

Sport Participation Research Initiative

This research is consistent with the two broad objectives of the Sport Participation Research Initiative. In relation to the *first* objective, this research will **develop a better understanding** of Canadian's, particularly Aboriginal youths', participation in sport in an effort to inform programs and policies that **enhance Canadians' participation in sport**. Specifically, the purpose of this proposal is to: (1) better understand the meanings of the terms 'sport', 'community', and 'culture' to Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta and (2) use these new understandings to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community, which incorporates Aboriginal cultures, can be used to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta. There is currently a lack of research that provides a better understanding of the manner in which Aboriginal youth sport participation can be enhanced, and our project will address this critical gap in the Canadian sport research literature. Thus, our proposal aligns well with *Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport*, which seeks to ensure that the *Canadian Sport Policy* is inclusive and will enhance Aboriginal peoples' access to, and experience of, sport. This research is also consistent with the *second* objective, in that it will address **three of the five specified target areas**:

(a) The proposed research will identify ways in which Aboriginal youth can **overcome barriers to participation in sport**. It has been suggested that culturally relevant programs, which are locally defined by communities, can increase sport participation by Aboriginal youth (Giles, 2007; Thompson et al., 2000). However, there is a lack of research to support such notions. Thus, this research seeks to not only better understand Aboriginal youths' understandings of the terms sport, community, and culture, but to identify ways in which communities can support Aboriginal youth in overcoming barriers to participation in sport and to improve sport opportunities.

(b) Findings will serve as the foundation for the **development of policies designed to enhance participation in sport** by Aboriginal youth. At a local level, partnerships have already been established with schools that serve a high number of Aboriginal youth (Amiskwaciy Academy, St. Joseph High School) and organizations (Aboriginal Learning Services, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Edmonton Public Schools) within Edmonton. The new understandings that result from this research will be used to inform sport policies at these schools and organizations. As well, new partnerships will be formed throughout this project with various municipal and provincial organizations and it is likely that findings will be used to inform policies by the City of Edmonton (e.g., summer sport camps), Indigenous Sports Council Alberta, and other general sports associations in Alberta.

The findings also have the potential to influence Canadian sport policy at a broader level. Youth participation rates in sport need to be addressed as they are on the decline (Statistics Canada, 2008) and given the documented benefits of Aboriginal youth participation in sport (Kickett-Tucker, 1999), there is a critical need to increase Aboriginal youth participation in sport. Knowledge generated from this research will serve as the foundation for the development of culturally relevant Canadian Sport Policy.

(c) Finally, by actively engaging youth and stakeholders in the research process, the **benefits and outcomes of participation in sport** among Aboriginal youth will be identified. Although there is an abundance of literature that highlights the positive development outcomes of youth participation in sport, very little literature has highlighted the benefits for Aboriginal youth. By engaging Aboriginal youth in one-on-one interviews and focus groups, it will be possible to gain an in-depth understanding of their perceived benefits of participation in sport and the manner in which sport participation can be enhanced. Given that Aboriginal youth have generally been overlooked in the Canadian sport literature, it is critical that their voices are heard and that their unique perspectives are not overlooked.

Statement of Alignment

The *Aboriginal Research Priority Area* highlights the importance of engaging in **respectful research**. Smith (2005) argued that, at a very basic level, respectful and ethical research is about “establishing, maintaining, and nurturing reciprocal and respectful relationships” (p. 97). Recognizing the importance of establishing and nurturing respectful relationships with Aboriginal research partners, I received a SSHRC Aboriginal Development Grant in 2010, which was focused on developing strong research partnerships and formulating a research question that is relevant and respectful to Aboriginal peoples. The current research proposal stems from this SSHRC grant in that the research questions and methodology proposed resulted from relationships that were established with the partner Aboriginal organization and schools. Specifically, monthly consultations were held with Aboriginal stakeholders in an effort to develop relevant and respectful research questions and methodologies for this current proposal. Thus, the relationships established between Dr. McHugh and members of Aboriginal Learning Services, Amiskwaciy Academy, and St. Joseph High School have supported the development of this current **respectful** research proposal that is responsive to the knowledges of Aboriginal peoples.

The proposed research aligns with the *Aboriginal Research Priority Area* in that the participatory action research (PAR) methodology employed will ensure that **Aboriginal knowledges and traditions are respected and valued**. Specifically, this proposed participatory action research project, which will take place at Amiskwaciy Academy and St. Joseph High School, are Edmonton area schools that use Aboriginal cultural enrichment to help promote learning and retention. By engaging in collaborative research with students and staff at these schools, Aboriginal traditions and experiences will be at the foundation of all research processes.

The importance of engaging in research **with and by Aboriginal peoples** is also outlined in the *Aboriginal Research Priority Area*. The PAR methodology, which will be employed within this proposed research, ensures that this research is *with* and *by* Aboriginal peoples. Specifically, PAR is committed to ensuring that participants are involved in all aspects of the research process, from the establishment of the research objectives to the communication of research results. This research proposal was developed in consultation with key stakeholders from Aboriginal Learning Services, Amiskwaciy Academy, and St. Joseph High School to ensure that it is relevant and responsive to the desires of participants. Various Aboriginal scholars (e.g., Bishop, 2005; Smith, 1999, 2005) have highlighted the strength of employing PAR when engaging in research with Aboriginal peoples as such methodologies are committed to ensuring the equal participation of Aboriginal peoples in research.

