivation). Advancing in difficulty, the roles of "guide" (leadership, explanation of activities) and "referee" (responsibility, boundaries, making rules and living up to them) were used. Finally, the roles of "builder" (organization of an activity, cooperation) and "inventor" (creativity, flexibility regarding animation activity) were introduced. The third technical competence domain related to pedagogical skills as a more general support to the training sessions and side activities. The focus evolved from personal to social responsibility towards others. The key competences related, among other things, to empathy, listening skills, communication skills, social skills, taking initiative, flexibility, planning and organizing skills and self-reflection. They were introduced gradually and combined with the different technical competence levels and domains.

2.1.2. Rating Instrument

The different levels and domains within the compe-

tence model were used to provide participants with insight into their own development and position themselves by means of a rating instrument. The positioning was done both by the youths themselves and the accompanying program organizers. For the technical competence domains, a five-point rating system was used enabling the respondents to assess the different competences, ranging from "perfectly able/knowledgeable" to "not able/knowledgeable at all". The rating instrument also revealed which key competences were important at each level. For every key competence, youths were asked about their personal meaning and its practical relevance. On the basis of these outcomes, the competences were further developed. At the end of each intensive week, youths were evaluated with regard to their positioning within the competence model. Development (if any) was also visualized by indicating their previous and current levels.

2.2. Method

A qualitative research design was used to analyze experiences of participants and accompanying program organizers with regard to their involvement in two intensive weeks and eight preparatory courses during the 2012-2013 soccer season. In the present study individual semi-structured in-depth interviews were used. According to Jones (1985), adolescents need to describe their experiences in their own words in order to best understand their meaning. Similar to other researchers that investigated experiences of socially vulnerable youth and sports interventions (e.g., Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, Nols, & Coussée, 2014), an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) was used. This method allowed us to understand the data from the perspective and experience of the interviewees relating to the shared phenomenon (with peers and program organizers) of participating in the volunteer training program. In this respect, both the perspective from the program organizers (youth workers) and the participating youths were relevant.

2.2.1. Youths

The program was aimed at socially vulnerable youths living in disadvantaged areas in Brussels, active as soccer trainers in specific clubs in Brussels. The goal was to offer these youths a longitudinal developmental trajectory. They were actively encouraged to be involved for the duration of the program; unfortunately some dropped out. Others joined the group later on. Youths could also (re)start at any time. As a result, the participating youths during the 2012–2013 program had different levels of competences making the program different for each individual. However, the fact that during the last season youths with a different level participated in the program was considered to be a good opportunity for the study. This allowed us to include both "experienced" and "less experienced" youths, adding a cross-sectional dimension to the data.

During the 2012–2013 season all participating youths attending one or both intensive weeks were interviewed. In total, the first author conducted 17 interviews with 11 different male youths. The average age of the participants was 17.64 years (SD = 1.63) and all were active in the same soccer club in Brussels. The other clubs involved in the initial program did not have adolescent coaches or were not interested in the coach training program and were not included in the present study. All participants lived in disadvantaged areas in Brussels and had predominantly North African roots. Most youths were trilingual (Arabic, Dutch, French), but according to the program organizers they mastered none of the languages perfectly to be able to express any subtleties, causing frustration and leading to occasional negative behavior. The majority of participants were in technical or vocational education. Only one of them received more general education preparing him for higher studies.

The mean duration of the interviews was 31 minutes. During each intensive week we interviewed all participating youths. This resulted in six youths being interviewed twice (they participated in both intensive weeks within an interval of four months) and five youths who were interviewed once (three during the first intensive week and two during the second intensive week). Two interview guides were constructed for both intensive weeks. The first interview guide started with a brief background inquiry followed by an open-ended, descriptive questions section regarding the situation of the youth in their clubs, how they look at themselves as coaches, the intensive weeks and preparatory courses and the possible impact of the program on their personal lives and the clubs. During the second interview, the focus was more on possible impact and learned lessons with regard to the previous intensive week and preparatory courses and the differences between the first intensive week and the second.

2.2.2. Program Organizers

The three program organizers, all youth workers, were interviewed twice by the first author. The first interview was on an individual basis during the first intensive week. It primarily included questions concerning the actual approach. The second interview was a group interview immediately after the first intensive week in which all program organizers were asked to reflect on the experiences of the participating youths.

All interviews were tape-recorded and, following a verbatim transcription, analyzed inductively afterwards. In the first step of the analysis, the researchers read the transcripts several times separately, looking for meaningful units of information (i.e., segments of

text that were comprehensible by themselves, that contained one specific idea, episode, or piece of information (Tesch, 1990)), as well as similar patterns and concepts. Researchers' independent analyses were then followed by discussions to resolve conflicting interpretations with regard to coding and themes. Codes with a similar meaning were then grouped together leading to the development of different (sub)themes. A computer software program, Nvivo 10, was used to assist with the coding and sorting of the data.

In addition to interviewing youths and program organizers, the first author also conducted participant observations during both intensive weeks. Finally, document analysis of the yearly reports of the program organizers was carried out. The observations and the document analysis provided us more insight into the program and enabled us to interpret the data within its specific context.

3. Results-Discussion

The aim of the study was on the one hand to gain more insight in the underlying mechanisms of the volunteer training program. On the other hand we wanted to gain more insight into the individual development of the participating youngsters. Therefore, findings of the study are presented thematically (i.e., approach of the volunteer training program, and developmental experiences) and occasionally illustrated using raw data (i.e. quotes).

3.1. Approach of the Volunteer Training Program

3.1.1. Long-Term Program

Both program organizers as participants experienced the extended length of the program as a positive factor. The duration of the program enabled the building of relations of trust with the accompanying program organizers and competence development on different levels.

> It's an audience where the group is rather important. If you take them to an intensive week a few times, the longer they know you, the more they trust you and the more you can say to them. (Program organizer)

Experience, knowledge and expertise regarding the different competence domains and the way in which these are transferred, as well as giving relevant and meaningful feedback contributed to these relationships, and were positively valued by the participants.

> Yes, they are constantly present, just to discuss things with you….At the club, sometimes you're on your own. (Hamir)

The youths also indicated that their relation with the children improved during the course of the program and that the parents respected them more. It was also mentioned that the duration of the program provided opportunities for experiential learning.

> During each intensive week you learn something. Every day, every moment, every second, you see different things and different situations. You see good and bad moments. And that gives you a lot of experience, you see? And you learn a lot thanks to these experiences and moments. (Bilal)

According to the program organizers, the fact that participants had different experience levels had a positive influence on the competence development of all youths. This is in line with Dryfoos (1990) who stated that adolescents need to have the opportunity for interaction with positively oriented peers and for involvement in roles in which they can make a contribution to the group. The participating youngsters endorsed this and found it meaningful to help and learn from each other.

> There are different kinds of coaches, there are young coaches who attend for the first time and we are here to help them. I'm at level 4, they're at level 1, and we train the children together. They learn from me, sometimes I can help them. (Adnan)

The program organizers also noticed that the participants had difficulties with being critical and giving feedback to one another at first, but that this clearly improved the longer they stayed in the program. The same appeared to be true for taking up responsibilities in their club (e.g., organizing tournaments on their own initiative).

3.1.2. Experiential Learning Trajectory

The practice-based approach of the program was highly appreciated by the participants. Youths were very positive about the preparatory courses, which dealt with the different technical competence domains, and the methods that were used during the intensive weeks (e.g., the role playing, team building).

> Because everything I saw and heard during the courses, I also saw here. We played games with the coaches, using name tags that called ourselves friend, builder, doctor or referee. If there is a fight, you have to interfere and act like the referee. Or as builder you have to help someone to build or to put something away. (Hamir)

The data showed that a practice-oriented approach involving learning by doing, working with life-like situa-

tions and the concretization of abstract concepts was well-received by the participants. The program organizers also indicated that the intensive weeks created a context that differs from the daily environment of the youths, thereby enabling learning opportunities.

> A green environment is something completely different. A different infrastructure, peace and quiet, a whistling bird instead of a noisy train. The surroundings, a forest, new inputs, new experiences, all add value….These guys are tough if you meet them on the subway, but put them in the dark at midnight, they're scared and come to you for comfort. (Program organizer)

This was also confirmed by youths who valued a safe place and the fact that they could return each intensive week to the same familiar environment. Other authors (Coalter, 2007; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005) have also emphasized the importance of a safe and supporting environment (physically, psychologically and emotionally) for this population.

Both youths and program organizers regarded the experiential learning with opportunities for "trial-and-error" by participants as one of the most important factors of the program. Within this experiential learning trajectory the program organizers are playing an important role.

> Experiential learning has to put the focus on the youngsters because it will increasingly give them the feeling that they can handle the situation themselves. In part, they determine themselves what the problem is and what they will tackle. They experience a problem and then ask themselves what they can do. You have to try to stimulate their independence and not merely teach them to do certain tasks. (Program organizer)

> What I like was that they let us make mistakes. They didn't say, "you don't have to do that", but they let us make our mistakes and at the end of the day we meet and they tell us what we did. They never say, "that was bad". They always try to tell us in a nice way. They let us make mistakes and that's how you learn the most. (Tarik)

According to the program organizers and youngsters, this kind of approach is often missing in other contexts.

> [Difference with supervisors at the club?] "Yes, I think they are more present. You lead a training session and they say what's not good, what you can change. They help you when you're stuck. At the club, they have a quick look, quick quick, that's not good. Here, they say what's good, they try to see what you're capable of, just by asking questions. (Ayoub)

An important aspect of the guidance approach was related to the positive experiences with the intense and frequent interactions (both formal and informal) between participants and program organizers. For example, the youths highly valued the group discussions with the coaches and peers at the end of every day, but at the same time found them difficult. Other authors (e.g., Hellison, 1995) have also reported the effectiveness of similar strategies in dealing with socially vulnerable youths.

> Group discussions are good because you learn from your own mistakes…it is easy for everyone to give comments on themselves, but it is more difficult to comment on other people. (Ayoub)

> We can learn from each other's mistakes. When you've done something wrong and you don't realize this yourself, other people can tell you. (Hamir)

3.1.3. Competence Model and Rating Instrument

Both the participants and program organizers highly appreciated the use of a competence model which emphasized technical as well as key competences and the approach of self-reflection by the self-rating instrument.

> The interesting thing is that they begin to think about themselves, which is an entirely different approach than just saying what they have to do. Now, they start to think on their own about how they work, the mistakes they make, and how they can try to improve. (Program organizer)

The data also showed that both the competence model and the rating instrument were regarded by the program organizers as critical elements within the approach of visualizing developmental experiences. Youths also appreciated this.

> Before I joined the intensive week, I didn't know this. And thanks to this [the competence model] you know what level you are. Before, you didn't think about your level. I just coached. But thanks to [the competence model] I know more or less what my level is and what my next aim is. (Tarik)

> We never get self-evaluation at school. It is weird that you never have to assess yourself. Here, they encourage you to do it. (Abel)

The differences in the levels of the competence model were explained by making reference to themes that were popular among the youngsters and to their social environment (e.g., international soccer competition), as this helped the youngsters to accurately assess what the different levels meant.

> For example, they showed five pictures of coaches from the different international soccer competitions. And for instance Belgium was the lowest level…and Spain the highest. This showed us where you think you were as a coach on the sports didactical level. (Bilal)

The program organizers deliberately opted for a system in which the youths assessed themselves to stimulate self-reflection. This process was not easy for some youngsters, as they sometimes overrated themselves. However, the youngsters indicated that it stimulated them afterwards to actively pursue higher competence levels. The program organizers stressed that it stimulated youths' ability to cope independently and they regarded this as an important factor in this respect.

3.2. Developmental Experiences

In order to facilitate personal developmental through participation in the volunteer training program, youths first have to take part in the program. One crucial influencing factor turned out to be the development of a safe and supporting environment in the soccer club where youths feel at home and are encouraged to take up voluntary tasks (i.e., as a coach) and participate in the program.

With regard to their sustainable participation in a soccer club, a number of youths emphasized the familial character of the club as an important factor. They referred to it as their second home and said that they spend most of their free time there (ranging from three times a week to daily), partly because it gives them something to do (i.e., meaningful pastime).

> I realized that I always sat at home and I found that I had already missed too many things. I wanted to do something big and now at least I have something to do every day. (Ayoub)

> My parents approve of the fact that I'm doing this. I'm living in a disadvantaged area and by coaching a team I stay away from the street. It's more reassuring for parents knowing their child spends his spare time at the soccer club. (Tarik)

As the youths experienced the soccer club as a safe and supportive environment, they were motivated to be involved in the volunteer training program. In this way the program organizers and participants could start working towards their individual development.

The youths in our study indicated that they had personally changed during the volunteer training program (e.g., increased insight into their own competences and behavior and an increased self-confidence with reference to their function as coach). Acquiring insights into their own personal evolution and actually improving was regarded as important. For the majority of the participants, this was the most important reason for participating in the program.

> The aim of the intensive week? That I start the second intensive week in the way I ended the first intensive week. That I start there with that experience. And that I end there with more experience. (Hamir)

Youths indicated they had developed themselves within the different technical competence domains (i.e., sports didactical, organizational and pedagogical). They also indicated that they had transferred the acquired knowledge both during the intensive week as well as afterwards in their own training at the club.

> Learning to communicate with the children....I've learned a lot and now I communicate better and my training sessions are better. (Hamir)

> What they teach us is how you have to deal with children. How you have to punish them. Prevention is better than cure, as they say. (Tarik)

> I learned to take the different animator roles into practice, for example referee, clown, friend, or builder. Dependent on the moment or the group I play a different role. Sometimes you have to be strict and act like a referee, in other cases you have to act like a friend or a clown and motivate children to take part. (Hamir)

The youths also mentioned having developed different key competences. These primarily related to taking responsibilities and initiative, setting goals and managing time.

> What I mostly learned here was first and foremost to take initiative and responsibility. Because if you don't do that, nothing will happen. (Bilal)

> The last time I didn't take initiative because I was ashamed, I was too afraid, but this time, I am less afraid to do something in the group. (Hamir)

In addition youths indicated that taking up responsibilities adds meaning to their lives.

Participants also stated to have made new and improved relations with peers and developed relationships with adults and children inside and outside the club (e.g. responsible youth trainers, program organizers) as well as improved social competences (e.g., collaborating as a team, communicating more effectively, dealing with feedback and debating skills, taking up social responsibility). They further indicated that the experiences made them think more clearly about their own behavior and attitude.

> I know I sometimes get angry too fast, for instance if I lose or if someone makes me uncomfortable because of what he says…now, I have more self-control than before, I can just count to ten and pretend as if I wasn't listening. (Ayoub)

> You see, youngsters nowadays are always alone on the streets, doings things that aren't right. My mind is 24 hours of the day on soccer. That's better than stealing or smoking or doing weird things. (Hamir)

Furthermore, the program organizers stressed the importance in the transfer of learned knowledge and expertise by the participants to other domains and situations (e.g., to add elements from the animator courses to the training sessions at their own club), as well as to their overall functioning as a coach at the club. Youths also indicated that they are applying things they learned during the program to their daily lives (e.g., better preparing things for school, keeping appointments, taking initiative or organizing activities at home).

> I do that for instance in school and that's because I learned it here; to show respect and to be polite. (Anouar)

> I have two little sisters and sometimes I entertain them at home and they really like it. I really want to work with children in the future. (Zakaria)

> We learn here for instance: we learned the method to structure our training. This also occurs in the initiator course. We learned it here to take the initiator course. That way, I'm a little bit prepared. (Ayoub)

4. Conclusions

The present study has analyzed the experiences of socially vulnerable male youth participants in a voluntary soccer coach training program in Brussels. Unlike most other volunteer training initiatives in Belgium, this program emphasized the acquisition of more general competences besides technical coaching related skills. The study has tried to gain more insight into the specific approach that was used to facilitate developmental outcomes among its participants as well as to learn more about participants' experiences with this program.

4.1. Interventionist Approach

Based on the interviews with the program organizers we obtained more insight into the developmental approach that was used in the investigated program. We found different indications that the approach used within the investigated program is more situated within what Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) described as an interventionist approach. We based this assumption on the following characteristics of the program:

- Experiential learning, used as a central approach in the program, is consistent with the paradigm of empowerment. "Empowerment", described by many authors (see e.g., Rappaport, 1987; Van Regenmortel 2002, 2009; Zimmerman, 2000), is a multi-level construct. Empowerment looks amongst others, according to Van Regenmortel (2002, 2009), from an insider's perspective at the fact that an individual can also learn from their own experiences. Because of these experiences, youngsters can learn how to deal with similar or new situations. This self-gained experiential knowledge might then lead to a change in attitudes and new skills that offer, for their part, new opportunities to improve the socially vulnerable position of the youngsters. Empowerment thus shows these resemblances to the interventionist approach of Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) as it focuses on (the experiences of) the person himself.

- Within the investigated program, volunteering (in sports) was a key mechanism. Volunteering resembles the interventionist approach, as it is a process that is undertaken with others, holds an emancipatory capacity, and is undertaken by free will. Furthermore, according to Risler and Holosko (2009), volunteering can also contribute to the development of empowerment.

- Within the program the emphasis was on self-fulfillment and development on a stepwise basis. The involvement of the youngsters increased gradually, at their own pace, in consultation with the youngsters and program organizers. In accordance to the interventionist approach, development in the investigated program was seen as a co-educational process between youngsters and program organizers. Important here was that the youngsters chose on which (key) competences they wanted to work, and where they wanted to focus (on animator, trainer), which gave them the necessary freedom.

- The program emphasized self-reflection as an important tool. Youngsters were encouraged to set a level for themselves by means of self-contemplation. Guidance was stressed on both gaining insight into their competences and on stimulating their ability to cope on their own. In this way, youths did not feel told what to do. This can be linked to the interventionist approach as youths critically reflect on themselves and their situation.

- The youngsters were encouraged to vouch for each

other (through collaboration between experienced and unexperienced youngsters). In this way, they are encouraged to learn from each other, which can be linked to the interventionist approach as, according to Sharma (2008), development is a process that must be undertaken with others.

However the operationalization of the interventionist approach described by Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) remained theoretical and a clear dichotomy between the dominant and interventionist approach is difficult to make, this study contributed to a better understanding of how an interventionist approach can be applied in practice. In this way we gained more insight in some of the underlying mechanisms of the program.

4.2. Youths Developmental Experiences

The interviews with both the youngsters and the program organizers showed during the voluntary sports-based training, positive youth developmental experiences were manifested in different ways.

- Youngsters mentioned that they could develop their competences and gain more insight into themselves. Youngsters had positive developmental experiences with regard to their participation in the program. The youngsters in our study indicated that they personally changed during the program, which was endorsed by the program organizers. According to the youngsters, they developed within the different technical competence domains, as well as with respect to different key competences. These key competences were primarily related to taking responsibilities and initiative, setting goals and managing time. Additionally, the youngsters indicated that they acquired insights into their own personal competences, attitudes, behavior and evolution, which were regarded as important to them. Furthermore, the youngsters stated that their experiences made them think more clearly about their own behavior and attitude.

- Participants stated that they had made new and improved relationships with peers, and developed relationships with adults and children inside and outside (e.g., program organizers) the club. The findings revealed that the youngsters, as well as the program organizers, showed respect for each other and that a bond of trust was created. They also stated that they had improved their social competences (e.g., collaborating as a team, communicating more effectively, dealing with feedback and debating competences, taking up social responsibility). We can conclude that these youngsters were indirectly referring to the development of their social capital to both Putnams' (2000) bonding (close ties between friends; in this program, with other participants) and bridging (more distant ties; in this program, with the responsible of the youth trainers at the soccer club) as well as to Woolcocks' (2001) linking social capital (relationships between individuals and groups in different social strata; in this program, with the program organizers).

- Youngsters indicated that they transferred and applied the knowledge and competences acquired during the program to their daily lives (e.g., club, school, home).

Based on these findings we can conclude that the program invested in the human capital of the participating youngsters, not in a direct way (through formal education or on-the-job-training), but through informal learning. Crucial in the program is that the investment in youths' human capital is seen as the development of a broad set of resources (e.g., responsibility, goal setting, time management, as well as social competences (working together, communication, dealing with feedback, etc.)). This broader focus, beyond, for example, job specific knowledge and competences, is of relevance as findings show that the developed competences are transferable to other domains of life (e.g., club, school, home). Besides, the fact that the youths indicated they had developed their social capital is an important finding as different researchers (e.g., Coleman, 1988; Schuller, 2001) have stated that, however human capital is very powerful in his own terms, and an essential feature of prosperity, it cannot be taken out of its contexts of social relationships. According to Schuller (2001), social capital gives greater prominence, for example, to informal modes of learning, and the skills acquired through learning by doing.

The above-described developmental experiences of the youths within the program correspond well to different outcomes described in the positive youth development literature. For example, the current findings resemble three out of four main areas of youth development outlined by the American National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRCIM, 2002) (i.e., intellectual, psychological/emotional, and social development). There is also similarity with some of the 40 developmental assets from Benson (2006), both on the external (e.g., positive peer influence, etc.), as well as on the internal level (e.g., responsibility, planning, and decision making, etc.). Reference can also be made to "contribution", which is Lerner's sixth (additional) C in his 5Cs of positive youth development (i.e., competence, confidence, character, caring/compassion, and connection) (e.g., Lerner et al., 2005). The youths in the present study were actively stimulated to prepare and organize training sessions and side activities for young-

er children (both during the intensive weeks and at the club). Furthermore, participants reported experiences that can be classified in the personal and interpersonal processes of development as described by Dworkin, Larson and Hansen (2003) for youth in general.

4.3. Limitations

4.3.1. Program

As we described above (see 4.1), the investigated program shows, amongst others, resemblances with the interventionist approach of Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) as it focuses on (the experiences of) the person himself. However, the fact that the program organizers did not make an effort, or did very little, to the further development of youngsters in the club (e.g., offering (developmental) opportunities, guidance from club members) during and after the program is a limitation of the program. Participating in a youth development program alone ignores the wider societal causes of social vulnerability. As described in the introduction (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Vettenburg, 1998), also social institutions and policies, as possible reproducers and maintainers of social inequalities, need to be transformed to improve the situations that youths are living in. This underlies the fact that developing human capital cannot be seen apart from the broader context of our society. However, according to Coussée and Roets (2011), sports-based social interventions have their meaning, as they may offer contexts in which young people could acquire competences to give meaning to their lives and help them cope with and change difficult situations. It might be a relevant point of interest for further research concerning similar sport-for-development-programs to investigate how a context can be transformed in order to improve the situations socially vulnerable youths are living in.

4.3.2. Study

Based on the results of the present study, we tried to better understand the underlying mechanisms of the volunteer training program and the developmental experiences of the participants. However, we can formulate one major limitation with this respect.

On the one hand, we interviewed program organizers, who said that they applied a specific strategy, and on the other hand, youngsters who said that they were experiencing different kinds of things. However, three critical remarks can be made here. (1) Program organizers said they made use of an assessment tool to record the key competences, but when asked for an example, it became clear that in practice they did not use it. (2) We found that the elaboration of a method does not automatically lead to program organizers to use this application in the same way (e.g., program organizers attributed different interpretations to the same term (inter rater reliability), and were vague with regard to their own interpretations concerning the aims and strategies). (3) Our understanding of the developmental impact of the program might be influenced by the fact that we only considered the experiences of those who organized and participated in the program. Also, as criticized by Hartmann and Kwauk (2011), this might result in a distorted positive image. For further research it might be relevant to consider the views and experiences of those who did not (want to) participate or who dropped out.

These findings underline the differences between, on the one hand, the real and perceived impact of the program, and, on the other hand, between the real processes and perceived insight in them. This is in agreement with the findings of Coalter (2007, 2012) and Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) that program organizers and researchers are confronted with major difficulties in defining and measuring the impact of programs. Therefore, future research needs to focus on gaining more insight in the reality (i.e., the real impact and mechanisms). The use of a program theory might be useful in this regard, allowing program organizers and researchers to develop and analyze programs in a systematic way.

4.4. Future Research

As Pawson (2006) described, we need to shift analysis and understanding of social intervention programs from families of programs to families of mechanisms (i.e., the processes, experiences and relationships that might achieve their desired impacts and, hopefully, outcomes). We need, in other words, to gain more insight into the program theories of different sport-for-change programs. Program theory has been defined as "a plausible and sensible model of how a program is supposed to work" (Bickman, 1987, p. 5). It is, in other words, a sequence of presumed causes/actions/processes and effects (Weiss, 1997). Program theory can be used to undertake consistent, robust, and comparable monitoring and evaluation of programs, which is lacking at this moment (e.g., Coalter, 2007, 2012; Coakley 2011). In addition, such an approach seeks to describe mechanisms in a systematic way, examine the theoretical underpinnings of programs as a basis for realistic evaluation and, mostly, provide some basis for generalization in order to inform future program design (Coalter, 2012). With regard to sports, few program theories are yet described. As a first step with regard to sport-for-development programs, Coalter (2012) developed a tentative program theory in an attempt to provide an overview of possible program elements, which is not definitive, but provides a template to situate other sport-for-development programs. Possible program elements are the approach to re-

cruitment (inputs 1), nature of the participants and assumptions about them (inputs 2), nature of sports provision and the priority accorded to sport in the socialization process (outputs 1: sport, sport-plus or plus-sport), the nature of social relationships between program personnel and participants (outputs 2), the social climate of the program (outputs 3), the response of participants to these various stimuli (personal impacts), interim outcomes (e.g., taking responsibility), and strategic outcomes (e.g., employment).

Our research showed that analyzing a program on an inductive manner delivers different insights, but to truly understand the underlying mechanisms, future programs need to consider the development of a program theory that allows program evaluators and researchers to focus on evaluation in a structured and systematic way.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Intersectoral Action to Enhance the Social Inclusion of Socially Vulnerable Youth through Sport: An Exploration of the Elements of Successful Partnerships between Youth Work Organisations and Local Sports Clubs

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Abstract
Research shows that participation in sport is positively related to self-esteem, self-regulation skills, and social inclusion. As socially vulnerable youngsters participate less frequently in sports activities than their average peers, youth work organisations try to guide their clients (i.e., socially vulnerable youngsters) to local sports clubs and inclusive sports activities. Inclusive sports activities, however, cannot be provided by youth work organisations alone. Therefore, in the Netherlands, intersectoral action involving both youth work organisations and local sports clubs has emerged. Because youth workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs are not used to collaborating with each other, we explored the factors that contribute to the quality and performance of such intersectoral actions. On the basis of five open interviews with youth workers and three focus groups with stakeholders in local sports clubs, we described factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action among youth workers and local sports clubs that are preconditions for the success of this specific type of intersectoral action.

Keywords
inclusive sports activities; intersectoral action; partnerships; socially vulnerable youth; youth work

Issue
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1. Introduction

Socially vulnerable youngsters face (temporary) difficulties in one or more domains in their life. Examples of these difficulties are income poverty, low parental education and negative experiences with institutions such as the family and school. These (temporary) difficulties may result in a low self-esteem and a disconnection from social institutions (Vettenburg, 1998). Trying to increase participation in organised sports clubs is seen as a promising strategy for improving the self-esteem of these youngsters and rebuilding their sense of social inclusion (Feinstein, Bynner, & Duckworth, 2005; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Coalter, 2012; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005). On average, however, socially vulnerable youngsters tend to participate less frequently in local sports clubs than their peers (Breedveld, Bruining, Van Dorsselaer,

Mombarg, & Nootebos, 2010; Vandermeerschen, Vos, & Scheerder, 2013).

The lower sport participation among socially vulnerable youngsters is due to social, financial, emotional, and/or physical reasons (Downward, 2007; Wicker, Hallmann, & Breuer, 2012). Because of these many factors influencing sport participation by socially vulnerable youngsters, intersectoral action by youth work organisations and local sports clubs is needed to increase sport participation among these youngsters. Rütten, Abu-Omar, Frahsa, and Morgan (2009) and Hartog, Wagemakers, Vaandrager, Dijk, and Koelen (2013) for instance, found that intersectoral action is also required to increase the physical activity of other socially vulnerable groups such as immigrant women and primary care clients. Kelly (2013) found that partnerships of practitioners (e.g., youth workers and volunteers at local sports clubs) are important because they can lead to shared resources and referral pathways. If strategic partners and community members are also included in such partnerships, access to funding increases, opportunities to influence policymaking grow, and possibilities to publish the results of the partnership arise (Kelly, 2013).

Several Dutch local sports clubs have the ambition to organise communal activities (e.g., trying to increase socially vulnerable groups' participation in sport through inclusive sports activities) in collaboration with social sector organisations such as primary care and youth work organisations. However, many social workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs lack experience with this type of intersectoral action. Thus, research is needed to gain insights into factors that contribute to the quality and the results of intersectoral action involving such groups. Unfortunately, to date few studies have investigated factors that improve the quality and outcomes of intersectoral action (Akkerman & Torenvlied, 2013; Williams, 2013), especially regarding the collaboration between professionals and volunteers (Harris, Mori, & Collins, 2009; Hartog et al., 2013). Hence, the aim of this article is to explore and describe factors that may contribute to the performance of intersectoral action involving youth work organisations and local sports clubs.

Intersectoral action and intersectoral partnerships have been studied in several social domains such as education (Akkerman & Torenvlied, 2013), crime (Chavis, 1995), and health promotion (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). In this study, the starting point is a framework for intersectoral partnerships in the field of health promotion, the Health ALLiances (HALL) framework. The HALL framework aims to contribute to the facilitation of successful alliances. It was developed stepwise in a participatory research project in which the participants needed guidance in organising alliances working on health promotion (Vaandrager, Koelen, Ashton, & Revuelta, 1993). One result of this research project was a list of dilemmas and challenges for collaboration in health promotion (Koelen, Vaandrager, & Colomér, 2001). Combined with experiences and studies in several applied settings in the Netherlands, and with review studies on collaborative processes, these dilemmas and challenges led to the HALL framework (Koelen, Vaandrager, & Wagemakers, 2012). As the youth workers and the stakeholders in the local sports clubs lack experience in collaborating with each other, the HALL framework seems to be a useful framework to investigate the presence or absence of factors that contribute to the intersectoral action of youth workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs. Therefore, it may be a useful framework from which to derive recommendations for the involved organisations. Blok, Wagemakers, Leeuwe, and Scholten (2014) and Hartog et al. (2013) have previously used the HALL framework to synthesise data from qualitative studies on collaboration between care and sport.

