ABSTRACT

JONES, GARETH JAMES. Sport-for-Youth-Development (SFYD): A Capacity Building Model. (Under the direction of Dr. Michael B. Edwards).

Sport is frequently regarded as an effectual mechanism for promoting youth development. Conceptually, sport helps participants develop important traits such as social competence, self-esteem, and interpersonal skills that transfer to other aspects of their lives (i.e., school or work). Research in this area has focused primarily on identifying and measuring these traits in sport participants, with less attention to the characteristics of programs or contexts that influence the process. Even as recent process-based studies have connected outcomes with specific program features (i.e., coach training, teammates), they typically pertain to the immediate sport context rather than broader developmental ecologies (i.e., family, community, school). Consequently, many initiatives focus almost exclusively on promoting individual outcomes within the sport context, with less attention to how sport programs fit within the community system, or how they may be leveraged to develop critical community capacities that similarly influence youth development.

Recently, scholars have worked towards grounding sport development practices with more comprehensive theoretical bases. One of the primary frameworks guiding this work is Sport-for-Development (SFD), which represents a more coordinated and theoretically refined approach to achieving development objectives through sport. Although promoting youth development through sport has been discussed conceptually and mentioned tangentially by SFD scholars, it has not yet received the same critical attention. Considering the worldwide growth and increased funding of sport-based youth development programs in recent years, this is a gap warranting further inquiry. This dissertation contributes to the current body of knowledge by laying the groundwork for a sport-youth-development (SFYD) model that will

help sport organizations not only promote youth development through their activities, but also build local capacities through their operations and interactions with the broader community.

This was achieved by utilizing a three-article format. First, an integrative review of sport-based youth development literature was utilized to understand how the topic has been conceptualized and studied by scholars. Using a theory of change to guide coding and analysis, the review demonstrates how various aspects of the change process (i.e., resources/inputs, outcomes, impacts) have been integrated into empirical research. In addition, theoretical trends and gaps in the literature are identified, and implications for practice are discussed. Second, an organizational network analysis was used to develop a greater understanding of youth sport non-profit networks, as well as their connections with other youth service organizations. In contrast to previous studies that have focused on the functionality and efficacy of connections, this study will focus on the relational structure of networks themselves, and determine how embedded youth sport non-profit organizations are with other developmental contexts. This knowledge will help youth sport non-profits build their organizational capacity by making more efficient use of existing connections, identifying potential partnerships that could expand and diversify networks, and helping managers strategically position their organizations to thrive. Finally, one youth sport non-profit organization was selected for a single case study. Data was generated through a diverse mix of qualitative methods and analyzed based on a framework of community capacity building. The results elucidate how dimensions of community capacity building can be integrated into the operations of a youth sport non-profit organization, and examine the challenges associated with the process.

Sport-For-Youth-Development (SFYD): A Capacity Building Model

by
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Peter and Linda, who inspire me to make the most out of every moment in life, and my wife Megan, who brings happiness and joy to every single one of those moments.

BIOGRAPHY

Gareth earned a bachelor's degree in Sport and Recreation Management and a minor in General Business Studies from Temple University in 2011. He returned to Temple University in 2013 to earn his master's degree in Sport and Recreation Management, during which he also worked as a research assistant studying youth development. In this role, he studied the impact of sport-based non-profit organizations on youth development, focusing specifically on programs serving at-risk youth in urban areas. In addition to examining the attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of these programs, Gareth was also interested in how this information influenced organizational action. This question inspired Gareth to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management (PRTM) at North Carolina State University. During his time at North Carolina State University, Gareth studied the dynamic associations between youth, organizations, and communities, and formed a more comprehensive understanding of sport-based youth development processes. He graduated in August 2016 with a Ph.D. from PRTM, and a graduate certificate in Geospatial Information Science (GIS). In the fall of 2016, Gareth will begin his academic career as a postdoctoral research fellow at Temple University in the School of Sport, Tourism, and Hospitality Management (STHM). He will also begin working as a Special Project Consultant for GreenPlay LLC, where he will apply his research training to inform the management of parks, recreation, and youth sport services.

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Finally, thank you to the dedicated volunteers and professionals who provide positive sport and recreation services every day. Your dedication is nothing short of remarkable, and your energy is infectious. I am honored to have worked with some of you during this dissertation, and I look forward to working with more of you throughout my career. My true passion is to promote healthy lifestyles for youth and communities, and I am grateful to everyone who has helped me place that passion at the core of my career.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Historically, youth development was approached from a deficit perspective, whereby the healthy progression of youth and adolescents was equated to a reduction in risky conduct and negative behavior. For example, Theokas et al (2005) note early scholars such as Hall (1904), Freud (1969), and Erikson (1968) who referred to adolescence as a time of "inevitable storm and stress" and "normative developmental disturbance" (p. 114). This conceptualization informed a variety of theoretical models focused on cataloguing potential problems and disorders in youth, rather than cultivating their personal abilities (Benson, 2003). Consequently, most research was directed at diagnosing and treating problems believed to be inherent in youth, with less attention to preventative or progressive measures (Theokas et al., 2005). In the late 20th century, the emergent positive youth development (PYD) paradigm began to change this narrative (Benson, 2003; Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Lerner et al., 2005).

In the early 1990s, Gottlieb (1991) summarized an evolving biological and psychological perspective he labeled the "systems view" of individual development, which recognized human development was hierarchically organized into multiple levels (i.e. genes, cell, organism, behavior, environment) that mutually influence each other. This viewpoint, now commonly referred to as developmental systems theory (DST), established a basis for multiple conceptual models which established the relationship between biological (i.e. genes) and environmental (i.e. community) influences (Gottlieb, 1991). One of the theories that evolved from DST is developmental contextualism (DC), a strain that recognized the inextricable and reciprocal link between adolescents and the multiple contexts of their lives (Lerner & Kaufman, 1985; Lerner, 1991; Lerner, 1995). DC theory is predicated on the

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notion that human development is characterized by systemic interactions between individuals and their context (Lerner, 2002). These interactions are considered bidirectional and mutually influential, such that the relationships between individuals and diverse ecologies (i.e. communities, schools, families, peers) ultimately influence behavioral and attitudinal development (Damon, 1998; Lerner, 2002).

Two integral components of DC form the theoretical foundation of the PYD perspective (Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Theokas et al., 2005). The first is "relative plasticity", which is a fundamental concept of both DST and DC (Lerner et al., 2003), and suggests that human development does not follow a linear trajectory, but rather reacts to dynamic changes amongst evolving psychological, ecological, and historical circumstances (Lerner et al., 2005). Importantly, each period of the life span (i.e. infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age) contributes to present and future development, such that multilevel relations during one stage (i.e. childhood) can facilitate or constrain opportunities for positive change in another (i.e. adolescence) (Baltes, Lindenberger, and Staudinger, 1998). Relative plasticity has been stressed by contemporary models derived from DC (such as PYD), which acknowledge that while the ability to adapt to dynamic exchanges always exists, the potential magnitude of these adaptations fluctuates across time (Lerner et al., 2003; Lerner et al. 2005; Theokas et al., 2005). The second is "adaptive developmental regulation", which relates to the alignment of personal and contextual assets which collectively promote reciprocal relationships between individuals and their broader ecology (Lerner, 2004). According to Theokas et al. (2005), youth who are able to continuously align their assets with contextual resources are "seen as individuals who are enhancing and contributing to the positive development of self, family, community, and civil

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society" (p. 117). Considered jointly, the concepts of relative plasticity and adaptive developmental regulation suggest there is always potential to improve behavior at various life stages, which is the conceptual basis for PYD (Lerner et al., 2005).

Multiple models have been proposed to identify the individual and contextual resources that combine to promote PYD. For example, the Search Institute established forty developmental assets (internal and external) that contribute to youth development (Benson, 2003; Scales, Benson, Leffert, & Blyth, 2000), while Eccles and Gootman (2002) identified eight characteristics of settings that promote the enhancement of personal and social assets. Perhaps most notably, Lerner and colleagues have developed the 5 C's framework, which has been utilized frequently by researchers and garnered the most empirical support within the youth development literature (Lerner, Bowers, Geldhof, Gestsdottir, & DeSouza, 2012). In each of these models, a young person who demonstrates strong PYD is theorized to contribute positively to self, family, community, and civil society (Lerner, 2004; Lerner et al., 2003). Contribution is characterized by behavioral and ideological components exemplified by both the actions of youth and their internalized responsibility regarding moral and civic duty (Dowling et al., 2004). As stated by Lerner et al (2005), "when youth believe that they should contribute to self and context and when they act on these beliefs, they will both reflect and promote further advances in their own positive development and, also, the health of their social world." (p. 23).

Despite the clearly outlined importance of supportive environments on youth development, integrating these theoretical components into program and research designs has proven difficult. Most approaches adopt a strictly psychological perspective of the individual-context relationship, and do not directly examine the influence of social,

economic, or political ecologies. As Sukarieh and Tannock (2011) note, "despite its emphasis on needing to pay attention to developmental contexts, PYD's notion of context tends to be strongly circumscribed." (p. 679). As a result, rather than addressing systemic social problems (i.e. poverty, family violence) that influence youth development, most research focuses disproportionately on the individual, and is undergirded by overly positive outlooks which suggest individuals "should take responsibility for helping themselves to get ahead and thrive" (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2011, p. 681). Consequently, despite recognizing the need to initiate programs that promote PYD, many communities struggle to understand how programs are effectively developed *within* a specific landscape (Perkins, Borden, Keith, Hoppe-Rooney, & Villarruel, 2003).

This limitation is particularly evident in the youth sport context, where sport has increasingly been positioned as a viable mechanism for promoting PYD (Anderson-Butcher, Riley, Iachini, & Wade-Mdivanian, 2014; Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). Conceptually, sport helps participants develop important traits such as social competence (Bortoli, Bertolo, Comani, & Robazza, 2011), self-esteem (Rodriguez, Wigfield, & Eccles, 2003), and interpersonal skills (Anderson-Butcher, Iachini, Riley, Wade-Mdivanian, Davis, & Amorose, 2013). Yet by focusing disproportionately on individual assets, many youth sport programs, particularly in North American, overlook the social and economic constraints that may inhibit PYD (Coakley, 2011; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Although bidirectional relationships between youth and their context are essential theoretical components of PYD (Lerner, 2002), many programs disproportionately focus on only one side of this interaction (i.e., youth). In these settings, sport is typically directed towards empowering youth to overcome contextual issues on their own, rather than

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addressing structural or social constraints that may inhibit their development. As stated by

Coakley (2011), most programs are "based on the assumption that for young people, sport

has a fertilizer effect – that is, if it is tilled into their experiences, their character and potential

will grow in socially desirable ways." (p. 308). This narrative is especially popular in

reference to at-risk youth, who ostensibly develop positive character, self-control, and

exposure to positive adult role models through participation in sport, which purportedly helps

them overcome the challenges they face (Hartmann, 2003; Hartmann & Depro, 2006). In this

respect, many programs have been critiqued for attempting to "solve broad gauge problems

via limited focus interventions. (Coalter, 2010b, p. 295).

Unsurprisingly, despite the growth of such initiatives, research regarding their

effectiveness has produced mixed results. Although youth sport participants have displayed

higher levels of self-esteem, goal attainment, and social skills than non-participants (Barber,

Eccles, & Stone, 2001; Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt, 2003; Richman & Shaffer, 2000),

sport participation has also been linked with the misuse of alcohol, engagement in delinquent

behavior, and the use of performance-enhancing drugs (Begg, Langley, Moffitt, & Marshall,

1996; O'Brien, Blackie, & Hunter, 2005; Siegenthaler & Gonzalez, 1997). In addition, the

application of PYD measurement scales in the sport context has yielded confounding results,

with some scholars questioning their applicability to such settings altogether (Côté & Gilbert,

2009; Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2011; Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan, & Bloom, 2011; Vierimaa,

Erickson, Côté, & Gilbert, 2012). The inconsistent nature of these results has contributed to a

confusing body of literature that is difficult for practitioners to interpret and apply (Ohrberg,

2013), and has led many scholars to conclude that the relationship between sport and youth

developmental outcomes is "related to and dependent on combinations of multiple factors." (Coakley, 2011, p. 309).

Ongoing studies of PYD revealed a need to shift the focus from the individual to the interaction of the individual and different levels of their ecology (Perkins et al., 2003). Rather than simply providing opportunities for youth to develop assets that theoretically contribute to PYD, it was recognized that youth need to be engaged as partners in their communities (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Furthermore, the growing research on risk and resiliency (Garbarino, 1992; Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1985; Werner, 1990) identified important characteristics of youth ecologies which further emphasized the influence of external support systems on PYD (Pittman, 2000). The resulting framework that arose from this confluence of ideas is known as Community Youth Development (CYD) (Hughes & Curnan, 2000). CYD is defined by Perkins et al (2003) as "purposely creating environments that provide constructive, affirmative, and encouraging relationships that are sustained over time with adults and peers, while concurrently providing an array of opportunities that enable youth to build their competencies and become engaged as partners in their own development as well as the development of their communities." (p. 6). Similar to PYD, CYD adopts a positive "asset-based" orientation towards youth and adolescent development (Brennan & Barnett, 2009). Using research stemming from more ecological theories of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1992), CYD situates PYD within the broader system of interactions between youth and their proximal environments (Perkins & Noam, 2007). From this perspective, since developmental ecologies comprise a variety of contexts (e.g., family, school, neighborhood), youth reach their full potential when each system continuously contributes to PYD over the lifespan (Jarvis, Shear, & Hughes, 1997). These contributions

are commonly referred to as external assets (Benson, 2003), and the more assets youth have available to them, the greater the likelihood they will engage in healthy and positive behavior (Nitzberg, 2006; Scales, Benson, Leffert, & Blyth, 2000).

While ecological systems theory encompasses a broad range of person-context interactions, CYD has been primarily informed by the concept of resiliency (Perkins et al., 2003). Resiliency refers to the ability of children who live in adverse circumstances to exhibit PYD and contribute positively to society (Bogenschneider, 1998). Research on this topic has explicated specific environmental circumstances and characteristics that not only help youth mitigate potentially troublesome risk exposures, but also promote positive behavior and competence (Bogenschneider, 1996). These traits can broadly be categorized as either "risk factors" or "protective factors", as outlined by Jessor, Turbin, and Costa, (1998):

> Conceptually, *risk factors* are conditions or variables associated with a lower
> likelihood of socially desirable or positive outcomes and a higher likelihood
> of negative or socially undesirable outcomes in a variety of life areas from
> health and well-being to social role performance. *Protective factors* have the
> reverse effect; they enhance the likelihood of positive outcomes and lessen the
> likelihood of negative consequences from exposure to risk. (p. 196).

Youth development scholars have utilized this literature to identify environmental elements associated with both resiliency and PYD, and integrated them into the CYD framework (Lerner, 2002; Perkins et al., 2003). Although research on resiliency has traditionally focused on youth in high risk or vulnerable situations, CYD has adapted this literature to identify and promote factors that provide *all* youth with the elements needed for successful development, regardless of their level of risk (Perkins et al., 2003).

Perhaps the most notable distinction between PYD and CYD is the active engagement of youth as partners in the development of self and community (Brennan & Barnett, 2009). Although youth exhibiting PYD possess the necessary competencies to contribute positively as adults, researchers and practitioners began to question why this contribution wasn't initiated in earlier stages of development (Pittman, 2000). Thus, in addition to creating environments conducive to youth development, it was recommended that youth become actively involved with researchers, practitioners, and policy advocates in the planning and organization of community efforts (Perkins et al., 2003). This perspective is based on the idea that when youth are provided with a broad range of opportunities to contribute, they are more likely become actively engaged in their communities and promote the positive well-being of other young people (McLaughlin, 2000; Pittman, 2000). Following this line of thought, youth contributions to communities were included as an explicit construct in CYD models, rather than just a theorized outcome (Perkins & Noam, 2007; Pittman, 2000). This represented a shift from focusing on individualized behavioral outcomes that theoretically lead to community engagement, to promoting youth engagement as an intentional outcome (Villaruel, 2003). As Pittman (2000) stated, the CYD perspective "starts rather than concludes with the engagement of young people whose lives and communities are most in need of change." (p. 21).

However, while these recommendations certainly make sense theoretically, their practical application has proven much more complex. Despite the increased emphasis on community-based approaches, the extent to which the "community" has been incorporated in interventions has varied considerably (Wendel et al., 2001). Community engagement requires critical elements such as enabling resources, funding, and strong social capacities that are not

present in all neighborhoods, particularly those characterized by economic or social deprivation (Miller, Dickson, & Stoker, 2000; Taylor, 2000). Consequently, many initiatives directed towards disadvantaged communities have treated them as *settings* or *targets* for development, rather than resources or catalysts for change (McLeroy, Norton, Kegler, Burdine, & Sumaya, 2003; Minkler & Wallerstein, 1997). Despite the growing consensus that local stakeholders should be partners in community development (Taylor, 2000), many programs in these areas emphasize categorical provision rather than participatory engagement (Wickizer et al., 1993). As a result, although many initiatives in disadvantaged communities provide services and assets that meet the needs of stakeholders, they seldom rely on the capacities of local residents to do so (Bopp, GermAnn, Bopp, Baugh Littlejohns, & Smith, 2000).

This trend is especially prevalent in the United States, where capitalist-driven policies have eroded social welfare and contributed to growing inequalities, particularly among racial and ethnic minority groups (Heathcote, Perri, & Violante, 2010; Goldsmith & Blakely, 2010). These communities are not only characterized by crumbling infrastructure and high levels of violent crime (Taylor, 2000), but are also becoming geographically and socially excluded from mainstream society (Hurst, 2015; Massey & Denton, 1993). This has led to less permeability between social classes and disproportionate access to the resources necessary for social mobility (Lin, 2000). In addition, funding reductions have perpetuated the emergence of what Pitter and Andrews (1997) describe as the "social problems industry," whereby the gap in public services, such as sport and recreation programs, is increasingly being filled by philanthropic or nongovernmental agencies (Darnell, 2007). Despite meeting important community needs, these organizations are typically organized, staffed, and

operated by individuals and groups external to the local community. Consequently, while they strive to compensate for what is missing in disadvantaged communities, such programs often fall short of alleviating the issues that are creating disadvantages in the first place (Taylor, 2000; Wickizer et al., 1993).

  This trend has certainly manifested itself within the sport context, as the rapid growth of organizations aimed at promoting youth and community development through sport has led to more critical assessments of their implementation and effectiveness (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2007, 2010b; Hartmann, 2001, 2003; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). In many disadvantaged communities, sport-based initiatives have assumed top-down approaches to development (Vail, 1992; 2007), where "off-the-shelf" sport programs are dropped into settings without input or feedback from local stakeholders (Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008, p. 270). These centralized structures place the responsibility for change squarely on the shoulders of local residents, who are expected to leverage the "power of sport" to promote community development (Coalter, 2010a; Hartmann & Kwuak, 2011). While this functionalist viewpoint has made for influential policy rhetoric, many initiatives have failed to develop the local capacities needed to sustain programs, particularly in disadvantaged communities (Skinner et al., 2008; Vail, 2007). Instead, most experience a relatively brief life cycle characterized by short-term delivery episodes that ultimately fall short of fostering long-term community development (Vail, 2007). This process has been especially detrimental to youth development efforts, as many sport programs have failed to generate the sustained participation required to promote civic engagement, healthy behaviors, and PYD outcomes (Burnett, 2001; Coakley, 2011; Vail, 2007).

In addition to these pragmatic critiques, there are also related concerns about the philosophy guiding many CYD sport interventions. On the international stage, Saavedra (2005) describes how sport programs can disseminate idealistic and Westernized views of development which often ignore the historical and political complexities that have created hegemonic structures of dominance (i.e., male and masculine domination). Similarly, Guilianotti (2004) highlights how sport institutions can replace indigenous sporting cultures with dominant Westernized values and customs. Glover (2007) expresses similar concerns at the domestic level, and specifically discusses how liberal visions of racial integration in youth sport leagues can perpetuate power imbalances and subdue opportunities for racial self-expression through sport. The implications of this oversight on youth development are noted by Hartmann and Kwuak (2011), who suggest the "assumptions about proper behaviors, rules of engagement, and personal aspirations embedded within the intervention leave little room for youth to reciprocate and influence society with their own understandings." (p. 292). Additionally, Coalter (2010a) has described how misdirected programs can actually create "new forms of dependency" rather than equipping youth with the skills and resources necessary to become independent (p. 1386).

Recently, scholars and practitioners have recognized that effective development initiatives are contingent upon the capacities of the communities they serve (Chaskin, 2001). This approach is based on a theoretical concept known as community capacity, which has "fostered inquiry by foundations, government agencies, and a wide array of non-profits and academic institutions." (Wendel et al., 2009, p. 277). Rather than focusing solely on identifying and providing "assets" that contribute to community development, this socio-ecological framework shifts attention to understanding the human and material building

blocks of such assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). These include the individual and collective knowledge of community members, resources and infrastructure, associational and social patterns, and ecological circumstances that may be leveraged for change (Jackson et al., 2003). Conceptually, communities possessing these traits are able to identify and resolve social problems, mobilize resources, and promote sustainable development (Wendel et al., 2009). Conversely, communities lacking these traits are said to be less likely to address pertinent public issues, and far less responsive to external development programs (O'Hare, 2011).

While capacity initiatives have similar long-term goals as community development, they serve the dual purpose of simultaneously cultivating important antecedents as well (e.g., strong social networks, organizational collaboration, capital infrastructure) (Wendel et al., 2009). For example, Wendel and colleagues (2009) explain that "foundations view capacity-building as an essential strategy for sustaining programs and health improvements long after grant funding periods have ended, because organizational infrastructure and the community commitment for continuation are created in the process." (p. 277). In contrast to traditional community development approaches, this represents a revitalized focus on the *process* of development, rather than just identifiable outcomes. In addition, it recognizes that individual and group traits do not exist independently of community characteristics, which similarly do not exist independently of broader societal structures. Rather, the capacities of individuals, groups, and communities are not only dependent upon the sufficiency and quality of public infrastructures, but also how these services are provided and operated (Jackson et al., 2003; Labonte & Laverack, 2001).

The theoretical groundwork for community capacity begins with Ferdinand Tönnies (1967) classical ideas of *gemeinschaft* ("community") and *gesellschaft* ("society"), a conceptualization that has subsequently received important contributions from other notable sociologists. According to Tönnies (1967), gemeinschaft refers to the self-fulfilling bonds of kinship and tradition typically held between familial or communal members. In contrast, the term gesellschaft was used to describe more institutionalized and less personal structures, often exemplified by the city, state, or governance (Tönnies, 1967). These characteristics informed early definitions of community and society which included spatially bound dimensions reflective of the immobility of residents (see Hillery, 1955). Although initially presented as dichotomous distinctions of social groups, over time this notion was revisited by Emile Durkheim (1951,1965), Max Weber (1978), and other scholars who disaggregated the terms to provide more clarity and specificity (Brint, 2001). For example, Brint (2001) acknowledges the work of notable sociologists who followed Durkheim in identifying "gemeinschaft-like" relations for sociological analysis (p. 3) (see Goffman, 1967; Hirschi, 1969).

While it was initially suggested that gesellschaft would eventually usurp gemeinschaft, contemporary perspectives posit the two concepts share a more dialectical relationship (Keller, 1988; Wendel et al., 2009). Rapid technological advancements over the last century have diffused communication platforms, expedited transportation systems, and thus softened the relevance of spatial boundaries (Wellman et al., 2000). Moreover, the recognition of complex relationships that exist beyond conventional spatial or physical dimensions suggest the value and content of member interactions may provide a more useful unit of analysis than simply their presence or absence within a given context (Brint, 2001).

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While communities are still typically described in geographically-bounded terms, the importance of social dynamics is becoming increasingly prominent (Emirbayer, 1997; Emirbayer & Goodwin, 1994). Community capacity reflects these prevailing conceptualizations by linking the assets within communities to the interactions between groups and individuals that contribute to and constitute them (Labonte & Laverack, 2001).

Although still a relatively new theoretical approach, capacity-building has been applied in a variety of fields. As Wendel and colleagues (2009) state:

> Community capacity touches many disciplines, including organizational development, community development, sociology and social work, criminal justice, political science, and public health. Some of this inquiry focuses on civic infrastructure, social service reform, and urban revitalization. While the end goals of interventions in these various fields differ, they share a common interest in drawing upon and building the capacity of communities to effectively address their problems. (p. 277).

The broad application of this term has led to a variety of contrasting theoretical perspectives that emphasize different dimensions of the concept (Simmons, Reynolds, & Swinburn, 2011). As a result, attempts to measure and assess capacity have been largely field-specific and difficult to compare across disciplines (Chaskin, 2001). Thus, while there is consensus on a set of core domains, other components are largely dependent on the context and purpose of the capacity building processes under study (Liberato, Brimblecombe, Ritchie, Ferguson, & Coveney, 2011).

While some have suggested these incongruences have undermined attempts to formally define community capacity and generalize measurable outcomes, such

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inconsistencies should be expected. Societies, communities, institutions, groups, and individuals vary considerably in their interactions, access to resources, and needs, so prescriptive approaches to cultivating capacities and achieving development outcomes would be unlikely to produce similarly positive effects across such a broad spectrum. As Labonte and Laverack (2001) suggest, these qualities "only ever exist *in relation* to specific people and groups, specific issues and concerns, [and] specific activities or programs." (p. 114). Thus, capacity-building is increasingly understood in more transferable terms, with a set of key guiding principles that are adapted *to* specific populations *for* specific purposes (Chaskin, 2001; Labonte & Laverack, 2001). As such, rather than undertaking capacity-building as a program in its own right, it is typically integrated as a "parallel track" to other programmatic goals (Labonte & Laverack, 2001).

As outlined previously, the relationship between sport and youth development has primarily been studied at the individual level. Even as community-based approaches have permeated the sport context, there has been a tendency to focus exclusively on community assets that contribute to youth development variables). While this recognition has been an important first step in identifying the distribution and significance of supportive environmental factors, future work is needed to understand the processes that contribute to their development. Furthermore, as the relationship between environmental assets and youth development is further explicated, understanding how youth sport organizations operate and interact within broader social systems becomes even more paramount. This has been recognized by numerous youth sport practitioners and scholars who have recently called for programs designed along more ecologic lines of thought (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2010a,

2010b, Edwards, 2015; MacIntosh & Spence, 2012; Schulenkorf, 2012; Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008).

One of the primary frameworks guiding this movement is Sport-for-Development (SFD), which can be broadly defined as:

The use of sport to exert a positive influence on public health, the socialization of children, youths and adults, the social inclusion of the disadvantaged, the economic development of regions and states, and on fostering intercultural exchange and conflict resolution." (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011, p. 311).

Although the concept of using sport for development is not necessarily a novel idea (Burnett, 2001; Kidd, 2008), SFD represents a more coordinated and theoretically refined approach to achieving well-defined objectives through sport (Edwards, 2015). This approach deviates from traditional sport practices by directing sport towards more human-oriented functions such as bridging ethnic divides (Schulenkorf, 2012), combatting HIV/AIDS (Banda, Lindsey, Jeanes, & Kay, 2008), and promoting gender equality (Meier & Saavedra, 2009). Considering the broad and diverse range of goals associated with SFD programs, scholars have restrained from attempting to develop one prescriptive grand theory (Henderson, Presley, & Bialeschki, 2004). Rather, under the auspices of this general outline, researchers have worked to develop smaller range frameworks to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of various SFD efforts (Edwards, 2015). For example, Lyras and Welty Peachey (2011) presented a theoretical framework for facilitating intergroup acceptance and collaboration through a sport project, while Schulenkorf (2012) outlined a model for promoting sustainable community development through sport events. Although

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promoting PYD through sport has been discussed conceptually and mentioned tangentially by these and other SFD scholars, it has not yet received the same critical attention. Considering the worldwide growth and increased funding of sport-based youth development programs in recent years (Kidd, 2008), this is certainly a gap warranting further inquiry.

PYD approaches have established a wealth of information on the behavioral and attitudinal attributes sport can develop in youth. Similarly, CYD perspectives have identified important contextual assets and resources that influence this development. However, these approaches are currently limited by a narrow focus on the presence or absence of individual and community properties, with less attention to how they are formed, leveraged, and sustained by local stakeholders. Community capacity connects these components and provides an integrated and contextualized guide for planning and implementing sport-based youth development programs within the SFD model. Using community capacity as framework, sport organizations can not only promote youth development goals through their activities, but also purposively build local capacities as a parallel track through their operations and interactions.

Although sport's connection to community capacity was initially based largely in public and policy-related rhetoric, the concepts related to capacity building have recently received more attention from a variety of international scholars (Coalter, 2010a, 2010b; Coakley, 2011; Edwards, 2015; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Rowe, Shilbury, Ferkins, & Hinckson, 2013). Among these contributions, Edwards (2015) provides a particularly insightful overview of how sport contributes to community capacity. Using Wendel and colleagues (2009) framework as a guide, Edwards explained the relationship between sport and seven key dimensions. Similar to other scholars, Edwards (2015) concluded that while

sport may provide an effectual agent for community capacity building, more empirical support is needed to substantiate the outcomes of these strategies. In order to accomplish this task effectively, Burnett and Uys (2000) recommend researchers use three levels of analysis to account for the macro, meso, and micro levels of society. Currently, empirical models assessing PYD provide a useful measure of the psychological impacts of programs that characterize the micro or interpersonal layer within this framework. Similarly, studies related to CYD have identified specific macro-level assets, resources, and policies that contribute to youth development. However, integrating and connecting these components to account for the meso-level of society has proven much more challenging (Burnett & Uys, 2000). Community capacity can further inform this model by helping researchers elucidate how the interactions within this dimension facilitate or constrain youth development outcomes.

The purpose of this dissertation is to initiate the process of forming a sport-for-youth-development (SFYD) framework that will guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of youth sport programs. By integrating the community capacity framework with models of youth and community development, this research will provide a foundation for youth sport programs to not only promote youth development through their activities, but also contribute to community capacity building through their management and operation. This goal is accomplished through three papers that independently and collectively contribute to the current body of knowledge regarding sport-based youth development. The first paper provides an integrative review of the sport-based youth development literature. Integrative reviews provide an excellent foundation for building conceptual models, and serve as an informative guide for future research (Jackson, 1980). This review examines theoretical approaches and thematic trends in the existing literature to understand how scholars have

studied the relationship between sport and youth development. To assess how the process of youth development has been integrated into empirical research, this review adapted the phases of a logic model, or program theory model, to frame analysis. Logic models are used frequently in philanthropic, not-for-profit, and government institutions to promote social change, and provide a useful depiction of the relationships between resources/inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of a program. This review catalogues how often these phases are accounted for in the sport-based youth development literature, and assesses how researchers have assessed their interrelatedness. This analysis will be guided by two broad research questions (RQ):

RQ 1.1: How often have different phases of the program process been integrated into sport-based youth development research?

RQ 1.2: How often have these different phases been studied together?

The second paper studies the inter-organizational partnerships linking youth sport non-profit organizations located in a geographically bounded municipality. Inter-organizational partnerships are an essential element of community capacity building, and provide the structure for collective governance strategies that encourage local organization, implementation, and management of resources (Wendel et al., 2009). In addition, they have become an increasingly prominent strategy for building organizational capacity in public, private, and non-profit sectors. Partnerships are especially useful for youth sport organizations, since SFD scholars indicate sport-based development initiatives are most effective when channeled through partnerships with government, education, health, and other social service industries (Edwards, 2015; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). In addition to facilitating the transference of knowledge, information, and resources between, these

networks strengthen social ties that enhance relationships between individuals and institutions. Thus, this paper examines how partnerships between youth sport non-profit organizations, as well as other proximal community institutions, were utilized to build organizational capacity. The structural analysis focuses on network cohesion, relative position, and influence, and the relational analysis focuses on the direction, importance, and frequency of interactions. Results are intended to provide informed recommendations as to how the network could be improved to facilitate more communication and collaboration. The research was guided by four broad research questions:

> **RQ 2.1**: How have inter-organizational partnerships between youth sport non-profit organizations been utilized to build organizational capacity?

> **RQ 2.2**: How have inter-organizational partnerships between youth sport non-profit organizations and other community institutions been utilized to build organizational capacity?

> **RQ 2.3**: What are the composition and characteristics of these partnerships in terms of resources being exchanged, direction, frequency, and importance?

> **RQ 2.4**: What is the association between existing organizational capacity and inter-organizational partnerships?

The third paper utilizes a single case study to examine the strategies used by a youth sport non-profit organization to build community capacity as a parallel track to youth development. Many sport-based development organizations have been critiqued for utilizing top-down approaches to management, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged areas lacking resources and support. Rather than engaging local stakeholders in development strategies, many organizations have instead focused on providing services that might

otherwise be lacking. In response, scholars have increasingly called for more bottom-up

strategies to promote community-led development. This case study contributes to the current

body of knowledge by studying how a community-based sport organization has utilized these

strategies. The organization was selected based on their strategic approach to youth and

community development, their location within a socio-economically disadvantaged

community, and their relations with other community institutions. Multiple qualitative

methods were used to generate data, and a deductive thematic analysis was employed to

determine how the organization contributed to seven key dimensions of community capacity,

as outlined by Edward's (2015) framework. In addition, inductive thematic analysis was

utilized to ascertain the challenges associated with planning, implementing, and sustaining

community capacity building strategies. Results highlight key elements of the strategic

process, and outline how programmatic, organizational, and societal trends influence the

efficacy of operations. The research was guided by two broad research questions:

> **RQ 3.1**: How did the organization strategically implement community capacity
>
> building strategies?
>
> **RQ 3.2**: What were the challenges associated with implementing community capacity
>
> building strategies?

The information derived from these three papers is used to develop a capacity

building approach to sport-based youth development. In this sport-for-youth-development

(SFYD) model, community capacity is integrated as a "parallel track" to PYD. That is, in

addition to providing sport activities that promote the individual qualities associated with

PYD, this model promotes community capacity building by helping organizations

strategically cultivate and incorporate local resources into their management and operations.

Considering the theoretical importance of individual-environment interactions in both the

PYD and CYD perspectives, youth sport organizations that simultaneously contribute to both

of these dimensions are more likely to promote youth development. In addition, the SFYD

model provides a more sustainable framework for organizational and community

development by promoting organic community-led approaches to management.

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CHAPTER 2: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF SPORT-BASED YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE

Abstract

Sport is frequently regarded as an effectual mechanism for promoting positive youth development (PYD) (Holt, 2008). However, this connection is not inherent, and depends upon a variety of programmatic and contextual factors (Coakley, 2011). To help elucidate these linkages, scholars have called for more process-based approaches to program evaluation and research (Coalter, 2012). This paper contributes to that agenda by presenting the results of a systematic integrative review of the empirical sport-based PYD literature. Using a theory of change to guide coding and analysis, these findings demonstrate how various aspects of the change process (i.e., resources/inputs, outcomes, impacts) have been integrated into empirical research. In addition to identifying trends and gaps in the literature, the authors use this information to provide informed recommendations for future research in the area of sport-based PYD.

Keywords: youth sport, sport for youth, positive youth development, youth development

Introduction

Sport is one of the most popular activities among youth (Knifsend & Graham, 2012; Pedersen & Thibault, 2014; Woods, 2011), and has been associated with a variety of physical, mental, and social benefits (Coakley 2011). This association is often based on the assumption that sport possesses certain inherent qualities that contribute to the development of youth (Hartmann, 2003; Levermore, 2008; Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). From this perspective, sport builds critical competencies (i.e., self-esteem) that contribute to a wide range of positive developmental outcomes, a narrative which has sparked tremendous growth in the number of local, national, and international projects using sport to promote youth development (Burnett, 2015; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). During this period, the positive youth development (PYD) and complementary community youth development (CYD) paradigms have become popular frameworks guiding youth sport program implementation and evaluation (Anderson-Butcher, Riley, Amorose, Iachini, & Wade-Mdivanian, 2014; Berlin, Dworkin, Eames, Menconi, & Perkins, 2007; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Holt, 2008).

Yet after years of research and practice, it is now commonly understood that in order to direct sport initiatives towards human-oriented functions, such as youth development, inherent assumptions must be replaced with intentionally designed and managed sport practices (Edwards, 2015; Kidd, 2008; Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). Moreover, since youth sport programs are an imbedded feature of their broader context, the importance of understanding the influence of various social and spatial elements in the surrounding environment is increasingly recognized (Coalter, 2010a; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Skille, 2014). Despite these conceptual advancements, empirical research examining youth

development through sport has been continuously critiqued for remaining outcome-oriented and focused almost exclusively on the individual (Haudenhuyse et al., 2014; Holt, 2011). Although social and political contexts, organizational capacities, and program features are known to influence the efficacy of youth sport programs to facilitate youth development (Doherty & Cousens, 2013), they are seldom accounted for in empirical research (Coalter, 2010a). This has led to a large body of literature linking sport with a variety of youth development outcomes, yet little information on how this process unfolds (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Coalter, 2012; Lawson, 2005). As a result, many youth sport programs, particularly in North America, have a clear vision of the youth development outcomes they should be targeting, yet only vague conceptualizations of how that development is achieved (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2015)

Thus, the purpose of this paper was to further inform the administration and evaluation of process-based youth sport programs by performing an integrative review of the empirical literature on sport-based youth development. Integrative literature reviews are "a form of research that reviews, critiques, and synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated." (Torraco, 2005, p. 1). While previous reviews have summarized the relationship between sport and youth development outcomes (see Holt & Neely, 2011), this iteration will provide a broader depiction of the relationship by analyzing how key administrative processes and contextual conditions have been integrated into research designs. This is achieved by adopting a theory of change to frame analysis (Weiss, 1995). Specifically, a sport-based youth development logic model developed by Wells and Arthur-Banning (2008) was adapted to understand which phases of the program process (i.e., resources/inputs, activities,

outcomes) have been focused on most intently by researchers, and how various individual and contextual constructs have been conceptualized. This information further elucidates the relationship between sport and youth development, and provides sport administrators with a deeper understanding of how program features such as resources, program logic, and contextual factors influence the process.

Literature Review

Historically, youth development was approached from a deficit perspective, where the healthy progression of youth was equated to a reduction in risky conduct and negative behavior (Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2002; Lerner et al., 2005). This narrative changed in the late 20th century with the emergence of the positive youth development (PYD) paradigm (Benson, 2003; Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Lerner et al., 2005). According to proponents of PYD, the best way to prevent negative behaviors is to promote positive behavior, which is achieved by aligning the personal strengths of youth with resources in their social and physical environment (Benson, 2003; Hamilton et al., 2004; Lerner, 2005; Lerner et al., 2005). While multiple models have been proposed to explain PYD (Benson, Scales, Leffert, & Roehlkepartain, 1999; Catalano et al., 2004; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Lerner, Bowers, Geldhof, Gestsdottir, & DeSouza, 2012; Scales & Leffert, 1999), each share a common emphasis on the duality between individual and context, and the idea that positive development manifests as both behavioral and ideological contributions to self and society (Dowling et al., 2004).

Ongoing studies of PYD have led to complementary perspectives describing youth development, the most notable of which is community youth development (CYD) (Perkins, Borden, & Villarruel, 2003; Villarruel, Perkins, Borden, & Keith, 2003). CYD stems directly

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from PYD models, but is differentiated by a stronger emphasis on external resources, or 'assets', in the physical and social environment of youth (Hughes & Curnan, 2000; Villarruel et al., 2003). In addition, CYD integrates contribution as part of the developmental process rather than a theorized outcome (Brennan & Barnett, 2009), representing a shift from focusing on attitudes and behaviors that theoretically lead to community engagement, to promoting youth engagement as an intentional outcome (Perkins et al., 2001).

While the importance of supportive contexts is clearly outlined in both these models, the degree to which such components have been integrated into youth program and research has been questioned (Coussée, Roets, & De Bie, 2009; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2011, 2014). This is particularly true in the sport context, which has been critiqued for focusing disproportionately on individual outcomes, and overlooking important social (i.e., poverty) and organizational (i.e., resources) elements that influence youth development (Coakley, 2011). Indeed, research in this area tends to focus almost entirely on the skills and abilities that are influenced by sport participation, with less information on the characteristics of programs or settings that influence the process (Coakley, 2011; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). As a result, while there is a wealth of knowledge on the youth development outcomes sport can influence, there is much less on how or why this development occurs (Coalter, 2010). As noted by Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, and Nols (2013), "this has led researchers to refer to such practices as black or magical boxes, since little is known about the ways programmes are actually working in relation to their claimed but often hard-to-follow outcomes" (473).

Informed by this body of knowledge, many youth sport programs, particularly in North America, have developed along similar reductionist paradigms (Coakley, 2011). Most

programs are encouraged to focus narrowly on youth development outcomes, yet lack a clear

logic or theory linking program resources and activities to those outcomes (Coalter, 2007,

2010b; Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Instead,

outcomes observed in the sport context are often assumed to 'transfer' to other settings (i.e.,

school or work) (Hartmann, 2001, 2003; Hartmann & Depro, 2006; Turnnidge, Côté, &

Hancock, 2014), a notion that not only lacks consistent empirical support (Danish, Farneris,

Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Urban, Lewin-Bizan, & Lerner, 2009) but also fails to account for key

structural or social factors that undoubtedly influence youth development (Coalter, 2007,

2010a; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). This lack of conceptual clarity makes it very difficult to

causally attribute developmental change to sport participation (Coakley, 2011), and offers

limited insight into the conditions, processes, and circumstances that would be likely to

induce change (Coalter, 2015).

In order to elucidate these important connections, scholars and practitioners have

called for more process- and evidence-based approaches to youth sport program design and

research (Coalter, 2006, 2012; Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). For example, Coalter (2007)

distinguishes between *traditional* sport practices, which assume sport inherently contributes

to positive development, and *sport plus* or *plus sport* practices, which view sport as a

necessary but not sufficient condition for the achievement of developmental outcomes. In

these models, sport programming is either intentionally combined with other activities

targeted at specific outcomes (e.g., *sport plus*), or used as a 'hook' to engage youth with

programs focused on other development objectives such as education and health (e.g., *plus

sport*) (Coalter, 2007). Importantly, the conditions and context in which sport is experienced

are given careful consideration, as Hartmann (2003) indicates "the success of any sport-based

social interventionist program is largely determined by the strength of its non-sport components" (134).

