Bonding over the Love of Soccer Is No Joke: A Mixed Method Study Exploring Sense of

Community, Resilience, and Cultural Adjustment for Refugee Youth Participants

by

Nina Fader

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

Approved April 2018 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Eric Legg, Chair
Dale Larsen
Barbara Klimek

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2018

ABSTRACT

Resettled refugees face numerous challenges including unsafe living conditions, loss of permanent shelter, adjustment to a new culture, loneliness, and separation from family, friends, and community. Of particular importance is the lack of a feeling of sense of community (SOC) within their new surroundings. SOC is not only worthwhile as an outcome of its own, but may also predict additional positive outcomes such as resilience and cultural adjustment. Literature has shown participation in sport can develop youth positively and build social skills, while studies in other regions of the world have also found a sport team setting to be a place for immigrants to experience SOC. In this study, I use a congruent mixed methods approach to both explore the experience of SOC for youth refugees in a soccer club, and examine the relation of SOC to resilience and cultural adjustment. Using photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews with 11 youth participants, the qualitative portion of the study explored SOC among youth participants. Findings note the presence of SOC as matched to theoretical frameworks both specific to sport, and to a more general theory of SOC. Further data were collected through questionnaires distributed to club members. Results from the quantitative analysis indicate a significant positive relation between SOC and resilience, and SOC and perceived acculturation. This study's contribution is to illustrate how refugee youth in a sport club in the United States experience SOC, and the impact of that SOC. Results suggest practical implications for sport managers who wish to provide positive sport experiences for youth refugees.

DEDICATION

With genuine gratitude, I dedicate this work to Concord Youth Soccer. This organization in Elkhart, Indiana gave me my first love. Soccer was always accessible to me to become an activity that taught me perseverance and loyalty. At CYS I felt a sense of community each and every season I played from 2000-2011. My passion and the drive behind this research is to make sure it is well known that every child should have an opportunity to fall in love with soccer and be embraced by the sport's community the way I was at CYS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge I could not have completed my studies without the support of many people. To my advisor Eric, thank you always leading with a positive comment and being patient with me. To my committee, thank you for sharing knowledge and giving of your time. To the soccer club organization leaders, thank you for accommodating me during the data collection process and for so openly caring about the refugee population. To my former boss Dave Carney, thank you for giving me a path to move to Arizona and for motivating me while I was applying to ASU. To the CIEE Iringa, Tanzania Language + Culture Fall 2014 program, thank you for challenging me outside of my comfort zone and allowing me to have a unique experience. It was on this study abroad trip that I found my inspiration for this research. To my parents Steve and Christine, thank you for constantly providing for me and making it clear I am never limited. To my teachers, starting with Mrs. Rhonda Lehman Williams to Mr. Seth Molnar to Mr. Ryan Bond and all the educators in between, thank you for the guidance and rousing my ambition. To my close mentors and friends from Indiana, thanks for investing in me and making it easy when we catch up after my move. To my cohort, Jada, Marena, Felecia, Celina, Kathy, Natasha, and Taylor, thanks for being good company and sharing resources to navigate graduate school together. To my friends (especially Kim), thank you for tons of encouragement and keeping my life balanced. To all those left out who also tolerated me during this process (especially Sami), thanks for the grace. Endurance and accomplishments in my life are truly a team effort.

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CHAPTER 1

RATIONALE

At the end of 2015, the United Nations designated one out of every 113 people a refugee (UNHCR, 2016). Refugees face numerous challenges including unsafe living conditions, loss of permanent shelter, adjustment to a new culture, loneliness, and separation from family, friends, and community (Bauman, Soerens, & Semir, 2016; Whitley, Coble, & Jewell, 2016; Wike, Stokes, & Simmons, 2016). These issues are not only detrimental to individual refugees, but also impact the communities in which they resettle, and the communities they left behind. Thus, it is important to explore their experiences and mechanisms which can improve their lives in a new place.

Of particular importance is the lack of a feeling of sense of community (SOC) within their new surroundings. SOC is the feeling that one belongs and matters to a group and that through being part of that group, his or her needs are met (McMillan & Chavis. 1986). A lack of SOC poses several risks including an inability to adjust to a new place and a diminished resilience as refugees face the challenges of immigration and resettlement without the support of a community. For example, people who experience a lower SOC are less likely to become engaged in their communities, and more likely to experience loneliness and depression (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Early research suggests mental illness and troublesome behavior can result from a lack of sense of belonging if not addressed (Maslow, 1968). These risks are particularly relevant to refugees because they are already susceptible to challenges due to leaving their community and home (Bauman et al., 2016; Uzabakiriho, 2011). Therefore, it is critical to explore means where refugees can develop connections in their new environments.

Exploring SOC within refugee populations is thus particularly important because attachments may assist with the difficult challenges that a refugee faces. Indeed, previous research links SOC to positive outcomes such as decreased feelings of alienation and negative moods (Roussi, Rapti, & Kiosseoglou, 2006; Pretty, Andrews, & Collett 1994), and increased feelings of self-confidence, emotional connections, and empowerment (Goodwin, Johnston, Gustafson, Elliot, Thurmeier, & Kuttai, 2009; Peterson & Reid, 2003). Further, individuals who feel SOC are more likely to engage in healthy activities and be more civically engaged with their communities (Omoto & Snyder, 2009; Peterson & Reid, 2003; Chavis & Wandersman, 1990). Exploring SOC for a refugee may be particularly worthwhile in understanding their experience, and potentially a mechanism to aid in their transition and adjustment.

One possible benefit of SOC is cultural adjustment. Newcomers to a community with a different culture must determine if they are willing to adapt their behavior, changed via continuous contact, to align with the local culture (Uzabakiriho, 2011; Miller-Keane, 2003; Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov, 2000; Nguyen, Messé, & Stollak, 1999). Cultural adjustment occurs along a spectrum, so movement is dependent on whether emotions towards the community are more positive or negative. Refugees who have been forced to move from their native countries have resettled in nations where citizens are divided on how to receive them. Around the world, some groups in host countries are responding positively to the influx of refugees and some are responding negatively (Nikunen, 2016; Wike et al., 2016; Wehle, 2005). After leaving familiar neighborhoods and their family, refugees experience additional alienation that can be a detrimental factor, possibly leading to increased depression and decreased community

engagement. Cultural adjustment, also called acculturation, may occur as refugees and the larger community interact with one another in first-hand experiences and social interactions.

Literature has shown acculturation can be stressful (Haboush-Deloye, Parker & Billings, 2015; Yako & Biswas, 2013; Renner, Laireiter, & Maier, 2012), but that there are approaches to cope (Uzabakiriho, 2011). If an individual has the support of a group while trying to adjust to a new physical or social environment, then they are better off (Renner et al., 2012). The underlying assumption appears to be that communities do not want to exist in conflict, so some researchers suggest that the goal should be acculturation that emphasizes cultural plurality to have two groups coexisting; not assimilation, where one culture fades away into another (Nguyen et al., 1999). Finding mechanisms to aid in cultural adjustment is generally for the best interest of the hosts and the foreigners.

In addition to aiding in cultural adjustment, SOC may help build resilience. Resilience and acculturation are important for refugees because these positive aptitudes help when settling into a different lifestyle. Resilience is "a class of phenomena characterized by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development" (Masten, 2001, p. 228). Resilience by definition requires adversity and adaptation (Matsen, 2014). Adaptation is learning and gaining behaviors (e.g. new life skills or hobbies such as sports) to cope in a changed environment (Miller-Keane, 2003). SOC may be related to cultural adjustment and resilience because SOC helps people feel connected and safe, both of which are necessary protective factors for growth (Siegel, 2015; Masten, 2014; Caldwell, 2005). Refugee youth are a good target population when examining adaptation to adversity because they tend to be in a transitory phase and more

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flexible than adults. For a refugee to succeed in the face of trials like loss and isolation takes resilience.

Though logic suggests that SOC may be related to cultural adjustment and resilience, it is also possible that there is not a relation between these constructs because there are a variety of factors that impact these outcomes. Some research suggests resilience represents a personal trait that may not be related to the peer interactions of SOC. In contrast, Perkins and Caldwell (2005) and Masten (2014) argue that it is a myth that resiliency is a personal trait and that it depends on the environment as well. While specifically looking at resilience in the context of athletes, Galli & Gonzalez (2015) discuss resilience found within sports, but not within the community. They concluded that resilience is associated with the task of sports and is not dependent on the community (Walseth, 2008). Yet Lerner (2004) argues resilience does not lie within the individual or in the context, but rather in the connection between the two. Further, SOC may not be related to cultural adjustment because the definition of adjustment implies that there is not a shared emotional connection or need, and one is sacrificing to become a part of a community they were once outside of. Given the uncertainty of the relation between SOC and resilience or cultural adjustment, it is important to explore contexts where this relationship may exist.

One activity that may help improve refugee connection and SOC is participation in sports. Existing research demonstrates the potential value of sport for youth development (Webb, 2016; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013; Fraser-Thomas, Cote & Deakin, 2005). Broadly, participation in sport may improve outcomes such as personal attributes like character and perseverance, or external benefits such as socialization and civic morals

(Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013; Poulin & Denault, 2013; Allen, J.T., Drane, Byon, & Mohn, 2010). More precisely, a feeling of SOC can also be an outcome of playing sport (Legg, Wells, Newland, & Tanner, 2017b). This feeling of SOC may be facilitated through coaches and other adults who can help create a safe space for belonging (Draper & Coalter, 2016; Scarf, Moradi, McGaw, Hewitt, Hayhurts, Boyes, & Hunter, 2016; Skuza, 2005; Kember & Leung, 2004; Hoffman et al., 2003). SOC may be facilitated through program design elements such as the creation of social spaces (Legg et al., 2017b) or through personal investment and identification with the program (Legg, Wells & Barile, 2015).

Existing research suggests that participation in sport may also have a positive impact on at-risk youth, such as refugees, by helping them adapt to challenging situations (Perkins & Caldwell, 2005). Sport and leisure activities may aid in the adjustment process because the activities help people find familiarity in a new place (Blecking, 2015; Spaaij, 2014; Allen, J.T, 2010; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009). For instance, existing research supports leisure programs to be used as learning centers of personal and interpersonal supports for those experiencing a new culture (Mauro, 2016; Sabirova & Zinoviev, 2016; Morela, Hatzigeorgiadis, Kouli, Elbe, & Sanchez, 2013). Beyond general outcome studies, academic literature has also looked specifically at place of belonging or bonds formed in team sports due to common activity, the amount of time spent together, and symbolic interaction among minority groups (Spaaij, 2015; Thorpe & Ahmad, 2015; Guest, 2013; Sherry, 2010; Stack & Iwasaki, 2009; Walseth, 2008). Thus, participation in sport has value in meeting needs by connecting to social supports and resources, as well as for the direct benefits of participation.

Despite evidence suggesting sport participation can positively improve the refugee experience, it is also possible that sports participation could have harmful effects on refugee participants. For example, aggression and competition instead of connection may be increased by playing sports (Sabirova & Zinoviev, 2016; Coakley, 2011). Divisions in sport can also perpetuate divisions in society. Individuals who are an ethnic minority may need to overcome many barriers such as language differences, socio-economic status, religion, gender and access (Bauman et al., 2016; Spaaij, 2015; Walseth & Strandbu, 2014; Guest, 2013; Yako & Biswas, 2013). Players wanting to be on a team in the host country may face similar constraints because a team is in essence a mini social-network. In addition, some sociocultural norms or scarcity of sport opportunities make participation forbidden in the newcomer's previous life, so immigrants or refugees who try something new upon arrival where activities are encouraged and available may quit because of cost or the loss of novelty (Stodolska, 2000). Finally, access may be the most difficult barrier to overcome. Programs aiding displaced persons or low-income families are already understaffed and underfunded, which places financial barriers and time constraints on families (NRPA, 2018; Kubic, 2016; Kelly, 2011; Holt, Kingsley, Tink, & Scherer, 2011). Proper equipment is expensive and program fees, even for a school team, can be substantial. Providing means for transportation to and from practices and events is outside of the means of most resettled families. Programs try to provide as much for free to those at risk, but being dependent on insecure funding sources can be a strain to the organization (Kelly, 2011).

Across genders another division is possibly created as opportunities for refugee men and women to engage in sports are often different. For example, studies found males

have an easier time going out into society to try new activities. Morela et al. (2012) studied migrant youth in a Greek city and interviewed 66 boys and 17 girls. This large gap in number of participants reflects the larger population and the inequity of opportunity for girls to use sports as their social center the same way boys can. One possible reason for this is that some cultures prefer women stay and tend to the house, so women are confined to those expectations (Sabirova & Zinoviev, 2016; Walseth & Strandbu, 2014; Kelly, 2011; Skuza, 2005; Stodolska, 2000). In another study, parents of young refugee girls would not let their daughters play sports at all or some would not let them travel with the club team (Walseth & Strandbu, 2014; Walseth, 2008). However, immigrant girls who were allowed to play gained social capital through sports, though capital did not come without adversity. According to Walseth (2008), Pakistani girls experienced socio-economic status and religion perpetuating exclusion from majority players on club teams in Norway. It may be that personal resilience kept them successful in growing skills of the game to be competitive, despite an absence of social allure.