The proposed research also aligns with the majority of expected outcomes outlined in the Aboriginal Research Priority area. For instance, this research is focused on **enhancing the capacity for Aboriginal peoples to actively engage and benefit from research**. The PAR methodology will ensure that participants develop a sense of ownership of the research. Participants have been engaged in the development of the proposed research objectives and are committed to actively participating in the various stages of the research. As well, it is expected that this research will lead to **better qualified personnel and enhanced research capacity for Aboriginal research**. By working in partnership with key stakeholders and under the supervision of Dr. McHugh, a graduate student and undergraduate student will gain the knowledge needed to engage in respectful and relevant research with Aboriginal peoples.



Family name, Given name

McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Revisions to Previous Application

This section may be used to outline revisions made to a previously submitted Insight Development Grants application. See instructions for additional information.



Family name, Given name

McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Summary of Proposed Research

The summary of your research proposal should indicate clearly the problem or issue to be addressed, the potential contribution of the research both in terms of the advancement of knowledge and of the wider social benefit, etc.

The Problem:

There is a large body of sport literature that highlights the many psychosocial, emotional, and developmental benefits of sport participation for youth, yet little literature has focused on the specific benefits for Aboriginal youth. The research that does exist suggests that sport influences youth identity, and can produce feelings of strength, pride, and passion. As well, it has been suggested that sport participation by Aboriginal youth can promote the development of leadership skills and individual life skills. Recognizing the many benefits of sport, Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport seeks to enhance Aboriginal peoples' access to, and experience of, sport. Nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding regarding Aboriginal peoples meanings of 'sport', 'community', and 'culture', which has limited opportunities for the enhancement of sport participation for Aboriginal youth. Thus, the purpose of the proposed program of research is twofold: (1) to better understand the meanings of the terms 'sport', 'community', and 'culture' to Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta and (2) to use these new understandings to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community, which incorporates Aboriginal cultures, can be used to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta.

This project was developed in consultation with Aboriginal youth and stakeholders from local partner schools and an Aboriginal organization; thus, the goals and processes are respectful and relevant to the needs of the participants. Participatory action research (PAR) that is informed by critical theory will guide this project; 15 one-on-one semi-structured interviews with Aboriginal youth and 10 interviews with adult stakeholders will be conducted. Youth will also engage in focus groups to share their knowledge; all data will be analysed using content analysis. By ensuring that youth and stakeholders are involved in verifying and sharing the findings, this research will have many potential contributions.

Potential Contribution:

Findings will advance knowledge in that it will shed light on an important area of research that has received relatively little attention in the sport literature. A better understanding of Aboriginal youths' meanings of the terms 'sport', 'community', and 'culture' will support the identification of ways to enhance Aboriginal youth sport participation. Thus, the sport literature will be advanced by this significant and original research. Findings will also advance knowledge in that it will provide a practical example of how Aboriginal youth can and should be actively involved in research that respects their knowledge and honours their authority. There is a lack of sport research that has involved Aboriginal youth, and the participatory and collaborative nature of this research will be documented and shared so that future researchers can optimize on our lessons learned from this critical process.

Findings will also be of significant interest to many outside of the academic community. Specifically, Aboriginal youth will be involved in research that respects them as the experts of their experiences. This research will also benefit Aboriginal youth, partner schools, Aboriginal organizations, and members of the general public in that it will lead to practical benefits (i.e., identification of ways to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth). Findings from this research may also influence sport policy at a local (e.g., school) and broader (e.g., City of Edmonton, Canadian Sport Policy) level. Finally, this proposed research may serve as a framework for others looking to identify ways to enhance sport participation among Aboriginal youth.

Detailed Description

Objectives

The purpose of the proposed program of research is twofold: (1) to better understand the meanings of the terms ‘sport’, ‘community’, and ‘culture’ to Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta and (2) to use these new understandings to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community, which incorporates Aboriginal cultures, can be used to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta. Accordingly, two main research questions will be addressed: (1) What are the meanings of the terms ‘sport’, ‘community’, and ‘culture’ to Aboriginal youth in Edmonton? and (2) How can ‘Aboriginal cultures’ be integrated into such communities for the purpose of enhancing sport opportunities? By engaging in participatory action research (PAR) with Aboriginal youth and stakeholders from local partner schools and an Aboriginal organization, it will be possible to address the purpose and questions.

The purpose of this research proposal stems from a SSHRC Aboriginal Development Grant (*Enhancing the Well-Being of Aboriginal Youth through Physical Activity, Sport, and Recreation*) that was awarded to Dr. McHugh in spring 2010. This research was focused on developing strong research partnerships and engaging in community consultations to identify a research question that is relevant and respectful in addressing the role of sport in the lives of Aboriginal youth in Edmonton. Findings lead to the development of the current research proposal.