To guide these approaches, several scholars have recommended using theory of change (Weiss, 1995) to frame research and practice (Armour & Sandford, 2013; Armour, Sandford, & Duncombe, 2013; Coalter, 2012, 2015; Pawson, 2006; Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). Theory of change evolved in contrast to traditional evaluation practices, which used standardized outcome measures to assess the success or failure of programs (Weiss, 1995). Rather than focusing solely on benchmarks, theories of change consider the conditions, mechanisms, and causal linkages that are presumed to generate outcomes and impacts (Weiss, 1995). By linking organizational inputs and processes to intended impacts, theories of change can help sport programs more intentionally promote developmental outcomes and facilitate continuous organizational growth (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011; Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). According to Coalter (2015), theories of change "assist in the formulation of theoretically coherent, realistic and precise impacts related to programme processes and participants; enable the identification of critical success factors enabling a more informed approach to programme design and management; and explore potentially generic mechanisms, thus providing a basis for generalization in order to inform future program design" (p. 21).

In order to organize and structure theories of change, logic models are typically used to visualize information (Frumkin, 2006; Weiss, 1995). Logic models are used frequently in philanthropic, not-for-profit, and government institutions that promote social change, and provide a graphical depiction of the causal links between different phases of a program (Coryn et al., 2011; Frumkin, 2006; Weiss, 1995). In the sport context, Wells and Arthur-

Banning (2008) provide a particularly salient overview of how logic models may be used to promote youth development, and specifically highlight the linkages between program resources/inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts (Wells and Arthur-Banning 2008). In this particular model, *resources/inputs* refer to the human, financial, organizational, and community resources youth sport programs have available; *activities* refer to specific aspects and characteristics of youth sport program implementation; *outputs* are the specific byproducts of the sport activities delivered; *outcomes* refer to any changes in attitudes or behaviors within participants; and *impacts* are the long-term consequences that may result from the youth sport program (Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008).

Despite the potential utility of theories of change and associated logic models, they have been used sparingly in sport-based youth development research and practice (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011; Coalter, 2015; Haudenhuyse et al., 2014). As a result, it remains unclear how different phases have been operationalized, and where more work is needed. In addition, due to the tenuous conceptual assumptions underpinning most youth sport research, important causal linkages between these phases have frequently been overlooked, leading to information that may provide incomplete or erroneous conclusions to sport administrators. In order to truly understand the relationship between youth and sport, and help sport administrators utilize process-based approaches for programming, these issues must be clarified. Using Wells and Arthur-Banning's (2008) logic model as a guide, this integrative review achieves that objective by providing an overview of how different phases have been studied, identifying the conceptual gaps between them, and providing informed recommendations for the development of process-based programs.

Methods

Integrative reviews are a viable tool for identifying the trends, findings, and assumptions inherent in a specific field or discipline (Torraco, 2005). They synthesize literature focused on a particular issue and help reveal underlying assumptions and generalizations that may have impacted conclusions (Torraco, 2005). Since the focus of this review is to understand how youth development outcomes have been associated with program resources, logic, and contextual factors, Wells and Arthur-Banning's (2008) logic model of sport-based youth development was used to guide analysis (Frumkin, 2006; Weiss, 1995). Using this model allowed us to code articles thematically to examine which phases of the logic model (e.g., resources/inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts) have been incorporated into analysis on the topic.

Article Selection

Database and key word searches were developed in consultation with the Research Librarian for Science Informatics at the lead author(s) institution. Our goal was to retrieve a broad array of articles that spanned both traditional sport journals and non-traditional sport journals, in order to capture a truly representative collection of sport-based youth development literature. Seven academic databases were searched: 1) SportDiscus, 2) PsychINFO, 3) ERIC, 4) Web of Science, 5) Sociological Abstracts, 6) PsychArticles, and 7) Academic Search Premier. These databases were chosen due to an affiliation with the topical subject of sport or a theoretical/methodological connection with youth development. The word 'youth' was chosen to capture the broad period of transition between childhood and adulthood (Ansell 2004), which is when sport is typically introduced as a developmental

mechanism (Holt 2008). The search was performed on May 6th, 2015, and searched for

Subject Terms (SU) matching the following keywords and Boolean operators:

("youth* sport*" OR "sport* for youth*" AND "develop*")

("sport*" AND "positive youth development")

("sport*" AND "youth develop*")

("sport*" AND "develop* youth*")

The asterisks (*) were utilized to pull all derivations of the affiliated root word (i.e.,

develop* = develop, developing, develops, development, etc.). During the search process,

"sport for youth" was noted as a prominent SU, and subsequently integrated into the search.

In addition, since searching by SU was not available in the Web of Science database,

"development" was searched under TOPIC, then refined by TOPIC: ("youth sport" OR

"sport for youth"). The search returned a total of 604 articles, of which 578 met our criteria

of scholarly contributions (i.e., academic journal articles, books, book chapters, or

dissertations). These articles were then exported to RefWorks and examined for exact and

close duplicates, which narrowed our collection to 482 articles.

Articles were then screened through an iterative review process based on 1) title and

key words, 2) abstract, and 3) content (Bocarro, Greenwood, & Henderson, 2008; Floyd,

Bocarro, & Thompson, 2008). In order to be considered for review, articles needed to meet

three criteria: 1) Focus on developmental rather than medical (i.e., injuries) or performance

related (i.e., muscular endurance) outcomes, 2) focus on youth populations, and 3) present

original empirical findings. Although conceptual articles, particularly in recent years, have

provided thought-provoking and stimulating information to the field of sport-based youth

development, evaluating, assessing, and measuring these concepts have proven much more

difficult. Thus, it was decided that a review of only the empirical literature would provide a more useful contribution to the field by showing how youth development concepts have been empirically operationalized within the sport context.

Coding

The screening process resulted in a final database of 185 articles. These were first read by the lead author to get a feel for the content, and coded for basic publication information, sample characteristics, and study design. Next, NVivo software was used to perform a qualitative content analysis (Babbie, 2013), using Wells and Arthur-Banning's (2008) youth sport logic model as the a priori coding scheme. To understand how these elements have been integrated into sport-based youth development research, the constructs measured and/or identified in each article were first coded in-vivo, then coded based on which phase of the logic model they occupied. For example, if an article studied the influence of a coach training program, that construct would be coded as *Coach Training* under *Resources/Inputs*. Any potential coding discrepancies were discussed with the co-authors, and reflected in a memo kept by the lead author, which detailed how constructs had been coded and helped ensure the consistency and validity of the coding process.

To enhance the reliability of the coding process, member checks were used to assess inter-coder agreement. (Nuendorf, 2002). To ensure an unbiased assessment, a doctoral student unaffiliated with this project, and with a master's degree in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management, was recruited to code a random selection of 10% (18 total) of the articles. A distinction is often made between the coding of manifest content and latent content, since manifest content simply requires cataloguing surface elements (i.e., authorship), while latent content requires coding for subjective interpretations influenced by

the coder's mental schema (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). Thus, the authors assessed the interrater agreement of the manifest content (i.e., year, journal, authorship, sample size, sample demographics) separate from the latent content (i.e., constructs studied, theory of change distinction). Overall, the percent agreement for the manifest content was 98% and the percent agreement for the latent content was 99%. In addition, no coding category had a percent agreement below 94%, which supports the reliability of this coding process (Neundorf, 2002).

At the conclusion of the coding process, node matrices were developed in NVivo to link concepts, then exported to UCINET software for relational analysis and graph development. The resulting conceptual maps include vertices (also referred to as nodes or points), which represent constructs that have been studied in the literature (i.e., motivation), and lines (also referred to as edges), which represent ties between concepts (i.e., motivation linked to burnout). In each figure, the size of the vertices corresponds to the number of articles that studied that construct, while the thickness of the lines represents the number of articles that linked the adjoining constructs. By building this relational data, we were able to not only report counts of the various constructs, but also study how they have been connected and related to each other empirically (Scott, 2000).

Results

The results of this review are organized into two sections. The first presents the results of the qualitative content analysis, detailing how each phase of the logic model has been incorporated into empirical research, and explaining which phases have been studied together most frequently. The second section contrasts how sport-based youth development

has been studied in sport journals compared to non-sport journals, and identifies several intriguing differences.

Logic Model

The most important component of this integrative review was to identify which aspects of the logic model have been incorporated into sport-based youth development literature, and which aspects of the model have received less attention.

Resources/Inputs. Overall, 51 articles included information regarding the resources/inputs of the sport programs under study (28%). The overall design or logic of the program was included in 33 articles (18%), the organization and structure of the program (i.e., logistics, league structure) was included in 14 articles (8%), and coach training protocols/procedures were included in 10 articles (5%). Information related to staff/employment characteristic, site/facility quality and safety, policy, partnerships, funding, equipment, and program recruitment/marketing were each included in less than 2% of articles.

Sport Activities. One key aspect of this review was to understand how sport activities and programs have been characterized in empirical research. 55% of articles reported the specific sport(s) being studied, 10% reported the classification of sport(s) being studied (i.e., team vs. individual), and 35% treated sport participation as a singular variable (i.e., participant plays sport or does not play sport). In terms of participation characteristics, 28% reported the duration of participation (i.e., how long youth had been participating in specific sport), 20% reported the competition level (i.e., elite, recreational), 17% reported the frequency of participation (i.e., how often youth participated in specific sport), and 12% reported the breadth of participation (i.e., how many different activities youth participated

in). Most articles (86%) did not involve a comparison group, while 5% compared sport participation to no sport participation and 9% compared sport to other activities (i.e., performing arts, service activities, school clubs). Finally, 22% of articles included at least a brief description (e.g., over 1 sentence) of the sport program under study.

Individual Outcomes/Outputs. Individual sport attitudes were studied in 117 articles (63%), with 42% of these articles studying sport attitudes only, 49% studying the relationship between sport attitudes and individual outcomes, and 9% studying the relationships between sport attitudes and youth development impacts. Sport competence, motivation, and enjoyment were the three most commonly studied sport-related attitudes, with 90% of the articles studying sport attitudes including at least one of these measures. In order to display the interrelatedness of sport attitudes, they have been plotted using an iterative metric multidimensional scaling (MDS) technique (Figure 1.1). This method plots constructs that have been studied together frequently closer together, and those that have been studied together infrequently further away (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). As noted previously, the size of the vertices relate to the number of articles studying the construct, and the thickness of the lines represent the number of articles linking the adjoining constructs. As expected, the most common links are between sport competence, motivation, and enjoyment, with 14% of the articles studying sport competence and motivation, 12% studying sport competence and enjoyment, and 12% including motivation and enjoyment. The next most common links were between teamwork and leadership-initiative (7%), sport identity and leadership-initiative (7%), and autonomy and sport competence (6%).

The transfer and application of skills between sport and non-sport contexts is an essential conceptual basis for most sport-based youth development research. Overall, 91

articles (49%) included at least one youth development outcome. Among these, competence (i.e., academic, social) was the most common (44%), followed by confidence (31%) and positive identity (29%). These constructs were then plotted along with the sport attitudes using a metric multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) technique to show how this transference has been studied in the literature (Figure 1.2). To provide more clarity, the vertices have been color coded to reflect sport attitudes (red) and individual outcomes associated with youth development (green). As Figure 1.2 displays, the most common link between the sport and non-sport context is the connection between sport competence (i.e., perceived sport ability) and competencies in other areas of life (i.e., social competencies, academic competencies), which was analyzed in 19% of the articles studying individual outcomes. Sport competence was also commonly linked to confidence (18%) and positive identity (10%). Sport motivation and enjoyment were the next sport attitudes most commonly linked with youth development outcomes, with 7% of the articles measuring youth development outcomes relating these attitudes to general competencies. Interestingly, while sport attitudes and individual outcomes have been studied relatively frequently in the literature, the distribution of these vertices highlights two very distinct bodies of research, which suggests the majority of work has been focused on either sport attitudes or individual outcomes, with less attention to the interrelatedness of the two domains.

Outputs of sport activities and programs were studied in 35 articles (19%). Most of these were related to dropout/burnout (54%), physical activity (34%), and body image (15%). Interestingly, despite the recent attention to injuries in youth sports, particularly related to concussions, injuries were only included one study related to youth development. The other outputs included in the literature were individual/team success (6%) and coach dropout (3%).

Contextual Assets. The contextual assets available to youth have a tremendous influence on youth development. Within the sport context, coaches, peers, and both familial and non-familial adults serve as important external assets that help facilitate or impede youth development (Atkins, Johnson, Force, & Petrie, 2015; Blom, Visek, & Harris, 2013). Similarly, family structures, community resources, peers, and school environments have been highlighted as key aspects of developmental ecologies in the youth development literature (Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003). Figure 1.3 displays the extent to which these contextual features have been integrated into sport-based youth development research. The intrapersonal transference between sport attitudes and individual outcomes is shaded in dark red, while the interpersonal connections with assets related to the sport context (i.e., coaches, sport peers) are shaded in light red. Interpersonal connections with assets related to the non-sport context (i.e., community, school) are shaded in dark green, while macro-level societal features (i.e., geographic area, religion/culture) are shaded in light green. Overall, assets in the sport context have received far more empirical attention than assets in the non-sport context. 69% of articles included one or more measures for assets in the sport context, compared to 43% of articles that had one or more measures for assets in non-sport contexts. Among the articles including measures for assets in the sport context, coaches received the most attention (77%), followed by sport peers/teammates (59%) and familial/non-familial adults (20%). Comparatively, among the articles including at least one measure of assets in the non-sport context, relationships with parents outside the sport context received the most attention (66%), followed by measures related to non-sport peers (33%), community resources/relationships (33%), and school resources/relationships (24%). Interestingly,

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although most studies included at least one measure from either the sport context or non-sport context (85%), only 27% included measures for both.

As seen in Figure 1.3, most empirical attention appears to center on sport attitudes, individual outcomes, and selected assets within the sport context (i.e., coaches, peers/teammates, parents), with far less attention to non-sport assets or broader societal influences outside the sport context. This represents a preeminent focus on intrapersonal (colored dark red) and interpersonal development (colored light red) within the sport context, with less attention to interpersonal relations in other micro-level contexts (colored dark green), or societal influences at the macro-level (colored light green).

Impacts. Overall, 33 articles (18%) included at least one measure related to theorized impacts of youth development. Various indices of risk behaviors (i.e., alcohol and drug use, aggression) were used most frequently (70%), followed by measures of depression (39%) and positive contributions (30%). Interestingly, despite the emphasis on positive outlooks stressed in youth development literature, impacts of sport-based youth development were more frequently studied using measures of negative behavior (i.e., risk behaviors, depression) rather than positive behavior (i.e., pro-social behaviors, academic achievement). For example, 24% of articles measuring impacts utilized negative measures only, compared to only 15 % that used positive measures only, and 6% that used neutral measures (i.e., school attendance) only. In addition, 79% of articles that included impacts utilized at least one measure of negative impacts, compared to only 58% of articles that utilized at least one measure of positive impacts.

Two Streams of Research?

Throughout the coding process, it became apparent that articles published in non-sport journals had a much different approach to studying sport-based youth development than articles published in sport journals. As seen in Figure 1.4, articles published in non-sport journals were far more focused on the individual outcomes and potential impacts of sport participation, with less attention to youth experiences within the sport context. In these journals, a majority of articles treated sport as a singular variable (49%) rather than categorizing by specific sports (31%) or sport type (i.e., team vs. individual) (20%). In addition, a majority of articles (53%) treated sport participation as a binary variable (i.e., youth play or do not play sport), with far less attention to the frequency (24%), duration (18%), or competition level (2%) associated with participation. Less than half included measures related to sport attitudes (49%) or assets in the sport context (49%), with most dealing primarily with the influence of contextual assets outside the sport context (60%), individual outcomes (59%), and presumed impacts on youth development (47%).

Comparatively, articles from sport journals tended to focus more on the sport context, with less attention to the individual outcomes associated with youth development. Most articles in these journals reported the specific sports (62%) or sport types (7%) played by participants, although about one-third still relied on binary characterizations of sport (31%). Interestingly, although a larger proportion of articles in sport journals reported the duration (32%) and competition level (28%) associated with participation, a lower proportion reported the frequency (16%) or breadth (6%) of participation. As seen in Figure 1.5, most articles in sport journals measured individual sport attitudes (70%) and the influence of assets within the sport context (80%), yet less than half included measures of individual outcomes (43%)

or contextual assets outside the sport context (34%). Perhaps most notably, only 6 of the 111 (5%) articles in sport journals included a measure related to longer-term youth development impacts.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this review was to understand how key phases of the change process have been incorporated into empirical research on sport-based youth development. Before proceeding to a discussion of the results, we shall acknowledge the limitations of this study. First, this integrative review focused only on seven academic databases, meaning potential articles that fit the inclusion criteria, but were not indexed within these databases, were omitted. Second, four articles were omitted from the review because the author(s) were unable to obtain a copy in English. This issue could have similarly influenced the articles returned in our search, which were all in English. Finally, as with all qualitative analysis, despite several steps to ensure the reliability and validity of this process, the author(s) recognize the potential influence their own personal bias had on the coding scheme. In light of these limitations, we identified several intriguing thematic trends that highlight strengths and future opportunities for the field of sport-based youth development.

First, it is clear that most scholarly work in this area has been directed towards individual outcomes. Most articles have focused on either the intra-relatedness of sport attitudes, or the youth development outcomes associated with sport participation. As shown in Figure 1.2, the 'transference' between these domains represents a relatively small portion of the empirical literature, and is substantiated by linkages between a rather small group of constructs (e.g., sport competence, sport enjoyment, sport motivation, general competence, confidence, positive identity). Interestingly, these particular constructs all happen to be

components of key psychological theories of human development (i.e., self-determination theory, Deci & Ryan, 2000; achievement goal theory, Ames, 1992; social cognitive theory, Bandura 1986), which represent the primary frameworks guiding sport-based youth development research in North America (Coakley, 2011). Considering North American institutions represent 75% of the articles in this sample, it is difficult to determine whether these are actually the most important constructs influencing the transference between sport and youth development, or simply a product of the preponderance of psychological approaches in the field (Coakley, 2011; Haudenhuyse et al., 2013). This lack of clarity highlights a need to not only integrate more diverse theoretical approaches into the field, but also connect individual outcomes with specific program processes (Burnett, 2001; Coakley, 2011).

Second, contextual features related to the sport (i.e., coach, teammates) and non-sport context (i.e., community, school) are also typically being studied separately, with only 27% of articles incorporating both contexts together. This is surprising considering the positive youth development paradigm has shifted away from individualist models to more ecological models in recent years (Haudenhuyse et al., 2013). Yet while these new frameworks may conceptually acknowledge the importance of environmental factors on youth development, our results suggest empirical conceptualizations of environment are still predominantly bound within the immediate sport context. From a research perspective, this limited focus my perpetuate what Coalter (2010b) describes as "displacement-of-scope" (p. 305), where youth development outcomes observed in the sport context are erroneously generalized to broader levels of communities and societies. From a practical perspective, it incubates youth sport

programs from other developmental systems, which limits the potential impact of sport on youth, and the potential impact of sport programs on communities (Burnett, 2001).

As highlighted previously, youth development is more likely to be achieved when sport programming is strategically combined with non-sport programming to promote specific objectives (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). This not only requires careful planning and implementation at the program level, but also partnerships with government, education, health, and other social services at the community level (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). However, with empirical research still focused primarily on the sport context, there is very little information on the inter-organizational networks linking sport programs with other community services such as schools, public and commercial recreation programs, and juvenile prevention programs (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). This makes it difficult for youth sport administrators to strategically target partners in their local community, and even more difficult to leverage partnerships effectively and efficiently. Thus, more research clarifying the relationships between youth sport programs and broader community services is needed to help facilitate connections. This will not only help youth sport programs establish partnerships with other community organizations, but also help sport administrators understand how the sport context is linked with other developmental settings.

Third, the resources and inputs of youth sport programs are currently drastically underrepresented in the empirical literature. Despite the fact that process-based approaches to youth sport programming are predicated on an underlying program theory, less than 20% of articles included information related to the logic or rationale of the program under study. Without this information, it is unclear if the evaluative criteria used by researchers matched the program model, or if the constructs being measured were an intended or unintended

consequence of participation. A related concern is that less than 2% of articles included information regarding organizational capacities or resources. The ability of youth sport programs to procure and utilize resources is fundamental to the achievement of any developmental objective (Sharpe, 2006), and without sufficient funding, facilities, equipment, or training, it is unlikely that activities will contribute to any sort of sustainable change, regardless of the program logic. Similar to how external environments influence and shape youth development in the sport context, they also present unique challenges to sport administrators seeking to maintain and build upon existing resources (Glover, Parry, and Shinew, 2005). Directing attention to these foundational elements is critical to understanding the complete program process, and will provide more operational recommendations for sport administrators. These include information related to the efficacy of certain activities or strategies in different contexts, and the organizational capacities and resources needed to implement them effectively.

Finally, as shown in Figures 1.4 and 1.5, the sport-based youth development process is conceived much differently in sport journals compared to non-sport journals, particularly related to how context and impacts are operationalized. Articles in non-sport journals are more likely to include measures related to the broader context, yet contain less specificity with regards to the sport environment and experience. Conversely, articles in sport journals contain rich information related to the sport environment and experience, but less data on the broader context. Similarly, articles in non-sport journals often study longer-term behavioral impacts (i.e., delinquency, academic achievement), yet have far less information on the characteristics of the sport experience which contributed to them. In sport journals, analyses

typically end with short-term attitudinal outcomes, which are often linked conceptually or theoretically with long-term impacts, but very seldom explored empirically.

These two distinct representations of how sport contributes to youth development highlight the need for more interdisciplinary work in both research and practice. From a research perspective, sport scholars should consider seeking collaborators in fields such as developmental psychology, human development, and sociology to help coalesce theories and concepts undergirding sport and non-sport approaches to youth development. For example, Haudenhuyse and colleagues (2013) highlight the potential of integrating more sociological content into analyses of sport-based youth development programs. These perspectives build on the current body of knowledge by examining the impact of youth sport programs on structural and social issues at the community level (Coakley, 2011). In a similar vein, insights from scholars in public planning, administration, and management can help explicate the impact governance at the community level has on the youth sport programs. Developing a deeper understanding of this mutually influential relationship will allow sport scholars to contribute to important dialogues regarding public policy and resource allocation.

From a practical perspective, while it is important for sport administrators to develop a sound theory of change to guide their program, it is equally important to learn about their surrounding context. Understanding this context is instrumental to developing an effective theory of change, and determining the resources needed to implement it. Without the necessary human, financial, and infrastructural resources, youth sport programs are unlikely to be successful or sustainable. Thus, collaborations with other community organizations should be utilized to enhance capacities through access to shared resources, knowledge, and expertise. In addition, considering sport is more likely to contribute to developmental

objectives when paired with other enrichment activities, youth sport organizations can leverage partnerships within the community to establish integrated curriculum around *plus sport* models. For example, sport has been successfully integrated as a component of youth education programs (Marvul, 2012), and has also been utilized as part of intervention strategies for youth facing a variety of disadvantages, such as victims of natural disaster (Kunz, 2009), armed conflict (Ravizza, 2008), and family violence (D'Andrea, Bergholz, Fortunato, & Spinazzola, 2013). Partnering with community organizations, particularly those in youth serving fields such as education, public health, and juvenile justice, can not only help sport administrators enhance the capacity and efficacy of their programs, but also position sport to meet a broader range of youth and community needs.

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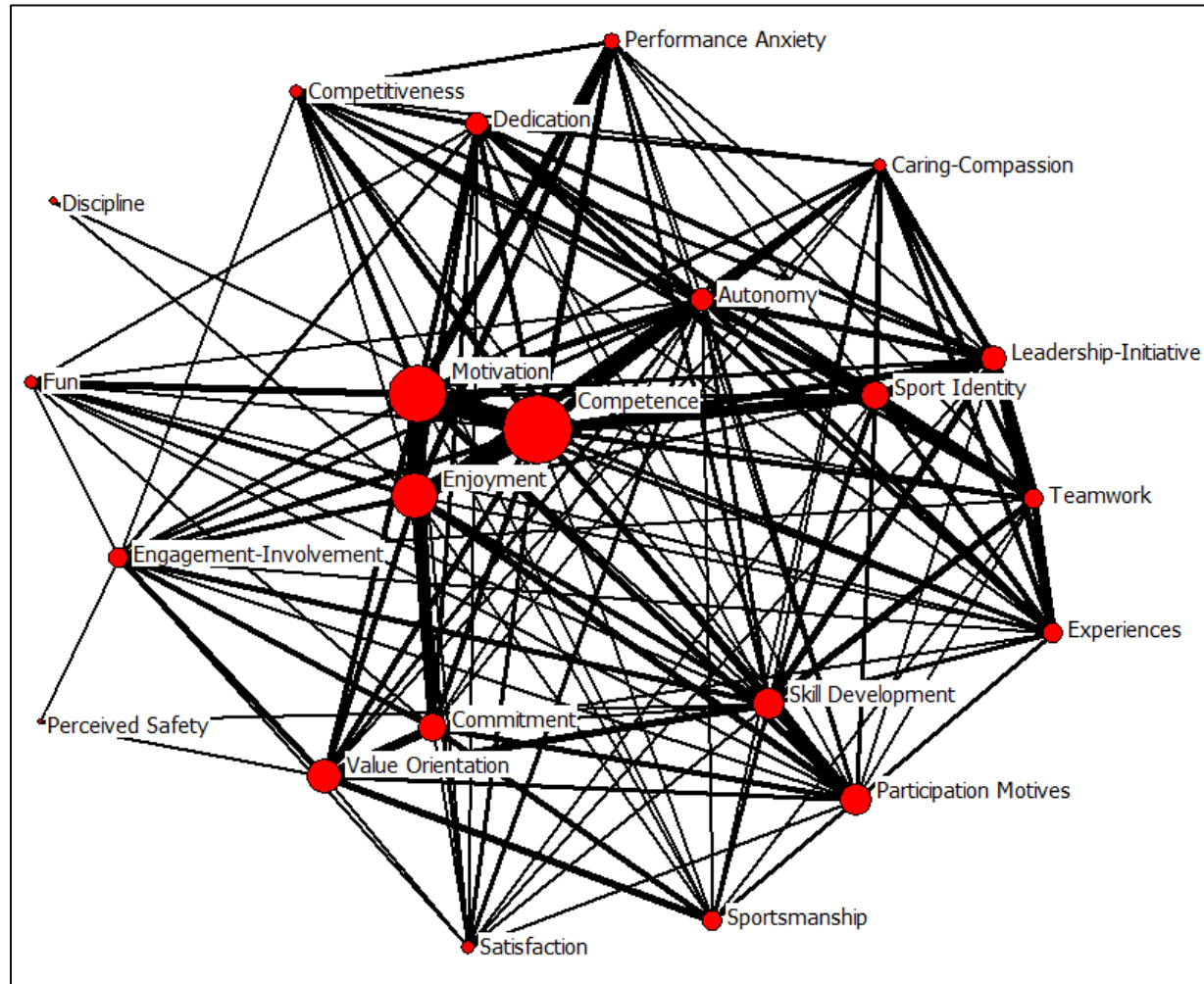
Figure 1.1. Sport attitudes

Sport Attitudes

Individual Outcomes

Teamwork
Caring-Compassion
Performance Anxiety
Sport Identity
Leadership-Initiative
Emotional-Affective State
Experiences
Commitment to Learning
Discipline
Autonomy
Positive Identity
Positive Values
Skill Development
Competence
Competence
Caring
Perceived Safety
Motivation
Character
Engagement-Involvement
Confidence
Enjoyment
Personal Development
Value Orientation
Sportsmanship
Planning and Decision-Making
Participation Motives
Life Skills
Competitiveness
Commitment
Dedication
Resiliency
Fun
Satisfaction

Figure 1.2. Sport attitudes and individual outcomes

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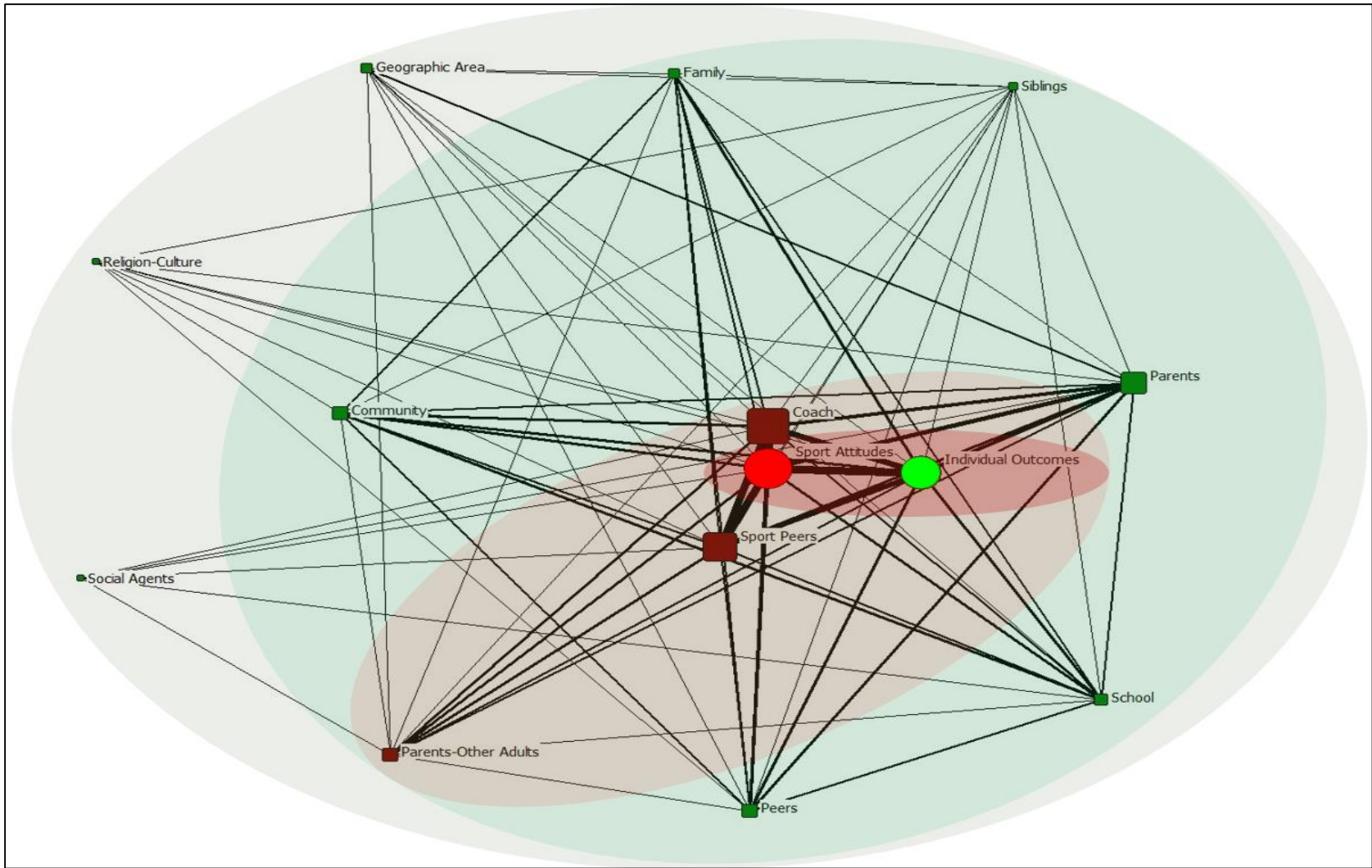
Figure 1.3. Contextual assets
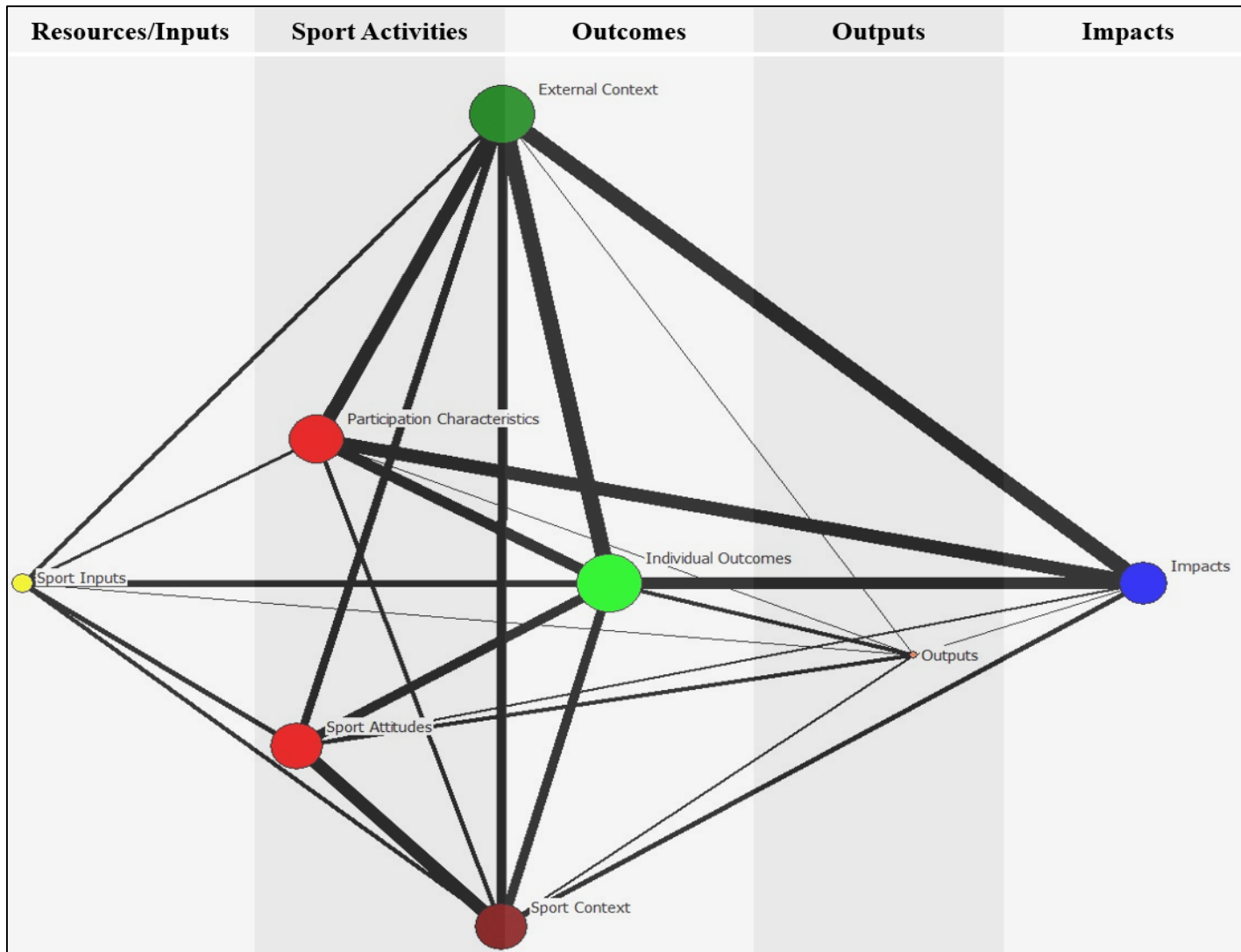
Figure 1.4. Sport-based PYD research in non-sport journals
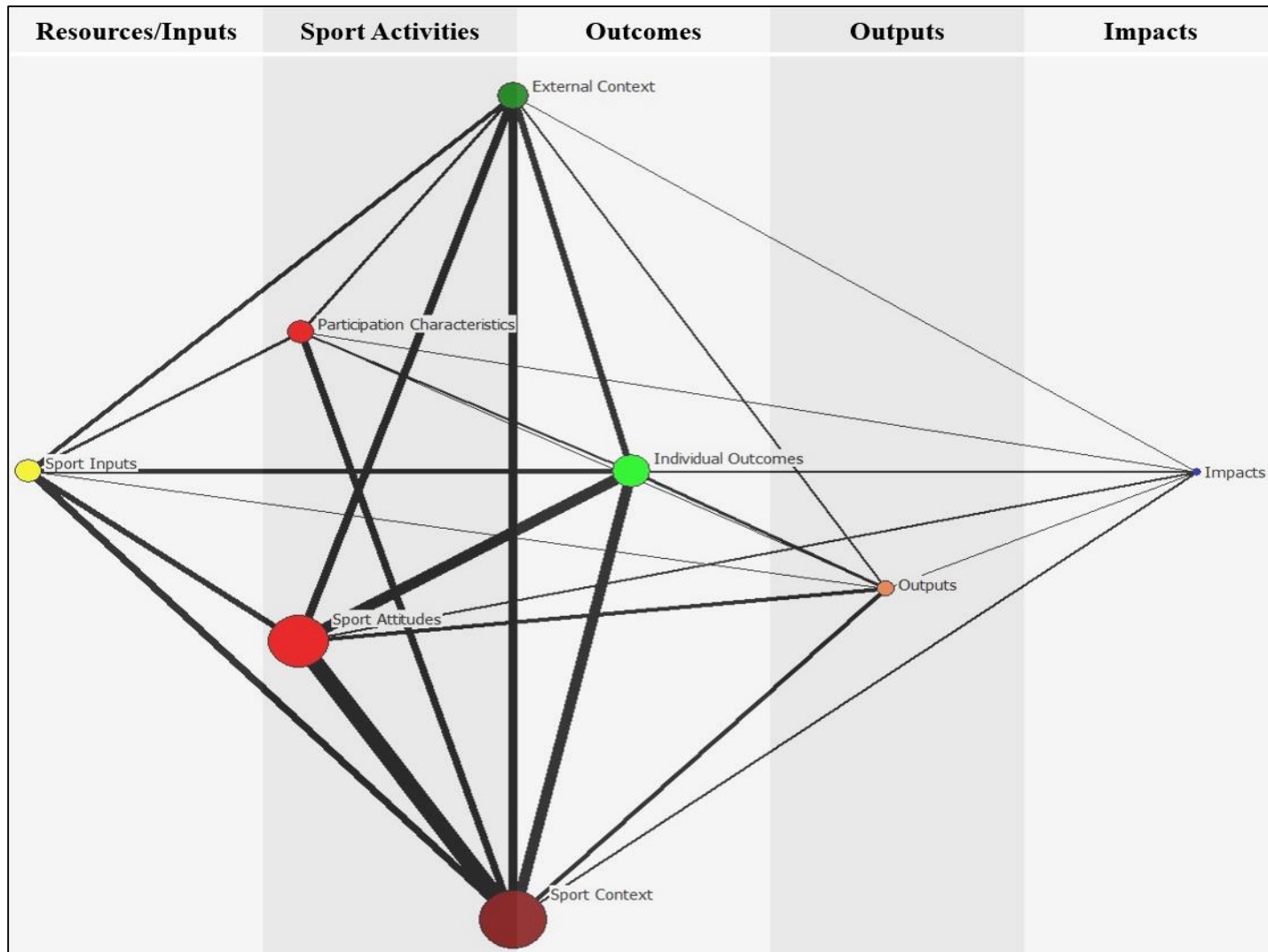
Figure 1.5. Sport-based PYD research in sport journals

CHAPTER 3: A NETWORK ANALYSIS OF YOUTH SPORT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Abstract

Inter-organizational partnerships have been utilized by non-profits in a variety of industries to build organizational capacity, yet they are currently underutilized by many youth sport non-profits. While previous research has highlighted key features of dyadic relationships that inhibit the development and maintenance of partnerships, there has been less attention to the influence of broader social systems. Thus, this study examines key structural properties of a youth sport non-profit network to determine how inter-organizational partnerships were utilized to build organizational capacity. Whole network analysis was used to study partnerships between youth sport non-profits, and ego-network analysis was used to provide information on the utilization of multi-sector external partnerships with external actors. Results indicate youth sport non-profits primarily operated independently of one another and relied on partnerships with external actors to build organizational capacity. The implications of these findings are discussed and strategic structural recommendations are provided.

Keywords: Non-profit, organizational capacity, partnerships, collaborative, networks

Introduction

Until the late 20th century, opportunities for youth to participate in sport were offered through a diverse mix of public and private programs (Coakley, 2010). However, these services have become increasingly privatized over the last thirty years (Coakley, 2010; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), and in most Western countries youth sport programs are now delivered primarily through non-governmental organizations such as community sport clubs and membership associations (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2009). In particular, non-profit organizations have become an integral part of "grassroots" sport participation (Seippel, 2006). These organizations typically form organically from communities in response to an identified need, and rely almost exclusively on local volunteers and resources to provide services (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014). This informal structure not only promotes positive outcomes for participants, but also offers opportunities for community members to develop skills and knowledge, social capital, and civic engagement through their involvement (Sharpe, 2006).

Similar to public and private organizations, the effectiveness of non-profit organizations is contingent upon their organizational capacity (De Vita & Fleming, 2001). Broadly speaking, organizational capacity refers to the ability of organizations to identify, access, and leverage resources to achieve stated goals and objectives (Paynter & Berner, 2014). Resources are characterized by external dimensions such as capital infrastructure and financial support, and internal dimensions such as strategic planning and volunteers (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Organizations with strong capacities are more likely to plan, implement, and sustain programs that achieve intended goals, while organizations with limited capacities are more likely to encounter difficulties operationalizing their plans (Eisinger, 2002;

Frederickson & London, 2000). Maintaining and building capacity is especially difficult in the non-profit sector, as organizations must find ways to continuously grow capacity amid increased competition and declining resources, all while remaining aligned with their established mission statement (Jones, 2007). Non-profit organizations who stay bound within the rigid parameters of their mission statement may miss important opportunities to evolve, while those who continuously discard such parameters in order to increase capacity risk "mission drift", a state described by Hawkins (2014) as "anchorless…where organizations grasp at passing financial straws and where unplanned outcomes retrospectively become reasons for existence." (p. 41).