Given the challenges of the refugee experience and the potential of sport participation to address those challenges, it is important to further explore the participation of refugees in sport and how participants perceive the role of sport participation in encouraging/discouraging SOC. Youth sports studies have been conducted in the United States, but those are typically focused on generalizing benefits such as character growth, competence, social skills, and friendships that *any* youth may have as an outcome of sport participation (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). In addition, most of the research on SOC is with college students or adults and excludes adolescents (Warner & Leierer, 2015). Action is justified in the area of SOC for

adolescents because previous adolescent studies are too broad to know how they impact a specific demographic or how benefits relate to other factors not mentioned like resilience or cultural adjustment. In addition, a majority of literature that focuses on refugees, immigrants, or international students within the sports context is based in Europe, Australia, and Canada (e.g. Blecking, 2015; Mauro, 2016; Spaaij, 2014; Walseth & Strandbu, 2014; Stack & Iwasaki, 2008). The prevalence of works available from other nations on the refugee crisis represents an additional gap in the literature, though research on refugees in the United States is expanding slowly.

While some research exists that sport-for-development has impacted communities trying to improve livelihoods in other nations, this thesis extends that research by specifically looking at refugees, not solely minority groups or immigrants, and how refugee sport programs are a possibility to smooth the transition for those trying to integrate in the United States now. Based on the potential of sport to positively impact the lives of youth refugees, and the identified gaps in the existing literature, this research addresses the following questions:

RQ1 – How do refugee participants in a formal sports club experience SOC?

RQ 2– Does the experience of SOC within a formal sports club predict increased cultural adjustment and resilience?

To address these research questions, this thesis will be comprised of two parts. Though each is distinct, both the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study revolve around the central theme of SOC within refugees participating in a youth sports league. Part one uses a qualitative approach to address research question one and explore the

experience of youth participants with a specific focus on SOC. Part two examines the

potential impacts of SOC with a focus on cultural adjustment and resilience.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main task of this literature review is to provide the overall foundations for this

research by providing an overview of the research population, setting, theory, and

examined outcomes. Specifically, this chapter addresses the following topics: the history

of refugees in the global context, sport as an environment where a healthy response to the

challenges of being a refugee may occur, sense of community (SOC), resilience, and

cultural adjustment. The following sections will first give background to the refugee

crisis and will explain the positive and negative perceptions residents and strangers may

have, and the relation of those perceptions to the need for a feeling of community. The

second main point will show how sports can be utilized for interaction and integration

with examples from youth sport frameworks and international sport studies. Part three

will give an overview of theories of belonging and SOC from literature in various fields,

as well as the sports context. The last two sections explain resilience and cultural

adjustment – two outcomes which may result from SOC.

Population: Global Human Crisis

Recalling a time in history when a massive human crisis enveloped the whole

world sets the tone for the current state of affairs. Floods of refugees are not new to the

world. Displaced Persons (DPs) were prevalent after WWII. In 1938, leaders spoke

sympathy for the pleas of Jews needing to flee religious persecution, but the decision was

to take no action (Martin, 2016). The Final Solution was catastrophic and the refugee

crisis after the war was much worse due to the Soviet Union controlling homelands

behind the iron curtain (Kubic, 2016; Martin, 2016). In the United States, President

Truman fought Congress to get a bill passed for visas for DPs but found congressional resistance; it was not until 1950 that the bill passed and by 1953 more than 600,000 people resettled in the United States (Kubic, 2016).

Today the refugee crisis is the largest since WWII. Droves of refugees arrive in dingy boats crossing the "blue borders" of the Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Greece (Papataxiarchis, 2016, p. 5). Volunteers escort individuals or families to refugee camps to receive resources, though, ninety percent of refugees surveyed said they are just passing through (Papataxiarchis, 2016). Non-governmental organizations could not supply sufficient resources in the 1940s and still today resources are stretched thin (Kubic, 2016; Martin, 2016), so the demand of resources to aid refugees then shifts to governments.

Negative media coverage influences public opinion on the degree of humanitarian need and policy. The UN agenda includes persuasion for responsibility sharing among governments so hosting refugees is not a burden to the finances or infrastructure of one nation (Martin, 2016). However, many governments appear uninterested in providing refuge aid unless there is something of political gain. For example Badolato, Italy received praise from other cities in the nation and extra funding from the Italian government when the locals welcomed 300 asylum-seekers from an unexpected shipwreck of over 800 Kurdish people. Empty houses of former residents who emigrated north for industrial jobs generated accommodation means for the asylum-seekers to stay, without strain to the locals who the media portrayed as heroes (Nikunen, 2016). However, Nikunen (2016) conducted a case study for fourteen years in the small town of Badolato, and witnessed that although the media used the word "hospitality" to describe

the city's response, the city took the extra funding and did not attempt to transform inequalities experienced by the Kurds.

Countries around the world have either taken in hundreds of thousands of refugees or have turned people away as a results of anti-refugee public sentiment. Even within countries that have taken in a large number of refugees, public opinion of the country's ability to cope varies (Martin, 2016). In some cases, public opinion labels refugees as potential terrorists (Martin, 2016; Wike et al., 2016). With so many crises happening all at once and in multiple countries, governments and citizens have lacked a unified response to the refugee crisis.

Among the 28 resettlement countries, the United States takes in the highest percentage. The state of Arizona took in about five percent to six percent of the refugees resettling in the United States in the 2000s. This includes refugees from the countries of: Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Bhutan, Burma, Somalia, Cuba, Bosnia, Vietnam, and Iraq (Stern, 2015). Thus, the refugee crisis is pertinent both nationally and locally in Phoenix.

The refugee experience can be extremely demanding for resettled families. For example, an Iraqi family had to wait a year in Turkey before coming to the United States with depleted financial savings (Yako and Biswas, 2012). Resettlement may be the best solution, but it means individuals are in a new environment, usually very different than their home. It is not just local hosts that hold perceptions that may be misconstrued. Iraqi refugees thought of the United States as "heaven" because of television shows and believed their placement would be in a large house with a three car garage (Yako & Biswas, 2012). Instead a family of nine was given a one bedroom apartment and useless

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furniture. This "romantic and unrealistic take" (Schinke, Blodgett, McGannon, Ge, Oghene, & Seanor, 2017, p 279) may affect the emotional well-being of refugees. Further, potential issues include that education is free in Iraq so many Iraqi refugees have college degrees, but without proper documentation to prove their education level, refugees may be forced to work lowly jobs to provide for their family (Yako & Biswas, 2012). In other instances some family members go to work without the proper legal work authorization, and are used in unsafe conditions for minimal benefit because the employer knows the refugee cannot speak up without reprimand (Bauman et al., 2016). Learning English is very important to the refugees and seen as the key to belonging (Yako & Biswas, 2012). It seems in addition to their own internal drives and anticipations to have a better life, refugees feel external pressures.

Refugees have to search for a community that is accepting, but when the majority of people seem unaccepting, it can be hard to feel like one is adjusting appropriately. Bias and prejudice may exist between different groups of people who have not had experiences together, like refugees who are foreigners and newcomers or Westerners who may not have even traveled to Asia, Africa, or the Middle East. The issue is a lack of "geographical imagination," which, "as defined by David Harvey, refers to a process through which the individual is able 'to recognize the role of space and place in his own biography' and to understand the relations between social structures and space" (Nikunen, 2016, p. 164). Geographical imagination is relevant because when the segregation of people based on geographic state boarders has become blurred with the mass migration of people, knowledge of others is going to come from crossing social boundaries in different social spaces than ordinarily thought. Europeans, Americans,

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other hosts, and refugees have something in common; they all have expectations before experiencing the other in reality. These expectations can add to the barriers previously mentioned. The unknown can be approached with hesitation or assumptions. For example, 50% of the local population in eight European nations believed incoming refugees increase the likelihood of terrorism in their country, but curiously less than half of the same sampled population thinks the majority of Muslims support ISIS (Wike et al., 2016). The high assumption of terrorism and the low perception of resettled neighbors being terrorists do not add up, exposing a gap in reasoning about widely accepted perceptions of refugees. Though these perceptions are mainly based in thought, when face to face, many refugees and members from their host country struggle to find a way to be around each other in community, but theories and strategies have been developed to help mitigate this process.

Setting: Sports as a social space

Community youth development programs that function to benefit the adolescent as a whole can include leisure activities. Sport represents one of these leisure activities where positive outcomes, such as resilience may be developed, and transferred to other areas of life (Galli & Gonzalez, 2015). Webb (2016) suggests that PYD in sports is a relevant topic for community development and the life skills learned by youth will empower a community to achieve its goals. Implemented formal youth sport programs provide benefits such as psychosocial development (Petitpas et al., 2005), or simply is a refuge and safe place escape from other tempting, but destructive situations (Fernandez-Gavira et al., 2017; Fuller et al., 2013; Walseth, 2006).

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A sports program can fall into one of three categories: development, intervention and prevention (Petitpas et al., 2005). The difference is the primary goal. The goal of developmental activities is growth upon existing attributes or adding new skills for participants. Intervention programs provide a replacement activity to reduce the negative behaviors a youth is engaging with. Prevention programs are created to reach youth before they experiment with negative behaviors or strive to prevent more unhealthy situations. For example, Right to Play is sport for development organization that works in 18 countries with mobile volunteers to reach children facing adversity to bring them sports and joy in the middle of their difficult living situations. The organization promotes the idea of acceptance and empowerment no matter religious, political or social affiliation. In these programs, sports skills and life skills are taught simultaneously for holistic development (Whitley, Forneris, & Barker, 2014). While not all organizations create sport programs that intentionally address these concepts, participating in sport programs may have positive outcomes, even if not part of the intentional design.

One natural outcome of sport participation is opportunities to make social interactions between strangers easier. Sports do not require a common spoken language as communication happens through the sport (Sabirova & Zinoviev, 2016). Participation in sports is a form of actively negotiating belonging by engaging in a community norm because a local does not naturally include a newcomer so the newcomer has to demonstrate knowledge of a shared value (Mauro, 2016; Spaaij, 2015). For example, participants in a refugee sports program can have fun or try sports to become familiar with mainstream culture. Stodolska (2000) studied leisure participation for immigrants in Canada and uncovered some interesting facts. For instance, 60% of the respondents under

the age of forty picked up a new outdoor activity (Stodolska, 2000). Refugees may get involved too as changes to their family's socioeconomic status, social networks, and the environment alter leisure participation in the new host country, as they did for the sampled Polish immigrants (Stodolska, 2000). Refugees who have the opportunity to be in sport programs can also feel a part of the team to not be alone, regain trust with adults, and learn leadership, respect, and teamwork which all can be transferred to their everyday new experiences (Whitley et al., 2016). Sports can form "we" groups or build bridges (Blecking, 2015; Walseth, 2008). When the cohesion of a team in a cooperative environment is emphasized more than the task, the sport can promote integration (Morela et al., 2012).

Sport impacts both the individual and broader society. For instance, an individual may increase his or her self-esteem by participating in sports that increase self-esteem, then enhances the person's ability to make peer connections, thus building upon the larger community. A community can use sports as a platform for social interaction and collective identity, but the results vary. Existing literature supports sport programs as a possible means to increase refugee acceptance. For example, Somali Australian youth playing for a football club in Melborne navigated the "us vs. them" barriers through the sport (Spaaij; 2015). Broadly, existing research provides examples of ways that both the individual and the larger community can benefit from sport programs.

One way sport may have positive impact on the individual is by facilitating positive youth development (PYD). PYD represents an approach to youth development that focuses on the potential of youth to be contributing, thriving members of society, and not simply problems to be addressed. One of the most popular approaches to PYD is the

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5Cs --- competence, character, caring, confidence, and connection (Fuller, Percy, Bruening, & Cotrufo, 2013; Perkins & Caldwell, 2005; Lerner, 2004). Researchers often use the 5C's in as a lens for studying PYD. Fuller and colleagues (2013) defines each term of the 5 C's for the reader. Competence is having well-rounded skills, "such as the health, physical, social (e.g., communication, conflict resolution, assertiveness, and refusal and resistance skills), and cognitive domains (p. 470)." Confidence is improvement in the vision of oneself. Connection gives youth the ability to relate to their peers, strengthen relationships with family, and to be in community. Character is action upon values like respect and accountability. Caring is compassion and empathy. When all 5 C's are present, Lerner (2004) postulates that a sixth C emerges. Contribution is being equipped to give back to the community and make a difference (Webb, 2016; Fuller et al., 2013). Thus, it is not sport itself that creates social development, but it is the values spread in the context of sport that creates positive outcomes (Morela et al., 2012). While all qualities build a healthy community, connection is the primary focus when studying SOC.