The HALL framework identifies three clusters of factors that hinder or facilitate the success of intersectoral partnerships (see figure 1).

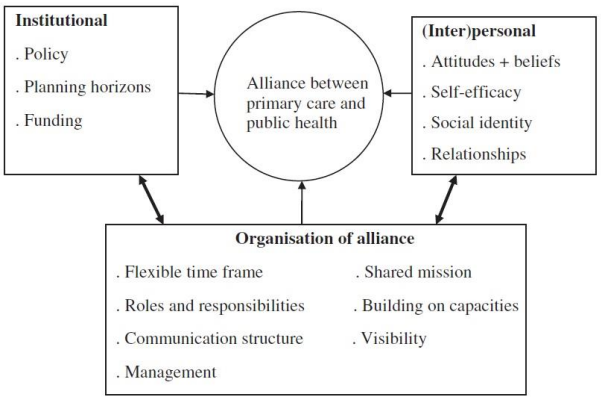

Figure 1. The Health ALLiances (HALL) framework (Koelen, Vaandrager, & Wagemakers, 2012).

The three clusters are institutional factors, personal factors, and factors relating to the organisation of a partnership (Koelen et al., 2012). Institutional factors include targets of the involved organisations, organisational values, cultures, and rituals, and funding possibilities. Personal factors are attitudes towards the intersectoral action, experience of collaborative work, and the feeling of being able to affect the results and performance of the intersectoral action (i.e., self-efficacy). Factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action help to deal with the institutional and personal factors that stakeholders bring into the partnership. Hence, factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action may increase the quality and performance of the partnership (Koelen et al., 2012; Provan, Fish, & Sydow, 2007). Koelen et al. (2012) described seven of these factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action: a flexible time frame, clear roles and responsibilities, a clear communication structure, the use of the specific expertise and capacities of the organisa-

tions involved, a shared mission, visibility of (the results of) the partnership, and a neutral and empowering management of intersectoral action. Williams (2013) argues that boundary spanners might be such neutral and empowering managers. Boundary spanners work in collaborative environments and possess the communication, co-ordination, mediating, and entrepreneurial skills required to deal with tensions and differences that occur within partnerships. Boundary spanners are, for instance, initiators of collaborations, partnership coordinators, and frontline workers collaborating with frontline workers from other organisations (Williams, 2013).

2. Research Setting and Methods

2.1. Research Setting

The current study took place in the context of two research projects. The first research project is *Youth, Care and Sport*, which was initiated in 2013 and will come to an end in 2017 (Super, Hermens, Verkooijen, & Koelen, 2014). The research project *Youth, Care and Sport* has four aims: first, to explore the causal relationship between participation in sport and life prospects (e.g., social inclusion) of socially vulnerable youngsters; second, to study the life experiences of these youngsters in the context of sport; third, to explore the social conditions for participation in sport that have a positive effect on life prospects; fourth, to investigate the elements of successful intersectoral action between youth work organisations and local sport clubs. The second research project is an evaluation study of the Sports Plus Programme. This evaluation study was carried out by the Verwey-Jonker Institute. The Sports Plus Programme is an initiative of Rotterdam Sportsupport, an organisation that supports local sports clubs in initiating and organising communal activities. The local sports clubs participating in the Sports Plus Programme have the ambition and the capacity to organise inclusive sports activities for specific target groups such as socially vulnerable youngsters. One of the aims of the Sports Plus Programme is to promote collaboration among social work organisations and local sports clubs.

Intersectoral action, involving youth work organisations and local sports clubs, has taken place at several locations in the Netherlands (Buysse & Duijvestijn, 2011; Hermens & Gilsing, 2013). One example is intersectoral action between FlexusJeugdplein, a large youth work organisation in Rotterdam, and Rotterdam Sportsupport. Alongside other forms of care, FlexusJeugdplein aims to increase the social inclusion of socially vulnerable youngsters by guiding them to new communal activities and new social networks. Hence, youth workers in this organisation—together with every youngster who starts a care programme—set goals relating to the youngsters' leisure-time activities during the care programme. Rotterdam Sportsupport supports the administration of local sport clubs in managing the club, recruiting volunteers, and organising communal activities. One example of these communal activities is inclusive sports activities (i.e., sports activities targeting socially vulnerable groups). Rotterdam Sportsupport also employs four pedagogues who support sport coaches in ensuring a positive socio-pedagogical climate at the sports club. FlexusJeugdplein and Rotterdam Sportsupport have appointed a Care Sport Connector (CSC) who encourages youth workers to guide clients to local sports clubs. This CSC also aims to connect youth workers with local sports clubs.

2.2. Methods

Adopting a qualitative research approach and using the HALL framework's three clusters of factors, we explored the intersectoral action of youth work organisations and local sports clubs in the two research projects. This exploration took place from the perspective of both the youth workers and the local sports clubs.

Two researchers (NH and SS) interviewed five youth workers from FlexusJeugdplein. The purpose of these semi-structured interviews with the youth workers was twofold: first, to explore whether and how youth workers promote sport participation among socially vulnerable youngsters; and second, to find out what support they need to guide their clients to local sports clubs. To represent different types of youth workers, we purposefully sampled five from a list of 20 randomly selected youth workers. We interviewed two pedagogical professionals at a residential centre for youngsters (two different locations), one ambulant youth worker, one school youth worker, and one ambulant youth worker for youngsters living in foster families. The interviews with the youth workers (four women, one man) were conducted in October 2013 and took around 45 minutes. Five topics were discussed in the interviews: (i) useful daytime activities for clients of the youth work organisation, (ii) sport as a useful daytime activity, (iii) methods of encouraging youngsters to participate in local sports clubs, (iv) preconditions that strengthen possible positive effects of sport participation, and (v) the contact between youth workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs. The interviews were held at the youth workers' workplace.

We held three open focus group discussions with representatives of local sports clubs in Rotterdam. These focus groups had two purposes: to investigate what support local sports clubs need to organise communal activities, and to explore the preconditions for successful intersectoral action among stakeholders in the local sport clubs and social workers. Hence, local sports clubs that were already involved in intersectoral action were purposefully sampled for the focus groups.

The focus groups took place in June 2014. In total, 20 people representing 14 local sports clubs participated in the three focus groups. Most of the participants were part of the management of the local sports club. Three topics were discussed during the focus groups: (i) the type of communal activities at the local sports clubs, (ii) the support local sports clubs need to organise and carry out these communal activities, and (iii) experiences of intersectoral action with social work professionals. The focus group discussions took around an hour and a half and were held at the location of one of the local sports clubs participating in the focus group.

The interviews and focus groups were audiotaped with the permission of the interviewees and the participants. The interviews were transcribed intelligent verbatim style. Summaries of the focus groups were written by a research assistant. Without being prompted, the participants in the interviews and focus groups mentioned personal factors, institutional factors, and factors relating to the organisation of the intersectoral action. Factors that are a reality in these organisations and factors that the participants wished to be present, were mentioned. We analysed the data using a deductive approach, with the HALL framework functioning as a starting point in order to describe the personal factors, the institutional factors, and the factors relating to the organisation of the intersectoral action that were spontaneously mentioned by the interviewees and participants. The different factors were hand-coded by one researcher (NH).

3. Results

The results for the youth workers and the local sports clubs are presented separately. For both, we have structured the results according to the three factors of the HALL framework.

3.1. Youth Workers

3.1.1. Institutional Factors

During the interviews, the youth workers mentioned two of the three institutional factors from the HALL framework: their organisation's policy and funding. According to the youth workers, it is their organisation's policy to prevent severe and chronic problems by empowering their clients (i.e., socially vulnerable youngsters) to participate in leisure-time activities and by increasing their clients' experience of social inclusion. Hence, the management of the youth work organisation wants the youth workers to guide youngsters to new social networks, such as local sports clubs. One of the youth workers, for example, said: "It is how this organisation wants to work….Empowering youngsters and their families, and involving clients in neighbourhood activities….I think they [the management] also want to work this way because in the future the local government wants youth work organisations to work like this".

The youth workers mentioned funding in two ways. First, youth workers can apply for the Youth Sports Fund to overcome the financial barriers that the youngsters face when they receive care from youth workers. This Youth Sports Fund pays a sports club membership fee for youngsters living in families with an income below 120 percent of the Dutch minimum income. Three youth workers mentioned the Youth Sport Fund. Two of these three youth workers were positive about this fund, but also mentioned that money is not the most important factor hindering their clients' participation in sports. One youth worker, for instance, said: "We can apply for the Youth Sports Fund. That is very important. For continued sport participation, however, teammates and coaches have to keep encouraging our youngsters to go to the local sports club. This is necessary because they are not used to any kind of structure in their lives". The youth workers also mentioned economic cuts in their field. For instance, one of the youth workers said: "All of our residential care homes will be closed in a couple of months. In fact, this is the youth work organisation's last residential care home. In the future, the youngsters who live here will be placed in a foster home or will receive short-term crisis care because those types of care are cheaper than residential care". The youth workers mentioned that such uncertainties make it difficult to spend time and energy on new forms of intersectoral action with local sports clubs.

3.1.2. (Inter)personal Factors

In the interviews, the youth workers mentioned aspects relating to three of the four (inter)personal factors of the HALL framework: attitude towards intersectoral action, self-efficacy, and relationships.

In general, the youth workers had a positive attitude towards intersectoral action with local sports clubs. Four of the five youth workers mentioned participation in sport as an activity where youngsters can develop in a positive way. Youth workers, for instance, said: "It is very important that the youngsters have the opportunity to relax…that they have some kind of distraction from their problems….And sport is also important because youngsters come into contact with other people"; "Sport is a communal activity, it helps youngsters to think about something else. And it's healthy as well. All these things together make me think that participation in sport is important for our youngsters". Such a positive attitude towards the possible effects of participation in sport is, of course, a prerequisite for intersectoral action involving both youth workers and local sports clubs.

Youth workers did not say anything about their self-efficacy regarding intersectoral action with local sports

clubs. They did, however, mention several things about their self-efficacy regarding their possibilities to increase socially vulnerable youngsters' participation in sport. They felt that they lacked time to invest in contacting stakeholders in local sports clubs. One youth worker, for instance, said: "I even do not have enough time to apply for the Youth Sports Fund". The youth workers also think that other factors, which they cannot influence, hinder the youngsters' continued participation in sports. The next two quotes from youth workers show two of these factors: "And the parents…they don't do sport themselves. They do not have a clue about the importance of participation in sport so they will not encourage the youngster to go to sports activities"; "The youngsters in our caseload are not used to the routine of going to a sports club. And no-one in their environment encourages them to go". Thus, youth workers think that the youngsters' social environment has a stronger impact on participation in sport than the youth workers themselves have.

The youth workers want to have personal relationships with stakeholders in local sports clubs that have an appropriate socio-pedagogical climate. One youth worker described such a socio-pedagogical climate: "They [volunteers at local sports clubs] do not have to treat our youngsters differently. They only need to know that our youngsters sometimes behave differently than youngsters living in regular families….Our youngsters, for instance, are not used to structure and are therefore easily late. When they are late, a sport coach should not argue with this youngster because this will not motivate the youngsters to be on time. It is better if the sport coach just says that it is good that the youngster is present, and that he/she should try to be on time for the next activity". Three of the youth workers said that they had links with local sports clubs with an appropriate socio-pedagogical climate. One, for instance, said: "Nowadays, I know a couple of sports clubs with a socio-pedagogical climate that want to include socially vulnerable youngsters in their activities". These three youth workers also found personal relationships with stakeholders in the local sports clubs important when they actually guide one of their clients to a sports club. According to one of them, these personal relationships are important because sport coaches need to be introduced to the background of the youngster and because it helps them to stay informed about the development and the behaviour of the youngster in the local sports club. One youth worker, for instance, said: "Sometimes local sports clubs have trouble with our youngsters. No big trouble, but we can help sport coaches to anticipate specific behaviour from certain youngsters".

3.1.3. Organisation of the Partnership

During the interviews, three of the five youth workers mentioned factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action among youth workers and local sports clubs. These three youth workers mentioned two of the seven organisational factors described in the HALL framework: visibility and the management of intersectoral action. Concerning visibility, one youth worker, for instance, said: "If I knew that my organisation had contact with several local sports clubs, and I knew with which sports clubs, then I would probably more frequently try to guide youngsters to these sports clubs". Another youth worker also found it important that the results of intersectoral action involving youth workers and local sports clubs were visible because this could increase their chance of getting financial support. This youth worker said: "Research into the influence of participation in sport on the life prospects of our youngsters is a good idea...really. It gives us an instrument to show why participation in sport is important for our clients. This may possibly persuade local governments to invest in inclusive sports activities".

Two youth workers mentioned a specific aspect of the management structure of intersectoral action. According to them, the youth work organisation needs someone who connects youth workers with local sports clubs. This person might also help youngsters to integrate into local sports club and support the local sports clubs in including the youngsters in their activities. One youth worker, for instance, said: "We need somebody who has the time to accompany the youngsters to the sports clubs the first couple of times. They can build up contacts within local sports clubs, some kind of network".

When the youth workers mentioned factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action, they mentioned these as being wishes. Thus, it seems that the management of the youth work organisation and Rotterdam Sportsupport have already arranged a partnership, but that concrete intersectoral action among youth workers and local sports clubs is still evolving. The next quote by a youth worker illustrates this: "I cannot do more than try to guide youngsters to a sports club and to motivate parents to support their children to participate in sport. Our management, however, is able to create coordinated action with local sports clubs and must call on us [the youth workers] to motivate sport participation among our youngsters".

3.2. Local Sports Clubs

3.2.1. Institutional Factors

The local sports clubs stakeholders who participated in the focus groups mentioned all three institutional factors described in the HALL framework. All 14 local sports clubs represented in the focus groups participate in the Sports Plus Programme. Hence, they all have the ambition and the policy to organise inclusive

sports activities. One respondent, for instance, said: "We, as the administration of this local sports club, want to do something for society". These stakeholders agreed that, in addition to aiming for intersectoral action, local sports clubs require a sound organisational structure and a policy plan if they want to successfully organise inclusive sports activities through such action. One stakeholder, for instance, said: "To organise communal activities, a local sports club has to have sound accommodation and management, and cannot have any financial troubles". According to the respondents, a sound organisational structure is also an important precondition for participating in intersectoral action, especially for local sports clubs as they are managed by volunteers.

The local sports clubs stakeholders mentioned funding as a precondition for successful inclusive sports activities and intersectoral action involving social work organisations and local sports clubs. One respondent said: "A grant makes it easier to start inclusive sports activities in cooperation with a public sector organisation. Especially at the start of such a project. After two years for example, when people are familiar with the sports activity, we can search for other ways to finance the project". To increase participation in sport among socially vulnerable groups in the Netherlands, some funding organisations give local sports clubs—together with social work organisations—the possibility to apply for a fund to develop and organise inclusive sports activities targeting these groups. One of the local sports clubs that participated in the focus groups has received a grant to organise sports activities for socially vulnerable youngsters for the next two years. These sports activities are specifically designed to improve the self-esteem and self-regulatory skills of these youngsters.

One specific institutional factor of local sports clubs that may hinder intersectoral action with youth work organisations is that they are open in the evening and at weekends. The stakeholders in these local sports clubs interpreted these opening hours as a problem for collaboration with professionals: "Social workers generally do not work in the evenings and at weekends, so we cannot meet or contact them at the times we are present on the site of the sports club". On the other hand, other stakeholders in local sports clubs thought that the specific opening hours of the clubs presented an opportunity for intersectoral action involving local sports clubs and social workers. One manager of a local sports club, for instance, said: "During the day, until five in the afternoon, our site is completely empty. During this time, it is possible for social work organisations to use our facilities for sports activities with their clients".

3.2.2. (Inter)personal Factors

In the focus groups, the stakeholders from local sports clubs all mentioned one of the four (inter)personal factors of the HALL framework. They had found that having a personal relationship with someone from the social work organisation had been very important for the success of intersectoral action. A volunteer from one of the local sports clubs, for instance, said: "I have to know who I can contact at the social work organisation if I have any questions. It is also important that his or her workplace is close to the sports club site, so we can meet easily".

3.2.3. Organisation of the Partnership

In the focus group interviews, the stakeholders from the local sports clubs mentioned four of the seven factors in the HALL framework that relate to the organisation of intersectoral action. These stakeholders agreed that they needed some support to organise communal activities and inclusive sports activities. The sports clubs receive such support, because they partake in the Sports Plus Programme. One of these stakeholders, for instance, explained: "The support we receive helps us to initiate inclusive sports activities and to create a structure in which we can organise and carry out these activities. The person who assists us also helps to maintain contacts with social workers". Other factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action were not mentioned by more than one of the local sports clubs stakeholders. The need to have a flexible time frame, a shared mission, and specific roles and responsibilities were not mentioned at all.

The manager of one local sports club mentioned the importance of visibility, communication structure, and building on the capacities of the organisations involved in the context of one specific partnership between a local sports club and a youth work organisation. For this specific partnership, a youth work organisation and the local sports club signed a contract which represents this visibility. They also received funding to organise the activity. The following quote shows how the organisations involved tried to build on each other's capacities: "Youth workers guide clients to our sports club. Here [at the sports club], these youngsters participate in specific activities for a couple of weeks. After that, the aim is for the youngsters to become members of the sports club. In addition, if during the regular activities one of our sport coaches notices that a youngster has behavioural problems, we ask a youth worker how to support them. To make these activities structural, we meet with the organisations involved every couple of weeks". This quote also shows how a communication structure can be formed.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this article was to explore factors that contribute to successful intersectoral action involving youth work organisations and local sports clubs. Explo-

ration of the preconditions for such successful intersectoral action is necessary because neither youth work organisations nor local sports clubs can develop and organise inclusive sports activities alone. The HALL framework was used to structure the data. Hence, we explored and described factors pertaining to the organisations (institutional factors) involved in such intersectoral action, those pertaining to the individuals (personal factors) involved, and those pertaining to the organisation of this specific type of intersectoral partnership (organisational factors).

Youth workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs mentioned several institutional factors that may influence the intersectoral action of FlexusJeugdplein and local sports clubs in Rotterdam. First of all, the management of both the youth work organisation and Rotterdam Sportsupport want to facilitate collaboration between youth workers and local sports clubs. FlexusJeugdplein wants youth workers to try to increase sport participation among the youngsters that receive care from this youth work organisation. The managements of the local sports clubs participating in the Sports Plus Programme want to organise communal activities. The youth workers and local sports clubs to whom we spoke are able to apply for several types of national and local funding that help to reach the aims of both institutions. If organisations that collaborate have different funding possibilities and can apply for funds that only help them to reach their own organisational target, intersectoral action will be difficult. It is, therefore, important that there are funding possibilities available for which youth work organisations and local sports clubs can apply together. Local sports clubs, for instance, can apply for a two-year fund to develop and organise inclusive sports activities targeting socially vulnerable groups. Also, youth workers can apply for the Youth Sport Fund to pay for their clients' sports club membership fees. This ability to successfully apply for funds might be a result of the involvement of Rotterdam Sportsupport. Kelly (2013), for instance, found that involving strategic partners (e.g., Rotterdam Sportsupport) may increase possibilities to acquire local funding.

Regarding personal factors, we found that both youth workers and stakeholders in local sports clubs have positive attitudes towards collaborating with each other. Volunteers in the local sports clubs that partake in the Sports Plus Programme have the ambition to help reach social policy goals such as the social inclusion of socially vulnerable youngsters. In addition, youth workers have positive attitudes towards increasing sport participation. They want to use it to increase social inclusion and consider the local sports club a place where socially vulnerable youngsters can develop in a positive way. The youth workers believe that their clients can develop their self-esteem and certain skills through sports activities. Although research indeed shows that sport participation by youngsters is associated with several beneficial outcomes such as social inclusion (Feinstein et al., 2005), academic achievement (Bailey, 2006), and social and emotional well-being (Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2013), no consensus has been reached on the evidence for a causal relationship. In addition, the mechanisms that explain how sport programmes positively affect life skills of socially vulnerable youth remain unclear (Lubans, Plotnikoff, & Lubans, 2012). Interestingly, the youth workers are only positive towards intersectoral action with local sports clubs if these pay attention to a positive socio-pedagogical climate and to the social skills of the coaches. A positive socio-pedagogical climate and good coaching skills strengthen the possible positive effects of sport participation on socially vulnerable youngsters (Haudenhuyse et al., 2012; Smith, Cumming, & Smoll, 2008). A second personal factor that was mentioned by the youth workers and the local sports clubs stakeholders was self-efficacy in relation to increasing socially vulnerable youngsters' participation in sport. Both groups say that they lack the time to build and maintain the personal relationships that are necessary for intersectoral action and inclusive sports activities. Moreover, some youth workers lack the self-efficacy that would give them the confidence that they could influence socially vulnerable youngsters' participation in sport. Some youth workers find that other factors such as the youngsters' family and peers have a stronger impact than they themselves do on these youngsters' sport participation. As Hunter, Neiger, and West (2011, p. 527) noticed as well, "some local health professionals may feel powerless in addressing the social determinants of health. It is daunting to consider disparities in income, educations, or housing quality".

Only two of the seven factors relating to the organisation of the partnership were mentioned by the youth workers and the local sports clubs stakeholders. First, Rotterdam Sportsupport makes the communal ambitions and activities of the local sports clubs that participate in the Sports Plus Programme visible through a signed contract and a small billboard in each sports club. This contract and billboard made the communal actions "real" for the stakeholders in the local sports clubs. Second, a CSC functions as a neutral leader—or boundary spanner (Williams, 2013). This CSC tries to create contacts between youth workers and local sports clubs and collaborates with the Rotterdam Sportsupport pedagogues to help local sports clubs in creating a positive socio-pedagogical climate.

In addition to the factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action that are currently present, youth workers and local sports clubs stakeholders also mentioned factors that they would like to be present. Youth workers want to increase the visibility of local sports clubs with which the youth work organisation has contact. In addition, both youth workers and the

local sports clubs stakeholders need some operational support for intersectoral action. Thus, there is a need for people (i.e., boundary spanners) who can manage the intersectoral action. According to Williams (2013), these boundary spanners also play an important role during decentralisation processes and policy reforms. For instance, boundary spanners can manage tensions that occur through new relationships between organisations that possibly coincide with these decentralisation processes. Hence, an exploration of the possible role of these boundary spanners during the coming reforms in Dutch local social policies deserves attention.

This study has two limitations. First, we explored the factors that contribute to intersectoral action involving youth work organisations and local sports clubs from open interviews and focus groups about communal activities of local sports clubs and collaboration between youth workers and local sports clubs in general. We did not specifically ask about all the factors in the HALL framework. The interviewees and the participants nevertheless mentioned several of the factors without being prompted. In future research, it is necessary to find out whether the other factors that were not mentioned in the interviews and focus groups, are relevant for this specific intersectoral action. Second, the data presented in this study are limited and relate to one case, the city of Rotterdam. However, as Rotterdam is investing in the social value of sport and intersectoral actions involving social sector organisation and local sports clubs in a programmatic way, the results of this study can be helpful for other cities that want to invest in this type of intersectoral action. A final important point is that inclusive policies and activities will only be successful if the target groups (e.g., socially vulnerable youngsters) want to participate themselves. Thus, sport participation is a way to increase the social inclusion of these youngsters only if participating in a local sports club fits with the physical and psychological abilities and with the wishes of the youngsters.

5. Conclusion

This article shows that youth workers believe that sport participation is important for the development of socially vulnerable youngsters. This article also shows that some of the interviewed local sports clubs and volunteers in those clubs want to organise inclusive sports activities. Unless these clubs and their volunteers have positive attitudes towards the social value of sport and have the ambition to organise inclusive sports activities, many of the factors relating to the organisation of intersectoral action presented in the HALL framework will not be present in the desired intersectoral action involving youth workers and local sports clubs. It seems that identifying "what to do" (i.e., inclusive sports activities through intersectoral action) is easier than finding out "how to do it" (i.e., actually guiding socially vulnerable youngsters to local sports clubs through collaboration between youth workers and local sports clubs) (Koelen, Vaandrager, & Wagemakers, 2009). There seems to be a missing link that might be filled by—as Williams (2013) calls them—boundary spanners. Future research is needed to further explore the factors that fulfil the potential of intersectoral action involving youth workers and local sports clubs stakeholders, and how to manage this specific intersectoral action.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Article

Managing Sport for Public Health: Approaching Contemporary Problems with Traditional Solutions

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Abstract
In the area of public health, civil society involvement in attaining government objectives on physical activity participation is often carried out by voluntary sport organizations (Agergaard & Michelsen la Cour, 2012; Österlind & Wright, 2014; Skille, 2009; Theeboom, Haudenhuyse, & De Knop, 2010). In Sweden, this responsibility has been given to the Swedish Sport Confederation (SSC), a voluntary and membership-based non-profit organization, granted government authority to govern Swedish sport towards government objectives (Bergsgard & Norberg, 2010; Bolling, 2005). Research has pointed to difficulties for sport organizations to shoulder such responsibilities due to the deeply rooted logic of competition in sport and organizational structures adapted for competitive sport (Skille, 2011; Stenling & Fahlén, 2009). This article focuses on how public health is being constructed, implemented and given meaning within the SSC. Drawing on a critical discourse approach (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012) this study explores the SSC's role and position in public health promotion by interviewing SSC representatives and National Sport Organizations' (NSO) general managers. Results indicate how discourses on democracy, equality and physical activity are used to legitimize the SSC's role in public health. Also, how these discourses are compromised in practice, posing challenges for organized sport in meeting objectives of public health.

Keywords
argumentation analysis; Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); democracy; equity; physical activity

Issue
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1. Introduction

The approach of utilizing sport with the intention of contributing to fundamental change and transformation in society has received much attention within the field of "sport for development" (Girginov, 2008) over the last decade. In particular, interventions to promote social inclusion and health have been studied in many different forms and settings (Bloyce & Smith, 2010). This text reports on a study of both these aspects but not with the interventionist approach dominating contemporary research (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). Instead it seeks to problematize interventions and sport for public health, in this case, by posing questions about organization´s will, ability, readiness and propensity to act as a counteracting force against differences in sport participation and health between groups in society.

In Sweden, sport and physical activity has received a prominent position in welfare policy and is, as such,

governed through the national objectives on public health, one of whose objectives physical activity constitutes (SOU, 2000, p. 91). The Swedish Sport Confederation (SSC), a voluntary and membership-based non-profit organization, has, since receiving its first government grant in 1913 (Norberg, 2004), been granted permanent annual state subsidy for sport activities as the main provider of sport for the people. With a relationship more of a partnership balancing rights and obligations in a way that has been described as an *implicit contract*, the SSC has been assigned a government mandate to act towards objectives of physical activity and public health, but is struggling to live up to those expectations (Norberg, 2011). In the SSC's policy document (Riksidrottsförbundet, 2009) on recreational sport it is stated that health, comfort and well-being is the norm, although performance and competition often serve as a spur. Furthermore, the SSC pledges in its strategy document on public health (Riksidrottsförbundet, 2007) to undertake health related development work within the frames of all of its regular sport activities and also to make targeted efforts (such as for example exercise on prescription, adapted activities for overweight children, and activities for adults on long term unemployment or sick leave) to reach new groups with inclusion as the main goal.

During the last decade two large, nationwide sport development programmes, The Handshake (Handslaget) and The Sports Lift (Idrottslyftet), have been launched to further pursue the ambition to include more children and youth in voluntary and membership-based club sport activities (Fahlén & Karp, 2010; Fahlén, Eliasson, & Wickman, 2014). Similar to its Nordic counterparts in Denmark (Ibsen, 2002), Finland (Vuori, Lankenau, & Pratt, 2004) and Norway (Skille, 2009; Skille & Waddington, 2006), the basic idea behind programmes has been the government commissions to national umbrella organizations for sport to develop their activities so that more children and youth (especially underrepresented and underprivileged groups) choose to participate in sport club activities, and to develop their activities so that children and youth choose to participate longer into their teens and early adulthood. While these programmes, and similar interventions in other countries (cf., Friis Thing & Ottessen, 2010, for a study of civil society involvement in welfare policy for public health; Wickman, 2011, for equal opportunity; Theeboom, Schaillée, & Nols, 2012, for integration; Morgan, 2013, for democracy; Mutz & Baur, 2009, for criminality; Stenling, 2014, for youth delinquency; Grix & Carmichael, 2012, for national identity; and Thorpe, 2014, for individual identity) have been valuable for social inclusion, some evidence indicates difficulties in relying on civil society organizations on the one hand, and in confusing physical activity with voluntary and membership-based club sport on the other hand.

Regarding the first and in relation to the empirical focus of this article, many studies (e.g., Adams, 2011; Garrett, 2004; Harris, Mori, & Collins, 2009; May, Harris, & Collins, 2012; Nichols, Padmore, Taylor, & Barrett, 2012; O'Gorman, 2011; Skille, 2009, 2010, 2011; Skille & Solbakken, 2011; Stenling, 2013, 2014; Stenling & Fahlén, 2009) have explored the propensity, ability, readiness and will of sport organizations to fulfil policy aims formulated by external stakeholders such as the state. These studies have found that sport organizations' existing ideas, norms and values act as strongholds against policy initiatives differing too much from their core activities. Regarding the latter, critics have found that most studies cited to support the notion that sport is beneficial for public health actually refer to physical activity or exercise (and not to sport) and that sport and physical activity is not the same (Coalter, 2007). However, as noted by Bloyce and Smith (2010), Collins (2010), and Coalter (2007), less is known about how sport and health policy are enacted in practice. Paying heed to the claim by Collins (2010), that the promotion of health through physical activity with the use of voluntary and membership-based sport organizations has not been explored sufficiently, this article explores the promotion of public health in the context of Swedish sport. Answering the call made by Hylton and Bramham (2001) to direct research focus at the gap between formulation of strategies for attaining equal opportunities and the implementation of such strategies, the aims of this article are to analyse how public health is being constructed, implemented and given meaning on a strategic level within the SSC, and to discuss implications in relation to society and public health objectives. This is to understand the SSC's potential for being a national physical activity promoter and to even out differences in health between groups in society.