Understanding how to effectively build organizational capacity is critical for youth sport non-profit organizations. Reductions in government subsidies, external grants, and in-kind donations have left many youth sport non-profit organizations struggling to financially support their operations (Balduck, Lucidarme, Marlier, & Peterem, 2015; Wicker & Breuer, 2011), and declining volunteer rates have deprived many programs of the most important human resource needed to organize, manage, and implement their activities (Balduck, Van Rossem, & Buelens, 2010; Byers, 2013; Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, & Darcy, 2006). These issues are exacerbated by the continuous growth of the commercial youth sport sector, which has increased competition over sport facilities and resources (Coakley, 2010). Indeed, many youth sport non-profit organizations operate with limited resources and inadequate infrastructure, and have difficulty reaching their goals (Misener & Doherty, 2013).

One strategy that can help alleviate these issues and contribute to organizational capacity-building is inter-organizational partnerships (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Cousens, Barnes, Stevens, Mallen, & Bradish, 2006; Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004; Hayhurst &

Frisby, 2010; Misener & Doherty, 2009, 2012, 2013). Babiak (2003) described partnerships as "voluntary, close, long-term planned strategic action between two or more organizations with the objective of serving mutually beneficial purposes in a problem domain." (p. 6). Partnerships can be utilized with funding agencies, government, private businesses, and other non-profits to build capacity in youth sport non-profit organizations (Casey, Payne, & Eime, 2009; Peng & Kellog, 2003). In addition, partnerships can contribute to positive program effects such as greater public exposure, increased social capital, and the development of a learning organization (Guo & Acar, 2005; Isett & Provan, 2005; Paarlberg & Varda, 2009). Despite their potential inter-organizational partnerships are not always utilized effectively in the youth sport context (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Misener & Doherty, 2013; Sharpe, 2006). Community sport clubs represent one of the largest sectors of non-profit organizations in many Western countries (Misener & Doherty, 2009), and provide most people with their first exposure to organized sport (Doherty et al., 2014), yet they often struggle to establish effective partnerships (Frisby et al., 2004). Even when partnerships do exist, research suggests that many are constrained by limited resources (Misener & Doherty, 2009), poor communication (Frisby et al., 2004), and power imbalances (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). Given that many of these organizations draw on limited resources to run their programs, this lack of collaboration may significantly impact their ability to deliver consistent services.

Prior research has focused primarily on dyadic relations and ego-networks to understand how inter-organizational partnerships contribute to organizational capacity-building in non-profit sport organizations (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Doherty et al., 2014; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Frisby et al., 2004; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; Misener & Doherty,

2009, 2012; Sharpe, 2006). These studies have uncovered the benefits and challenges of forming and maintaining relations, and elucidated how strategic partnerships can help organizations achieve their goals (Misener & Doherty, 2013). However, there is currently a paucity of research on the structural features of whole networks, particularly those comprising youth sport non-profit organizations (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). This is a significant limitation, considering the organizational capacity of youth sport non-profits, and their dyadic relations, are greatly influenced by their embeddedness within the broader system of interactions (Galaskiewicz, 1985; Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, & Dowell, 2006; Galaskiewicz & Krohn, 1984; MacLean, Cousens, & Barnes, 2011).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the whole network structure of partnerships between youth sport non-profit organizations, along with characteristics of their connections with other organizations. This paper contributes to the current body of knowledge by examining the configuration of a youth sport non-profit network, the composition of ties with other community organizations, and the ways in which organizational capacity influences partnerships involving youth sport non-profit organizations. The analysis is guided by three primary research questions:

1. How are youth sport non-profit organizations utilizing partnerships with each other to build capacity?

2. How are youth sport non-profit organizations utilizing partnerships with other non-profit, public, or private organizations to build capacity?

3. What role does organizational capacity play in facilitating or constraining opportunities to establish partnerships?

Literature Review

Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity has been studied in a variety of contexts to understand how non-profit organizations effectively plan, implement, and evaluate programs (Bryson, 2011). Despite commonalities regarding important dimensions, it is generally understood that conceptual models of organizational capacity must be tailored to specific contexts. For example, human service agencies (Eisinger, 2002), public school systems (Timar, 1994), and health organizations (Nowell & Harrison, 2011) all present distinct challenges that have led to different conceptualizations of capacity building, and reflect the multidimensionality of the term (Christenson & Gazley, 2008; Doherty et al., 2014). In the sport context, researchers have drawn primarily from the conceptual framework of Hall and colleagues (2003), which emphasizes five dimensions: 1) human resource capacity, 2) financial capacity, 3) strategic planning and development capacity, 4) infrastructure and process capacity, and 5) relationship and network capacity (Hall et al., 2003).

Human resource capacity refers to both the quantity and quality of human capital within an organization. Since the informal structure and limited funding of most youth sport non-profit organizations constrain the number of paid staff, volunteers are typically regarded as a key component of this dimension (Balduck et al., 2010; Cuskelly et al., 2006). For youth sport non-profit organizations, the availability and continuity of volunteers is critical to building capacity (Doherty et al., 2014), and recruiting and retaining volunteers is one of the biggest challenges (Wicker & Breuer, 2013). Previous research has distinguished between "primary" volunteers, who perform the core tasks related to managing the organization, and "secondary" volunteers, who "are more casually involved with the organization and assist

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with supplementary tasks" (Misener & Doherty, 2009, p. 469). Ideally, individuals with knowledge and experience in leadership, negotiation, and communication serve in primary volunteer roles, while individuals with less skills and competencies fill secondary roles (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Yet many youth sport non-profit organizations fail to achieve this balance (Wicker & Breuer, 2013). Oftentimes, a lack of consistent secondary volunteers forces a small number of primary volunteers to do more work, creating power imbalances that limit organizational growth and lead to volunteer burnout (Cuskelly, 2005). Alternatively, too many primary volunteers often leads to disagreements regarding the values, mission, and focus of the organization, creating confusion regarding its intended purpose and unravelling attempts to establish a unified direction (Wicker & Breuer, 2013; Doherty et al., 2014). It is for these reasons that Doherty and colleagues (2014) recommend that organizations focus on finding and retaining "valued" volunteers to enhance club capacity (p. 133S), both at the primary and secondary levels.

Financial capacity represents the ability of an organization to procure and utilize financial resources (Balduck et al., 2015). Greater financial capacities help youth sport non-profit organizations achieve their goals by providing the means to purchase or redevelop facilities, hire qualified coaches, and increase the number of programs (Wicker & Breuer, 2013). In addition to a strong operating budget, Wicker and Breuer (2013) highlight the importance of diverse revenue structures that allow youth sport non-profit organizations to stabilize their financial capacities. Organizations that are able to supplement membership fees with fundraising activities, donations, sponsorships, and grants are able to generate more consistent revenue and withstand temporary downturns from one source (Carroll & Stater, 2008; Doherty et al., 2014). Previous studies have found that youth sport non-profit

organizations generally have fewer financial resources than other non-profit organizations (Gumulka, Barr, Lasby, & Browlee, 2005), and encounter a variety of problems related to financial management (Allison, 2001). These include short-term issues such as balancing budgets (Doherty et al., 2014), and long-term issues such as savings and investments to fund growth strategies (Wicker & Breuer, 2011). As a result, many youth sport non-profit organizations operate with limited financial capacities (Balduck et al., 2015), and rely heavily on funding from membership fees to sustain programs (Misener & Doherty, 2009).

Planning and development capacity refers to the strategic vision and direction of an organization (Hall et al., 2003). This includes the design and formulation of strategic plans, development of associated policies, and continuous monitoring of outputs. Organizations driven by a consistent strategic vision, reinforced with monitoring and support mechanisms, are able to streamline operations and efficiently deliver services (Fredericksen & London, 2000). In addition, organizations with a cohesive internal strategy are more equipped to navigate external changes to the social, economic, and political environment (Bryson, 2011). Youth sport non-profit organizations typically struggle to establish strong capacities in this dimension (Doherty et al., 2014; Taylor, 2004), as unpredictable finances, insufficient human resources, and a lack of strategic expertise among leaders inhibits the ability of many youth sport non-profits to establish a consistent direction (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Wicker & Breuer, 2013). As a result, many programs operate with an episodic approach to strategic planning and development, characterized by an emphasis on day-to-day operations rather than long-term organizational growth (Doherty et al., 2014).

Infrastructure and process capacity represents the capital available to organizations to implement programs effectively (Hall et al., 2003; Wicker, Breuer, & Pawlowski, 2009), and

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can be classified in both tangible and intangible forms. Tangible capital refers to the physical infrastructure available to organizations to run their programs, such as facilities and equipment. Most youth sport non-profit organizations do not own their own facility (Nichols, Padmore, Taylor, & Barrett, 2012), and the process of finding facilities that meet their financial and logistical needs is one of the most prominent challenges facing youth sport managers (Harris, Mori, & Collins, 2009). This is especially true for organizations providing sport services that require specialized facilities, such as pools or ice rinks, which are far less common in most communities (Doherty et al., 2014). Intangible capital refers to the communication structures, program procedures, and information technology (IT) resources that influence the service delivery process (Doherty et al., 2014). Formalizing these processes helps youth sport non-profit organizations increase efficiency by establishing a standardized set of practices and institutionalizing strong organizational values (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Wicker & Breuer, 2013). Although there is a trend toward formalization within youth sport non-profit organizations (Allison, 2001; Doherty et al., 2014), many remain governed by looser management practices (Misener & Doherty, 2009).

Relationship and network capacity is the final dimension of Hall and colleagues (2003) framework, and refers to an organizations ability to initiate, develop, and maintain partnerships. When utilized effectively, relationships and networks enhance and contribute to other dimensions of capacity in youth sport non-profit organizations. In addition to reducing operating costs by facilitating the exchange of human resources (Misener & Doherty, 2013), financial capacities (Doherty et al., 2014), and services and facilities (Thibault, Frisby, & Kikulis, 1999), relationships and networks can enhance information resources that contribute to decisions regarding strategic planning and development (Casey et al., 2009). Moreover,

relationships and networks build social connections within and between youth sport non-profit organizations that contribute to the development of social capital (Babiak, 2003). This helps build important relationship qualities such as trust and reciprocity among volunteers (Wicker & Breuer, 2011), and also serves as a basis for broader community development efforts (Misener & Doherty, 2012).

Relationship and Network Capacity

Although every dimension of capacity is instrumental to organizational performance, collaborative relationships and networks have become an integral part of building capacity in non-profit organizations, particularly those in social and public service industries (Chaskin, 2001; Guo & Acar, 2005). Non-profit organizations were traditionally organized by rigid hierarchical management structures that emphasized unilateral communication, rapid production, and efficiency (Raab & Kenis, 2009). Yet trends in technology and production, coupled with continued patterns of globalization, have led to contemporary collaborative structures that promote bilateral communication, inter- and intra-organizational networks, and adaptability to evolving marketplaces (Raab, Mannak, & Cambré, 2015). In particular, two primary factors have contributed to the growth and expansion of inter-organizational relationships and networks among non-profit organizations (Isett et al., 2011; Klijn, 2005). First, the late 20th century has seen notions of capitalism and free enterprise permeate the public goods landscape (Stadtler, 2015). Rather than relying solely on public agencies to deliver social services, governments now often redirect funds through a variety of non-profit and for-profit organizations (Salamon, 2002). Increasingly, resources are becoming embedded within a dense system of multi-sector agencies who collectively implement and manage services (Salamon, 2002). In these systems, non-profit organizations must wrestle

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with "market" demands and consumer-oriented politics that traditionally characterized more privatized fields (Isett et al., 2011). Relationships and networks with other non-profit, private, and public organizations have become essential to accessing resources and maintaining organizational capacities in this environment (Gazely, 2010), and have also become important criteria evaluating non-profit performance (Lee & Nowell, 2015). Indeed, collaborative partnerships are now considered a key dimension of organizational capacity that funders look for when awarding grants to non-profit organizations (Lee & Nowell, 2015).

Second, collaborative governance structures have proven much more effective at tackling *wicked* problems of the 21st century. Although conventional management structures were effective at responding to routine problems, they have proven much less effective at tackling the non-routine challenges of modern society (i.e., obesity) (Kettl, 2009; Wilson, 1989). These issues present complex and unpredictable challenges that permeate several service contexts, and cannot be explained using the technical rationality which once dominated public policy and planning (Head & Alford, 2015). They involve increasingly heterogeneous social groups characterized by divergent values, needs, and perspectives that present unique and evolving challenges (Head & Alford, 2015). Input from a variety of service branches is needed to elucidate the multiple dimensions of wicked problems, devise comprehensive solutions, and implement required strategies. Inter-organizational relationships and networks have proven instrumental to this process, because they provide more flexibility than traditional models of management in addressing multidimensional concerns (Kettl, 2009). As Lee and Nowell state (2015), non-profit effectiveness is now conceptualized not just in terms of organizational performance, but "in terms of how an

organization has managed its relations with other stakeholders and established a reputation for trustworthiness and excellence within this broader network." (p. 10).

The theoretical rationale for inter-organizational partnerships and collaborations is based on resource dependence theory (RDT) (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) and transactional cost economics (TCE) (Williamson, 1975, 1985, 1991). RDT emphasizes the influence of external environments and resources on organizational action (Pfeffer & Davis-Blake, 1987). With a foundation in theories of power-dependence (Emerson, 1962), RDT posits that organizations who control resources have power over organizations who need those resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Organizations gain control over resources by acquiring them directly, or positioning themselves in a way that minimizes their dependence on other organizations - or maximizes the dependence of other organizations on them - to acquire resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Because resource environments are inherently variable and subject to change, this positioning often results in new and more complicated patterns of interdependence (Hillman, Withers, & Collins, 2009). As a result, resource dependence is generally understood as a function of both the availability and distribution of resources, and the interdependency between organizations (Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005).

From this perspective, relationships and networks provide opportunities for organizations to acquire resources that might otherwise elude them when operating independently (Hillman, Withers, & Collins, 2009). Organizations can combine complementary resources to create additional benefits that are shared between partnering organizations (Adegbesan & Higgins, 2010; Gulati, 1998; Malatesta & Smith, 2014), or collaborate to "co-create" social, economic, or political value that may be collectively leveraged (Austin, 2010; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). These relationships and networks grow

the potential pool of resources and help non-profit organizations stabilize their resource

environments (Guo & Acar, 2005). They also reduce competition between organizations and

help them gain more power over resource providers (Adegbesan & Higgins, 2011; Hillman et

al., 2009). This is especially important for youth sport non-profit organizations, as

competition from alternative providers in multiple sectors is known to dramatically increase

the cost of competition (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). Well-directed networks of collaborative

governance can mitigate this issue by creating a broad consensus on network-level goals

(e.g., promoting youth development through sport), and helping organizations work together

to acquire resources rather than compete over them (Provan & Kenis, 2008).

Transactional cost economics (TCE) augment this perspective by focusing on the

costs associated with turning resources into products or services. TCE has been utilized to

understand how organizations minimize the comprehensive costs associated with production

and transaction (Williamson, 1985). These include direct costs such as the acquisition of

facilities, payments to staff, or equipment purchases, and indirect costs such as the expenses

associated with planning, implementing, and monitoring activities (Williamson, 1985). Costs

can vary as a result of the size of an organization, the competencies and experience of

managers, and locational advantages (Barringer & Harrison, 2000). According to TCE

principles, the proclivity of organizations to demonstrate opportunistic behavior,

characterized by self-interested action lacking candor or honesty, is thought to increase

transaction costs within market settings (Williamson, 1975, 1985). For example, competing

organizations who withhold strategic information and attempt to seize excess benefits from

transactions ultimately reduce the level of trust involved in negotiations (Barringer &

Harrison, 2000). This discord impinges future interactions and increases transaction costs by

compelling managers to internalize production components that would otherwise be produced more efficiently through partnerships (Barringer & Harrison, 2000). According to Williamson (1975, 1985), the inefficiencies perpetuated by this process can lead to market failure when independent transaction costs become prohibitive for production.

Inter-organizational relationships and networks expand managers' decisions to produce or purchase by adding the option to *partner* (Barringer & Harrison, 2000). Partnerships have distinctive characteristics that help mitigate the transaction costs found in many market systems (Jarillo, 1988). They allow organizations to share larger production costs that would be impossible to manage independently (Harrigan, 1988), and create ownership incentives that preclude opportunistic behavior by creating a joint interest in a shared resource (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Jarillo, 1988). Moreover, continuous successful interactions between organizations lead to greater feelings of trust and reciprocity between partners (Ring & Van De Ven, 1994), which not only contribute to more efficient network exchanges, but also strengthen relations and discourage organizations from leaving the network to engage in self-serving opportunistic behavior (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Maitland, Bryson, & Van De Ven, 1985).

Relationship and Network Capacity in Non-profit Sport Organizations

Previous research on inter-organizational relationships and networks involving non-profit sport organizations has revealed numerous potential benefits. For example, Thibault and colleagues (1999) found that partnerships helped public, non-profit, and private sport and leisure organizations share human, financial, and infrastructural (e.g., land, facilities) resources that reduced costs and created service efficiencies. Similarly, Casey, Payne, and Eime (2009) found that cross-sector partnerships helped sport and recreation organizations

gain access to equipment, venues, and transportation infrastructure. Though the development of physical capacities characterizes much of the research in this area (Misener & Doherty, 2013), several studies have also highlighted strategic and social benefits. Partnerships have been shown to help non-profit sport organizations increase their visibility and legitimacy within communities (Babiak, 2003; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010), build and deploy social capital (Misener & Doherty, 2012; Sharpe, 2006), and promote community leadership (Allison, 2001; Vail, 2007). Collectively, these studies have underscored the link between partnerships, organizational capacity, and goal achievement, and highlighted the role sport and recreation can play when integrated into broader social and health policies.

Unfortunately, partnerships involving sport non-profit organizations remain vastly underutilized. For example, Allison (2001) found that only one-fourth of sport clubs had partnerships with schools or other community organizations, and less than one-fifth had partnerships with private organizations. These relationships and networks are especially sparse in small sport non-profits (Misener & Doherty, 2013), and even organizations who *are* engaged in multi-sector partnerships typically struggle to maintain and sustain them (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Frisby et al., 2004). Without collaborative partnerships, non-profit sport organizations are often compelled to internalize production components, forcing many volunteers to juggle duties related to resource acquisition, strategic planning, organizational management, *and* service delivery. From a programmatic perspective, this limits the ability of youth sport non-profits to deliver the integrated programming needed to achieve objectives (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Coalter, 2010; Edwards, 2015; Rowe, Shilbury, Ferkins, & Hinckson, 2013; Skinner, Zakus, & Cowell, 2008; Vail, 2007). From a TCE perspective, it creates additional production costs that could otherwise be alleviated through partnerships

(Williamson, 1991). Additionally, without a strong base of collaborative partners, many youth sport non-profit organizations may be struggling to demonstrate the network capacity sought by funders (Lee & Nowell, 2015).

Scholars have attributed these limitations to key dyadic features of youth sport partnerships. For example, mutual trust (Babiak & Thibault, 2009), shared values (Shaw & Allen, 2006), and available social capital (Doherty et al., 2014) have all been highlighted as important antecedents of successful inter-organizational partnerships. Many sport non-profit organizations struggle to establish these features due to limited organizational capacities (Doherty et al., 2014; Balduck et al., 2015). For example, mutual trust develops when partners continuously fulfill obligations and maintain consistent interactions, which require important capacities such as collaborative leadership and formalized governance structures (Brinkerhoff, 2002). Since many sport non-profit organizations do not possess these capacities, their partnerships are often disorganized, undermanaged, and unsuccessful at establishing trust (Frisby et al., 2004; Babiak & Thibault, 2009). Similarly, key philosophical and programmatic differences between "sport development" (which prioritizes elite athletic performance) and "sport-for-development" (which directs sport towards more social and health-related goals) organizations have been known to create value discrepancies that hinder effective collaboration (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010). These tensions prohibit agreement over the overarching purpose of partnering organizations and the value they intend to create for stakeholders, and ultimately limit opportunities for effective partnerships (Austin, 2010; Frumpkin & Andre-Clark, 2000).

Another key dimension of dyadic relations is power and dependence (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; MacLean et al., 2011). Although partnerships can increase access to resources,

they also entail a loss of operating autonomy that must be balanced and negotiated during the formative stages of a partnership (Guo & Acar, 2005). Due to their limited financial and infrastructural capacities, the value proposition offered by many non-profit organizations is limited (Austin, 2010). From an RDT perspective, this allows potential partners to negotiate from a position of power, as they control critical resources and have substitutable partners to drive up competition (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). As market-based economics continue to permeate public and social service industries, these issues of power and dependence are becoming increasingly salient for youth non-profit organizations (Isett et al., 2011). Since they typically do not own critical infrastructure, and are becoming increasingly reliant on external sources of funding, many partnerships involving youth sport non-profit organizations are hindered by power imbalances that favor external providers (Balduck et al., 2015; Wicker & Breuer, 2013). These partnerships can also involve substantial losses in managerial autonomy which perpetuate mission drift (Allison, 2001; Coalter, 2010; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010).

Although many of these studies are informed by conceptual principles of network theory, empirical analysis has focused primarily on dyadic relations and ego-networks. Even studies examining broader whole networks have been limited to a small number of organizations within a specific sport category (see MacLean et al., 2011). This limitation is significant, considering an organization's position within a network, along with the configuration of the network itself, can dramatically shape the formation and efficacy of dyadic relations (Cook & Emerson, 1984; Galaskiewicz, 1985; Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, & Dowell, 2006; Galaskiewicz & Krohn, 1984). In addition, although the difficulties and potential drawbacks associated with cross- and multi-sectoral partnerships have been noted

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(Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Misener & Doherty, 2013), they have been the primary focus of researchers. Several studies have examined partnerships between sport organizations (see Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010), though the focus has typically remained on cross-sector partnerships between government agencies, non-profits, and/or private organizations providing sport services. Focusing on within-sector collaborations could be especially useful for sport-based non-profit organizations, as they may be more likely to find partners who have compatible values and could potentially work together to exert power over resource providers (Adegbesan & Higgins, 2011; Hillman et al., 2009).

The purpose of this study is to examine the structural properties of a youth sport non-profit network, along with their connections to other organizations. It first examines how inter-organizational partnerships between youth sport non-profit organizations are being utilized to build organizational capacity. Then, it analyzes the composition of partnerships with other non-profit, public, and private organizations to understand how youth sport non-profits are leveraging partners in the broader community. Finally, it assesses how organizational capacities may facilitate or constrain opportunities for partnerships involving youth sport non-profits. The results and discussion provide information to help youth sport non-profit organizations strategically identify potential partners, make more efficient use of existing partnerships, and leverage their position within the community to build organizational capacity.

Methods

The use of the word "network" as a methodological, theoretical, and even metaphorical concept has been widespread in organizational research and practice, leading to a wide array of definitions. In the organizational literature, a distinction is typically made

between formal partnerships and informal "serendipitous" networks that form more opportunistically (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). Since the purpose of this study was to understand how inter-organizational partnerships contribute to developing organizational capacity, I focused on analyzing formal collaborative network structures. Specifically, I adopted Babiak's (2003, p. 6) criteria to identify partnerships characterized by close, long-term, and planned strategic action between organizations with the objective of mutually beneficial outcomes.

Boundary Specification and Study Setting

The issue of boundary specification is integral to network analysis, as it determines which organizations will be included in the study (Provan, Fish, & Sydow, 2007). Laumann, Marsden, and Prensky (1983) specify two major approaches to boundary specification, realist and nominalist. In the realist approach, the network is identified by a cognizant social membership that actors can readily identify, such as students in a school or employees in an organization (Laumann et al., 1983). In the nominalist approach, the investigator imposes a conceptual framework to define boundaries that are analytically relative to their research questions (Laumann et al., 1983). Because there were no formal structures bounding youth sport non-profit organizations together within the study setting, a nominalist approach was used for this study. Nominalist boundaries are defined by identifying organizations that may interact with one another to achieve a common purpose (Provan et al., 2007) and/or establishing definitional foci to delineate actors that share some attribute or characteristic (Laumann et al., 1983). Both aspects were utilized to establish three criteria that delineated the network boundary.

First, the boundary was defined geographically to include only non-profit organizations registered within the municipality of a large city in the Southeastern United States. The population of this municipality was almost 500,000 people, with over one-fifth under the age of 18. Residents were primarily white (61.3%), black (27.2%), or Hispanic/Latino (12%), and median household income was $53,654. According to *ReferencesUSA*, 54 organizations in this municipality were registered as Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 71394011, which provides an indicator of private investment in sport and recreation services. In terms of public investment in sport and recreation facilities, the municipality's parks and recreation department operated over 9,000 acres of parkland with numerous courts, gymnasiums, and pools, and had an annual operating budget of over $50 million. Non-profit organizations in this municipality were identified using Guidestar, an information service specializing in reporting on U.S. non-profit organizations (website: http://www.guidestar.org/SearchResults.aspx). This first criteria produced an initial pool of 3,708 non-profit organizations. Second, organizations were retained if they are registered in one of four Guidestar categories: 1) Recreation, Sports, Leisure, Athletics (Code: N), 2) Youth Development (Code: O), 3) Human Services (Code: P) and 4) Community Improvement, Capacity Building (Code: S). This second criterion narrowed the pool to 458 organizations. Finally, organizations were screened using an iterative process that evaluated the name, mission statement, and objectives of each organization to determine if they met three definitional criteria: 1) focused on promoting youth development, 2) served youth under the age of 18, and 3) used sport as a primary program component. This resulted in a final sampling frame of 36 organizations.

Data Collection

Contact information for these organizations was retrieved from their website and Guidestar accounts. On September 21st, 2015, an email was sent to representatives from each organization to introduce the study and ask for an appropriate contact person. On September 23rd, 2015, a follow up e-mail was sent to reiterate information about the study and request an interview. On September 28th, 2015, a third follow-up email was sent and phone calls were placed to those who had not responded. This process also was repeated one week later on October 5th, 2015. This resulted in successful contacts with representatives from 32 of the 36 youth sport non-profit organizations in the municipality of interest (response rate = 89%). Face-to-face interviews were requested with all 32 responding organizations, and phone interviews were used when face-to-face interviews could not be facilitated. Face-to-face data collection has been highlighted as the most effective means of collecting network data, since it allows researchers to establish a rapport with respondents and provides opportunities to use probing techniques that improve respondent recall and elaboration (Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013). Although phone interviews provide a less interactive context, they are still considered a more effective means of maximizing respondent elicitation than self-administered, mail-out, or electronic surveys (Borgatti et al., 2013). Network data was collected from 22 organizations using face-to-face interviews (69%), and 10 organizations using phone interviews (31%), with interviews lasting an average of 39 minutes. Table 2.1 provides a profile of each organization, the representative's role within the organization, and the interview method.

Network data was collected through both closed- and open-ended questions. As the whole network of youth sport non-profit organizations was of primary interest, respondents

were given a roster of all 36 youth sport non-profit organizations in the municipality. This reduced the likelihood of recall error and selection bias related to identifying partner organizations within the network of interest (Borgatti et al., 2013). Open-ended questions were used to elicit partnerships with other organizations. The open-ended format was preferred for these questions because choosing from a roster of all possible cross- and multi-sector partners in the municipality of interest was deemed too cumbersome for interviewees. In addition, it was necessary to provide respondents an opportunity to nominate partnerships that might be absent on a predefined roster, such as organizations in different cities or counties. Though open-ended questions do present several limitations, the focus on organizational rather than personal networks alleviated some of these issues. For example, one of the biggest issues of open-ended questions is matching actual names from a list of nominated nicknames or similar names (i.e., Rob, Robbie, Robert, Bob, Bobby) (Borgatti et al., 2013). As the analysis focused on organizations, names provided by respondents were concrete and traceable to a singular organization. In addition, face-to-face and phone interviews provided opportunities for follow-up and probing questions that alleviated issues of recall error.

Questions were developed around the key dimensions of Hall and colleagues (2003) organizational capacity framework: 1) human resource capacities, 2) financial capacities, 3) infrastructure capacities, and 4) strategic planning capacities. To help respondents understand the specific dimensions, a list of potential resources and capacities was provided to typify each dimension. For example, the question related to financial capacities included: 1) funding (i.e., grants, sponsorships, donations, dues), 2) fundraising strategies and activities (i.e., fundraising events, grant writing strategies, co-writing grants), and 3) information regarding

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potential funding sources (i.e., request for proposals [RFP's], potential donors, potential

sponsors). For each capacity dimension, respondents were asked the question stem, "Which

organizations do you send or receive one or more of the following resources with?", and

provided with the list of options to inform their answer. Respondents were then asked three

follow up questions specific to each nomination. The first question related to the direction of

the partnership by asking "Do you send, receive, or send and receive as part of this

relationship?" Respondents were given three categorical answer choices: 1) Send, 2)

Receive, 3) Send and Receive. The second question asked "How frequently does this

relationship occur?" Respondents answered this question using a 6-point Likert scale ranging

from 1 (Less than once a year) to 6 (Daily). The third question asked "How important is this

relationship to the operation of your organizations?" Respondents answered this question

using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Unimportant) to 5 (Very Important). These

questions established the direction and flow of different resources, and provided an efficient

method of gauging the relative value of certain ties.

Attribute data for each organization was collected through a GuideStar subscription,

which provided access to analysis and aggregation tools along with GuideStar's most

complete non-profit reports. Guidestar provides a comprehensive database of financial and

organizational information gathered from 990 IRS Forms and other documentation. The 990

Form provides financial information and requires disclosures regarding corporate governance

and boards of directors as well. This information was used to create measures of each

capacity dimension. *Human resource* capacity was measured by the number of volunteers

and the sum of paid salaries; *financial* capacity was measured by the total revenue of the

organization; *infrastructural* capacity was measured by the valuation of fixed assets

(inclusive of land, buildings, and equipment); and *strategic and planning* capacity was measured by the size of the board of directors and years in operation.

Analysis

The structural features of the youth sport non-profit network were assessed using measures of density, reciprocity, and transitivity. These measures collectively assessed the cohesiveness between organizations, and provide an indication of the network configuration. To examine connections with other organizations, compositional measures of ego-networks were used to identify important partners in the broader community. Organizations are grouped into four classifications, 1) private/public schools and higher education, 2) other non-profit organizations, 3) private organizations, and 4) public agencies. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons were used to compare the frequency and perceived importance of ties in these sectors. In addition, a dyad reciprocity measure was utilized to understand the direction of exchanges. Finally, bivariate correlations were used to measure how organizational capacity influenced the relationships and networks of different youth sport non-profit organizations.

<div align="center">Results</div>

Youth Sport Non-profit Network

In this directed network, ties represent partnerships between organizations related to a dimension of capacity. For example, if organization 'i' sends a capacity dimension to organization 'j' (i.e., paid staff and volunteers), that represents 1 tie. If organization 'j' reciprocates by sending a capacity dimension to organization 'i' (i.e., funding), that represents 2 ties. Among the network of 32 youth sport non-profit organizations, there were 6 ties related to human resource capacities, 5 ties related to financial capacities, 8 ties related to

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infrastructural capacities, and 11 ties related to strategic capacities. Table 2.2 provides several measures of cohesiveness for each of these dimensions, as well as the overall network.

The total network density of .024 indicates that only 2.4% of the total possible ties were utilized within the overall network. This lack of connectivity is further confirmed by the fragmentation index, which indicated that 88.6% of the possible pairs of nodes in the network did not reach each other. Interestingly, while dyad reciprocity measures for the human resource, financial, and infrastructural dimensions indicated that less than one-fifth of dyadic ties were reciprocated within these networks, this measure was much higher for the strategic and overall networks (.833 and .714 respectfully). This suggests that 83.3% of partnerships involving strategic capacities were reciprocated with strategic capacities, and partnerships involving other dimensions of capacity were typically reciprocated through complementary capacities (i.e., infrastructural capacity in exchange for human resource capacity).

Figure 2.1 provides a graphical representation of the youth sport non-profit network. Nodes are plotted using a spring embedding technique that locates nodes based on their geodesic proximity and path length similarity. The size of each node is determined by its total degree centrality, and the nodes are labeled with their unique ID number. Thicker black lines represent reciprocated ties, and thinner grey lines represent non-reciprocated ties. Although the low connectivity between youth sport non-profits limits opportunities for in-depth structural analysis, there were a few interesting features of this network. As shown in the graph, node 32 occupied a central role within the network, with a normalized in- and out-degree centrality of .194 and .129 respectively. This indicates that node 32 sent 19.4% of all possible ties and received 12.9% of all possible ties within the network. In addition, node 32

had a normalized betweenness centrality score of .083, meaning 8.3% of all possible geodesic (shortest) paths in the network passed through this node. This indicates that node 32 had considerable influence on the transfer and exchange of capacities through the network. Nodes 10 (3.4%), 7 (3.0%), and 1 (2.7%) also occupied central roles in this respect. In terms of balance, 20.5% of all existing triads were transitive, and only 8.7% of triads that could be completed by one more tie actually were, indicating that the network was unbalanced and susceptible to structures of power and hierarchy. However, because more than 92% of the potential triads in the network were empty, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

The limited dyadic redundancy also highlighted the presence of structural holes within the network. The average efficiency measure for organizations in this network was .865, which means that for each non-isolated organization, an average of 86.5% of partnerships were with organizations who do not share similar ties. This indicates that youth sport non-profit organizations were utilizing their ties efficiently within the network, but it also means the network was vulnerable to fragmentation. For example, node 32 had almost twice the effective size (5.8) of any other node, and a very high efficiency (.967). If this organization was deleted from the network, it would create another isolated organization (Node 9) and four fragmented sets of partnerships. This is referred to as the "Key Player Problem/Negative" (KPP-Neg) (Borgatti, 2006, p. 22), as the deletion of one node dramatically disrupts the cohesiveness of the remaining network.

Connections with Other Organizations

Collectively, youth sport non-profits in the study were connected with 673 external organizations. These consisted primarily of private businesses (72.5%), private sport and recreation facilities (7.7%), sport governing bodies (5.2%), and churches (3.3%). There were

a total of 1,227 ties between these organizations, comprising 104 (8.5%) human resource ties, 797 (65%) financial ties, 183 (14.9%) infrastructural ties, and 143 (11.6%) strategic ties. Because the extent of this particular network was undefined, the analysis of these ties focuses on the characteristics and composition of ego-networks. Table 2.3 provides a comparison of the mean frequency and importance of ties within each capacity dimension. ANOVA results revealed significant differences between capacity dimensions with regards to the average frequency (F=263.55, p < .001) and perceived importance of partnerships (F=5.95, p < .001). In terms of frequency, human resource partnerships and strategic partnerships entailed more frequent interactions than financial partnerships (p < .001), and less frequent interactions than infrastructural partnerships (p < .001). There was no significant difference in the average frequency of interactions between human resource partnerships and strategic partnerships. Infrastructural partnerships entailed more frequent interactions than the other capacity dimensions (p < .001), and financial partnerships entail less frequent interactions than other capacity dimensions (p < .001). In terms of importance, the average perceived importance of infrastructural partnerships was significantly higher than the average perceived importance of financial partnerships (p < .001). There were no significant differences in perceived importance between other capacity dimensions.

　　To analyze the composition of dyadic exchanges between organizations, ties were aggregated to represent different dimensions of capacity. For example, ties related to equipment and facilities were aggregated to create a network for the infrastructural capacity dimension (INF), in which ties represented the exchange of *at least one* of these capacities. Table 4.4 provides descriptive statistics for the ego-network ties in each of these dimensions. As shown by the large standard deviations and ranges within each dimension, there was

considerable variance among youth sport non-profit organizations, and all youth sport non-profit organizations received more ties than they sent. In addition, only 13.3% of human resource ties, 6.8% of financial ties, and 4.7% of infrastructural ties were reciprocated. Similar to ties within the youth sport non-profit network, a larger proportion of strategic ties were reciprocated (36.8%).

Figure 2.2 provides a graphical representation of the human resource network (HR). The scaling and symbolization is the same as Figure 2.1, with the symbols for youth sport non-profit organizations identified with green colored rims (these scaling parameters and symbols are also used for Figures 2.3-2.6 as well). In the human resource network, partnerships with other youth sport non-profits were the least common (13.2%), and partnerships with other industry categories were evenly distributed between 19.8% and 23.1%. Partnerships with other non-profits and private organizations were evenly spread across incoming and outgoing ties, but the distribution of ties with public agencies and public/private schools and institutions of higher education was skewed. Specifically, there were more incoming (31.4%) than outgoing (10%) ties with public/private schools and institutions of higher education, and more outgoing (30%) than incoming (11.8%) ties with public agencies. This indicates that youth sport non-profits received more human resource capacities than they sent from public/private schools and institutions of higher education, but sent more human resource capacities than they received from public agencies. Of the ties sent to public agencies, 75% went to public parks and recreation departments. For incoming ties, the most prominent external actors were a public institution of higher education within the municipality of interest (ID: 681, 4.7% of ties), a private business (ID 533, 3.5% of ties) and a private institution of higher education within the municipality of interest (ID 682, 3.5% of

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ties). For outgoing ties, the most prominent external recipients were the county public school system (ID: 666, 2.4% of ties) and the municipality's parks and recreation department (ID: 628, 2.4% of ties). Among the youth sport non-profit organizations, Node 1 accounted for 19.6% of the incoming ties, and 28% of the outgoing ties.

Figure 2.3 provides a graphical representation of the financial network (FIN). Almost all financial ties received by youth sport non-profits were from private organizations (92.2%). The financial ties sent by youth sport non-profits were not quite as concentrated. Half were sent to private organizations, 20.3% were sent to other non-profits, 14.0% were sent to public/private schools and institutions of higher education, and 11.6% were sent to public agencies. Among the outgoing ties sent to private organizations, 94.2% were sent to either private businesses or private sport and recreation facilities. Of the outgoing ties sent to other non-profits, 65.7% were sent to sport governing bodies (i.e., membership fees, insurance). Of the outgoing ties sent to public agencies, 75% were sent to public parks and recreation departments. No prominent external actors are apparent in the network. The most incoming ties came from a private sporting goods retailer (ID: 694, 0.7%), and the most outgoing ties went to the municipality's parks and recreation department (ID: 628, 1.1%) and the county public school system (ID: 666, 1%). As seen in the graphical representation of the network, most financial ties were concentrated around nodes 6, 21, 25, 30, and 32. The majority of these ties were incoming, and collectively accounted for three-quarters (73%) of all incoming financial ties, with node 32 alone accounting for over 36%.

Figure 2.4 displays the infrastructural network. A majority of ties related to infrastructural capacities were received by youth sport non-profit organizations, which makes intuitive sense considering very few organizations owned their own facilities. Overall, a

majority of ties received by youth sport non-profits on this dimension came from private organizations (44.7%), with the remaining coming from other non-profits (15.5%), public agencies (16.8%), and private/public schools and institutions of higher education (17.4%). In particular, over half of the infrastructural ties received from other non-profit organizations were from churches (52%), and one-fourth came from sport governing bodies. Almost all of the incoming infrastructural ties from public agencies came from public parks and recreation agencies (92.6%), and most incoming ties from educational institutions were from public school systems (46.4%) or private schools (35.7%). For outgoing infrastructural ties, the most common partnering organizations were other youth sport non-profits (34.8%) and private/public schools and institutions of higher education (34.8%). It should be noted that public school systems (62.5%) and private schools (37.5%) comprised the entire educational category, as no institutions of higher education received infrastructural ties from youth sport non-profits. Although 34.8% of the outgoing infrastructural ties went to youth sport non-profits, only about one-fourth of these involved *non-sport* youth non-profits. Unlike the other networks, there are several notable external actors in the infrastructural network. The municipality's parks and recreation department comprised 6.8% of the outgoing infrastructural ties (ID: 628), and the county public school system (ID: 666) and a public institution of higher education in the municipality (ID: 681) accounted for 5.1% and 2.3% of the outgoing ties respectfully. The county public school system (ID: 666) also accounted for the largest proportion of incoming infrastructural ties (1.7%) among external actors. Among the youth sport non-profits, Node 1 accounted for 11.8% of the incoming ties, and Nodes 6 and 10 both accounted for 8%. Node 32 accounted for almost one-fifth of the outgoing ties (18.8%).

Figure 2.5 shows the network of strategic ties. Similar to the other dimensions, there were more incoming ties than outgoing ties involving strategic capacities. Almost half of all incoming ties were from other non-profits (48.9%), and almost one quarter were from private organizations (22.2%). Of the 44 incoming ties from other non-profits, 36 (81.8%) were from sport governing bodies. The fragmented appearance of the strategic network may be attributable to the fact that most sport governing bodies were sport specific, so youth sport non-profits generally received information from their affiliated national or regional governing body (i.e., USA Rugby, USA Swimming) rather than one universal governing body. The majority of outgoing strategic ties were directed toward other sport non-profits (27.5%), followed by public agencies (20%) and other non-profits (20%). Of the 8 outgoing ties sent to public agencies, all 8 (100%) went to public parks and recreation departments. Interestingly, although there were 11 (27.5%) ties to other youth sport non-profits, there were only 4 (10%) to other *non-sport* youth non-profits. Node 1 had a particularly large amount of strategic ties, accounting for 22% of the incoming ties and 50% of the outgoing ties in the network. Though previous research has highlighted rivalries between same-sport organizations (MacLean et al., 2011), this network offers a slightly different perspective. Nodes 10, 13, and 17 all provide the same sport opportunity, yet shared reciprocal exchanges that create a complete triad. Despite the fact that these non-profits are competitors, they note amicable relations that involved the sharing of market trends and programmatic information that contributed to organizational development. Conversely, nodes 2, 14, and 31 also provided the same sport opportunity yet had no direct connection, and representatives noted intense competition over participants and facilities. Clearly, though competition may be pervasive among youth sport non-profits, and more acute among same-sport entities,

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partnerships proved useful at dissuading the negative structural disadvantages of these relations.