Social motivation may be a primary driver for participation in youth sports. The decision to engage in sports may have less to do with the amount of physical ability and more to do with the opportunity to interact with others (Allen, 2003). That frequent interaction builds social bonds (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Participants find friendships through sports salient to decision making on when and where to play (Poulin & Denault, 2013). For example, boys in three case studies (Australian, French, and German) chose to stay in their swimming clubs for the social dimension and the meaning derived from it (Light, Harvey, & Memmert, 2013). Walseth (2006) discussed refugee girls who did not

want to go play for a team outside of their neighborhood because they did not belong, making the sport unenjoyable. The people one can go play sports with matters to youth. Not just the peers of the youth, but also the adults in the program. In the case of the Buffalo City Soccer School, the coaches and volunteers helped create that open environment for the men by displaying supportive characteristics and investing in the players (Draper & Coalter, 2016). An emphasis on the social component is important because focusing on task cohesion or skill improvement too much will not benefit the interaction of teammates and may actually cause competition (Ryba, Schinke, Stambulova, & Elbe, 2017; Morela et al., 2012). When competition against an opponent and pressure is high, social connections on the team keeps the activity enjoyable (Light, et al., 2013). Competition may cause a rift in connectedness when gone too far, but competition may also be a part of SOC.

Some relationships in sports are not mere acquaintances with jovial interactions, but deep bonds because of similar backgrounds such as ethnic identity, nationalism, and relatable circumstances. Individuals may use sports as a way to stay connected with their ethnic identity, because sports can help maintain culture (Allen et al., 2010). Stack and Iwasaki (2009) show in their study of Afghan immigrants in Canada that meaningful/purposeful leisure among their same group *and* with non-ethnic friends to celebrate the immigrant's native culture is important to overcome stress in a new host country. When multiple separate intimate friend groups intersect with the same common passion, the result is a collective identity. There is power behind everyone in a group doing the same activity; even if that same activity is watching sports (Legg, Rose, Tanner, & Newland, 2017a). A study by Brown and Shipway (2014) demonstrates this.

International students who watched the 2010 FIFA World Cup from England, instead of their home country, created a temporary community gathered around the TV. Those whose country team did not qualify aligned with the England team. The Germans displayed their national pride even more than usual when their team won, as if they had permission to act German again. Even if the individuals are not from the same country, they find people in a similar circumstance. In other studies, very positive responses were given for players who were a part of homogeneously ethnically minority teams where no one was from the same country, but they were all trying to adapt to the host country, therefore had something in common and team cohesion was strong (Morela et al., 2012; Walseth, 2006). To summarize, sports can be an inclusive arena where a common thread helps form relationships.

There are several group distinctions where ethnic minorities, such as refugees, might find themselves incorporating into at any given demographic context. The type may determine the experience and factors aiding or hindering SOC and belonging. Literature indicates that there are two types of sports clubs, homogeneous and heterogeneous. Homogeneous teams are those that have all players as ethnically minority (though coming from different countries) or all ethnically majority. In contrast, heterogeneous teams are those that are the majority ethnicity of the host country with some minority players (e.g., a Pakistani girl playing on a Norwegian team; Walseth, 2008). In the realm of sports or physical activity, many studies look at heterogeneous groups. Us vs them barriers like socioeconomic status or religion occur in heterogeneous teams and can be difficult barriers to overcome, especially for a Muslim woman (Spaaji, 2015; Walseth, 2006). Walseth (2008) found that minority players experienced a feeling

of belonging more in individual sports than in team sports. When participating in teams sports, reciprocity was not always present from teammates. The minority adolescent felt excluded with a clear distinction between the Norwegian players and the immigrant players. In another example, collective identity through sport is important in wartime (Blecking, 2015; Calloway, 2004). Polish migrants went to the mines in Germany for work and under repression they banded together to make football clubs (Blecking, 2015). Membership was not allowed at the German clubs, so the Poles replicated them (homogeneous teams). After the war, the clubs could compete against each other or blend together on a team (heterogeneous) with a new name. Hitler then banned the remaining Polish minority clubs and rounded up the Poles to go to concentration camps by 1938. It was not until the 1970s that a Pole again played on a German club. This study showed that sports clubs can be a place of segregation or assimilation (Blecking, 2015).

To conclude, previous research has found that sports teams give young people friends and comradery within the small community of the team (Blecking, 2015; Poulin & Denault, 2013). This community may then lead to additional benefits. Given the challenges that refugees face, the development thru a feeling of community may be extra important for this population. It is, therefore, worth exploring the context of sports as a means of developing community for youth refugees.

Theory: Definition of Belonging and Sense of Community

A long line of research points towards love and belonging as essential human needs (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Sarason, 1974; Maslow; 1954). Society is made up of people in many different cultural and demographic groups. While diversity can in some environments increase intellect and concept of self (Maestas, Vaquera, & Zehr, 2007),

having so many groups to identify with can leave someone seeking where to best belong. The need to be in a small group is universal because it is an evolutionary response. As external threats increased in the Paleolithic era for hunters and gathers the desire to be with others in order to diffuse risk, share labor, and the burden of stress became a necessity; to transform into a psychophysiological requirement in the human race (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Over time this natural intragroup cooperation lead to small groups utilizing teamwork efficiently, tightening of the circle making some left out due to implicit biases and prejudice (Hanson & Mendius, 2009). Those left out formed their own groups spurring intergroup tensions and competition (Hanson & Mendius, 2009). The search for belonging and love is a human instinct that individuals will always seek to fulfill, yet some groups remain marginalized or choose to disconnect.

Connections can be fostered by utilizing programs and spaces to bring people together. In general, connectedness has decreased and social isolation has recently increased in the United States (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Brashears, 2006; Putnam, 2000). The absence of community participation for the broader society hurts the quality of life for people, but gives potential to managers of niche activities, like sports, to build community (Warner & Dixon, 2011). However, while program leaders chant "sports for all," their success varies in improving lives and the program is actually limited in its impact on exclusion (Kelly, 2011). Impact may seem limited because there are many factors that go into a sports program (Petitpas et al., 2005); it is possible that sense of belonging is just one of the necessary elements in youth programs (Draper & Coalter, 2016). Disagreement about community inclusion via sports in the research leaves space to explore further the role of sense of community (SOC).

SOC represents a feeling where an individual feels like they belong and matter to a group; and that by belonging to that group, they are able to meet their needs. In this study, I focus on the most frequently used theoretical approach (psychological sense of community; PSOC) as developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986; McMillan, 2011) and the more recently developed Sense of Community in Sport Theory (SCST) developed by Warner and colleagues. According to McMillan & Chavis (1986) SOC is defined "as a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together (p. 9)". Broadly the necessary processes of SOC are classified into four elements: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connections (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; McMillan, 2011). Each of these can be defined by describing how an individual interacts with a group.

Membership means there are those who belong and those who do not because of barriers and to become a member one may need a status or capital desirable by a group (McMillan, 2011). Membership is created by the skills or dues invested that make a person valuable to the group for inclusion and emotional safety. Emotional safety is also part of membership as it leads to personal investment in the community, in turn sustaining the group. Across cultures, membership often occurs when community members add value to the community (Wang, Li, Olushola, Chung, Ogura, & Heere, 2012). An example of membership is belonging to a sports team, because participants might pay fees to play, they fill a position on the field, and players invest time hoping for a victory.

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Influence is where both the participant and other members are impacted by social norms and decisions or initiate them. For example, the influence on social norms in sports would occur on a team when the captain sets a good example by respecting the coach, trying their best at practice to influence their teammates, and follow with similar good behaviors. Individuals want to be needed and use their assets to influence events, decisions, and peers. Influencing goes both ways, so it is the group's impact of social norms on the individual and the individual's impact of decisions on the group. Peer groups change the behaviors of others to conform to the established norms. Validation for the individual comes from same emotions and reactions to experiences that are within the group norms.

Fulfillment of needs will occur for an individual in a group that holds similar values and the meeting of physical and psychological needs will reinforce participation. Needs can take many forms including physical, social, or psychological. In communities where SOC exists, the fulfillment of needs is reinforced through status, and success of other members. For participants in youth sports, examples of needs that may be met include supportive adults like coaches, friendship, and good physical health.

Shared emotional connection develops through contact over time and going through significant events with the group. An individual has his or her personal needs based on their own learned values and must find a community that has shared values for the needs to be met. The fulfillment of these needs is the basis of the shared emotional connection, beyond the common interest. Shared emotional connection comes from contact, shared history, closure, investment and spiritual bonds (McMillan, 1986). If a

strong SOC is experienced by a participant in the group, all of these elements would

emerge.

Though research frequently realizes the theory of PSOC, recent literature suggests

that SOC may look different in a sport setting. As an alternative to McMillan and

Chavis, Warner (2011, 2012, & 2013) expanded SOC into seven elements that are

applicable specifically to the sports context (SCST). While SCST can make connections

back to McMillan and Chavis, the components represent distinct constructs. Further, the

seven elements of SCST represent practical and specific elements. According to SCST,

the seven parts of SOC are: common interest, competition, leadership, voluntary action,

administrative decisions, administrative consideration, and social spaces. Group

dynamics, social networking, and friendships result from individuals being brought

together by a common interest (Warner, Dixon, & Chalip, 2012). Loyalty to one's team

and the desire to be a member of a winning team causes competition. There are multiple

versions of competition (Kerwin, Warner, Walker, & Stevens, 2015), but competition

always creates a challenge to excel against both internal and external rivalries (Warner et

al., 2012). Members competitively compare contributions based on their personal

aptitudes and express contributions through leaderships. Voluntary action is always a

personal difference because it is freedom of activities that stand alone without external

pressure or incentive (Warner et al., 2012). But an individual's choice to willingly be

together with others needs to have reinforcements; otherwise the individual would not

choose community. Examples of reinforcements are status, success, and competence.

These can be lived out in leadership opportunities, both informal and formal, to guide and

direct others in the community. Those who have formal power should recognize that just

like uniform behavior, administrative decisions must be uniform to demonstrate that all community members are treated equal (Warner et al., 2012). Administrative consideration is when administrators like coaches intentionally express care and concern for an individual on the team, instead of addressing the group as a whole (Warner et al., 2012). Specifically, needs of adolescents would be better understood if time is taken by adults to listen to the adolescents (Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2013; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). The place to address these needs is within social spaces. That is a common area for group members to interact with one another, like athletes in a locker room facility (Warner et al., 2012). Social spaces can provide comfort to the participants (Warner & Dixon, 2011). A social space is also where meaningful gatherings before or after an interaction/experience/event occur (Kerwin et al., 2015).

The necessary factors in building SOC have been found consistently in multiple studies, but which factors are more important to the individuals experiencing community depends on the context, such as a formal setting like varsity sports as compared to an informal setting like clubs (Warner et al., 2012). Although this thesis is a study of a formally established club (not casually meeting in a park as studied in Guest, 2013), it is considered an informal setting by Warner and colleagues. Thus it is important to specify that differences may appear in administrative decisions, administrative consideration, and social spaces which appear more often for creating SOC within varsity sports. Common interest and voluntary action are stronger factors in club sports because the athletes are choosing to be on that team and are not forced to participate. People join organized groups because they have shared interests, such as sports or the arts, they want to focus on and bond over (Poulin & Denault, 2013). Many of the previous studies on SOC in

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sports are qualitative, but Warner & Leierer (2015) found SOC quantitatively as well. Though PSOC is still the most commonly used approach to studying SOC, the addition of SCST is particularly important to this study given its specific focus on sport communities.

Other scholars have emphasized the importance of support in developing a feeling of belonging. For example, researchers have suggested that a feeling of belonging occurs when an individual is supported and involved in their surroundings, not an outcast, but aligned with others in a space of meaning (Hoffman, Richmond, Marrow, & Salomone, 2003); or when others are empathetic and supportive (Hanson & Mendius, 2009; Siegel, 2015). This social support can be classified in four domains: tangible support, belonging, disclosure, and social intimacy (Hale, Hannum, & Espelage, 2005). In this study, belonging was the only variable that directly predicted physical health. Researchers believe attachment to others is the explanatory factor for people feeling secure and less stressed. Further studies in a school setting found that empathetic faculty, academic support groups, and family support increased the likelihood the individual would continue in their studies, compared to students who tried to tackle courses alone and felt lonely by not being integrated into the school climate (Reiswig, 2016; Maestras et al., 2007; Kember & Leung, 2004; Hoffman et al., 2003). The byproduct of this support would appear likely to lead to success, growth, and potentially increased resilience among refugee youth plugged into school systems as their first exposure to a new country (Reiswig, 2016). Schools and out-of-school groups like sports teams gives an environment of met needs and of influence that they could not find alone (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). In the literature the trend appears that there is a third party aiding in the

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progression and persistence to belonging. Family support, coaches, volunteers, crewman, and professors all played a role in making the participants feel comfortable in programs (Draper & Coalter, 2016; Jacobs, Castañeda, A., & Castañeda, R., 2016;Scarf et al., 2016; Kember & Leung, 2004; Hoffman et al., 2003). The end goal is not to feel a part of the group with the coaches or with the professors, but these individuals help students connect to teammates on the pitch or feel a part of the university, which is the intended support.