2. Contextual Background

The Swedish Sport Confederation (SSC) is, as mentioned in the introductory section, appointed by the government to act towards the national objectives of physical activity and public health, and has since 1970 been given the mandate to distribute government funds to sport organizations (Norberg, 2002). Government funds to voluntary organized and membership-based club sport have been granted since 1913 and today amount to some €210 million (Centrum för idrottsforskning, 2013). Public funding to sport also comes in the forms of municipal support of €490 million (€360 million to facilities and €130 million to activities and leaders, Bergsgard & Norberg, 2010). This extensive public funding is provided as means for implementing social policy and goes out to and is used by 3,300,000 sport club members in 20,164 Swedish sport clubs (Centrum för idrottsforskning, 2013), but is

also distributed to some 1,000 district sport organizations (DSO, with regional authority over one specific sport), to 21 regional sports organizations (RSO, with regional authority over all sports), and to 70 national sport organizations (NSOs with national authority over one specific sport) for coordination, administration and support. These organizations are federated under one large umbrella organization with almost a monopoly on competitive sports (Bairner, 2010; Bergsgard & Norberg, 2010). The monopoly is based on the fact that the SSC holds the role as the highest authority in voluntary organized and membership-based club sport and as a public authority in sport policy (Norberg, 2011). The role of the government has traditionally been limited to decisions on the extent of the funding and its overarching goals, while the SSC has had the mandate to decide on the means for reaching such goals. This state-SSC relationship has enabled the government to control its expenditure and the SSC to preserve its self-determination in a corporative collaboration. The confederation's main tasks include representing voluntary and membership-based club sport in communication with authorities, officials and the surrounding society, supporting and servicing affiliated organizations, administering and distributing government funds to affiliated organizations, stimulating sport development and research, coordinating social and ethical issues, leading and coordinating anti-doping work, coordinating international cooperation, protecting sport's historical legacy, and to acting as the government authority for the 51 upper secondary elite sport schools with some 1,200 students in 30 sports. The defining character of and main organizing principle for contemporary voluntary and membership-based club sport in Sweden is that of individuals forming and/or taking part as members in voluntary and membership-based sport clubs.

3. Theoretical Approach

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) involves normative critique of discourse and the existing social reality focused upon dialectical relations between discourse, social practice and social structure—all being conditions for, and effects of, each other (cf., Fairclough, 1992). In CDA, discourse is seen as representations of processes, relations and structures of the material, mental and social world, and also as a form of social practice and mode of action that has constructive effects. The discursive constitution of society emerges not only from ideas in people's heads, but from social practices firmly rooted in real, material social structures. According to Fiske (1994) CDA acknowledges that language (discourse) derives its meaning from particular social, historical and political contexts. CDA aims at evaluating societies in order to understand possibilities for changing them to make them better, in terms of cultivating the well-being of their members rather than undermining it. The basis for developing CDA is a critique of past and current research applying a CDA perspective without connecting representations of agents' meaning-making with actual actions via agents' practical reasoning. In approaching the construction, implementation and sense-making of public health through voluntary organized and membership-based sport in Sweden the analyses in this article rests on the most recent variant of CDA as performed by Isabela and Norman Fairclough (2012). In this variant of CDA (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012) discourse is viewed primarily as *practical argumentation* for (or against) particular ways of acting, a deliberative form of argumentation that can ground decision. It is shown how representations of actions enter as premises in arguments and that arguments based on such representations can be critically evaluated. The authors claim that an analysis and evaluation of arguments can increase the capacity of CDA to extend critique of discourse, moving from normative critique (representations) to explanatory critique (practical arguments). This statement will be put to the test in this text in using it to understand the SSC´s possibilities to and obstacles for acting as the national physical activity promoter and to even out differences in health between groups in society.

In trying to make use of the proposed framework, a structure of practical reasoning and practical argumentation is employed. Practical arguments for, as well as against, certain actions (*means* premises) are in this approach understood as taking *circumstances* and *goals* as premises, and the circumstances (that are described in a way that fits in with the claim of action) are understood as being informed by the agents' *values* premises. That is, organizational leaders, in this particular case, choose certain means and actions (over others) in view of the certain circumstances they find themselves in, but also in view of their goals which are supported by their values and concerns. The basic notion is that we tend to "see" problems around us in relation to our values and concerns, which informs our goals and the means we take to achieve them. In this study and from an argumentative perspective, statements about strategies, procedures, working methods and actions that are employed in fulfilling ideas of public health are treated as representations that enter as premises in the arguments of how sport contributes to public health. In a similar way, means premises are deconstructed to identify inherent goals, circumstances and values. Finally, arguments are evaluated in terms of whether the actions are reasonable and sufficient in view of the goal and of the consequences of action. CDA has previously been employed in other studies to analyse and critique sport related discursive representations of different kinds of material, for example in Canadian Swim Program manuals (Rich & Giles, 2014), American sports news publications (Simon-Maeda, 2013) and British national newspapers (Kelly, 2012).

This study's approach will add to the knowledge about the relationship between discursive representations of public health and sport practice.

4. Methodological Approach

CDA provided the methodology for both data-gathering and analysis processes in this study. Capturing agents' practical reasoning required qualitative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) and capturing the construction, implementation and sense-making of public health through voluntary organized and membership-based sport in Sweden required a purposeful sampling (cf., Patton, 2002) of respondents together representing the collective reasoning of the SSC. Thus, respondents were chosen on the basis of their assumed knowledge about and possible influence on decisions made in relation to the object of study in this text (Bryman, 2008). Following this notion it was deemed important to select key actors with formal power and mandate to govern the confederation towards the public health aims provided by the government. Thus, key actors from the national SSC and its federated national sport organizations (NSO), with national authority over their respective sport, were selected.

SSC representatives were chosen guided by an ambition to capture the strategic dimensions of policy enactment. That is, leaders in formal positions having access to resources and mandate to allocate these within the organization, making them able to influence Swedish sports development. The selection resulted in six representatives: the chairperson of the confederation, the director of sports policy, the director of sports development, the director of economy, the director of recreational sport for children and youth and recreational sport for adults. Four of these representatives also hold a position on the SSC´s board of directors, the highest governing body in the organization.

The purposeful selection of NSOs aimed at providing information-rich examples. Therefore a sample of NSOs was made on each organization's merits as distinguishing itself as being more public health oriented. This selection was assisted by SSC representatives. According to the SSC representatives, a few NSO's were described as forerunners within the sports movement by arranging sports suitable "for all", by delivering sport activities organized with the purpose of the participants being physically active and having fun without goals set for competition and performance, and by participating in targeted interventions in line with public health goals. Four NSOs, out of the total of 70, were selected: company sports, gymnastics, school sports and academic sports. Each NSO was represented by its general manager with formal power and mandate to govern the organization. In total, this study is based on interviews with ten organizational leaders: six SSC representatives and four NSO general managers. The respondents were contacted via email and telephone in advance and invited to participate in a telephone interview. Information was given about the study's purpose and how it would be published. After that, the respondents agreed to participate in interviews, and times for the interviews were booked. The semi-structured interview guide had the key objectives in state sport policy and public health policy as a starting point, narrowed down to a couple of question areas: sport's significance for public health; encouraging participation, physical activity and recreational sport of the population; offering sport "for all"; reducing societal differences in sport participation and health; targeted efforts for public health; and inter-sectorial collaboration. The semi-structured format of the interviews enabled the respondents to talk about how they, within their organization, are implementing the above mentioned public health related objectives in their everyday practice. This, in turn, allowed for the conversation to move beyond common (political) rhetoric and discourse towards richer knowledge about how "sport for public health" is implemented and why (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The interviews were conducted by the first author on the telephone from the author's office. The interviews lasted approximately one hour, were recorded and transcribed verbatim by the first author.

Data were analysed in several careful reviews, marking and sorting out arguments about the meaning of public health and in what way sport is valuable for and promotes better overall health. With the CDA perspective employed, these arguments were collected into themes which can be seen as representations of the respondents' understanding and ideas of sport's significance for public health. The themes are: democracy, equality, recreation and physical activity. In order to take the analysis a further step beyond those representations and to explore how the respondents are putting them into practice within their respective organizations, the interviews were analysed using an argumentative perspective on discourse (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012), as outlined under the Theoretical approach section. An illustrative example is offered to clarify the process in the present study. Since the respondents were asked to talk about how they implement "sport for public health", the means for implementation were identified in the first step of the analysis. One example of means for implementation given was the government programme "The sports lift". As a second step, the line of argumentation connected to those means was analysed with regard to identifying the circumstances in relation to the means and also the values and concerns. For example, the circumstances for "The sports lift" could be argued on basis of concerns about recruiting more members. The values connected to these concerns and motivating the description of the circumstances could be linked to

traditional competitive sport activities and related performance skills. This means ("The sports lift") in relation to the (stated) goal of reaching new and other groups of people, could then be evaluated.

5. Findings

Aiming at an understanding the SSC's potential for being a national physical activity promoter and to even out differences in health between groups in society, the findings are presented thematically following the respondents' lines of argumentation.

5.1. The Significance of Sport for Public Health

When asked questions about what significance sport has for the public health of the Swedish population the respondents claimed that sport's role in public health is important in several ways. The statements given about public health, sport's significance for and contribution to it, are very much in line with the key objectives in state sport policy. A common argument among the respondents is that the sport movement already delivers public health through its regular activities and that sport is entitled to government support for doing just that and that alone, without having to perform further specific actions such as, for example, those connected to the government programmes presented in the introduction, or yet other targeted efforts such as exercise on prescription, adapted activities for overweight children and activities for adults on sick leave. This line of reasoning is exemplified by one respondent: "The good in sport is sport itself, so to speak…just the fact that sport exists makes it a health perspective".

When scrutinizing the arguments within this line of reasoning—that sport is inherently beneficial for public health—four main discourses come to the fore: *democracy, equality, recreation* and *physical activity*. The first discourse is about how sport participation fosters democracy and that being offered opportunities to exercise influence is key to public health. Schooling in democratic values is a cornerstone in Swedish voluntary and membership-based organizations and by offering members voting rights, influence and power, members are included and empowered. Connected to the democracy discourse is the argument that sport promotes equality. By stating that sport is an activity for *all,* regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or social and financial background; it is again argued that sport is intimately connected to public health due to its inclusive nature. The inclusiveness in extension brings about the third argument—recreation. Since *all* are included, sport makes up an arena for social interaction which in turn promotes a sense of community and belonging. Community and belonging, it is asserted, is then instrumental for public health. The argument of recreation is also based on the view of sport as something you do simply because it is fun, not based on goals for performance improvement or competition. Fourth and finally, it is argued, sport is healthy on the merits of its physical character. Thus, this particular argument contains little else than the first statements given about public health, sport's significance for and contribution to it, which in turn are little more than echoes of the key objectives in state sport policy. By that it shows how cemented the hegemonic discourse about the value of sport is and how the sport-public health relationship is constructed through circular arguments.

5.2. The Implementation of Sport for Public Health

When discussing how sport for public health is implemented in practice within the respondents' respective organizations, the circular arguments remain. This is visible in the general opinion among the respondents; that their main responsibility is to provide support for and create the best possible conditions for the organization and its members to "do sport". In an attempt to move beyond this seemingly self-evident argument, respondents were asked to specify what they as professionals in their day-to-day operations do to meet the goals of sport for public health. Their descriptions are then oriented around activities such as advocacy "for sport" and lobbying government agencies and community representatives such as policy makers, national and local politicians, business leaders and school leaders. The lobbying of public officials is specifically focused on arguing for a more "open" and "free" distribution of public funds to sport with less regulation and control. By that, it is claimed, sport is better equipped to act as public health promoter.

Then, respondents also talked about taking internal measures to further facilitate the implementation of public health through sport—to influence the organization "for public health" from within. The measures referred to are the ongoing restructuring of the organizations spurred by a shared argument that voluntarily organized and membership-based club sport needs to change and broaden its activities and thereby its target groups. It is, however and simultaneously, emphasized that Swedish sport organizations are in fact part of a voluntary and democratically governed popular movement acting on behalf of its members who are in the end those in charge of the what, how, when and why of sport clubs' activities: "It's not like a company with subsidiaries that one can say what they should do". Thus, the concept of *democracy*, which was one of the arguments given by the respondents for sport's importance for public health, returns but seems to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, voluntariness and active memberships is pointed to as a vehicle for public health as members can exercise their democratic rights in an organization and thereby be empowered,

which is argued to contribute to public health. On the other hand, it is complicated from the point of view of the limited possibility to influence or control the organization in any direction since the respondents are acting on behalf of the members.

Nevertheless, several of the means employed to "do public health" are aiming to influence and change the organizations' culture in a top-down manner. In order for sport to be more inclusive and open "to all", and to be able to fulfil the function as *the* national physical activity promoter, respondents claim that the organization's inherent logic of competition and performance needs to change: "We are trying to get the NSOs to review their operations and to consider what they might need to change to get people outside the sport movement to want to join". This quote might indicate that promoting public health is thought of as best being realized by making efforts to reach new groups of people, such as the inactive or sedentary, and at the same time striving against "sport for all". The practical argumentation for how these efforts are implemented shows how increasing the number of members is a means to receive more legitimacy and funding, which may benefit competitive sports in the end. The goal to increasing membership, and not necessarily to even out differences in health, is identified by examples of recruitment activities that target former sport members or individuals that have previously been physically active. There are also examples of the contrary, for instance the NSO of school sports cooperates with other NSOs organizing "non-traditional sports" (boule petanque is given as one example) in an attempt to attract children not interested in "regular club sports" such as soccer or gymnastics. The respondent representing the NSO for school sports explains: "If we are serious about making a better sports movement which more people feel they want to be a part of, it is necessary to influence the sport clubs to stop thinking in terms of the logic of competition and performance and to broaden their perception of for whom they exist". Thus, similar to the double-edged nature of the concept of *democracy*, *equality* is equally being used both as an argument for sport's significance for public health *and* as a measure taken to implement ideas for public health.

However, including new groups of people in the pursuit of realizing "sport for all" is also problematized by the respondents. While the ambition is very much on the agenda in the ongoing development work, it is argued by some of the SSC representatives that reaching new groups involves more than just offering more or perhaps "non-traditional sport activities". They claim that the whole organizational structure of sport has to change in order for sport to be able to move away from a priority on competition and ranking of performance. As an example they point to the most recent and still ongoing sport development programme, The Sports Lift, (alluded to in the introduction of this paper) in which actions are taken aiming at broadening the sport movements' uptake. While such programmes are argued to be valuable and referred to as means to fulfil the public health objectives, they cannot be expected to repair the mechanisms behind the problem: "We cannot just make these additional investments all the time, we have to change internally, and there really is no quick fix". Since regular club sport activities, the respondents elaborate, are not organized with *recreation* and *physical activity* for the participants as their main aim, it is far-fetched to expect participants who are first and foremost interested in physical exercise. In addition it appears as that a particular type of participant is not very interesting for a sport club to attract either: "The sport movement has traditionally not been interested in people who are not interested in competing in sports but only to move for the sake of exercise".

The NSO representatives also seem to be aware of how the sporting activities they provide and the groups of people they attract fit in with contemporary societal public health ambitions. The NSO representative for company sports concludes that their organization seem to attract many leaders with specific skills and interest in delivering recreational physical activities for young people and adults, a direction that happens to fit well into a public health profile. This particular NSO has, in recent years, involved all its affiliated sport clubs in extensive strategic planning activities and development work which has resulted in a "business" strategy taking a stand for concepts such as health and public health. Some fractions within the NSO have voiced opinions to further include various kinds of public health activities (such as smoking prevention, dietary advice, physical activity on prescription), but the strategy work has resulted in a more consolidated offering of activities: "Our contribution to public health is to improve the physical health of our members by physical activity". There are still affiliated sport clubs working towards specific target groups (for example overweight children and people on sick leave) and in cooperation with county and municipality administrations, but experiences from such efforts have shown that such activities are often afflicted with problems of coordination and tend to require additional funding besides regular government grants. The NSO representative for gymnastics expands on the difficulties in implementing physical activity on prescription. Since activities for people granted a prescription are to be provided during the day and voluntary leaders only are available in the evenings after work, it has proven difficult to coordinate "supply" and "demand" resulting in a decline in interest from the activity leaders to perform such duties. The NSO representative for academic sports reports being more successful and exemplifies this with a large externally funded project aiming at recruiting physically inactive students, which has resulted in the

development of a model for getting young people started with physical activity. In conclusion with regard to implementing sport activities for public health, the four NSOs represented in this study seem to be in line with public health objectives. However and importantly, it appears difficult to provide activities that are disconnected from the logic of competition and performance: "In the traditional sport club the focus of course is on improvement of performance, on the next game or next competition".

5.3. The Potential of Sport for Public Health

While the respondents argue that sport already delivers public health through its existing and regular activities, they also highlight that sport holds a big potential for contributing to public health even more in the future. The potential is argued to lie within the reorientation of the larger sport movement which has been initiated and which is hoped to bring about a change of direction, making the sport movement more inclusive and open to all. At the same time, the respondents argue strongly that it is completely voluntary for sports clubs to take on health promotion activities, and that the organization is, by no means, to be perceived as a public health supplier for the government—it simply has no obligation to take individual responsibility for public health. While the respondents all paint a picture of an organizational willingness to be an advocate for health and to strive for contribution to public health, they at the same time point to the fact that willingness, advocacy and perseverance is all in the hands of the existing members. In relation to the latter, the respondents are not too optimistic since the existing priority in most sport clubs appears to be to preserve the long-standing tradition of *sport* activities: "Too much focus on public health interventions can make us lose focus on sport, which is the core and foundation". This "too much focus" is seen as problematic in other ways too by one of the respondents who claims that there are leaders within the organization that on their own initiatives "take on too much responsibility for public health and put in too much work without getting paid for it". Such an argument is particularly interesting in the light of the ascribed value of grassroots anchored initiatives and the experienced problem of leaders being guided too much by the logic of competition and performance. Simultaneously it is argued that it is difficult to design activities with a public health perspective, instead of with the traditional competition and performance perspective. It requires a different kind of leadership and competence which cannot be expected of the voluntary leaders in Swedish sport, even if the respondents acknowledge that there do exist leaders holding such competence. The internal education system doesn't seem equipped to prepare leaders for such leadership, with the health aspects included in these programmes being restricted to basic knowledge in relation to the specific sport in question and often reduced to injury prevention and treatment.

In conclusion with regard to the potential of sport for public health, the respondents appear to be somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand they claim that sport is in its existing form promotive of public health and has the potential to be even more so in the future. On the other hand they see obstacles in the form of self-determining members and leaders guided by traditions and the logic of competition and performance. One of the respondents elaborates on the latter and highlights the importance of the sports movement to be built on voluntary initiatives—that possible public health related activities carried out within the organization must be based on the members' own desires and interests. However, the focus of the local sport clubs, as another representative concludes, is not to administer various social problems: "One probably should not overestimate the capacity of sport to play the role of public health promoter".

6. Conclusions

The ambitions of this article were to show how public health is implemented and given meaning within Swedish sport and to add to the broader understanding of voluntarily organized and membership-based sport's potential as a physical activity promoter in order to act as a counteracting force against differences in participation and health between groups in society. The evaluation of the SSC and NSO representatives' practical arguments of how ideas on public health are implemented within their respective organizations shows how stated health related goals are being compromised by other values underlying the described means taken. Thus, actions can be viewed as insufficient in view of the goal of public health, since the values and concerns, such as sport performance enhancement and competitive sport, informing the actions taken are differing in stance. These findings are in line with previous studies showing that the main convention in sport is competitiveness and that sport representatives' arguments for health "seem to be manifested in rhetoric, symbolic or legislative processes" rather than being regulative for social practice (Skille, 2011, p. 250) and sport's difficulties to change in order to act on ideas that are not in line with its organizational self-identity (Stenling, 2013). Similarly, actions taken to reach new target groups (in the name of equality) can be seen as insufficient when the values and concerns informing the actions are about growing memberships and gaining legitimacy and funding for traditional competitive sports. A consequence of gaining more members on such basis would possibly imply a continued imbalance in terms of sport participation and distribution of health between different social groups in society. A consequence of

lobbying and advocating "for sport" in the name of public health can result in continued support for the sport movement for actions not prioritized in practice. Especially in the light of aforementioned research (Skille, 2011; Stenling, 2013) that supports the indications in this study, that health issues may not necessarily be the regulating concern for the actions taken in practice in the name of public health. A consequence of allocating grants to short-term efforts and specific "inclusion-targeted projects" can allow regular competitive sport activities to remain unchanged. This conclusion is supported by previous studies (Fahlén & Karp, 2010; Fahlén, Eliasson, & Wickman, 2014) that have shown that even targeted efforts to develop alternative sport activities in order to attract new target groups have not been successful. Scholars (Coalter, 2007) have argued for the need for a cultural and structural change from within sport organizations in order for change to occur. The respondents in this study all refer to an ongoing restructuring of their organizations in order to change and broaden their activities and thereby their target groups, but it is shown that the actions taken to work internally in influencing the organizations to review their operations and activities (in the name of democracy) have resulted in a more limited range of targeted public health activities, possibly limiting the organizations' abilities to contribute to a more equal distribution of health between different social groups.

The findings of this article indicate some implications for sport practice and public health as well as for future research. First, a vulnerability in the SSC's potential to promote participation and inclusion from a public health perspective is the duty to act on members' behalf. Even if the sport movement at a strategic level had an ambition to broaden the uptake of members based on the goal to reach public health defined vulnerable groups in society, it is the members at an operative level that determine the actions and activities, and ultimately the target population really being prioritized. Previous studies have shown sport's difficulties in attracting, including and prioritizing minorities and vulnerable groups, and problems in relying on civil society organizations for this (Girginov, 2008; Morgan, 2013; Stenling, 2014; Thorpe, 2014; Wickman, 2011). The challenge for the sports movement is to regard equality, inclusion and equal opportunities to physical activity and health from a population perspective when in fact the member perspective is an obligation. Secondly, if the inherent values and concerns of the SSC's members are supporting traditional competitive sport ideals, the main challenge is to design and carry out actions and activities that are effective in relation to public health related goals. Another finding with implications for "sport for public health" practice and research is the argument that is taken for granted that sport equals physical activity, a circumstance previously problematized by scholars (Coalter, 2007). It has been argued that if sport is intended to improve citizens' health, then more thought should be given to *what kinds* of physical activities should be encouraged. The contradictions between the representatives' normative discourse on how sport is significant for and contributes to public health, and the practical arguments of the actions and means taken in practice, takes place in the space of freedom enabled by the way sport is governed by the state—referred to by researchers as the *implicit contract* (Norberg, 2011). These circumstances raise further questions about governments' use of voluntary and membership-based non-profit organizations to achieve public health goals. Also, it demonstrates a need for further studies on how public health promotion is put into practice on a strategic and operative sport level—in order to better understand the potential for sport to act as a counteracting force against differences in sport participation and health between groups in society.

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Conflict of Interests

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Article

You Made *El Team-O!* The Transnational Browning of the National Basketball Association through the "Noche Latina" Marketing Campaigns

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Abstract
This essay pushes beyond the black-white binary in an effort to expand understandings into the relationship between sport, Latinidad, and global capitalism in the 21st century. Through a discursive analysis into the National Basketball Association (NBA) outreach policies, I ask: do recent shifts in the NBA's marketing strategies, while alluding towards social inclusion and multicultural diversity, also contribute to the containment, exclusion, and marginalization to the fastest growing minority group in the United States: the Latina/o. By conducting a textual analysis into the NBA's Noche Latina campaign, this essay makes the case that while the NBA may be another example of *browning the sporting gaze* the gaze remains fixed upon Western capitalist notions of identity and representation. An aim of this study seeks to highlight the contradictions within U.S. based-sport marketing in hopes that sport fans, pundits and academics alike might grapple with and strive towards understanding how phenomena like "Noche Latina" repackages racialized, sexist and cultural tropes for global television audiences and social media users alike.

Keywords
Latina/o sport; NBA; Noche Latina; Latinidad; transnationalism; marketing

Issue
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1. Introduction

This essay provides a critical examination into the recent growth and global development of the National Basketball Association (NBA) in relation to Latin Americans and U.S.-based Latina/o Hispanic populations. By conducting a textual analysis into the NBA's Noche Latina campaign, this essay makes the case that while the NBA may be *browning the sporting gaze* the gaze remains centered upon Eurocentric notions of identity and cultural representation. Through a discursive analysis into the NBA's contemporary marketing and branding strategies, I demonstrate how these recent shifts in NBA policy, while mobilizing notions of social inclusion and multiculturalism, in actuality contributes to the erasure, marginalization and political containment to the fastest growing minority group in the United States: the Latina/o.

The author attempts to push beyond the Black-White racial binary in an effort to further expand popular cultural understandings into the relationship between sport and Latinidad by offering a multidisciplinary intersectional reading into gender, sexuality, ethnorace, citizenship and political economy. Consequently, this essay asks: under what political-cultural-social-economic matrixes does Noche Latina participate in; how does Noche Latina—as spectacle, branding, and transnational commodity—further re-inscribe racialized, sexualized and cultural Latina/o tropes? Ultimately, I am curious in raising the inquiry: what are

the implications of adopting a neoliberal multicultural-sporting framework in creating, circulating and consuming the Latina/o sporting body with/in contemporary American immigrant and "browning" discourses? The aim of this study is to highlight the contradictions within the NBA in order to grapple and strive towards critical diversity and social inclusion.

The literature this essay reviews is broken into two parts. The first section works through the transformations in global economy and US domestic politics overseeing the emergence of sport as transnational entity. In this section, I review the literature deriving from Sport Studies in relation to the NBA and networks of global capitalism. I explain how recent shifts in the political economic agenda of the NBA has necessitated campaigns that complicate the role of the nation-State and local communities. The second part discusses the "Hispanicization" of America borrowing from Latina/o Cultural Studies. I provide a brief overview into some of the critical studies regarding the marketing of "Hispanic" and the commodification of US Latinas/os in order to theorize as to how the NBA's Noche Latina operates within the frameworks of ethnoraciality, global capitalism, and transnational media. The Discussion portion of the essay argues Noche Latina proves to be a fruitful site to critically assess whether the Noche Latina campaigns currently serves as a policy worthy to be considered as socially inclusive. For the purposes of this study, this final section is broken into three specific moments whereby the aforementioned frameworks of sport as global commodity and Latinidad are applied. This paper concludes the Noche Latina phenomena must be perceived and understood as a sporting tool that simultaneously represents, regulates and re-imagines the browned body in U.S. popular and sporting discourses. The author concludes by offering alternative resolutions the NBA might consider in order to further improve its outreach efforts for Latina/o US Hispanic peoples. Overall, the adoption and usage of browning and/or brownness in this paper is done in an effort to illustrate the complexities of ethnoracialization, nationality, citizenship and power hierarchies. As such, the essay adopts a multidisciplinary, intersectional framework in order to further illustrate topics of importance related to the cultural politics of race and culture in sport and society.

2. Literature Review

Although there has been a recent growth amongst both academic and popular circles towards researching the growing influence of Hispanic marketing within the National Basketball Association (Jensen, 2014; Harrison & Mukul, 2013) this essay differs by grappling with social theory as its source of engagement. In other words, this paper does not attempt to offer a comprehensive overview to the origins and development of Noche Latina as it has been adopted by each single basketball organization, player and/or NBA season; rather, I have organized this study to focus on the more prominent cultural-political-economic-social contexts by which the promotion and dissemination of Noche Latina, across physical and cyber platforms, have undergone since its implementation in the 2006–07 NBA season. Henceforth, the bulk of my data derives from popular culture, social media and online blogs. Ultimately, the author is invested in illustrating how events like Noche Latina act and serves as conduits by which the re-definition of American citizenship is taking place across 21st century global sporting worlds.

2.1. Transnational Projects: Sport as a Global Economic Phenomenon

Early 2014, on the 1st of February, David Stern officially stepped down from his post as Commissioner of the National Basketball Association. His retirement came exactly three decades to the day from taking on the job. According to an article published by the *Washington Post Newsweek Interactive*, Stern arose at a time when the "league was a wasteland plagued by bankrupt teams and drug scandals…When Stern, the son of a delicatessen owner, suggested that basketball could one day rival soccer as the world's most popular sport, his critics thought he must've been as high as all too many NBA players at the time" (Larmer, 2005, p. 71). Larmer alludes to one of the greatest shifts that will outlast Stern's retirement in the sporting world: the NBA as a global economic phenomenon.

In his opening essay to *The Commercialisation of Sport*, seminal sport scholar and cultural critic David L. Andrews challenges sport fans, journalists and scholars alike to move beyond the mantra of "it's just a game". Andrews (2004) challenges us to re-connect American sport to the larger nexus of power: the political economy of the sports-media-cultural complex. By situating the consumption, performativity, spectacle and institutionalization of sport within "context of contemporary US political economy" Andrews argues:

> [T]he explosion of sporting content on network and cable television, radio, in newspapers, magazines and on the Internet has transformed sport into an intrusive and influential cultural practice; one that profoundly contributes to the shaping of everyday understandings, identities and experiences, as it swells the coffers of the wider economy. (p. 4)

According to Andrews, to dismiss the captivating routines practices between sport and media today would be like dismissing the role of the Church in the Middle Ages. Andrews articulates the affects that the dominant cultural-political-economic-social paradigm has for the global consumption of professional sport. Trac-

ing television networks such as ABC, CBS, FOX, and NBC, Andrews (2004) highlights that the contemporary transnational capitalist edifice has "virtually erased [the] boundaries between advertiser and programmer interests" (p. 8). As a case-study, Andrews (2004) points out that in 1998 FOX owner Rupert Murdoch purchased the Los Angeles Dodgers only slightly above $300 U.S. million. This highlights the lucrative potential and capitalist incentives imagined across sporting and global marketing firms. Consequently, branding culture becomes of immense importance for the social inclusion of marginalized sectors into dominant society.