To provide a depiction of the overall network of inter-organizational partnerships, relations related to each capacity dimension are aggregated to create a total network (TOTAL). In this network, ties between organizations represent the transference of *at least one* capacity dimension (e.g., HR, FIN, INF, and/or STR). There were a total of 1,021 ties in this network, meaning 97.7% of inter-organizational ties involving youth sport non-profits are sent or received with external organizations. Overall, almost 74.4% of inter-organizational ties were not reciprocated, and those that were typically involved complementary rather than similar capacities. Nodes 32, 25, 21, and 6 had the highest concentration of ties, though most of these were incoming and not reciprocated, and three of the four nodes (32, 25, and 21) were branches of larger national youth sport non-profit organizations. The two most prominent external actors were the municipality's parks and recreation department and the county public school system (Nodes 628 and 666 respectively), who are both connected with 12 youth sport non-profit organizations. Figure 2.6 displays a graphical representation of the total network.

Influence of Organizational Capacity

Table 2.5 presents descriptive statistics for each measure of organizational capacity. As evidenced by the large standard error and range, there was considerable variance among measures for organizational capacity. In addition, there was also significant positive correlations between each variable ($.465 < r < .976$, $p < .05$), reflecting the interdependency of capacity dimensions highlighted in previous literature (Doherty et al., 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2009, 2011; Wicker & Breuer, 2011). Principal components analysis (PCA) with

Varimax rotation was utilized to generate a composite variable representative of organizational capacity. A single factor solution was optimal, with an eigenvalue of 4.831, and over 80% of the variance explained. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of .823 verifies the sampling adequacy for the analysis (Kaiser, 1974), and Barlett's test of sphericity (χ^2 (15) = 149.964, p < .001) indicated that the correlations between items were sufficiently large for PCA. The resulting factor score was saved and labeled Organizational Capacity (see Table 2.6).

Bivariate correlations were examined to study the relationship between organizational capacity and partnerships. Partnerships were separated into sent and received ties, and classified by the dimension of capacity they represented. The results are shown in Table 2.7, and highlight several intriguing findings. Organizational capacity was positively associated with received financial ties (r=.880, p < .001), but not sent financial ties, indicating that organizations with greater capacities receive more financial ties (i.e., sponsorships) but did not necessarily send more financial ties. There was also a significant positive association between organizational capacity and both sent and received infrastructural ties (r = .666 and .599 respectively, p < .01), indicating that organizations with greater capacity sent and received more infrastructural ties. Finally, there is a significant positive correlation between organizational capacity and the total number of received ties (r = .711, p < .001), indicating that increases in organizational capacity were associated with increases in incoming ties, but not outgoing ties.

Discussion

These results indicate that the network of youth sport non-profit organizations in the municipality of interest was fragmented and characterized by a low level of cohesiveness and

collaboration. Over half of the organizations reported no partnerships with other youth sport non-profits, and less than 3% of the total possible partnerships were utilized within the network. Though the connections among youth sport non-profits were efficient, the network itself was unbalanced and characterized by numerous structural holes. One organization (ID: 32) represented what Borgatti (2006) would characterize as a negative key player, and bridged a significant structural hole within the network. If this organization was removed or decided to discontinue partnerships with other youth sport non-profits, the network would fragment even further.

This low level of cohesiveness may be attributable to the competitive rather than collaborative atmosphere among youth sport non-profit organizations. Reductions in public funding and in-kind donations have forced youth sport non-profits to rely more on government grants, sponsorships, and service fees to fund their programs (Balduck et al., 2010, 2015; Wicker & Breuer, 2011). In addition, the continued commercialization of sport in the United States has increased competition with private organizations over the facilities and equipment necessary to operate programs (Coakley, 2010). When facing these sorts of environmental challenges, it is common for non-profits to respond by differentiating themselves from other actors in an attempt to convince providers they deserve resources (Barman, 2002; Chetkovich & Frumkin, 2003). This competition is especially intense between organizations that provide similar services, such as youth sport non-profits, since organizations with similar directives and programs often compete over the same potential sponsors, facilities, and resources (Schiff & Weisbrod, 2007). In addition, with membership fees becoming an increasingly important aspect of revenue generation for youth sport non-profits, competition over participants has increased as well (MacLean et al., 2011). These

environmental conditions may be creating tensions between youth sport non-profit

organizations that are not conducive to establishing inter-organizational partnerships.

Alternatively, the lack of connectivity may be due to more practical considerations.

Although principles of RDT suggest partnerships lead to more resources, the magnitude of

these benefits is proportional to the complementarity, not similarity, of partnering

organizations (Adegbesan & Higgins, 2010). Partnerships involving heterogeneous

organizations are generally more effective than homogenous organizations since they entail

the combination of dissimilar resources, leading to greater overall benefits for both partners

(Adegbesan & Higgins, 2010). Most youth sport non-profits have similar organizational

profiles, characterized by unstable financial resources and a lack of infrastructural capacities.

When seeking potential partners to address these limitations, other youth sport non-profit

organizations are not necessarily prime candidates as they face similar circumstances. In

addition, even when youth sport non-profits have compatible profiles, value discrepancies

may create tensions that inhibit partnership formation. Although organizations in this study

had similar overall goals, their respective processes to achieve those goals varied

considerably. In fact, several youth sport non-profits actually branched off from other

organizations in the network due to perceived value differences, and espoused much different

approaches to programming in terms of coaching styles, competition, and structure. Previous

research has shown value differences can create antagonistic sentiments between sport

organizations (Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010), which may have constrained partnership formation

within the network.

It is also important to consider that youth sport non-profits may have simply been

unaware of other actors in the network. During the interview process, it became apparent that

many administrators did not know about other youth sport non-profit organizations in the municipality. Even when the complete roster was presented, interviewees mentioned that it was their first time hearing of most other youth sport non-profits. This aligns with previous studies suggesting many organizations do not know about all their prospective partners, and tend to interact with only those of which they are aware (Galaskiewicz, 1985). With many youth sport non-profits operated by volunteers who focus primarily on day-to-day operations, administrators have limited time to familiarize themselves with the market. Rather than cognitively choosing who to pursue partnerships with based on resource compatibility or value similarities, youth sport non-profits may simply be operating on what they know. This not only narrows the potential number of partnerships, but also leads to suboptimal partnering decisions (Galaskiewicz, 1985).

The limited interaction between youth sport non-profits also raises important concerns regarding structures of power and influence that may influence the negotiation, formation, and management of external partnerships. This study demonstrates that youth sport non-profit organizations lack a dense structure of in-group partnerships, so their partnerships with other non-profit, public, and private agencies are often negotiated individually. By positioning themselves between disconnected actors in the youth sport non-profit the network, these organizations have greater control over the flow of information and resources, and can exert considerable influence over negotiations (Burt, 1992). For example, Figure 2.7 displays the ego-networks of nodes 628 and 666, who were the most prominent external partners of youth sport non-profits, particularly related to infrastructural capacities. The scaling and symbolization is the same as previous figures, however the size of nodes is equal to their effective size, which relates to their relative influence over the ego-network.

The lack of connectivity and closure among youth sport non-profits clearly creates structural advantages for these agencies. The bridging position they occupy between disconnected youth sport non-profits provides more power and influence during negotiations, and may lead to increased transaction costs and unbalanced partnerships for youth sport non-profits. Moreover, it is important to consider the influence of other public and private youth sport services in the municipality who create additional leveraging power for resource providers. Previous research on cross-sector partnerships involving youth sport non-profits has highlighted key dyadic features that create imbalances (see Allison, 2001; Coalter, 2010; Hayhurst & Frisby, 2010; MacLean et al., 2011), but the results of this study suggest the position of organizations within the broader network may also play a significant role. Due to their dependency on resource providers to operate programs, and the number of substitutable options available to resource providers in the public, private, and non-profit sector, youth sport non-profits typically have little leverage in negotiations. Based on the current findings, this leverage may be deteriorating even further due to their lack of cohesiveness, as resource providers are able to bridge structural holes and assume positions of power by negotiating with each youth sport non-profit independently.

Of course, youth sport non-profits could counter by attempting to find alternative resource providers, yet there are several issues with this strategy. First, it requires key strategic and planning capacities that many youth sport non-profits do not possess, such as the time, knowledge, and expendable resources necessary to implement plans. Second, key logistical considerations limit the number of potential number of providers from which to choose. Because most youth sport non-profits are unable to provide transportation for participants, the search for alternative providers is geographically limited to facilities that are

within a reasonable driving distance of their target market. These facilities must also have the type of surface required for their particular sport. Four out of every five non-profits in this study specialized in one sport activity, meaning they required a specific surface to operate their program. The availability of these surfaces can vary considerably depending on the sport and community, and further restricts the number of potential providers. Finally, the two primary providers of infrastructural capacity in this study are the municipality's parks and recreation department and the county public school system. Although each of these entities operate numerous facilities throughout the municipality, negotiations such as rental and lease agreements go through the same centralized management system for each site. Though there are a large number of public schools and recreation facilities available to youth sport non-profits, they all present the same challenges when it comes to negotiation.

In addition to the structuring of partnerships with external organizations, the results also highlight intriguing characteristics of the partnerships themselves. Austin and Seitanidi (2012) arrange non-profit partnerships on a "collaboration continuum", from philanthropic to integrative (p. 72). These stages have distinct characteristics and functions, and may evolve from one stage to another (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). Previous research indicates most non-profit partnerships are characterized by low levels of engagement and infrequent interactions that typify philanthropic collaborations (Austin, 2010; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012; Galaskiewicz & Colman, 2006). The current study supports this assertion, as over half the ties between youth sport non-profits and other organizations related to financial capacities, with most related to direct funding. In fact, 68.4% of external partners are only connected to youth sport non-profits through non-reciprocated direct funding (e.g., sponsorships and contributions). Most of these organizations are private businesses that have minor influences

on the activities and strategic planning of youth sport non-profits, peripheral connections to their mission statements, and a very low frequency of contact. Although philanthropic collaborations provide a significant resource to youth sport non-profits, and can offer associational benefits for businesses, their potential benefit to broader levels of society are much less significant than subsequent stages of collaboration (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012).

Transactional collaborations comprised the next largest proportion of partnerships in this study. These are characterized by more explicit interactions between partnering organizations, and involve bilateral rather than unilateral exchanges (Austin, 2010; Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). Examples include youth sport non-profits paying external partners in exchange for facilities or equipment, or providing employee volunteer programs in exchange for financial or infrastructural capacities. Because they typically involve the exchange of complementary resources, these partnerships are expected to produce more direct benefits to partnering organizations, yet there is less certainty regarding their benefit to broader society (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). Transactional collaborations tend to arise more out of self-interested need than social good (Selsky & Parker, 2011), so although the efficacy of youth sport non-profits may be indirectly enhanced by gaining capacities, societal improvement is not the primary goal of the partnership. In addition, as these partnerships involve more structured interactions, they are more difficult to manage and lead to a loss of managerial autonomy (Guo & Acar, 2005).

A much smaller proportion of partnerships in this study characterize integrative or transformational collaborations. These collaborations involve the joint production of value and are viewed as integral to the operation and success of each organization (Austin, 2010). More importantly, since the mission, values, and objectives of integrative and

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transformational partners are congruent, they typically set a greater precedent for societal betterment (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). However, they also require greater trust and investment in relational development, which may have been difficult for many youth sport non-profits given their limited capacity. Interestingly, although this may lead one to assume that youth sport non-profits with greater capacity are able to form more integrative and transformational partnerships, the current results suggest this is not the case. The only significant correlation between organizational capacity and inter-organizational partnerships is related to incoming financial ties and infrastructural ties, and these partnership are more philanthropic/transactional than integrative/transformational. This highlights an intriguing trend regarding the association between organizational capacity and inter-organizational partnerships. The inter-correlations between measures of organizational capacity suggest youth sport non-profits with greater financial capacities also possess more human resource, infrastructural, and strategic planning capacities. This aligns with previous studies suggesting organizations with more revenue are able to hire more paid staff to augment their volunteers, invest in infrastructural capacities, and develop more advanced strategic plans (Balduck et al., 2010, 2015; Wicker & Breuer, 2011, 2013; Doherty et al., 2014). Increased capacities also help youth sport non-profits formalize procedures and management structures to standardize the service delivery process (Allison, 2001; Doherty et al., 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2009; Nichols et al., 2012; Taylor, 2004). All these developments are intended to internalize production components in order to reduce dependencies on external providers and increase operational autonomy. Consequently, youth sport non-profits with greater organizational capacities may have less need for interactive or transformational partnerships to deliver services.

However, this process also creates additional transaction costs by forcing organizations to absorb expenses associated with transforming resources into services. Although this doesn't necessarily influence the need for more integrated partnerships, it does increase the need for alternative revenue sources such as philanthropic/transactional financial partnerships. Organizations with greater capacities generally have more status and visibility within communities, so they are better positioned to establish these connections and can provide more associational value for potential partners (Chandler, Haunschild, Rhee, & Beckman, 2013; Margolis & Walsh, 2003). In addition, they have more human resource and strategic capacities to solicit funding. Thus, when deciding which youth sport non-profits to support through philanthropic/transactional financial partnerships, it makes sense that most organizations would choose those with higher capacities. The results of this study support that notion, as two-thirds of all incoming direct funding ties go to the four youth sport non-profits with the most organizational capacity, and over 37% go to the non-profit with the most (Node: 32). Though the cross-sectional design of this study limits opportunities for longitudinal interpretation, it is generally understood that the credibility and reputation of non-profits is enhanced when they are selected for funding (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989), so it is likely that this process has a compounding effect over time.

Importantly, organizational growth does come with potential negative programmatic consequences, as organizations that focus disproportionately on building capacity risk discarding their directives for financial or organizational gain (Hawkins, 2014). In this study, many interviewees from smaller non-profits were careful to ensure their organization remained aligned with stated objectives, and several indicated that they had turned down potentially lucrative partnerships because they did not "fit" with their organizational mission.

But this is not always the case, as many youth sport organizations alter their mission or sacrifice key components of their programming to satisfy funders or increase participation (Coalter, 2010). This mission drift is especially precarious for sport-based development programs, because their effectiveness is contingent upon a more specific and integrated focus than generalized competitive or recreational programs (Hartmann & Wheelock, 2002). One manifestation of this process is the lack of integrative or transformational partnerships observed in this study. Although contemporary approaches to sport-based youth development highlight the importance of utilizing partnerships to integrate non-sport programming into sport activities (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), and many youth sport non-profits in this study embraced similar narratives, these types of partnerships are not common. Smaller non-profits may be struggling to establish these partnerships due to a lack of capacity, and larger non-profits may be prioritizing organizational growth and autonomy over community-based practices. This highlights some of the important decisions facing youth sport managers and administrators, who must balance the organizational need to build capacity and stabilize resource environments with the programmatic need to stay embedded within the broader community system.

These findings should be considered in light of several limitations. First, the boundary specified for this study excluded organizations who were registered outside the municipality of interest. Although organizations located within close proximity to this boundary may have influenced the relations observed in this study, they were not included. In addition, there are numerous public and private youth sport programs in the municipality of interest that may have similarly influenced the relations observed in this study, however our focus on the non-profit sector meant these organizations were not interviewed. Second, the relations between

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youth sport non-profits and external organizations should be interpreted with caution. Though the whole network of youth sport non-profits and their associated ego-networks are accurate, the connections between external organizations are not included in the study. As such, figures that include external organizations are intended to display the distribution of relations among non-profits, and should not be used to interpret relations among the external organizations themselves. Third, because 4 of the 36 organizations in the network could not be reached the analysis is based on an incomplete network. Incomplete data can negatively influence the reliability of whole-network analyses (Kossinets, 2006), however Wasserman & Faust (1995) indicate a response rate over 75% drastically limits these impacts, and the study response rate significantly exceeded that threshold. Further, the 4 unrepresented organizations are not nominated by any of the 32 participating organizations, suggesting they had a relatively small influence on the network. Finally, financial and governance information was only available for 21 out of the 32 participating organizations (67%), which means the analysis involving measures of organizational capacity only include approximately two-thirds of the nodes. Missing data analysis showed no significant difference in the relational properties between these two groups, and the distribution of relations was also similar.

Conclusion

Building, managing, and maintaining inter-organizational partnerships is becoming an increasingly important component of non-profit management. When used effectively, partnerships can help non-profits gain access to resources, reduce transaction costs, and build organizational capacity. Yet they are currently underutilized by many youth sport non-profits, with even those utilizing partnerships reporting difficulties managing and sustaining

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them. Previous research has focused on key features of dyadic relations, such as communication, trust, and mutual values, which collectively impact partner relations. In addition, characteristics of the actors themselves, such as organizational capacities, have also been highlighted as important factors influencing effective collaboration. This study contributes to the current literature by uncovering ways structural network features influence these dyadic and actor attributes. Most notably, the results suggest a lack of cohesiveness among youth sport non-profits is limiting the ability of youth sport non-profits to exchange information and resources, and creating structural disadvantages by forcing organizations to negotiate with other actors independently. This exacerbates their dependency on external resource providers, and limits their power and leverage in negotiations. Because most youth sport non-profits are operating independently of one another, the majority of their partnerships involve external actors who are less likely to share the same values and goals as them (i.e., private businesses). This focus on need-driven rather than value-driven partnerships is reflected in the characteristics of their collaborations, which are predominantly philanthropic or transactional in nature. Even youth sport non-profits with greater organizational capacities, who could ostensibly build and manage partnerships more effectively, have very few integrative or transformational collaborations. This highlights a need to focus on improving the structuring of relations among youth sport non-profits, not just their attributes and dyadic relations.

Clearly, increased connectivity between youth sport non-profits is needed to provide access to more resources and increase their power in negotiations with resource providers. Additionally, because they are more likely to share similar values, needs, and goals, partnerships between youth sport non-profits have a much better chance of progressing to the

type of integrative and transformational collaborations that benefit society. Nevertheless, building and maintaining effective networks is extremely difficult for managers and administrators of these organizations. The unstable resource and funding environment in which many non-profits operate creates intense competition between actors. Although building denser networks of inter-organizational partnerships can help reduce competition by establishing shared norms, expectations, and mutual trust (Coleman, 1988), these types of strategies are generally more effective in industries with stable resource environments (Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004). Moreover, denser networks characterized by locally redundant ties do not necessarily provide the best return on investment for organizations, as they provide little access to new information and resources (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973, 1983, 1985). This is especially important for youth sport non-profits, as many don't have the capacity necessary to build and sustain many relations. Indeed, managers and administrators of most youth sport non-profits must focus on maintaining day-to-day operations, and don't have time or resources to strategically scan the market for potential partnerships. To truly be effective, youth sport non-profits need to establish network structures that allow them to maximize the effectiveness *and* efficiency of partnerships simultaneously.

One network approach that would achieve this objective is to introduce a third-party intermediary to occupy the structural hole between youth sport non-profits (Obstfeld, 2005). Previous research on structural holes has focused primarily on exploitive entrepreneurial actors who occupy what Simmel (1950) described as "tertius gaudens" (the third who enjoys) roles. Yet structural holes can also be bridged by "tertius iungens" (the third who unites) actors who leverage their social position to unify surrounding actors, mediate relations, and improve coordination (Obstfeld, 2005). These actors are more commonly referred to as

"brokers", and help facilitate the transference of information and resources between actors in a network (Kirkels & Duysters, 2010). Youth sport non-profits could benefit tremendously from this structure, as brokers would bridge the structural holes between youth sport non-profits, provide information on the broader network, and offer support in negotiations with external actors. They are also conducive to facilitating cooperative activities across multiple organizations (Human & Provan, 2000), which would help youth sport non-profits develop more integrated activities to promote developmental outcomes (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). Most importantly, brokers facilitate the type of "weak ties" between youth sport non-profits that provide access to multiple connections without the costs of maintaining them directly (Granovetter, 1973, 1983, 1985). In fact, this efficiency has made them popular in networks of small and medium sized organizations in other industries, who would otherwise not have the resources to manage multiple partnerships themselves (Kirkels & Duysters, 2010).

Departments within institutions of higher education, particularly applied fields such as sport management, leisure and recreation sciences, public health, social work, and applied sociology, are in a prime position to assume this brokerage role among youth sport non-profits. Previous research has shown colleges and universities can serve as effective non-partisan partners to for-profit organizations (Boulding, Morgan, & Staelin, 1997; Winch & Courtney, 2007), and their low level of resource conflict suggests they could occupy similarly impartial roles as brokers to non-profits as well. In addition, they possess a wealth of intellectual capital that would provide a direct benefit to non-profit managers and administrators through the dissemination of knowledge. Rather than transferring this information through conventional mechanisms such as peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and news briefs, this would provide a more direct and dialectical

communication pathway between academics and practitioners. Similarly, researchers within

higher education could benefit tremendously by learning from the experience of practitioners,

who provide a wealth of knowledge on the cutting edge operations of non-profit

organizations. Perhaps most importantly, these connections would also help establish the

presence of universities and colleges within their local communities, which is a key directive

of higher education in modern society (Jacob, Sutin, Weidman, & Yeager, 2015).

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Table 2.1. Organization profiles

ID	Interviewee	Youth Served	Volunteers	Interview Method	Duration (min.)
1	President	300	350	Face-to-Face	45
2	Business Development Director	9,000	2,350	Face-to-Face	35
3	President	200	55	Phone	55
4	President	120	20	Face-to-Face	40
5	Head Coach	100	20	Phone	30
6	President	200	45	Face-to-Face	45
7	President	100	15	Face-to-Face	40
8	President	200	15	Phone	20
9	Assistant Program Director	70	60	Face-to-Face	40
10	Senior Head Coach	350	25	Face-to-Face	45
11	Executive Director	1,000	300	Face-to-Face	40
12	Head Coach	350	30	Face-to-Face	40
13	Director of Operations	400	30	Phone	25
14	President	400	100	Face-to-Face	30
15	Director of Coaching	100	15	Phone	45
16	President	20	6	Face-to-Face	40
17	President	60	12	Face-to-Face	30
18	President	320	100	Phone	30
19	Community Director	400	100	Phone	25
20	President	320	65	Face-to-Face	45
21*	Athletic Director	700	150	Face-to-Face	50
22	Chairman, Youth Committee	40	15	Face-to-Face	45
23	Membership Chair	150	15	Phone	20
24	President	350	10	Phone	55
25*	President	1,200	100	Face-to-Face	43
26	President	85	10	Face-to-Face	45
27	President	50	10	Face-to-Face	30
28	Secretary	800	180	Face-to-Face	45
29	President	35	10	Phone	35
30	Executive Director	1,000	750	Face-to-Face	55
31	Vice President	120	15	Face-to-Face	40
32*	Sports Director	6,000	900	Face-to-Face	40

denotes organization is branch of national or international organization

Table 2.2. Cohesiveness measures for each capacity network

Measure	Capacity Dimension				
	HR	FIN	INF	STR	TOTAL
Avg. Degree	.188	.156	.250	.344	.750
Degree Centralization	.097	.029	.129	.057	.181
Out-Degree Centralization	.094	.028	.125	.055	.175
In-Degree Centralization	.060	.028	.058	.055	.108
Density	.006	.005	.008	.011	.024
Fragmentation Ratio	.989	.994	.986	.989	.886
Average Distance	1.455	1.167	1.500	1.00	2.513
Dyad Reciprocity	.200	.250	.143	.833	.714

Table 2.3. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Frequency and Importance

Frequency				
__Capacity Dimension__	**N**	**Mean (SE)**	**F**	**Sig.**
Human Resources	104	3.17 (.10)	263.55	<.001
Paid staff or volunteers	82	3.29 (.12)		
Programs, strategies, or information	22	2.73 (.12)		
Financial	797	2.10 (.02)		
Funding	695	2.06 (.02)		
Fundraising strategies and activities	78	2.32 (.09)		
Information regarding potential funding	24	2.67 (.21)		
Infrastructural	183	3.97 (.09)		
Equipment	38	2.37 (.18)		
Facilities	145	4.39 (.12)		
Strategic	143	3.01 (.09)		
Information regarding logic/ rationale	91	3.01 (.10)		
Professional knowledge and expertise	52	3.00 (.17)		
Importance				
__Capacity Dimension__	**N**	**Mean (SE)**	**F**	**Sig.**
Human Resources	104	4.36 (.11)	5.95	<.001
Paid staff or volunteers	82	4.37 (.12)		
Programs, strategies, or information	22	4.32 (.28)		
Financial	797	4.30 (.04)		
Funding	695	4.35 (.04)		
Fundraising strategies and activities	78	3.91 (.13)		
Information regarding potential funding	24	4.25 (.20)		
Infrastructural	183	4.65 (.06)		
Equipment	38	4.42 (.17)		
Facilities	145	4.70 (.07)		
Strategic	143	4.37 (.03)		
Information regarding logic/rationale	91	4.40 (.12)		
Professional knowledge and expertise	52	4.33 (.12)		

Note 1: Frequency scale ranges from 1 (Less than once a year) to 6 (Daily)

Note 2: Importance scale ranges from 1 (Very Unimportant) to 5 (Very Important)

Table 2.4. Descriptive statistics for ego-network ties

Measure	HR		FIN		INF		STR	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
Mean	1.6	1.3	17.8	5.4	5.2	0.7	3.2	1.3
SD	2.6	2.3	38.3	5.2	4.4	1.3	4	3.6
Median	1	0	5.5	4	3.5	0	2	0
Max	10	11	207	23	19	6	20	20
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dyad Reciprocity	.133		.068		.047		.368	

Table 2.5. Descriptive statistics for organizational capacity

Measure	Salaries	Volunteers	Revenue	Fixed Assets	Board Size	Years
Mean	$439,477	303.2	$1,096,059	$651,497	10.3	21.3
SE	$235,948	140.9	$460,376	$406,066	1.9	2.9
Median	$32,295	60	$362,040	$2,553	8	22
Minimum	$0	12	$22,159	$0	0	3
Maximum	$4,067,204	2,350	$7,939,691	$8,153,012	40	59

Table 2.6. Factor loadings based on principal components analysis

Variable Name	Factor 1 (Organizational Capacity)
Salaries	.977
Volunteers	.920
Revenue	.961
Fixed Assets	.917
Board Size	.781
Years	.809
Eigenvalue	4.831
KMO	.823

Table 2.7. Correlations of partnerships with organizational capacity

Dimension	r
Human Resources	
Outgoing	.148
Incoming	.070
Financial	
Outgoing	.404
Incoming	.880**
Infrastructural	
Outgoing	.666**
Incoming	.599**
Strategic	
Outgoing	.111
Incoming	.322
Total	
Outgoing	.181
Incoming	.711**

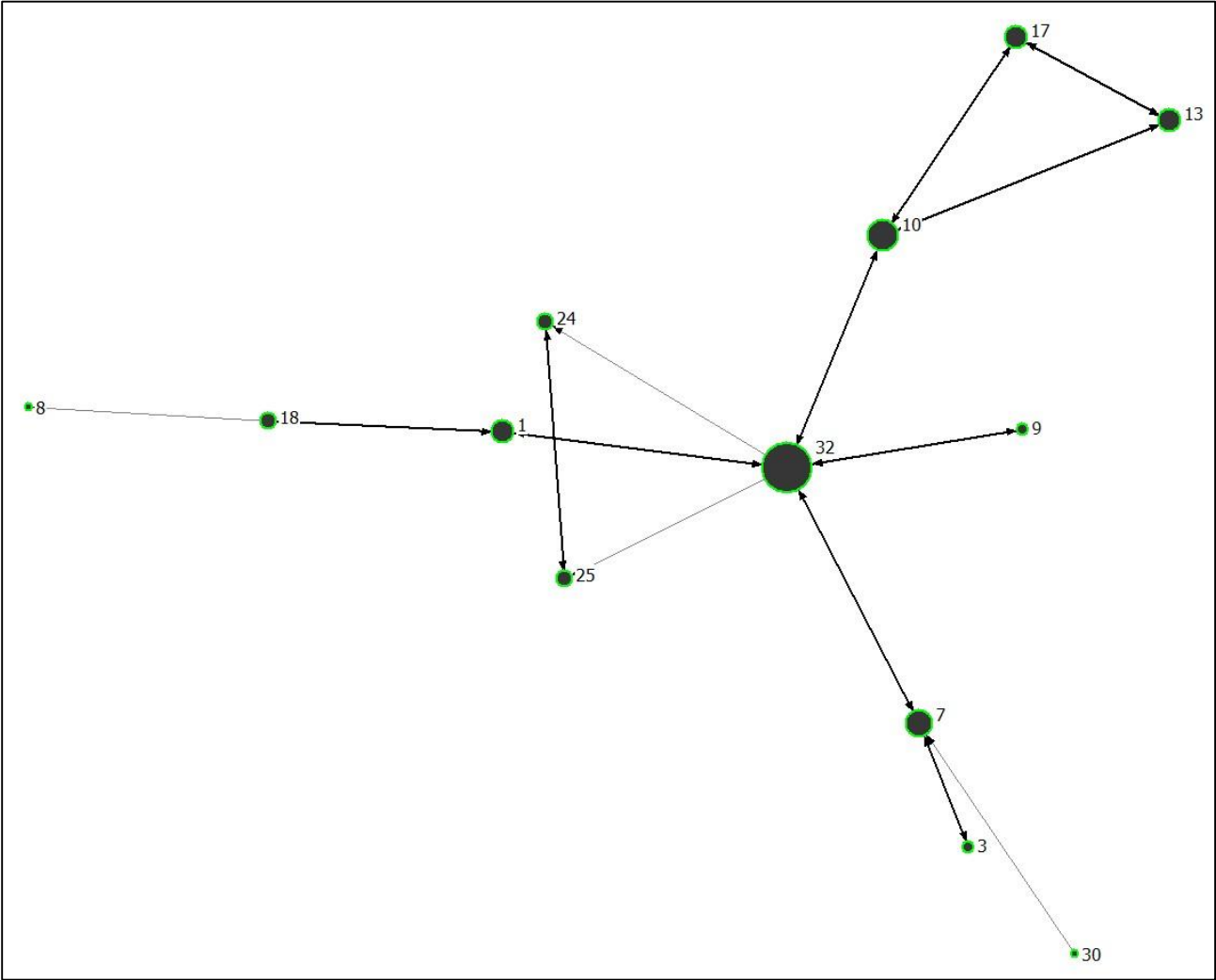*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

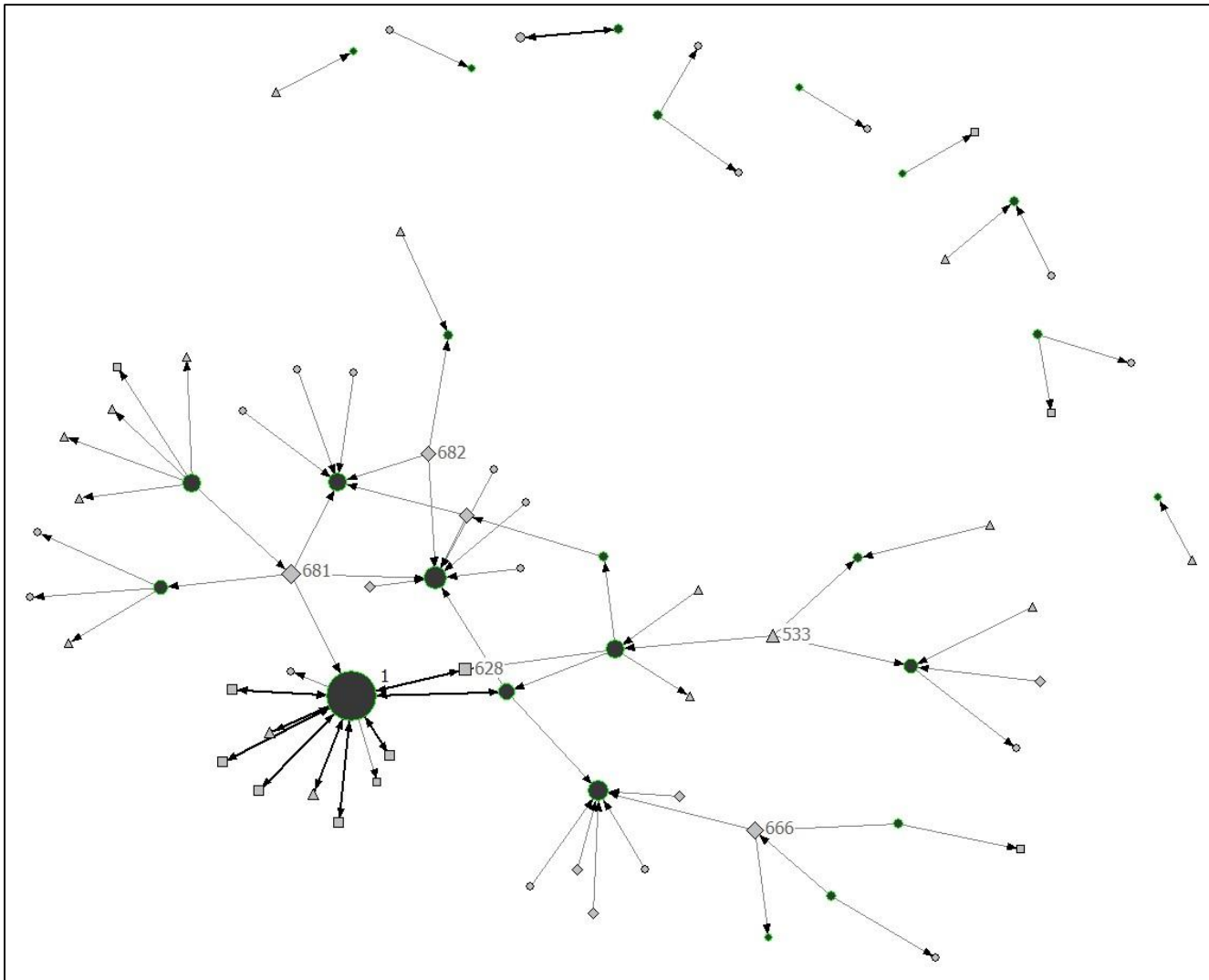**Figure 2.1. Youth sport non-profit network**
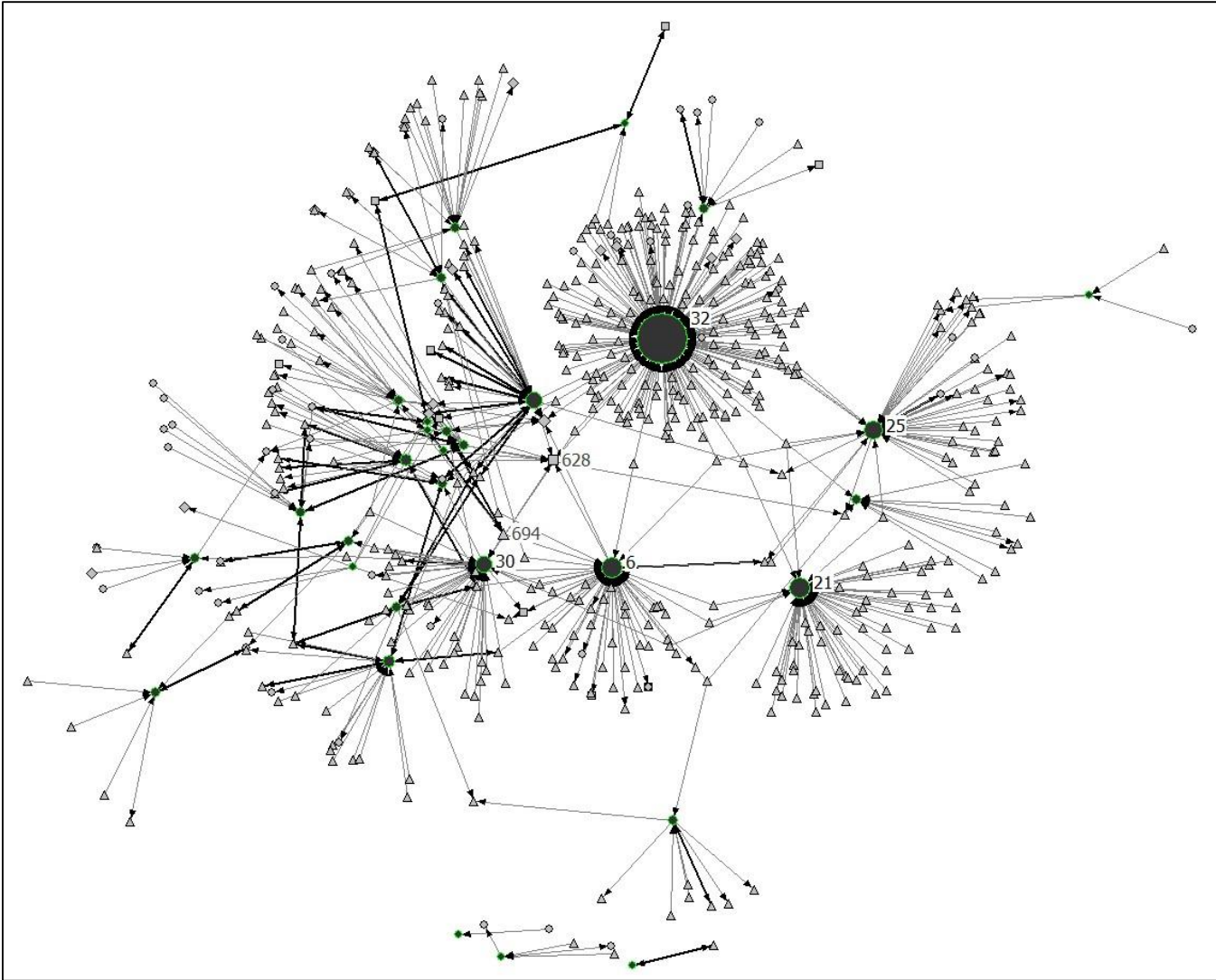
Figure 2.2. Human resource network
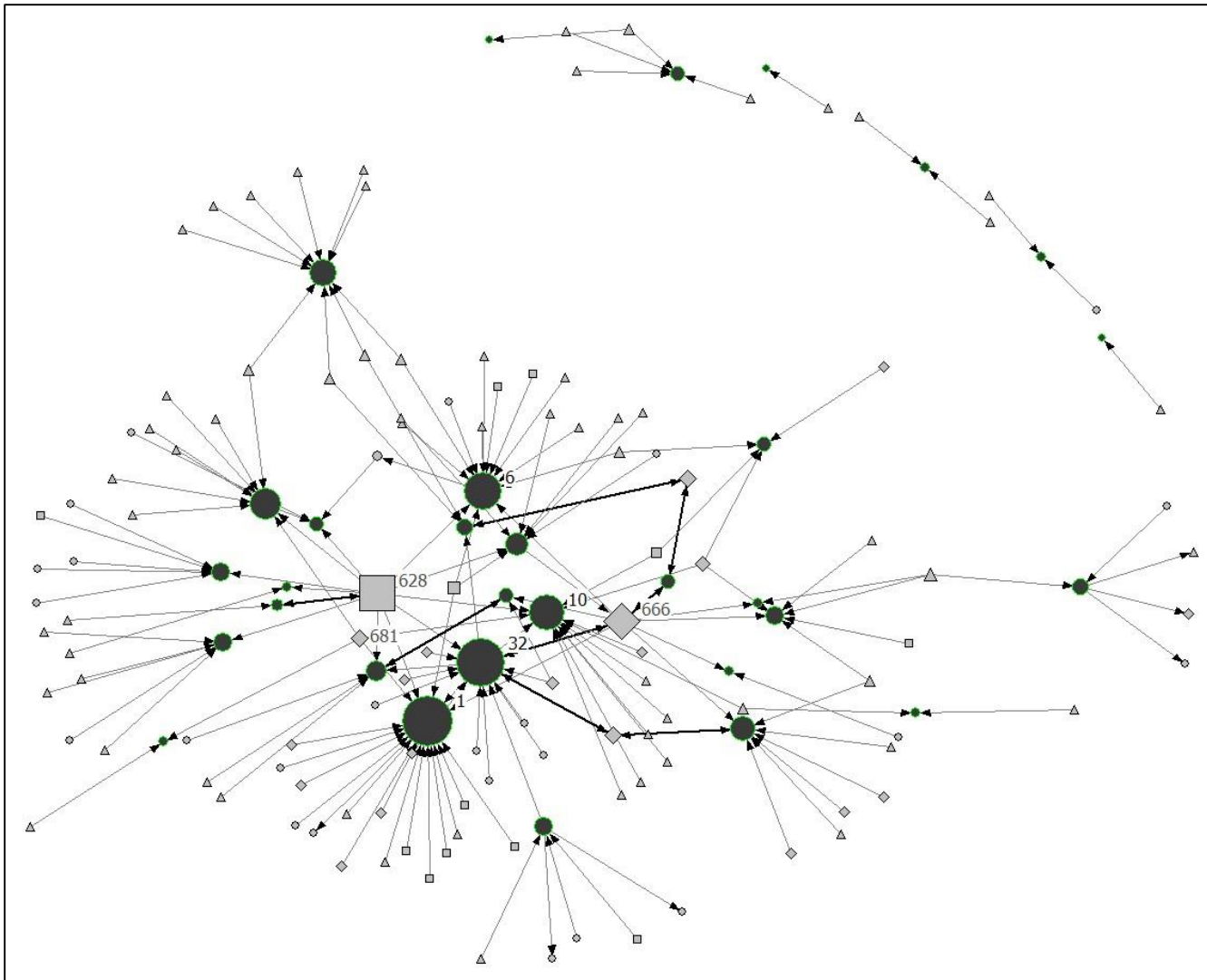
Figure 2.3. Financial network