Context

Fit within relevant scholarly literature

There is a large body of sport literature that highlights the many psychosocial, emotional, and development benefits of sport participation for youth (e.g., Eccles et al., 2003; Holt, 2008; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). However, relatively little literature has focused on the specific benefits for Aboriginal youth. Of the literature that does exist, the Indigenous Sport Council Alberta (n.d.) has argued that sport promotes positive lifestyles for Aboriginal youth, including the development of leadership skills and individual life skills. Furthermore, they argued that sport participation can reinforce cultural and family values. It has also been noted that sport participation among Australian Aboriginal youth is related to positive self-concept and influences youth identity, which subsequently can produce feelings of strength, pride, and passion about themselves (Kickett-Tucker, 1999). In recognition of the many benefits of sport, *Sport Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal Peoples’ Participation in Sport* was developed in an effort to ensure that the *Canadian Sport Policy* is inclusive and will enhance Aboriginal peoples’ access to, and experience of, sport (Canadian Heritage, 2006). One year after this policy was published, findings from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey that was conducted in 2006 showed that 69% of Inuit, Metis, and off-reserve First Nations youth participated in sports at least once a week (Smith et al., 2010). Nevertheless, there are a number of barriers that limit sport participation rates among Aboriginal youth (Findlay & Kohen, 2007). For example, economic circumstance, in addition to a lack of social support and awareness have been identified as barriers to sport participation for Aboriginal youth (Canadian Heritage, 2006; Coble & Rhodes, 2006; Kirby et al., 2007; McHugh, in press). In addition, the research literature outlined below has suggested that the lack of understanding regarding Aboriginal peoples meanings of ‘sport’, ‘community’, and ‘culture’ have limited opportunities for the enhancement of sport participation for Aboriginal youth.

Westernized attitudes of the meanings of ‘sport’ may limit research with Aboriginal children and youth (Smith et al., 2010), as such meanings may not be consistent with Aboriginal youths’ perspectives. It is possible that Aboriginal youth have an encompassing view of sport, which includes more traditional activities (e.g., hunting, trapping; First Nations Information Governance Committee, 2007). As suggested in *Sport Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal Peoples’ Participation in Sport*, the holistic

perspective of many Aboriginal peoples does not support a distinction between sport, physical activity, and recreation as such activities are interrelated and play a critical role in personal well-being (Heritage Canada, 2005). Thus, within this proposed project, Aboriginal youth will be actively engaged in the research process to ensure that their understandings of the meanings of sport are being applied to one of the purposes of this project, which is to identify ways to enhance sport opportunities.

An understanding of Aboriginal youths' meanings of 'community' is also critical in the effort to identify ways to enhance sport opportunities. Research with Australian Aboriginal peoples highlighted how sport connects Aboriginal peoples to their community, and that the complex meanings that Aboriginal peoples tie to their community should be taken into account if programs are to be effective (Thompson et al., 2000). Although Thompson et al.'s research had a broader focus on food and physical activity programming within a community, the strong relationship between sport and community was identified, warranting further research. The critical need to focus on community was also identified by Giles (2007) who argued that sport programming should be guided by "locally defined needs and practices" (p.4), and Aboriginal athletes from Blodgett et al.'s (2008) study argued that sport programming should be refined at the community level. Youth from some of our recent research (i.e., McHugh, in press) also described the need for Aboriginal community support when promoting sport to Aboriginal youth; such community support may provide a means for Aboriginal youth to overcome some of the sport participation barriers they face (e.g., financial barriers). However, the challenge associated with trying to define community was noted in some of our previous research with Aboriginal youth (i.e., McHugh & Kowalski, 2009). Similar to the work of Smith (1999), who has argued that people can belong to a number of different communities and that communities are self-defined spaces, our research (i.e., McHugh & Kowalski, 2009) has similarly demonstrated that communities typically form around the goals and interests of a particular group. Given the potential for communities to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth, an understanding of Aboriginal youth's meanings of 'community' are crucial to enhancing sport opportunities.

The Aboriginal youth within this project will also share and apply their meanings of 'culture', to ensure that the identified sport opportunities are culturally relevant. This is particularly important as research (e.g., Iwasaki, 2006) has demonstrated that culturally relevant activities support the overall well-being of Aboriginal peoples. It has been suggested that providing culturally (Young & Katzmarzyk, 2007) or traditionally (Kirby et al., 2007) relevant opportunities for Aboriginal peoples could positively impact physical activity (including sport) involvement by addressing barriers to participation. However, moving forward with the development of culturally relevant opportunities may prove difficult as there is a lack of understanding of what Aboriginal culture means to Aboriginal youth. Kirmayer et al. (2003) argued that all cultures demonstrate variation in attitudes, knowledge, and practice, and cultures are often viewed as "local worlds that are constantly in flux" (pg., S19). Thus, our project will ensure that Aboriginal youths' meanings of 'culture' are better understood, as such meanings will support the identification of ways to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth.

Relevance to ongoing research

This proposed research stems from the PI's 2010 SSHRC Aboriginal Development grant, which supported the development of relationships with various stakeholders including an Aboriginal organization (i.e., Aboriginal Learning Services), an Aboriginal Educational Consultant from Edmonton Public Schools, a Community Relations worker from Amiskwaciy Academy, and school members from Edmonton Public Schools (i.e., Amiskwaciy Academy) and Edmonton Catholic Schools (i.e., St. Joseph High School). As a result of these relationships, we have worked together to develop the current research proposal including the purpose, questions, and methodology. The participatory

nature of the development of this research ensures that the findings from this research, which is in its initial stages, will be meaningful and beneficial to all participants.

Importance, Originality, Anticipated Contribution

There are many barriers that prevent Aboriginal youth from engaging in sport, and *Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport* has highlighted the need to enhance Aboriginal peoples' access to sport. Thus, this research is *important* because it will identify ways in which fostering a sense of community can improve sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton. Our project is also *original* in that, unlike previous sport research with Aboriginal youth, it will highlight Aboriginal youth's meanings of the terms 'sport', 'community', and 'culture' within the vernacularity of local context. These new understandings will subsequently support the identification of ways to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth. This research will make a significant *contribution* in that it will foster an environment that respects the knowledge of Aboriginal youth and honours the authority of Aboriginal youth in the research process; as argued by Smith (2005), the process of research is often more important than the outcomes in research with Aboriginal peoples.