Branding, as explained by Sarah Banet-Weiser (2012) is "now both reliant on, and reflective of, our most basic social and cultural relations [whereby] brands become the setting around which individuals weave their own stories, where individuals position themselves as the central character in the narrative of the brand" (p. 4). Consequently, sport offers ample opportunities by which branding culture can/does take place. For example, when FOX News Corporation bought the Dodgers almost two decades ago, in many ways the media conglomerate was also claiming ownership to the means by which the sporting organization, its contracted athletes, and fans would/have become branded. Additionally, one can see the power of media in shaping contemporary sporting practices with the case of the Turner Broadcasting System, who in 1976 bought the Major League Baseball Atlanta Braves franchise, effectively merging branding and consumption thru sport. Indeed, the practice of branding people through sport remains a contested terrain, especially in relation to Native American and politics of sovereignty, identity and cultural representation (King, 2001). Conclusively, branding will remain an important 21st century socio-cultural tool for power holders in the sport-industrial complex due to the prevalent synergy between media and marketing across national boundaries.

Indeed, the National Basketball Association has developed to become a formidable global sport for the 21st century. In fact, guided by the logic of neoliberalism—free trade, open markets, government deregulation, individualism—the NBA, like any other transnational enterprise in the late capitalist period, is invested in growing its fan base across a myriad of peoples, cultures and spaces. In fact, the dominance of NBA branding efforts can be traced to the phenomenon of Michael Jordan, a moment in sporting history when corporations like Nike and Gatorade linked to the ethos of "Be like Mike", effectively reigned in the common-day paradox where branding further creates branding (Kellner, 2001). As a $5 billion dollar industry, the NBA has extended its "sphere of influence" across the globe in China, Europe, Africa and South America. According to Larmer (2005), the NBA would not have retrieved such a high-status global position of power if it were not for David Stern's leadership and global envision. "The NBA, they said, was too alien, too menacing, too 'black' to sell to the mainstream American public, much less to do the rest of the world. But Stern envisioned a game that defied the boundaries of race and culture and geography just as easily as its acrobatic players defied the limits of gravity" (p. 71). Stern's vision for a NBA palatable for global consumption—across differences, not despite them—seems to have coincided immensely with the emergence of the "browning of America". The following two sections seek to demonstrate how the NBA of the 21st century has mobilized new ways to appeal to newer audiences by establishing new markets and therefore increasing its transnational affluence. I illustrate below that multiculturalist incentives towards social inclusivity via the NBA Spanish-marketing campaigns remain dictated by Eurocentric notions of identity, culture, and representation.

2.1.1. Origins: Hispanic Heritage Month

The term "Hispanic" was first introduced to public-imaginaries in a *New York Times* 1969 article. Indeed, through a concerted institutional effort at appropriating the late-1960's politically charged social movements of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, the United States government effectively undermined and substituted the self-determination and cultural nationalism with a centrist politics of branding ubiquitously known as multiculturalism. Suzanne Oboler (1995) reflects on the historical origins of the term Hispanic and ponders:

> Why, one cannot help but ask, in this period of national emergence of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans and in view of their specific divergent demands and cultural affirmation as *two distinct groups*, would the president of the United States designate a "Hispanic Heritage" week? (p. 81)

Oboler sheds light on these historical complexities and the political contradictions that the term "Hispanic" has invoked since 1969. Ultimately, she critiques the belief that a U.S. institutionally led approach, guided by a White majority, can ultimately bridge the cultural and political wealth-gap thriving in American society today. More importantly, Oboler (1995) argues against State-led initiatives because they failed time again to recognize the "largely mestizo, indigenous, and/or black populations that make up the majority of the Central American nations...nor of the indigenous and mestizo cultural roots that both the Chicanos and the Puerto Ricans emphasized in their movements" (p. 82). Additionally, the term "Hispanic" has been cited as limiting formal connections to processes of modern-day colonialism because it de-nationalizes group history and de-links group interest via associating with Spanish Empire while simultaneously hiding the influence of U.S. Em-

pire for Latin America and U.S. "Hispanics" alike (Alcoff, 2005). In short, discourses around this Hispanic-identity have inherently contained, erased and silenced (non-European) cultures, populations and transnational voices.

2.1.2. Development: The Age of the Hispanic and Commodification

Somewhere in between the social movements of the 1960s and the neoliberal backlash into the 21st century, race and racism became a non-issue in the U.S., done away with by Civil Rights legislation and the non-violent movements of the late 20th century. In their co-authored article, Bonilla-Silva and Dietrich (2012) re-articulate the notion of colorblind racism within the context of the election and presidency of Barack Obama:

> For older generations of blacks desperate to see racial equality before they die, and for many post-Reagan generation blacks and minorities who have seen very little racial progress in their lifetimes, Obama became the new messiah of the civil rights movements. In contrast, the symbolic meaning of Obama to whites was compatible with their belief that America was indeed a color-blind nation. (p. 198)

Colorblind racism, in brief, is the new racist regime "used to explain, rationalize, and defend white racial interests" (p. 192). The new racist system also naturalizes a "false consciousness" among people of color, whereby U.S. minorities fall back on the "old bootstraps story" in rationalizing issues of systematic inequality and inadequate resource distribution. Unfortunately, through this insurgency of racial neutrality, critical concepts such as racialization—the notion that society is inherently fractured along racial hierarchies and codes superimposed by governing structures—have been considered unnecessary when discussing the placement of Latinas/os within the racial spectrum.

Arlene Dávila (2008) resuscitates the concept of racialization in order to illustrate the highly charged realities Latinas/os represent and undergo within US mainstream discourses today. "Illegal, tax burden, patriotic, family-oriented, hard-working, and model consumer—how do we make sense of such contrasting definitions of Latinos? Why do they circulate in concert? Put simply, everyone seems to want an answer to the same questions: Are Latinos friends or foes?" (p. 1). And indeed, it is within this context that mainstream media representations of Latinas/os in the United States have occurred in the past decades. One of the premises by which *this browning* is taking place is in the hyper-visibility and/or representation of Brownness through media platforms, largely operative within enclave and ethnic-marketing. In Jackson, Andrews, and Scherer (2005), sport is construed as a "global cultural form, practice and institution has not been immune from advertising's cultural excavation and exploitation" (p. 5). As such, this final sub-section provides a brief overview to the intersections between racialization, Latinidad and the concept of ethnorace in order to contextualize the rise of Noche Latina as very much informing and guiding media creations and circulations about Latinidad in specific, and browned bodies in general.

In her important book Chicana historian Martha Menchaca (2002) adopts Omi and Winant's *racial formation theory* and describes how the historical process of racialization intertwines with those deemed Latinas/os today. According to Menchaca (2002), "the reproduction of racial inequality was instituted through a legal process [called] racialization. Spain and the United States used their legal systems to confer social and economic privileges upon Whites and to discriminate against people of color" (p. 5). In other words, the placement and justification for a racially stratified social structure has its roots within the colonial endeavors of Spain first, then the United States (see Alcoff, 2005). The regulation, containment, erasure, and forced assimilation of Afro-Indigenous culture and people were executed through the state, Church and a myriad of other institutions (military, education, law, etc.). Fortunately, much work being produced within Latina/o Studies provides ample lenses and frameworks by which to better understand the intersections between racialization and the U.S. media's construction of Latinas/os.

For example, Isabel Molina-Guzmán (2010) maps out the "symbolic value assigned to Latinas in a media landscape that remains simultaneously familiar and strangely new" (p. 1). Inquiring about the desire and commodification of Latinas, she asks: "Under what representational conditions are Latinas depicted as socially acceptable, culturally dangerous, or politically transformative to specific audiences? What are the limits, possibilities, and consequences of Latinas' contemporary global marketability?" (2010, p. 3). *Dangerous curves*' examination into processes of racialization is different from Menchaca and other racial theorists due to its focus on popular culture, namely media representation of Latinidad in the U.S. In a previous work, co-authored with Angharad N. Valdivia, Molina-Guzmán articulates Latinidad as epitomizing the present-day synergy that connects transnational communities within the larger symbolic processes and representations of globalization. Accordingly, Latinidad is a:

> [S]ocial construct informed by the mediated circulation of ethnic-specific community discourses and practices as well as mainstream economic and political imperatives through the cultural mainstream. Thus Latinidad is a category constructed from the outside with marketing and political homogenizing

> implications as well as from within with assertions to difference and specificity. (Molina-Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004, p. 208)

Within this particular moment, where race and global media intersect, Molina-Guzmán, like Dávila, provide us with the context and tools to better grasp the role of Hispanic marketing with/in the NBA.

Additionally, Dávila (2001) examines the Hispanic marketing industry and demonstrates how it both defines, and is determined by, Latinos. She shows that Hispanic marketing, "as a self-identified arena of Latino self-representation" remains largely "dominated by corporate intellectuals of Latin American background in the United States [with direct] ties to the structures of the U.S. economy" (p. 2). Dávila's analysis is a salient foundation by which this study explores the dialectical relationships between Latinos, advertisement, and sport. According to Dávila, advertisements are "complex texts that, as stereotypical or outlandish as they may be, are always entangled with the interests, desires, or imaginations of those whom they seek to entice as consumers, and are always the result of negotiations in the process of depicting the consumer" (pp. 14-15). The expansion of Hispanic marketing, as a defining cultural industry in 21st century America, really demonstrates how difference along the color line has been one of corporate absorption. Thus, Noche Latina, and the browning of the sporting gaze in general, are operative in "a context where nothing escapes commodification [and instead] must be considered as constitutive of contemporary identities and notions of belonging and entitlement" (p. 10).

Due to the shortcomings the concepts of race and ethnicity have had in defining, representing and understanding Latinas/os Hispanic people, both authors stress the role of Ethnorace in order to fully grasp the visual representations and consumption of browned bodies. In her influential work "Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?" philosopher Linda Martín Alcoff evidences how the categorization of "Race" has never applied to the group deemed Latina/o. Alcoff states that race, as it has historically functioned in the US, denotes "homogeneity, easily visible identifying features, and biological heredity" (2000, 24). These characteristics, however, cannot simply be added on to Latina/os on account of the nuances in both cultural and biological traits. Consequently, she calls into question those that reject "race" and its effects and have instead adopted the notion of ethnicity as a viable cultural marker by which to assess and understand Latina/os.

To better grasp the function and logics behind Hispanic Marketing within a global age, this study frames ethnorace as a useful tool by which to understand the *browning of the sporting gaze*. The browning of the sporting world invokes broader conversations about struggles towards cultural and global citizenship; it allows fans and cultural critics alike to think through how social matrixes of ethnorace, citizenship and mobility continue to play out into the 21st century through sporting competitions, marketing and popular discourses. Consequently, future studies into the browning of sport must build from studies that have analyzed the affects and logics of regimes of containment and colorblindness. (Bloodsworth-Lugo & Lugo-Lugo, 2010; Sundstrom, 2008)

3. Discussion: "Celebrating Your Passion"

As a child, I would spend my weekday afternoons shooting hoops in the backyard my parents rented out on a monthly basis. Though comprised mostly of dirt and loose-gravel, that court would become center stage for countless hours of imagining "my American Dream". Though raised in Los Angeles, I would make believe that I was part of the 1995–96 rosters of the late-Seattle Super Sonics. Alongside Payton, Kemp, Schrempf, Perkins and McMillan, was me: the 6th man: "And coming off the bench is the 1995 1st draft pick, Number 88…"

Out of the few childhood memories where my mind imagined an alternative world, there was this one that sticks out. It was 1995, and I was about 8 or 9 years old. Michael Jordan sprained his left ankle during game 5 of the '96 NBA finals, ultimately leading to Seattle's second NBA championship title and my very first NBA championship ring. My participation in this (trans)nationally televised sporting spectacle created mass eruptions of joy through the heart of Meso-America. You see, in my mind's eye, I would make sure the television announcers adequately acknowledged my parents' ethnic-roots in Central America. This was important to me because I did not want to imagine a future where I did not know who or where my family was and came from. However, reflecting back, I did not yet know that understanding the present "let alone using the past to inform the future" would be so difficult.

In their recent co-authored monograph Aldama and González (2014) connect with this childhood memory of mine, with their *conversación de sobremesa*—an after dinner in-depth conversation. They focus on the (in)visible histories of Latino players within the National Football League (NFL) and contend that by looking into the histories and experiences of Chicano and Latino athletes, new readings into the intersections between ethnicity, race, class, family, capitalism and sport emerge. Their terming of the "Brown Color Line" is demonstrated to be a significant historical and contemporary marker due to the "unequal access to education and racial segregation" this racial line has regulated to *browned* populations. Furthermore, Aldama and González (2014) argue:

> Historically, Latinos have constantly been told they

> don't belong, despite the thousands upon thousands of Latinos who can trace their ancestry in this land far before there was a United States of America, so that's nothing new. It has happened and will continue to happen the more we break ground in areas people never expected to see us…A little Latino boy growing up in west Texas may have a hard time believing he can be John Elway, but he might believe he can be Jim Plunkett. Those sorts of thing really do matter. (p. 77)

The authors push readers to consider what it meant for Chicano quarterbacks like Jim Plunkett, Tom Flores and Joe Kapp to break through the NFL brown color line in order to better understand the ways Latinos have been regulated to certain social roles as both athletes and a people. Indeed, by peering into the role of brownness in American sport, new conversations about social inclusion and issues of access and equity can be better obtained for peoples and communities that don't strictly adhere to the common sense notion of sports as mere entertainment.

3.1. Noche de Apertura—Posting Op: New York, NY, Oct. 2009

Similar to marketing events occurring in/through the NFL (Harrison & Mukul, 2013), National Basketball Association (NBA) expanded its multicultural branding with a "new marketing campaign" geared to the growing U.S. Hispanic market. This rebranding effort, dubbed éne-bé-a (read NBA in Spanish) is a "360-degree campaign [that] will include television, radio and online advertising, a Web site, special events, grassroots programs and unique consumer products" (NBA, 2009, October 19). The brainchild of Saskia Sorrosa, Vice President of multicultural/targeted marketing, the éne-bé-a is the medium by which the representation of Latinas/os takes place in modern day American basketball.

This section argues that Noche Latina is a colorblind spectacle, whereby the celebration of differences serves as substitute to the materialist grounded differences based on ethnoracial lived realities. "A colorblind diversity understanding of the social world is based on the premise that it is sufficient to embrace cultural differences among various racial and ethnic groups without acknowledging disparities among these groups in power, status, wealth, and access." (Herring & Henderson, 2011, p. 632) As such, Noche Latina marketing campaigns are conceptualized as "contested terrain" (Beamon & Messer, 2014, p. 7) on account of its emergence and consumption within the realms of sport. As such, I argue Noche Latina marketing campaigns are a fruitful space where identity politics and power relations can be mapped out to contextualize how media and politics operate in tandem.

Sociologist William Robinson (2011) describes the entrance of a Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC): "The TCC is a class group grounded in global markets and circuits of accumulation…There are of course still local and national capitalists, and there will be for a long time to come. But they must "de-localize" and link to transnational capital if they are to survive" (p. 355). The productions of a TCC, alongside the processes of global capitalism, have serious implications for consumers, entrepreneurs, and workers revolving around the sporting world as well. In the case of Saskia Sorrosa, leading Hispanic media distributors have projected her as "The Trendsetter" (Hispanic Executive, 2012) and as a "Latina of Influence" for her "brand strategy, brand positioning, content development, event promotion and advertising efforts targeted to the U.S. Hispanic, African-American, Youth and Female segments" (Sandoval, 2013). Sorrosa, as a key stakeholder and visionary in the dissemination of NBA as global entertainment, has determined the transnational Hispanic imaginary through her ability to bank off of a diverse group of cultures and brand it as a homogenous celebration. Similar to Robinson's TCC, Andrews and Silk (2005) write:

> Rather than using uniform and invariant global marketing and advertising initiatives that attempted to negate entrenched national cultural boundaries (something tried and failed by many in the fledging stages of the transnational era), transnational [elites] seek increasingly to represent national cultures in a manner designed to engage the nationalist sensibilities of local consumers. In this scenario, the locus of control in influencing the manner in which the nation and national identity are represented becomes exteriorized through, and internalized within, the promotional strategies of transnational corporations. (p. 176)

As sport sociologists continue to elucidate, the recent synergy between sports, media, culture and capital will continue to reveal the role that transnational corporations engage local and nationalist particularities and warp it onto a singular global imaginary. The induction of éne-bé-a and Noche Latina as the "promotional strategies" of a transnationalist NBA consequently produces a transnational Latina/o image historically founded along uneven power relationships.

3.2. Noche Dos—D-E-F-E-N-S-E: Phoenix, AZ, May 2010

Amidst the 2010 passing of Arizona Senate Bill 1070—a state policy that sought to provide the CCA (Corrections Corporation of America) with an influx of browned (un)documented bodies (NPR, 2010, November 9), Arizona's Phoenix Suns were going into game two of the Western conference finals against the Texas rival the San Antonio Spurs. On this particular occasion, the

viewing of basketball as purely entertainment crashed with the surrounding tension brought on by SB 1070. This moment pushed NBA players, coaches and franchise owners alike to grapple with the interrelationship between sport and politics. The Phoenix Suns donned code-switched jerseys for the night's game. According to franchise owner Robert Sarver, the decision to wear the "Los Suns" jersey came from the players themselves. In an interview with ESPN, then-Sun point guard Steve Nash had this to say:

> I'm against it. I think this is a bill that really damages our civil liberties. I think it opens up for the potential of racial profiling, racism. I think it sets a bad precedent to set for our young people. I think it represents our state poorly in the eyes of the nation and the world. And I think we have a lot of great attributes here and I think its something we can do without and it hopefully it will change a lot in the coming weeks.(Democracy Now!, 2010, May 6).

Intended as an effort to show solidarity with the Latino community, the Suns' attempt to politicize the jerseys alongside SB 1070 is a prime example of the kind of agency one finds by following the browned color line. However, like any conversation about immigration, race and human rights usually leads to, the Suns' decision to protest the Arizona state government draconian immigration bill was ultimately met with mixed emotions from fans, coaches and team owners everywhere. Most notably from legendary head coach and longtime icon of the NBA, Phil Jackson.

In an early May 2010 pregame news conference, then Lakers head coach Phil Jackson responded to ESPN.com news correspondent J.A. Andade's who inquired into the "Zen master's" take on the possibilities between sport and politics: "Am I crazy, or am I the only one that heard when the legislators said that 'we just took United States immigration law and adapted it to our state'?" Jackson continued on by critiquing Sarver's franchise and the NBA players who decided to vocally express and get involved into politics: "I don't think teams should get involved in the *political stuff* [emphasis added]. I think this one is still kind of coming out to balance as to how it is going to [be] favorably looked upon by…the public" (Amato, 2010, May 17). In response to anti-immigrant rhetoric and notions of containing "brownness", LA community activists and sports fans alike rallied and protested the Phoenix Suns and Los Angeles Lakers playoff game in mid May 2010. "We were deeply disappointed because we love the Lakers. And we're here to denounce Phil Jackson's comments and his support for Arizona and we want to him to stand with the fans" said Jason Zepeda, a Lakers fan and political organizer for the protest. What this succeeding event in 2010 illustrates are the new conversations that arise when Latinos become a driving force in the way sporting institutions appeal to fans and consumers alike (Jensen, 2014).

However, what gets lost in both Nash's and Jackson's discourse is the central truth that *everything* about sport is political because everything about the sporting body is political. For example, while Nash and the wearing of "Los Suns" was mobilized in an effort to visually critique Arizona state immigration law and the embedded antiquated notion of citizenship as white-America, it was ultimately done so under an individualist framework—or, *buy this jersey and you too can resist racial profiling*—commodity racism. In other words, while the Suns deserve praise for their desire to spread advocacy for Brown (Hispanic) people in the US, it is crucial to note that it is simultaneously done through shortcomings of institutionalized multiculturalism. As Dávila (2008) reminds us, "[nobody] is shielded from racism in the United States by identifying as 'white' if one is not visually and culturally recognized in this manner" (p. 17). By conceptualizing this mid-2010 moment in NBA history as illustrative of the "browning of the sporting gaze", we can better assess the limitations of the NBA's consequent agenda toward social inclusion via the NBA's diversity outreach programs.

Upon contextualizing this moment within contemporary discourses about sport and social inclusion, it becomes noteworthy to inquire that while a transnational corporation seeks to increase its Hispanic consumer fan-base it simultaneously has relatively nothing to say towards how this potential consumer enclave interfaces with/in larger systems of discipline and control. (i.e., crimmigration, ethno-racial profiling, and/or the prison-industrial-complex) As anti-SB 1070 grassroots advocacy group Alto Arizona powerfully asserted: "A coach that doesn't support the community doesn't have the community's support" (quoted in Dave Zirin "Boycott Phil Jackson: Why Lakers Fans should root for Los Suns"). Ultimately, the social tensions that have arisen from SB 1070 alongside the NBA have opened up a moment whereby the NBA—as an organization and global institution—can align itself with a more progressive politics that stands by critical social inclusion. Furthermore, Dávila (2008) reminds us Latinos are simultaneously positioned in the US media as both friend *and* foe. As critical consumers and fans of the game, Latinas/os should ponder, and imagine the potentiality of the rising Latina/o presence in the NBA and other professional sports. As I'll conclude below, it is crucial to hold the NBA accountable for the decisions it takes (or does not take); I tie in together already discussed concepts of ethnorace and Latinidad and attach it to the marvel of the sport-media complex in order to better comprehend the implications that a social inclusion via the contemporary framework of individualism and consumption has for a transnational public audience.

3.3. Noche Tres—"Es Tu Noche": Miami, FL, March 2013

In an éne-bé-a affiliated promo, journalist Lorena Baez (LB) walks around American Airlines Arena, home to the Miami Heat. For 2013, "Yo soy Latino de corazon" was the promotional taglines constantly reverberated in this 4 minute 17 second video. Lorena Baez, a light-browned skinned Latina, introduces the short promo alongside a small group of musicians carrying wind instruments commonly used in *Timba*—Cuban salsa. Baez begins by stating: "Definitely, this night has a different flavor. Tonight, we pay homage to the prominent Latino basketball players and give a strong acknowledgement to their home culture. So tonight let's enjoy Noche Latina" [translated by author]. The promotional video continues by Baez asking Miami Heat fans what "Noche Latina" signifies to them. While she asks a couple of fans to explore the cultural meaning of having a Latin-influenced heritage night, ultimately, it is an encounter with a phenotypically White Male (WM), aged 18–34, that reveals the shortcomings of social inclusion via the NBA:

> ***WM**: So, I'm from South Florida. But I don't speak Spanish, but I support Hispanic peoples.*
> ***LB**: You are Latin from your heart, right?*
> ***WM**: Yes, Latin from my heart.*
> (NBA, 2013, March 26)

In a context where the celebrating of brownness automatically erases structural and cultural discrimination, the above conversation reveals the limitations of the NBA's Noche Latina marketing campaigns. In other words, it is important to understand the differences between the *intent* of Noche Latina in contrast to its *reception*. Does buying a jersey with "Los" or "El" demonstrate cultural empowerment or is it another application of commodity activism? In a *New York Times* NBA Blog piece, Stuart Miller (2013, March 15) writes: "The league did extensive market research to learn what fans wanted and said it got a much stronger response to the jersey names it chose than a true translation. The league also expanded the event to include culturally relevant music and food". Similarly, in another 2013 news article on the *Huffington Post* titled "NBA Defines Latinos in the U.S. with "Noche Latina" Campaign", NBA promotional gimmicks for the 2013 season are described: "For this year, a campaign featuring Latino pride was created, in which a man speaking in English explains that although he is proud to be a Latino, likes Spanish music, and fútbol, he also feels very American, and enjoys basketball." However, this kind of representation via multicultural branding and commodity culture (code-switched jerseys, cultural nights, television promos) has generated consistent criticism in social media. For example, ThinkProgress.org article "How the NBA's "Noche Latina" Jerseys Fall Short of Actual Latino Outreach"; or an online petition calling the NBA's Noche Latina to stop; as well as a comical headline by *The Onion* "NBA Honors Latino Community by Using Spanish Word for 'The' on Jerseys."

Before wrapping up the éne-bé-a promo for "El Heat's 2013 Noche Latina", Lorena Baez joins Miami Heat basketball players Norris Cole, Mario Chalmers, Chris Andersen, and Mike Miller in their locker room. Asking what the purpose of Noche Latina is, Miller responds: "Obviously, we have a lot of Latin fans. It's a way for us to kind of thanking them for being part of Noche Latino [*sic*]. So it's a lot of fun for us to be a part of this." Noche Latina marketing campaigns celebrates Latina/o inclusion via a politics of scratch-the-surface multiculturalism and buying individual accessories. As I stated earlier, I used to imagine myself making it into the NBA and playing for a team that I dearly admired. Growing up, I didn't really read into issues or histories of marginalization namely because the U.S. status quo doesn't necessitate critically youth thinkers. However, this lack of awareness on my part did not diminish the fact that my conception of reality was being very much informed by the racial, gendered, and sexualized performativities televised and channeled via the NBA:

> [S]porting discourses, practices, and experiences often serve as a juncture for particular dominant groups to further (re) define the parameters of *the* "sanctioned" identity, and are often mobilized and appropriated with regard to the organization and discipline of daily life, in the shaping and "education" of citizens, and in the service of particular corporate-political agendas. (Silk, 2002, p. 6)

As demonstrated with the Phoenix Suns politicization of "Los Suns", Noche Latina does provide opportunities to challenge sport fans and the general public alike on issues about citizenship, immigration and social inclusivity. However, given the social context by which marginalized identities are (re) fashioned along capitalist incentives, the dissemination of a homogenous Hispanic identity further erases the complexities and nuances of Latina/o Latin American people, histories and cultures.

In other words, sport instructs, defines, and shapes our social relations because of its ability to disguise racial, gendered and classed agendas through the notion of "it's just a game". This becomes evident in the ways Noche Latina is projected among fans, players and owners alike. Fans and popular media accept an individualist celebration of "Hispanics" because it substitutes for a critical grappling with how the same celebrated community is being contained, excluded and marginalized in other sectors of U.S. society. Indeed, what does not get acknowledged in popular media, unfortunately, are the ways Noche Latina simultaneously commodifies and contains browned histories and

Latinidad consciousness.

As of the writing of this essay, the Lorena Baez énebé-a promo piece had received a little over 60,000 views. Additionally, the video clip generated around 500 comments. A number of these comments highlight the notion of "symbolic colonization" as explained by Molina-Guzmán (2010). Symbolic colonization is a theoretical concept helpful in distinguishing the means by which Latinidad is produced, consumed and disregarded. "What is of interest in my discussion of symbolic colonization is the ways in which media practices reproduce dominant norms, values, beliefs, and public understandings about Latinidad as gendered, racialized, foreign, exotic, and consumable" (p. 9). For example, user Mike Jones wrote: "That's by far the best thing about Latinos, the b*****s". This is also graphically exemplified via YouTube user Carl Landry who commented: "When he [*sic*] was interviewing birdman it was like an introduction to a porn scene hahaha at 3:20". Additionally, a Google image search with the key words "Noche Latina NBA" reveals three common occurrences: video games, jerseys, and the Latina cheerleader/dancer. It is in these public popular comments and images that I believe the structural problematics of social inclusion via current NBA outreach policies is best highlighted. As YouTube user DCjoker2 subtly inquires:

> I wonder why the nba didn't bother putting up subtitles for this video, i speak spanish so i understand this, but whats the point of the video if the main audience for this is supposed to be non latinos. It was meant for people to learn about latin culture and they can't even understand what she is saying. [*sic*]

Noche Latina furthers the commodification and containment of the Latina body because like Molina-Guzmán clarifies, symbolic colonization always constructs Latinidad as a consumable commodity. The NBA, with its Noche Latina marketing campaign, must be scrutinized and held accountable for its reinforcement of the typical Latina stereotype: hot blooded, innately good dancers, thick accent and hyper-sexualized.

In constructing this argument about the ways Noche Latina serves as a racialized/gendered/sexualized project informed along class lines, it becomes necessary to note that Latina/o agency is equally at play in this dialectical relationship. In their discussion about the way the media constructs the Latino football player, Aldama and González (2014) fittingly assert that at the end of the day Latinas/os are "self agents" in the ways the media constructs, manipulates, reports and narrates on/about Latinas/os (p. 84). By "teaching" a basketball player to say "Me gustan las Mujeres Latinas" (I Love Latin Women), Baez justifies and perpetuates to a transnational global audience much of the historically informed cultural tropes geared towards Latinos and Latinas. The fact that these YouTube viewers did not care as to what Baez was *saying*, but rather were only interested in how her body was *shaking*, produces a public violence upon women of color. Noche Latina, as derivative of the hyper-masculine hetero-normative US culture, affirms this hyper-sense of hetero-masculinity, where like the basketball, Latinas become props on and off the court. In sum, it is not what Noche Latina says, but rather what it does not say, and under what interests, that should be on the minds of fans, players, coaches and marketers alike. I conclude this essay by offering up alternative ideas that might better position the Noche Latina campaign as truly cognizant and socially inclusive to Latina/o Hispanic consumer base.

4. Conclusions: After Noche Latina

In his *Sports Illustrated* article "Cal's Jorge Gutierrez shaped by life-changing voyage from Mexico", journalist Jordan Conn (2011, January 27) narrates a story unheard of in Noche Latina—so far. Gutierrez, who signed a one-year contract with the Brooklyn Nets early 2014, became the fourth Mexican-national athlete to *make it* to the NBA. Gutierrez's inception into the NBA provides ample possibility towards viewing professional basketball naturally inclined towards the social inclusion of Latina/o communities. Noche Latina, as it has been framed in the previous years, is representative to Eurocentric notions of identity and culture, evident through Latin American basketball players like San Antonio Spurs Manu Ginobli (Argentina); retired player turned D-league coach Eduardo Najera (Mexico); and Minnesota Timberwolves Rick Rubio (Spain). By advertising players like Ginobli as emblematic of Latina/o Hispanic peoples and experiences, locally specific histories of ethnorace, gender, class, and sexuality are potentially erased from the dominant gaze. By privileging a whitened image of the Hispanic, Noche Latina marketing campaigns function to affirm hegemonic racial (White), sexual (Male Gaze), and classed (Transnational Capitalist Class) ideologies and tropes. However, like Oboler, Dávila and Alcoff remind us, there is not a "one-size fits all" when it comes to this ethnoracial population. Gutierrez's narrative is instructive because his reception to the NBA becomes indicative of how "brown-bodies" interface U.S. society and policies. Gutierrez, at the age of 15, took it upon himself to cross over *la frontera* (the border) in order to pursue his American Dream. Fortunately, Gutierrez's cultural capital as a gifted basketball player allowed him access to a college degree and now a career as a professional athlete. It remains to be seen if Gutierrez's browned-sporting gaze will embody Noche Latina media reels.