Figure 2.4. Infrastructural network
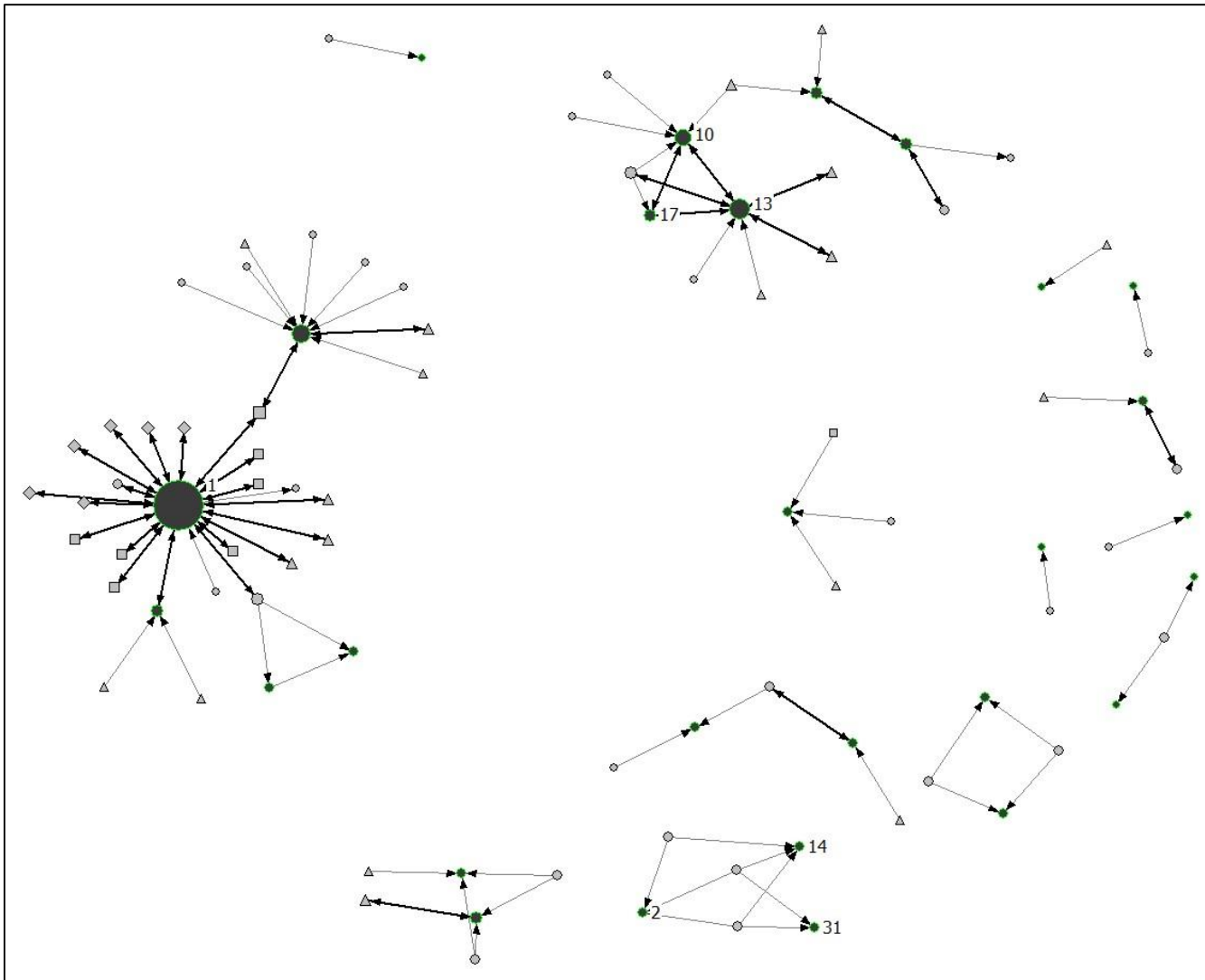
Figure 2.5. Strategic network

145
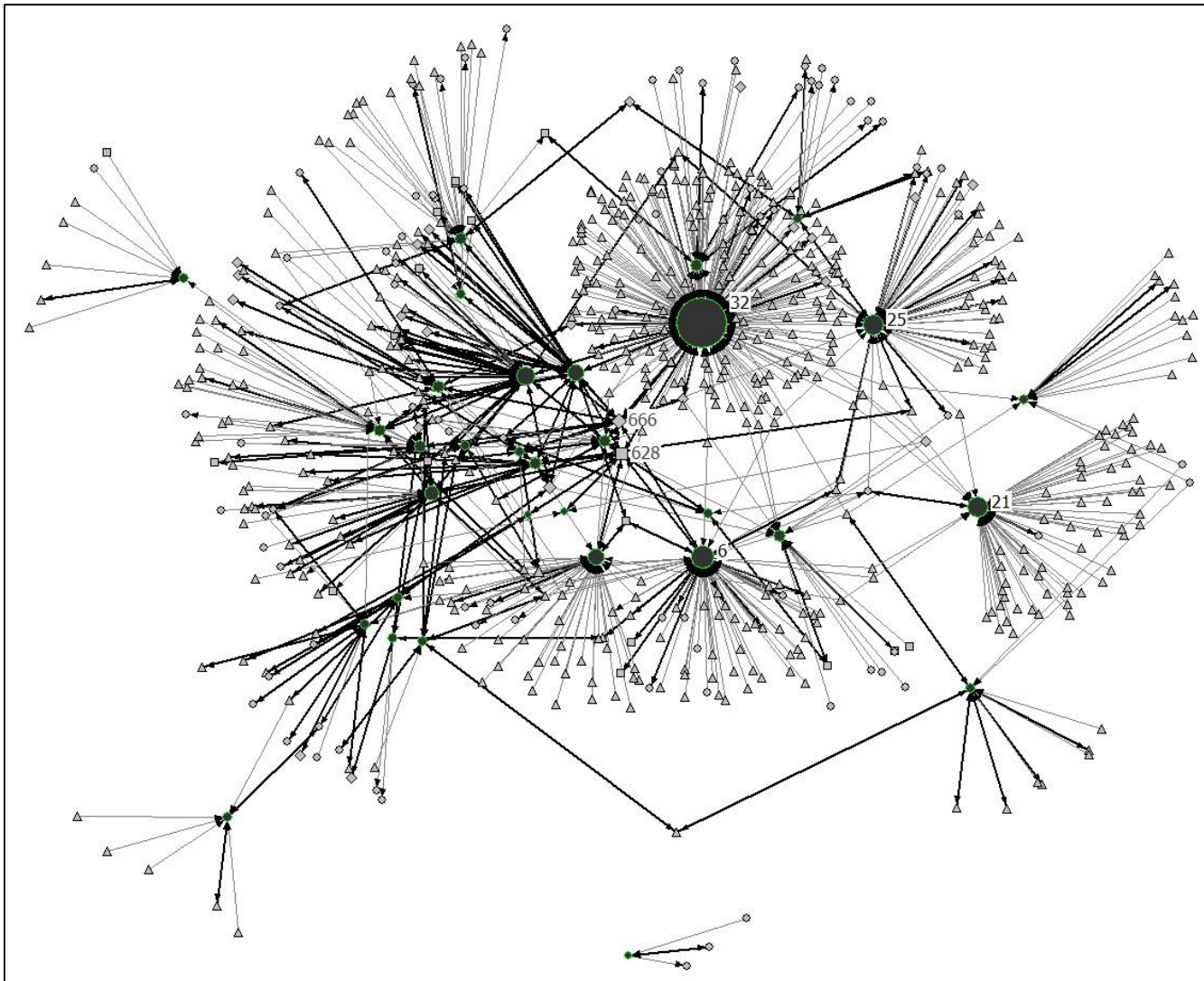
Figure 2.6. Total network

146
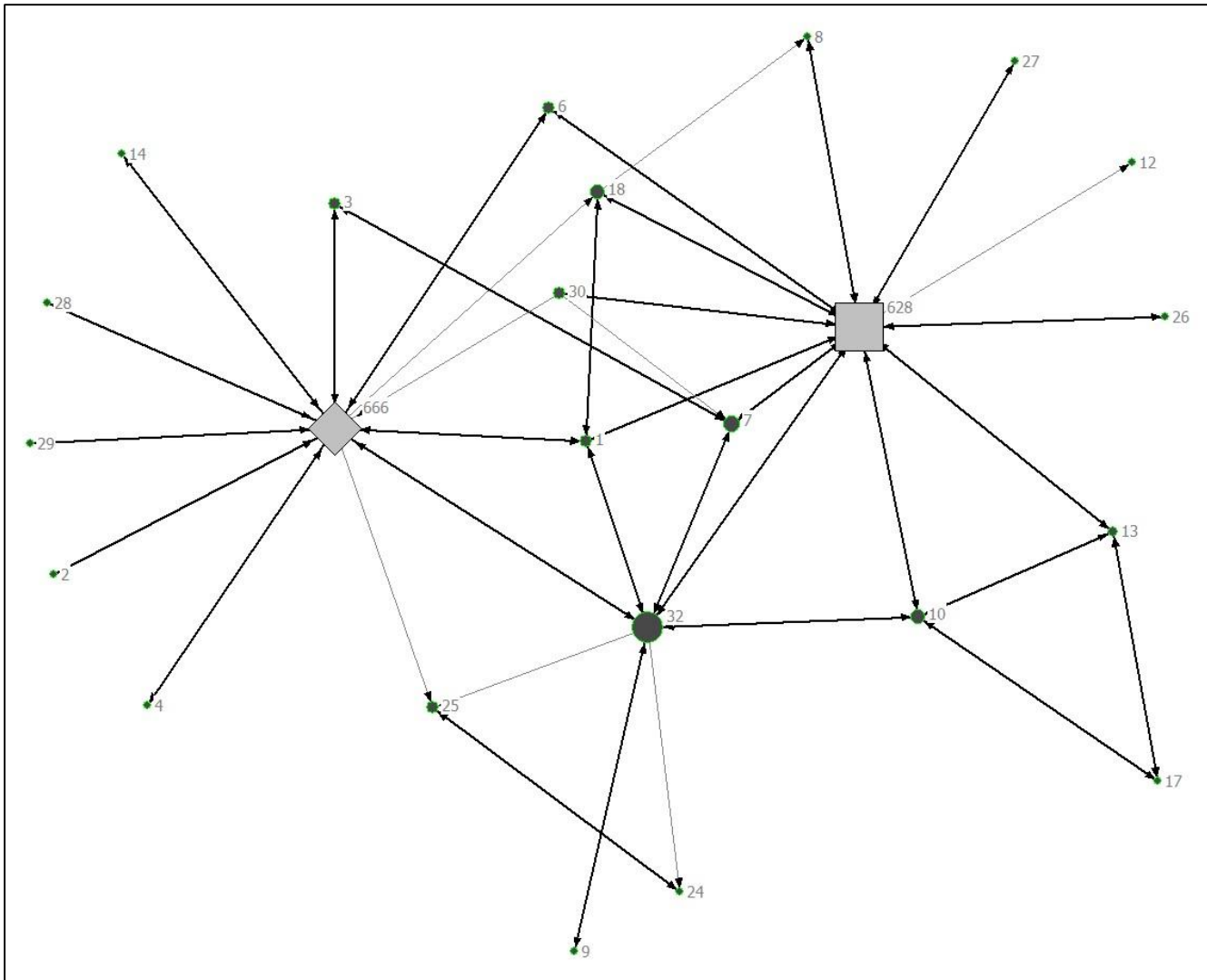
Figure 2.7. Ego-network of nodes 628 and 666

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING IN A YOUTH SPORT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Abstract

Positive youth development (PYD) is generally understood as an ongoing process of dynamic interactions between youth and their surrounding environment. However, many sport-based youth development programs focus on only one side of this equation, with the cultivation of individual skills often seen as the primary objective of many youth serving programs. This is particularly true in disadvantaged communities, where sport is typically conceptualized as an intervention for youth, and many sport-based youth development programs assume top down approaches to management. Community capacity has been highlighted as a potentially useful framework to guide programs towards a more comprehensive approach to youth development in these areas. However, little research has examined the potential efficacy of community capacity strategies in youth sport organizations, and some scholars indicate that the approach deviates from traditional American sport ideologies. This qualitative study contributes to the body of knowledge by utilizing a single case study to examine the capacity building strategies of a youth sport non-profit organization serving a disadvantaged community. Interviews, participant observation, and document analysis are used to generate data, and deductive and inductive techniques are used for thematic analysis. Results highlight the strategies associated with capacity building strategies, and the challenges associated with their implementation.

Keywords: community capacity, case study, youth development, youth sport, community development

Introduction

Many youth sport programs are guided by contemporary models of youth development that share a theoretical basis in developmental system theories (DST). DST underscore the importance of systemic interactions between youth and their environment, and suggest youth who are aligned with the resources in their environment are more likely to experience positive psychological, social, and cognitive development (Dowling et al., 2004; Lerner, 2005). Moreover, interactions during one life stage are expected to influence opportunities for positive change in another, meaning present individual-environment alignment influences future development prospects (Baltes, Lindenberger, & Staudinger, 1998). This relational focus emphasizes the importance of environmental resources, or "external assets", in the lives of youth (Benson, 2003). In particular, community-based programs have been described by researchers and practitioners as vital external assets in the youth development process (Benson, 2003).

Lerner (2005) outlines three features of community-based programs that contribute to youth development: 1) positive and sustained adult-youth relationships, 2) skill building activities, and 3) opportunities to apply skills in community-based activities. Although a variety of community-based programs provide these features (e.g., 4-H, Boy/Girl Scouts, Big Brother Big Sister), sport programs are considered an especially viable setting for promoting youth development (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Perkins & Noam, 2007). When intentionally managed and operated around the features outlined by Lerner (2005), sport programs contribute positively to youth outcomes such as social competence (Bortoli, Bertolo, Comani, & Robazza, 2011), self-esteem (Rodriguez, Wigfield, & Eccles, 2003), and interpersonal skills (Anderson-Butcher, Riley,

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Amorose, Iachini, Riley, & Wade-Mdivanian, 2014). In addition, sport activities have been shown to attract more at-risk youth than other community-based activities (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Nols, 2013; Spaaij, 2009), and have become increasingly prominent in prevention and intervention programs targeting youth in disadvantaged communities (Hartmann, 2003; Hartmann & Depro, 2006; Pitter & Andrews, 1997; Spaaij, 2009, 2012).

The connection between sport and youth development is supported by a growing body of knowledge on the micro-level benefits of sport participation (Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Bunds, & Smith, 2016), characterized by ideological, physical, social, and psychological changes that manifest in the attitudes and behaviors of participants (Burnett, 2001). However, there is far less information on the meso- or macro-level impacts of youth sport programs (Burnett & Uys, 2000; Coalter, 2010a; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). According to Burnett (2001), meso-level impacts manifest at the community-level, and include changes that focus "mainly on the functioning of social networks, social integration, values, norms, group cohesion and intergroup relationships." (p. 45). Macro-level impacts are established relative to even broader socioeconomic and environmental factors, and influence the provision, distribution, and availability of services (Burnett, 2001). With a disproportionate focus on micro-level impacts, the influence of sport programs on meso- and macro-levels of communities and societies is often overlooked (Coalter, 2010b; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Skille, 2014). Consequently, although individual-environment interactions are fundamental to youth development, many youth sport programs focus on developing only one side of the interaction (e.g., individual) (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Coalter, 2012).

This oversight is especially problematic for youth sport programs serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities. These areas have limited resources to mobilize collective action and are characterized by "risk factors" that negatively influence the relationship between youth and their environment (Jessor, Turbin, & Costa, 1998, p. 196). As a result, many youth sport programs are operated by external agencies that focus primarily on helping youth overcome negative risk factors (Coakley, 2011). While several studies indicate this approach can be effective, critics suggest it promotes "narrow empowerment" that falls short of addressing the systemic social issues that create and perpetuate socio-economic disadvantages in the first place (Haudenhuyse et al., 2012, p. 479). Indeed, many youth sport programs have been critiqued for focusing on helping youth "beat the odds" rather than working to "change the odds" (Seccombe, 2002, p. 384).

In order to effectively promote youth development in disadvantaged communities youth sport programs must contribute to both individual *and* community development (Burnett, 2001; Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2015; Haudenhuyse et al., 2012). While a variety of sociological theories may be used to inform this approach, community capacity provides a particularly useful framework (Edwards, 2015). Community capacity assesses how the management and composition of sport organizations contributes to building the "capacity" of communities, defined by Chaskin (2001) as "the intersection of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community." (p. 295). By integrating capacity building strategies into their operations, youth sport programs can help build the critical antecedents needed for community-led development. This allows youth sport programs to not only promote individual competencies through sport activities,

but also contributes to community enrichment that improves the long-term quality of individual-environment interactions as well.

Despite these potential benefits, prevailing models of sport management and policy in the U.S. are not always conducive to broader social change agendas, and may limit the ability of sport organizations to integrate community capacity principles (Edwards, 2015). In addition, many youth sport programs have limited organizational resources to achieve their objectives (Misener & Doherty, 2013), which may restrict opportunities to organize, implement, and monitor capacity building strategies. Clearly, more research is needed to understand how community capacity may be effectively utilized by youth sport programs (Edwards, 2015). This paper contributes to that understanding by using community capacity as a framework to evaluate the operations of a youth sport program serving a socio-economically disadvantaged community. Using a qualitative case study approach, the analysis focuses on how the youth sport program contributes to dimensions of community capacity, and determines the extent to which these contributions are intentionally integrated into organizational functions and procedures. In addition, the challenges associated with implementing capacity building strategies are examined to identify areas for improvement.

Literature Review

Budget cuts in parks and recreation departments have significantly reduced funding for recreational youth sport programs in the United States (U.S.), with many departments forced to either downsize programs or increase fees associated with youth leagues and facilities (Coakley, 2010; Neighmond, 2015). Moreover, policy reform and funding reductions in public education have forced athletic directors to either cut athletic teams or institute 'pay-to-play' policies that charge students to participate in school sport (Heinze &

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Zdroik, 2016). Similar to other social service industries, this void in public services is increasingly being filled by private and non-profit sport organizations. In fact, community sport clubs and membership associations now represent one of the largest segments of the non-profit sport sector in most Western countries (Misener & Doherty, 2009), and provide a majority of youth with their first organized sport experience (Doherty et al., 2014).

In communities with adequate resources, these organizations typically form through the agency of community stakeholders and are managed and operated by local volunteers (Doherty et al., 2014; Misener & Doherty, 2009). In addition to promoting youth development through their activities, this bottom-up structure provides ancillary benefits to community members and institutions, such as skill and knowledge acquisition, social capital, and civic engagement (Sharpe, 2006). Yet in communities without adequate resources, these organizations are more likely to be externally organized and managed by philanthropic or non-governmental agencies (Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2010b; Kidd, 2008). Since funding, infrastructure, and other enabling resources are not always present, such organizations frequently utilize top-down management structures to deliver youth sport services (Vail, 2007). Although they provide an important external asset that might otherwise be absent in the lives of youth, they seldom rely on the capacities of local residents to organize, manage, or operate programs (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Consequently, many do not provide the same ancillary benefits to communities as grassroots or bottom-up organizations (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011).

This trend has been labeled by Pitter and Andrews (1997) as the emergent "social problems industry," in which disadvantaged communities are identified as settings or targets for development rather than catalysts for change. In these areas, many youth sport

organizations utilize prescriptive approaches to programming that maximize service

efficiencies but limit the input and feedback from the local community (Skinner, Zakus, &

Cowell, 2008; Vail, 2007). Rather than responding to the needs and issues of communities,

sport activities are guided by rigid models of individual development that encourage youth to

overcome their context and achieve upward social mobility (Coakley, 2011). Although these

approaches have made for influential policy rhetoric, many organizations have struggled to

sustain programs (Skinner et al., 2008; Vail, 2007). Instead, most experience a relatively

brief life cycle characterized by short-term delivery episodes that fall short of addressing key

social issues (Vail, 2007). This process is ultimately detrimental to youth development

efforts, since many programs are unable to generate the long-term participation required to

promote youth engagement, healthy behaviors, and positive individual-environment

interactions (Burnett, 2001; Coakley, 2011; Crabbe et al., 2006; Vail, 2007).

There are also related concerns regarding the philosophy undergirding many sport-

based youth development organizations. In the global context, Saavedra (2005) suggests

many organizations disseminate idealistic and Westernized views of sport which disregard

the historical and political complexities of certain regions. Similarly, Guilianotti (2004)

discusses how sport institutions have contributed to the mainstream assimilation of different

cultures through the absorption of indigenous sporting values into dominant Westernized

visions. Although the culture and context is much different, the basic premise of these

insights is relevant to domestic sport-based development programs as well. When local

communities are not involved in the planning and operation of youth sport programs, issues

of dependency and power imbalances are equally as salient. As Hartmann and Kwauk (2011)

note, "assumptions about proper behaviors, rules of engagement, and personal aspirations

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embedded within the intervention leave little room for youth to reciprocate and influence society with their own understandings." (p. 292). In order to foster sustainable youth development, communities need to be engaged in the organization and operation of youth sport programs. Community capacity provides a sound theory for achieving this objective, and serves as the guiding framework for this study.

Community Capacity

The theoretical groundwork for community capacity begins with Ferdinand Toennies (1957) classical ideas of gemeinschaft ("community") and gesellschaft ("society"), a conceptualization that has subsequently received important contributions from other notable sociologists. According to Toennies (1957), gemeinschaft refers to the self-fulfilling bonds of kinship and tradition typically held between familial or communal members. In contrast, gesellschaft describes more institutionalized and less personal structures, often exemplified by the city, state, or governance (Toennies, 1957). Together, these terms informed early conceptualizations of community and society which were often defined by spatial demarcations (Wellman & Leighton, 1979).

Although initially presented as mutually exclusive definitions for social groups, the concept of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft has been revisited by Emile Durkheim (1951, 1965), Max Weber (1972), and other notable scholars who have disaggregated the terms to provide more clarity and specificity (Brint, 2001). These contemporary perspectives posit the two concepts share a more dialectical relationship (Keller, 1988; Wendel et al., 2009). Rapid technological advancements have diffused communication platforms, expedited transportation systems, and softened the imposition of institutional structures on individual and community interactions (Wellman et al., 2000). Moreover, the existence of social

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relationships that transcend conventional spatial definitions of community suggest the value and content behind institutional structures may provide a more useful unit of analysis than their physical presence or absence within a "community" (Brint, 2001). This has led to a growing recognition that while institutional structures may continue to shape the social dynamics of individuals and communities, the social dynamics of individuals and communities are equally as capable of influencing institutional structures (Provan & Kenis, 2008; Raab, Mannak, & Cambré, 2015). From this perspective, analyzing how "gemeinschaft-like" social relations affect the arrangement and composition of gesellschaft structures provides a deeper understanding of individual and community interactions (Brint, 2001, p. 3).

Community capacity draws on this prevailing conceptualization by linking the structural assets and resources of communities to the interactions between groups and individuals within them (Labonte & Laverack, 2001). Rather than focusing solely on identifying the institutional structures that influence community development, this framework shifts attention to the human and material building blocks of such assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). These include the individual and collective knowledge of community members, resources and infrastructure, associational and social patterns, and ecological circumstances that may be leveraged for change (Jackson et al., 2003). Conceptually, communities possessing these traits are able to identify and resolve social problems, mobilize resources, and promote sustainable development (Wendel et al., 2009). Conversely, communities lacking these traits are less likely to address pertinent social issues, and far less responsive to external development programs (O'Hare, 2011).

In contrast to traditional community development approaches, community capacity building represents a revitalized focus on the process of development. Individual and group traits are examined within the context of community characteristics, and community characteristics are examined within the context of broader societal structures. From this perspective, sustainable development depends not only on the presence of external assets, but also how components of those assets are provided and operated (Labonte & Laverack, 2001). While capacity initiatives have similar long-term goals as community development, they serve the dual purpose of simultaneously cultivating important antecedents as well (e.g., strong social networks, organizational collaboration, capital infrastructure) (Wendel et al., 2009). For example, Wendel and colleagues (2009) explain that "foundations view capacity building as an essential strategy for sustaining programs and health improvements long after grant funding periods have ended, because organizational infrastructure and the community commitment for continuation are created in the process." (p. 277).

The concept of community capacity has fostered inquiry by a wide variety of foundations and agencies, and stems from the recognition that effective development depends upon the capacities of community being served (Chaskin, 2001; Wendel et al., 2009). Although still a relatively new theoretical approach, capacity building has been applied in a variety of fields. As Wendel and colleagues (2009) state:

> Community capacity touches many disciplines, including organizational development, community development, sociology and social work, criminal justice, political science, and public health. Some of this inquiry focuses on civic infrastructure, social service reform, and urban revitalization. While the end goals of interventions in these various fields differ, they share a common

interest in drawing upon and building the capacity of communities to

effectively address their problems. (p. 277).

The broad application of this term has led to a variety of contrasting theoretical

perspectives that emphasize different dimensions (Simmons, Reynolds, & Swinburn, 2010).

As a result, attempts to measure and assess community capacity have been largely field-

specific and difficult to compare across disciplines (Chaskin, 2001). While there is consensus

on a set of core domains, other components are largely dependent on the context and purpose

of the capacity building processes under study. (Liberato, Brimblecombe, Ritchie, Ferguson,

& Coveney, 2011). While some have suggested these incongruences have undermined

attempts to formally define community capacity and generalize measurable outcomes, such

inconsistencies should be expected. Societies, communities, institutions, groups, and

individuals vary considerably in their interactions, access to resources, and needs, so

prescriptive approaches to cultivating capacities and achieving outcomes would be unlikely

to produce similar effects across such a broad spectrum. As Labonte and Laverack (2001)

suggest, these qualities "only ever exist in relation to specific people and groups, specific

issues and concerns, [and] specific activities or programs." (p. 114). Thus, capacity building

is increasingly understood in more transferable terms, with a set of key guiding principles

that are adapted to specific populations for specific purposes (Labonte & Laverack, 2001).

As such, rather than undertaking capacity building as a program in its own right, it is

typically integrated as a "parallel track" to other programmatic goals (Chaskin, 2001).

Youth Sport and Community Capacity

Although sport's connection to community capacity was initially based largely in

public and policy-related rhetoric, concepts related to capacity building have received more

empirical and theoretical attention in recent years (Coalter, 2007, 2010a; Coakley, 2011; Edwards, 2015; Guest, 2005; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kidd, 2010; Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). Most notably, Edwards (2015) provides a particularly insightful overview of how sport may be leveraged to enhance community capacities related to health promotion. Using Wendel and colleagues (2009) framework as a guide, Edwards (2015) explains the association between sport and seven key community capacity dimensions: 1) skills, knowledge, and resources, 2) social relationships; 3) structures and mechanisms for community dialogue; 4) quality leadership; 5) civic participation; 6) value systems, and 7) a learning culture. Table 1 provides definitions for each of these dimensions, and a summary of some of the potential ways in which sport may enhance each dimensions according to Edwards (2015).

Importantly, Edwards (2015) emphasizes that the connection between sport and community capacity is not inherent, and indicates that sport must be intentionally managed to contribute to each of these dimensions. Considering community sport in the U.S. predominantly emphasizes elite performance and competition, re-positioning sport to promote broader social goals such as community capacity might be difficult (Frisby & Millar, 2002; Skinner et al., 2008). These programs require explicit strategies that differ drastically from those found in traditional modes of sport management, with some suggesting sport-for-development (SFD) practices should be differentiated entirely from elite sport practices (Coalter, 2007). In fact, sport management education and training is currently oriented more towards corporate management, economic development, and commercial entertainment (Edwards & Welty Peachey, 2010; Welty Peachey & Cohen, 2012), meaning the efficacy of sport managers to implement capacity building strategies may be limited.

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Moreover, although social and community impacts are rarely the primary goal of sport programs, and seldom evaluated through evidence-based assessment, it is often assumed that sport contributes positively to these outcomes (Coalter, 2010b). As a result, many sport managers may be reluctant to alter approaches they feel are already successful at developing community capacities.

In addition to these ideological constraints, the ability of youth sport programs to contribute to community capacity may also be constrained by limited organizational resources. Continued reductions in government funding, sponsorships, and in-kind donations have destabilized the finances of many youth sport programs (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Declining volunteer rates have also deprived many organizations of their front-level staff (e.g., coaches) and strategic planning committees (e.g., board members) (Byers, 2013; Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye, & Darcy, 2006). Moreover, most youth sport programs do not own their own infrastructure, and must compete with other public, private, and non-profit organizations over available facilities and and/or equipment (Coakley, 2010). The confluence of these factors, coupled with growing pressure from the commercial sector, limits the ability of organizations of achieve their objectives (Misener & Doherty, 2013). These limitations may also impede their ability to implement and sustain capacity building strategies.

Issues such as stable funding, volunteer recruitment, knowledge acquisition, and partnership formation can all interfere with attempts to build community capacity (Whitley, Forneris, Barker, 2015). This is especially true for programs serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities, as limitations imposed by the external environment may be even more restrictive (Forneris, Whitley, & Barker, 2013). Thus, the purpose of this paper is to examine the opportunities and challenges of implementing community capacity into youth

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sport programs serving a socio-economically disadvantaged community. Using Edwards (2015) model as a guide, we analyze how one youth sport organization contributes to capacity building in their community. In addition, we assess the challenges associated with this process to determine what factors facilitate or constrain the implementation of specific strategies. Our analysis was guided by two primary research questions:

1. How did the youth sport program contribute to dimensions of community capacity as defined by Edwards (2015)?

2. What are the challenges associated with implementing capacity building strategies?

Methods

The aim of this study was to understand how a youth sport program contributed to capacity building in a disadvantaged community. To ensure a rich analysis of this process, a single qualitative case study was considered an epistemological fit for this study (Yin, 2009). Westside Youth Center (pseudonym) was purposively selected based on their approach to programming and location within a socio-economically disadvantaged community. Information related to the program was gathered through a semi-structured interview with a member of the board of directors, which was part of prior research project (see Jones, Edwards, Smith, Bocarro, & Bunds, 2016). In addition to outlining the operations and objectives of the program, this interview also identified Westside Youth Center's involvement with the local community through various partnerships and events. Data related to characteristics of the community were gathered from City-Data (http://www.city-data.com/). The poverty rate, percentage of residents over 25 not completing high school, median household income, and unemployment rate were used to categorize disadvantaged areas at the ZIP code level.

Study Setting

Westside Youth Center is located in a socio-economically disadvantaged neighborhood in a medium-sized city in southeastern U.S. Based on the mandates of their affiliated national governing body, Westside Youth Center specifically serves three ZIP codes in this area. These ZIP codes collectively have a 14% unemployment rate, 22% poverty rate, median household income of $44,377, and 83% of population with a high school degree or higher. By comparison, the rest of the county has a 4% unemployment rate, 9% poverty rate, median household income of $68,080, and 90% of the population with a high school degree or higher. The population is 54% Black/African American, 25% White, 18% Hispanic/Latino, and 3% other or mixed race/ethnicity. The racial profile of the rest of the county is 16% Black/African American, 68% White, 9% Hispanic/Latino, and 7% mixed race/ethnicity. The families and youth served by the Westside Youth Center share similar socio-economic and racial characteristics as the surrounding community. Participants are predominantly Black/African American, and the majority qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The Westside Youth Center was founded in 1950 with the goal of using sport activities as a catalyst to promote positive youth development. In 1990, The Westside Youth Center filed for 501(c)(3) status, and has operated as a non-profit organization since. The Westside Youth Center operates entirely through unpaid volunteers, and has an annual budget of approximately $100,000. Like many other non-profit organizations, the revenue structures of the Westside Youth Center have changed drastically due to fluctuations in the social and economic climate. In 2001, 21% of revenue came from public support, contributions, and/or government grants, 38% came from membership fees, and 41% came

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from fundraising, special events, inventory sales, and other revenue. By 2011, 94% of revenue was coming from membership fees, with only 4% coming from public support, contributions and/or government grants, and only 2% coming from fundraising, special events, inventory sales, and other revenue. This has impacted the operations of Westside Youth Center, who have been forced to reduce programming in order to curtail costs. Unlike many other non-profit organizations, the Westside Youth Center own their facilities, which include two lighted fields (1 football, 1 baseball), a club house, and concession stand. In addition to being used by the programs associated with the Westside Youth Center, these facilities are rented to local community groups through rental agreements and other partnerships.

Program Design

Traditionally, the Westside Youth Center offered baseball, football, cheerleading, and softball programs for youth ages 5-13, however funding reductions and declining interest have limited programming to just football and cheerleading. There are currently 6 football teams, grouped by age and weight, and 1 cheerleading team collectively serving youth ages 5-18. Altogether, Westside Youth Center serves approximately 120-150 children and adolescents per year through these programs. In addition to teaching important life skills through sport activities, the Westside Youth Center seeks to increase parent/guardian and community involvement as well. The organization is operated by approximately 30-35 family and community volunteers who serve a variety of sport related (e.g., coaches, officials, game announcers) and non-sport related (e.g., team parent, fundraising/sponsorship coordinator, facility maintenance) roles. The board of directors are made up of 6 volunteers from the local community who have been nominated for exceptional service, and all meetings involving

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board members, coaches, and parents are open to the public. The Westside Youth Center also

engages in a variety of partnerships to increase their visibility within the community. The

clubhouse is utilized by a local church for faith-based youth enrichment programs, and also

serves as a state-sponsored food bank distribution center throughout the year. The church

also co-owns part of the football field due to zoning regulations, and partners with the

Westside Youth Center on a variety of community service initiatives involving youth in the

community. Finally, the Westside Youth Center also partners with a local training center to

engage youth participants during the off-season. In addition to physical fitness training, this

program incorporates nutrition, mentorship and guidance, and academic support.

Data Generation

Data was generated from a variety of sources to ensure the credibility and

dependability of findings (Tracy, 2010). First, documents related to the financial,

administrative, and programmatic features of Westside Youth Center were collected.

Following Scott (1990), document selection was guided by four criteria: 1) authenticity, 2)

credibility, 3) representativeness, and 4) meaning. Since the research questions focused

specifically on dimensions of community capacity, documents were purposively selected

based on their reflection of program meaning. The corpus of documents included registration

and membership forms, participant contracts, memorandums, meeting agendas, sponsorship

and advertisement forms, flyers, and internet documents from the organization's website.

External documents such as news stories and press releases were also collected to understand

public representations of the organization. In addition to the meaning of each specific

document, the intertextuality between documents was an important consideration for this

study. Previous research has highlighted a disconnect between the rhetoric and reality of

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many sport-based development programs, in which the idyllic perceptions of sport managers are not always reflected in program management and operations (Coalter, 2010b). Thus, establishing the explicit and implicit links between communicative documents (e.g., flyers, program descriptions) and operational documents (e.g., meeting agendas, membership forms) was critical to understanding the consistency between program logic and program implementation.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the commissioner, members of the board of directors, and all head coaches. Interviews were conducted in a public setting that allowed for an uninterrupted and focused conversation (Markula & Silk, 2011), and averaged approximately 45 minutes. Questions were guided by a set of prepared open-ended questions based on Edwards (2015) framework of sport-based community capacity building. These included open, theory-driven, and probing questions organized around each dimension of capacity, and were designed to be flexible to the interview situation and the interviewee's experiences (Markula & Silk, 2011). Examples of open questions included *"Explain how your organization encourages civic engagement and citizen involvement in community processes?"* and *"How does your organization identify and build leadership among volunteers?"* The purpose of open questions was to introduce the interviewee to a particular topic and encourage them to express their knowledge and insight (Flick, 2014). Examples of theory-driven questions included *"How are peers, parents, or community members involved in the planning process?"* and *"To what extent is feedback from participants, parents, and the broader community integrated into this organization?"* The purpose of theory-driven questioning was to make the interviewees' knowledge more explicit, and determine whether their knowledge and experiences corresponded with theoretical suppositions from the

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literature (Flick, 2014). Finally, probing questions included a mix of scripted follow-up questions such as *"What facilitates or constrains these partnerships or potential partnerships?"* and ad-hoc probing questions such as *"You talked about just coming from a meeting with other organizations about the different things they are doing, sort of like a consultancy group, could you talk a little bit more about that and maybe anything else that other board members are doing to build skills and knowledge?"* These questions corresponded to previous questioning or specific information the interviewee presented, and were intended to compel the interviewee to re-examine specific themes and clarify their subjective theory (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2007).

Third, observational methods were utilized to further understand the operations and activities of the Westside Youth Center. One coaches meeting and one parents meeting were purposively selected to understand the flow of communication from board members (e.g., management), to coaches (e.g., staff), to parents (e.g., stakeholders). These observations were conducted in natural settings in the field of interest, and utilized methods that were flexible to the processes themselves (Flick, 2014). The itinerary for the coaches meeting was collected and added to the corpus of documents, and the meeting itself was audiotaped. The researcher assumed a role of "observer-as-participant", as his presence was announced at the beginning of the meeting yet he had minimal involvement in social processes of the setting (Gold, 1958). The parents meeting was less formal and did not have an itinerary, however the same methods were utilized and the researcher assumed the same role. In addition to the dialogue of the meeting, the researcher also focused on cataloguing the interactions between participants, and the log of these interactions was added to the corpus of documents.

Finally, the Westside Youth Center provided access to the responses of an open-ended survey that is sent annually to the parents of participants. In addition to assessing their satisfaction with the administration and delivery of programs, parents are asked to provide feedback on specific aspects of the administration or programs of the Westside Youth Center that could be improved. The survey consists of ten items, and examples of survey questions include: *How satisfied are you with your child's experience at the Westside Youth Center? What do you think could be improved about the operations at Westside Youth Center?* The survey was web-based, and parents were sent the survey link electronically via email. The solicitation email was sent five times over the course of two months immediately following the end of the season. A total of twelve parents responded to the survey, which represented approximately 12% of the families served by the Westside Youth Center. Although convenience sampling has several limitations compared to other criterion-oriented strategies (Patton, 2002), it was the most feasible option for the Westside Youth Center due to their limited resources for data collection. The responses were analyzed to understand the perceived impact of the Westside Youth Center from the viewpoint of parents.

Data Analysis

Data from interviews, focus groups, and meeting dialogues were transcribed verbatim by the lead researcher in Microsoft Word 2013. The ensure dependability of interview and focus group data, transcripts were presented to each interviewee in order check for accuracy and representativeness. These transcripts, along with relevant documents and meetings logs, were imported into QSR Nvivo 10 to facilitate the coding process. For the first research question, a deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The primary structure of the coding frame was based on Edwards (2015) dimensions of

community capacity. After transcribing the data and reading the transcripts several times, the author coded the data systematically under these a priori themes. A realist approach was taken to this process, as the coding was guided by the research questions outlined at the beginning of the study. The lead researcher worked through the data line-by-line, and the primary units of analysis were words, sentences, and/or paragraphs that were related through content or context. Verbatim quotations and other data extracts were used to substantiate themes. For the second research question related to challenges, an inductive thematic analysis was used to develop codes and themes from the data. The author worked through the data line-by-line searching for "repeated patterns of meaning" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). This process led to the generation of initial codes which were then sorted into themes. Following Braun and Clarke (2006), these themes were reviewed and refined based on the collation of relevant data extracts, and labeled to reflect the organizational challenge they represented.

To ensure the credibility of themes, the lead researcher ensured multivocality in the selection of supporting data extracts so that varied voices were included in the analysis (Tracy, 2010). In addition, the lead researcher strived to provide in-depth illustrations, or thick descriptions, of the data to provide sufficient detail of culturally situated meanings (Geertz, 1973). Following the recommendations of Tracy (2010), the purpose of these descriptions was to provide enough detail so that readers could come to their own conclusions regarding the data, rather than "telling the reader what to think." (p. 843). The trustworthiness of findings was enhanced by triangulating methods and data sources (Denzin, 2008). Methodological triangulation was achieved by utilizing multiple data generation methods, which encouraged consistent (re)interpretations of findings and increased the scope of understanding (Tracy, 2010). Data triangulation was achieved by utilizing different data

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sources to examine the multi-faceted nature of the social phenomena under study. Following Denzin (1989), data was generated from different people, in different places, at different times. This increased the depth and consistency of the analysis and provided a solid foundation for the findings (Flick, 1992). To further ensure the dependability of findings, a memo was kept by the lead author to document different coding decisions and discrepancies, and discussed with committee members to ensure the credibility of the coding process.

The lead researcher is a White male with a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) and Master of Science (M.S.) in Sport and Recreation Management. At the time of the data generation and analysis, the lead researcher was a third-year PhD candidate pursuing a doctoral degree in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management. The lead researcher is situated in the pragmatist paradigm, and approached this research with a problem-based epistemology. The study was guided by the ontological assumption that truth is context-specific, and arises from the actions, situations, and decisions of specific groups and individuals. The lead researcher acknowledges that an extant theoretical framework was utilized to frame the study, and that post-positivist approaches to data generation and analysis were used. However, the lead researcher rejects post-positivist axiological assumptions that researchers are neutral to scientific process, and emphasized self-reflection and transparency during the research process. The lead researcher's knowledge of community capacity and youth development, experience with sport, and demographic background all influenced the theoretical direction of the study, along with the methods of data generation, analysis, and interpretation. Thus, results should be understood in light of these characteristics.

<center>**Results**</center>

The purpose of this paper was to examine the strategies utilized by a youth sport non-profit organization to contribute to community capacity building, and understand the challenges associated with the process. The results are organized around these two research questions.

Community Capacity Building

Level of skills and resources. Developing local skills and resources is critical to building the organizational and structural capacities required for sustainable community development (Wendel et al., 2009). One of the primary ways community sport organizations contribute to this dimension is by managing programs and events that enhance local infrastructure and knowledge, (Edwards, 2015). The Westside Youth Center has leveraged their physical and social position within the community to achieve this objective. For example, a recent partnership with a local church resulted in improvements to the physical infrastructure of the Westside Youth Center, which according to a 2015 press release included, "lights for its gazebo, a fixed water leak, and a spruced up, in-use clubhouse." This allowed the Westside Youth Center to host more sport programs and events throughout the year. The football commissioner, Peter, stated, "recently we [added] a soccer organization that [uses] the facilities during the weekends, which is very good because you have young kids all the way up to adults that are actually utilizing the facility." Similarly, a board member, Brian, mentioned, "[A high school] plays their games here now…we have another rec league…that utilizes the field as well, and a homeschool baseball team."

These facility improvements have also been leveraged to host a wider array of community events. As the 2015 press release explains, the Westside Youth Center now

"hosts Sunday worship, discipleship classes, and Bible study…there's also a summer camp and a food pantry the second and last Saturday of each month." This trend toward utilizing the facility for more integrated programming was evident in interviews with board members as well. As Brian stated, "we're in the process now of looking at [other] programs to engage the youth in the community…so that they feel a part of the organization." Similarly, Greg, a board member, mentioned, "we [are] trying to build certain partnerships with people so we can advance this mentoring thing, give the kids something, ya know…use it like a rites of passage type program." The importance of integrating non-sport programs and events was also communicated to coaches, and was a notable point of emphasis during the coaches' meeting. As one coach stated:

> The reason why I want some ideas here, is because the mentoring aspect is so much more important than the football aspect. I mean I can't emphasize that enough…so that's why it's such an imperative part of what we [want to] begin to do. It's been years that this has been talked about, but we've never done anything.