Theoretical Framework

Critical theory is the theoretical framework that informed this proposal. Critical theory creates a form of knowledge that is produced and developed from the liberation of those creating the knowledge; this knowledge supports the emancipatory interests of individuals (Brydon-Miller, 1997). Critical theory has had a particularly strong influence on the emergence of participatory action research (PAR; Brydon-Miller et al., 2003), and PAR will be used as the framework within this proposed research. PAR has been defined as an emerging process that engages participants in research and results in a practical outcome that is related to participant experiences (Stringer, 1999). It is founded on the belief that people are knowledgeable about their intentions and actions; thus, they can take a "realistic" approach in changing their lives (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). The inclusion of Aboriginal youth within this proposed PAR is supported by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996), which documented how Aboriginal youth want to be empowered by developing the capacities that will help them to tackle their own challenges. Bishop (2005), Harrison (2001), and Smith (1999, 2005), leaders in the area of Aboriginal research methodologies, have highlighted the strength of employing PAR when engaging in research with Aboriginal peoples. As well, the PI for this project has successfully used PAR in previous work with Aboriginal youth (e.g., McHugh & Kowalski, 2011).

Methodology

The five PAR phases (i.e., Research Design, Data Gathering, Data Analysis, Communication, Action) outlined by Stringer and Genat (2004) and proposed for this research are presented in a fairly sequential and linear form for purposes of clarity. However, it is well understood that PAR is a cyclical and reiterative process (Stringer & Genat, 2004). Prior to providing detail regarding the specific phases of this research, ethical considerations are briefly addressed; such considerations are critical when engaging in research with Aboriginal peoples.

Ethical Considerations: Research ethics, at its most basic level, is about developing and maintaining respectful relationships (Smith, 2005). Funding from the PI's previous SSHRC Grant has supported the development of strong relationships with various stakeholders. As well, relationships will continue to be built through various informal meetings with stakeholders at their school or organization. A number of programs (e.g., Smudges, feasts) are offered at the schools in which the research will take place (i.e., Amiskwaciy Academy and St. Joseph High School) and when invited we (researchers and the research assistants) will attend such programs in an effort to sustain strong relationships with

stakeholders. As well, as per the recommendations of many Aboriginal scholars (e.g., Smith, 2005), during the initial meetings of this research project we will discuss issues of ownership and benefit; the most important ethical principle of Aboriginal research is that Aboriginal peoples should have control of their own knowledge (Battiste, 2002). Throughout the entire project we will adhere to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct Research Involving Humans, with special focus on Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada.

YEAR 1 (PAR phases One, Two, & Three)

Phase One: Research Design

The objective of the first phase of PAR is to construct a preliminary picture of the context and to identify the key *issues* and the *people* who are affected by the issues (Stringer & Genat, 2004). The initial stages of this phase have already been addressed through collaboration with partners (i.e., Aboriginal organization, stakeholders, and school members). Specifically, the issue and participants have been defined.

Issue: Findings from the PI's 2010 SSHRC Aboriginal Development Grant indicate that Aboriginal youth want to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community, which incorporates Aboriginal culture, can improve sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth. The identification and need for this issue to be explored is supported by the research literature (e.g., Giles, 2007; McHugh & Kowalski, 2009; Smith et al., 2010; Young & Katzmarzyk, 2007).

Participants: Participants, or stakeholders as they are often called in PAR, are those individuals who have a "stake" in the research because they are affected by the issue being explored or influence events related to the issue (Stringer & Genat, 2004). The key stakeholders within this PAR project will be urban Aboriginal youth from Amiskwaciy Academy and St. Joseph High School. The term "Aboriginal" is an encompassing term that includes those individuals who identify as First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit, or Métis (Statistics Canada, 2006). Amiskwaciy Academy is a junior and senior high school in Edmonton, which serves approximately 99 percent Aboriginal youth and uses cultural enrichment to help promote learning and retention. St. Joseph High School is also located in the City of Edmonton and although it is not exclusive to Aboriginal youth, it serves many Aboriginal youth through programs and services that are offered by our partner Aboriginal organization (i.e., Aboriginal Learning Services). Staff members from Aboriginal Learning Services, as well as an Aboriginal Educational Consultant from Edmonton Public Schools, a Community Relations worker from Amiskwaciy Academy, and other stakeholders (e.g., school principals, teachers) will also participate as partners in this research.

A total of 25 participants will engage in one-on-one interviews. Specifically, 15 Aboriginal youth (from Amiskwaciy Academy and St. Joseph High School) and 10 adult stakeholders (e.g., community relations worker, Elder, principal) will participate. In addition, the 15 youth will also participate in focus groups (3 focus groups of 5 participants).

Phase Two: Data Gathering

The objective of the second phase is to provide opportunities for participants to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community can improve sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta. PAR is based on the assumption that people of all ages have a deep understanding of their own lives; thus, interviews and focus groups tend to be a main component of this type of research (Stringer & Genat, 2004). Interview guides will be co-developed by the researchers, research assistants, and stakeholders. Questions to youth could include: "What does the term 'sport' mean to you?" and "How could your 'community' enhance your 'sport' participation?". For adult stakeholders, a question could include: "How can 'community' be used to enhance 'sport' participation by Aboriginal youth?"

All youth and stakeholders will be identified by the known sponsors (i.e., community relations worker at Amiskwaciy Academy and Aboriginal Learning Services staff member at St. Joseph's High School) who have, what Patton (2002) refers to, as legitimate relationships with all stakeholders. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted by research assistants and will last approximately 45-60 minutes.

