

The Acculturation of Youth Refugees through Community Sport

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Project Relevance	
Canada resettled the 2 nd highest numbers of refugees worldwide in 2018 (UNHRC, 2019)	Sport can provide a context for newcomers to learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural jargon and slang• How to handle conflict• Acceptable cultural behaviours and gestures 95% of newcomers felt sport was an important part of Canadian culture (ICC, 2014)
42% of resettled refugees were under the age of 18 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018)	
From 2016 – 2018 there was an annual increase of 32 038 individuals who crossed Canada's border seeking asylum (IRB, 2019)	
26% of asylum seekers were youth under the age of 14 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018)	

Project Aims

- 1) Gain a rich understanding of the acculturation experiences of youth community sport participants who are refugee newcomers to Canada and settled in Northeast Ontario
- 2) Acquire a focused understanding of the opportunities offered by, and challenges encountered in, community youth sport by refugee youth from various countries
- 3) Develop practical interventions and build a community of practice for youth, coaches, administrators, and sporting agencies.

Methodology

Interpretivist Paradigm

- Underpinned by ontological relativism and epistemological social constructionism (Papathomas, 2016; Smith, 2016)

Community Based Participatory Action Research

- Prioritization of local knowledge (Elden & Levin, 1991)
- Identification of local community issues and interests (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998)
- Development of practical solutions (Schinke, Smith, & McGannon, 2013)
- Conducted in tandem with community (Kral, 2014)

Narrative Inquiry

- Stories are co-constructed between participants and researchers

Current Progress

- Arts-based conversational interviews (ranging from 15:34 to 82:18, average length: 38 minutes) were conducted with 33 forced immigrant youth
- Following the arts-based interviews, an inductive thematic analysis was performed, whereby transcripts were read multiple times, coded interpretively in the page margins, developed into initial themes, refined into 2nd order themes, and pieced together to form a coherent thematic structure (Braun & Clarke, 2014)
- Two 1st order themes and five 2nd order themes were created and are currently being constructed into composite moving stories to provide contextualized accounts of participants stories

Preliminary Results from Phase 1:

The Unique Journey Faced by Forced Immigrants

Home Country Enculturation: Forced immigrant youth felt it was important to speak about their special connection to their home country; despite having to flee it would always be viewed in a special light. Socialization in their home country was often family oriented, informal, and youth-led. Gender roles were culturally defined by adults.

Journey to Canada: Canada is the second (or third) country of refuge for many youth. The asylum seeking and/or resettlement process were times of tension for youth and their families due to the uncertainty of being accepted.

Immersion into Their Host Community: During their first year in their host community, sponsor and/or community groups play a vital role in facilitating or limiting sport and physical activity opportunities. Those who do become involved in sport in their host community see it as largely beneficial.

Developing a Sense of Belonging through Sport

Learning of Cultural Aspects of and through Sport: Local geography/context and the structured nature of sport are factors that youth may have to adapt to to engage in sport and physical activity. Coaches/leaders in the sport context are key to fostering or hindering inclusion.

Developing of Shared Goals and Interests: Positive experiences, shared goals, social media, youth interaction, and skill level are all factors that may influence integration for forced immigrant youth.

Possible Takeaways:

The Unique Journey Faced by Forced Immigrants

- 1) Allow youth to open up about their journey in their own time and be cognizant of the questions you ask them about how they came to Canada.
- 2) Sport can be helpful for immersion into local communities; however, be open to different forced immigrant stories and suggestions. Some may transition smoothly while others may not and sponsor/community groups may facilitate or impede this transition.

Developing a Sense of Belonging through Sport

- 1) Understand that shared sport goals can help forced immigrant youth learn cultural norms and facilitate group integration
- 2) Encourage youth community interaction to aid forced immigrants in community acculturation

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