In addition to the physical resources of community sport organizations, the environments created through various programs and events are conducive to the development of human capital (Lawson, 2005). Youth can benefit from their participation in sport, and board members, coaches, and volunteers can benefit by developing skills and knowledge that transfers to other capacity building settings (Burnett, 2006; Kay & Bradbury, 2009). To date, the Westside Youth Center has focused primarily on developing the skills and abilities of participants. For coaches, the development of skills, knowledge, and expertise is less direct and tied mostly to safety or sport-specific training. The Westside Youth Center has

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effectively utilized the services provided by regional and national governing bodies to educate coaches in areas such as safety, practice planning, and skill development. As Megan explains, "there is two mandatory classes in addition to the [safety] class, and then there is an online training that you have to take and fill out…and if you don't pass it you can't coach." In addition to the safety training mandated by the national governing body, coaches are also strongly encouraged to attend local and regional coaching clinics. As Coach Eric stated, "we do a USA certification of course, we do the Heads-Up tackling and all that stuff…and then you always have the option to go to different camps and stuff."

Recently, the Westside Youth Center has tried to integrate more child and adolescent development training to complement the safety and sport-specific components. As Megan stated, "[we do] additional training for [the] coaches prior to [governing body] training…because we want them to be able to not just feel like they're helping the community, but know what they're doing in order to be able to do that." Although this process is not yet formalized, it was described by board members as an identified area for improvement in the future. For example, Greg stated, "[the coaches] go through the [governing body] training which includes risk management…but [we need] training that actually [helps] our volunteers so they can actually understand kids better." Similarly, during the coaches' meeting, one coach remarked, "that's one thing as coaches that we have to keep reminding [ourselves], we can take the coaches clinics, but we also need to take clinics on how to be able to intervene and see [child behaviors]." The football commissioner summarized this position, stating:

> [Coaching] takes a lot of attention, a lot of time, a lot of patience, and you
>
> have to use different strategies and techniques. Because one message, the way

you're delivering a message, it may get [to] a few but [not] really get [to] the majority, and if it doesn't get [to] the majority, what's your backup plan? How do you understand…where the kid is having problems at, and helping them? Because this is all about building up that individual kid right. So it is important, it is a priority in all different aspects, because if we don't do that, we won't grow, we won't do anything, we're not helping.

Developing the skills and resources of parents, volunteers, and community members was also a much less formalized process. For example, Megan explains, "we've had a yard sale where people could pay five dollars, and we lined the fields and everybody got a spot, and then they could sell whatever they wanted to sell, and it was their money." Although these type of events provide opportunities for residents to build knowledge and expertise, such as planning and entrepreneurism, they are typically short-term and not specifically directed toward skill development. Similarly, parents and volunteers that fill administrative roles on committees such as special events, merchandise, fundraising, and sponsorships acquire skills that can be applied to different contexts, but this is not necessarily an intentional outcome of their involvement. There was an indication that the Westside Youth Center would like to start formalizing these processes in the near future. As Coach Tom stated:

I would love to see a situation where we're able to mentor the parents, not telling them how to raise their child, but involve them and just show them, ya know, this is how prepare your credit to buy a house, this is how you prepare yourself to get a better job.

Nature of social relations. The connection between sport and social relations is an essential element of community capacity building (Edwards, 2015). Drawing from the foundational work of Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Putnam, and James Coleman, a growing body of literature has linked sport events (Misener & Mason, 2006; Schulenkorf, 2013; Schulenkorf, Thomson, & Schlenker, 2011), sport organizations (Burnett, 2006; Sharpe, 2006), and sport activities (Spaaij, 2012; Theeboom, Schaillée, & Nols, 2012) to greater social connectivity and cohesion, or social capital. Conceptually, social capital developed in sport contexts may be deployed in broader community settings to help bridge social divides and mobilize collective action (Edwards, 2015). During interviews with board members and coaches, the theme of family was frequently used to express how the Westside Youth Center builds social capital. Greg explained "it's family oriented…it's real family oriented, the program is really big on family [and] that's [our] strength." Similarly, Megan mentioned, "in addition to us being a part of the community, we all see ourselves as a family, we sell [The Westside Youth Center] as a family." This sentiment was also expressed by coaches, who explained various strategies for promoting a "family" social atmosphere. For example, Coach Eric utilized cook-outs after each game to strengthen social relations within the team and community, and reflected:

> I saw these kids come from day one having no football knowledge [and] never playing football before, never knowing each other, to man we had cook-outs, everybody knows each other, their playing with each other, the mom's know each other…camaraderie, so it's like we created a family.

Coach Tyler referred to similar strategies, stating "we do cook-outs…we do films, like one year we took a couple of kids [to] the movies and stuff like that…this year we're

working on having team nights, like off days of practice [we'll] get together." Importantly, Coach Eric indicated that youth who typically do not interact were able to establish strong social relations over the course of the season, stating "you see kids that normally wouldn't [even] know each other, who stay on opposite sides of the town, can actually play with each other, interact with each other." Coach Tyler also alluded to this concept when describing his own experiences, stating "it [is] like we still brothers at the end of the day, White or Black it [doesn't matter]." These findings indicate the sport programs at the Westside Youth Center provide a safe space for social interactions between different social and racial groups in the community.

The Westside Youth Center also utilizes a variety of community events to build loose social networks between players, parents, coaches, and community members. As Megan mentioned:

At the beginning of the season, we always have our huge kick-off and family day, and you don't even have to be a part of [The Westside Youth Center] or have a kid in our program, we just cook hot dogs and hamburgers and we just have a good old block party.

In addition, Peter stated "we tried to do a dance where we could reach out to the community and have the kids, and get the parents to chaperone, and try to do things to bring everyone together." These type of events were also discussed during the parents' meeting, as the coach stated, "school is not out yet…when it [is], we're looking at having a report card, a school out celebration where [we] can get everybody to come here [and] bring their report card copies." Off-site events are also utilized by the Westside Youth Center to enhance social

relations. For example, Joe, a board member, discussed how the Westside Youth Center has engaged local businesses in fundraising events which also strengthen community ties, stating:

> We've had pizza parties at certain businesses…we've [gone to] Applebee's or
>
> Buffalo Wild Wings or whatever, [and] yea we want to try to get money, but it
>
> also helps the business because they're supporting the youth and you would
>
> think the community would come out and do more with the youth.

Similarly, Peter stated, "we do have [Westside Youth Center] outings and events, of course sport is our main draw so we'll utilize that to push a skate night at the skate rinks, or we'll do a family fun night at Zaxby's." Peter specifically highlighted a recent event:

> Recently we were able to [go] out to [a professional ice hockey game],
>
> Westside Youth Center had some tickets and they were distributed and given
>
> to the family members and things like that. And it was a good draw, a good
>
> outing, and it was great because you had all different team sets and all
>
> different families and things like that, Westside Youth Center affiliated, all
>
> come out to the Hurricanes game…so we try to push when we can those type
>
> of things to bring everybody together.

This strategy is also employed by the coaches with the individual teams. In discussing his post-game cook-outs, Coach Eric stated, "I open it up to everybody, not just my team…so its things like that [that] I'm trying to do off-site [of] the Westside Youth Center, but still represent the Westside Youth Center as well." Coach Tyler also mentioned plans to encourage personal interactions with the surrounding community through off-site events:

> We [want] to have like a community clean up, like go around and help the
>
> community, because [Westside Youth Center], we kinda in the heart of the

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borderline between southside and north[side]…so all the coaches and [the commissioner] we all came to the conclusion [we should] probably just go around, introduce ourselves and let them know that Westside Youth Center is still around.

These events are seen as a way to build the network of the Westside Youth Center to help sustain and expand programs. As Greg stated, "we [are] reaching out to build a stronger network, and then you also bring that network in now you got parents, parents got kids, so that would be the longevity of the program."

Structures, mechanisms, and spaces for community dialogue. Organizations that provide settings for community dialogue help build dense social networks that are conducive to mobilizing collective action. In addition, inter-organizational partnerships help facilitate community capacity building by opening channels of communication, resource exchange, and collective decision-making (Edwards, 2015). These networks are most effective when they extend beyond traditional sport organizations and engage partners in the private, public, and non-profit sectors (Chalip, 2006). The Westside Youth Center has taken steps toward establishing this network structure at the organizational and individual level, but it is still a work-in-progress. The management of youth sport programs at the Westside Youth Center has helped build strong communication networks between coaches, volunteers, and parents. For example, Coach Eric stated, "me and the parents are in constant communication…I have an open suggestion thing, [so they can tell me] things they may want to change about the [Westside Youth Center], things they like, things they wish we could do different." Coach Tyler also described a similar structure within his team, stating, "we try to…have that response, sit there [and] have the communication with the parents, let them know yea we

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coaches but we still human just like ya'll…if you have an issue come to us." Feedback from the online survey indicated that parents were satisfied with this communication, with one parent commenting, "the communication was excellent," and another parent stating "team moms were awesome communicators via the text link."

Interviews with coaches indicated the communication network was also utilized to discuss important, and sometimes difficult, non-sport issues as well. For example, Coach Eric described how he responded to one child acting out of character:

I'm like "hey mom what's been going on?"…come to find out, step-dad left

him, having some problems at home…there were some problems in the

family. So I reached out, the little boy called me one day to come and talk to

him, and things in the house kind of got back together. So I'm not just here for

the just football, I'm in these guys lives, I'm in their households and their

families talking to them.

A similar situation was described by Coach Tom, who alluded to an issue involving a verbally abusive father:

I'm like "let me talk to your mom," so when I spoke with her, she came and

she just cried right there in the parking lot…that's why I'm saying it's more

than football… these are the things that we have to do as a head coach.

The prospect of establishing these communication channels was especially important for single mothers. In fact, Coach Eric explained that "mom's [are usually] the ones that are pushing for the boys to get, especially the single mothers, for the boys to be around these men, because they don't have that." He further described the importance of this particular relationships by recalling a story he experience the previous year:

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I told all of my kids and all of my parents, you contact me day or night if there

is a problem, if you just wanna talk or anything. So that opens up a doorway

to open a relationship between the parents as well, because you have some

single mothers out there…it's hard when this little boy [sees] he has a penis

and stuff like that, and they don't know how to deal with it. They wake up one

morning, he wakes up with an erection and [his mom] goes and wakes him up,

"Oh god!" Ya know he's six years old, "Hey coach what do I do?" Ya know,

calm down, calm down.

Developing and sustaining formalized inter-organizational structures has been a much
more difficult task for the Westside Youth Center, and is considered a work-in-progress.
When asked about partnerships that promote community dialogue, Brian stated, "not
enough…and that is where we can use some help, people that understand how to go about
doing that." The aforementioned church has been a particularly valuable partner, and Megan
reflected on this partnership by talking specifically about the food drive on the second and
last Saturday of each month:

So that invites community people in, and gives us the chance to help in a way

that we have not ever helped before…so that is amazing to us because we

have not ever had, even though the church is right there with us, the church

doesn't have a giveaway for needy families, they have an AA meeting and

then they have a divorce counseling meeting and so we filter into some of

those things if we need…but we've never tapped into the need family aspect

of it. So we do that [now].

It is clear the board of directors are keen to continue formalizing these types of

relationships to provide the structure for effective partnerships. For example, a future

partnership with a local youth mentoring non-profit organization that would provide

programming for youth during the off-season was discussed during the coaches' meeting.

During this discussion, coaches and board members highlighted the benefits of partnering

with an external organization, with one coach stating:

> After the season is over, some of ya'll are in touch with the kids, and that's
>
> good, but as a majority, we're not. We need to have somebody who does this
>
> professionally involved. We don't always have to take the credit for doing
>
> something, but if there is somebody who is doing something positive we need
>
> to try to get on that wagon and roll with it.

In addition, Greg alluded to alternative strategies for integrating community partners

into the management of the Westside Youth Center:

> I feel like we need to bring some more community partnerships inside the
>
> board, instead of just having board members attached to the program, where
>
> they have kids out there or they got kids playing out there, I believe if you
>
> bring stakeholders in from the outside on your board it will promote [the
>
> Westside Youth Center] better.

Developing and sustaining these partnerships is essential to building community

capacity and also helps stabilize resource environments, maximize service efficiencies, and

enhance organizational capacity.

Leadership. According to Edwards (2015), community capacity building requires

"local community champions to communicate goals, motivate community members, acquire

resources, and lead the implementation of community-wide initiatives." (p. 12). Sport leaders

from the local community often possess high levels of trust and credibility that can be used to

galvanize community stakeholders (Burnett, 2006), and coaches and volunteers can develop

transferrable leadership skills through their participation in community sport programs

(Parent, Olver, & Séguin, 2009). This leadership is most effective when diffused across

"native" individuals and organizations, which fosters sustainable growth that is responsive to

the local community. The Westside Youth Center operates with a decentralized management

structure that prioritizes leadership development among volunteers and coaches. Yet

instituting formalized structures to guide this process has been difficult. Currently, potential

leaders are either referred by members of the organization or identified from a pool of

volunteers who lead one of several committees (e.g., sponsorship, special events,

fundraising). As Megan describes:

> Once we go through the committee program, I think we have like seven
>
> committees, once we establish that to see what your involvement level is, and
>
> how committed you can be to something, then that becomes a nomination
>
> process for, let's train somebody to do this.

These committees are somewhat flexible, and designed to capitalize on the skillset of

the volunteer. As Peter explains,

> When we do get volunteers…we will push and try to [help] them make the
>
> right choices and train them in a way that will help, or give them suggestions
>
> on what they need to do. But overall, we adapt to their talents and skillsets and
>
> we try to use, even if it's just a little bit of time, and their skill set may be very
>
> minute, we try to do our best to utilize that.

Joe provides specific examples of how this process has worked in the past:

[At one point in time] there was a doctor out there, [so] we had kids that was

in the program [that] he gave physicals to…someone might have been a line

chef, sous chef, they can help in the concession stand, show a different flow

that that kind of thing.

In addition to cultivating unique skills, the board also specifically looks for

individuals that are intrinsically motivated. As Peter noted, "one of the biggest things we

look at is intent, and what are they looking to do, the people that give us a good eye are the

ones that actually do without being told to do." Brian echoed these sentiments, stating, "when

I first started here I didn't wait for anybody, when I saw the need to do something I just did

it… that is what we are looking for, people that are not asked to do, people to just do."

Ideally, leaders are identified from the volunteers who perform well and demonstrate a

commitment to the Westside Youth Center, and elected by the community every June to join

the board of directors. However, board members indicated that most volunteers become

overwhelmed by the complex challenges and dropout before assuming a leadership role. As

Brian explains, "it always starts out great, and then the discouragement sets in…they put

[ideas] out there and they think automatically because they have a great idea it's just going to

work, and it doesn't, and they totally, [we] lose people." Greg described the cycle as a

swinging door, stating, "it's like closing a door, you know you open the door then all of a

sudden it [closes] if things don't turn out the way that person thought it would turn out."

Similarly, Peter stated, "sticking is a good word, because I think that we could do a lot to get

people [more involved], but to get them to stay and stick, it's tough."

Most of the volunteers that proceed through the leadership protocol are parents of participants in the program. Although these individuals develop important leadership skills and contribute immensely to the Westside Youth Center, they rarely continue after their child ages out of the program. As a result, the board has been forced to specifically target parents involved with the younger teams to try and establish more continuity. As Megan mentioned:

> Unfortunately we try to start with, I know they think we pick on them, but we try to start with the parents of the five, six, and seven year olds, because longevity wise they have more invested in our program as opposed to training the [parents of] fourteen and fifteen [year olds].

While this tactic helps the Westside Youth Center limit turnover, it places additional strain on parents. This was evident in parent evaluations, as a mother from the youngest team stated, "it would be good if we had some more supporters outside of the parents that could help with home games so that the same parents were not always called on to volunteer." Overall, results indicate the Westside Youth Center utilizes the sort of decentralized approach that is conducive to developing leadership in the local community, and has attempted to formalize a leadership development process. However, the complexity of the social issues they face has hindered these efforts, and the limited inter-organizational network has constrained opportunities for existing leaders to interact with broader community efforts.

Civic participation. Participation in voluntary grassroots organizations is frequently associated with broader civic involvement. Sport programs and events provide can provide contexts for diverse community stakeholders to interact and develop a shared sense of community identity (Sharpe, 2006; Tonts, 2005; Trussell, 2009), which compels them to

engage in broader community development efforts (Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Glover & Bates, 2006). In particular, programs that engage local citizens in governance processes and ensure they are relevant to community needs are most likely to engender broader civic action. Results indicate the programs and events at the Westside Youth Center have contributed to a strong collective identity among board members, coaches, volunteers, and participants (Edwards, 2015). The sponsorship cover letter states that "volunteers represent the very fiber of Raleigh and its surrounding area," and this connection was evident in interviews with board members and coaches. When asked where most volunteers are recruited from, Megan stated, "they're all coming from there, they're coming from either the patch that we pull from, one of our parent's, or somebody that knows somebody." This strategy has instilled a collective identity that was especially evident in interviews with coaches. For example, Coach Tyler explained, "I'm really coaching out of the love and out of the heart of the Westside Youth Center because I played with the Westside Youth Center…so I [came back] to give back to the Westside Youth Center." Additionally, Coach Tyler stated, "[There is] a lot of alumni that's willing to come back to the Westside Youth Center and just keep the name going, keep the name strong, stuff like that." Coach Eric articulated similar connections, and explained how the prospect of helping youth in the area motivated him to start coaching:

> That's my whole reason for doing this is because I grew up in inner city youth
> in Raleigh, I started out in The Westside Youth Center and made it up through
> high school and went to college playing ball. And then I come back to my
> neighborhood and see the same thing going on…so my whole reason for
> doing this is trying to do something to bring the community back together.

The Westside Youth Center has also attempted to engage members of the broader community that are not directly involved with the programs. As Peter stated, "board meetings are, and always have been, open to the public. They're available for the public to come, and that's how when it was founded it was a community-based organization." These meetings are primarily communicated through word-of-mouth, although texts, emails, and postcards have also been used. In addition, the meetings are included on a variety of program documents, such as the sponsorship cover letter, which states "meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at the Westside Youth Center clubhouse. These meetings are open to the public. Board members encourage community interaction and participation at the Board of Directors meetings." Yet public involvement in these forums has been limited. As Greg stated, "our board meetings are open, so the people that visit can't vote, [but] they can actually come sit in on the board and they can present ideas, but we don't ever have that part of it." Similarly, Joe mentioned, "[you] can put it out there on blast, hey community event, come here, tell us about the Westside Youth Center, how this can help your community, that kind of thing, and it'll fizzle out." As a result, the Westside Youth Center has struggled to build a collective voice in broader public management and planning in the area. Megan explained one of the consequences of this limited collective action:

> The plaza that was right above us…that used to be called Westside Plaza, and
> it got bought [but] it's been like that forever. So then stores up there started to
> close, new owners bought the property, I think somebody bought the whole
> plot and they changed the name, which was devastating to us because we felt
> like we were connected to that plaza by having it named after our field.

To try and increase involvement, the Westside Youth Center recently adjusted the dates and times of certain meetings to try and make the schedule more accommodating. As Megan explains:

We used to have our elections in January, and we decided to not have them in January anymore because nobody's coming. So it's best for us to have them in the middle of the season when the parents are at least out here and we can say hey look we have a board meeting, I mean we have an election do you want to come. So we started moving, and of course you have to adjust with the times.

While this approach has been relatively successful at increasing the participation of parents, engaging with members of the broader public has remained difficult. As Joe explains:

It's in our by-laws that they can come, we don't shut out, but the thing is also coordinating when they can get in front of the majority of the board members that can make it at a certain time. We do have board meetings at least once a month…but again, you have people that are all over the place, with other parts of their lives and trying to coordinate that, it can be difficult.

When residents do attend meetings, the feedback tends to relate more to maintenance and upkeep of the facility, although there has also been some community support. As Megan states, "homeowners come to our meetings as well, and they'll say to us, too loud, the lights are on way too long, had stuff all in my yard, [but] sometimes they'll just come and say what I would really like to see, how can I help you." Being more deliberate about increasing community interaction was a notable area of potential improvement among board members, with Peter stating:

I mean we put out the information and the information is listed on the website, flyers, and things of that nature, a lot of the grassroots type things, but that's probably something we can increase a lot more to engage [the community].

Value system. Sport organizations can help build community capacity by creating a value system that aligns with local cultures and beliefs (Shilbury, Sotiriadou, & Green, 2008). This ensures that development initiatives reflect the goals and interests of local stakeholders by fostering inclusion and social justice (Edwards, 2015). The value system of the Westside Youth Center is directly reflective of local stakeholders, and emphasizes youth development through community action. The website states that the goal of the program is to "use football, cheerleading, baseball and softball as a catalyst to promote positive youth development," and serve as a prevention program for youth by "promoting the development of healthy lifestyles and reinforcing community values." This message is reiterated in program documents such as the sponsorship letter, which states, "participants will learn many life lessons while participating in these sports…such lessons about self-esteem, sportsmanship, teamwork, responsibility and striving for excellence can help on the road to success." Similarly, the organization's home page for the football program emphasizes its goal to increase "self-esteem, socialization, and interpersonal skills," and states that the football program offers "cultural exchange and development among peer groups and increased parent/guardian involvement."

These values are evident during interviews with board members and coaches. Peter stated, "we want to always make sure that the coaches are building up kid's character, building them up in the areas where they can be productive citizens outside in society." In addition, several board members and coaches referenced plans to help youth build technical

and applied skills that would allow them to achieve this objective. For example, Brian stated

that the Westside Youth Center was "looking this summer to put together a program to build

computers with the youth that in turn they will be able to take home with them."

Additionally, Brian mentioned that the organization was "trying to put together some classes

possibly in welding, and possibly in learning how to operate large machinery," and also

"working on trying to get some classes in here, etiquette classes, things of that nature, so that

the kids can really benefit from that." Coach Tom also explained his own unique idea for an

off-season enrichment program:

> What I [want] to do is have the kids, show them how to build, how to grow
>
> their own crops, and [their] own food…so they can kind of play around, and
>
> see do I like gardening, do I like farming, do I like agriculture, or do I like
>
> science, do I like technology, or am I good with my hands.
>
> The Westside Youth Center also provides opportunities for youth to apply these skills

to community development efforts, as Megan, a board member, stated:

> We have student demonstrators who have aged out of our program, but are
>
> giving back to the program. And then they can get community service hours
>
> through their school…And so, we feel like we give them a positive role model
>
> to look at, and then in turn they can turnaround and give that back to us.
>
> While promoting youth development is the primary goal of the Westside Youth

Center, their core value system is embedded in the process and substance of development.

The board members and coaches understand the structural disadvantages facing the

community they serve, and recognize that addressing those issues is essential to promoting

sustainable youth development. As Coach Tom stated:

We can tell the kids A through Z what they need to do, how they need to be

productive citizens, but when you sending them back into the same

environment, I'm not going to say it falls on deaf ears but there has to be

something implemented where we have access to the kids year round.

Coach Tom specifically highlighted how systemic social issues manifest in

participant's behavior, and emphasized the importance of rectifying those broader problems,

"a lot of their behavioral issues come from societal issues, so until we are able to address

those societal issues, there's still going to be issues." Coach Eric outlined a similar

community-based mindset, stating "I'm going to start with this community, but I want to

change this community as a whole, I want to change the future for your youth as a whole."

This approach is indicative of the value system guiding the Westside Youth Center.

As Greg noted:

Long term [what is] going to keep this program up and running is like I said

leadership. Start with leadership in [the] community, which sprinkles down to

parents and children. If you got the proper leadership in the community, you

should be able to bring in the community more, and make the community

aware that we need this.

Megan echoed similar sentiments, and used the metaphor of family to explain how

sport programs are used to engage parents in the process of youth development:

Everybody that comes through our program, we meet and discuss "this is what

we want to do" and "this is how we want to do it" and "this is how we want to

get to this goal." So we're all on one common goal…and once all of us get on

the same page, we consider ourselves a family, and everybody knows this is a family.

While engaging members of the broader public has been difficult, board members feel this strategy is essential to the long term development of local youth, and are willing to deal with the obstacles. As Megan noted, "one of the things that we have seen with the Westside Youth Center is that when our community is not happy, it's a mess." In discussing this approach, Brian described his reaction to recent acts of vandalism at the Westside Youth Center facility:

I'm not upset or frustrated about it because I know the bigger goal for here is to continue to help the youth. So I don't get discouraged, I don't get downtrodden, and I don't get mad…my initial reaction now is how can we help to solve this problem, and when [the same people that are vandalizing] come to start helping build it, then that's when I think you reach a pinnacle in your organization.

Despite the acts of vandalism, Brian indicated the Westside Youth Center will remain open for public use, which reflects a commitment to accessibility that is essential to building community capacity (Edwards, 2015). As Brian stated, "being open is what community is all about, so I think shutting it down and locking it kind of goes away from the original vision of what the Westside Youth Center stood for from the beginning."

Learning culture. The final dimension of community capacity relates to how organizations critically assess intended outcomes and the underlying assumptions that guide program logic (Edwards, 2015). Sport programs should perform routine evaluations to gauge progress towards developmental goals, and utilize this information to promote continuous

organizational growth (Edwards, 2015). Moreover, the learning culture fostered within a sport organization can diffuse through various social and organizational networks to foster critical thinking in broader community settings. At the organizational level, the Westside Youth Center utilizes end-of-year surveys to solicit feedback from parents, but response rates have been extremely low. As Greg stated, "a lot of parents don't even do the survey, which is common when you do a survey…but we try to get a survey in for needs of improvement." Similarly, Brian mentioned, "we don't get a lot of feedback from parents, we send out surveys and things of that nature but it's not a lot of feedback."

Even with the limited feedback, the board of directors still systematically review responses to identify areas of improvement. As Megan stated, "we organize them, put them in categories, and then try to figure out how we can enact the changes that we need in order to make this [happen]." Additionally, Peter mentioned, "I take every critical response, every positive praise point to heart, so I don't take anything lightly and we try to address it in some type of way." At the team level, the evaluation processes is much more informal and characterized by an ongoing dialogue between parents, players, and coaches. As Coach Tyler stated, "we have meetings and stuff like that before we practice, so like once a week or something like that…the team moms will have parent meetings sometimes." Similarly, Coach Eric described, "I'm more of an open dialogue…I'm live and direct, so if you got a problem or you got an issue, come to me, as long as you do it in a respectful manner." There is currently not a formalized structure in place for youth to provide feedback, as Peter stated that "each coach will hear kids and most of the time the kids don't really have too many [complaints], other than wanting to play and run and score touchdowns, they're having fun."

Although information from both formal and informal evaluations are used to inform program operations, there is not a standardized set of evaluable benchmarks either. As Peter stated:

> It would be great to have, this is what we want to achieve, and this and that, but we really don't…it's tough to do it…but you just try to make sure we can get our main supporters and keep them happy, and make sure we're doing what they're expecting we need to.

Brian highlighted similar shortcomings, and expressed a desire to solicit external help in order to address the issue. When asked if the Westside Youth Center had any benchmarks to ensure the organization is meeting goals and objectives, Brian stated, "we have benchmarks and evaluations, but they are not utilized right now, right now we are trying to revamp how we operate, again, going back [to] having some resources, some [human] resources to help implement those things would be awesome." However, the importance of critical reflection and ongoing learning was a point of emphasis for board members and coaches. For example, Brian stated:

> From a board perspective, it's always encouraged to become a part of local organizations to learn how other organizations do things to bring that back, I think that it's important that we afford ourselves the opportunity to learn from successful organizations.

Similar sentiments were echoed during the coaches' meeting, with the commissioner stating, "it's very important that we all improve our craft…if you're not doing what you need to do to improve and to increase and grow yourself, in all those areas, then you're really selling yourself short." Coaches also discussed different types of clinics at the coaches'

meeting as well, with one coach commenting, "I've been doing it for about six years going to the clinics, and I found it most beneficial when I go to the youth segments where it's catered more directly towards us and what we're doing." The diffusion of this learning culture was evident during interviews with coaches, with Coach Tyler stating, "they recommend us to go [to clinics], so sometimes [the football commissioner] will send it through email…and they just send it to us and we try to up all our skills as coaches to keep us up to par with everything we need to know."

Challenges

    Limited organizational capacity. Data indicated deficiencies in organizational capacity restricted the capacity building strategies of the Westside Youth Center. For example, when asked what some of the biggest obstacles to developing community activities were, Brian responded, "resources, and not resources being financial, but resources being people, really trying to implement it and understanding what programs have worked for other organizations, I think that's huge." Similarly, when speaking about the difficulty in increasing parent involvement, Joe stated, "when you have less than a handful of people that are the ones doing the majority of the time and the majority of the things, to keep the parents engaged, it's difficult." Peter reiterated these sentiments, and linked the lack of human resources to the adverse social circumstances faced by many families:

    We have a lot of, our demographics, we have a lot of single parents that work

    two, three jobs, and it's not that their being mean spirited where they don't

    want to help, [they want to], but it's just not feasible, so yea [that's] probably

    the toughest thing, volunteerism.

Issues related to the intentions of volunteers also influenced human resource capacities. In describing the profile of most volunteers, Megan stated, "because it's not a paid position, its Dads, it's a Dad or it's somebody's uncle." These individuals typically wanted to volunteer in team-based roles (e.g., coaches), but as Coach Eric states, "every coach is not a counselor, and that's big…you have to be able to recognize that." When they are unable to coach, many of these volunteers are reluctant to contribute in other areas. As Joe explains:

Because if you tell somebody, we need you out here every third Wednesday to pick up trash or to put up the fence, or line the fields, ya know because we're lacking in that spot, they may go "Uh nah that's okay."

Consequently, much of the "grunt" work falls on the same group of core volunteers that collectively manage the organization. As Joe explained, "when you're there all the time [and] you don't see it you get frustrated [and you] just say, well I'll just do it myself." This heavy reliance on a small number of volunteers has reduced opportunities to expand or enrich programs. As Megan mentioned, "we have so many things going on with the Westside Youth Center…and there are twenty people, maybe thirty, that you can count on…they're spread so thin that it's like don't add one more thing to my bucket." This limitation was evident among coaches as well, as Peter sympathized with coaches at the coaches' meeting, but implored them to extend their volunteer work into more functional tasks:

Volunteering is always tough, we always struggle as coaches, I'm not even going to lie with you, we get to a point where we do some volunteering throughout the off-season, I'm saying outside of our normal volunteer hours that we dedicate to the Westside Youth Center for the kids, I mean actually doing volunteer work at the Westside Youth Center and helping out. Some

coaches have done a great job, other coaches have not done such a great job.

We all have things that we need to do, we have obligations, we have families,

it's totally understood, but we have to figure out how we can make volunteer,

work, life balance, all that work.

The limited human resources had a reverberating impact on the strategic and planning

capacity of the Westside Youth Center. Board members indicated that their involvement with

day-to-day operations disrupted attempts to discuss long-term strategic action. For example,

Megan explains how operational issues displaced time allocated to discussing new business

opportunities at board meetings:

It's difficult to add one more thing to the basket…you know, here are the

long-term goals, and here's what we talk about during our meeting. This is

what we have to do, we have to make this budget match, we've got to buy

uniforms, we've got to do this, [and] down at the bottom, new

business…then [that] gets put off to the next one because we didn't have

enough time.

Similarly, Peter discussed how it limited the ability of the board to strategically

promote the Westside Youth Center to the broader community, "we could be taking

advantage of a lot of different avenues of social media…the website itself could be done in a

different way…but it just circles right back down to the [lack of] volunteers." Results

indicate the board has even started to consider their limited strategic and planning capacity

when making decisions regarding new programs and events. When speaking about new

programs, Megan stated, "we are careful about what structures we put in place…if I can't

keep it up and I can't manage it, and I'm not going to be able to pass [it] off to somebody else later on, it's not gonna work."

The Westside Youth Center also has limited network capacity at the organizational level. Board members alluded to value discrepancies that have impeded some opportunities to extend their network. For example, Brian stated:

When you bring other entities in, it's not as easy as one would think it is because everyone doesn't have the same mission and the same goal[s], so to take all those entities, bring them together, and try to attain the same goal is a challenge.

Greg reiterated this position, and described the qualities the Westside Youth Center looks at in potential partners, "don't look for the benefits of tax write-offs or all that stuff, you're looking at how can we [prevent risky behavior]…how can we reduce [defiant behavior] in the community." Yet establishing and sustaining partners with mutual values has been difficult due to the high degree of turnover. As Megan explains:

Every place and everybody that you talk to, from year to year it changes. So we had a communication, or partnership, with [a representative] at the [municipal parks and recreation department], next year [the representative] is not there, he's gone and so now we either need to re-establish that relationship with somebody else, and does that person really want to do it? Same thing with Carly C's or Sam's Club.

Establishing and building connections has also been influenced by internal turnover as well. For example, Greg described how a beneficial partnership was lost when the family

with the personal connection to the organization aged out of Westside Youth Center programming:

> You had Bobby Murray Chevrolet, they came out [and] donated a car for raffle, and it was real big. But ever since that, and again I think it was his grandson [that was] affiliated with the program, when the kid pulled out all that stuff kind of went away.

Due to these issues, the Westside Youth Center has struggled to build and sustain partnerships in the local community. As Coach Tom summarized, "that network, [that's] one thing that we don't have."

Finally, the Westside Youth Center also encountered issues related to their infrastructural capacity. Greg stated, "see we operate year round, but we don't have sports year round, but bills still [have to] get paid." As Peter explained during the coaches' meeting, "it costs us a month, and this is not talking about any issues where we have pipes break and lights go out…$1,100 to $1,200 just sitting dormant." Board members indicated these costs make it difficult to maintain the facility year-round. Joe mentioned, "we only have a certain amount [of money], so the main thing is we want to make sure our youth [have programs], so certain things [have] to be downgraded or not fixed as soon." Similarly, Peter stated during the coaches' meeting, "our biggest asset has also been our Achilles heel, and that's our field. Our field always needs to be constantly up kept and worked on to get it in condition…we got improvements that need to be done on that."

Costs associated with equipment have also been an issue. Joe explained, "equipment costs have gone up, we have to replace helmets, officiating…certain things you can't cut on costs, like for instance helmets have to be recertified or they have to be bought new after a

certain amount of time." This past year, the Westside Youth Center was able to purchase new

equipment for the teams, and Coach Tom reflected on the importance of replacing the team

jerseys:

> We play against organizations that have resources, the kids, man when you
>
> look at them the kids [look] different, ya know…Now I was ecstatic when
>
> they got new helments and stuff this year, new uniforms and the kids looked
>
> good, like I could show you pictures where we had kids with different jerseys,
>
> ya know old [jerseys], you know what I'm saying? It just doesn't look
>
> professional.
>
> During the coaches' meeting, Peter also noted:
>
> When we got outfitted last year with brand new equipment, got brand new
>
> helmets, pads, jerseys, the whole nine…I mean I think the kids had a blast
>
> with being able to be outfitted in different uniforms and different jersey's
>
> week in and week out.

However, keeping pace with facility maintenance costs and equipment costs has been

difficult for the Westside Youth Center. During the coaches' meeting, the football

commissioner stated, "because of the operating costs that we have at the Westside Youth

Center, and if we want to continue doing the jersey's the way that we're doing…I mean we

really should go a little bit higher but we [can't] go lower." Moving forward, revamping the

facility and upgrading the equipment was seen as essential to the future of the Westside

Youth Center. As Peter mentioned, "until we can get our facilities up to par where people

would want to come out…I [think] reaching out to the community will fall a lot on deaf

ears."

Community disadvantage. One of the key themes that emerged from the data was how structural disadvantages in the local community influenced capacity building strategies. Similar to other non-profit organizations, there has been a significant reduction in private donations and public subsidies for the Westside Youth Center over the last decade. As Joe mentioned, "the economy a few years ago hurt everybody, so everybody was kind of tight, a lot of businesses are holding onto money, whereas before they were more willing and giving." Like many other non-profit and membership associations, the Westside Youth Center now funds its programs and events primarily through membership fees. Yet as Greg stated, "in comparison to all the area [sport organizations]… ours is more minority, low income families, with single parent homes." As a result, the Westside Youth Center has struggled to maintain operations while keeping registration fees affordable for their stakeholders. As Coach Tyler mentioned, "we [have] a lot of kids that, you know right here is the low budge part of town, so a lot of the financials of getting the child to come over to play…it's kind of rough." Consequently, the Westside Youth Center operates on an extremely tight budget that limits community capacity building strategies.

This issue was a prominent point of discussion at the coaches' meeting, with the commissioner stating:

> The fee [was] $150 last year, I struggle with this, because I really would like us to be to the point where we could actually have an $85, $60 fee, but we are not there at that point, okay. The fee I discussed back and forth with [the board], we're trying to figure out the best way to reduce the cost and still be able to function and do the things that we need to do, and it's very tough. It was decided upon to increase the fee to $170.

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When one coach asked why the fee couldn't be raised higher, the commissioner responded, "because we…it's tough to get, you know our demographics where we are, it is what it is, it's tough to get that heightened fee." The Westside Youth Center has also tried to institute payment plans to accommodate as many families as possible, but as Joe stated:

> We've gotten into trouble also, with…putting them on payment plans and stuff so that the kids [can be] out there engaged, but again that puts us at a disadvantage…because again, after so many times of basically [not paying], it's money out of the Westside Youth Center's pocket where we don't even have a pocket.

In response to these concerns, Brian explained how the Westside Youth Center recently "decided to downsize to hopefully offer better quality programs and then grow organically within the organization." Yet the issue remains a prominent concern, and was evident in interviews with board members and coaches. For example, when discussing the possibility of sending coaches and volunteers to training seminars, Brian stated, "our budget doesn't allow us to send individuals to any classes or anything." In addition, coaches described how they were influenced by the limited budget, with some forced to purchase their own equipment. Coach Tom stated, "a lot of stuff [comes] out of our pocket, like when I was making those infused waters, I was buying," and Coach Eric mentioned, "I had to purchase all my stuff myself, we do have some equipment but I didn't have any cones, no footballs…stuff like that."

Other community disadvantages also presented operational issues for the Westside Youth Center, such as transportation and vandalism. For example, Megan stated "our biggest obstacle is transportation and the kids getting there," and several coaches indicated they

regularly provided transportation for multiple participants. Coach Tom stated, "some parents don't have transportation to get to the games, kids don't have parents with [cars], so I'll go pick them up." Similarly, Coach Tyler mentioned:

> Sometimes we have to go get kids, but I mean it's all good because we have to understand that it's hard for, like a lot of players [are] in single-parent homes so you have some parents might be at work…some parents might have car issues and stuff so we can go get kids when we need to bring them to practice.

In addition, acts of vandalism have degraded the facilities and equipment at the Westside Youth Center. As Joe described, "in certain neighborhoods there's always people that are going to tear up certain things [and] vandalize…and that's something that does happen, ya know not just at our facility I'm pretty sure it's all over." This has not only increased costs associated with repairs and maintenance, but also limited capacity building strategies. For example, Brian described how these acts of vandalism have hampered attempts to build partnerships with other organizations who may not deal with the same issues:

> Even if we were to start bringing in other organizations, we really are continually trying to clean up our baggage, which is the vandalism, because the church wasn't aware of that type of thing. [We] tried to inform them but until you're a part of it, you really don't understand it.

Peter also specifically described how vandalism has influenced the image of the Westside Youth Center:

> We've had over the years we've had some break-ins in our concession stand areas, we've had graffiti in different areas and things like that that we've had

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to clean up. And people come by and see that, and it's not a good sight,

actually it puts a black eye on your as an [organization].

The implications of this negative perception were a key theme throughout conversations with board members and coaches. When talking about the importance of maintaining the facilities and equipment, Joe spoke about the current image of the Westside Youth Center, "[it's] the kind of thing where people drive by, oh that's the Westside Youth Center…that's why we left." Moreover, Peter highlighted how negative perceptions influenced attempts to engage the community, stating, "the facility itself is not in the greatest condition…if the Westside Youth Center had a major uplift…I think we would get a lot more support and involvement [from the community]." In fact, Peter described a situation in which a parent requested a tour of the Westside Youth Center because she heard "it was run down," and didn't want her child to be "part of an organization that's not up to a certain level." These sentiments were noted by coaches as well, with Coach Tyler stating, "some people [stereotype] you, [and] it's hard to get that black cloud off your head, so it's like you [have to] make that first impression good with the parents, and then with the kids."

Reversing this perception is a primary objective of board members and coaches, who want to use the Westside Youth Center as a catalyst for broader community development. As Brian mentioned, "I think when the facility gets up and running, and everything is flowing like it should, and it looks great…the whole mindset changes [in] people." This focus on revival was evident among coaches as well. During the coaches' meeting, one coach emphasized the importance of "changing the face of the Westside Youth Center, changing what [people] know about the old Westside Youth Center versus the new Westside Youth Center." Similarly, Coach Tyler emphasized his own personal commitment to "[bringing] the

Westside Youth Center back up to par to let [people] know it has changed." This theme of

revitalization was particularly evident in a 2015 press release, which described how

stakeholders of the Westside Youth Center were "filled with enthusiasm and hope that this

community gem in [east Raleigh] can rise from near obscurity and return to its glory days."

Moreover, the press release stated the board was "committed to breathing new life into the

center," and focused on a "revival that finds the Westside Youth Center meeting new

neighbors and re-connecting with familiar ones."

       Engagement. Data indicates the Westside Youth Center has struggled to build and

sustain engagement with parents and members of the broader community. When asked if

parents were encouraged to become involved, Brian answered, "always, always encourage

them to help out on game day, do chains, help in the concession stand, help at the gate taking

money, help with the clock, clean up the facilities, ya know constantly trying to [encourage]

them." Yet when describing the involvement of most parents, Brian stated, "they bring their

kids, they pay their registration fee, and basically that's how they are involved, we don't have

a lot of parent participation." Although some parents volunteer and contribute to the

operation of the Westside Youth Center, the majority of parents are far less engaged. As

Greg stated, "you got some parents that [are] heavily involved, then you [have] some that

[are] not…so that active part is not there as an overall, not how I want to see it…[the] parent

participation is very slim." Similar to Brian, Greg also described more of a transactional

relationship with most parents:

        We have like community days, but like I said, people will drop their kids off

        and keep going, you don't really see the parent support like that. And we've

been trying to improve that, we've been bumping our heads [about] how we

can get the parents more involved and buying into this program.