This study focuses on belonging relationally as having friends and relationships can help an individual feel welcomed and comfortable in their communities. Though "community" can be based on locality or interest for refugees (Gusfield, 1975), the change in locality to a new host culture may cause differences to arise, therefore communities based on interests may become more crucial. This may be especially important as the idea of community existing based on voluntary association in social groups, and not just a fixed locality (e.g. a neighborhood), is more of a Western thought (Wang et al., 2012). Thus, experiencing SOC through a voluntary association such as a sports league may be a new concept for refugees. For the sake of survival and safety, refugees relocate and are not given a choice on the physical location (Bauman et al., 2016), but they can choose which social groups they engage with in an attempt to find secure attachments. Secure attachments are especially important for those who have experienced trauma, such as a warzone and separation from family, because trauma causes dissociation even from self (Siegel, 2015). Crisis can bring bonding, but for a community to have an emotional connection, a shared history is important (Martin, 2016; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). A host community cannot identify with the crisis a refugee

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experienced. Therefore, in order to experience SOC something refugees need to find another shared history. For instance, one study found that refugee female athletes bonded well in a sports club setting because there were collective aspects and reciprocity, but there were barriers to bridging (Walseth, 2008). Bridging is a step higher than bonding by getting to know people different than yourself. SOC is not an outcome by chance, but the above components actually work together (or their absence hinders) to create SOC in sports (Warner & Dixon, 2011).

Outcomes: Resilience

One possible outcomes of SOC might be resilience. Resiliency is defined as continuing to function despite chronic stress such as a "threat, challenge, or loss" (Schetter & Dolbier, 2011, p. 637). To be resilient is "the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development" (Masten, 2014a, p. 6). Literally, resiliency represents the ability to resume original shape after bending (Strümpfer, 1999). When adversity comes, an individual needs to be resilient. Resilience is especially important for refugees who are forced to flee their native country and resettle in a new community that may not be welcoming. This adversity requires resilience in order to adapt successfully.

Refugees face many challenges in resettlement including negative perceptions of them, a lack of social support, and adjusting to a new environment. These challenges make finding ways to increase resiliency especially important. Youth development programs, such as community sport organizations, represent arenas that apply to all youth - regardless of the challenges they face (Perkins & Caldwell, 2005), and therefore are particularly well-suited as avenues to develop resiliency.

Resiliency is not just a personality trait; it can be built by finding coping mechanisms for stressors. For instance, protective processes like individual well-developed skills, relationships with others, and participation in community systems lead to risk mitigation and positive outcomes like sense of belonging and resilience (Caldwell, 2005). Secure attachments allow integration of the brain for resilience (Siegel, 2015). Neill and Dias (2001) also found that existence of adversity does not increase resilience alone, but when partnered with protective factors like social support, resilience increases for the individual. Resilience as an individual is increased by being present to then be flexible, strong, face challenges, rise above, learn from experiences, and move on with passion and vitality (Siegel, 2015). Consequently, studying a context (e.g. youth sport) as a place where resilience may be developed is relevant to the refugee experience.

Positive youth development (PYD) and resilience are often discussed together, though some researchers suggest that resilience is not a PYD construct. Though both PYD and resilience are positive, PYD is a child embodying assets to thrive, while comparatively resilience is returning to an okay function from extreme conditions. However, others argue that there may be a connection. Perkins and Caldwell (2005) believe that the 5 C's as outlined by Lerner (2004) are the protective factors that build resiliency as a byproduct. Additionally, Webb (2016) believes resilience is an outcome of positive assets like the 5 C's. If youth are expected to grow up to be successful adults, strategies that have been shown to increase resilience in adults like physical activity and physical fitness (Caldwell, 2005; Schetter & Dolbier, 2011) should be accessible to the youth in a regular and structured manner.

Individuals struggle with the feeling of adversity, and will seek out a way to overcome the adversity, rather than give up. Fiske (2004) proposes five motives of adaptation: understanding (i.e. making sense of their environment), controlling (i.e. mastery), self-enhancement (i.e. skill improvement), belonging (i.e. cooperation), and trusting (i.e. seeking help from credible others). The last two are relational because Fiske believes people do better in social contexts than as individuals in isolation. One way individuals feel more resilient is to have a social group, such as a sports team. Being a member of a group is a social recognition status in sports that fulfills a human need (Weiss, 2001). The individual then identifies as an athlete, a teammate, or a friend and their self-awareness of competence and strength is reinforced by others in the group (Weiss, 2001). This reiterates that resiliency is not just a personal trait, but it likely to develop when in a supportive social context (Perkins & Caldwell, 2005)

Scarf and colleagues (2016) had one of the most detailed studies that examined both resilience and feelings of belonging. An Adventure Education Program in New Zealand put students on a 10-day boat voyage in a small living space without technology and challenged to sail the ship without the help of a crew. Both resilience and belonging of participants was assessed one month prior to the trip, one day prior, on the last day, and nine months after the trip. Results indicate that both belonging and resilience continued to increase, even after the program was complete (i.e. at the nine-month mark). This suggests that there may be a positive relation between feelings of belonging and resilience. Further, the study that looked at resilience gained from adventure education programs, and concluded that the program itself did not increase resilience, but rather the common factor of social support did.

Outcomes: Cultural Adjustment

Cultural adjustment, also known as acculturation, is a positive process that occurs in stages as interactions occur between two groups so that each feels at ease. Societal boundaries create the "in vs. out" and the "us vs. them" distinctions. Some social boundaries can change and are permeable, but boundaries of gender, ethnicity, and religion may still be hard to cross (Spaaij, 2015). Acculturation is the process of individuals from different groups sharing values and identities because of first-hand contact (Ryba et al., 2017). This does not mean reading about "the other" from afar and basing conclusions on media perceptions. To make the distinction between the groups, Ryba and colleagues uses the terms: "receiving culture" and the "newcomers." In contrast, assimilation can be individual-absolute assimilation (cognitive and identification) or individual-relational assimilation (interests and interactions), the latter being of most interest when studying SOC (Frogner, 1985).With globalization, an individual should expect to have to assimilate or adjust to other cultures at some point in their lifetime (Deal & Prince, 2007).

Adapting to a new environment and new group of people may be a challenge for refugees. A person will enter an environment where there is "inexplicable phenomena which they seek to interpret on the basis of pre-existing knowledge" (Barron & Dasil, 2010, p. 80). Alahdadi & Ghanizadeh (2017) cite three dimensions of adaptability: 1) the ability to change and adapt when it is necessary, 2) the ability to be flexible and recover quickly from changes, difficulties or constraints, and 3) the ability to be and remain confident and active after changes have occurred. Adapting to another culture is a difficult process, especially when physical features do not allow a person to blend in with

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everyone else. Looking at it from their perspective, an immigrant or refugee faces multiple constituents for acculturation (Skuza, 2005). Relevant to this study are feelings of being diminished by generalizations (negative), finding relief in relationships (positive to help with demands of the stress), and feeling better with increased competencies (also positive to find own worth).

Relocating for a better life does not remove challenges. Low self-esteem from lack of employment and language barriers, anxiety from being overwhelmed, and depression are common for refugees adjusting to a new culture that differs from their own (Yako & Biswas, 2012). Individuals experiencing acculturation are acting in new patterns and can grow weary from the slow process if they do not have the proper supports, similar to protective processes mentioned with resiliency (Perkins & Caldwell, 2005). Unfortunately, stress related to acculturation is often unavoidable in new environments. Even transnational athletes who move for their careers as a voluntary and happy reason face acculturation stress (Ryba et al., 2017). Having jobs or physical necessities met such as food and housing will not aid in acculturation, because those do not instill coping mechanisms, but rather temporarily mask struggles (Renner et al., 2012). Many people who are in a new environment are unable to find a balance in acculturation (Skuza, 2005) and if the lack of balance is prolonged, suicide ideation may be the worst case scenario (Haboush-Deloye, 2015). Instead, youth need social support which can be a buffer for the negative effects of acculturation stress (Renner et al., 2012). A formal example of a social support is mental health professional treatment, which when catered toward acculturative stress was found by Haboush-Deloye (2015) to help Hispanic youth struggling with suicidal attempts. Conversely, on Native American Reservations in Arizona the suicide

rate is high because seeking help to address stress due to their ethnic identity is rare (Haboush-Deloye, 2015). Unfortunately, many refugee families cannot afford these services, so a more natural outlet (e.g. youth sports) is important to mental health.

Acculturation requires socio-cultural adjustment and psychological adaptation (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2009; Miller-Keane, 2003). Social activities that are universal may be one of the best places to share culture and begin dialogue. Just as belonging is a personal and social co-creation (Spaaij, 2015), an individual is not solely susceptible to acculturation, but an active participant in how it happens (Delle et al., 2009), even in an empowering way (Erden, 2017). For example, theater can be a platform to ask challenging questions about the displacement crisis. Testimonies can be shared on the stage. Interviews from refugees give dreadful stories to act out about actions taken for a chance at survival. Characters in the play display the resiliency of the displaced people (Wehle, 2005). Similarly, sports offer a social situation that can be a positive benefit for those integrating. For instance, Frogner (1985) studied ethnic sport clubs as a model of integration for Turks permanently settling in Germany (Frogner, 1985). And in other settings, soccer was an example of an optimal experience in leisure used in the daily lives of immigrants in the acculturation process (Delle et al., 2009).

Acculturation is different than assimilation (Skuza, 2005) as cultural plurality remains part of acculturation (Nguyen et al., 1999). Conversely, assimilation assumes the non-dominant culture absorbs into the dominant. On the other hand, acculturation represents changes made to adapt to a different culture in either direction, both to the immigrant/refugee and/or to the people in the society of settlement (Skuza, 2005). Acculturation assumes that if similarities and differences between individuals are

understood and both foreigners and members of the majority culture can work together, then outcomes will be successful (Deal & Prince, 2007). Involvement in American culture can provide positive outcomes and better links to resources for a better life for refugee youth (Nguyen et al., 1999).

Bennett (2013) created the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, which is a continuum representing where one can be in their interpretation of another's culture. The model consists of six stages and there is potential progression based on continuous contact. The first stage is denial of the difference which usually includes stereotypes or superficial tolerance. During the denial stage, an individual may keep his or her identity by holding onto language, which others might never understand, but instead of being in denial, individuals can share customs that are part of their national identity (Wike et al., 2016). Next is defense of the difference as it is seen as a negative by the person. Third is minimization, meaning a different culture is accepted, but only because the differences are outweighed by the parts that are culturally familiar. Cultural events like festivals help bridge the gap between locals and establish new traditions (Nikunen, 2016; McKibben, 2008). In addition, traditional activities give psychological comfort as something to latch onto in the unfamiliar (Stodolska, 2000). Yet even farther still on the scale, acceptance is reached and the new culture is a respected alternative worldview. The steps can be taken farther. One can adapt their communication skills to reach across the cultural boundary so co-existence is easier. Reality can also be seen through the eyes of others (Barron & Dasli, 2010). Finally, integration is when a person can identify or assimilate into the culture (Bennett, 2013). Every citizen of the receiving country will find themselves somewhere along this continuum in regards to understanding a Syrian, Iraqi, or an

immigrant from any country. However, just because the host community is willing to

accept those of different cultures in one context of shared values, it does not mean they

have the tools to effectively join the culture in another social environment.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This is a convergent parallel mixed methods study that uses both qualitative and

quantitative methods to address the primary purposes of the study (Creswell, 2014). Prior

to the study, I completed the required Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

certification to protect the rights of human participants. Data were collected between

December 2017 and March 2018 at three games and four practices. The following

sections detail the process of both the qualitative and quantitative components.

Qualitative

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how sport clubs can be a vehicle for sense

of belonging among refugee children in the local community. To accomplish this, a

phenomenological qualitative study was implemented to utilize observations and semi-

structured interviews, to uncover feelings of ethnic minority refugees now living in

Phoenix, Arizona. The state of Arizona resettled more than 70,000 refugees in the last

four decades making this a relevant place to study refugees (Cooper, 2016). The primary

question is how do refugee participants in a formal sports club experience sense of

community (SOC)?

Methodology

As a phenomenological qualitative study with a constructivist view, this research

examines multiple individuals who have experienced a shared phenomenon to understand

their emotions and actions (Creswell, 2014). Phenomenological studies reveal the reality

that a group of people are facing and capture shared emotions or reactions. For example,

phenomenology has been used to explore the experiences of residents in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, the lived experiences of nurses providing care to those victims, or the emotions of those who were permanently displaced as a result of the flooding (Biggar Jr., 2015; Creswell, 2014; Frank, 2008). The refugee crisis is a phenomenon many groups of people are exposed to. In my research, all participants experienced displacement from their home country and are now living in Phoenix. Data were collected while observing participants playing sports on a club team and interviewing them about their comparative experiences with the team.

Sampling

The two main eligibility criteria for participation in the study are the refugee status of the participant and that the participant is in high school. West Phoenician FC[1] was an ideal organization to interact with my target population because the organization is comprised of 90% refugees who are active in sports. For my study sample, I interviewed players from the 19 and under team. The U-19 team was selected, being the oldest, to give a more comprehensive account of the club.