Phase 3: Data Analysis

The objective of the third phase is to identify the information that appears to be most pertinent to the issue or problem being explored (Stringer & Genat, 2004), which in this case is the identification of ways to foster a sense of community to enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth. Interviews and focus groups will be transcribed and content analysis will be used as the primary method of data analysis, as it is often used when there is limited former knowledge about the phenomenon (Elo & Kyngas, 2008) and when text (e.g., transcripts) are the primary form of data. The content analysis will be comprised of three processes: preparation, organizing, and reporting (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). In terms of *preparation*, the unit of analysis (i.e., groups of words) will be selected, and then *organizing* will take place by using open coding. Open coding is the process of developing a codebook and deciding upon possible categories, patterns, and themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Finally *reporting* of themes will include direct quotations from participants. The PI's previous research with Aboriginal peoples (i.e., McHugh & Kowalski, 2009) has highlighted the importance of working collaboratively with participants to ensure that research findings are accurate representations of their experiences. Thus, stakeholders will be presented with the proposed themes, and they will be invited to add, alter, or delete themes as they deem necessary. The themes, and accompanying quotations from participants, will outline ways in which a sense of community can be fostered for the purpose of enhancing sport opportunities for youth.

YEAR 2 (PAR phases Four & Five)

Phase Four: Communication

The objective of the fourth phase is to provide stakeholders the opportunity to review their progress and to resolve any disputes about past events or proposed action (Stringer & Genat, 2004). From here, it is possible to move forward with communication of findings. It is anticipated that findings from this research will be communicated to all stakeholders, as well as to public, professional, and academic audiences. Although communication of results will primarily take place in Year 2, initial results and understandings will be shared with the participants at various points throughout YEAR 1 in order to obtain their feedback. This process is consistent with the cyclical and reiterative process of PAR (Stringer & Genat, 2004). A detailed explanation of the communication strategies has been documented in the *Knowledge Mobilization Plan* attached to this proposal.

Phase Five: Act

The objective of the fifth and final phase is to proceed with the new understandings and knowledge in an effort to resolve the research issue (Stringer & Genat, 2004); this phase is based on the assumption that it is possible to move to practical action (Stringer, 1999). Joint discussions among all stakeholders about the new understandings that arise from the interviews and focus groups, will lead to the development of proposed action initiatives that will outline ways in which fostering a sense of community can enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta. The act phase is an emergent process based on the findings from previous phases; thus, the participants will identify proposed action. Given that this is a development project, the identification and proposal of action initiatives will constitute the action for this project. The development of a subsequent SSHRC Insight Grant, which will be focused on working with Aboriginal youth to carry out the proposed action initiatives, will also be a form of action.

List of References

*Principal investigator's maiden name

- Battiste, M. (2002). Decolonizing university research: Ethical guidelines for research involving Indigenous populations. In G. Alfredsson & M. Stavropoulou (Eds.), *Justice pending: Indigenous peoples and other good causes* (pp. 33-44). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Bishop, R. (2005). Freeing ourselves from neocolonial domination in research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed, pp. 109-138). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Blodgett, A. T., Schinke, R. J., Fisher, L.A., George, C. W., Peltier, D., Ritchie, S., & Pickard, P. (2008). From practice to praxis: Community-based strategies for Aboriginal youth sport. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 32, 393-414.
- Brydon-Miller, M. (1997). Participatory action research: Psychology and social change. *Journal of Social Issues*, 53, 657- 666.
- Brydon-Miller, M., Greenwood, D., & Maguire, P. (2003). Why action research? *Action Research*, 1, 9-28.
- Canadian Heritage (2005). Sport Canada's policy on Aboriginal peoples' participation in sport. *Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, Catalogue No.: CH24-10/2005*.
- Coble, J. D., & Rhodes, R. E. (2006). Physical activity and Native Americans. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 31, 36-46.
- Corbin, J. C., & Holt, N. L. (2011). Chapter 13: Grounded theory. In B. Somekh & K. Lewin (Eds.), *Theory and methods in social research* (2nd ed., pp. 113-120). London: Sage.
- Corbin, J., & Holt, N. L. (2005). Chapter 5: Grounded theory. In B. Somekh & C. Lewin (Eds.), *Research methods in the social sciences* (pp.49-55). London: Sage.
- Eccles, J. S., Barber, B. L., Stone, M., & Hunt, J. (2003). Extracurricular activities and adolescent development. *Journal of Social Issues*, 59, 865-889.
- Elo, S. & Kyngas, H. (2007). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62, 107-115.
- Findlay, L. C., & Kohen, D. E. (2007). Aboriginal children's sport participation in Canada. *Pimatisiwin*, 5, 185-206.
- First Nations Information Governance Committee (2007). *First Nations regional longitudinal health survey (RHS) 2002/03*. ISBN: 1-894804-34-1.
- Fleming***, T.-L. & Kowalski, K. C. (2009). Body-related experiences of Rural Aboriginal Women. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 4, 44-51.