One of these strategies for increasing parent involvement was to formalize the

volunteer process by designating certain times for parents to contribute to the Westside

Youth Center. Yet as Joe states, this process has been difficult:

Part of the [reason] we implemented them [was] to get a little bit more

[engagement] by having those designated times when certain teams could

designate parents to come and help with the concession, or help with clean-up,

or help with field activities to try and get them a little bit more involved. It's a

way of getting them engaged and getting more input, but again, it dies out.

In addition to formalizing volunteer opportunities, the Westside Youth center has also

created administrative positions for parents to become involved with their child's team or the

management of the organization. However, Megan indicates that these opportunities have

done little to balance levels of parent engagement:

We [set up] committees, we set a committee up for this, we set a committee

up for homecoming, we set a committee up for grounds, we set a committee

up for equipment, we set a team moms committee up…and it still, it's so

incredibly hard…I think there are probably less than 10% if I had to put

number on it, that were really [engaged with] the Westside Youth Center.

Despite these challenges, the board members emphasized a commitment to engaging

parents in their programs and events. As Greg stated:

It always starts back [at] the parents, getting the parents back involved…At

the last board meeting we discussed how [we can] get the parents involved.

And we [are going to] have spirit nights, things like that to try to incorporate the parents. The biggest thing at the Westside Youth Center right now is the parental support. Instead of just dropping your kids off, hang around [and] sees what's really going on, and see how this facility is actually operated.

The Westside Youth Center has also had trouble engaging members of the broader community. Board members indicated that the Westside Youth Center has historically received considerable support and input from local stakeholders. For example, Joe explained, "in the early 60's it was really [community-based], it was a little bit more close-knit and those kind of things, so volunteering was, if someone could cut grass, they cut grass, [or] picked up trash." Megan provided more recent examples of strong community involvement by describing public participation in the board meetings, stating, "when I first got here [15 years ago] we used to have our board meetings at the [recreation center] across the street because there was that many people there." But as Megan mentioned, "the dynamics have just [changed]," and community involvement has dropped considerably over the last ten years. As Brian explained, "we don't have a lot of community [involvement], if [their] child doesn't participate [at the Westside Youth Center] it's very minimal how much [they] help out."

In addition to the aforementioned strategies for increasing civic participation, the board of directors has also utilized more deliberate strategies to make local stakeholders feel more accountable for the Westside Youth Center. For example, Megan described:

We started saying okay, well let's do it a different way, let's put out a newsletter so they can see the budget, the budget's open to everybody, you can see what we spend every month and we take in every month, and then we

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started printing it because we wanted people to see that every month there is a

deficit, there is not an overage of money that we're spending…And we

thought maybe that will get people [to want] to do more. Not necessarily, it

doesn't. It gave them an "Aha" moment but it really didn't change anything.

Some of the challenges associated with community outreach efforts were attributed to

broader societal trends that have impacted the local area. Most notably, the rapid

urbanization and gentrification of the city has influenced the social characteristics of the

neighborhoods served by the Westside Youth Center. As Joe stated:

Our area might be aging out whereas other areas, lets say Cary or Garner,

populations [are] growing because new families are growing and going to the

area and building houses and [those] kind of things. There's not much you can

build around the particular area around the Westside Youth Center.

Peter echoed these sentiments, and explained how the population shifts have

fragmented the community between old retirees and new families who often have different

needs and values:

The Westside Youth Center is different. The area is different. I mean you can

kind of look within right where [the Westside Youth Center] is, you can see

the retirees and the age of the community, people that stay within that area

right off of Peter Oak Rd., but if you immediately go right around the corner

you have a totally different set of people, and kids. And it makes it kind of

tough to open things up.

In addition to generational differences, the racial demographics of the area have also

changed significantly. Coach Eric stated that the Westside Youth Center currently serves a

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"predominantly Black or African-American community," yet the area used to be far more racially diverse. As Coach Tyler explained, "when I was young… it was vice versa, there was more White [people] and it was like we was all tight, and I [have] a lot of friends that [are] White that played there." These changes reflect a high degree of egress and turnover in the area that may contribute to less social connectivity between community members and institutions. Greg alluded to this lack of interaction, stating,

> We used to sit out in front of the Wal-Mart to try to promote [the Westside
> Youth Center], or that little shopping center with the Carly C's, but in the
> same token that area is…like I said the demographics, it's really not that
> [supportive] of anything, and it's sad but it's true.

> This has made it hard for the Westside Youth Center to integrate the community into

their operations. As Peter stated, "yea that's kind of tough in the community…without reaching out to them on a continued basis and getting the response from the community, it's tough to do that."

Competition. The influence of competition was a common theme in interviews with board members and coaches. Data indicated that winning and competitiveness was extremely important to parents. In fact, Greg described how the organization's recent lack of on-field success has led to reductions in participation:

> Another thing that's hurting the Westside Youth Center is the
> competitiveness…We haven't really been that competitive in sports in a
> while…so a lot of parents, even in the area, take their kids to the other [sport
> organizations], and so that kind of decreased our numbers to smaller sizes.

This trend was also noticed by Coach Tyler, who stated, "they had a bad season before that, before I got there [they went] 0 and 8, 0 and 9, so [the parents said], well coach then we are going somewhere else." Even parents of the younger age groups were primarily focused on the athletic success of their children, with Coach Eric stating, "my parents…they're coming in, this is their first or second year [of] playing football man, they're coming in trying to treat it basically as a college program." Competitive values were also evident in parent evaluations, with one parent from a winning team stating, "I think this year was a great improvement for the Westside Youth Center, winning teams help."

The competitive mindset of parents was reflected in their feedback to coaches and board members, which related primarily to on-field issues such as playing time, tactics, and player positions. For example, Coach Tyler indicated that the feedback from parents "always boils back down to playing time," while Megan stated that, "if I had to just put a number on it, I would say more than half of the things parents discuss with us or want to talk to us about is playing time for their kids." During the coaches' meeting, one coach specifically described an incident that occurred following a game in which they won, stating, "before I can even give my reason we won, good job speech, I had a parent in my ear, coach he don't look too happy, he feel like he didn't contribute." In addition to playing time, coaches also highlighted parental concerns with on-field tactics and player positions. As Coach Eric stated, "more of the feedback is like, hey coach you're doing a great job, we love what you're doing, keep it up and everything, but hey this is what I want my son to play." This was also evident in parent evaluations, with one parent from the Westside Youth Center's youngest team suggesting, "coaches should not be able to coach on a team with their own kids, there is a lot of favoritism," and another parent calling for coaches to have kids start specializing in

certain positions, suggesting that "veteran players [be] offered positions they're comfortable with and working with them to strengthen and enhance their skills in their positions."

Board members indicated the continued emphasis on competition has made it difficult to engage parents with non-sport related programs, events, and activities. As Greg indicated, "that's the barrier we [are] bumping our heads with right now. How do we promote something outside of sports? What type of structure can we impose that the kids will still hang around year round outside of sports?" Greg specifically explained one of the biggest challenges with engaging parents at the Westside Youth Center:

> Getting them to look past the sports side. Quit focusing on sports as the
>
> primary reason why the Westside Youth Center is around, and start looking at
>
> the Westside Youth Center as more of a prevention type program, intervention
>
> type program. And I say that's the biggest challenge, the reason families kind
>
> of resort to other programs, because they are looking [only] at the sports side.

Coach Tom provided a more specific example of the lack of engagement with non-sport activities, describing the short-lived attempt at establishing a study hall program:

> So on the days I had practice, Coach Greg would host [study hall], on the days
>
> he had practice I would host [study hall]. And we did this for about two weeks
>
> and I stopped doing it because when I was there nobody was there, [and]
>
> when Coach Greg was there the parents would show up, drop their kids off,
>
> and they would have no books, no papers, no pencils, no nothing.

Similarly, Coach Tom explained the reasoning behind instituting a gardening program in the off-season, which will be implemented in the next year:

That's why I [want] to do the garden and things like that so they can kind of

play around and see do I like gardening, do I like farming, do I like

agriculture, do I like science, do I like technology, or am I good with my

hands. Like they need to be able to figure that out, but they can't figure it out

because they don't have access to anything other than football.

During the coaches meeting, one coach explained how this emphasis on

competitiveness manifested in the attitudes and perceptions of the participants as well:

One time in my practice I asked my kids by a show of hands what you want to

be when you grow up, by the time I got to the seventh child I just had to say

okay put your hands down, because I don't want to hear that oh I want to be

an NFL star…We need doctors, we need lawyers, we need business owners,

and that's what we need to impart into these children's minds at this age, by

using sport.

The growing emphasis on competition has also significantly impacted participation in

non-competitive athletic programs, such as the flag football program. As Megan stated, "[no

parents] want [their child] to play flag football anymore. About 5 years ago we had a really

large flag football [program] with 5 year olds, now they want their kids to put on pads at 5."

Megan compared this transformation in parental expectations to her own experiences with

her son:

My son is 22, [but] when he was playing we wanted him to have the

experience of playing flag [football], and just being in a group activity where

it was organized and he had to follow rules and [had] fun at the same time.

And now, the focus has changed for these little kids to getting them early and

trying to get them to be these all-star football players, and so the [parents]

want their kids to play, hit people at 5, with pads on.

Interestingly, competition emerged as a key organizational challenge as well. The

proliferation of public, private, and other non-profit youth sport organizations in the area has

led to significant reductions in participation at the Westside Youth Center. For example,

when describing other youth sport organizations, Joe stated:

> Well their competition. You look at it and you think about it…like for
>
> instance Parks and Recreation [can] keep their registration fees way down
>
> [since] they have, ya know it's Parks and Recreation so the city owns it and
>
> those kind of things. Whereas us being [non-profit], we have to join another
>
> association, have to pay different [fees] for the referees, have to maintain our
>
> own fields and stuff like that, [so] we can't be spread as thin.

This trend was also described in a 2015 press release, which indicated that "over the

years, city sport leagues drew some families away from the Westside Youth Center, others

chose travel teams, and some moved away or aged out of the program." The implications of

this competition are critical for the Westside Youth Center, who rely almost entirely on

membership fees to support their operations.

Data suggests competition with other organizations also impacted other potential

revenue streams as well. For example, the continued growth of sport programs has been

accompanied by a significant increase in the number of public and private sport facilities in

the area. This has made it increasingly difficult to rent the fields and clubhouse at the

Westside Youth Center to other organizations, especially since the budget has limited

ongoing maintenance efforts. As Peter explains:

I think we may charge around $650 to use the field. Now if you take that

price, based on what is around the area, it's very inexpensive…but if you

compare the facility to a lot of the public facilities and the school system…I

can guarantee you when we tell them [the price], even though they know that

it's going to cost a lot more somewhere else, [they] will probably say it's too

much only because of how the facility looks.

Moreover, similar to the Westside Youth Center, these new programs and facilities

are looking to supplement their programs with sponsorships from local businesses. This has

increased competition over sponsorships and donations, which has been especially

detrimental to the Westside Youth Center due to their limited resources to attract and engage

potential sponsors, as well as the limited professional network of their families. As Joe

explains:

[The parents] don't have as much time [or] access to partner with business

sponsors, or go out to them. Some of the [other organizations] are

organizations where more of the parents have their own business kind of thing

so they can give more back, whereas [our parents]…yes [they] can go ask

them for certain grants but it's already gone.

Board members and coaches indicated that more and more, the on-field success of

their teams is influencing the off-field success of their organization. For example, Peter

discussed how he felt the opportunity to play in a competitive national championship was

associated with participation rates:

You go to ESPN 3 you'll see the teams and the championship games being

played, and they play them in a setting just like a college football game, and

they have their replays, they have their announcers, and everyone wants that.

And if you can have an association where you can get down to Florida a few

times, that's an identity where people say, wow I want to be a part of that.

Similarly, Coach Tom indicated how successful teams may be more likely to attract

sponsors and donations from local businesses:

That's why we need to try to get to Florida, because then we go to businesses

and we're not just saying, hey this is what we do, ya know we put you on

programs, flyers, or whatever around here. Now we [are] going to Florida, we

may be on ESPN, on national television, they will be more likely to sponsor

us and support us then, because what we [are] doing is bigger and more far

reaching.

A similar connection was made during the coaches' meeting, as one coach suggested:

When we recruit [and] our teams are successful on that football field, then

you're able to go to a WalMart or a Mr. Wonderful's or whatever business it

is in our boundary, and say sponsor the Westside Youth Center. And this is

why because we have national recognition because our team is going

somewhere.

Discussion

This discussion provides an overview of capacity building strategies employed by the

Westside Youth Center, and highlights lessons learned from the challenges they have

confronted. The first dimension of community capacity relates to the development of local

skills, knowledge, and resources, and the Westside Youth Center leveraged their position

within the community to achieve this objective. The decentralized structure of the

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organization comprised a loose network of board members, coaches, and volunteers who collectively managed and implemented programs. This bottom-up approach ensured the organization was community-led, and provided opportunities for volunteers to develop key organizational and administrative skills. However, their limited organizational capacity hindered attempts to implement more deliberate strategies for building local skills and knowledge. For example, many of the volunteers were parents of participants, and primarily interested in team-related responsibilities (i.e., coaching) rather than functional organizational tasks (i.e., facility maintenance). Consequently, most core volunteers in administrative positions performed secondary duties as well, creating a convoluted web of duties and responsibilities that significantly reduced service efficiencies. As a result, efforts to sustain the organizational capacity required to provide youth sport programs usurped the time, resources, and vision needed to implement more expansive training programs for parents and other community members. Although several promising projects and events were described, many experienced short-term delivery episodes or failed to get off the ground altogether. Strategic planning and human resource capacities were highlighted as the primary challenges associated with these initiatives, as administrators struggled to balance the management and leadership responsibilities associated with their implementation.

For the Westside Youth Center, the most effective strategy to counter these issues was the utilization of inter-organizational partnerships. The Westside Youth Center strategically partnered with community agencies to extend their services and supplement organizational capacities. Most notably, the partnership with the church was leveraged to upgrade facilities and host community events, and the forthcoming partnership with a youth mentoring agency will provide access to enrichment programs for participants and their

families. These partnerships have allowed the Westside Youth Center to increase the scope of their operations without significantly changing their structure or compromising the quality of their primary service (i.e. youth sport programs). Internalizing these production components would have been cost prohibitive, and likely required more formalized top-down structures that would negate the community benefits of decentralization. From a community capacity perspective, these types of collaborations provide one of the most viable options for community sport programs to enhance local skills and resources. While the effectiveness of sport-for-development programs is contingent upon the strength of their non-sport components (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), it is important to consider that sport organizations do not need to produce every component. For the Westside Youth Center, inter-organizational partnerships were far more effective at building local skills and resources than attempts to establish their own independent programs or events, and provided access to complimentary resources that might have otherwise been beyond the scope of the organization. Of course, these partnerships did involve costs, such as investments of organizational capacities and a loss of operating autonomy. Yet value congruencies and mission alignment were paramount to identifying and building these relationships, and helped establish norms of trust and reciprocity that led to integrated services. This meant that both organizations were mutually dependent, or co-dependent, on one another to achieve collective goals, which reduced self-interested action and promoted collaborative approaches to goal achievement.

The decentralized management of the Westside Youth Center also helped contribute to strong social relations between participants and families, which is the second dimension of community capacity building. Coaches and volunteers collectively organized team activities

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and events, and each age group was afforded considerable autonomy in decision making. As teams progressed through the program together, the formation of "family-like" social cliques reinforced team values and promoted a collective team identity. However, while cliques facilitate dense social relations, they also tend to become more insular over time, which may limit the potential social reach of an organization. This trend was evident at the Westside Youth Center, as programs and events helped build strong bonding ties *within* teams but struggled to establish bridging ties *between* teams or with other community members. For example, although the Westside Youth Center has been able to successfully recruit volunteers from team networks (i.e., past players, team parents), they have struggled to solicit participation from the broader community. Moreover, the identity and attachment of these volunteers typically manifests more with specific teams than the organization, leading to higher rates of volunteer turnover. Consequently, the primary social growth of the organization has occurred through the extension of existing social circles rather than the creation of new ones.

This raises issues related to what Lin (2000) describes as inequality in social capital. Team-based social cliques have provided access to substantial social capital for families participating in the Westside Youth Center, yet the majority of this network involves clustering at relatively disadvantaged socio-economic positions. As a result, the information, resources, and influences embedded in the network are relatively poor compared to networks that involve more diverse socio-economic groups and positions (Lin, 2000). Lin (2000) suggests that in order for disadvantaged groups to access resource-rich networks, they must extend relations beyond their usual social circles and establish routine exchanges. The Westside Youth Center has attempted to achieve this objective by hosting a variety of social

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events throughout the year. These include on-site events that allow community members to experience and utilize facilities, and off-site events that engender social interactions in different community spaces. Yet community engagement with these events has been limited, and the interest they have created has been short-lived. Forming cross-group ties is extremely challenging for members of disadvantaged groups, as structural constraints and various class-based social patterns reduce opportunities for interactions with members of more advantaged positions (Lin, 2001). As these structural and social barriers become even more impermeable, it will be increasingly difficult for organizations like the Westside Youth Center to increase returns on their social capital. Utilizing sport and recreation organizations to facilitate diverse social connections should be a priority for policymakers, as they support organic exchanges and increase the diffusion and flow of resources through the entire community network.

This highlights the need for structures, mechanisms and spaces for community dialogue, which is the third dimension of community capacity building. The community-led management of the Westside Youth Center has encouraged local resource development and incentivized social responsibility. In addition, communication networks between participants, families, and volunteers have been utilized to discuss community issues and heighten social justice beliefs. However, the Westside Youth Center has struggled to implement structures to broaden this community dialogue and engender collective action. In particular, the organization has struggled to utilize connections with other community sport organizations, especially as policy trends have altered resource environments. Reductions in public funding and donations, coupled with the ongoing privatization of youth sport services, has drastically limited financial resources for youth sport non-profits (MacLean, Cousens, & Barnes, 2011). These organizations now operate in market-based resource environments where they must

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compete with each other over finite commodities (i.e., participants, businesses) to procure

financial resources (i.e., membership fees, sponsorship) (Chetkovich & Frumkin, 2003). The

effects of this competition were evident at the Westside Youth Center, who have lost

participants and sponsors to other public, private, and non-profit community sport

organizations in the local area.

To counter this trend, policymakers should incentivize collaborations between

organizations to expand community dialogue. Like many other community sport

organizations, the Westside Youth Center lacks the market knowledge, time, and resources to

facilitate these connections on their own. Moreover, the increasingly competitive climate has

made establishing dyadic connections between organizations more difficult. The introduction

of a third-party broker would help mitigate this issue by providing a more efficient platform

for communication, and increasing the potential value of collaborations by adding multiple

partners to exchanges. Although formalized inter-organizational partnerships could emerge,

the primary emphasis of these forums should be the exchange of knowledge and information

between diverse stakeholders. Sport activities provide access to a variety of racial, cultural,

and socio-economic groups that may not be available in other work or leisure settings (Arai

& Pedlar, 1997). Yet there is a tendency for these groups to concentrate around certain sport

activities and organizations, creating a misleading perception regarding the diversity of sport.

Competition between community sport organizations exacerbates these differences and

reinforce stereotypes, such as those noted by volunteers at the Westside Youth Center. These

forums could help mitigate this issue by facilitating ongoing discussions between

representatives of diverse social groups. Collaborative approaches to management have been

adopted to help sport non-profits adapt to innovation (Wemmer & Koenigstorfer, 2015), and

these communication pathways could similarly help organizations engage in discussions regarding local issues, reach consensus on broader social goals, and encourage collective action.

Developing local leadership is paramount to the success and efficiency of collaborative dialogue, and represents the fourth dimension of community capacity building. The Westside Youth Center is directed by a group of individuals who invest a significant amount of time and resources into their roles, and collectively manage the organization year-round. These leaders hold influential symbolic positions in the organization, and have the platform to sell a vision and embolden development efforts. Yet despite the level of trust and respect they have garnered within the organization, and their promising visions for community-wide regeneration, their influence has not yet filtered into the broader community. This may be attributable to the limited social reach of the organization and their lack of interaction with other community leaders. Although leaders of the Westside Youth Center control their own internal resources, they lack opportunities to engage in broader community dialogue and spread their influence into resource-rich networks. This limitation is significant, as sport leaders are most effective when they have access to internal and external resources that can be utilized in development efforts (Autry & Anderson, 2007). In addition, the decentralized structure and limited capacity of the organization has made it difficult to institute and incentivize formalized leadership training programs. Even volunteers that do express interest in leadership positions soon become overwhelmed by the complex social challenges they face, and do not progress through leadership pathways. Inevitably, the leaders that do progress have deep personal or familial ties that inspire a profound

commitment to the Westside Youth Center, yet do not expand the existing network of influence.

It should also be noted that sport performance and competition significantly influenced the perception of coaching leadership at the Westside Youth Center. Coaches and former high-level athletes often garner considerable power and credibility among community stakeholders (Burnett, 2006), yet our results indicate this status may be increasingly contingent upon their on-field success. Coaches of winning teams attracted more attention and participation than coaches of less successful teams, indicating their leadership status was influenced by performance. In fact, engaging families in non-sport programs was a key challenge for administrators, since many parents were focused primarily on the athletic performance of their child. While this connection between winning and leadership may be expected at the professional or intercollegiate level, the association seems to have permeated youth sports as well. Driven by the allure of collegiate scholarships and elite/professional contracts, the emphasis on competitive success in youth athletics has undoubtedly increased (Friedman, 2013), and may be limiting the ability of leaders, particularly coaches, to promote physical health and social outcomes through sport.

One especially important social outcome linked to sport is civic participation, which relates to the fifth dimension of community capacity. Promoting citizen engagement with public issues is imperative to organizing and sustaining community development efforts. In addition to the collective identity formed by participants, families, and volunteers through programs and events, the Westside Youth Center has also attempted to encourage broader citizen involvement with the organization. Board meetings are open to the public, and administrators even adjusted the dates and times of certain meetings to make them more

accommodating to the local citizenry. Yet public engagement in these forums has reduced considerably over the last two decades, which aligns with nationwide trends of decreased civic participation and involvement in democratic activities (Putnam, 2000). In particular, socio-economically disadvantaged communities such as those served by the Westside Youth Center present complex challenges associated with participatory strategies (Goodlad & Meegan, 2005; O'Hare, 2011). Recent shifts in the political and economic landscape have led to social fragmentation and reduced community-wide engagement with public initiatives, and these trends were evident in the communities served by the Westside Youth Center. With limited organizational capacity to plan, implement, and sustain effective promotional strategies, the Westside Youth Center has struggled to overcome these structural obstacles. Indeed, the civic withdrawal of socio-economically disadvantaged communities has developed over years of political misrepresentation, limited access to municipal forums, and violated public trust (Fung, 2001; Lijphart, 1997), making them increasingly difficult to reach.

Sport organizations like the Westside Youth Center offer programs and events that collectively engage with a diverse cross-section of community stakeholders that include these populations. Sport activities can be strategically managed to promote political discourse and public engagement in this space, yet organizations need resources to implement these strategies. More importantly, policymakers need to ensure that organizations are able to operate in an environment in which they have equal access to resources, which is not always the case. For example, one of the reasons grassroots sport organizations encourage participation from broad populations is that they are affordable (Sharpe, 2006). However, as capitalist ideologies have continued to drive social policy in the United States, public funding

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for youth sport programs has been cut drastically (Coakley, 2010). Organizations with access to resource-rich networks have been able to alter membership fees to compensate for these expenses, or deploy social and human capital to solicit funding from sponsors and grant agencies. Yet organizations serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities, such as the Westside Youth Center, typically lack the social and human capital to generate alternative sources for revenue, and instead must rely primarily on membership fees. Over the last ten years, the Westside Youth Center has been forced to increase membership fees to support their operations, and administrators are not only worried about the sustainability of this model, but also pricing out a key portion of their stakeholders. As this trend continues, community sport organizations will attract more homogenous constituencies, and provide less effective spaces for promoting inclusive civic engagement.

These shifts were reflected in the Westside Youth Center's value system, which represents the sixth dimension of community capacity building. The Westside Youth Center highlighted the importance of youth development through community action, and this emphasis was consistent throughout the organization. Administrators viewed sport activities as a mechanism for engaging the local community in the process of youth development, and a viable setting to advance other community-led initiatives. However, many parents viewed sport activities only for their competitive qualities, and were focused primarily on the athletic success of the team and their child. In fact, interest in non-competitive sport programs at the Westside Youth Center has decreased significantly, and engagement in non-sport programming has been limited. Most parents exhibited a transactional/consumerist relationship with their child's participation, and did not engage with the program beyond paying registration fees, providing transportation, and/or attending competitive games. This

made it difficult for the Westside Youth Center to align their sport value system with broader community-building value systems, which is an essential step in sport-based development (Shilbury et al., 2008).

This highlights a broader trend in the United States, where sport practices and policies have tended to prioritize elite sport, economic development, and competition (Chalip, 2006; Grieve & Sherry, 2012). Although the social impacts of youth sport are often propagated by public officials, they are rarely substantiated through rigorous evaluation or supported by strategic policy (Coakley, 2011). While sport-based development approaches are beginning to gain traction in the U.S., the elite performance model continues to dominate American sport landscapes (Welty Peachey & Cohen, 2012). This mindset has certainly manifested itself at the youth level, as the continued commercialization of youth sports has perpetuated a wave a private sport clubs and travel teams that provide "elite" training and encourage year-round sport specialization. In addition to increasing costs associated with participation, these trends have created a perception of recreational or non-competitive sports as settings for sub-par athletes or children who are not athletically gifted enough to make competitive travel teams. These programs receive far less funding and support, and are often accompanied by lower social statuses that dissuade some children from participating in sport altogether. For sport organizations such as the Westside Youth Center to promote broader development agendas, traditional conceptualizations of sport must be altered to establish some semblance of parity between elite sport, sport development, and sport-for-development systems. This would include modifications to the governance structures of sport systems in the public and private sectors, and policy adjustments to rearrange the distribution of resources among sport organizations.

The final dimension of community capacity relates to critical reflection and the establishment of a learning culture, which was evident at the Westside Youth Center. Coaches were strongly encouraged to attend local and regional seminars to improve their knowledge and skills, while ongoing professional development was a point of emphasis for administrators. In addition, community feedback was solicited at public board meetings, and surveys were utilized to gauge the satisfaction of parents involved in the programs. This information was critically examined by administrators to improve operations and ensure they were meeting the needs of stakeholders. The primary challenges associated with this dimension were a lack of organizational capacity to design, collect, and evaluate programs, and limited response rates from parents and community members. Administrators at the Westside Youth Center did not have much experience with program evaluation, which not only limited the amount of data they were able to collect, but also constrained its potential value. With training or support in these areas, the Westside Youth Center could collect richer data on their programs and strategically utilize it in promotional materials or grant applications. Moreover, the application of more sophisticated sampling strategies could make more efficient use of evaluative resources, increase response rates, and/or ensure the data collected is representative. Partnerships with external organizations, such as institutions of higher education, would be a logical starting point for this training, however the goal should be to equip community sport organizations with the knowledge needed to carry out ongoing assessment and monitoring activities on their own.

These findings and their subsequent interpretation must be considered in light of several limitations. The Westside Youth Center was purposively chosen for this single case study due to their unique program features and location within a socio-economically

disadvantaged community. The concepts and relations that were studied are rooted within this context, so readers should be cautious when generalizing results to other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Maxwell (2012) indicates that the boundaries between a case setting and other settings depend on contextual characteristics, so the transferability of these findings to different contexts should be based on the degree of comparability with the Westside Youth Center and its community context. In addition, although data was collected from secondary sources that were not directly influenced by the researcher (i.e., documents, participant observation), the primary data for this study was generated through direct qualitative methods, and the researcher's presence during these processes may have influence the subjects' responses. Moreover, an extant theoretical framework was used to develop data generation materials, and the coding and analysis related to community capacity building strategies was guided by deductive thematic analysis techniques. This structured approach undoubtedly influenced the generation and interpretation of data, and may have limited the ability of the researcher to inductively identify emergent themes. Finally, the researcher's knowledge of the topic, along with their personal and educational background, may have influenced their interpretation of the data. Despite these limitations, the results of this study offer several intriguing findings regarding how youth sport non-profit organizations contribute to community capacity building, and the challenges associated with this process.

Conclusion

Community sport programs and events provide opportunities to enhance local resources and build social capital, skills and knowledge, and common values (Lawson, 2005; Moscardo, 2007). These represent critical community capacities that may be leveraged to increase public engagement with pertinent social issues and promote broader community

development efforts. While the cultivation of community capacities may be initiated by external assistance programs, the sustainability and efficacy of programs hinges on their ability to develop and utilize local capacities (Edwards, 2015). This requires a strategic process-based approach to programming that relies on deliberate organizational action rather than optimistic narratives. Yet the effectiveness of these actions also depends on the social, political, economic, and ideological climate in which they operate. This single case study of the Westside Youth Center provides a deeper understanding of this interplay between organizations and their environment, and the specific issues associated with implementing community capacity building strategies.

The results indicate that organizations serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities face significant challenges that impact these strategies. The limited organizational capacity of the Westside Youth Center constrained attempts to plan, implement, and sustain many initiatives. Inconsistent and relatively low levels of funding and volunteers forced administrators to focus on sustaining operations year-to-year, and diverted attention from longer-term strategic planning efforts. Additionally, while partnerships were effectively utilized to supplement organizational capacities, the limited social reach of the Westside Youth Center restricted most of these exchanges within resource-poor networks. Modifications to the structure and management of the organization, as well as the service delivery process, would improve the effectiveness of community capacity building strategies.

Yet many of these organizational challenges were exacerbated or even created by issues in the broader environment. Social, economic, and political trends in the communities served by the Westside Youth Center have drastically altered their ability to implement community capacity building strategies. Destabilized funding environments, increased multi-

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sector competition, population and migratory patterns, and even ideological shifts related to civic participation and leisure involvement have all created issues for the Westside Youth Center. In order to effectively leverage sport to promote community capacity, we must understand sport organizations within the context of these evolving conditions. Sport is not immune to societal trends, and the current orientation of sport policy in North America is not philosophically or structurally conducive to supporting sport-for-development practice. In order for sport activities to promote community capacity building, policy modifications are needed to ensure sport organizations like the Westside Youth Center are supported. Once these resources are provided, community sport organizations will be able to more effectively leverage their operations to build community capacity as a parallel track to youth development.

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Table 3.1. Dimensions of community capacity and examples of sport's potential role in enhancing capacity

Dimension	Definition	How sport may enhance Dimension
Level of Skills and Resources	Development of and access to resources and skills within the community	Availability of sport facilities and supporting infrastructure; Development of volunteer skills; Support of national sporting organizations.
Nature of Social Relations	Sense of community; social capital	Positive social interactions among participants, volunteers, and spectators; Sport as a mechanism to build community social capital.
Structures, Mechanisms, and Spaces for Community Dialogue	Social and inter-organizational networks; Mechanisms for communication and citizen input	Inter-organizational community partnerships developed to promote sporting events; Sport as a mechanism to build collective identity; Sport as a comfortable psychological space for inter-group dialogue.
Leadership	Effective and sustainable community leadership and leadership development	Leadership development among participants and volunteers; Credibility and symbolic power of athletes and coaches within communities.
Civic Participation	Distribution of community power and ability for citizens to participate in community processes	Sport encourages civic engagement and citizen involvement; Sport forming the basis of community identity.
Value System	Shared community values that support democracy, inclusion, and social justice	"Sport for all" approaches that encourage democratic processes and inclusivity; Culturally relevant sport; Sport programs that are designed to teach ideal cultural values to participants.
Learning Culture	Understanding and awareness of community history and ability to critically reflect on shared experiences	Sport programs including process for critical reflection and feedback from multiple stakeholders; Cross-sectorial and geographical partnerships that provide access to information for benchmarking and lessons learned; Evaluation of programs.

Source: Adapted from Edwards (2015)

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The association between sport and youth development has garnered considerable attention from both scholars and practitioners. Scholars have drawn from a range of theories and methodological approaches to elucidate the benefits and consequences of sport participation. Practitioners have developed a wide variety of programs aimed at promoting youth development through sport activities. Collectively, this information has provided a wealth of knowledge on the individual outcomes associated with youth sport participation. However, connecting these outcomes to specific program processes has proven much more difficult, and limited the potential efficacy of sport programs to youth and communities. This dissertation utilized three separate studies to expand this knowledge base and help youth sport programs maximize their influence. First, the integrative review provided a critical overview of empirical research, described the interrelatedness of key concepts, and offered informed recommendations for future research and practice. Second, the inter-organizational network analysis examined the collaborations linking youth sport non-profit organizations and other community agencies, and highlighted how strategic partnerships may be utilized to build organizational capacity. Third, the single case study of a youth sport non-profit organization outlined strategies for community capacity building in a socio-economically disadvantaged area, and uncovered key challenges associated with their implementation. This chapter briefly describes these findings, and discusses how they contributed to a more comprehensive conceptual model of sport-based-youth-development (SFYD).

Brief Summary of Findings and Contributions

The findings from the integrative review (Chapter 2) indicated that most scholarly work in the area of sport-based youth development has focused on the individual outcomes

associated with sport participation. This research has been informed primarily by psychological theories of human development, such as self-determination theory and achievement goal theory, which have elucidated key associations between sport attitudes and youth development outcomes. However, there has been less attention to contextual or programmatic features of the sport environment that contribute to this process, leading to a lack of clarity regarding how these outcomes are produced in the sport context. Specifically, the resources and inputs of youth sport programs are drastically underrepresented in the literature, which may spuriously influence the observed association between sport activities and certain outcomes. Moreover, there has been even less attention to broader community- or societal-level factors that influence the management and operations of youth sport programs. Despite a growing body of conceptual work highlighting the need to understand more macro-level influences, these insights have yet to be consistently integrated in practice. Consequently, many youth sport programs continue to operate under individualist assumptions that idealize the connection between sport and youth development, and detach sport programs from other developmental systems.

These findings are significant considering sport is most likely to contribute to development objectives, such as youth development, when integrated with non-sport programming. Youth interact with a variety of contexts on a daily basis, so sport programs that collaborate with and improve these contexts would be most effective in promoting youth development. Yet very little research has extended beyond the sport setting to examine how fields such as education, public health, and juvenile justice have been integrated into youth sport programs. This disconnect was evident in the integrative review, as two distinct streams of research emerged during the coding process. Research in sport journals contained rich

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information on the sport setting and short-term outcomes of programs, yet less information on the broader context. Conversely, research in non-sport journals typically included measures of the broader context and longer-term development impacts, yet far less information on characteristics of the sport setting or experience. This finding not only highlights the need to build stronger collaborations among youth development scholars, but also indicates a practical need to establish partnerships with other youth serving industries.

The inter-organizational network analysis (Chapter 3) built on these findings by examining how partnerships were utilized by youth sport non-profits to build organizational capacity. The results indicated an extremely low level of cohesiveness between youth sport non-profits, with over half of the organizations reporting no partnerships within this network. The low level of cohesiveness may be attributable to a combination of several trends. First, the landscape in which these organizations operate has become increasingly competitive, as youth sport non-profits now must wrestle with the demands of an increasingly "free-market" social service industry. This may create tensions between youth sport non-profit organizations who compete over similar resources, which drastically limits the potential for collaboration. Second, since most youth sport non-profits have similar organizational profiles, partnerships between them may not be as useful for building resources. Partnerships are typically most successful when they involve heterogeneous organizations who are able to combine dissimilar resources to achieve a net gain for both parties. This potential net gain is less valuable between homogenous organizations, and even those with compatible profiles may have value discrepancies that inhibit partnerships on the basis of resources alone. Third, youth sport non-profits may simply be unaware of other actors in their network. Most organizations are led entirely by volunteers who may not be able to identify prospective

partners in the market or build the necessary trust and understanding to establish effective partnerships.

Interestingly, despite their limited connectivity with each other, youth sport non-profits were connected to a variety of other organizations in the public, private, and non-profit sector. Most of these partnerships were with private businesses, and many were related to unreciprocated financial resources (i.e., sponsorships, donations). Compared to partnerships involving other capacities (i.e., human resource, infrastructural, and strategic), financial partnerships involved a significantly lower frequency of interaction, indicating most collaborations were philanthropic or transactional in nature. The structure of the network also indicated many partnerships were negotiated independently, which created issues of power and dependence that favored resource providers. Due to the lack of closure among youth sport non-profits, resource providers typically occupied structural holes that gave them considerable leverage in negotiations, leading to service inefficiencies for youth sport non-profits. In addition, there was a significant association between organizational capacity and the number of financial and infrastructural partnerships, indicating youth sport non-profits with more resources were able to attract more potential partners. Yet due to their limited connectivity, the resources derived from these partnerships were not disseminated throughout the entire youth sport non-profit network.

These findings indicate that despite the potential utility of inter-organizational partnerships, they are drastically underutilized by youth sport non-profits. Although this study uncovered a large number of philanthropic and transactional partnerships with external organizations, there were few collaborations that involved integrated programs or transformational leadership strategies. Moreover, there was considerable variation between

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youth sport non-profits in terms of the number of partnerships, and this variance was significantly associated with organizational capacity. The introduction of a third-party brokerage organization could help alleviate these issues and significantly improve collaborations between youth sport non-profits. A broker could help increase connectivity, provide network information, and support joint negotiations with external actors. More importantly, a broker would provide a more cost-effective platform to encourage efficient interactions between organizations, which would be especially useful for youth sport non-profits with limited organization capacity. From a youth development perspective, brokerage organizations would also help facilitate interactions with other non-sport agencies, which would help connect sport to other youth industries.

The single case study (Chapter 4) provided an in-depth analysis of the strategies used by one youth sport non-profit to build community capacity in a socio-economically disadvantaged community, and elucidated the challenges associated with this process. The bottom-up managerial approach of the organization was conducive to developing skills and resources among local residents, and also promoted the leadership of those involved with the administration of the organization. The programs and events offered by the organization, coupled with the inter-organizational partnerships that linked them with other non-sport contexts, strengthened social relations within the community and provided important structures for community dialogue and civic participation. By drawing on local resources and reinforcing community ideals through their activities, the organization was also able to establish a strong value system that resonated with participants and their families, and created learning a culture among administrators, coaches, and volunteers.

Yet there were key challenges associated with these strategies that drastically limited the potential influence of the organization. Due to limited organizational capacities, the organization struggled to effectively implement certain programs for youth, and in some cases these limitations prohibited the development of programs altogether. In addition, the multi-faceted disadvantages of the community served by the organization created complex issues related to all phases of the program process. Despite strategic attempts to alleviate these disadvantages, the organization was influenced by various social issues that transcended the scope of their operations. Engagement from parents and the local community was also a challenge that influenced the implementation of certain programs and events. Although the organization intentionally altered schedules and times to accommodate as much community input as possible, the response from local stakeholders was limited, and most parents had more of a transactional or consumerist relationship with the organization. Finally, competitiveness at the organizational and program level was cited as a particularly difficult challenge to overcome. At the organizational level, the rapid growth of youth sport programs in various sectors has increased competition over participants and resources, and made it difficult for the organization to establish operational consistency. Moreover, the growing emphasis on competition in youth sport has reduced interest in uncompetitive sport activities and non-sport enrichment programs, as parents seemed to prioritize specialized training and on-field success over developmental outcomes.

Sport-for-Youth-Development (SFYD)

After years of research and practice, it is now commonly understood that sport initiatives directed towards human-oriented functions, such as youth development, must be intentionally designed and managed to do so (Kidd, 2008). Yet despite these conceptual

advancements, research examining youth development through sport has remained outcome-oriented and focused almost exclusively on the individual. Although social and political contexts, organizational capacities, and program features undoubtedly influence the operation of youth sport programs (Doherty & Cousens, 2013), they are seldom accounted for in empirical research (Coalter, 2010). As a result, despite a large body of literature associating sport with a litany of youth development outcomes, there is currently much less information on how this process unfolds.

These limitations have constrained the potential impact of sport on youth development. At the national level, there is little evidence that the social, mental, and physical health outcomes typically associated with sport participation are improving. In fact, the incidence of school dropout has remained the same since the 1990's (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & KewalRamani, 2011), as has illicit drug use (Banken, 2006), alcohol use (Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2006), and juvenile delinquency (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Youth are now twice as likely to suffer from anxiety compared to 30 years ago (Hagell, 2012), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2013) estimates that as many as one out of every five American children (aged <18) suffers from some form of mental disorder (i.e., behavior or conduct problems, depression) (Perou et al., 2013). Furthermore, recent studies show that more than one-third of children aged 6-19 are obese or overweight (Ogden, Carroll, Kit, & Flegal, 2012), a rate that has remained consistent for over a decade (Ogden, Carroll, Kit, & Flegal, 2014). Most alarmingly, every single one of these outcomes is significantly linked with social, economic, and racial disadvantages that are actually becoming more pronounced (Omi & Winant, 2014; Saez & Zucman, 2014).

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While sport alone is not accountable for these complex issues, the role sport has played in perpetuating these trends must be recognized. Although sport remains one of the most popular activities among youth, recent studies indicate participation is decreasing among children and adolescents. This trend is particularly evident among disadvantaged youth (i.e., minority, low-income, rural), indicating barriers to sport participation are becoming even more restrictive for certain populations. Moreover, the continued professionalization, commercialization, and commodification of youth sport is indicative of a pervasive sport ideology rooted in competition and exploitation rather than key development principles. While sport remains the most popular leisure activity among youth, and one of most influential social, economic, and political industries in the world, its potential utility in promoting youth development remains drastically underdeveloped.