The team is an all-boys team. The club used to have an older girls team, but not in recent years. A lack of females signed up for the club is why the club I used does not have a female team for any age level at this time. Of the observed games and practices for the West Phoenician FC, I only observed three girls of any age participating. Consistent with literature, girls do not participate in sports as much as the boys, as refugee females have fewer opportunities to participate in community activities because of the societal structure that expects emphasis to be on family and taking care of the home (Walseth &

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[1] The names of specific people and the club have been changed to pseudonyms for confidentiality

Strandbu, 2014; Walseth, 2008). Part of this may be due to power-based societies

(Iwasaki, 2008) or religion (Walseth & Strandbu, 2014). Though a gap exists in the

literature related to the experience of female refugees in sport programs, this gap could

not be filled with this study.

This was a convenience sample from players available to meet before or after

practices and games, or during evenings of the week days. A few players have a car of

their own to help transport each other to practices and games, which addresses one of the

main barriers of attendance (transportation). The club uses a practice field behind a

Baptist church, whose resources benefit the club. The refugees are from countries such as

Thailand, Burma, Iraq, and over ten other countries; the boys discovered the club through

word of mouth. Many of the adolescent players have been regularly engaged with soccer

for a long period of time. Data were collected at the beginning of the winter season, after

club soccer resumed from a hiatus due to high school soccer season. The team reunited

together as a whole after playing for their individual high schools for three months. The

adolescent members of the football club were asked to participate in my study and it was

completely voluntary.

Data Generation

I am aware that topics may be sensitive or bring up traumatic experiences, but the

risk was minimal. I would not make someone answer all of the questions if they become

uncomfortable or distressed. Records of interviews were numbered, unidentifiable by the

names of the individuals for confidentiality. The organization registrar and I worked

together to obtain consent from the players and parents for participation. The age group I

studied was mostly under 18 years, so the study required parental consent and the child's

assent, which I obtained before proceeding. The consent forms were given to the first few participants to take home and translate to their parents. Utilizing players from numerous countries made formal translation of the form difficult. However, they did not return these forms, so the club registrar had to visit the homes of the boys and approach parents for signatures herself. The families trust her, so I was not a part of this process as an outsider. For assent, I made it clear that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions I will ask; the boys signed the form right before their interview.

In preparing for interviews in the field, I did three informal pilot interviews. Based on this, I realized in the first interview that the flow of my questions was looping back on itself and being repetitive instead of expanding on their experiences within the team or gathering new information regarding the dynamic of the community. I modified statements from the Perceived Belonging in Sports scale by Allen (2006) for questions about relationships among club members. I had followed that order as I wrote questions down and did not revisit them afterwards. In my revision, I moved some questions about how participants relate or feel towards one another in the team, and grouped the questions in the interview guide for better order, or to use only as probes. Then I expanded to questioning about the smaller local team unit and branch out to contextualizing their belonging in the larger organization.

Qualitative studies can use text or image data (Creswell, 2014). In this study, I used images through a photo elicitation technique to assist in gathering in-depth information. Photo-elicitation is a technique where participants select images they deem to be particularly meaningful to them, and those images are then used to open up the interview discussion. As English was not the first language for most of our participants,

directly answering questions could add frustration when participants were trying to convey what they meant. This activity gave participants another way to express their thoughts. Specifically, I followed a process similar to one described by Krueger & Casey (2009) where participants were given pictures and asked to ponder them, then asked to discuss why they assigned certain ones meaning. This incorporated task involved participants by providing possible examples to explain their feelings, rather than the participant needing to generate their own examples on the spot. The visual processes of the brain are evolutionarily older than the verbal parts; therefore memories connected to an image stir deeper conversations than words (Harper, 2002). A picture truly could be worth a thousand words in this instance and reduces misunderstanding by giving more ways to express opinions (Harper, 2002). In contrast, this was not photo-voice where the participants take the pictures to document their lives, though similar work has been used with refugees (Purcell, 2007). My study used pictures taken of the youth by a team assistant. The specific participant may or may not have appeared in the image. The images were not the most recent photos of the club. There were 14 pictures to choose from and the boys participating in the interviews only needed to select three to five as identifying things of meaning may be difficult and requires critical reflection (Purcell, 2007).

I conducted semi-structured interviews with photo-elicitation as the first portion of the interview. Then the line of questioning followed a "grand tour" (Spradley, 1979), asking broadly participant to describe their experience to get a layout of every aspect of the club from the player. Questions were based on previous sense of belonging sports studies found in literature (Spaaij, 2015; Warner, Kerwin & Walker, 2013; Warner et al.,

2012; Allen, 2006). Examples of questions included: What is your favorite part of the club? Describe your teammates to me. Are you able to relate to anyone here? In addition, I added at the beginning a seemingly random question, "what are your favorite sports teams?" This question serve the purpose of being an easy non-pressure question that could help the interviewee open up and feel more relaxed. The goal of the interviews was to create an overview of the role organized sports play in aiding refugees to find SOC in Phoenix.

Procedures

Participants were chosen using a convenience sampling technique for face-to-face semi-structured interviews. I used gatekeepers (the club president and registrar), to access participants. Gatekeepers are individuals who are inside the group and hold access to group members (Creswell, 2014). They have built a relationship with participants over time and told me what time the games and practices were best for me to come observe, distribute forms, and collect data. The registrar helped select the participants based on their ability to comprehend and level of openness. The assistance of the gatekeepers and a Facebook Messenger group chat were utilized to inform and update players on the status of the study.

I observed one game and two practices before interviews began. This helped to build rapport with the club before I asked members to participate. The first three interviews were conducted in the homes of the refugee boys. Scheduling a time to meet with participants was challenging, so seven of the interviews occurred at a long practice. One boy at a time was taken aside to the baseball dugout next to the soccer field to respond. The final interview took place at a local Starbucks. Each interview contained the

photo-elicitation portion and inquired about team relationships (See interview guide

Appendix B). The photos were reshuffled after each interview. Two more practices of the

club including U-19 and three games for the U-14, U-12, and U-11 teams were observed

to conclude qualitative data collection. Examples of descriptive notes taken included:

coach interactions, the tone players use to talk to each other, banter, and body language.

Data Analysis

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcriptions were

stored on a password-protected computer. The transcriptions were coded and then themed

into meaningful phrases to summarize findings with secondary sub-codes (Thornberg &

Charmaz, 2014; Campbell, 2013). Observation notes were matched as well to identify

repeated feelings and details to explain the theme. Theoretical codes (Table 1) were based

on the existing literature on sense of belonging and SOC (Legg et al., 2017b; Legg et al.,

2015; Warner & Dixon, 2012; Maestas et al., 2007; Allen, 2006; Kember & Leung, 2004;

McMillan & Chavis, 1986) and in vivo codes were also found (Table 3). I manually

coded using colored markers to underline themes in the transcriptions through a single

level of coding (Campbell, 2013). I used a codebook to track concepts and themes within

the data (see Table 3). The findings from this study were compared to other perceived

belonging studies and sports-for-development case studies.

Table 1: A priori codes

McMillan & Chavis
• Membership • Influence • Fulfillment of needs • Shared emotional connection

Warner & Dixon
• Competition • Leadership • Administrative decisions • Administrative consideration • Social spaces • Common interest

Reflexivity & Trustworthiness

The importance of this section is to bare potential bias and expose the mindset interpreting the research. As the investigator, I aimed to be reflexive throughout the research process. I am a white female from a middle-class family so I cannot relate much to the participants' experiences as refugees, and there is little way I fit into the research site. Thus, I made additional efforts to build rapport with the participants. In a previous research experience, I faced challenges such as a fear of making the participant feel awkward or appearing to have power that was intimidating or accidently condescending. But in actuality, once in the field interactions had no issues. The questions flowed, terms were clarified, and minute hesitation made us both comfortable. This previous experience helped me be able to self-disclose myself to participants easier and grow in my confidence as a researcher, as I learned about new cultures. I sought the same for this study.

I have traveled often, so I have experienced other cultures. I spent four months abroad in Tanzania and at times felt alienated. Playing soccer and touch rugby with the local people each week helped my adjustment process. I love sports and grew up playing them, so joining in local games gave me a familiar feeling in an unfamiliar place. Sports in my childhood taught me teamwork, gave me confidence, and were my escape in tough times. My personal experience in sports can help me find a balance to succeed in this

research setting; however I was aware not to have my positive outlook of sports influence the data. These memories made me passionate about the topic and hopeful of positive conclusions.

To increase trustworthiness, I used member checking, which asks the group if what was perceived and interpreted is correct, and it allows for accuracy of interview statements (Creswell, 2014). In this case I used the leaders of the program. In addition, I also clarified the bias in an honest reflection of my interpretation and used a critical friend (Elliot, 1985) to act as a partner to give advice and to challenge my conclusions.

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

Introduction

The primary question is does the experience of SOC within a formal sports club predict increased cultural adjustment and resilience? This portion of the study comes as a response to triangulate and further explore the data gathered with interviews. The quantitative data was collected at the same time as the qualitative data, making this study convergent parallel. In the qualitative piece of the study, I explored how SOC is felt by refugee youth playing on a homogeneous soccer team, and the purpose of the quantitative part was to assess the hypotheses that the feeling of SOC increases cultural adjustment and resilience. A survey of youth in the formal soccer club tested the relationship between SOC and resilience, and SOC and cultural adjustment. Results will inform the benefits of sports to aid with personal transition and success off of the soccer field.

Sampling

The approximate available population was 90 youth participants, though this number has fluctuated considerably in recent years; ninety percent are refugees. The main

eligibility criterion is refugee status of the participant. West Phoenician FC is the organization ideal to interact with my study population, because the organization is comprised of refugees who are active in sports. The players are 6-19 years old. The youth players are picked up for practice in a minivan on the west side of Phoenix, AZ where more refugees are resettled and resources are available. The club uses a practice field behind a Baptist church, and receives a team dinner once a month from an affiliated small group. The refugees are from countries like Thailand, Burma, Iraq, and over ten other countries, and they heard about the club through word of mouth. Michael is the director of the West Phoenician FC at 77-years-old and has paid most of the operations cost. The club's jerseys and soccer balls are donations from other local clubs. Michael has many stories to share about all the children, as he is very connected to their lives. The sample is convenience based on who was picked up for practices and games on the data collection dates. This was the main limitation affecting the sample size. Participation in the study was voluntary for the youth, and did not determine their participation in the club.

Procedures

Prior to commencement of the study, permission was obtained from the leadership of the West Phoenician FC. The gate keepers for this part of the study were coaches and the church youth leader. IRB approval was then obtained prior to the collection of any data. Initially, the youth were to return a form for active parental consent; however, after difficulties in obtaining active parental consent, the IRB was modified (and approved) to only require passive consent. At this point, letters were mailed to parents of all of the active roster refugee youth to the addresses on file with the club registrar. No one opted-out. The U-19 team was surveyed on site after their practice. The other teams participated

at the March team dinner. After the kids ate, assent forms were signed. The participants

brought their assent form to two quiet rooms inside the recreation center, and traded it for

a pencil and questionnaire to complete. The surveys were anonymous. Participants were

told to give each other space and not read over shoulders because to address

confidentiality and privacy. I administered the survey in paper form and volunteers from

the church helped read aloud the questionnaire or answer questions of meaning that

participants had. While it was estimated the participants would only take five to ten

minutes to complete, the majority took fifteen to twenty minutes. The reading

comprehension of the items was high, even for youth who have English as a first

language. The bulk of the quantitative data were collected that night after dinner, but to

try and increase the number of completed surveys, different teams were surveyed on two

other game days. Players were approached on the sideline after the game to catch who

had not yet participated. The goal was to gather a representative sample of the club to

examine how SOC is related to both resilience and cultural adjustment.

Measures

A brief questionnaire using five scales was designed to meet the specific purpose

of this part of the study. Sense of community was the independent variable examined

both in the broader refugee community and narrowly to the soccer team. The two

dependent variables for analysis were resilience and cultural adjustment. Cultural

adjustment was assessed through three subscales - separation, integration and

marginalization. In addition, a separate scale assessed perceived adjustment. In addition,

demographic information including nationality, length of time in the United States, and

time living in Phoenix was collected. Following is a more detailed explanation of each of

the variables of interest. Gender was not relevant because the number of girls in the club is so few to be representative. The questionnaire was pilot tested by a friend before administered to the participants.

Sense of community. I first used the Sense of Community of Adolescents scale from Abdelkader & Bouslama (2014). The SOC scale uses 12 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale to measure participants' feelings on how well the statements represent a specific community (e.g. the broader Phoenix refugee group). Examples of statements include "I can have what I need in this group", "I have the impression I am connected to the group," and "I feel safe in this group." Responses ranged from 1 (Not at All) to 5 (A lot). Based on these 12 items, from each participant a mean summary score (range = 2.67 – 5.00; *M* = 3.96; *SD* = .72) was created. The summary score was found to be normally distributed (skewness = -.06; kurtosis = -1.31) and this measure was found to have very high reliability (α = .87).