- Fleming***, T.-L., Kowalski, K. C., Humbert, M. L., Fagan, K. R., Cannon, M. J., & Girolami, T. (2006). Body-related emotional experiences of young Aboriginal women. *Qualitative Health Research, 16*, 517-537.
- Giles, A. R. (2007). From the special editor. *Pimatisiwin, 5*, 3-4.
- Harrison, B. (2001). *Collaborative Programs in Indigenous communities: From fieldwork to practice*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Holt**, N. L. (Ed., 2008). *Positive youth development through sport*. London: Routledge.
- Holt**, N. L., & Tamminen, K. A. (2010b). Improving grounded theory research in sport and exercise psychology: A Response to Mike Weed. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 11*, 405-413.
- Holt**, N. L., & Tamminen, K. A. (2010a). Moving forward with grounded theory research in sport and exercise psychology. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 11*, 419-422.
- Indigenous Sport Council Alberta (n.d.). *About Indigenous Sport Council (Alberta): Executive Summary*. Retrieved 22 January 2012 from <http://aboriginalsports.org/about-isca.html>
- Iwasaki, Y. (2006). Culturally Meaningful Leisure as a Way of Coping with Stress among Aboriginal Individuals with Diabetes. *Journal of Leisure Research, 38*, 321-338.
- Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2000). Participatory action research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 567-605). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kirby, A. M., Levesque, L., & Wabano, V. (2007). A qualitative investigation of physical activity challenges and opportunities in a northern-rural, Aboriginal community: Voices from within. *Pimatisiwin, 5*, 5-24.
- Kickett-Tucker, C. S. (1999). School sport self-concept of urban Aboriginal school children: Teacher influences. *Paper presented at the Joint Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education and the New Zealand Association for Research in Education*. Retrieved 22 January 2012 from <http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED441650.pdf>
- Kirmayer, L., Simpson, C., & Cargo, M. (2003). Healing traditions: culture, community and mental health promotion with Canadian Aboriginal peoples. *Australasian Psychiatry, 11* (Supplement), S15-S23.
- Marsh, H. W., & Kleitman, S. (2003). School athletic participation: Mostly gain with little pain. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 25*, 205-228.
- McHugh**, T.-L. F. (in press). Physical activity experiences of Aboriginal youth. *Native Studies Review*.
- McHugh**, T.-L.F. & Kowalski, K. (2009, Summer). Lessons learned: Participatory action research with young Aboriginal women. *Pimatisiwin, 7*, 117-131.

- McHugh, T.-L.F. & Kowalski, K. C. (2011).** “A new view of body image”: A school-based participatory action research project with young Aboriginal women. *Action Research*, 9, 220-241.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada.
- Smith, L T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Smith, L. T. (2005). On tricky ground: Researching the Native in the age of uncertainty. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 85-107). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Smith, K., Findlay, L., & Crompton, S. (2010). Participation in sports and cultural activities among Aboriginal children and youth. *Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada*, Catalogue no.11-008.
- Statistics Canada (2006). *Aboriginal peoples highlight tables, 2006 Census*. Retrieved 22 January 2012 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-558/index.cfm?Lang=E>
- Straus, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stringer, E. (1999). *Action research* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stringer, E. T., & Genat, W. J. (2004). *Action research in health*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
- Thompson, S. J., Gifford, S. M., & Thorpe, L. (2000). The social and cultural context of risk and prevention: Food and physical activity in an urban Aboriginal community. *Health Education & Behavior*, 27, 725-743.
- Young, T.K., & Katzmarzyk, P.T. (2007). Physical Activity of Aboriginal People in Canada. *Applied Physiology, Nutrition & Metabolism*, 32, 148-160.



Family name, Given name

McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

This section should include an overall plan, a plan for engaging the appropriate audiences, the objectives of the knowledge mobilization activities and a schedule for achieving the activities. See instructions for additional information.

Overall Plan: Knowledge mobilization will take many forms, and the voices of Aboriginal youth will be central to all forms. The target audiences, some of which will be participating in this research, were identified during the consultations with the partner schools and organization that took place during the development of this research proposal. Target Audiences: Findings will be shared with: (1) youth/stakeholders from partner schools, (2) Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) and Edmonton Catholic Schools, (3) Aboriginal communities within Edmonton and all Edmonton residents, (4) broader general public (e.g., Albertans, Canadians), and (5) academic audiences. Activities: Researchers and research assistants will work alongside participants to develop creative visual representations and lay summaries of research findings that will be posted on the partner schools' web sites, printed in the school newsletters, and shared at school assemblies, feasts, and school showcases. Findings will be shared with the school boards through their district newsletter. Various forms of media (e.g., Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and Alberta Native News) will be used to share findings with Aboriginal communities, Edmonton residents, and the general public in Alberta and Canada. In terms of academic audiences, research will be shared through publications in various open access peer-reviewed journals (e.g., Pimatisiwin) and other leading academic journals (e.g., Action Research). As well, findings will be presented at national and international research conferences. Schedule: Most of the knowledge mobilization activities will take place in Year 2, but initial research findings will likely be shared with the partner schools and organization during Year 1.



Family name, Given name McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Intended Outcomes of Proposed Activities

Elaborate on the potential benefits and/or outcomes of your proposed research and/or related activities.

Scholarly Benefits

Indicate and rank up to 3 scholarly benefits relevant to your proposal.

Rank	Benefit	If "Other", specify
1	Knowledge creation/intellectual outcomes	
2	Enhanced research collaboration	
3	Student training/skill development	

Social Benefits

Indicate and rank up to 3 social benefits relevant to your proposal.

Rank	Benefit	If "Other", specify
1	Behavioural outcomes	
2	Cultural outcomes	
3	New or enhanced partnerships	

Audiences

Indicate and rank up to 5 potential target audiences relevant to your proposal.