The multi-faceted problems facing youth today require multi-faceted solutions that necessitate inter-disciplinary collaborations in both research and practice. Youth sport programs must be managed in a way that focuses on the process of development as much as the product. To accomplish this, youth sport programs must be understood as an imbedded feature of their broader context, and not detached from social and spatial circumstances (Coalter, 2010; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom, & Skille, 2014). The results of this dissertation have informed a conceptual model of sport-for-youth-development (SFYD) that provides a framework to achieve this objective by leveraging both sport activities and sport organizations.

Activities

As more process-based designs have been utilized to study youth development in the sport context, scholars and practitioners have uncovered a range of particularly useful

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strategies and practices. This has led to the development of various models for promoting

youth development outcomes through sport activities. For example, Hellison's (2003, 2011)

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model has been adopted in a variety of

settings to promote accountability and action in youth. Although the work undergirding the

model predates the positive youth development (PYD) movement, the TPSR represents core

values that are closely aligned with those outlined by PYD scholars (Martinek & Hellison,

2016). Similarly, the Developmental Model of Sport Participation (DMSP) (Côté , 1999;

Côté & Vierimaa, 2014) offers a framework for promoting performance, participation, and

personal development for youth, and places significant emphasis on key proximal processes

of the sport environment. These and other models (i.e., Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin,

2005) draw primarily from foundational PYD frameworks to direct sport towards specific

PYD outcomes. In particular, Lerner and colleagues' (2005) 5 C's model, and the Search

Institute's developmental assets model (Benson, 1997), have provided the conceptual basis

for most sport initiatives (Coakley, 2016).

The components outlined in these models provide a theoretically refined and

conceptually grounded approach to promoting youth development through sport, yet they

should not be uniformly applied in all contexts. Sustainable youth development efforts

require the integration of local norms, beliefs, and values that reflect what "development"

means in a particular setting (Coalter, 2016). Since these qualities vary considerably across

different communities, standardized approaches to sport-based youth development are not

likely to be effective. In fact, the imposition of prescriptive approaches to youth

development, despite best intentions, can actually suppress youth and community

empowerment by inadvertently reproducing hegemonic conditions of power and influence

(Spaaij & Jones, 2013). Thus, while sport administrators should utilize these models to inform their philosophy, they must develop their own unique approach to youth development that is context-specific and responsive to changes in the local environment.

One technique that can help facilitate this process is the use of logic models to develop a coherent program theory that is specific to a given context. As stated by Coalter (2015), "a program theory seeks to identify the components, mechanisms, relationships and sequences of causes and effects which program providers presume lead to desired impacts and outcomes." (p. 20). After synthesizing various conceptual and practice-based models to develop their theory, sport administrators can utilize logic models to structure this information and graphically depict a process of youth development that aligns with local values. Importantly, these theories and their associated logic models should not be based on overly positivist assumptions regarding youth development or sport (Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). If youth are facing adverse circumstances in a particular environment, programs need to strategically account for these conditions in the design of activities (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2011). Moreover, for sport to effectively promote youth development, programs must be integrated with non-sport components that intentionally direct activities towards developmental outcomes (Coakley, 2011). Developing program theories and logic models will help identify and critically examine underlying assumptions, and allow administrators to establish an informed approach to sport-based youth development that fits their unique context (Coalter, 2015).

While summative evaluations of program outcomes are necessary, the configuration of these logic models must also be integrated into ongoing processes of monitoring and assessment. Youth sport programs must be adaptable to changes in their environment, so

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what constitutes an effective program for a particular area may change over time. Furthermore, changes to the composition of an organization, or their available resources, may induce changes to the underlying program theory or process. This requires a dynamic approach to monitoring and evaluation that accommodates both formative and summative forms of assessment. Evaluability assessment's (EA) provides a useful framework to achieve this objective (Jones, 2015). Initially developed by Joseph Wholey (1979), EA was designed to improve the relevancy and applicability of summative research by determining if programs were "evaluable". Although a variety of EA frameworks have been used in fields such as public health (Leviton, Khan, Rog, Dawkins, & Cotton, 2010) and juvenile justice (Poulin, Harris, & Jones, 2000), most models follow three general steps (Jones, 2015). The first step establishes program intent by building a logic model that describes how the program will achieve intended outcomes and impacts (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2004). The second step involves assessing program reality by engaging with staff and stakeholders and performing site visits to determine how the program actually operates (Smith, 1990). Finally, the third step involves reconciling program intent with program reality to determine whether the program is functioning as intended.

If this logic holds, researchers and practitioners jointly develop an evaluation strategy that provides specific and timely information that can be tied back to various program phases (Wholey, 2012). While theoretical and conceptual models of youth development are used to inform this process, the resulting evaluation model is tailored to a specific program in a specific context, and not based on pre-defined models of development (Wholey, 2012). If the EA discovers critical gaps in program logic, or a mismatch between program intent and program reality, researchers are able to provide informed recommendations based on the EA

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that help practitioners strengthen these areas before proceeding to a formal evaluation. This ensures that information derived from summative evaluations can be causally linked to specific program processes and inputs, and improves the utility and interpretability of findings. This iterative process-based approach to monitoring and evaluation is particularly useful for youth sport organizations, since complex policy and management settings often compel sport practitioners to adapt their operations in the face of fluctuating resources and capacities (Jones, 2015). EA accounts for these ongoing programmatic changes in evaluative designs, which helps practitioners identify if their organization has drifted from its original directive (Hawkins, 2014). In addition to assessing how sport activities are influencing youth development outcomes, EA ensures the integrity of program logic and allows managers to monitor critical program factors that help produce positive outcomes for a particular group, in a particular setting, at a particular time.

Organizations

Considering the theoretical influence of individual-context relations on youth development, effective sport-based programs must also ensure they contribute to the surrounding context. Just as sport activities provide settings to promote individual assets (i.e., self-esteem), sport organizations represent institutions that can positively influence contextual assets. However, many programs focus solely on individual development within the sport setting, and operate independently of other community organizations (Haudenhuyse et al., 2014). This was evident in the results of the organizational network analysis, which indicated a low level of cohesion among youth sport non-profits. Even the partnerships linking youth sport non-profits to other community organizations were typically philanthropic or transactional in nature, highlighting limited instances of strategic

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collaboration. This isolation is indicative of self-empowerment approaches to youth development that are characteristic of traditional PYD and CYD sport programs (Haudenhuyse et al., 2014). Under these models, youth sport organizations focus primarily on building skills and competencies in youth that ostensibly lead to positive developmental trajectories and community contributions. However, structural challenges outside the sport context are often overlooked in this process, and the responsibility for change is placed primarily on the shoulders of youth (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2014).

Sustainable youth development cannot occur in this vacuum, and youth sport organizations must intentionally leverage their operations to enrich the various contexts that youth interact with. This involves strong partnerships with other local organizations, particularly those that youth engage with most frequently (i.e., schools, public services, youth agencies). These connections will help establish consensus regarding community-level goals (Chaskin, 2001), and provide access to a wider range of knowledge, expertise, and resources (Misener & Doherty, 2013). In addition, the ongoing communication between organizations will help strengthen norms of trust and reciprocity, and facilitate the co-production of important community services and values (Misener & Doherty, 2012). This is especially important for sport-based youth development programs, since their effectiveness is largely contingent on the quality of their non-sport components (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). The potential benefits of this process were evident in the single case study, as the Westside Youth Center partnered with a youth mentoring agency to provide important enrichment opportunities for youth that would have otherwise been unavailable. Partnering with a broad range of community organizations will not only provide access to services that complement sport-based youth development programs, but also involve sport organizations in discussions

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regarding important local issues. In addition, greater cohesion between youth sport organizations will make exchanges with other fields more effective, increase the collective value proposition offered in partnerships, and facilitate the diffusion of ideas and resources throughout the entire network.

In addition to partnerships, sport organizations must also intentionally leverage their management and operations to promote community capacities. Although youth development is the primary goal of sport activities, sport organizations provide unique opportunities for local stakeholders to acquire knowledge, capital, and expertise through their involvement (Sharpe, 2006). This is especially important for organizations serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities, since enhancing local knowledge and resources is paramount to promoting positive youth-context relations in these areas. As outlined in the single case study, community capacity provides a useful framework to guide this tactic. Community capacity focuses on the social and material building blocks of development efforts, and highlights critical antecedents to successful bottom-up strategies. Rather than delivering important services that are missing in disadvantaged areas, capacity building strategies cultivate and develop local resources to engender more bottom-up development efforts. By ensuring their management and operations contribute to key dimensions of community capacity, sport organizations can contribute to this process (Edwards, 2015).

In particular, sport organizations should strategically align their management and operations with seven key principles of community capacity: 1) skills, knowledge, and resources, 2) social relationships; 3) structures and mechanisms for community dialogue; 4) quality leadership; 5) civic participation; 6) value systems, and 7) a learning culture. Although sport activities can help reinforce these principles among youth, strategic

management at the organizational level provides a much more effective platform. For example, by utilizing a decentralized management approach and prioritizing the recruitment of local coaches and volunteers, the Westside Youth Center strengthened social relations in their community and built "family-like" values among families. Moreover, informal processes for leadership development allowed certain individuals to assume prominent social positions among families within the organization. By connecting with other organizations in the area, these "native" leaders can help extend the reach of the Westside Youth Center and contribute to community coalitions. These strategies build critical capacities that transcend sport settings and have reverberating impacts throughout the community, which ultimately influence other contexts that youth interact with.

However, the potential challenges associated with these strategies must be noted. Organizations constructed around "plus sport" models have yet to gain considerable traction in the U.S. (Coakley, 2016). In fact, the underlying philosophy of this approach deviates from the deeply ingrained logic of most sport leagues and governance structures (Coakley, 2016). As youth sport continues to become increasingly privatized and geared towards elite competition, funding and support for more developmentally focused programs will continue to dwindle. Moreover, as the social status prescribed to sport becomes entrenched in competition and personal success, the perception of noncompetitive sports and "plus-sport" ideals will be inversely affected, and likely detract potential participants. The effects of these trends were evident in the single case study, as the Westside Youth Center experienced dramatic funding reductions that not only destabilized revenue streams, but made it difficult to support programs for their particular demographic. In addition, the growing competitive culture surrounding sport influenced parent and community involvement as well. Despite

their engagement with competitive sport activities offered by the Westside Youth Center, participation in non-competitive sport activities and enrichment programming had slipped considerably, and administrators found it extremely difficult to engage families with the full breadth of programming. Without systemic changes to the policy and institutionalized structures that organize sport in the U.S., these challenges are likely to become more pronounced.

The sport-for-development (SFD) movement represents an opportunity to reverse these trends and establish a more coordinated base from which to support "plus-sport" models. While traditional conceptualizations of sport continue to pervade the U.S., there is evidence of growing public demand for socially responsible sport practices. Concerns related to the growing costs associated with youth sports (Matters, 2015), improper behavior of parents and coaches (Rosenwald, 2015), and overall decline in youth sport participation (Cook, 2015) have shaken the common perception that sport inherently produces positive change. Moreover, as the inflated economic benefits of sport franchises, facilities, and events receive more scrutiny from the general public, taxpayers will continue to demand more comprehensive and accurate depictions of sport's impact. This is not only evident in resistance to the public financing of sport facilities and events, but also in the Obama administration's proposed 2016 budget, which sought to end the issuance of tax-free government bonds for professional sport facilities (Brown, 2015).

Building off SFD principles, the SFYD model represents a comprehensive framework for directing sport towards youth development. As shown in the conceptual model (Figure 4.1), SFYD programs not only promote youth development through their activities, but also build community capacity through their organization and management. By developing a clear

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program theory that integrates both sport and non-sport components, and utilizing logic

models to continuously monitor program processes, administrators can effectively direct

sport activities toward individual youth development outcomes. In addition, by

communicating and collaborating with partners in other youth serving industries, youth sport

organizations can improve their non-sport components and enhance their visibility and reach

within the community. Finally, by intentionally managing and operating organizations to

contribute to community capacities, youth sport programs can cultivate key antecedents to

broader development efforts that will enrich the surrounding context. This reverberating

impact will influence individual-context interactions well beyond the sport setting. The

SFYD model represents a comprehensive approach to sport-based youth development that

intentionally targets individual and contextual dimensions of change. Rather than promoting

one prescriptive approach to sport-based youth development, the SFYD model is intended to

provide a conceptual framework from which practitioners can develop their own unique

program and organizational theory. When operationalized effectively, the SFYD model will

help youth sport administrators build community capacity as a "parallel track" to youth

development (Labonte & Laverack, 2001)

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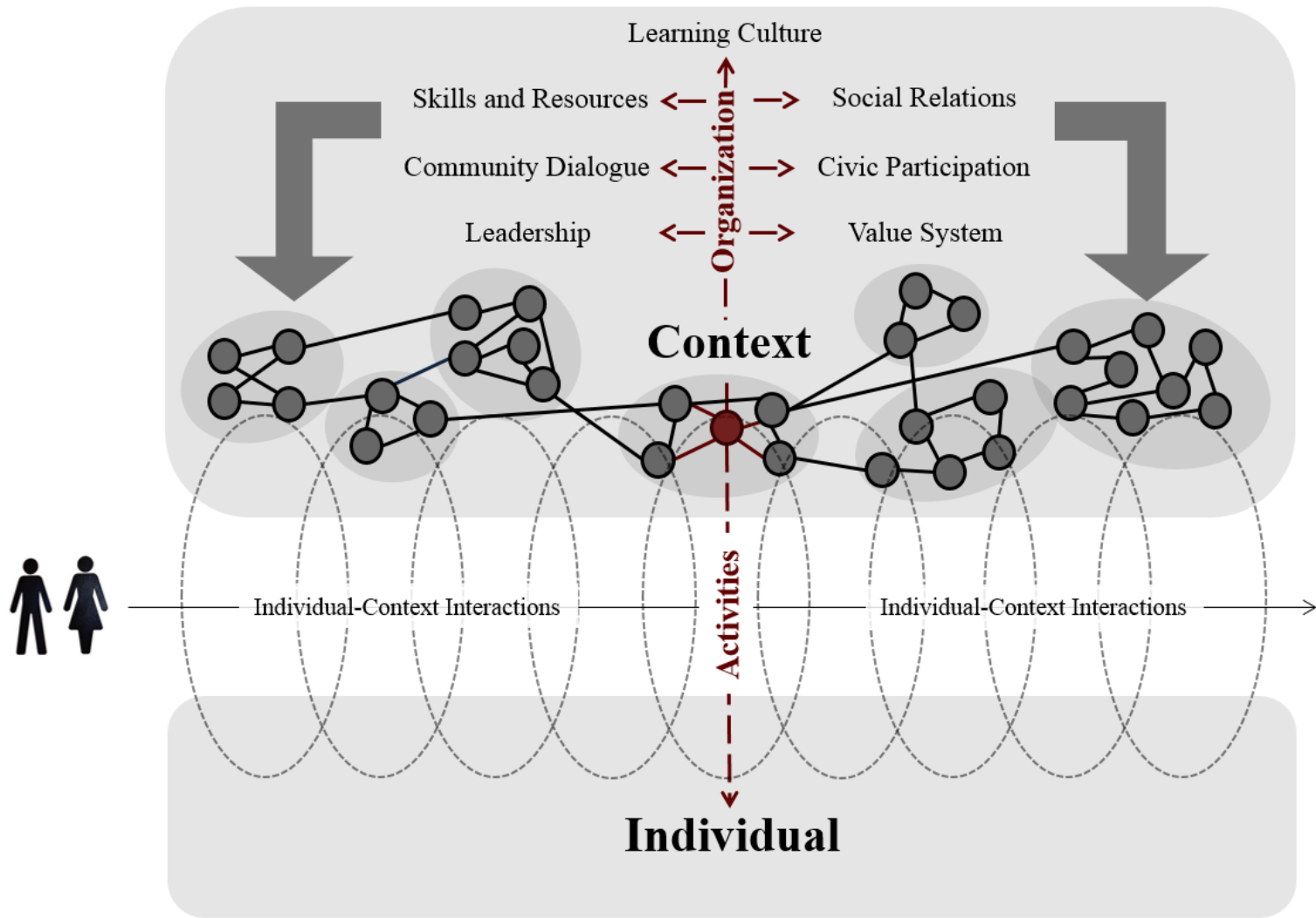
Figure 4.1: Conceptual model of sport-for-youth-development (SFYD)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval

Project Title

Youth development through sport: A capacity building approach

IRB File Number:

Original Approval Date:

09/17/2015

Approval Period

09/17/2015 -

Source of funding (if externally funded, enter PINS or RADAR number of funding proposal via 'Add New Sponsored Project Record' button below):

NCSU Faculty point of contact for this protocol:NB: only this person has authority to submit the protocol

Edwards, Michael B.: Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management

Does any investigator associated with this project have a significant financial interest in, or other conflict of interest involving, the sponsor of this project? (Answer No if this project is not sponsored)

No

Is this conflict managed with a written management plan, and is the management plan being properly followed?

No

Preliminary Review Determination

Category:

Exempt b.2, b.4

In lay language, provide a brief synopsis of the study (limit text to 1500 characters)

A mixed-method research design will be utilized for this study. The first component will utilize social network analysis to study the network of sport-based non-profit organizations (NPO's) in Raleigh, NC, as well as their connections to other community organizations. Attribute data for each sport organization will be collected from an online public access database, and network data will be collected through a survey with at least one member of management from each NPO. Questions will specifically focus on ties based on three relations: 1) communication, 2) knowledge/information transfer, and 3) resource sharing. The purpose of this first component is to understand the structural features of youth sport non-profit networks and how embedded they are within broader community systems.

The second component of this project will be a case study of one non-profit organization selected based on their structural properties within the network. This case study will focus on understanding how one organization contributes to community capacity building. This case study approach will comprise in-depth interviews with key members of management, focus groups with staff/volunteers, and document analysis. These findings will help sport organizations not only promote youth development through their activities, but also purposively build local capacities through their operations and interactions.

Briefly describe in lay language the purpose of the proposed research and why it is important.

Sport is increasingly considered a viable mechanism for promoting positive youth development (PYD). However, many youth sport programs, particularly in North America, focus disproportionately on developing individual outcomes related to PYD within the sport context, and overlook the social and environmental factors that may enhance or constrain youth development. This oversight is particularly problematic for initiatives serving at-risk communities, which are often guided by overly positive thinking that places the responsibility for change on the individual; yet doesn't address systemic contextual issues (i.e. poverty, crime) that inhibit youth development. Unsurprisingly, research regarding the effectiveness of these sport initiatives has produced mixed results.

Recently, the limitations of this reductionist paradigm have been acknowledged by numerous youth sport practitioners and scholars, who recognize that effective development initiatives are contingent upon contextual conditions the

capacities of the communities they serve. This perspective is based on a theoretical concept known as community capacity, which focuses on understanding the critical human and material building blocks of communities. From a capacity building perspective, organizations are most effective when they provide supportive services that promote a common objective while simultaneously enriching local development through their operations and networks. Rather than undertaking capacity-building as a program in its own right, it is typically integrated as a â€œparallel trackâ€• to other programmatic goals. Although promoting PYD through sport has been discussed conceptually and mentioned tangentially in this literature, it has not yet received exclusive attention. Thus, this dissertation will situate PYD within the broader community capacity framework to understand how sport-based programs can promote youth development while simultaneously enhancing the capacities of the local communities they serve. By studying how they contribute to the capacity building process, and elucidating their connections with other sectors of the community, this research will help youth sport organizations maximize their position within communities to promote more comprehensive and sustainable development.

My research qualifies for Exemption. Exempt research is minimal risk and must fit into the categories b.1 - b.6 found here: http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html

1

Is this research being conducted by a student?

Yes

Is this research for a thesis?

No

Is this research for a dissertatiion?

Yes

Is this independent research?

No

Is this research for a course?

No

Do you currently intend to use the data for any purpose beyond the fulfillment of the class assignment?

No

Please explain

If so, please explain

If you anticipate additional NCSU-affiliated investigators (other than those listed on the Title tab) may be involved in this research, list them here indicating their name and department.

Will the investigators be collaborating with researchers at any institutions or organizations outside of NC State?

No

List collaborating institutions and describe the nature of the collaboration

---

What is NCSU's role in this research?

Describe funding flow, if any (e.g. subcontractors)

Is this international research?

No

Identify the countries involved in this research

An IRB equivalent review for local and cultural context may be necessary for this study. Can you recommend consultants with cultural expertise who may be willing to provide this review?

Adults 18 - 64 in the general population?

Yes

NCSU students, faculty or staff?

No

Adults age 65 and older?

No

Minors (under age 18--be sure to include provision for parental consent and/or child assent)?

No

List ages or age range:

Could any of the children be "Wards of the State" (a child whose welfare is the responsibility of the state or other agency, institution, or entity)?

No

Please explain:

Prisoners (any individual involuntarily confined or detained in a penal institution -- can be detained pending arraignment, trial or sentencing)?

No

Pregnant women?

No

Are pregnant women the primary population or focus for this research?

No

Provide rationale for why they are the focus population and describe the risks associated with their involvment as participants

Fetuses?

No

Students?

No

Does the research involve normal educational practices?

No

Is the research being conducted in an accepted educational setting?

No

Are participants in a class taught by the principal investigator?

No

Are the research activities part of the required course requirements?

No

Will course credit be offered to participants?

No

Amount of credit?

No

If class credit will be given, list the amount and alternative ways to earn the same amount of credit.Note: the time it takes to gain the same amount of credit by the alternate means should be commensurate with the study task(s)

How will permission to conduct research be obtained from the school or district?

Will you utilize private academic records?

No

Explain the procedures and document permission for accessing these records.

Employees?

Yes

Describe where (in the workplace, out of the workplace) activities will be conducted.

For the case study, research activities will be conducted in the workplace at the participating organization, at a location of the participants' choosing.

From whom and how will permission to conduct research on the employees be obtained?

Permission to conduct research on the employees will be obtained through an Informed Consent form (see attached).

How will potential participants be approached and informed about the research so as to reduce any perceived coercion to participate?

For the social network analysis, organizations will be identified using Guidestar, an online public access database of U.S. non-profit organizations. Organizations will be invited via email to participate in the study. Organizations who

respond to the initial email will either be sent an online version of the survey or contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time to collect the survey in person. Previously identified organizations who do not respond to the initial email will be sent a second email inviting them to participate in the study. If necessary, telephone calls will be made to previously identified organizations who do not respond to the first two rounds of emails. All participants will have an option to not participate in the study.

One organization will be selected for the case study. Key members of management and administration will be invited via telephone to participate in semi-structured interviews. Staff and volunteers will be invited via email to participate in focus groups. Members of management and administration who respond to the initial telephone call will either be contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time to conduct the semi-structured interview. Previously identified staff and volunteers who do not respond to the initial email will be sent a second email inviting them to participate in a focus group. If necessary, telephone calls will be made to previously identified staff and volunteers who do not respond to the first two rounds of emails. All participants will have an option to not participate in the study.

Is the employer involved in the research activities in any way?

No

Please explain:

Will the employer receive any results from the research activities (i.e. reports, recommendations, etc.)?

Yes

Please explain. How will employee identities be protected in reports provided to employers?

The data will be cleaned of all identifiable indicators. Pseudonyms will be used when presenting data extracts to protect the privacy of employees who contribute to the research.

Impaired decision making capacity/Legally incompetent?

No

How will competency be assessed and from whom will you obtain consent?

Mental/emotional/developmental/psychiatric challenges?

No

Identify the challenge and explain the unique risks for this population.

Describe any special provisions necessary for consent and other study activities (e.g., legal guardian for those unable to consent).

People with physical challenges?

No

Identify the challenge and explain the unique risks for this population.

Describe any special provisions necessary for working with this population (e.g., witnesses for the visually impaired).

Economically or educationally disadvantaged?

No

Racial, ethnic, religious and/or other minorities?

No

Non-English speakers?

No

Describe the procedures used to overcome any language barrier.

Will a translator be used?

No

Provide information about the translator (who they are, relation to the community, why you have selected them for use, confidentiality measures being utilized).

Explain the necessity for the use of the vulnerable populations listed.

The employees of the non-profit organization will be instrumental sources of data for this research, as they understand

the daily operations and activities of the organization. Their insight is required to understand how these organizations operate and connect with the community.

Case Study

After agreeing to participate in the study, participants will select a time and location (in the workplace) for the interview or focus group (depending on their position). The researcher will then review the Informed Consent Form with the participants, and only proceed to the interview/focus group if the participant agrees to the terms outlined in the document through a dated signature.

Informed consent information is included on the landing page for the online survey

No minors will participate

No

No

Yes

Yes

No

For the social network analysis, 41 organizations exist in Raleigh, and surveys will be collected from at least 30 of these organizations.

For the interviews and focus groups, interview data will be collected from 4-6 members of management/administration, and focus group data will be collected from 15-20 volunteers/staff.

For the social network analysis, organizations will be identified using the Guidestar online service, which catalogs every non-profit organization in the United States. Organizations will be selected if they are sport-oriented, serve youth, and located in Raleigh, NC. All organizations meeting these criteria will be contacted to participate in this study.

For the case study, potential participants will be selected based on their role within the organization. Individuals with management/leadership positions will be selected through a mix of purposive, snowball, and opportunistic sampling for interviews. Individuals in general staff or volunteer roles will be similarly selected through a mix of purposive, snowball, and opportunistic sampling. All individuals working or volunteering for the organization are considered potential

participants. See attached documents for scripts that will be used to recruit participants for interviews/focus groups.

For the social network analysis, organizations will be invited to participate via email. Organizations who respond to the initial email will either be sent an online version of the survey or contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time to collect the survey in person. Previously identified organizations who do not respond to the initial email will be sent a second email inviting them to participate in the study. If necessary, telephone calls will be made to previously identified organizations who do not respond to the first two rounds of emails. All organizations will have an option to not participate in the study. The language of this email protocol can be seen in the attached document.

For the case study, key members of management and administration will be invited via telephone to participate in semi-structured interviews, and staff and volunteers will be invited via email to participate in focus groups. Managers and administrators who respond to the initial telephone call will either be contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time to conduct the semi-structured interview. Staff and volunteers who respond to the initial email will either be contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time to conduct the focus groups. Previously identified managers and administrators who do not respond to the initial telephone call will be contacted again via telephone to invite them to participate in a semi-structured interview. Previously identified staff and volunteers who do not respond to the initial email will be contacted again via email to invite them to participate in a focus group. If necessary, telephone calls will be made to previously identified staff and volunteers who do not respond to the first two rounds of emails. All participants will have an option to not participate in the study.

No participants will be excluded from this study, since all identified youth sport non-profit organizations will be contacted in the social network analysis, and all members of the organization will be considered for the case study.

No

Social Network Analysis

I. Subject Recruitment

    a. Initial Recruitment

        i. Youth sport non-profit organizations will be identified using Guidestar and invited via email to participate in this study.

    b. Follow-up Call/Email

        i. Organizations who respond to the initial email will either be sent the online survey link or contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time and place of their choosing to collect the survey in person.

        ii. Previously identified organizations who do not respond to the initial email will be sent a second email inviting them to participate study.

    c. Follow-Up Call (if required)

        i. If required, previously identified organizations who do not respond to the first or second email will be receive a telephone call inviting them to participate in the study.

II. Data Collection

    a. Researchers will either send the survey link to be completed online, or meet organizational representatives at a time and place of their choosing to complete the survey in person.

Case Study

I. Subject Recruitment
    a. Initial Recruitment

        i. Management/Leadership - Management and leadership personnel will be identified and invited via telephone to participate in a semi-structured interview.

        ii. Staff/Volunteers - Staff and volunteers working for the organization will be invited via email to participate in focus groups.

    b. Follow-up Call/Email

        i. Management/leadership personnel who respond to the initial telephone call will either be contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time and place of their choosing to conduct the semi-structured interview. Staff and volunteers who respond to the initial email will either be contacted via phone or email to schedule an appropriate time and place of their choosing to conduct the focus group.

        ii. Previously identified management/leadership personnel who do not respond to the initial telephone call will be contacted again via telephone inviting them to participate in a semi-structured interview. Previously identified staff/volunteers who do not respond to the initial email will be contacted again via email inviting them to participate in a focus group.

    c. Follow-Up Call (if required)

        i. If required, previously identified staff/volunteers who do not respond to the first or second email will be receive a telephone call inviting them to participate in a focus group.

II. Data Collection
    a. Researchers will meet subjects at a location and time of their choosing.

    b. Researchers will first review the Informed Consent Form with subjects, and only proceed to interview if subjects agree to the terms outlined in the document through a dated signature.

    c. Researchers will then proceed to the semi-structured interview or focus group. Questions will be developed from guides focusing on community capacity. Example questions include: "How much of a priority is training and professional development in this organization?" [Interviews]; "How do activities facilitate positive interactions between participants?" [Focus Groups].

III. Data Validation
    a. After the interviews and focus groups, the printed transcripts will be sent to the respondents to review for accuracy.

Describe how, where, when, and by whom data will be collected.

Social network analysis
How: Survey
Where: Online or in person at a location on the workplace
When: October-November 2016
By Whom: Gareth Jones (researcher)

Case Study
How: Interviews & Focus Groups
Where: In-person at a location on the workplace
When: November-December 2015
By Whom: Gareth Jones (researcher)

Secondary Data
How: Guidestar subscription and ReferencesUSA service
Description: This will include publicly available financial documents submitted over the last 5 years by the organizations to maintain their 501c3 status (i.e., Balance Sheet, Income Statement). These tax forms are accompanied by

governance information such as Board of Directors and staff. The organizations are identified by their name in these reports, however I will use pseudonyms in my writing.

When: January-March 2016

By Whom: Gareth Jones (researcher)

Social?	
No	
Psychological?	
No	
Financial/Employability?	
No	
Legal?	
No	
Physical?	
No	
Academic?	
No	
Employment?	
No	
Financial?	
No	
Medical?	
No	
Private Behavior?	
No	
Economic Status?	
No	
Sexual Issues?	
No	
Religious Issues/Beliefs?	
No	

Describe the nature and degree of risk that this study poses. Describe the steps taken to minimize these risks. You CANNOT leave this blank, say 'N/A', none' or 'no risks'. You can say "There is minimal risk associated with this research."

There is minimal risk associated with this research.

If you are accessing private records, describe how you are gaining access to these records, what information you need from the records, and how you will receive/record data.

Various archival documents such as memorandums, agendas, administrative documents, employee logs, and meeting minutes will be collected and analyzed to further determine the operations of the organization. Prior to selecting an organization of for the case study, access to these records will be discussed with key management to ensure they will be made available.

Are you asking participants to disclose information about other individuals (e.g., friends, family, co-workers, etc.)?

Yes

You have indicated that you will ask participants to disclose information about other individuals (see Populations tab). Describe the data you will collect and discuss how you will protect confidentiality and the privacy of these third-party individuals.

If you are collecting information that participants might consider personal or sensitive or that if revealed might cause embarrassment, harm to reputation or could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, what measures will you take to protect participants from those risks?

There is no information that we will collect that might be considered personal or sensitive.

If any of the study procedures could be considered risky in and of themselves (e.g. study procedures involving upsetting questions, stressful situations, physical risks, etc.) what measures will you take to protect participants from those risks?

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts related to the procedures to be used in this study.

Describe the anticipated direct benefits to be gained by each group of participants in this study (compensation is not a direct benefit).

There are no direct benefits for participants in this study.

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If no direct benefit is expected for participants describe any indirect benefits that may be expected, such as to the scientific community or to society.

This research will improve the understanding of youth sport networks and how they contribute to developing important community capacities. This will allow youth sport organizations to maximize their position in communities, and simultaneously promote youth and community development.

Will you be receiving already existing data without identifiers for this study?

No

Will you be receiving already existing data which includes identifiers for this study?

Yes

Describe how the benefits balance out the risks of this study.

Will data be collected anonymously (meaning that you do not ever collect data in a way that would allow you to link any identifying information to a participant)?

No

Will any identifying information be recorded with the data (ex: name, phone number, IDs, e-mails, etc.)?

Yes

Will you use a master list, crosswalk, or other means of linking a participant's identity to the data?

No

Will it be possible to identify a participant indirectly from the data collected (i.e. indirect identification from demographic information)?

No

Audio recordings?

Yes

Video recordings?

No

Images?

No

Digital/electronic files?

Yes

Paper documents (including notes and journals)?

Yes

Physiological Responses?

No

Online survey?

Yes

Restricted Computer?

Yes

Password Protected files?

No

Firewall System?

No

Locked Private Office?

Yes

Locked Filing Cabinets?

Yes

Encrypted Files?

No

Describe all participant identifiers that will be collected (whether they will be retained or not) and explain why they are necessary.

For the social network analysis, the names of organizations will be used as identifiers for organizations to select their relations. This information is needed to understand the specific organizations that are connected to one another, which is a key element of structural analysis. However, this identifying information (specific organization names) will not be retained and will be replaced by pseudonyms in the data (e.g., Organization A, Organization B, etc.).

For the case study, participants will only be classified based on their role as management/leadership personnel or staff/volunteer. No other information will be retained.

If any links between data and participants are to be retained, how will you protect the confidentiality of the data?

No links will be retained.

If you are collecting data electronically, what (if any) identifiable information will be collected by the host site (such as email and/or IP address) and will this information be reported to you?

No identifiable information will be collected by the host site.

Describe any ways that participants themselves or third parties discussed by participants could be identified indirectly from the data collected, and describe measures taken to protect identities.

For the social network analysis, pseudonyms will be used for all organizations to ensure they cannot be identified. Similarly, to ensure participants themselves or third parties cannot be identified from the case study data, pseudonyms will be used to refer to all data extracts.

For all recordings of any type:Describe the type of recording(s) to be made Describe the safe storage of recordings Who will have access to the recordings? Will recordings be used in publications or data reporting? Will images be altered to de-identify?Will recordings be transcribed and by whom?

For the case study, data will be recorded through both hand written notes and audio taping. Notes and tapes will be stored in a secured and locked cabinet in the researchers office. Only the researcher will have access to the recordings. Audio tapes will be transcribed verbatim by the researcher, and any data extracts to be used in publications or data reporting will be de-identified using pseudonyms.

Describe how data will be reported (aggregate, individual responses, use of direct quotes) and describe how identities will be protected in study reports.

Data will be reported in both aggregate and individual terms. For example, aggregate terms will be used to describe themes emerging from keywords and content in multiple responses, and individual responses and direct quotes will be used as examples of such themes. Pseudonyms will be used with all individual responses and quotes to protect the identity of participants.

Will anyone besides the PI or the research team have access to the data (including completed surveys) from the moment they are collected until they are destroyed?

Yes. The student researcher (Gareth Jones) and the 4 PRTM faculty on his dissertation committee (inclusive of the PI) will have access to the data.

Describe any compensation that participants will be eligible to receive, including what the compensation is, any eligibility requirements, and how it will be delivered.

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Explain compensation provisions if the participant withdraws prior to completion of the study.

N/A - There is no compensation for any participants.

Appendix B: IRB Informed Consent for Survey

North Carolina State University
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH
Youth Development Through Sport Study

Michael B. Edwards

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this study is to understand the structural properties of youth sport non-profit inter-organizational networks. The goal of this research is understand how youth sport networks are constructed, and how youth sport organizations are connected with other aspects of the broader community system.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey lasting approximately 15-20 minutes. Questions will focus on relations based on communication, knowledge/information, and resources. Example questions include: "Please list the organizations you communicate with in the blank spaces below"; "Please indicate how long your organization has communicated with these organization.". The survey can be completed in-person, mailed, or online.

Risks
There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts of the procedures to be used in the study.

Benefits
This research will improve the understanding of how youth sport non-profit networks, and how they are connected with other developmental contexts.

Confidentiality
The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored in a secured and locked cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researcher will have access to the recordings. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study.

Compensation
You will not receive anything for participating.

What if you have questions about this study?
If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Michael B. Edwards, at Box 8004, 3033A Biltmore Hall, North Carolina State University, Raleigh 27695, or (919)-513-0060.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/515-4514).

Consent To Participate
"I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled."

Subject's signature_____ Date _____

Investigator's signature_____ Date _____

Appendix D: IRB Informed Consent for Interviews

North Carolina State University
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH

Youth Development Through Sport Study

Michael B. Edwards

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this study is to understand how youth sport non-profit organizations contribute to community capacity development. The goal of this research is to provide information that will help youth sport organizations effectively promote youth and community development.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30-60 minutes. Questions will be developed from an interview guide focusing on community capacity. Example questions include: "How much of a priority is training and professional development in this organization?"; "How does your organization partner, or seek to partner, with other sport-based organizations?" The interview will take place at a time and location of your choosing.

Risks
There are minimal foreseeable risks or discomforts of the procedures to be used in the study.

Benefits
This research will improve the understanding of how youth sport non-profit organizations operate, and how they contribute to both youth and community development.

Confidentiality
The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored in a secured and locked cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researcher will have access to the recordings. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study.
Compensation
You will not receive anything for participating.

What if you have questions about this study?
If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Michael B. Edwards, at Box 8004, 3033A Biltmore Hall, North Carolina State University, Raleigh 27695, or (919)-513-0060.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/515-4514).

Consent To Participate
"I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled."

Subject's signature_____ Date _____
Investigator's signature_____ Date _____

Appendix D: Inter-Organizational Network Survey

Hello,

We'd like to invite you to participate in a very important survey regarding the partnerships, collaborations, and connections of youth sport non-profit organizations. We would like to know more about the relationships your organization has with other organizations. These may include relationships with:

- Other non-profit organizations (i.e., other youth development organizations)
- For-profit organizations (i.e., Subway, Lenovo, law offices, insurance groups)
- Public organizations (i.e., recreation centers in Raleigh Parks and Recreation, schools in WCPSS).
- Private organizations (i.e., churches, private schools)

Specifically, we are interested in how human, financial, capital, and strategic resources are shared and exchanged with these organizations. This information will be used by a team of academic researchers from North Carolina State University to understand more about the inter-organizational networks of youth sport non-profit organizations. Results are intended to help better understand the structure of these networks so that organizations can access, utilize, and leverage resources as efficiently as possible.

Any information supplied is strictly confidential and all responses will be de-identified to ensure the data your organization provides will be completely anonymous.

This survey will ask you a series of questions about the organizations you share or exchange four types of resources with: 1) human, 2) financial, 3) capital, and 4) strategic. For each resource type, you will be asked to indicate the number of organizations you have relationships with, the names of these organizations, and three questions regarding the direct, frequency, and importance of your relations with each organization.

Direction	Frequency	Importance
1. Send	1. Less than once a year	1. Very Unimportant
2. Receive	2. Annually	2. Unimportant
3. Send and Receive	3. Bi-Annually	3. Moderately Important
	4. Monthly	4. Important
	5. Weekly	5. Very Important
	6. Daily	

First, we would like to know about the organizations you share or exchange human resources with.

Approximately how many organizations do you send or receive one or more of the following human resources with:

1. Paid staff or volunteers (i.e., staff exchange, provide staff/volunteers for program or special event)
2. Programs, strategies, or information related to the recruitment or retention of paid staff/volunteers (i.e., recruitment materials, training manuals, employee benefits)

Name of Organization	Resource	Direction	Frequency	Importance

Next, we would like to know about the organizations you share or exchange financial resources with.

Approximately how many organizations do you send or receive one or more of the following financial resources with:

1. Funding (i.e., grants, sponsorships, donations, dues)
2. Fundraising strategies and activities (i.e., fundraising events, grant writing strategies, co-writing grants)
3. Information regarding potential funding sources
   (i.e., requests for proposals [RFPs], potential donors, potential sponsors)

Name of Organization	Resource	Direction	Frequency	Importance

Next, we would like to know about the organizations you share or exchange capital resources with.

Approximately how many organizations do you send or receive one or more of the following capital resources with:

1. Equipment (i.e., clothing, balls, computers, software/hardware)
2. Facilities (i.e., fields, gymnasiums, recreation centers, courts, pools, ice rinks)

Name of Organization	Resource	Direction	Frequency	Importance

Next, we would like to know about the organizations you share or exchange strategic resources with.

Approximately how many organizations do you send or receive one or more of the following strategic resources with:

1. Information regarding the logic or rationale for programs (i.e., curriculum, logic models, goals/objectives)
2. Professional knowledge and expertise
   (i.e., academic/professional insight, market trends, strategic plans, evaluation and assessment)

Name of Organization	Resource	Direction	Frequency	Importance

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Level of Skills and Resources

1. How much of a priority is training and professional development in this organization?
2. In what ways does this organization contribute to the skill building of volunteers and employees?
3. How does this organization ensure facilities and supporting infrastructure are made available for broader community use?
   a. How is availability communicated to the public?
   b. What facilitates or constrains any of these processes?

Nature of Social Relations

1. How does this organization ensure it meets the needs of community stakeholders?
2. How are peers, parents, or community members involved in the planning process?
3. How does your organization engage with the local community?
   a. Events?

Structures, Mechanisms, and Spaces for Community Dialogue

1. How does your organization partner, or seek to partner, with other sport-based organizations?
   a. Other NPO's? Public? Private?
2. How does your organization partner, or seek to partner, with other youth-based organizations?
3. How does your organization partner, or seek to partner, with other organizations?
4. What facilitates or constrains these partnerships or potential partnerships?
5. How does your organization promote community dialogue?
   a. Specifically inter-group dialogue?
6. To what extent is feedback from participants, parents, and the broader community integrated into this organization?

Leadership

1. How does your organization identify and build leadership among employees?
2. How does your organization identify and build leadership among volunteers?
3. How does your organization identify and build leadership among participants?
4. How does your organization use that leadership to other non-sport contexts?

Civic Participation

1. Explain how your organization encourages civic engagement and citizen involvement in community processes?

2. Explain how your organization might help sport be leveraged as a form of community identity?

Value System

1. In what ways does your program promote democratic processes and inclusivity amongst participants, community members, etc.?
2. How do you ensure your organization is culturally relevant?
3. How does your organization integrate cultural values into its operation?
4. How are peers, parents, or community members involved in your organization?

Learning Culture

1. How does feedback from participants influence your organization?
2. How does this input influence the management and operations of the organization?
3. Explain how you ensure this organization is meeting goals/objectives.
   a. Benchmarks for program evaluations?