To close this essay, I ask: If the NBA is truly invested in representing it's Latina/o Hispanic consumer base, then why not go the extra step and publically support

Latinas/os political and economic interests? For example, the NBA could collect revenue from the month-long sales of code-switched jerseys and/or ticket sales and funnel those proceeds to state-sponsored scholarship opportunities for undocumented students, such as California's AB 540 or Washington State's HB 1079. Similarly, the NBA could sponsor political educational promos providing a wider audience during the month of March more discussion into issues of continued importance for the Latina/o population. Or maybe, and on account of the fact that Jorge Gutierrez benefited from policies like the DREAM Act, perhaps the NBA can go on record to promote this crucial bill that seeks to provide more (un)documented Latinas/os and immigrants a fighting opportunity to contribute and participate in US society. Each one of these resolutions, on an individual or collective scale, would effectively demonstrate to a global audience that the "NBA's Cares" about creating a socially inclusive society for those affected by the processes of brownness in US society.

In this essay, I borrowed from Sport Studies and Latina/o Culture Studies in order to contextualize some of the social tensions within the brief tenure of the *éne-bé-a*. I argued that Noche Latina goes beyond entertainment and spectacle, and very much informs the cultural politics of ethnorace, Latinidad, and transnational capital. In other words, the National Basketball Association's Noche Latina Marketing Campaign serves as a hegemonic tool that justifies and perpetuates a colonial imaginary to a transnational public audience. Indeed, though Noche Latina will remain a cultural phenomenon that (re) inscribes classed, racial and gendered stereotypical norms, it is important to emphasize the role that agency plays in such conversations about media representation. Latin Americans, Latinas/os and Hispanics indeed have a powerful culture worthy of praise and celebration. Unfortunately, without more scrutiny coming from the fans, players, coaches, and marketers themselves invested in discussing the ways that the NBA in specific, but all professional sport in general, *can* become institutional beacons for political progress and social justice, then critical diversity and (Real) social inclusion for one of the fastest growing communities and cultures in the US will continue to be simply marketed to the world as making *El-Team-O.*

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Article

"Community Cup, We Are a Big Family": Examining Social Inclusion and Acculturation of Newcomers to Canada through a Participatory Sport Event

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Abstract
While sport is widely understood to produce positive social outcomes for communities, such as the inclusion of diverse and marginalized groups, little researched has focused on the specific processes through which these outcomes may or may not be occurring. In this paper, we discuss the Community Cup program, and specifically a participatory sport event which seeks to connect newcomers to Canada (recent immigrants and refugees) in order to build capacity, connect communities, and facilitate further avenues to participation in community life. For this research, we worked collaboratively with the program to conduct an intrinsic case study, utilizing participant observation, document analysis, focus group, and semi-structured interviews. We discuss how the structure and organization of the event influences participants' experiences and consequently how this impacts the adaptation and acculturation processes. Using Donnelly and Coakley's (2002) cornerstones of social inclusion and Berry's (1992) framework for understanding acculturation, we critically discuss the ways that the participatory sport event may provide an avenue for inclusion of newcomers, as well as the aspects of inclusion that the event does not address. While exploratory in nature, this paper begins to unpack the complex process of how inclusion may or may not be facilitated through sport, as well discussing the role of the management of these sporting practices. Furthermore, based on our discussion, we offer suggestions for sport event managers to improve the design and implementation of programming offered for diverse/newcomer populations.

Keywords
cultural/ethnic minorities; events; inclusion; multiculturalism; sport management

Issue
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1. Introduction

Sport is increasingly being used as a catalyst for building capacity, and developing healthy, inclusive communities (e.g., Casey, Payne, & Eime, 2009; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Misener & Mason, 2006; Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012). It is widely believed that sport and physical recreation can positively contribute to the overall health and well being of individuals in these communities, and yet very little is actually known about the management of these types of projects and programs in order to attain positive social outcomes.

Further, there is also very little known about the experiences of the participants in community-based participatory events that are being utilized to engage and integrate typically excluded members of their communities. It is necessary to understand both the managerial processes and participant experiences in order to critically reflect on the role and value of sport for social change projects (Levermore, 2010). With this in mind, we worked collaboratively with a community-based organization that utilizes sport as a tool for social inclusion of newcomers to Canada (recent immigrants and refugees): the Community Cup. We focused our research on the role of an annual participatory sport event run by this program, which aims to bring newcomers together to build capacity, connect communities, and facilitate further avenues to participation in community life. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to examine how a participatory sporting event can influence the acculturation processes of newcomers to Canada. In particular, we are interested in the value and perceptions placed on involvement in the event for newcomers, as framed through the lens of social inclusion. In this paper, we utilize a case study of the Community Cup soccer tournament, held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada to address the following research objectives: (a) to examine the potential of sport to play a role in social inclusion for newcomers to Canada, and (b) to examine participants' experiences in this participatory sport event, and the potential of sport events (and organizational practices related to these events) to play a role in newcomers' transitional and acculturation experiences.

2. Literature Review—Sport as a Driver of Social Inclusion

Participation in sport events can provide opportunities for people to come together to socialize and be entertained, and to develop contacts, friendships and networks (Misener & Mason, 2006). The outcomes of these activities can be improved community spirit and pride, enhancement of cultural traditions, attitudes, beliefs and values, intercultural learning, and potentially enhanced social capital (Green, 2001; Misener & Mason, 2006; O'Brien, 2007; Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2013). In other words, from a purely positive perspective, sport events can act as a driver of social inclusion and integration into community life (Kidd, 2008; Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2012). However, more critical approaches to the study of sport emphasize that sport in and of itself is not a sufficient condition for any social outcome and more scrutiny in the methods of monitoring and evaluating outcomes is necessary (Coalter, 2010; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Despite the increasingly widespread work on sport events for community and social impact, little research has addressed the potential value of sport events, in particular participatory sport events (i.e., event where participants are actively involved in playing sport rather than merely observing the sport event as a spectator), such as the Community Cup, in the social inclusion of newcomers. In order to provide a nuanced discussion, we first outline the demographic and political context in which the Community Cup was developed in order to situate the guiding body of literature on the use of sport and leisure for inclusion.

Berry (1992) described the process of acculturation as both a group and individual process of culture change that occurs as a result of continuous or repeated interactions between two or more groups. More specifically, Berry (1992) also identified acculturation strategies of integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Based on the current policy framework, the Canadian government has articulated a desire for an integrative approach to acculturation throughout all sectors of Canadian civil society. Notably, Canadian immigration policies and services are supported through social policy programs at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. However, as noted by Stodolska and Alexandris (2004), "despite the growing interest in issues of immigrant leisure, this strand of research remains in an early stage of development" (p. 50). Leisure and sport related research pertaining to newcomer populations has generally focused on the nature of immigrants' participation, and the factors influencing that participation, particularly constraints such as discrimination, language, and finances (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Taylor & Frisby, 2010; Taylor & Toohey, 2001; Yu & Berryman, 1996).

2.1. The Role of Leisure and Sport in Community

Research has demonstrated that leisure seems to play a key role in new immigrants' adaptation to stressors and challenges in a new environment (Sharaievska, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004; Tirone, Livingston, Miller, & Smith, 2010). It is readily believed that involvement in sport and physical activity can assist with positive identity construction, social inclusion, and the adaptation processes that recent immigrant youth face (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003). However, there is actually very little tangible evidence, beyond anecdotes and inconclusive research that demonstrates sport has the potential to fulfill this role in communities.

In the European context, Amara, Aquilina, Henry and Taylor (2004) demonstrated that the contribution of sport, as an instrument of informal education, to the multicultural dialogue between young people is an important element in promoting the integration of recent immigrants. Their research provided some evidence that sport can play a role in breaking the state of isolation and depression that newcomers go through during their settlement processes. While there is some evidence to suggest that sport and leisure can play a role in adaptation processes of newcomers, research also

demonstrates that newcomers typically are significantly less involved in physical activity. The Canadian Community Health Surveys (Ali, McDermott, & Gravel, 2004; O'Driscoll, Banting, Borkoles, Eime, & Polman, 2013) confirmed lower levels of physical activity undertaken in leisure time by immigrants compared with non-immigrants, and a decline in immigrant health status directly related to socioeconomic, political, and cultural transitions (Frisby, 2011).

All too often, immigrants are blamed for their lack of participation, which ignores the constraints to participation for those who may be unfamiliar with policies and delivery systems in the sport and recreation sectors. Frisby (2011) also noted that new immigrants often face barriers to participation including language, culture of gender, and class variations. Further, the lack of pathways to participation is a significant deterrent to participation and thus finding ways to bring immigrants together around leisure opportunities is fundamental to successful engagement in physical activity. In the international context, there has recently been much attention focused on programs that work to use sport for development and/or peace (Coalter, 2013; Kidd, 2008). Indeed, around the world, sport-based programs are used to facilitate a variety of outcomes, some of which include peaceful coexistence (e.g., the Football 4 Peace Program in Israel/Palestine; Sugden, 2006). While these programs often seek to accomplish ambitious goals, there are also many criticisms around practices of monitoring and evaluating outcomes of these programs as well as their neo-imperialist nature (see Coalter, 2013). For example, Darnell (2010) purported that the philosophical (neo-liberal) underpinnings of international development through sport programs work without questioning social, cultural, and political contexts which preclude the very inequalities that these programs seek to address, thus making them less effective for promoting "development" or "social change". While less attention has been given to similar programs that seek to facilitate social outcomes in developed countries, such as the Community Cup, comparable critiques can be applied to leisure services agencies whose operational practices (e.g., focusing on revenue production and promotion of customer loyalty) prevent them from meeting the needs of disenfranchised groups (Scott, 2000). Similarly, Kelly (2011) discussed the effectiveness of sport-based social inclusion interventions in the United Kingdom, noting the limited effect that sport based interventions have on decreasing social exclusion, as well as their risk in de-emphasizing social inequalities and highlighting personal deficits. In order to situate the program and our research, we elaborate on the Canadian context in which the program operates.

2.2. Canadian Political Context

Canada was the first country in the world to adopt a Multiculturalism Policy (Government of Canada, 2013). The Federal Government's approach to diversity has evolved over the years and is embedded within a broad policy and legislative framework. Multiculturalism is about ensuring that citizens are empowered to retain their ethnic identities, take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging in their new communities. In recent years, there has been a shift in the rhetoric of immigration policies focusing on multiculturalism whereby there is a much greater expectation that the arrival of people and their integration into Canada maximizes their contribution to the country while protecting the health, safety, and security of Canadians (Government of Canada, 2013). The focus of multiculturalism policy in Canada has been about preservation of racial and ethnic identities ensuring support for all cultures, assisting newcomers in navigating constraints to participation in society, and promoting opportunities for experiencing socially inclusive activities. Thus, sport and leisure constitute an area to which Canadians with diverse backgrounds should have equitable access.

In Canada, the Multiculturalism Act (Government of Canada, 1998) is a guiding framework for integration and inclusion of newcomers to Canada. In essence, this act is about recognizing and promoting the understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity of Canadian society, while acknowledging the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance, and share their cultural heritage. Foundational to this opportunity is the promotion of full and equitable participation of individuals in society, and attempts to remove barriers to participation. This approach is distinctive in that it recognizes the existence of communities whose members share a common origin and encourages social, cultural, economic, and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada's multicultural character. This approach may include encouraging understanding and creativity through respectful interactions to promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of cultures. In this way, it would seem vital to ensure that there are specific opportunities for newcomers to interact and celebrate their culture while learning about opportunities for better integration into Canadian societies (Government of Canada, 1998).

2.3. Social Inclusion

Given the aforementioned discussion of multiculturalism in Canada, it seems logical to utilize the theoretical notion of social inclusion to frame our analysis. Importantly, when social inclusion theory is considered in relation to multiculturalism policy, it takes on a number of different meanings. The processes of social inclusion can also be understood in the context of integration and individual freedoms, which allows for the development of new skills and knowledge about the new

country. In the context of sport and recreation, Kelly (2011) discussed the limited effectiveness of sport-based intervention in providing pathways to education and employment in the UK, and cautioned against the ways that these individualized programs risk problematizing individual deficits rather than addressing structural inequalities. In regards to sport organizations, Doherty and Chelladurai (1999) have advocated for an organizational culture of diversity which encourages and celebrates unique cultural positions within an organization, as opposed to traditional organizational cultures of similarity that promote assimilation to an expected norm. This culture of diversity is proposed as an avenue for sports organizations to diversify their operations and support the inclusion of diverse perspectives. Interestingly, the two aforementioned examples (Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999; Kelly, 2011) highlight the importance of considering the individual as well as the environment when discussing social inclusion and diverse groups of people.

In regards to acculturation, Berry (1992) noted two important issues (which can be considered at the individual or environmental level) faced by migrants that may contribute to acculturative stress: (a) the importance of retaining ethnic distinctiveness, and (b) the desirability of inter-ethnic and societal connectivity. Further, the acculturation process can be understood at three different levels: a) psychological; b) sociocultural; and c) economic. It is then not only about one level of adaptation but about how individuals find good health, well being and sense of self, and how they are able to navigate society in a productive and supported manner. This process is also mediated by the ability to find satisfactory financial security. As Berry pointed out, together different experiences in adaptation will influence the overall acculturation process. Thus, in order to facilitate an inclusive environment that reflects an integrative approach to acculturation, a desire to both maintain ethnic distinctiveness, and interact with other ethnic groups should be facilitated and encouraged, along with considering the dynamic and multifaceted nature of acculturation. While programs that align with this approach to acculturation reflect the current policy approach to multiculturalism in Canada, it is important to note that it is not necessarily an ideal approach for all individuals or communities. For example, a program that encourages an integrative approach to acculturation may not be effective for individuals/communities that do not value or support inter-ethnic and societal contact. This sort of misalignment may result in varying adaptation/acculturation experiences, which will not lead to the intended experience of integration. While facilitating an integrative approach to acculturation may be effective for some individuals in some communities, it is clear from the literature reviewed above that single approach programs are likely to experience limited success in reaching all newcomers effectively.

In regards to sport and recreation Donnelly and Coakley (2002) drew upon the well-recognized five cornerstones of inclusion: (1) valued recognition, (2) human development, (3) involvement and engagement, (4) proximity, and (5) material well-being. Valued recognition refers to the acknowledgment and respect of individual and group distinctiveness, while human development refers to the encouragement of diverse talents, skills, capacities, and choices and their recognition as worthwhile (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Involvement and engagement refers to ensuring the necessary support and encouragement for individuals to be involved in decision-making processes that have implications for themselves, their families, and their communities. Proximity is discussed as the opportunity for individuals and groups to interact in shared social and physical spaces, and material well-being refers to the condition of having the resources available to fully participate in community life (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). It is important to note that these cornerstones are guidelines proposed to promote social inclusion in the sense that they will not promote social exclusion. Indeed, it is necessary to distinguish the differences between inclusive programming and that which promotes social inclusion and/or integration. While these cornerstones for inclusion do not map directly onto modern sport practices (i.e., simply engaging in sport does not facilitate inclusion), we argue below that the innovative structure of the Community Cup event lends to a discussion of all five of these cornerstones, consequently enabling a platform (inclusive sport experiences), where an integrative approach to acculturation may then be realized in a sport context. In order to assess this possibility, we employed a case study methodology to examine the potential of sport to facilitate inclusion by exploring the conditions created by the Community Cup Soccer Tournament and the resulting newcomer participants' experiences at the event.

3. Methodology

For this study, we utilized an intrinsic case study methodology and thus employed multiple methods to collect data (Yin, 2014). These methods included overt participant observation at the Community Cup, document analysis of Community Cup materials, as well as semi-structured and focus group interviews with organizers, volunteers, and participants of the event.

The first author participated in the 2012 Community Cup event in Ottawa, Ontario, (the original and most established event location) as a volunteer and subsequently remained with the organization, acting in a support role for the planning of other programming (not the soccer tournament) throughout 2013. The second author observed the 2013 event in London, Ontario (a pilot site for the expansion of the event) as a spectator. In both cases, the authors engaged in overt

participant observation of the event and the day's activities. Observing two separate events in different cities allowed for a rich discussion of the diverse management practices and their impact on the potential for these events to produce positive social change, that is, to facilitate the acculturation process of newcomers. It should be noted that while we observed the event in London, the data we discuss here is focused only on the Ottawa event due the nature and structure of the events. The third author is the program manager of the Community Cup and was involved throughout the research design, data collection, and analysis processes. Throughout the organizing process, the authors conducted document analysis of Community Cup material including, but not limited to: promotional material (flyers, brochures, web pages, social media, etc.), meeting minutes, volunteer manuals and resources, as well as past evaluations and assessments (conducted by the host organization).

Following the 2013 event, we also interviewed organizers, volunteers, and participants of the Community Cup. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two staff assigned to the Community Cup, one of which was the founder and manager of the event. In these interviews, we discussed the structure and organization of the tournament, the role and impact of sport and recreation opportunities for newcomers, as well as the intricacies of working with newcomer populations, both generally and specifically in regards to sport and recreation. Focus groups were also conducted with nine newcomers (eight of whom were immigrants and one refugee) who were involved with the Community Cup in various capacities including players (n = 3), volunteers (n = 5), and a coach (who runs a pick up soccer program for newcomer youth and organizes one or two teams each year for the event). Participants were recruited based on availability and included six males and three females originating from a variety of geographical locations (Burundi, Russia, China, Argentina, Algeria, the United Kingdom, Somalia, and Senegal). Although the Community Cup focuses specifically on newcomers within their first three years in Canada, in recruiting these participants, we did not limit our search so as to gain representation of a variety of newcomers who could speak to the role of sport and recreation at different stages of the acculturation process. Thus, our participants included four newcomers in their first year in Canada, one who came between one and three years prior to the interview, and four newcomers who lived in Canada for more than three years. The newcomer participants included students (who had immigrated with their families), recent immigrants, as well as one refugee. In these focus groups, we discussed sport and recreation in different contexts (country of origin vs. in Canada), the role of sport and recreation in the adaptation/acculturation process, as well as the newcomers' experiences with the Community Cup. Following the interviews, all data were compiled and subjected to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For our analysis, the first author coded transcripts from the interviews and focus groups as well as notes taken during observations. From these codes the first author then established higher order themes (e.g., organizational practices, sport participation, etc.). These themes were then verified and discussed by the second and third authors in relation to their experience, observations, and the previously reviewed literature. This process also allowed us to assign these themes clear and concise names that were reflective of the data collected. As a final step we selected the most meaningful excerpts from the transcripts and notes that reflected the data collected.

We would also like to make a brief note regarding some of the difficulties we faced in recruiting newcomer participants for this study. The difficulties we faced are not dissimilar to others who have done research with immigrant populations. For example, Tirone et al.'s (2010) research with immigrant sport key informants in eastern Canada demonstrated similar constraints resulting in a sample of only six. In attempt to alleviate some of the constraints of previous research, we recruited through a targeted exit survey distributed after the 2013 event with verbal confirmation of participants. Despite scheduling and confirming participants, we had a turnout of less than ten percent. Subsequently, we had more success in recruiting participants through a snowball sampling method (which lead to four participants attending focus groups on the same-day that they were called) and then by organizing a game of pickup soccer in a local park (where we recruited another four participants), the latter of which was suggested by the Community Cup organizers. We raise this point in order to highlight the tensions that arise between "gold-standard" procedures (e.g., random sampling) and the realities of working with diverse populations. While recruiting from the entire pool of newcomer participants at the tournament would seem to be the most appropriate method of recruitment, it proved to be largely ineffective. It should be noted that creative recruitment strategies developed with input from the communities in which the research is happening proved to be more effective. While some may criticize these recruitment strategies, as they do not provide a "representative" or adequate sample, we argue that this was necessary to recruit any sample at all. In order to mitigate some of the shortcomings in sampling, we have attempted to provide rich insights into participants' experiences through a contextualization of interviews by including extensive descriptions of the program management and the way that these practices relate to participants experiences. Furthermore, themes that emerged from the data collected regarding participant experiences were discussed with the program staff, who in many cases had developed close

relationships with program participants, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the data collected. While program staff and participants were familiar with each other, the data were discussed in general rather than in relation to specific cases (in the interest of confidentiality). Given the exploratory nature of this study, the sample that we obtained along with the observational and document data collected was deemed sufficient to explore our research objectives.

4. The Community Cup Event: Organizational Characteristics

Given many of the unique characteristics of the Community Cup, we feel that it is pertinent to include a brief description of the history, structure, and current operating and organizational practices of the event and organization. This information is crucial to understand as it maps directly on to what many of the participants highlighted as important aspects of the tournament that influenced their experiences with the event and consequently their acculturation in Canadian society.

4.1. Origin and History

The Community Cup soccer tournament was first organized in 2005. Originally, the event was conceived to remedy a shortage of local male mentors in a buddy program that matched newcomers with locals to create social networks. A sport event was perceived as a valuable way to create social opportunities between newcomers and local residents without the "awkward feelings of commitment" (Program Manager). As the event developed into an annual tournament and newcomers became engaged in the planning process, a common trend was noted in that newcomers often devoted the majority of their available time to writing resumes and searching for new/better employment while neglecting important social and physical health promoting activities such as sport and/or exercise. As described by the Program Manager newcomers indicated that they had "no time to "selfishly" spend on sports." Thus, the Community Cup was organized as a way of connecting these newcomers to local professionals, adding experience to their resumes, and encouraging participation in sport in a friendly and welcoming environment that would enhance their professional opportunities. After the tournament developed into an annual event, the Community Cup's capacity broadened to include connecting newcomers not only to local professionals, but also to a variety of local sport and recreation organizations and opportunities, while also providing many newcomers with volunteer opportunities through the organization of the event, a valuable asset for those looking to improve their resume. As noted in the program's funding agreement:

> The project will use community engagement activities to: expand social networks for immigrants and refugees; actively promote civic participation of newcomers as volunteers; increase the capacity of organizations to create partnerships; use public spaces to facilitate the integration of newcomers and the community-at-large; use shared interests to engage people with dissimilar backgrounds.

In order to achieve these ambitious goals, the Community Cup adopted some innovative management practices and organizational features.

4.2. Structure and Organization

An interesting characteristic of the Community Cup is that the organization strives to achieve its goal of connecting newcomers not only through participation in sport, but also through the organization of the sporting event. The Community Cup is organized each year by over 20 planning teams, each of which is required to have at least one newcomer and one local volunteer, and ideally a post-secondary student. These planning teams work together, meeting and communicating for an average of six months on specific tasks and key aspects of the event's organization. All participants are residents of Ottawa and have access to meeting rooms in the centre where the Community Cup is located. These tasks and projects require that planning teams work together, and develop relationships with each other, as well as with other community members and organizations, thus achieving the goal of connecting participants through the volunteer process. It must also be noted, that in order to recruit and manage this number of volunteers, particularly from such an unpredictable demographic (i.e., always changing, varying levels of education/experience/language skills, having many other priorities), requires an organizational culture that strongly values inclusion and providing a welcoming environment. Indeed, as the reason many newcomers volunteer is to gain experience to eventually find employment, often the success of the program is contingent upon newcomer volunteers not returning as they secure employment and no longer have the motivation or time to invest in the program. That is, in an ideal scenario, a Newcomer who volunteers with the Community Cup to get experience in order to obtain employment, and then obtains this employment, will no longer volunteer and therefore exit the program achieving the desired outcome. Therefore, the success of the program is often inversely proportional to the number of returning volunteers, contrary to traditional organizational models, which rely on volunteer retention and repeat customers. Without the dedication to non-judgmental and friendly organizational practices, success in recruiting and engaging these volunteers would prove extremely difficult.

Another unique characteristic of the Community Cup is the way that the sport is played during the tournament. The rules of the tournament also reinforce the Community Cup's values of being a welcoming and inclusive organization. Rather than standard soccer rules, there are several variations that are made to the version of the sport played at the Community Cup. Firstly, games are played on a field half the size of a standard pitch, teams field seven players at a time, two of which must identify as female, and the nets are small practice nets, thus eliminating the keeper position. There are also no formal referees for games played at the Community Cup, rather two volunteers are assigned as judges who award each team spirit points for their style of play and attitude throughout the match. In order to reinforce the importance of friendly play, interaction, and positive attitudes, the outcome of each match is based predominately on the number of spirit points a team earns; whereas scoring more goals can earn a team up to five points, the way they play the game can earn them up to another five points. Therefore, the way the game is played is equally as important as the number of goals scored. This scoring method allows teams with less experience, skill, or physical prowess to excel in the game and further reinforces the goals of the Community Cup. Tournament participants may register to play as a team or as an individual and be placed on a team, and in fact, many corporate organizations register teams with fewer players than required and request to have individual newcomers added to their team in the spirit of the event. The result of these unorthodox characteristics is a unique event that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism through sport, recreation, and play. Furthermore, the event also hosts a community tent where sport and volunteer organizations are invited to set up booths in order to reach out and connect with the newcomers and all community members on site. Given the unique approach used by the Community Cup, the event provides an interesting platform for the discussion of the role of sport in the acculturation process and the potential of sport to facilitate social inclusion. In order to discuss these topics, we turn to the experiences of event participants.

5. The Community Cup Event: Participant Experiences

Following thematic analysis of the focus group and semi-structured interviews, we identified two main themes in the data. Firstly, participants discussed explicit differences in sporting practices in different contexts. Secondly, participants spoke of the unique characteristics of the Community Cup related to the role that the tournament played in the acculturation process. Note that we made every effort to preserve the voices of our participants in these results. As the focus of this research is inclusion, it is necessary that we explicitly note that we felt it more appropriate that participants' voices were heard, despite the language and use of grammar therein. Therefore, direct quotes were maintained despite their length and the sometimes cumbersome use of language.

5.1. Sporting Practices in Different Contexts

Notably, participants discussed the remarkable differences in sporting practice between Canada and their countries of origin. Some participants felt that the Canadian way of participating in sport was overly structured and thus made it more difficult to find ways to participate prior to involvement in the event:

> A big difference you know, because in my country, like in Senegal, you can play soccer anywhere you want…the difference I have seen here is…here people, you know, they pay [for] their kids to go play soccer…the whole day we are soccer lovers. So I was doing it like every day, but since I get here I am kind of like, I have no way to do it. So its a big difference…you can just walk outside with a ball and you don't need that kind of special ground or the field for it, you know what I'm saying. You can do it anywhere, and any time you feel like it (Eric, Volunteer).

While the constraints to participation in overly structured environments was a concern by many participants, others noted that there were in fact more opportunities to participate in Canada due to a different lifestyle:

> Because over there, there is no more time for these activities, you know…you were always walking or looking for money. But when I come here, I discover that there is more fun, more activities, and I got involved more on soccer (Allison, Player).

In a similar vein, another participant who lived in Canada for an extended amount of time noted that there is more support for individuals to participate in sports in Canada, as long as they know where to seek it out which proved a constraint without the guidance of an event such as the Community Cup. Many of the participants discussed the financial constraints of broader participation in sport but saw the event as a means of engaging in activities and finding the pathways. The availability of sport more broadly in Canada was important, but certainly without the avenues to discover these opportunities, participants would struggle with participation:

> There is more available for you to do [here in Canada]. For example, you can find ways if you can't afford the sport, you can find a way to help pay for it here. Whereas back in Russia, you can't. If you

> don't have the money you won't be able to play. That's kind of how it is (Emily, Volunteer).

It is clearly expressed by these participants that access to sport and recreational practices varies greatly in different contexts, and this event provided an opportunity to consider the points of access in the Canadian setting. Furthermore, individual characteristics within these situations will also impact whether or not individuals will perceive sport systems as more or less accessible. While for some, like Eric, structured sport in Canada sets up a barrier to participation, others, like Allison perceived this structure in a positive light, making these opportunities more accessible. Nonetheless, the tournament was a viewed as a way to negotiate the access issues and overcome some of the constraints.

5.2. The Role of the Community Cup

Participants also discussed the various roles that the Community Cup played in their social lives and acculturation processes. Importantly, soccer was identified as a "common interest" that allowed participants to relate to one another and the Community Cup event provided a space for participants to engage with each other and their community. As noted by Jackson (Player) "they like soccer, you like soccer…there are so many things to talk about!" In another particularly positive example, Eric (Volunteer) summed up his experience with the Community Cup as follows:

> You know, newcomers, when we come to Canada…, we have a different point of view before we get to the country. You know what I'm saying. So once they get here, its something else…In my case I was ready to say…you know I think I made a big mistake of…stopping here man. You know, it's just like, you come to the country and you're going back to school. Can you imagine, you feel you have to start again at a low level? No matter, you can bring your resume, you know I did this, I did this, and they say you know what? You don't have a Canadian experience. You know, that really starts to knock you off. But once you start socializing with people, being involved with programs, such lovely programs as the Community Cup, they make you forget about that negative aspect you had you know…Once I met those guys at the tournament, I am feeling myself to be at home. (Eric, Volunteer)

Other newcomers used their experience at the Community Cup specifically to gain this "Canadian experience". Dawson (Volunteer) described the way in which he learned social norms through his work with the Community Cup, which he hopes in the future will help him find employment:

> I am searching for jobs and Canadian experience is something that we really need. And you need to have references and, well, this was a way to get my Canadian experience…For me it's more to know the Canadian approach in the workplace. It's the structure, the way that Canadians relate to each other, we have a difference approach in Argentina. It's cultural, and it's not completely different, it's very close but there are some subtle details that it's good to know. Personal space, when you ask a question well that's a personal question, [or] it's not a personal question. In Argentina we ask a question, people can answer, or no, or they change the subject. Here you have to be careful because personal questions, people get really invaded. So, I don't know, you have to manage that space better, and that was good to know (Dawson, Volunteer).