Rank	Audience	If "Other", specify
1	Aboriginal Peoples	
2	Academic sector/peers, including scholarly associations	
3	Students	
4	General public	
5		



Family name, Given name

McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Expected Outcomes Summary

Describe the potential benefits/outcomes (e.g., evolution, effects, potential learning, implications) that could emerge from the proposed research and/or other partnership activities.

There are a number of expected outcomes associated with the proposed project. One of the purposes of this participatory action research (PAR) is to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community can enhance sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth in Edmonton, Alberta. The methodology utilized will lead to an increased awareness within the broader research community on the importance of involving participants as research partners. Although there has been a general increase in the recognition of the value of Aboriginal research, there is still a lack of sport research that exclusively highlights the unique experiences of Aboriginal peoples. Thus, it is expected that this research will serve as a starting point and framework for other researchers interested in increasing sport opportunities for youth.

Given the purpose of this PAR research is to work with Aboriginal youth to identify ways in which fostering a sense of community can improve sport opportunities for Aboriginal youth, it is expected that this research will lead to practical outcomes that are of significant benefit to participants. Participants will likely develop a sense of ownership over the research since it is their knowledges and experiences that will form the recommendations that result from this research. As well, by working collaboratively with participants on the various knowledge mobilization activities (e.g., newsletters, community presentations), it will be possible to ensure that target audiences are appropriately informed of findings. Thus, this research has the potential to benefit a broad audience within Alberta, Canada, and even internationally.

It is also anticipated that this project will lead to enhanced research capacity for Aboriginal research. Specifically, undergraduate and graduate students will be trained as research assistants and they will be involved in all aspects of the research process (e.g., relationship building, data gathering, communication). Through guidance of key stakeholders from the partner Aboriginal organization and schools, the PI (Dr. McHugh), and co-applicants (Dr. Andersen, Dr Holt) the students will be provided with training as to how to engage in respectful/ethical research with Aboriginal peoples. This commitment to training will ensure that an outcome of this research is an enhanced capacity for Aboriginal research.

Lastly, an expected outcome is the continuation of a strong research partnership that has been developed between Aboriginal Learning Services, Amiskwaciy Academy, St. Joseph High School, and Dr. McHugh. Amiskwaciy Academy and St. Joseph High School are unique schools in that they are infused with Aboriginal traditions and knowledges. A research relationship has already been established between Dr. McHugh and stakeholders (e.g., community relations worker, principals) from the partner organization and schools, and it is expected that this proposed research will support the maintenance and lead to even stronger partnerships that would support future research.

Research Team and Student Training

A. Description of Research Team

Reasons for a Team Approach

A new team of three researchers: Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh, Dr. Chris Andersen, and Dr. Nicholas Holt has specifically been assembled to pursue the research described in this proposal. All researchers have conducted relevant research in the past and bring complementary but unique strengths to the proposal.

Dr. McHugh is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta. Her research focuses on the psychological and social components of Aboriginal youths' body image and physical activity. She has a strong background in collaborative approaches to research, and her work has been published in the prestigious "Pearls, Pith, and Provocation" section of *Qualitative Health Research* (Fleming et al., 2006). Her most recent work was a participatory action research (PAR) project with Aboriginal youth in which she worked collaboratively with participants to develop school-based initiatives that promoted positive body image (McHugh & Kowalski, 2009; McHugh & Kowalski, 2011). She currently holds a SSHRC Aboriginal Development Grant, which informed the purpose and methods of this research proposal. As well, her previous work highlighted the need for collaborative school-university partnerships to solve some of the significant problems faced by youth. The knowledge Dr. McHugh generated and her research expertise in working with Aboriginal youth support her role in leading this proposed research.

Dr. Andersen is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta. His area of research is focused on the importance of understanding the local vernacularity of 'community' and in particular, the impact of land-based notions of community on Aboriginal sociality, both in legal and health contexts. Additionally, he has worked extensively on issues pertaining to official renderings of Aboriginal 'identity' (again, in a legal context but also in a statistical/census context) and in particular, has explored the impact of race on definitions of Metis identity. Finally, Dr. Andersen is the editor of *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, a journal dedicated to policy-specific issues relating to Metis, non-status Indian and urban Aboriginals. Dr. Andersen's expertise in community and identity make him a strong contributor to this research team.

Dr. Holt is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta. He is the director of the Child & Adolescent Sport & Activity (CASA) lab, and his research focuses on examining psychosocial dimensions of youth sport and physical activity. His research is rooted in the Positive Youth Development approach (see Holt, 2008), which is a strength-based view of adolescent development focused on ways in which characteristics of individuals and their communities can be aligned to optimize developmental opportunities. He has published studies examining issues such as peer relationships, parenting, and how adolescents learn life skills through their involvement in sport and physical activity. He currently holds a SSHRC grant examining ways to create, deliver, and examine the provision of after-school programs to children from low-income neighbourhoods. He also holds a CIHR grant which examines the role of sport and leisure activities for 'at risk' young people who occupy marginalized spaces in inner-city Edmonton. Finally, he has considerable expertise qualitative research methods (see Corbin & Holt, 2005; 2009; Holt & Tamminen, 2010a, 2010b). Dr. Holt will therefore be able to contribute to the substantive content area of the proposed grant (i.e., youth sport) as well as the proposed qualitative methods.