Perceived Belonging in Sports. Then the questionnaire narrowed the community to the sports setting with the use of the Perceived Belonging in Sport Scale by Allen (2006). The summary score was calculated by taking an average of Likert-type responses (1-5, strongly disagree to strongly agree) to 11 statements regarding players' level of identification with the team (e.g., "I feel like a part of the team" and "I can really be myself on the team"). Four of these items were reverse coded (e.g., "I wish I were on a different team"). An overall mean score was calculated from the 11 items (range = 2.82 – 5.00; *M* = 3.95; *SD* = .59). The summary score was found to be normally distributed (skewness = -.288 kurtosis = -.713) and this measure was found to have acceptable reliability (α = .73).

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Resilience. The twenty-five (25) item Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale on a 5-point Likert-type scale was used to assess how the participants personally view and address adversity. Examples of statements include "Can deal with whatever comes", "Can handle unpleasant feelings," and "Sometimes fate or God can help." Responses ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The CD-RISC-25 has been widely translated into multiple languages and different languages could have been obtained to lower the chance of language confusion for participants, but to keep uniformity the English version was used for everyone. Despite CD-RISC-10 showing to be a better fit measure in Madwell & Pone-Garcia (2016), CD-RISC-25 was used; as I preferred all the items. Based on these 25 items, a mean summary score was created from each participant (range = 2.48 – 5.00; M = 3.94; SD = .68). The summary score was found to be normally distributed (skewness = -.322; kurtosis = -.823) and this measure was found to have acceptable reliability (α = .71).

Acculturation Stages. One of the ways to measure cultural adjustment was the Acculturation Stages scale from Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov (2000). The purpose of this scale was to detect the phase of acculturation the participant believed they are at; based on preferences between their native culture and American culture in different aspects such as holidays, language, mentality, peers, and behavior. The scale was lengthier with 17 items of heavily worded phrasing compared to the other scales. The three subscales were separation (e.g., I wish to retain my native country mentality rather than adopting an American one), integration (e.g., I would like to celebrate American holidays as well as my native country holidays), and marginalization (e.g., my native language is not fluent anymore, and I still cannot express myself properly in English). Responses ranged from 1

(Totally disagree) to 5 (Totally agree). A mean score was calculated for each subscale (range = separation 1.00 – 4.86, integration 1.00 – 5.00, marginalization 1.00 – 5.00; M = separation 3.29, integration 3.00, marginalization 2.34; SD = separation .89, integration .78, marginalization 1.05). The summary score was found to be normally distributed (skewness = separation -.470, integration .134, marginalization .574; kurtosis = separation .130, integration 1.058, marginalization -.257). Integration was not found as reliable (α = .59) and thus was dropped from analysis, but separation was found to have an acceptable reliability (α = .78) and marginalization was found to have a very high reliability (α = .83)

Perceived Adjustment. Another way to measure cultural adjustment used in this study was the Perceived Cross- Cultural Adjustment scale also from Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov (2000). The last scale in the questionnaire uses 19 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale to measure participants' feelings on how accurately the statements describe them adjusting well to their lives in the United States. Examples of statements include "I feel at home in America", "My American teachers regard me as a good student," and "I have several American good friends." Two of the items in the Perceived Adjustment scale were reverse coded (e.g., I had many confrontations with Americans). Responses ranged from 1 (do not agree at all) to 5 (totally agree). Based on these 19 items, from each participant a mean summary score (range = 2.56 – 4.78; M = 3.90; SD = .61) was created . The summary score was found to be normally distributed (skewness = -.611; kurtosis = -.611) and this measure was found to have very high reliability (α = .86).

Data Analysis

      Responses on paper surveys were input manually into SPSS software (v 22) that was used to compute data. Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that SOC mean would be positively related to the amount of resilience an individual had and to cultural adjustment in America. Thus, a regression analysis was used (chapter five) to show the relationship between the variables; how much variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The qualitative analysis is divided into three sections. First I display from the interviews the photo elicitation activity. Then I explain the coding of the semi-structured interviews. In the third section, I provide four narratives based on the interview and observation data. Eleven of the 16 active members of the U-19 team were interviewed. On average the interviews lasted 12 minutes. Many of the exploratory questions resulted repetitively in very similar answers, so saturation was reached when there was no new information revealing additional themes (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). The process of interviewing concluded when data saturation was reached.

With photo-elicitation, fourteen photos were chosen to represent different components of a soccer club. As all but one photo was chosen at least once, this suggests that the photos represented a range of important experiences. This activity appeared to be successful as participants explained the meaning behind the photo, rather than just the details of the scene captured. Displayed below are the photos that were chosen most often. Table 2 shows the frequency each photo was chosen and Appendix A contains all of the photos. The higher frequency means these photos elicited the most meaning for players in the club. The boys described how soccer brings people together; and when they work together and support each other, they can have success.

Table 2: Photo-elicitation choice tally

Picture #1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14
Chosen: 1	7	8	1	8	6	2	1	0	1	1	2	1	3

2. Players watch while sitting out of the game   3. Players pray before the game

5. Players shake hands with opponents after the game

6. When the U-19 team won the Presidents Cup

Based on my analysis, I identified a total of 10 themes. Four themes (membership, influence, fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection) correspond to the theory of SOC as outlined by McMillan & Chavis (1986). Three themes (competition, common interest, and social spaces) link to Warner & Dixon (2012). Additionally, I note three in vivo themes (fun, church and gratitude) to identify other aspects dominant in the community that do not fit into previous theoretical models. These themes including sub-codes are categorized in Table 3 below and the table provides definitions based on the responses of the participants. The definitions give some context as to what the codes mean from this particular study.

Table 3: Coding Interviews

Codes:	Definitions:
McMillan & Chavis **Membership**	
• Respect	Treating teammates and coaches well
• Trust	Able to be open and not hide. Also rely on each other
• Belonging	Fit in/like those in the group and accepted
• Family / like siblings***	Members describe all ages bonded as close as family
• Together***	Individuals coming together as one because of the sport
Influence	
• Loyalty	Continue in the same club. Started young in it. Owe it to the leaders
• Sportsmanship	Win or lose, as a team behave kindly toward opponent
• Working hard***	All give effort and do not give up to win championships
• Next level/tryouts	Take opportunities to improve skills to advance in leagues
Fulfillment of Needs	
• Support***	Coaches and players encourage being a good person and having each other's back
• Help	Help to adjust, learn English, get to and from games and practices
• Friends	Participants prefer playing with people they

• Low income/poor	knew before joining the club Families of players have little and work constantly to provide
• Not pay to play	The organization leader covers the registration fee for the team
• No stress	Soccer is an escape where the players do not have to worry
Shared Emotional Connection • Countries/backgrounds*** • Refugee Experience • Soccer	Some from the same country, while various counties are represented Families went through camps and came to America for safer and better conditions The love of the "beautiful" game
Warner & Dixon **Competition**	Players like to play strong to win when they can
Common interest • See each other/hang out*** • • Watching sports	Scrimmages in the park, the movies, out to eat, sporting events, sleepovers, and church are all areas players hang out The participants follow professional soccer teams, mostly La Liga, and casually watch the National Basketball Association
Social spaces • Quiet and isolation at school • Comfortable at the practice field	Instead of being social at school, the participants keep to themselves Players can be themselves
Other **Fun** • Laughing • Silly • Jokes***	Being on the club is enjoyable Laughter is a sound constantly heard on the team Players goof around and do not take the game too seriously Players make jokes towards each other often
Church* • God • Pray	Attending services for the Christian religion A higher power the participants have come to believe in Asking a higher power for safety and a good game
Gratitude	Is the acknowledgement of a broader community from which one feels fulfillment and happiness*

***Codes that appeared most frequently among multiple interviews

*How to relate this to SOC was found in Emmons, R. A., & Shelton, C. M. (2002). Gratitude and the science of positive psychology. *Handbook of positive psychology*, *18*, 459-471.

I provide four narratives based on these themes. While combined the vignettes exhibit each of the 10 identified themes, they do not follow a particular structure as related to the themes. Rather, I sought to create vignettes that more authentically expressed the experience of the participants. I used the vignette technique (Schinke et al., 2017; Blodgett et al., 2011) instead of direct quotes to give a single common narrative or compiled overview of how a participant experienced SOC. From all the codes, I creatively weaved narratives for a shared account of the 11 participants' experiences, giving a voice to one athlete (Schinke et al, 2017). The vignette focuses on SOC and encompasses positive and negative views. While each individual may not have expressed some of these details in their interview, the story is written about all that one could hypothetically experience if they joined the team. The author's interpretation is implied. This is a composite vignette because it uses unified experience both from what was said in interviews and what was observed by me in the team setting (Blodgett et al., 2011). This story is written in first person and with slight grammatical errors left intentionally to enhance the realness of a refugee male youth soccer player that these findings represent.

Narrative 1:

I arrived here in America after my family fled war and conflict in our home country. My family came here for safety, but also hoping to give us a better opportunity. I attend school and do my best, but I tend to stay quiet and keep to myself. The American kids seem selfish compared to me, so I do not engage. A few people from the same country as me attend my school and live in my neighborhood. I became friends with them.

I then, by word of mouth, heard that my friends played for a soccer club. When I was young I joined the West Phoenician FC and have continued to play with them.

My teammates are always there for me, well sometimes they are not there, like when they do not show up to practice I mean. That is one frustration about the team. I cannot be too hard on them though, because when I arrive to practice, I often take my time exiting the vehicle from being picked up and slowly put on my gear. Many of my peers also straggle in and are not dressed to play, based on serious American standards. The field is barely lit in the evenings, the only light coming from the flood lights the club installed. There are just a few balls to share among all the members so sometimes we just chase each other 1-on-1 to warm up. Then I choose to be social and do my own thing with a friend until the coach has to raise his voice to get our attention for an organized drill. I do not always practice with just my team, but a mix of younger players too. All ages share the space and time together. Even though we are different teams, we are one club.

I do feel respect for my coach and listen to him. He is very vocal and encouraging. Even when my coach is unable to be present at our games, we know he wants us to do well, so we keep each other accountable to improve ourselves. Honestly, I do not always respect the referees. I walk away from them when they are being difficult, because they don't understand what all it took for me to be here today. I respect the club leaders too. They are like my role models, so I want to be nice to them.

This team is like my family. I call the guys my brothers and I trust them. I can be completely myself, chill and weird. I do not have to hide any part of me. I feel comfortable at practice. I know the second I get here that I am accepted. I fit in because I

like soccer like they do, I can make jokes like they do, and I am a refugee like them.

Those three things make us come together. I have a different playing style than my

brothers and I might come from a different country than some of them, but we

communicate well. We win and lose together.

Narrative 2:

I work very hard on the soccer field. I want to be an example to my teammates.

Working hard usually pays off. We can be serious and focus, but mostly we know that

soccer is just a game. A game I can be myself while playing and find escape from the

other stresses in my life. Although I will take a win if I can. The coaches may treat me

and my teammates to a meal after a game or good practice. I have won a championship

with this team and that feeling of winning after all the hard work made me happy. I take

pride in the trophies and medals I have, showing I am competitive. I take opportunities to

see if I can play at the next level. I have been to a couple tryouts for lower level

professional teams. I hope to one day be good enough.

In the meantime, I continue to display good sportsmanship in the league I do play

for. I am a good sport to my teammates. I sit and watch my team when I am on the bench

instead of wandering off like others. I am also a good sport to my opponent. I think it is

important that win or lose we always shake hands with the other team. It is a gesture that

shows we are all just people who want to play. One of us won and one of us lost is the

biggest difference. There are other differences a spectator would notice. Our side of the

sideline is awfully quiet with no spectators compared to the opposing team. It might look

sad, but I don't even think I notice anymore. Sometimes the other team has to provide the

balls when we cannot. At a game, all that we have matching is our shirts that are not

even ours personally, but are reused for all the teams in our club. Regardless, we are the closest team and the best team because we have the most fun with no pressure. I am loyal to the leaders of the club for all they have done for me. Like I said, I am a good player, so even though I have been offered to play for another club, I will not trade.

I could not leave my friends anyways. We see each other ALL THE TIME! When my friends and I see each other, everything revolves around sports. We practice, go to games, scrimmage in the park, attend college and professional games when the coaches take us, passionately follow FC Barcelona or other teams, and play sports-themed video games. On the weekends I like to go stay the night at a friend's house. Sometime we will go catch a movie or go out to dinner. I am glad we have common interests.

Narrative 3:

Because my parents are poor and have to work to provide for us, they are unable to take me to games or practices and paying the registration fee to play is a burden. Thankfully the club leaders and the coaches support us by paying the fee and giving us rides. The leader Michael put his life savings into this club and I am very thankful to him. Because of him I can show up and play with no stress. Or if I have spare time, he will help me get a referee job to make some extra cash to contribute to my family's earnings.

Adjusting to life here, I needed more than just money. I needed lots of help. I had to learn English. I struggled in school at first, so the club leader tutored me. More than just book smarts, I needed direction and to know what was the best path to follow. The coaches and my peers tell me how to be a good person and to stay out of trouble. The small group leaders that feed us a meal at church say I am strong, brave, and intelligent

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to build me up. It is clear I am safe and cared for by others. Without this club I would feel

like I have nothing.