Finally, other participants perceived their engagement with the tournament as a chance to meet people from different cultures and countries. As Canada is understood to be a multicultural place, participants valued this opportunity:

> People come from different countries so you will be able, actually, to know people from different countries. You know, like in Canada, it is very multicultural, like there are countries that I have never seen in my life and I have met people that [come from these countries at the Community Cup] (Jackson, Player).

> The biggest [outcome] I'm gonna say, is giving me the opportunity to meet people from different countries. You know, it was like, in one place you know, buying one ticket and you go all around the world. So the Community Cup make it happen, I have met people from England you know, from Somalia, just in one place. And through that place, you learned a lot because they expose their culture you know, the way they behave the way they exchange…so that was like, it gave me a lot of big experience if I can call it like that (Eric, Volunteer).

While the participants in this study had varied experiences with sport in Canada, they unequivocally valued their experience at the Community Cup tournament for the opportunity to interact with other newcomers from different cultures in a welcoming environment. It was also noted however, that not all participants understood the premise of the event, nor did they enjoy their experience with the tournament. This was illustrated by the following example:

> It's a different spirit. I invite a newcomer from Peru and he was annoyed because…he said well, he

> wasn't expecting this kind of tournament. He wanted something more competitive. And I said well, you haven't read the materials or you haven't listened to me when I explain to you what kind of tournament it was. So you came to the wrong place if you were looking for that (Dawson, Volunteer).

The Community Cup's unique approach is clearly highlighted from the aforementioned quotations. While sport in general played diverse roles in the acculturation process of newcomers, the Community Cup provides a unique site which may facilitate the inclusion of newcomers both on and off the field of play. The results demonstrate the unique role of this small participatory event in impacting the acculturation of newcomers in one Canadian community.

6. Discussion

The Community Cup presents an interesting case where not only the event in and of itself but also the organizational structure facilitates meaningful experiences for the participants. Here, we return to our two research objectives as they relate to the organizational structure and the context of the event: (a) the role of sport in facilitating inclusion, and (b) the role of the event in the acculturation process of newcomers.

6.1. Sport and Social Inclusion

In the focus groups, participants discussed varying experiences with sport since coming to Canada. While some felt that the very structured nature of sport participation in Canada represented a barrier to participation, others felt that it made opportunities to participate more obvious and accessible. These contradictory responses speak to the notion that sport, in and of itself, is not a sufficient condition to promote inclusion (Coalter, 2013; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). That is, offering opportunities to participate in sport (through minor sports associations, drop-in leagues, tournaments, etc.) is likely inadequate to effectively impact the inclusion or acculturation processes of newcomers as these opportunities are not accessed or sometimes even perceived as opportunities by all newcomers. This is partly due to the varied understandings of sport and how it can and should be played. As noted by Eric (Volunteer), he was accustomed to an environment where "you can just walk outside with a ball" and play without needing "special ground or the field for it". Consequently, if sport is undertaken with the goal of a producing a specific social outcome (such as inclusion or integration), it must be intentionally crafted to produce this outcome and targeted for the specific audience, which the outcome is intended to affect. Thus the spatial dimension of a participatory event is vital in bringing potential participants together to foster increased participation.

Most notably, participants articulated very clearly that sport, and specifically soccer was valued as it was "common interest" that allowed them to connect to each other as well as locals both on and off the pitch. While this is far from the rhetorical claims of a "universal language" or a "level playing field," the importance of a commonality that two people can easily discuss when the end goal of the activity is making connections and promoting social interactions should not be undervalued. This is particularly salient when many participants may not fluently speak either of the official languages, potentially preventing full social participation in society. Consequently, and not surprisingly, the value placed on this common interest was of high importance to our participants. Furthermore, the identification of soccer as it is played at the Community Cup as a common interest also suggests that soccer itself is a fluid construction. Many individuals, newcomers or otherwise, would argue that the version of soccer played at the Community Cup is not a "sport" in its common understanding, but rather a "soft" version of the game. This approach in using play as sport aligns with the approaches used by many sport for development and/or peace organizations seeking to produce social change in international contexts (Coalter, 2013). While it was noted by Dawson (Volunteer), that some participants do not enjoy this version of the game, he attributed this discontent with a failure of the participant to align his goals in participating with the goals of the Community Cup, that is, the participant wanted to play for competition while this event provides an opportunity to play for social connections. The understanding of the Community Cup version of soccer as a "common interest" between participants who are consumers (players, fans, supporters) of the professionalized game demonstrates that the sport can be understood and constructed in various, fluid forms to serve the interests of its consumers. This is an important consideration when discussing the role of sport in inclusion as it disrupts our understanding of sport and the way that it may be applied to produce social outcomes. As participants valued the alternative form of soccer and equated it with the more commonly practiced version of the game (in turn using it to connect with others), this alternative version may be a useful way of promoting shared physical and social spaces. While this shared space maps directly onto the "proximity" cornerstone of social inclusion (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002), this is one of the few direct links that can be made between the act of participating in sport and these cornerstones. It is through the act of organizing the event, as we will demonstrate in the following section, that the tournament relates most directly to conceptualizations of inclusion, which we argue has the biggest influence newcomer on participants in terms of a multi-level understanding of adaptation/integration.

6.2. Organizational Practices

In order to effectively examine the role of the Community Cup in the acculturation processes of newcomer participants, there are two groups of these participants that must be distinguished: the players and the volunteers. Despite the small number of participants in each group, the insights provided by these groups offers an avenue for important discussion as well as the direction for further research. As such, here we discuss the role that the event played in the acculturation processes of these two groups of participants while considering the five cornerstones of inclusion (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002) as well as how they related to the identified strategies of acculturation (Berry, 1992). In moving into this discussion it is important to note that our focus will shift away from the sport aspect of the Community Cup and more towards the event and its management in general. As this event clearly fits the "plus sport" model identified by (Coalter, 2007), utilizing sport as the hook to attract participants but then explicitly aiming to produce social outcomes, we must consider the event more broadly to fully understand the outcomes it may be producing.

Player participants. For players in the Community Cup, it was noted that the event provided an opportunity to create social networks in a welcoming, friendly, and multicultural sport environment. Furthermore, players appreciated the opportunity to learn about Canadian society and the various cultures and national identities. We interpret this appreciation in regards to the cornerstones of valued recognition and proximity. As participants acknowledged and appreciated the celebration of multiculturalism that is characteristic of the Community Cup, it is apparent that they feel comfortable maintaining and expressing their own ethnic distinctiveness and also value the interactions among ethnic groups that this celebration affords. According to Berry's (1992) framework for understanding strategies of adaptation, these two characteristics are indicative of an integration approach to acculturation, which allows for "a selective adoption of behaviour from the repertoires of the two societies" (p. 74). This acknowledgement and encouragement of individuals to express and celebrate their distinctiveness is also indicative of the cornerstone of valued recognition (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Furthermore, as noted above, the shared physical space of the tournament venue as well as the shared social space of play and the common interest of sport/soccer allow the cornerstone of proximity to be enabled through participation in the Community Cup. Given the comments expressing appreciation for the multicultural environment of the Community Cup, we suspect that the event reifies newcomers' perceptions of Canadian society as a welcoming and multicultural entity. Thus, by foregrounding the discussion of the event itself rather than the sport practice undertaken, we can begin to understand how the dramaturgy and liminality (Lugosi, Walls, Ziakas, & Boukas, 2013) created around an event can be an important factor in producing social outcomes such as integration. Furthermore, through examining these participants experiences, it appears that valued recognition and proximity (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002) are understood to be vital for creating an inclusive environment that may promote the integration (Berry, 1992) of newcomers in a sporting context. While these outcomes for player participants are interesting and important, they are less remarkable than the implications for volunteers involved with the event.

Volunteer participants. The five volunteer participants in this study occupied a variety of roles in the event from supporting community organizations in the community tent to playing active roles on the planning teams. One participant even wrote a theme song for the event (*Community Cup, We are a Big Family*); an aspect that he felt was missing from the celebratory experience. What may or may not have been apparent to volunteer participants, but which was made explicit to us by program administrators was that these participants where selectively placed in these roles based on their skills, abilities, and the potential for the event to offer them the most benefit. The loosely structured event and organizing practices allow for the administrators to place newcomers into a variety of different roles, and even create roles for newcomers, based on what is most realistic for their needs and abilities. Paired with the welcoming and accepting culture, this aspect of the organization allows structured organizational processes to adapt and change to meet the needs and desires of its participant volunteers, thus ostensibly embodying a culture of diversity (Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999). While this practice is not made explicit in any of the program documents, we feel that it is a redeeming practice that affords the organization the ability to meet the very diverse needs and interests of the many participants it encounters. Of course, these practices are also accompanied by downfalls. While there are no official statistics to report, the administrators do not count on a high numbers of volunteers to remain committed to positions for the duration of the event. As Doherty and Chelladurai (1999) noted, there are inefficiencies of working in diverse environments in sport organizations. Nonetheless, encouraging and embracing diversity entails tolerating challenges of these inefficiencies as they continue to adjust, adapt, and compensate accordingly in order to work with as many participant volunteers as possible.

We argue that the volunteer engagement practices of the Community Cup seem to procure feelings of valued recognition, human development, involvement and engagement, as well as (in some cases) material well-being. The recruitment and screening process of volunteers is quite openly non-exclusive, and volunteer

positions are ostensibly flexible in order to meet the diverse needs and abilities of participants. This flexibility provides a sense of valued recognition in that it respects the distinctiveness of participants and values their input no matter how small it may seem in relation to the larger event. Similarly, the Community Cup encourages the contribution of diverse talents that newcomers bring to the organization (human development). A prime example of this is the participant who composed the theme song for the 2013 event. While the administrators may have never thought that it would be important to develop this aspect of the event, they embraced the contribution. Furthermore the process of including newcomers in the decision-making processes involved in all aspects of organizing the event is indicative of the cornerstone of involvement and engagement. Finally, as noted by Dawson (Volunteer), the Canadian experience gained through volunteering at the Community Cup was important for him not only to build his resume, but also to learn social conventions and workplace norms that would aid him in finding employment. Thus, his experience with the Community Cup was perceived to be actively contributing to his process of achieving material well-being. By valuing participants' diverse contributions to the organization as well as providing them with an opportunity to benefit from interacting with locals and other newcomers through the process of organizing the event, it is apparent that the Community Cup provides an environment that supports volunteer participants in maintaining their distinctive ethnicities and valuing interaction with individuals of other ethnicities. Thus, as noted above for player participants, volunteer participants are also afforded the opportunity for an integration strategy of acculturation (Berry, 1992) should they choose to pursue this avenue.

While there are clearly many layers to participants' diverse experiences with the Community Cup event, we argue that these experiences (and consequently the outcomes stemming from them) can be discussed in relation to all five of the cornerstones of inclusion (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Furthermore, the event offers both players and volunteers the opportunity to maintain and celebrate their distinctive ethnicities while valuing interactions with other ethnicities. Consequently, the event offers a platform for all participants to pursue an integration strategy of acculturation, which is appropriate for acculturation into an ostensibly multicultural society (Berry, 1992) and endorsed by the Canadian policy on Multiculturalism (Government of Canada, 1998). Based on participants' experiences with the event, it is also apparent that engaged newcomers are effectually taking advantage of the aspects of the event that may influence the acculturation process. However, it must also be noted that this approach to acculturation is not necessarily effective for every individual. Consequently, while this research, in some ways, validates Donnelly and Coakley's (2002) "five cornerstone" approach to social inclusion for an integration approach to acculturation, it may not necessarily be effective for newcomers experiencing separation, marginalization, or assimilation. Indeed, diverse contexts and individual characteristics must be considered in order to craft appropriately inclusive sport and play experiences for different communities and individuals.

7. Conclusion and Future Directions

The Community Cup event offers a unique case study through which we can begin to unpack the complex processes involved in attempting to use sport to facilitate the inclusion of newcomers to Canada. While it is important to note that our analysis provided above is limited by the scope of the study, it nonetheless offers important insights into the role of a small-scale participatory sport event in the process of acculturation. We do not wish to generalize these findings to the experience of all participants. Indeed, it is likely that our participants were among the most positively affected by attending and participating in the event. However, rather than dwelling on this as a limitation, we wish to emphasize the importance of understanding how this event was successful in affecting these individuals' experiences of acculturation through the lens of social inclusion. We highlight this focus assuming that if we can provide a thorough understanding of the conditions and circumstances in which the event has positively influenced the acculturation process of some newcomers, we will be able to generate discussion and a better understanding of how we can craft future opportunities to produce similar outcomes for other newcomers and potentially other marginalized populations. Furthermore, we call on other researchers to also begin to broaden future analyses to the organization and broader experience of sport events and programs attempting to produce social outcomes. Indeed, it has been repeatedly stressed in the literature and confirmed in this research that sport in itself is not a sufficient condition to produce social change. Yet, we continue to interrogate and examine sport opportunities for the potential to produce these outcomes. We argue that future research should shift their focus away from the sport itself and to the broader organizational and engagement practices that may allow many events to produce tangible and important social outcomes and consequently develop and perpetuate a privileged status in current societies. Such research may have wide-reaching implications and the potential to inform program design, volunteer management, and event leveraging strategies. In relation to social inclusion and acculturation, further inquiry may consider the relationship(s) between inclusion strategies (e.g., the five cornerstones), adaptation and acculturation strategies (Berry, 1992), and sport experiences to deter-

mine more clearly how organizations can produce social outcomes in diverse contexts. Finally, in order to fully understand the production of social outcomes through sport events and programs, future inquiry should consider the compatibility of sport and diverse worldviews and philosophies in ostensibly multicultural states. As the discussion of multiculturalism and sport remains underdeveloped, we will continue to have an underdeveloped understanding of the potential of sport to promote inclusion and influence the acculturation process. However, we hope that this contribution provides a platform for future research to examine these intersections more thoroughly as they are important considerations for future policy, program, and partnership development strategies.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Multiculturalism, Gender and *Bend it Like Beckham*

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Abstract
In this article, we explore the efficacy of sport as an instrument for social inclusion through an analysis of the film *Bend it Like Beckham*. The film argues for the potential of sport to foster a more inclusive society in terms of multiculturalism and gender equity by showing how a hybrid culture can be forged through the microcosm of an English young women's football club, while simultaneously challenging assumptions about traditional masculinities and femininities. Yet, despite appearances, *Bend it Like Beckham* does little to challenge the structure of English society. Ultimately, the version of multiculturalism offered by the film is one of assimilation to a utopian English norm. This conception appears progressive in its availability to all Britons regardless of ethnicity, but falls short of conceptions of hybrid identity that do not privilege one hegemonic culture over others. Likewise, although the film presents a feminist veneer, underneath lurks a troubling reassertion of the value of chastity, masculinity, and patriarchy. *Bend it Like Beckham* thus provides an instructive case study for the potential of sport as a site of social inclusion because it reveals how seductive it is to imagine that structural inequalities can be overcome through involvement in teams.

Keywords
film; gender; multiculturalism; sport

Issue
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1. Introduction

The 2002 film *Bend it Like Beckham* offers perhaps the most sophisticated and nuanced narrative of sport, race, and gender of any recent mainstream picture. This makes the film particularly seductive from an ideological standpoint, for it invites us to share in its vision for a better society. Precisely for this reason, it is incumbent upon more critical viewers of the film to interrogate exactly what lessons the film propagates to its audience, for the film asks important questions about multiculturalism, gender, and sport that must be taken very seriously. Foremost among them is the question of what multiculturalism and gender equity actually look like. The film offers us a vision and it is important to ask whether that vision is one we should collectively aspire to.

In what follows, using a cultural studies approach, we argue that the film ultimately provides an overly triumphalist version of contemporary multicultural society. We do this by examining a variety of the film's underlying assumptions. First, we suggest that like most sports films, *Bend it Like Beckham* operates through the category of "transcendence", framing sport as an arena of opportunity in which structural inequities like racism and patriarchy can be overcome

through hard work and athletic excellence. Second, we argue that the film reinforces the "culture clash" understanding of society, an approach that blames non-hegemonic groups for causing any friction within the liberal society on account of their refusal to fully integrate to the principles and norms of the liberal (white, masculine, heterosexual) state, thereby reasserting the centrality of whiteness and normative femininity, which includes heterosexuality. Third, and relatedly, we contend that the film in part accomplishes this "culture clash" project by completely dismissing traditional Indian femininity. Finally, we argue for an alternative vision of cultural openness as a more productive way to discuss multiculturalism.

2. Context and Rationale

Before examining the film itself, it is worth addressing why we have chosen to write at length about a film from 2002 that is set in a different country from the one in which we currently reside (Canada). We see *Bend it Like Beckham* as having significant value within a discussion of sport and social inclusion for the following reasons. The film, while set in England, serves as a useful discussion point for social inclusion in both the British context and for ex-British settler colonies/nations, such as Canada, due to the somewhat homologous ways in which multiculturalism, official and otherwise, applies in both contexts. Although distinct in the particularities of their histories, nations such as Britain, Canada, and Australia, among others, share a legacy of whiteness, Englishness, and masculinity that has been forced to confront the reality of post-colonial migration from non-white populations across the globe. In each of these countries, the policy of multiculturalism (rather than straight assimilation) has been adopted as a mechanism designed to produce social cohesion (and, we argue, to ultimately preserve the legitimacy of white, masculine hegemony). Second, the film, although over ten years old, still applies to the current context, given the tenacious persistence of racial and gender inequality within Canada and Britain respectively. Third, the film had and still has a significant popular appeal. In fact, as has been noted by Sara Ahmed (2010) it is one of the largest grossing all-British films of all time and received widespread play in places like Canada as well as Britain itself, in the process informing ideas about multiculturalism across the English-speaking world.

Our approach in this paper builds on other treatments of the film, such as those of Michael Giardina (2006) and Sara Ahmed (2010). Both Giardina and Ahmed make similar arguments to our own, by which we mean that they point out the limitations of the film from the point of view of recent trends in cultural studies and critical race theory. Giardina's (2006) main contribution is to point out that the film offers the viewer a vision of "stylish hybridity"—a celebratory version of multiculturalism that ignores the persistent realities of racism within contemporary England. Ahmed (2010) makes a similar claim, although she reads the film within the larger discussion of "happiness" and suggests that the film is based on overlooking structural inequalities in order to offer individual happiness as the way out of racial inequality. Both authors index in their own ways the ultimately neo-liberal orientation of the film, one that celebrates the agency of the individual while paying scant attention to the structural impediments racialized people face in liberal multicultural societies.

This article contributes to and extends the scholarship around *Bend it like Beckkham* in three primary ways. First, we situate the film in the broader context of mainstream film about sport. Second, we approach the film through an intersectional lens in order to demonstrate that the multicultural discourse offered by the film is part of a broader liberal project that elides structural inequity and instead seductively implies that race, gender, and sexuality are categories of identity which can be transcended through membership in the British nation. Our argument here is that in all cases, while the film appears on the surface to be progressive, it provides little in the way of a radical alternative. Third, and perhaps, counterintuitively given the preceding comments, our approach is also to emphasise the *positive* elements of the film. That is, we attempt to highlight the more salutary representational moments in the film as exemplars of the possibility the medium wields to expand the realm of social inclusion.

3. Analytic Framework

3.1. Understanding Multiculturalism

When we think of the word multiculturalism, we often imagine a society where different ethnicities seamlessly live alongside each other. For historically hegemonically white societies such as England and Canada that have been increasingly faced with immigration by non-white populations from around the world, multiculturalism has been understood to offer the perfect solution for how to create a more harmonious and integrated society (e.g., Kymlicka, 1995; Taylor, 1994). The discourse of multiculturalism suggests that racial inequality no longer exists in these societies, as each racial and ethnic group that forms a part of the multicultural mosaic is recognized for its unique value. On a broader scale—in the context of an increasingly cosmopolitan, globalized world, multicultural societies are valued for their diversity (Thobani, 2007). Thus, multiculturalism has come to challenge what it means to be Canadian or English. Yet, while this is an idyllic portrait of the contemporary multicultural society, much of the evidence states that things are not as they appear. In Canada,

England, and Australia, multiculturalism remains a noble ideal more than a lived reality. There are three significant limitations with official multiculturalism (Bannerji, 2000) as practiced in places like Canada and England. First, as overwhelming evidence suggests, racial and economic inequality persists in multicultural societies. This is largely due to the fact that racial inequality stems from economic and political factors that are part of the capitalist and colonialist mode of production. In their book *Racial Oppression in Canada*, Peter Li and B. Singh Bolaria argue that "the oppression of racial groups is by no means a historical accident, but is rooted in the social and economic development of Canadian society" (1988, p. 14). Thus, in spite of the best intentions of some, racial inequality, as with all forms of social inequality, cannot be eliminated without significant attention to the economic and political roots of racism.

Second, instead of alleviating racial inequality, the policy of multiculturalism actually reinforces racial inequality and hierarchy. This is done in two ways. On one hand multiculturalism establishes and maintains the idea of an official "national" culture while relegating "other" cultures to a secondary or marginalized status. This "core" culture is what all must conform or assimilate to with very few exceptions (Coleman, 2006). Canadian cultural theorist Eva Mackey writes: "[A] problem with [multiculturalism], as many have pointed out, is that [it] implicitly constructs the idea of a core English-Canadian culture, and that other cultures become 'multicultural' in relation to that unmarked, yet dominant, Anglo-Canadian core culture" (2002, p. 2). So, in spite of claiming to be multicultural, such societies still retain the idea of a dominant culture. The core culture, as theorists like Mackey and Coleman, have pointed out, is whiteness. For example, many will still claim such a thing as *real* Canadian culture, which, as we have come to know, is symbolized by beer, hockey and Tim Horton's, while British culture is seen as the Union Jack, fish and chips and, once again, beer. Both, in the British and Canadian cases, are shorthand for whiteness.

On the other hand, multiculturalism also reinforces racial hierarchy by purporting to be the antidote to racial inequality. In fact, if one suggests that racial inequality or racism exists in Canada, for example, many are quick to deny those allegations and offer the policy of multiculturalism as proof of racism's absence. As a result of this, it is often difficult to make claims of racism within multicultural societies. Racial inequality is often swept under the rug and the dominant way of discussing ethnicity is via food, music, and costume, for these forms of difference are permitted by the hegemonic nation as long as they are accompanied by a willingness to submit to the society's structural norms (whiteness, capitalism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, etc.) (Ahmed, 2000). This can make it seem as if there are no inherent problems with multiculturalism. As such, whenever problems do arise, this way of looking at things prevents an honest and open examination of the issues. Rather, any problems involving non-white peoples are often blamed on their lack of ability to integrate and abide by the laws of the host society. For example, it is common in Canada and England to hear of the reluctance of non-white populations, be they Chinese, Muslim or any other group, to accept or assimilate to the norms and traditions of the host, or white, society. Commentators who support multiculturalism see any social problems within these societies as an example of "culture clash". This has the effect of continually denying racial inequality as the source of social problems. Multicultural theorist Amita Handa (2003) suggests that while culture clash seems like a plausible explanation for social problems, each culture carries a certain "weight" as it were. In other words, cultures are not equally weighted. As she puts it, Canadian, or "core culture" has "the (relative) social, economic, and political power and representational resources to enforce itself" (p. 5).

The third limitation of multiculturalism is that its idea of culture is very narrow and relies on a number of stereotypes. This is another way of saying that multiculturalism essentializes culture. Culture within multiculturalism is often reduced to food, clothing, dance, and music. When we are asked about Greek culture, many of us know souvlaki and ouzo but are hard pressed to name any Greek poets or the current Greek president. The same is true for Indian culture: we often know it as sweets, saris, and tandoori chicken but we know very little about India beyond this oversimplification. As such, instead of culture, something that is politically, historically, and economically informed, multiculturalism presents a series of caricatures that may seem cute, but do not tell the whole story of a culture or society. More importantly, these multicultural versions of culture are frozen in time. That is, they do not testify to the ways in which all cultures are constantly in flux since culture is historically-constituted rather than natural. Thus, multiculturalism narrows the cultural field and limits the ways in which people from "other" communities can speak. If they don't speak the language of food, music and costume, many are quick to ignore them (Mackey, 2002).

The connection between racial inequality and multiculturalism should become clearer if we look at the economic and political trends that have produced multicultural societies. Contrary to what some might think, policies of multiculturalism were not founded on benevolence. Rather, metropolitan countries such as Canada and England have used immigration in order to meet their labour needs (Sharma, 2006). Thus, the policy of official multiculturalism in Canada is economic and political in origin. According to Himani Bannerji (2000), Canadian multiculturalism actually emerged as

a way to manage the problem of an increasingly disenfranchised population who were asking for increased civil and political rights. Moreover, it was also enacted to dampen the fire of the Quebec separatist movement. Thus, on this level, official multiculturalism was a self-interested national/capitalist project to maintain privilege by the dominant group in society (Handa, 2003, p. 3).

3.2. Film, Sport and Multiculturalism

The significance of representation in this process cannot be overstated (Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011). Images of multiculturalism in popular culture play a significant role in valorizing and legitimizing official multiculturalism. Films and stories of multicultural concordance in popular culture create the illusion that harmony and opportunity are pervasive at a historical moment in which marginalized people—particularly those with fewer economic resources—have increasingly limited opportunities due to neo-liberal policies that prevent the redistribution of wealth and the leveling of the economic playing field.

Moreover, our research shows that mainstream films, especially films about sport, have a relatively coherent structure. As we have argued, this structure's key component is the idea of transcendence. As we wrote (Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011, p. 111):

> There is one dominant feature that links both commercial film and high-performance sport. This feature is the idea of winning or transcendence. Transcendence is a term that refers to going beyond or surpassing all worldly constraints….Most of the films about sport…hold the idea of transcendence as the "carrot" in front of the viewer.

In fact, the notion of transcendence has been particularly prevalent in sports films dealing directly with the issues of "race" and racism, particularly in the context of the United States. Whether it is narrative films such as *Remember the Titans* and *Glory Road*—works of historical fiction—or documentaries such as *Hoop Dreams* and *Through the Fire*, the dominant themes, particularly in such U.S. films, have been that sports provide a mechanism to produce greater racial harmony (by bringing white and black players together) and also to offer impoverished black athletes an avenue to transcend into a higher social class. This is a deeply ideological and obfuscatory gloss on structural racism given that racism is, as Fanon (2004) puts it, "a compartmentalized world, a world divided". Hollywood film attempts to spin race in precisely the opposite way, suggesting instead that sport offers African-Americans a way to move out of this "compartmentalized world" in order to seek a better non-compartmentalised future. Ultimately, it is critical to examine the representational impact of films such as *Bend it Like Beckham* because they oversimplify the efficacy of sport as a site of social inclusion. Sport is simply one social site among many in a given society. If a society is rife with structural inequality, so too will be the sport of that society. Films about sport too often mislead viewers to believe that sport can offer a panacea to these much larger and more complex problems, in the process inducing political complacence. If we are serious about producing genuine social inclusion, we must begin by deconstructing the myth that it has already been achieved.

3.3. Gender in Sport

In addition, our theoretical framework reads gender in sport unlike the bulk of the literature, which tends to universalize the experience of women and girls (as well as men) in sport (Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011). We specifically see gender as an historical category within the sphere of socio-economic relations of production. These specific relations of production include capitalism and neo-colonialism in the current context, but also slavery and colonialism in the past. These events force us to read gender, and all forms of social identity, not as existing alone, but rather as existing in relation to one another, and therefore as being determined not solely by patriarchy (Abdel-Shehid, 2005; Abdel-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011).

4. Research Method

The paper takes the position that cultural studies, in addition to being a theoretical approach, is also a research method. In this sense, our approach to cultural studies borrows from the work of Stuart Hall (1997). Hall argues that the meanings viewers glean from cultural productions are not arbitrary. On the contrary, meaning is anchored by context. When a particular image is persistently coded and disseminated in a specific way in a given a society, that becomes the dominant way of reading the image in question. So, for example, when black men are consistently depicted as criminal, blackness becomes associated with criminality. At a certain point, the image of a black man does not need to be engaged in a criminal act in order to evoke criminality, for this context already exists in the mind of the viewer. Following Hall, we argue that the depiction of multiculturalism and gender in *Bend it Like Beckham* is understood by viewers through the broader prism of multicultural discourse and notions of masculinity and femininity. In a sense, the film is a reassertion of lessons that viewers have already been taught in various ways. This provides the film with tremendous power, for instead of appearing to be one unique perspective on the experience of young women playing football in Britain, it instead reads as a statement of fact about the nature of the world.

5. Film Analysis

It is with all this in mind that we will examine Gurinder Chadha's 2002 motion picture *Bend it Like Beckham*. This film, which was successful in India, as well as in England, Australia, and North America, is an interesting example of popular culture's role in shaping ideas about multiculturalism and gender. On first glance, the film is enjoyable. It contains excellent performances, especially by Anupam Kher (Mr. Bhamra), Parminder Nagra (Jesminder Bhamra) and Keira Knightly (Jules Paxton). In addition, the film has a very nice, lively soundtrack and a wonderfully happy ending. Third, if one has any interest in food, sport, or music, it is hard not to like the film. Like many Bollywood films, it is a feast for the eyes. There are several tantalizing shots of nice Punjabi dishes and, if one has an eye for these things, very athletic young women demonstrating their prowess and having great fun in doing so. Fourth, what makes the film compelling is its subject matter. The issue of second-generation immigrant middle class kids wondering how to negotiate between their family's demands and those of the outside society is a concern for increasingly large portions of the population in places such as England and Canada. While this issue is growing, it receives little attention in popular culture. With all of this, one can ask the question: what's not to like about the film? This is indeed a fair question. What follows is an attempt to look at what the film is saying beneath the music, tasty-looking dishes, and scenes of athletic excellence. Specifically, we will look at the film keeping in mind the critiques of multiculturalism discussed above and ask the question: what message about culture and gender, and by extension, social inclusion, does *Bend it Like Beckham* put forward?

