



Exploring Social Support, Sport Participation, and Rural Women's Health Using Photovoice

Dr. Beverly D. Leipert, Western University
Robyn Plunkett, PhD(c), Western University
Dr. Lynn Scruby, University of Manitoba
Dr. Donna Meagher-Stewart, Dalhousie University
Dr. Heather Mair, University of Waterloo
Dr. Kevin Wamsley, Western University



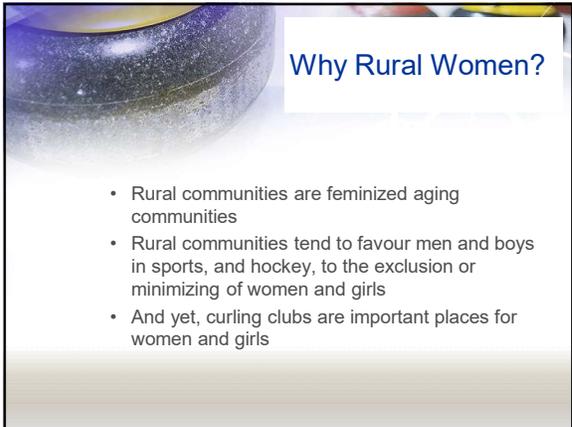
Graduate Research Assistants: Robyn Plunkett (Western University), Melanie Moore (Dalhousie University), Hazel Rona (University of Manitoba), Maggie Miller and Meghan Muldoon (University of Waterloo)

Funded by Sport Canada



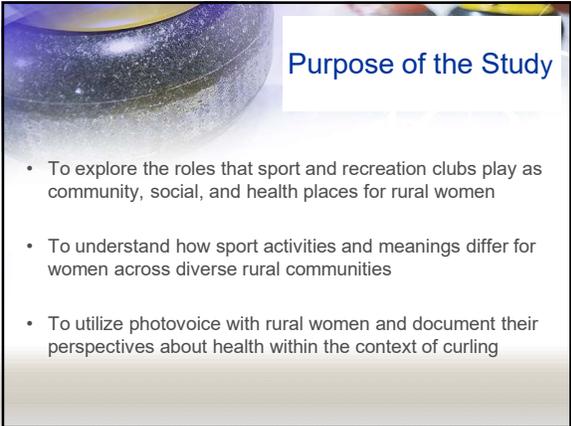
Background

- More than 1 million Canadians curl every year (CCA, 2011)
- Curling is central to many rural communities
 - more than 28% of Canadian curlers live in communities with fewer than 10,000 people (CCA, 2008)
- Few health, recreation, or other resources exist in rural communities
- Rural people are less healthy and have shorter life expectancies compared to urban residents (CIHI, 2006; Romanow, 2004)



Why Rural Women?

- Rural communities are feminized aging communities
- Rural communities tend to favour men and boys in sports, and hockey, to the exclusion or minimizing of women and girls
- And yet, curling clubs are important places for women and girls



Purpose of the Study

- To explore the roles that sport and recreation clubs play as community, social, and health places for rural women
- To understand how sport activities and meanings differ for women across diverse rural communities
- To utilize photovoice with rural women and document their perspectives about health within the context of curling



The Research

- A national 3 year study in Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and the Northwest Territories
- Feminist and social capital theoretical approaches (Seippel, 2006)
- Photovoice - developed for research with rural women; founded on feminist, critical consciousness, and PAR philosophies; facilitates inclusivity and empowerment (Wang & Burris, 1997)
- Rural definition: Populations living outside the commuting zone of urban centres with more than 10,000 inhabitants (du Plessis et al., 2002)

Participants

- 52 women and 3 girls, aged 12 to 75 years, from seven rural communities in Ontario, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories
- Location: 24 lived on a farm/acreage (5 to 30 km from town) and 28 lived in a town (300 to 5000 people)
- Education: Grade 7-8 (2 children, 1 adult), Grade 9-13 (1 adolescent, 19 adults), Post-secondary education (30)
- Curling experience: less than two years (10), 3-5 years (10), 6-10 years (6), 11-15 years (7), 16 or more years (18)

Method

- Camera orientation session, then 2 weeks for picture taking and log book recording, then focus groups or in-depth interviews to discuss photos
- Participants participated in analysis
- Several strategies used for analysis of photo, log book, and focus group data (Leipert & Smith, 2008; Oliffe et al., 2008; Wang & Burris, 1997)
- 955 photos taken; NVIVO used for data management