Narrative 4:

Sunday mornings we attend church with other members of the club. My family did

not expose me to Christianity and I hope they do not become insulted with my new found

faith. I greatly enjoy when the church makes dinner for us once a month. It is a good

meal and more time to spend talking to my friends. The leaders read us a devotional. I

see how much God is in our lives. When we pray before every game we ask to not get hurt

on the field and to help us play well. It is a good way to center my mind before the game.

Even at practice I know I should not use foul language because God cares for me.

While my friends and I hang out we know that our refugee experience is a bond

that connects us, but we talk about it in fleeting moments. At least I know if I ever wanted

to talk about it, someone would be there to listen who understands. The deepest bond I

have with my teammates is our love of soccer. And when we play, we like to be silly doing

it. At practice I took a joke too far and my friend who was having a bad day took it

personal, but then shrugged it off. We have no conflict on this team. All I ever hear is

laughing and all I ever see is smiling while we are together because we love to joke

around. I mostly pick on the captain. I watch the younger kids who like to mess around,

wrestle, and chase each other. We all come from different backgrounds, but we treat each

other like siblings. This is a really fun group that I love.

CHAPTER 5

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Forty-one club participants completed the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics for

the demographics of the sample are listed in Tables 4, 5, & 6. The participants are mostly

from Asia and Africa, specifically countries like Thailand and the Congo. The majority of

participants are between the ages of 11 and 14 years-old and have lived in the United

States around the same number of years, meaning they were infants or toddlers when

their family resettled. Data were screened for missing data and mean imputation was

used for missing data.

Table 4: Region of the participant's native origin

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Africa	11	26.8	26.8
	Asia	16	39.0	65.8
	Central America	4	9.8	75.6
	America	3	7.3	82.9
	Missing	7	17.1	100.0
	Total	41	100.0	

Table 5: Age of the participant

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 10 years old	4	9.8	9.8
	11-14 years old	24	58.5	68.3
	15-17 years old	5	12.2	80.5
	18+ years old	8	19.5	100.0
	Total	41	100.0	

Table 6: How many years participant lived in US

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 2 years	2	4.9	4.9
	2-5 years	6	14.6	19.5
	6-10 years	18	43.9	63.4
	11-15 years	13	31.7	95.1
	18+ years	2	4.9	100.0
	Total	41	100.0	

Prior to conducting our main analysis, we tested regression assumptions. To test for normality, we visually inspected histograms and examined skewness and kurtosis. Of the six variables, visual inspection revealed all variables to be approximately normal. Further, all variables were within acceptable ranges of skewness and kurtosis, based on being less than 3 times the absolute value of the standard error (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Thus, all variables were treated as normal.

In order to determine if the independent variables were discrete, bivariate correlations and tolerance levels were inspected. Tolerance levels for PBS and SOC were low (<.5) suggesting multicolienarity. This means both scales were measuring the same feeling of SOC in the sample. Thus, PBS was dropped from future models and SOC was kept as the scale was more specific to the theme of the study and more commonly used in literature. Standardized means of the independent and dependent variables are displayed in Table 7.

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Table 7: Means for variables

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sense of Community (SOC)	41	3.96	.72
Perceived Belonging in Sport (PBS)	41	3.95	.59
Resilience (RSL)	41	3.94	.68
Separation	41	3.29	.89
Integration	41	3.00	.78
Marginalization	41	2.37	1.06
Perceived adjustment (PA)	41	3.90	.61

To test for independence, Durbin-Watson was calculated for each model. As a rule of thumb, values between 1.7 and 2.3 indicate that the data are likely independent (Field, 2009). All Durbin-Watson statistics for these models were within the acceptable range, except for when separation was entered as the dependent variable. Though, the dependent variable of separation presents potential issues of independence, given that the remaining sub-scales on the cultural adjustment scale were independent, and for theoretical consistency, we included separation as a potential dependent variable.

To test for relations between the primary independent variable of interest (SOC) and each of the dependent variables: Resilience (model 1), Seperation (model 2), Marginalization (model 3), Integration (model 4), and Perceived Adjustment (model 5), five regression models were tested with each model using a different dependent variable. In additon, logically age and number of years in the U.S. may increase cultural adjustment or resilience, so these were also included as predictor variables.

The initial regression equation contained resilience as the dependent variable and SOC as the independent variable. This regression equation (model 1) was significant

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($p<0.01$, $R^2 = .484$; $\beta = .66$; See Table 8). The positive sign of the beta-weight indicates that SOC is positively related to resilience, with no relation to age or number of years in America. To put it simply, if an individual experiences an increase in SOC, their resilience increases, while a low SOC would lower resilience. How much the dependent variable increases based on the independent variable is predicted by the R^2 and expressed as a percentage. So in this sample, SOC predicts 48% of variance in resileince. Similarly, model 4 was also significant ($p<0.01$, $R^2 = .294$; $\beta = .45$; See Table 8). Model 4 supports the assertion that as a person's SOC increases, their perceived adjustment also increases. The R^2 value indicates that a person's SOC predicts 29% of the variance in their perceived adjustment. Models with seperation and marginalization as dependent variables were not significant (Model 2, $p=0.120$; Model 3, $p=0.093$). A comparison of all the regression models can be found in Table 8. A regression takes data points and plots them and draws a line through it, so models are expressed as an equation $y=mx+b$. Based only on significant predictors, the regression equations are as follows:

Model 1:   Predicted resilience = .66(SOC) + 1.238

Model 4:   Predicted perceived adjustment = .45(SOC) + 1.867

Table 8: Regression Models

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std Error of the estimate	p
1	.696	.484	.442	.507	<.01
2	.380	.144	.075	.855	.120
3	.397	.158	.089	1.011	.093
4	.542	.294	.237	.531	.005

All of this applies to the sample of refugee youth in the West Phoenician FC, but what about other refugee youth in Phoenix who have a sports community elsewhere? Though sampling in this study was not random, looking at the change in R^2 offers an alternative approach to discussing generalizability. If a model is generilizable, then then the R^2 value should be close to the adjusted R^2 value (Field, 2009). For the two models that were significant, the difference in R^2 and adjusted R^2 was between 0.04 and 0.06. This closeness in value suggest that the regression equation is generalizable to the population that was sampled.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

This study shows how refugees feel sense of community (SOC) and demonstrates the impact of SOC on additional outcomes. Data appeared consistent with other studies and partially verified my initial hypotheses. This research fills the gap that leisure sports aid refugees living in the United States, similarly to those resettled elsewhere in the world. Other discoveries showed there is more to understand about the conception of SOC for marginalized and adolescent populations.

An important element of youth sports is the socialization of friends. In the present study, being in the club because the participants' friends are there emerged as a main rationale for participation. This is related to other adolescent studies, where players decide to stay in the club for the social dimension (Light et al., 2013; Poulin & Denault, 2013). The participants' response also supports other literature that acknowledges immigrants chose sports programs for social relations (Fernandez-Gavira, Huete-García, & Velez-Colón, 2017). For marginalized members of society, friendships established on a sports team increase support in times of hardship and the obligation to that team increases a feeling of connectedness to the larger community (Sherry, 2010). The refugee boys in this study were opposite the participants in Spaaij (2015) and Walseth (2008) who changed club teams many times in the period they played. These participants expressed friendship beyond acquaintances and loyalty due to the support they received.

Of particular note, participants appeared to experience SOC primarily through their soccer community. Though the questionnaire asked participants about their SOC on both their soccer club, and the larger community, results suggest that these two measures

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were assessing the same thing. Additionally, the boys interviewed rarely expressed time with friend groups outside of the club. It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that participants viewed their sport community as the primary driver of their feeling of SOC related to the larger community. This finding supports previous research that indicates the importance of sport in the lives of youth (Fuller et al., 2013; Allen, J.T et al., 2010; Caldwell, 2005). Indeed, the work of Warner and colleagues (2015; Warner et al., 2012; Warner & Dixon, 2011) implies that the context of sport is a particularly germane context to experience SOC.

While not all of the components of SOC by Warner & Dixon appear, a few main ones stand out, including common interest, social spaces, and competition. Coexisting with the competitive atmosphere is more notably the fun personality of the club. Among a few of the impacts of sport suggested by Lyras & Peachy (2011), inclusive teams, fun quality experiences, and cultural enrichment are related to the present case. This study supports examining more than just mere participation in soccer, but the whole sport context. For example, I did not ask about how soccer makes them feel, but rather how the players and coaches make them feel. Looking at the setting reveals team cohesion for adolescent migrants (Morela et al, 2012). This can be contrasted with results when emphasis is placed on specific skills or an ego climate.

As seen above (Table 3), all of the elements of McMillan & Chavis (1986) emerged in the data as intertwined with how people in the club treat each other during interactions. Additionally, across the sample, the mean score of the SOC and PBS scale (see Table 7) supports on average a strong SOC among club participants. McMillan & Chavis define SOC broadly, but previous research found SOC in sports specifically felt

by players, parents, and spectators (Legg et al., 2017a; Legg et al., 2017b; Legg et al., 2015). One component of membership can be the dues and fees associated with participation for registration and equipment, but this type of membership does not exist for the club team in this study because the club leaders take care of fees and equipment personally and with donations. The players do not have to pay to play. Yet the majority of players feel like they belong; and the emotional safety of the group leads to personal investment in the club, like trying their best out of gratitude. In 1996, McMillan revised the second element of influence to focus on trust. Interviews stated players trust the team enough to fully act themselves, without shame. In general, community members relate better to each other if they are free of shame (McMillan, 1996). Not only that, but community members take pride in how well they treat one another, to avoid shaming others via their own positive social traits (Johnson, 2011). The West Phoenician FC takes pride in their community, as observed and expressed in interviews. Many sub-codes in Table 3 could have fit within different themes as they resemble each other. For example, loyalty is like McMillan & Chavis' influence and fulfillment of needs and to Warner's administrative consideration with the definition including care and intentionality (Legg et al., 2017a). Another example is sportsmanship is a social norm, so it was placed within influence, but could have been with competition or by itself. In contrast, other codes distinctly stand out.

One highlighted example of membership in SOC is how the team feels like they are a family. They depend on one another. The instances in the qualitative data illustrating family overlap with Draper and Coalter (2016) and Spaaij (2015). Sport was found to provide a "second family" to refugees and also to rise above the clan/familial

level ties to unite an entire ethnic identity (Spaaij, 2015). For the West Phoenician FC, the emergence of "togetherness" displayed how even though many of the players are from Thailand, they do not stay segregated based on which clan they came from in Thailand; and also embrace the players from other Asian and African countries because the boys share the emotional connection of the refugee experience. This team cohesion does not weaken the refugees' ethnic identity (Morela et al., 2012), but additionally makes one big family. "Brothers and sisters" in the club act like typical siblings, meaning that not all interactions are always positive, but the underlying tone is always love and respect. The players see each other's good and bad days (Walseth, 2006). When days are rough, that is when players rely on their SOC and resilience more.

This study suggests there is a strong relationship between resilience and SOC. By the adolescent refugee boys being involved in an activity they both enjoy and are good at, their belief increases that they can survive and advance in the face of challenges (Iwasaki, 2008). The length of time in a program increases resilience (Scarf et al., 2016) and many of the U-19 boys have played since they were U-10. Even the younger players who were surveyed are not new to the soccer club. For these youth resiliency is both personal and based on context. Sports can improve self-efficacy and self-agency, similar to resilience (Draper & Coalter, 2016). Social support like the meals from the church small group, school assistance from the organization leader, and having role models all act as protective factors for the youth resilience, which reiterates literatures that stresses caring adults in the lives of adolescents (Siegel, 2015; Caldwell, 2005; Neill & Dias, 2001). Both this study and Scarf et al. (2016) are more unique in indicating the role that belonging has for impacting youth resiliency.

The data did reveal the unexpected element of faith, such as the prominence of God in the lives of the team members. "Christian" is in the name of the club, but the researcher initially thought this to be a little affiliation. For some refugee families, religious freedom was a reason for choosing to migrate (Hagan & Edbaugh, 2003). Nanlai (2005) starts an article on Chinese youth in America with the sentence, "Religion can mean a great deal to uprooted people (p. 183)." A faith-based support can help in the psychological hardships of migration and religion can be present in all stages of acculturation (Hagan & Edbaugh, 2003). Some literature focuses on the role of ethnic churches for various ethnic groups, such as bonding, self-worth, social networks, and resources for accommodations or employment (Tsang, 2015). The church the participants attend is not an ethnic congregation; however, it seems to meet the same needs as an ethnic congregation by giving a support foundation to the boys who may attend.[2] If church emerged in the Draper & Coalter (2016) study, the authors would consider it an integral non-sport component to strengthen the program. Thus, the importance of church and the prayers before the game to the players on the team is beneficial for the organization leaders to know.