The film is the story of two eighteen year old athletes: Jesminder "Jess" Bhamra and Jules Paxton. Jess comes from a Sikh family living in London. She is an avid footballer, although her exploits are limited to recreational triumphs over her male friends in the park. Early in the film she is discovered by Jules, an Anglo-Saxon Briton from a middle class family who plays for a local women's team called the Hounslow Harriers. The film traces the struggles of both girls to find acceptance as athletes. Jess must overcome the resistance of her family, particularly her mother, who feel both that sports are not an appropriate activity for girls and that Jess should focus her attention on becoming a lawyer. Jules' challenge is to confront her mother's associations of athleticism with masculinity and homosexuality. Ultimately, these conflicts are reconciled, as both young women accept athletic scholarships to attend university in the United States.

Unlike many Hollywood films about sport, *Bend it Like Beckham* seems conscious of its potential social and political impact. The predominant issues dealt with in the film—multiculturalism, gender, and sexuality—each explicitly engages with a form of injustice and offers relatively progressive solutions. Among the film's primary mandates is an attempt to articulate a sophisticated version of multiculturalism that allows for hybrid or blended identities. While there has been significant academic writing on the question of hybridity within multicultural societies, we are not referring to Homi Bhabha's (2004) use of the term, as outlined in the various essays of *The Location of Culture*. Instead, we are indexing something more in line with what Himani Bannerji (2000) calls popular multiculturalism, which refers to the everyday ways that cultures are made anew amidst difference. In other words, its ambition is to show us that the categories "Asian" and "English" are not mutually exclusive. Rather, it seeks to show that Englishness has become a multicultural concept open to people of diverse backgrounds, each of whom in turn comes to inform what it means to be English. Thus, in the film, we see myriad examples of flourishing multiculturalism, from the diverse constitution of the Harriers to Jess' ability to move comfortably at the end of the film from her sister's Indian wedding to a Harriers match and then back again.

Nearly as significant thematically is the film's focus on gender. Historically, sporting activities have generally been considered aspects of masculinity, diametrically opposed to feminine attributes. *Bend it Like Beckham* refuses to accept this understanding. On the contrary, it suggests that women are perfectly capable of competing in sport and that this is an entirely appropriate activity for them to be engaging in. Consequently, throughout the film, viewers are provided with shots of the Harriers playing impressive football. Likewise, they are also shown defying instances of misogyny. Early in the film, three of the South Asian boys Jess is playing with in the park begin making fun of her after she is fouled. One of them asks, "Who does she think she is, Beckham or what?" Another pointedly says to Jess in a sexually suggestive manner while jiggling his chest, "Can you chest it like him? You know, give us some bounce". The third adds, "Chest it Jess, go on". Although these are clearly attempts to reduce Jess to a sexual object, thus negating her performance, she is unperturbed. Instead, she slams the ball in the third player's groin area, suddenly turning him into the object of scorn. Soon after, back in her room at home after she has left the park early to help with chores, she foregrounds gender inequity by saying, "It's not fair, the boys never have to come home to help".

Finally, issues of sexuality are also tackled in a progressive manner in the film. Since the mid 20th century, women involved in sport have often been labeled lesbians. Such claims have not been merely descriptive. Rather, in the homophobic contexts in which they have been delivered, accusations of homosexuality have worked to discourage women from entering public spheres previously reserved for men (Cahn, 1994; Ab-

del-Shehid & Kalman-Lamb, 2011). *Bend it Like Beckham* rightfully challenges homophobia. The most homophobic character in the movie, Jules' mother, is also the most ridiculous. Early in the film, Mrs. Paxton worries that Jules is not feminine enough to attract a boyfriend because of her preoccupation with football. However, midway through the film she overhears an argument between Jules and Jess over their coach Joe. Mrs. Paxton thinks that she has heard her daughter tell Jess that she has broken her heart, when in fact it is Joe that Jules is talking about. This misunderstanding leads Mrs. Paxton to think that her daughter is a lesbian, something she is clearly not comfortable with as she first weeps and then later confronts the girls about it at Jess' sister's wedding. Although this homophobia might appear problematic, its impact is minimized by the fact that it is Jules, not her mother, who has credibility in this film. Jules may be athletic, but she is not a lesbian. Moreover, at the end of the film, after proving to her mother that she is not gay, Jules tells her, "Anyway, being a lesbian is not that big a deal", (cited in Giardina, 2006, p. 49).

Nevertheless, while the film demonstrates some awareness of social inequality, it is clear on closer examination that this critique remains moderate and relatively superficial. Director Chadha does not tell viewers that assimilative nationalism or male dominance in sport are fundamentally problematic; on the contrary, she asks viewers to "bend" these systems in order to create more opportunities for non-white people and women. Thus, by accepting these structures as they are rather than offering alternatives, Chadha reproduces many of their problems.

Although *Bend it Like Beckham* may seem to advocate a more fully-realized form of multiculturalism, one in which individuals can identify as both English and Asian, this progressive vision is undermined and even contradicted by several aspects of the film. In fact, the film reproduces two of the limitations of multiculturalism discussed above. First, we can say that the overall message of the film is actually one of assimilation to a "core culture", which in this case is the white, English norm. Assimilation is what saves Jess Bhamra. Moreover, Jess' sister, Pinky, who agrees with her parents' vision of womanhood, is not taken seriously in the film and dismissed as a fool. The binary between Jess and her sister is one of the main ways the plot of the film is advanced. Jess is represented as modern and therefore serious, while Pinky is represented as traditional and foolish. While we are not advocating either position, we are left asking what the film would have looked like if both sisters were represented in as multidimensional a way as Jess is.

The other area where the film reproduces the limitations of multiculturalism is in its depiction of "Indian culture". The film reduces Indian culture to food, music, and marriage. None of the complexities of Indian culture, or any other culture for that matter, are shown in the film. It is as though the only thing preoccupying South Asians in England is food and wedding plans. While this is true for some, it is certainly not true for all, and the film runs the risk of reproducing stereotypes by not offering a more complex portrait of Indian culture in England. The character of Mrs. Bhamra, Jess' mother, is perhaps the most disturbing in the film. She is represented without any complexity and all of her aspirations come down to food, marriage, and modesty. This is a mythical representation in line with the work of semiotician Roland Barthes. For Barthes, myth is one of the primary ways that bourgeois society reproduces itself. Myth, according to Barthes, is an evacuation of history (1972, p. 118). What he means by this is that ideas and images in capitalist society are depicted in a manner that is divorced from their historical context so that they come to appear natural and timeless. This is a powerful ideological tool, for it forecloses possibilities for resistance against the status quo by suggesting that no other ways of organizing society exist as alternatives. In the language of Barthes, then, Mrs. Bhamra and her family are presented in a mythical fashion precisely because their portrayal presents a conflict between Asian traditionalism and English modernity without providing any of the context around colonialism that might render it comprehensible as a historical contingency. Divorced of this context, Mrs. Bhamra comes to stand in for an essential conservative Indian culture that obstructs Jess from attaining the bountiful opportunities proffered by an essentially progressive English society. For example, early on in the film, Mrs. Bhamra is asked if she is proud of her daughter's football successes. She responds: "Not at all! She shouldn't be running around with all these men, showing her bare legs to 70,000 people." In addition, consider the following scene. When Mrs. Bhamra finds out that Jess wants to play for the Harriers, she informs her that she cannot since there are, significantly, Asian activities she must perform instead:

> You've played enough…I don't want you running around half-naked in front of men…What family will want a daughter-in-law who can run around kicking a football all day but can't make round chapattis? Now exams are over, I want you to learn full Punjabi dinner, meat and vegetarian…That's it: no more football.

In yet another scene, we see Mrs. Bhamra stir food in a pan while Jess plays keep-ups with a cauliflower. However, as soon as Mrs. Bhamra sees what her daughter is up to, she grabs her arm and drags her to the frying pan. Likewise, towards the end of the film, at a party the night before her sister's wedding, Jess kicks a football around while wearing a sari. Again, Mrs. Bhamra is there to squash the moment, giving Jess a platter of

food to circulate. Essentially, each time Jess attempts to express her impulses towards this English activity she is impeded by alternative Asian cultural practices, often embodied in the figure of her mother. This has the effect of reducing Indian culture and makes it seem that the only logical choice for Jess would be to adopt the English lifestyle. Englishness is thus portrayed as inherently modern and progressive, while Asianness is reduced to a conservative traditionalism, a classic Orientalist trope (Said, 1979). Importantly, it is left to Jess' white coach Joe (played by Jonathan Rhys Meyers) to rescue her from her tradition-bound family by pleading that she be allowed to play football. This too is a colonialist narrative, as the British persistently positioned themselves as defenders of Indian women against the ostensible tyranny of Indian culture (Mani, 1998). Thus, while we might acknowledge that many middle-class immigrant kids and youth are put in the difficult position of having to negotiate a somewhat divergent cultural terrain, in order to demystify the mythical depiction of the Bhamra family, it is necessary to understand that historically English culture was instrumental in the production of racial inequality and also that English society today is far from as welcoming of non-white people. This is context the film does not sufficiently provide.

In that sense, the film reinforces a third limitation of multiculturalism, which is that it is often seen to be an antidote for racial inequality. The film advances the position taken by culture clash theorists that if there are any difficulties for immigrants to integrate into a host society, the fault lies with the immigrants' rigidity, and not with the racial inequality or racism that is part of the host culture's view of "outsiders". For example, throughout the film, while Jess' Asian heritage is consistently portrayed as an impediment to multiculturalism, it is her English friends who are repeatedly seen as welcoming her. This is most apparent in her relationship with Jules. To begin with, the stereotypically Anglo-Saxon Jules is the one who invites Jess to play with the Harriers. Moreover, whenever Jess comes over to Jules' house, she is made to feel welcome. Mrs. Paxton offers her traditional English snacks and asks her questions about her Asian culture, going so far as to implore Jess to teach some of her culture's values to Jules. Jess' interactions with the Paxtons make it clear that the English welcome multiculturalism even as her own Asian family rejects it.

The primacy of English identity over Asian identity is further reinforced near the end of the film. During the climactic football match at the end of the film, which Jess has left her sister's wedding to attend, we see Jess become fully English by overcoming her Asian past, not by merging the two into a hybrid future. Giardina neatly describes this scene. After Jess is fouled, she gets up to take the free kick:

> As the wall forms in front of her, blocking the goal, time slows and "Nessum Dorma", the tenor aria from Puccini's *Turandot*, plays in the background. Instead of seeing a wall of opposing players, she sees her sister, mother, grandmother, and aunts—all dressed in their wedding attire—blocking (her) goal (Giardina, 2006, p. 48)

Jess bends the ball around her family and into the net. The message of this scene is powerful and unambiguous. Jess has finally triumphed over her Indian background to become genuinely English. It is not an accident that her family is figured in this sporting context as her *opponents*. There is particular symbolic significance here. The film quite clearly states that ethnic fusion, or genuine multiculturalism, is not the ideal. There can be no ethnic fusion—it must be England versus Asia and England must prevail.

At the end of the film, Jess finally chooses to accept the scholarship that she has been offered to play football in the United States and must break the news to her family. When she does, she echoes Joe's words of wisdom from earlier in the film: "And if I can't tell you what I want now, then I'll never be happy, whatever I do". By articulating the decision to reject her family's aspirations in precisely the words used by her assimilated English coach, Jess reveals once all for all that she has been subsumed by her new English identity. She has chosen England *over* India, not found a way to live both identities at the same time.

Progressive multiculturalism is not the only social theme *Bend it Like Beckham* pursues. Equally significant is its vision of women's empowerment. Yet, just as assimilationist ideas are embedded within the multiculturalism of the film, so too are traditional gender roles reasserted even as others are overcome. At first glance, it is hard to deny the positive messages of the film with respect to gender. With the exception of Mrs. Bhamra and her daughter Pinky, the film portrays strong, resilient, proactive women who enter a sphere formerly reserved for men and thrive in it. This, in and of itself, is doubtless positive in its implications for viewers of the film. However, without probing further into the construction of gender in the film, we risk swallowing some considerably more troubling notions about sex and gender, namely suggestions of the validity of feminine chastity, masculinity, and patriarchy along with the good.

Generally, traditional norms of femininity—the requirements to be physically appealing to the male gaze, heterosexual, and domestic, to name a few—are rejected in the film. But sadly, this is not done in a complex way. Rather, as previously mentioned, the characters that conform most closely to what we could call "traditional femininity" are seen to be the least credible. Consider the following examples. At the end of the film, Pinky says of her wedding to Jess, "Don't you want all this? This is the best day of your life, innit?"

Jess responds: "I want more than this". Similarly, the mothers of both Jess and Jules live their lives according to conventional feminine roles. Mrs. Bhamra spends most of her time in the kitchen preparing food for her family. Mrs. Paxton takes her daughter bra shopping and is interested in which boys Jules prefers, not how many goals she scores. The attempts of both these maternal figures to feminize their daughters are greeted with little success. Jess plays football in the kitchen, while Jules selects a sports bra rather than the push-up bras advocated by her mother. What is troubling about this pattern is that those women choosing an alternative to the typical North American form of femininity, symbolised by independence, cutting of family ties, and no interest in cooking, are seen in a very narrow fashion. Because they are seen in such a comical light, we are not offered a window into why these women made these choices. They are merely seen as backward and foolish.

While the more exaggerated forms of femininity are dismissed in the film, it does not mean that *Bend it Like Beckham* abandons all traditional ideas about femininity. In fact, the film's rejection of "traditional" femininity enables it to retain ideas about femininity all the same. Consider the following examples. While playing football in the park early in the film, Jess is called over by three Asian girls who have been admiring the physiques of the boys Jess is playing with. When they tease Jess about her relationship with her friend Tony, Jess responds: "Oh, shut up. You know he's just my mate. We're not all sluts like you lot". Coming as it does from the clearly sympathetic protagonist of the film, this epithet serves to reassert for the audience the equation between femininity and chastity. Apparently, although women may seize control of their bodies for sport in *Bend it Like Beckham*, the same does not go for sexuality. Later, in Germany, the team plans to go out for a night on the town after their games. Jess, clearly uncomfortable, realizes that she has not brought "appropriate" clothes. Jules calls in Mel, and when we next see Jess she is heavily made up and wearing a tight-fitting dress. From the admiring looks she gets from her teammates and Joe, it is evident that we are supposed to appreciate the transformation. The implication here seems to be that progressive women must be footballers *and* beauty queens. This provides little space for girls and women who would prefer not to accept traditional norms of feminine beauty. The fact that all of the girls on the team would make themselves up for a night out tells us that this is still an expected part of feminine behaviour. Soon after, as Jess is about to kiss Joe in Hamburg, Jules sees them and calls her friend a "bitch". The use of this misogynistic word by one of the female protagonists of the film cannot help but legitimize it. For young audiences of the film (*Bend it Like Beckham* can often be found in the children's section at video stores) this may become an epithet of choice in similar situations, in the process reproducing its harmful connotations. Thus, although *Bend it Like Beckham* dismisses stereotypical forms of femininity, and opens up new spaces for women—notably on the football pitch— it continues to carefully draw the lines of femininity outside the football pitch.

Moreover, the gender norms associated with football in the film are consistently tied in to ideas about masculinity—courage, toughness, and aggressiveness, even as the games are played by young women. In fact, it is all too apparent that according to the film, for a girl to play soccer legitimately, she must play like a man. When Jules first tries to sell Joe on the possibility of Jess as an aspirant for the Harriers, she tells him, "She's got balls Joe, at least watch her". The more she plays like a man, the more viable a candidate she is for the team. Later, Jess again proves her toughness after she has been punished in practice by Joe, who forces her to run laps: she runs until she injures her leg, refusing his injunctions to stop. When Jules asks her if Joe was too hard on her and tells her that some of the girls find him to be too strict, Jess demurs, suggesting that he behaved in an appropriate manner: "No, he was really nice, just really professional". In this way, the critique of aggressive masculinity in sport and authoritarian coaching leveled by the other girls is dismissed as illegitimate. Finally, during a game later in the season, we see one of the Harriers players wipe blood off of her knee and return to the game. Again, this is a reassertion of the masculine sporting ethic: stoicism is prized and pain is disdained. The potential repercussions of such images are significant. Although the film tells viewers that women can and should play, it also tells them *how* they should play—like a "man". This forecloses the possibility for alternative approaches to sport, for instance as a site of pleasure and companionship as opposed to combative competition.

Perhaps the most blatantly problematic gender portrayal in the film comes from the pervasiveness of what Giardina calls "the all-discerning male voice of reason" (2006, p. 47). That is, throughout the film, male characters are figured as wise, compassionate, and authoritative patriarchs, in contrast to their female counterparts. In Jess' family, this distinction is apparent immediately from the start of the film. Jess is watching a football match featuring Beckham when her mother rudely interrupts her. The mother bursts into her room yelling and demands that she stop watching. Jess is left seething. However, soon after, her father enters her room and kindly convinces her to come downstairs. The key difference is that he is able to understand the significance of the game to his daughter in a way that his wife does not. Since the significance of football to Jess is apparent to viewers of the film, Mr. Bhamra immediately comes off in a compassionate and sympathetic light. Jules' father is presented in much the same way. In a scene early in the film, Jules and her father play football together in the garden. Mrs. Paxton inter-

venes and chastises her daughter for not being feminine enough, prompting Jules to storm out of the yard. Mr. Paxton tells his wife, "See what you've done? Why don't you just get off her flaming back? If she's more interested in playing football right now than chasing boys, then quite frankly I'm over the moon about that". This is both a reassertion of the importance of feminine chastity and a demonstration of paternal wisdom. Like Mr. Bhamra, he is able to understand the importance of football to his daughter and to recognize the absurdity of gender conventions discouraging women's participation in sport. Even Joe, although younger, is established as a figure of masculine wisdom and authority. Although it is Jules who scouts Jess and suspects that she would be a good fit for the team, she still requires Joe's ultimate affirmation to confirm her own opinion.

In the climactic scene at the end of the film, in which Jess tells her family that she wishes to pursue the scholarship she has been offered in the United States, we are provided with an ultimate display of patriarchal wisdom and authority. Upon hearing the news, Mrs. Bhamra is enraged and immediately rejects her daughter's decision. Mr. Bhamra, on the other hand, gathers himself to think about what she has said, strolling away from the living room where the family is gathered into the kitchen. When he returns, he has made up his mind. He tells the family of his own decision to give up cricket and compares that to Jess' situation. He resolves that she should not make the same mistake that he did and authorizes her to go. This moment is significant on a couple of levels. First, the film in no way undercuts his masculine authority to be the final arbiter on the subject. Second, his rational wisdom and compassion contrast directly to the impulsively irrational response of Mrs. Bhamra. It is clear throughout the film that when difficult decisions must be made, they must be made by a man. This message, like the reassertions of feminine gender norms off the pitch and masculine norms on it, serves to undermine the progressive messages of the film.

6. Conclusion

Ultimately, due to its reassertion of traditional norms such as assimilation, femininity, and patriarchy, we find the film *Bend it Like Beckham* to be limited in its potential as a political intervention against whiteness and traditional gender norms. While it may be entertaining, it is clear the film offers few choices for immigrant families trying to negotiate the terrain of culture or young women chafing under feminine conventions. In this regard, we can say that the film cements the culture clash argument, thus reinforcing the message that assimilation is the only way forward for multicultural societies.

However, perhaps we need not end on the most pessimistic note. Limitations aside, perhaps one positive aspect of the film is in its critique of those who cling to the cultural past. This is the film's strongest message, although unfortunately it came in the form of a caricature of Mrs. Bhamra and Jess' sister Pinky. Yet this criticism is indeed relevant, and it is worth discussing in detail. To this end, we refer to an essay by the novelist Salman Rushdie entitled "Imaginary Homelands" (1991). In the essay, Rushdie discusses the process of migration, or what it means to move from one country to another. For anyone who has migrated transnationally, or knows someone who has, it is indeed a very difficult and trying experience. The process involves a great deal of loss. Often, one leaves behind friends, family, furniture, food, and music in the transition. Rushdie notes that this process has a profound effect on the psyche, which often does all it can to piece things together as they were before. In the face of new and often unfriendly surroundings, the migrant sometimes uses her memory to make the most sense of the new world confronting her. In that sense, when one leaves a place, the only thing one can truly count on is memory, since all else is incomplete. When this occurs, the temptation is to try and rebuild the old country in the new. But Rushdie notes that even memory is never complete; in other words, never something that can be fully relied upon. He notes (1991, p. 10) that "exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back". Yet, he cautions those who do look back to recognize that they can never fully replace the past. He continues by saying that invariably, the memory creates "fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind".

This is an important message. The character of Mrs. Bhamra in the film represents the problem with trying to fully reproduce the lost culture. This may explain the insistence on learning to get the dishes right and doing things exactly as they were back home. By desperately trying to recreate an "imaginary homeland" in England, and trying to force everyone around her to do the same, Mrs. Bhamra ends up losing even more. Rushdie, who spent years in hiding from Islamic fundamentalists after the publication of his novel *Satanic Verses*, is warning against the common tendency to fix culture and identity. Rushdie was not alone in this opinion. His feelings were part of a wave of writing in the 1980s and 1990s specifically in Britain that took this position. It is clear that a younger Chadha was part of this wave, if one looks at her earlier works, such as *Bhaji on the Beach*. In his essay, then, Rushdie closes with a plea for more fluidity when we perceive culture and asks us to "open the universe a little more". On the surface, Chadha wants to do the same, but instead, she ends up missing the mark and reinforcing the idea of a "core culture". This is because she only sees the Indian culture as static and not the dominant culture. As such, we are left asking: is assimilation the same thing as

opening the universe? Moreover, the film is weakened by the fact that the static Indian culture is not explained sociologically. Instead, the film reproduces the idea of what Fanon (1988) referred to as racism's tendency to create a "fossilized" culture. Yet, it pays no attention to the way in which it is in fact racism that tends to fossilize culture, in spite of claims that multicultural society is open to change. Thus, in light of Fanon's claims, we can read Chadha's representation of Indian culture, specifically in the form of Mrs. Bhamra and Pinky, not as *true* per se, but rather as the outcome of a racist hegemonic culture that does not allow other cultures to flourish and to grow. In addition to Rushdie's plea to open the universe, we could also borrow from the conclusion of Fanon's essay "Racism and Culture": "The characteristic of a culture is to be open, permeated by spontaneous, generous, fertile lines of force" (1988, p. 34). For Fanon, "lines of force" refer to a cultural engine; those things that make culture change, that move it from being on "object" to something more dynamic. It is this spirit of openness, perhaps, which is Chadha's strongest, if occluded, message.

What is clear here is that in the context of sport and social inclusion, the film *Bend it Like Beckham* should be read metonymically. In other words, the film should be read as a text about a society that has a significant social impact. If we treat the film as such, we are offered a glimpse as to the challenges that sport holds for social inclusion. The primary research finding of this paper is that if sport participation for young women from ethnic groups outside the core culture leads to an assimilationist perspective, we end up leaving the problem of racism alone, in spite of the success that some athletes have. One further implication, especially from the point of view of sport policy researchers, is to interview young female athletes outside the core culture, to see the extent to which assimilation is part of their success in high-performance sport. It seems that this may be the case, but further research is necessary to solidify these findings.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Book Review

Sport, Social Exclusion and the Forgotten Art of Researching Poverty: Book Review of Sport and Social Exclusion (2nd ed.). By Mike Collins and Tess Kay. New York: Routledge, 2014, 320 pp.; ISBN: 978-0-415-56880-7.

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Abstract
Book Review of Sport and Social Exclusion (2nd ed.). By Mike Collins and Tess Kay. New York: Routledge, 2014, 320 pp.; ISBN: 978-0-415-56880-7.

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Issue
This book review is part of the special issue "Sport for Social Inclusion: Critical Analyses and Future Challenges", edited by Dr. Reinhard Haudenhuyse (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium) and Professor Marc Theeboom (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium).

> Time and time again the poor have low or narrow participation in sport, but also in a much wider range of leisure, and this is even more true if they are female, non-white and disabled. (Collins, 2014, p. 9)

1. Time for a Second Edition

Roughly 10 years after Mike Collins' seminal and ground-breaking book on sport and social exclusion, a new generation of sport scientists, practitioners, policymakers and students are offered an update with this second edition. Although the book draws heavily on research and policy insights from the United Kingdom, the materials offered to the reader on exclusionary processes embedded in the domain of sports are applicable and relevant to other contexts and regions. A quick walk through the table of contents shows that the second edition has been extended to include twice the original number of case studies (n:8) illustrating the book's major themes. This makes the book an even more valuable resource for practitioners and policymakers. Reviewing the references further shows that a substantial amount of new references have been added after the publication year of the book's first edition.

After Mike Collins' passing in the summer of 2014, this book reflects the legacy of a seasoned, well-experienced researcher who has continuously stressed that sports needs to be understood as part of social life, and therefore inevitably a co-carrier of processes of social exclusion. Moreover, Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Nols (2013) argued that there is a danger of viewing sport as a versatile instrument for social inclusion. This does not imply however that those active in the domains of sport can "sit on the bench" when social exclusion takes the field. As Collins (2003, 2014) formulated: "The sports world can leave inclusion to others and be part of the problem of an unequal society, or take hard decisions and demanding steps to be part of the moves to inclusion and be part of the solution".

2. Grand Tour Questions

According to Chenail (2010), describing one chapter after another is not a book review, since it is the task of a

reviewer to offer readers more than a mere recapping of the book's text. Readers who are interested in a chapter summary, are advised to read the last and concluding chapter 12 of the book. So what insight has the book to offer in terms of better understanding the relationship between sport and social exclusion? What is, from a policy perspective, the best way to tackle exclusion from sport and society in the future? What are the lessons that will enable sport to become more an agent of change, instead of merely a mirror of an unequal society? These are the central "grand tour questions" (Chenail, 2010) that I will use as focal points in my book review. Drawing on the information and materials that the book provides, I will try to answer these questions.

3. Critical Insights

The most important insight in the books is that exclusion from sport is real and that at its core is poverty. This is the central message, perhaps mantra, which runs through the book. On a more critical note, we could ask ourselves that, if poverty is at the core of social exclusion (and the book), why the author did not chose to include "poverty" in the title of the book? Coalter (2012) argued that since "class" is no longer an option to describe inequality and disadvantage in society, new terms needed to be invented. He continues stating that social exclusion and the socially excluded were the code for "poverty" and "the poor" (Coalter, 2012, p. 6).

Poverty limits and excludes people from leisure, and money is listed as the most significant constraint Money to pay for the costs of playing sports, childcare, transport and so forth. Although limited survey data and the international research literature clearly shows that there is a social and income gradient in sport participation, the author stated that we still know little about the relationship between poverty and participation in sport. Collins opined that leisure studies as a still relatively young academic field has been criticised for many shortcomings, but not for ignoring poverty. He admits that as a sport researcher writing about poverty is difficult, as leisure studies have produced only a few discussions of income and poverty, and at the same time mainstream poverty studies have mainly ignored or neglected leisure issues, in particular sport. Of course there are others excluded by factors of racism, ageism, gender-blindness, disability, and geographic isolation but the bulk of people excluded are also poor (p. 55). Poverty can also intensify these other factors in terms of trapping people in and accentuating their feelings that they are not autonomous agents, capable of bringing change to their lives. "Poor people" are not a static group. In the book, Collins (2014), for example, identifies working age adults, lone parents, single people, childless couples and pensioners as the "new poor". Additionally, having a non-western immigration background, holds the risk of experiencing a double or even multiple disadvantage in terms of exclusion from sports (and other life domains).

The book might be criticized for "only" covering sport and social exclusion in western (high-income) countries, and not explicitly mentioning the rather western geographical scope. In chapter 5, however, Tess Kay shows that poverty carries a female face. She somewhat broadens the geographical scope of the book by noting that ¾ of the poorest billion people of the world are women, and, as such, women have a greater vulnerability to poverty and from being excluded from sports. Kay further argues that there is a stronger social class effect on women's participation than on men's. High risk groups are women from lower socio-economic groups and women heading a household alone. She states that: "Women predominate among the low paid, they are more reliant on benefits than men…and women are the majority of poor pensioners and parents of poor children". In his final chapter, Collins also strongly argues that while many schemes are mounted to enable more female participation in playing sport, it has rarely looked at the needs, behaviour or attitudes of the most disadvantaged and excluded.

Collins (2014) identifies disabled people as a group that is often confronted with deep social exclusion. The book shows the additive effects of gender and class on disabled people's participation, noting that disabled people are in situations partly determined by social structures, policies and "disabling" attitudes (Collins, 2014, p. 140). Collins states that disability often implicates extra living, travel and care costs, and consequently, many disabled people and their families depend on welfare benefits, which according to the author makes them by definition "poor". Even those who are active in the labour market, are disproportionately likely to be employed in work that is poorly paid, low-skilled and part-time. Such issues require not only more attention from policymakers and the sport sector, but also from researchers, since "studies on leisure inequality generally omitted any explicit discussion of disability" (p. 147). Just as there is no fixed category of "the poor", there is also no group that can be easily demarcated as the "the disabled". The failure to appreciate the diversity of disabled people means that not all of them benefit from (new) policies to promote social inclusion in sport (p. 139). The book also calls for more research attention to be given to the leisure participation of asylum seekers and refugees. We might also add children and people who are institutionalized, both young and old.

4. Policy Lessons

In summary: yes to sustainability and longevity; no to short term projects, which Collins refers to as "initiativitis". This could be the core answer to the question:

"What is, from a policy perspective, the best way to tackle exclusion from sport and society in the future?". Collins (2014) compellingly asks policymakers to: aspire less to novelty; better resource projects; provide long-term follow-up support, lengthen the policy span to 7 or 10 years; show more commitment with a clearer focus; and be less impatient. In his own words:

> "If [sport] is to play a greater role in helping to meet public policy aims to increase participation of excluded groups, its structure needs strengthening, perhaps in clusters, where administration could be consolidated, and where particular clubs could specialise in working with particular groups or levels of performer". (Collins, 2014, p. 229)

More specifically, the book repeatedly focuses on three relevant issues on which sport policies could have a direct impact, namely: transport, leisure cards and multi-sport clubs. We will briefly touch these three issues. A neglected factor in exclusion from leisure time remains transport. The book shows that for groups living in poverty, transport remains a prominent structural barrier. People living in poverty might not have a car, and public transport may be inaccessible or unavailable at the times necessary to facilitate participation. Even when there is public transport, it may unaffordable or there may be issues of safety involved in terms of using public transport in the evening or at night (e.g., young children or young women). Collins (2014) argues that it is remarkable in the burgeoning geographical, planning, economic and sociological literature on regeneration and urban management how little attention has been given to the ways in which urban planning and transport decision-making affects sports. The book identified the experiences of older people and people with disabilities as particularly precarious in relation to transport barriers.