Although SOC did not predict cultural adjustment based on the Acculturation Stages scale from Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov (2000), this might be a result of issues with the scale. The choice of scale might not have been the best measure of cultural adjustment. The population studied with this scale originally was international college students temporarily living in another country, not refugee youth more permanently resettling. The wording of the Acculturation Stages scale was confusing and at a higher

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[2] Attendance to the church or membership in the congregation is not a requirement to be a participant in the West Phoenician FC

reading level, which may explain the variation in responses. While the scale was trying to identify if an individual was separated, marginalized, or integrated, many of the youth simply might not know how to classify where they are or what they prefer. A study with college students revealed responses on Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity either addressed differences, ignored them, or neither (Barron & Dasli, 2010); so youth may not be more capable of explaining where they are in the process of cultural adjustment. Fernandez-Gavira et al. (2017) contends sports programs for immigrants can result in separation and marginalization, rather than integration because of barriers similar to lack of influence and administrative consideration. Results for immigrant youth are not concrete because the context of an individual affects acculturation and adjustment more than simply breaking the social network down into more heavily U.S. peer involvement or more maintenance of ethnic relationships (Nguyen et al., 1999). There is evidence that it is possible to measure cultural adjustment in a sports setting because Allen (2009) identified cultural maintenance and cultural assimilation through sports. If the study was done again, a simpler scale identifying different aspects of culture would be chosen and pilot tested.

In conclusion, this thesis used a mixed methods approach to explore SOC and its impacts among a sample of refugee youth sport participants. My findings support the presence of SOC among participants both through the qualitative results (which demonstrate themes that are consistent with theoretical explanation of SOC from previous research), and through the high mean scores in the quantitative results. Further, quantitative analysis reveals significant relations between SOC and cultural adjustment indicating that the development of SOC can also lead to the increase in other PYD

outcomes. Combined, these findings point toward the positive role that sport may play in the lives of youth refugees. The bigger picture of PYD, SOC, resiliency, and cultural adjustment converging with the understanding of constructs is sport-for-development theory. "[Sport for development theory] suggests that through the development of a common sense of community, we can establish stability, coexistence, understanding and acceptance for what is different from us" (Lyras & Peachy, 2011, p. 323-324). As the refugee crisis continues, research can aid community development within these vulnerable populations.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This thesis explores participation in a refugee youth soccer program, with specific

foci on sense of community (SOC), resilience, and acculturation. Findings explain how

SOC develops within the program, and also indicate positive relations between SOC and

resilience, and SOC and perceived acculturation. There are many audiences who may

find this study of interest. Simply anyone who enjoys international sports will be drawn

to the discussion. Specifically, sports program coordinators may find these studies useful

to learn how to be intentional and create a safe space for bonds to form. Program

coordinators may also benefit by noticing ways that their organization can grow and be

more successful in building community, rather than solely addressing soccer skills. In the

following sections, I offer ideas for practical implications based on study findings,

address the study limitations, and provide suggestions for future research in this area.

Implications

Refugee sports organizations are currently rare, therefore recreation providers

could benefit from exploring more in depth the lack of resources and challenges of

accessibility. As a matter of fact, the National Parks and Recreation Association reported

85% of programs offered by parks departments are cultural festivals and 68% of agencies

offer outdoor recreation programs for refugees/immigrants, giving Portland youth soccer

and basketball as one example. But much more can be done to give validity to these

programs by connecting them to theory. It remains important for refugee communities

and local communities to get to know each other in social spaces (Erden, 2017), and

academia can now see this is true in the United States. Playing on a sports team can fulfill

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needs and give social support to individuals facing challenges. Given the importance of sports to refugees, sports managers should provide traditional sports opportunities such as soccer, but also offer options like cricket and badminton for inclusion and diversity even though those are not popular American sports (Allen, 2009). One example from the West Phoenician FC is the participants telling Michael about playing sports barefoot in the camps (Guest, 2013), soccer for boys and volleyball for girls, but also some sharing about playing cane ball (sepak takraw) in Thailand before resettling. Only 51% of the leisure agencies in the United States target this population with surveys and focus groups to allow input on planning (NPRA, 2018). Participants in this study expressed having fun as a top priority, more so than competition, so leagues do not need to be elite status. Member loyalty ensures that programs can be long-term, as sense of belonging leads to retention (Hoffman et al., 2003). Yet when starting a new program, sport managers need to be aware of the transportation challenge that may limit the number of participants showing up to play. Parents are not involved in the club because they are frequently working and do not have transportation. The care of the participant is placed into the hands of the club leaders. Lin, Chalip, & Green (2016) found that seeing a child have a SOC is one of the reasons for parent satisfaction with the sport and to re-enroll their child into the club. The authors also point out middle-class parents as a limitation to their study, leaving out working-class which refugee families fall into the category. Caldwell (2005) adds that cost of participation in leisure activities is often not affordable and poverty is the leading cause of not engaging in leisure opportunities. Club programs for refugees are beneficial, so for organizations like the West Phoenician FC, overcoming resource challenges may be worth it. Finally, resettlement programs within the United

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States should consider sports programs and other leisure activities in a list of provided resources when helping families locate practical services. These are just a few examples of how sport managers can use the information provided in this thesis to improve sport programs for refugees.

Limitations

Some refugee experiences, the uses of sport, and ways to use the data have been omitted from this study. All of these limitations gave the study its scope as not everything could be covered or controlled. There are many sports that SOC can be measured in, but the research made no comparison to soccer. The chosen sport of soccer may reflect upon the team-oriented style of play more than individual sports like running would (Poulin & Denault, 2013; Walseth, 2006). Soccer already dramatically envelopes the world, which was an advantage for community to be a strong result of the study. Being a well-known sport with a large fan base naturally invites people. Additionally, studying soccer in a club setting rather than a school setting or informal setting is a limitation and likely to have skewed the results, because club teams are a good balance between consistent structure and choice. Club sports are more voluntary in the grouping of players, than say only being able to play for the school one attends. Though also in the realm of club sports, I limited my research to a local casual recreation league, not the industry of corporate elite sports clubs with large facilities. Delimitations for this study are not about sport programs that are for elite athletes, or specialization, or talking about the negative effects of sports like burnout from three-sport athletes. Those topics focus primarily on the sports themselves and not the player interaction, whereas this thesis emphasizes player relations. Corporate sports were avoided because I want to know the individual

level experience of trying to belong. Selecting a setting that was potentially accessible to all was a necessary element when studying the refugee population.

Half of the cultural adjustment measure was discarded or insignificant which limited the discussion on how SOC relates to cultural adjustment. Conducting a similar survey with a better acculturation stages scale to more refugee youth athletes may generate stronger results. Next, specifically for the refugees, there was no way in the available population and allotted time for me to focus on newly settled refugees only. The sample size of the quantitative survey was low, which can account for some disproportionate demographics. Players also come and go, changing the demographic of the team for length of residency. Only a handful of participants have lived in the United States less than five years. Most have lived in the United States between 11 and 15 years, even some being born in the United States, though their parents and siblings fled their native country. Sampling participants at all stages would give a full view of the acculturation spectrum to integration.

One challenge of the study was accessing parents. The club transports players to and from practices and games. Parents are never in attendance at any team functions. While the youth were asked to take forms home to their parents for signatures, the youth did not seem to prioritize returning the forms as no consent forms were returned. Therefore, obtaining consent was difficult. A creative way this could have been overcome would have been a parent meeting with dinner and monetary compensation for their time to come and hear about the study and sign consent. While this challenge was overcome without incentives, incentives would have been beneficial and may have strengthened the quality of participation. More in-depth questions about the refugee experience and life

history (Walseth 2006, 2008) would potentially have gathered more detailed data, but also would have required the willingness to open up about their feelings. I intentionally avoided those questions given the current political climate. With more data to theme, longer narratives like ethnographic creative nonfiction with the purpose to inspire significant change can be written within academic literature to give a more emotionally driven analysis (Smith, 2013), so the audience puts a clearer face to the refugee crisis like journalism often does. This leads into future research that can be done to expand upon this limited study.

Future Research

Questions raised by the result of this study are about how SOC expands into other aspects of the individual's life and the sport club's functions. Research continuing to look at the quality of relationship built in sports is important (Fredricks & Simpkins, 2013). Of particular interest is bonding between people who are refugees of ethnic minority and the people of ethnic majority in the host country. To understand inclusion, studies must be conducted in heterogeneous organizations with a mix of refugees and locals. This study was of a homogeneous group because all the players were refugees, many coming from the same region of the world. When asked about their interactions at school, refugee youth seemed more hesitant about the interactions with American students. Another phenomenological study can explore the potential for organized youth sport programs to be an environment that refugees can cope and connect with those living in the host country.

If a mixed methods study such as this is replicated, both the qualitative piece and the quantitative piece can be expanded. More activities similar to photo-elicitation could

be used in the future to evoke responses of meaning. Leisure researchers should continue to deeply examine meaning-making through sport in the global context (Iwasaki, 2008). Additionally, if future research can find a theoretical connection between resilience and perceived adjustment, a mediation model could be constructed between SOC, resilience, and perceived adjustment. Future studies could also use PYD theory for qualitative coding and operationalize PYD for a quantitative study as Webb (2016) suggests, using PYD as an independent variable in regression models to any of the discussed variables as dependent. Also, more demographics of the youth could be gathered, such as grade-point-average in school, since the perceived adjustment scale and many research studies asked about the school setting specifically.

For the sport managers, by using a SOC theoretical lens, programs can be evaluated to see if youth sport programs can help integrate refugee children into the community quicker and may help them build friendships with local children. There are articles on hypothetical evaluation (Whitley et al., 2016; Whitley et al., 2014; Petitpas, et al., 2005), but few looking at specific organizations (Jacobs et al., 2013). Identifying the pros and cons in a sports atmosphere so the sport programs efficiently maximize benefits to the youth will allow organizations to grow. Petitpas and colleagues (2005) presents a youth sport framework comprised of context, external assets (such as caring adults), internal assets (such as identity) and research and evaluation. Evaluation does not have to be done with scales from existing literature but can be more open ended questioning. While the qualitative data of this study revealed that participants are grateful to the leaders and interact well, little was mentioned as to the player's ability to influence decisions. Studying youth voice among refugees could be insightful and may have a

relationship to SOC. These recommendations can provide different and important aspects

of the phenomenon of refugee resettlement and acculturation with SOC being a key

factor.

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APPENDIX A

PHOTO-ELICITATION IMAGES

The following images were all used for the photo-eliciatation activity at the beginning of the interveiw. The photos are of the U-19 team from a past year, not the most recent season. All of the photos were taken by the club registrar. Each photo tried to capture a different aspect of the game from the researcher's perspective. The participants discussed meaning for three to five photos.

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Refugee Youth Soccer Participation: Sense of Community and Outcomes

<u>Introduction Script</u>

Welcome to the interview. I want to say thanks for your participation in this discussion. This discussion will be about community and your experiences on the team with West Phoenician FC.

An interview is a research design where we (we all) have a conversation about a few topics and get a full view of your experiences and the positive or negative outcomes of playing soccer. There is no right or wrong answers, because your response is a product of your own experiences. Everyone gets a chance to talk, and should speak what he (or she) feels is important. This discussion is between you and me here. I am only here to facilitate the interview. You are the experts from which I am seeking information. I ask that everyone participating speak freely and with respect. Please do not share what your hear or say in this interview with others to help maintain confidentiality.

We are recording this discussion to be later typed out. Your ideas are so important to this research that I do not want to miss anything anyone says. Please let me know if for any reason you want me to stop recording, and I will do so for your particular statement. Again, your names will never be used in anything. What is discussed here will only appear in a public school paper by Arizona State University and possibly future publications as statements made by members of the club as a whole, and never stated from an individual. The records of this recording will be locked up for confidentiality protection at ASU's school of Community Resources and Development. This recorded file will be destroyed upon completion of this research. Do you have any questions?

<u>Consent</u>

Please vocally respond "yes" to the following questions as I read them. If you do not agree or do not give consent please say "no."

- Do you understand the process of participation in this interview?
- Do you agree to be recorded?

<u>Interview Question Guide</u>

1. Let's start with an ice breaker question. Really easy. Do you have any favorite sports teams you follow?

2. The first part of this interview is an activity. Here we have 20 photos of the West Phoenician FC. I would like you to carefully look at them all and pick out 3-5 photos that have a particular meaning to you. I will ask that you describe each reaction to those photos. Let me know when you are ready.

2.1 What do you see?
2.2 Who is in the photo/with you
2.3 What emotions do you feel looking at this picture?

3. Tell me your experience playing soccer in this club
      3.1 What do you like best about this club?
      3. 2 What do you like least about this club?
      3.3 Why are you a participant at this club?

4. Describe your teammates to me.

4. What are your relationships like with people in the club, including coaches or leaders?

      4.1 How often do you see these people? (like once a week during practice or hang out more often outside of the program?)
      4.2 Describe to me areas where you interact with other club members.

5. In your team setting, how much of your personality do you feel you can show?

6. Are you able to relate to anyone in the group? If so, how?

7. Do you feel different from others in any way? If so, why?

8. What other social activities do you participate in such as school, work, church?