The second issue is leisure cards (see case study 1 in the book). Collins seems to be a firm believer of the potential of leisure cards in providing sporting opportunities for those who are not able to participate. However, he stresses that social marketing strategies (for example through paid advertising in local media) and managerialist mechanisms need to be used more intensely in order to reach the desired target groups. Further, leisure cards are most useful, according to Collins, when a systematic monitoring and evaluation strategy is present, including the necessary money and personnel to do the monitoring and evaluation.

Thirdly, Collins supports investing in or setting up large multisport clubs. He argues that:

> Much larger clubs (averaging 300 but sometimes reaching 3,000 or more members) means that youth leaders, coaches and mentors can be more easily found and dedicated to youth work than in Britain's small clubs, averaging only about 43 members….Larger size allows specialisation of roles, but also makes the club a more secure place to invest public money in facilities and especially professionals. (Collins, 2014, p. 71)

In light of such sentiments, he argues for two major policy changes. The first suggested policy change is to support the founding of multi-sport clubs in limited places of new development, and the second one is to cluster clubs to gain economies of scale in terms of operating costs, without giving up autonomy. It is not wholly clear what empirical evidence Collins used to formulate these thoughts and policy recommendations. To the book reviewer's knowledge, there is no hard evidence that larger sport clubs are better (or less worse) in terms of combatting social exclusion and including people living in poverty. Secondly, although the clustering of clubs might mean economic gains (by, for example, sharing infrastructure, getting better prices from insurance companies and more subsidies from local governments because of more members), other factors might suffer from such clusters of cooperation, such as accessibility (if activities are centralized) or feelings of belonging (because the groups are bigger and there is no dominant group with one can identify). It could, therefore, be argued that small clubs or associations offer advantages in terms of reaching people living in poverty, which would require targeted policy interventions to unlock their potential. These are, however, all speculations, and all of this would require further research.

All in all, Collins opined that the policy leverages of sport in terms of combatting social exclusion are "puny" and it is more likely that leisure in general offers a potential contribution in dealing with social exclusionary processes and outcomes. The ephemeral impact of sport policy on social exclusion has also been stressed by Coalter (2012). Collins (2014) further states that because of an interplay of multiple constraints, both on an individual and structural level, single policy measures are insufficient to tackle social exclusion, particularly since addressing one constraint merely gives another prominence. This, according to the author, necessitates unprecedented forms of coordinated health, sport, physical activity policies. In other words: the impact of sport on broader processes of social exclusion seems to be non-existent, and the impact of single sport policy measures to combat social exclusion from sport, are at best ephemeral.

5. Sport an Agent of Change?

In the fifth chapter, on page 97 more precisely, Collins argues that in sport as elsewhere, formal policies do not guarantee effective action. We might forget it, but long before there was a minister of sport and a sport policy, there were sport associations that offered envi-

ronments to play sports, and which included and excluded certain groups of people. There is an old Chinese proverb that says that the laws of the emperor are less than the customs of the village. Replace the words "emperor" with sport minister, the "laws" by sport policy and the "village" by sport club, and we might learn from this old Chinese proverb that what policymakers want or put in legislations, may differ very much from day-to-day local sport practices.

Notwithstanding this, sport clubs or associations can take their own measures to combat processes of social exclusion. They can, in other words, be their own agents of change. When referring to sport as a sector, we mean voluntary and professional sport clubs or associations, national sport bodies and local municipal sport services. Following Collins' view on the potential of large multi-sport clubs, such clubs could work (or merge) together in clusters, which would allow them to share expertise, facilities or other (human, social, economic, political) resources, but also broaden and deepen their services both in terms of sport, but also in implementing and coordinating strategies to combat social exclusion. According to Collins (2014) such sport clubs make them more secure places to "invest public money in facilities and especially professionals" (p. 71). What is more, larger sport entities could also have a bigger "say" or "footprint" in local contexts since they would command a greater proportion of local resources. Collins (2014) opined, however, that sport clubs still have a long way to go. He wrote: "While awareness training for staff is now widespread, including amongst volunteers…it is clear that many local sport clubs have not yet taken action to broaden their cultural base" (p. 135). Culture here needs to be understood as broader than ethnic background, but in relation to black and minority ethnic groups (BME), the books argued that: "Good practices to encourage BME groups are similar to those for women: providing role models, programme space and time sympathetically, offering private/segregated sessions providing leadership and outreach worker" (p. 126). Notably, Collins (2014) referred to more publicity and information in BME languages and linking sports to cultural/religious festivals. The book identified seven key drivers for promoting social inclusion, which may serve as an inspirational framework for the sport sector, it should also be viewed as practices to be further tested in a diversity of sport contexts. Collins suggests sports services should: be community driven; empower beneficiaries, make social cohesion an objective; driven more by participants; developed by specialist outreach staff; measured qualitatively; and effectively marketed. However, as he repeatedly emphasises: sport cannot do it alone. As such, sport clubs, national governing bodies and local municipalities need to work together with civil society actors and other municipal services in multiple policies domains such as youth(-work), welfare, outreach, education and childcare to address cross-cutting issues associated with social exclusion.

6. Concluding Thoughts

Although income-related poverty is, according to the author, at the core of social exclusion, people's own characteristics or unique social circumstances may have divergent impacts on their lives in general, and their sport (non-)involvement in particular. This is illustrated throughout the different chapters of the book and the case-studies. Collins (2014) identified single parent families, ethnic minorities, disabled people and elderly without second or index-linked pensions as disproportionately over-represented in the social group suffering from poverty and social exclusion. Sections in the book dealing with gender issues and people with disabilities clearly illustrate that, in combination with situations of poverty, gender (being a girl/woman) and disability have deep negative multiplier effects on social exclusion and barriers to leisure participation. In addition, Collins (2014) identifies a group that is highly precarious and almost left untouched in sports research, namely refugees and asylum seekers.

Treating the "socially excluded" or "the poor" as one category or as a collection of different well-demarcated sub-categories is problematic, notwithstanding a shared experience of income-related poverty and exclusion from aspects of social life. A young girl growing up in a work-poor household, a young boy living in a household dependent on welfare-benefits due to disabilities of family-members, a young person of non-western ethnic background growing up in a single-parent household or a young asylum seeker in a transit-centre, face both similar and different challenges. Any policy that aims at alleviating social exclusion in relation to sport participation needs to be able to tackle processes of social exclusion across multiple policy domains and with a broad view to those living in poverty and being confronted with social isolation and barriers to full participation in civic life. This also requires that different groups in society have the ability for "self-advocacy" and a strong voice in decision-making processes. The sport world indeed needs to take hard and demanding steps, but such steps should be taken alongside a cross-policy perspective with a real likelihood of being able to address the root causes of poverty and social exclusion. The world of sports has seen enough limited-focus programs (and research) to cope with broad gauge problems (Weiss, 1993), such as poverty and social exclusion. This book serves as a timeless reminder of this message.

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Article

Understanding Football as a Vehicle for Enhancing Social Inclusion: Using an Intervention Mapping Framework

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Abstract
This article outlines a partnership between an academic institute and a third sector organisation attached to a professional football club in the United Kingdom. The partnership concerns a sport for development intervention. The purpose of the article is to outline the development of applied monitoring and evaluation and the application of intervention mapping for an intervention to tackle anti-social behaviour through a football-based social inclusion project for children and young people. This case supports the development of third sector-university partnerships and the use of intervention mapping to meet shared objectives in relation to articulating the impact of interventions to funders and for research outputs.

Keywords
community; evaluation; football; research partnership; social inclusion

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1. Background

Since the 1970s and 1980s recreation and welfare policies have underpinned more recent (1990s) political acclaim attached to sport for its potential impact on social welfare and its regenerative qualities (Coalter, 2007). Sport was thought to be a mechanism that could increase income and jobs, improve education, health and social inclusion (Houlihan & White, 2002; PAT 10, 1999). Furthermore, it has been noted that the impact of sport, particularly football, extends to domains that are considered harder to reach through more traditional political and civic activities (Mellor, 2008; Parnell & Richardson, 2014). Indeed, sport has been recognised as a potential vehicle to enhance health, engage "at-risk" children and young people (aged between 6–25 years) build stronger and safer communities and combat anti-social behaviour (ASB) (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; Collins & Kay, 2014; Parnell & Richardson, 2014). Nevertheless, authors have challenged the notion that sport can facilitate social benefits, highlighting that this claim often lacks empirical evidence (Bailey, 2005; Coalter, 2007; Collins & Kay, 2014; Smith & Waddington, 2004).

Smith and Waddington (2004, p. 281) argued that support for sport-based social inclusion projects among policy makers and practitioners is "based on an uncritical perception of sport as an unambiguously wholesome and healthy activity in both a physical and moral sense". Further, Walker, Heere and Kim (2013, p. 313)

stressed that some sports based interventions experience "evaluation-phobia", whereby project leaders fear the collection of hard evidence as it may in essence demonstrate programme ineffectiveness. This may only offer a one-sided perspective of project leaders, neglecting those who are actively engaged in the pursuit of "evidence". The emerging problem is that this lack of measurement and evidence often leaves these community programmes uninformed and under-evaluated (Levermore, 2011). Intrinsically, and often incorrectly—this is not seen as a catastrophe by a number of project leaders, sport researchers and policy makers (Coalter, 2007). However, given that policy makers continually rely on a sound evidence base (or at least evidence which is political comfortable) there remains a real need to evaluate and make a clearer assessment of the contribution sport is assumed to make in the promotion of greater social inclusion.

Sport's potential to contribute positively to a range of social issues is widely celebrated (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; Coalter, 2007; Collins & Kay, 2014; Parnell & Richardson, 2014). The underpinning notion is that participation in sport can support social inclusion (i.e., reduce crime, develop communities and/or improve health) (Coalter, 2007). These presumed outcomes and subsequent policy rationales have rarely been articulated systematically or monitored and evaluated (Coalter, 2007). Indeed, empirical evidence for such benefits is limited and authors have challenged this shortfall calling for more rigorous and sustained programme outcomes and process evaluations (Bailey, 2005; Coalter, 2007; Collins & Kay, 2014; Parnell & Richardson, 2014; Pringle et al., 2014; Tacon, 2007). Broadly, Coalter (2008) highlights that sport rarely achieves the desired outcomes accredited to participation. He continues to call for a greater understanding of the issue of process and context to maximize its development potential (Coalter, 2008). As such, the quest for evidence-based policy-making in the UK often leaves policy makers ill-equipped and ill-informed (Pawson, 2006; Coalter, 2008). Despite this apparent lack of evidence to support the social role of sport and football, it has (in the past) been positioned by the UK government as a key vehicle to generate greater social inclusion for children and young people (Tacon, 2007; Parnell & Richardson, 2014).

Of all British sports, it is perhaps football which has the greatest potential to reach and engage large numbers of children and young people. Owing to this apparent mass media youth appeal (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007), it has received support as a vehicle to deliver on the social inclusion agenda. Within England, Football in the Community (FitC) programmes, which are often organised as independent registered charities attached to professional football clubs, lead the social welfare and corporate social responsibility agenda for football (Anagnostopoulos & Shilbury, 2013; Parnell et al., 2013; Walters, 2009; Walters & Chadwick, 2009). Watson (2000) originally suggested that FitC schemes are identified as organisations that can aid the development of a range of social outcomes including sport participation rates, drug and alcohol abuse, social exclusion and health (which has been echoed more recently by Parnell and Richardson, 2014).

It is necessary to position this debate in the current political and economic context. Whilst unprecedented amounts of public and private money has in recent times (1997–2008) been targeted at sport based organisations (including professional football clubs FitC programmes), this has since been replaced by an age of public spending austerity. There is currently an increased likelihood of funding cuts and increased scrutiny on the impact of any investments (Pringle, McKenna, & Zwolinksy, 2013; Parnell, Millward, & Spracklen, 2014). Given this situation, it is likely that critical questions will be asked about what should and should not be funded. As such, the need to develop meaningful research and evaluation is a necessity. As a result of continued funding without an increase in scrutiny on the effectiveness of investment, could maintain the status quo for many policy-makers, practitioners and some researchers.

Using football to tackle the health agenda has begun to gather evidence (Bingham et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2014; Parnell et al., 2013; Pringle et al., 2013). Current understanding about football shows that this intervention option can offer some valuable health improvement programme success (Bangsbo et al., 2014). From engaging "hard-to-reach" groups (Pringle et al., 2014), delivering weight reduction (Hunt et al., 2014; Rutherford et al., 2014), delivering social inclusion (Parnell & Richardson, 2014), supporting social capital (Bingham et al., 2014; Ottesen, Jeppesen, & Krustrup, 2010) and other positive physiological changes across various groups (Bangsbo et al., 2014). The emerging social welfare remit attached to football, its reach and its associations with social inclusion and behaviour change, has resulted in its delivery to tackle issues such as ASB in children and young people (Kickz, 2009).

Within the UK context there has been increasing concern over the levels of criminal and ASB committed by young people (Boreham & McManus, 2003; Condon & Smith, 2003). ASB is an often-difficult term to define, in that it encompasses what can be highly stigmatised activity such as young people being in large groups, making noise and behaving in a manner not accepted by some people. Furthermore, ASB is also an umbrella term, whereby several acts can be classed as forms of ASB. The ASB act (UK Government, 2003) defines it as the behaviour by a person, which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the person. As such, ASB is a difficult and complex term (Nixon et al., 2003). As the UK government has sought interventions to tack-

le ASB, sport and football have been highlighted as a vehicle for enhancing social inclusion and reducing ASB.

One major football based intervention delivered nationally through FitC programmes to tackle ASB in children and young people was "Kickz" (2009). This programme was part of a system designed by the Laureus Sport For Good Foundation; in which three major sports were used as a vehicle to combat crime rates and ASB. Kickz was designed to build safer, stronger, more respectful communities through the development of young people's potential. It involved 42 professional football clubs, delivering 112 projects across the whole of England. "Kickz" showed a 60% reduction in ASB; along with a 28% reduction in criminal damage rates (Kickz, 2009). Football and FitC programmes were shown to be a key element in the success of the programme. Similar findings were suggested by Ramella (2004) in their evaluation of Positive Futures, a similar sport-based intervention (that used football). However, as with many other football-based interventions, there remains little clarity on whether such interventions actually work and the process in which any changes occur. Indeed, the Youth Justice Board highlighted the difficulty in attributing changes in ASB levels to specific interventions (Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 2011). Essentially, there is no supporting empirical evidence that has been systematically collected showing the relationship between football (or sport) and a reduction in ASB.

The lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between sport and ASB may be a result of project evaluations tendency to focus on sporting outcomes. Moreover, the methodological difficulty of identifying sport's precise contribution and the challenge of establishing cause and effect in behavioural change may also contribute to a lack of evidence (Coalter, 2007). However, research in this area, particularly in football is beginning to emerge (Bingham et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2014; Parnell et al., 2013; Parnell & Richardson, 2014; Pringle et al., 2014). Yet there remains a need to provide support for football-based practitioners, who often lack the required skill-set, develop effective and workable evaluation strategies for their interventions (Parnell, Pringle, et al., 2014; Walker, Heere, & Kim, 2013).

At the same time, academic institutes, particularly those in higher education are facing their own respective challenges. In the UK, the government have undertaken a comprehensive spending review in 2010, which outlined £81 billion of cuts across government departments by 2014/15. Such cuts have had a range of subsequent economic constraints for society. The resource limitations have also had an impact on academic institutes. As such, the national economic climate has resulted in reduced funding for universities, who are experiencing reduced access to research council funding (Larkin, Richardson, & Tabreman, 2012). As such, in order to ensure universities develop applied research activities that endeavor towards "impact", new approaches are required to develop meaningful opportunities. On a similar level, the government public sector funding cuts, as part of the Conservative Liberal Democrat reform, which are premised on the "Big Society", has resulted a greater reliance on the third sector (Coote, 2010; Gleave et al., 2010; Parnell, Millward, et al., 2014). At the same time, third sector organisations, including those attached to professional football clubs are being required to sustain and develop intervention delivery and evaluation (Pringle et al., 2013).

The aim of this short communication is to demonstrate the development of a partnership and the application of intervention mapping. Whilst intervention mapping has been used previously for health-based interventions in sport, it has not (to the best of the authors knowledge) been deployed in social inclusion sport based interventions. This article may be beneficial for organisations planning to develop evaluations that aim to understand how interventions can tackle ASB through football-based social inclusion projects with children and young people.

2. Burton Albion Community Trust: Albion 2 Engage (2014)

Leeds Beckett University has an extensive portfolio of research partnerships in sport and leisure, including one with Burton Albion Community Trust (BACT). BACT is the community arm and registered charity of Burton Albion Football Club, a professional football club. The authors have developed a range of health improvement based research projects over several years with BACT (Parnell, Hargreaves, et al., 2014; Pringle et al., 2014).

BACT is located in the town of Burton, which is located in East Staffordshire in the English West Midlands, United Kingdom (UK) and has a population of 113,583. Data on deprivation indicates there are 70 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs—a measure of deprivation) across East Staffordshire (East Staffordshire Borough Council, 2013). The East Staffordshire Local Strategic Community Safety Plan 2014−17 (2014) outlines three broad aims, (i) enhance the local environment, (ii) improve employability and (iii) live healthy. Within this document there is a number of objectives related to tackling a range of local social inclusion concerns. Amongst them is the objective to increase community cohesion and involvement, tackle ASB, continue to tackle crime as a priority and focus on the neighborhoods of concern. In response to this and as part of a broader strategy for the region, BACT have been commissioned support the plan's strategic objectives through their Albion 2 Engage intervention.

In 2011/12, official crime statistics indicated that that there were 1,235,028 arrests in England and Wales; of which 167,995 were of people in the age cohort of 10−17 (Home Office, 2014). Of the 167,995 ar-

rests, 30,778 (18%) were placed in custody. Overall, there were 273 ASB orders (ASBO) distributed in the year of 2012 and with 2,883 children and young people being given Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND). Within the past 15 years in the UK, there have been a total of 23,078 ASBO's issued to people aged 10 and above (Home Office, 2013). Research undertaken shows that 83% of Britons believe that ASB is a growing problem in the country; 79% of these blaming a lack of discipline as the main contributory factor, closely followed by 68% attributing the outcomes to at alcohol usage (ADT, 2006). Due to increased concerns associated with ASB, it has become much more prominent in debates within government resulting in past and current political parties implementing interventions in an attempt to tackle ASB, especially through football (Kickz, 2009; Ramella, 2004).

Albion 2 Engage is a football (and sport) based intervention that uses diversionary activities to focus children and young people into positive activities. These are delivered within notoriously "hard to reach" wards or priority neighbourhoods (i.e., those wards with high ASB levels or those that represent indices of multiple deprivation) across the Burton area of East Staffordshire to tackle ASB. Albion 2 Engage aims to target areas of the community through positive (i.e., fun and enjoyable) football and sport activities that attempts to reduce ASB and improve community cohesion. Albion 2 Engage uses the brand and appeal of the football club badge to attempt to inspire children and young people across local communities. This is provided alongside the engagement of key stakeholder organisations to deliver a targeted approach to supporting children and young people (BACT, 2014). The intervention is delivered in the following wards (i.e., geographical boundaries that contribute to a county in the UK): Shobnall, Stapenhill, Winshill, Horninglow, Eton Park and Anglesey. This is delivered through the utilisation of community outreach settings, such as multi-use games areas, local parks, playing areas or transportable playing areas. However, further sport provision is available such as cricket and basketball dependent on participant choice and accessibility of facilities. All activities are delivered by BACT coaching staff. BACT staff are typically English FA (Football Association) Level 2 Football Coaching qualified and often possess a range of other Level 1 and Level 2 national governing body sporting qualifications. Whilst football and sport based activities are the main constituent of the intervention, BACT offer reward mechanism for positive behaviour and engagement within the intervention. These additional activities include stadium tours, match day experiences, sport tournaments and celebration events.

The following section aims to provide both insight and context into the development of the research partnership between BACT and Leeds Beckett University. In describing this process, applied to monitoring and evaluation, we have used components of "intervention mapping" as an organising framework (i.e. evaluation needs, planning and implementation) (Ransdell, et al., 2009). Whilst intervention mapping has been used elsewhere in football based interventions (Pringle et al., in press), there remains a significant lack of structure and evaluation in sport and social inclusion projects (Bailey, 2005).

3. Evaluation Needs

In a era of reduced public spending on sport and leisure (APSE, 2012), amidst a climate of austerity measures set by the government (Parnell, Millward, et al., 2014) we now, more than ever see the need for partnership working as a key facet in community sport (Tett, 2005). In a bid to tackle strategic priorities across the East Staffordshire area and attend to the objectives of East Staffordshire Local Strategic Community Safety Plan 2014–17 (2014) a range of sport based community projects emerged, including Albion 2 Engage. Yet, there remained a real need and interest to develop evaluation strategies for BACT social inclusion based interventions. Given the literature previously discussed, it is apparent that policy makers, commissioners and the sport for development literature would benefit from greater insight into the development of partnerships and subsequent evaluation frameworks to capture the impact of football based social inclusion interventions (Bailey, 2005).

Football has evolved from its early days of delivering school based coaching programmes to attract new supporters (Parnell et al., 2013; Watson, 2000). Indeed, clubs and their respective community progammes are delivering on key agendas such as social inclusion (Parnell & Richardson, 2014). BACT is no different to many football clubs, who focus their efforts on the delivery of football based community programmes that utilise the potential of the "brand" (Bingham et al., 2014) to recruit and engage participants (Pringle et al., 2014). To help BACT evidence the impact of Albion 2 Engage to a range of stakeholders an agreement was made as part of the commissioning process. The specific distribution of outcome measures and responsibilities are highlighted within the East Staffordshire Local Strategic Community Safety Plan 2014–17 (2014). The Plan is influenced by the pan Staffordshire strategy of the Police and Crime Commissioner, which has set out distinct themes of community safety. The contribution of Albion 2 Engage to the broader strategic Plan, including the need for the BACT evaluation concerned focusing on priority neighbourhoods and ensuring positive outcomes for families on the Building Resilient Families Programme (i.e., working with children and young people). Evaluating the impact of the Albion 2 Engage was necessary to establish intervention effect, and fundamental for sustaining resources for continued de-

livery (Parnell & Burrows, 2014). A compounding problem was the lack of expertise within BACT to develop and apply monitoring and evaluation, something that is echoed within the literature (Parnell et al., 2013).

A contributing factor to the development of this partnership were the demands of the higher education sector. Particularly, the demand to deliver "impact" through community engagement and research outputs, a challenge multiplied by reduced availability of funding (Larkin et al., 2012). As such, this current situation supports the development of partnerships with third sector organisation's that are currently responding to the impact of the economic downturn. This includes the added pressure to evidence a return on investment, whether that be social, health or economic, through intervention evaluation (Pringle et al., 2013). In electing to act on these needs, BACT contacted Leeds Beckett University in 2013/14 to provide consultation surrounding the evaluation of Albion 2 Engage (BACT, 2014).

4. Evaluation Planning

Over a number of years the BACT management team and authors (originally the first author) began discussions to expand internal BACT-led evaluation techniques to develop effective evaluation strategies to gauge the impact of Albion 2 Engage. An original preliminary evaluation was undertaken which involved surveys with children and young people, stakeholder partners (including Staffordshire Police, Trent and Dove Housing and East Staffordshire Borough Council), which was supplemented with an analysis of ASB and crime statistics provided by Staffordshire Police. Key evaluation findings are presented in the project report (Parnell & Burrows, 2014). This initial preliminary evaluation preparation and engagement helped develop collaborative discussions surrounding the organisations strategy towards an intervention mapping framework, planning and evaluation discussed within this article.

The first meeting concerned the project outcomes, current monitoring and evaluation processes, any perceived or experienced barriers to evaluation (such as time and staff skill-set) and both internal and external resources related to the delivery of and future funding for the Albion 2 Engage intervention. Following this, a series of meetings were organised with the community coaches/practitioners that coordinate and deliver the intervention. This led the research team to develop a bespoke evaluation that aimed to measure the impact of Albion 2 Engage. The meetings have informed the following impact outcomes evaluations, which were included the data collection process.

The data collected included ASB; current and past activity, intention to engage in, peer influence and ASB statistics provided by (i) the Fire Service and (ii) the Police at different spatial scales (ward, district, region, and nationally). Further, a growing body of empirical evidence demonstrates that the contextual factors that impact upon a community or neighborhood has a bearing on a range of personal, psychosocial behaviours. Notably, poor economic conditions, opportunities, housing instability, crime rates and quality of life can impact school achievement, and influence emotional and behaviour problems in children and young people (Fauth, Leventhal, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007; Kohen et al., 2008; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Prezza & Pacilli, 2007). Further Nixon et al. (2003) highlighted ASB is dependent on context, location, community tolerance and quality of life expectations. In order to develop an understanding that attempts to capture such complexities, measurement markers included, different aspects of social capital and community cohesion (belonging, neighbourhood trust, generalised trust and social support). The survey explored whether engagement in the intervention was new or replacement activity (if the adopted activity was a substitute or new). The next section explored lifestyle information (including smoking and alcohol). Whilst smoking prevalence among young people in developed countries has been falling over the past 20 years, smoking prevalence rates among 15 year olds in Europe resides at approximately 28% (Hibell et al., 2011). Moreover, recent studies have shown sport may offer an opportunity to educate young people about elements of smoking and health (Romeo-Velilla et al., 2014). Nebury-Birch et al. (2009) also highlighted that ASB and interpersonal problems in young people can be a predictive factor of alcohol (and substance) misuse in future life. A measure of quality of life was taken given the breadth of associated factors that appear to contribute to ASB. Finally, demographic profiles (including age, gender, ethnicity and post-code) and affiliation to football and/or football clubs (i.e., football fan, non-fan, fan of host club) were collected which aligned with previous research in football and social change contexts (Bingham et al., 2014; Pringle et al., 2014). The evaluation outlined above is the self-report approach to data collection via an online survey (university commissioned version of Google documents) based on past research on football interventions (Pringle et al., 2014). These evaluations can be supplemented by further evaluation approaches as and when required, including qualitative research such as semi-structured interviews or focus groups as used in similar football-led interventions with children and young people (Parnell et al., 2013). Prior to any data collection the research team secured university research ethical clearance for the evaluation activities to take place.

Once the evaluation had been formalised the Leeds Beckett research team provided project specific capacity building with community coaches and practitioners. This professional development, that was typically delivered formally over one-day (supported by a number

of informal support sessions prior to, throughout and post data collection), allows for "leads for the evaluation" BACT staff to develop. Developing the coach, as a researcher was especially important for the development of a rapport to work with and gain access to this target group (Parnell et al., 2013). This contributes to a developmental approach to project delivery to occur and any such changes to be tracked over the duration of the research and intervention. This allowed for effective elements of the intervention to be confirmed and also provided impact results. These results could then be shared with key stakeholders and commissioners and/or funders.

5. Evaluation Implementation

Once the research began, recruitment for the surveys were undertaken across the various Albion 2 Engage service delivery locations and delivered by the research team and BACT staff. Anonymity was maintained throughout. The research team attended and supported baseline data collection, ensuring and supporting the evaluation lead within BACT with the process of informed consent and delivery of the survey. This was completed in a supportive and collaborative manner. Where appropriate the research team offered guidance and support to ensure a consistent approach to data collection. Ongoing communication between the research team and BACT (both senior management and leads for evaluation) and research team was maintained through a range of techniques (informal and formal meetings, telephone calls and emails), aligned with the development of effective partnerships (Kihl, Babiak, & Tainsky, 2014). In the future, the research team would provide analysis and reports on the data collected to support BACT stakeholder dissemination.

A fundamental aim of the partnership between Leeds Beckett University research team and BACT, was (and is) to develop a meaningful and mutually beneficial approach to research and evaluation. The national economic climate and subsequent austerity cuts (APSE, 2012; DCMS, 2010; Parnell, Millward, et al., 2014), accompanied by a drive for more efficient and effective practice within academic institutes and third sector organisations (including those attached to professional football clubs, FitC programmes) has developed a new priorities. This includes the need for organisations to develop new ways to effectively partner (Larkin et al., 2012). By doing so, such partnerships will allow for academic institutes in the higher education sector to build community engagement with third sector organisations.

Initial observations from implementation indicate the potential of this approach when assessing programme impact, which may provide positive research and evaluation outputs. This is particularly important, in an era of reduced funding for research (Larkin et al., 2012). Within this socio-political context, third sector organisations must react to reductions in funding, as government pursues the "Big Society" initiative (Coote, 2010; Gleave et al., 2010). The third sector has not been isolated from the impact of the economic downturn. Indeed, in the pursuit for more value for money, return on investment and the growing need to assess programme impact, third sector organisations including FitC programmes have felt an urgency and drive to provide evidence, in order to sustain and develop intervention delivery and evaluation (Pringle et al., 2013).

This partnership approach (South & Tilford, 2000) and organisational framework for evaluation (intervention mapping), allows BACT the opportunity to utilise the impact evidenced from the evaluation activity. This includes allowing effective elements of the intervention to be confirmed. Furthermore, the evaluation enables subsequent impact results to be shared with key stakeholders and commissioners or funders, to strengthen the case for resources for sustained and/or enhanced provision. Going forward this is important in generating evidence for future practice and contributing to the academic literature.

6. Conclusion

The aims of this short article, was to demonstrate the development of a partnership and the application of intervention mapping. In doing so, this article provides a clarion call for academic institutes to work more closely with third sector organisations in football who, in this socio-economic and political context appear to require additional support. The article offers a potential way forward to support academic institute research objectives, third sector resource and evaluation needs, whilst offering a contribution to the advancement of wider knowledge and understanding football (sport) for development.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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