Relative Proportion of Each Team Members' Contribution to this Research and other Ongoing Projects

Dr. McHugh will lead the study and be primarily responsible for training students in respectful research with Aboriginal peoples and the specifics associated with this participatory action research project. She will also work to ensure that the relationships with the partner schools and Aboriginal organization are maintained, and that new relationships with relevant organizations are established. Dr. McHugh will oversee all aspects of the project and be heavily involved in the data analysis, communication, and action. Dr. McHugh's contract is comprised of 40% research, 40% training, and 20% service; thus, she will devote up to 5 hrs per week, on average, to the study and be responsible for approximately 70% of the work.

Dr. Andersen will share his expertise regarding Aboriginal identity and community with student trainees and such expertise will support the design of interview guides, interpretation of findings, and communication of results. He will devote 1-2 hours per week, on average, to the research and be responsible for about 15% of the work.

Dr. Holt will assist in the methodology training of students and play an important role in ensuring that the highest methodological standards, with respect to the interviews and focus groups for example, are upheld throughout the study. His youth sport expertise will also support the development of interview guides, interpretation of findings, and communication of results. He will devote 1-2 hours per week, on average, to the research and be responsible for about 15% of the work.

B. Proposed Student Training Strategies

Research trainees are integral to the research team. The majority of the budget is devoted to support the training of students (i.e., one doctoral and one undergraduate). Under the supervision of the applicants, students will be involved in all aspects of the project from developing relationships with the participants, to data collection, analysis, communication, and action. As well, the students will be trained in respectful research approaches with Aboriginal peoples, which will complement their own academic goals to engage in research with Aboriginal peoples. The students will have regularly scheduled monthly face-to-face meetings with the applicants to ensure that all of their questions and concerns regarding data collection and reporting are adequately addressed. As well, the students will be working within the lab of Dr. McHugh and therefore will receive guidance on a continual basis throughout the research project.

The doctoral student will also be provided with opportunities to mentor the undergraduate student, particularly in terms of data collection and analysis, which will support her development as an independent researcher. It is also likely that her involvement with the project will shed light on potential areas of focus for her own doctoral dissertation.

Various students from the partner schools will participate in the research project, in terms of sharing their knowledges and identifying potential action initiatives. Therefore, albeit informal, these students will also be trained in respectful and effective approaches to developing research projects that are relevant to Aboriginal peoples. This transparent process of engaging in participatory action research (PAR) with Aboriginal youth will make clear the role that researchers and community members play in addressing topics of importance to Aboriginal peoples. The training of students (high school and university) will enhance their capacity to engage in other projects with similar goals.



Family name, Given name
McHugh, Tara-Leigh

Funds Requested from SSHRC

For each budget year, estimate as accurately as possible the research costs that you are asking SSHRC to fund through a grant. For each Personnel costs category, enter the number of individuals to be hired and specify the total amount required. For each of the other categories, enter the total amount required.

	Year 1		Year 2	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
Personnel costs				
Student salaries and benefits/Stipends				
Undergraduate	1	3,226	1	3,226
Masters				
Doctorate	1	21,275	1	22,339
Non-student salaries and benefits/Stipends				
Postdoctoral				
Other				
Travel and subsistence costs		Year 1		Year 2
Applicant/Team member(s)				
Canadian travel		250		4,750
Foreign travel		0		2,500
Students				
Canadian travel		250		1,750
Foreign travel		0		2,500
Other expenses				
Professional/Technical services		2,800		0
Supplies		285		285
Non-disposable equipment				
Computer hardware		1,900		0
Other		420		0
Other expenses (specify)				
Hosting Expenses		710		0
knowledge mobilization		1,000		1,000
Participant Transportation		600		0
Total		32,716		38,350

Budget Justification

Personnel costs

Student Salaries and Benefits

One Doctoral student will be responsible for communicating with participants, data collection via one-on-one interviews and focus groups, analyzing data, and communication/knowledge mobilization. The student will work 10 hr/week for 12 months of the year, for 2 years. The Doctoral student will earn a salary of \$18,996 +12% benefits for a total of \$21,275 for Year 1, and \$18,996 + 5% (annual merit and contract increase) + 12% benefits for a total of \$22,339 for Year 2 (based on University of Alberta Graduate Student Unionized Salary; total over 2 years **\$43,614**).

One undergraduate student will work as a research assistant and will support the graduate student in terms of reviewing literature, data analysis, and communication. The student will work 6 hr/week for 8 months per year, for 2 years. The students will earn a salary of \$15 per hour + 12% benefits, for a total of \$3226 each year; 2 year total of **\$6452**).

Travel and Subsistence Costs

Applicant

Research-related travel:

To cover transportation and parking costs of PI to the location of research (e.g., Amiskwaciy Academy; \$125 X 2 years = **\$250**).

Knowledge dissemination travel:

Cover flight, accommodations, conference registration, and 3 days per diem meals for PI to one National Research Conference (e.g., Sport Canada Research Initiative Conference) and one International Research Conference to network, share research findings, and to develop collaborations for future research projects (Year 2: National Conference: **\$1500**; International Conference: **\$2500**).

Team Members

Research-related travel:

To cover transportation and parking costs for co-applicants to the location of research (e.g., Amiskwaciy Academy) and rapport building activities (\$125 X 2 years = **\$250**).

Knowledge dissemination travel:

Cover flight, accommodations, conference registration, and meals for two co-applicants to a National Research Conference to network, share research findings, and to develop collaborations for future research projects (Year 2: 2 X \$1500 = **\$3,000**).

Students

Research-related travel:

To cover transportation and parking costs for research assistants to the location of research (e.g., Amiskwaciy Academy) and rapport building activities (\$250 X 2 years = **\$500**).

Knowledge dissemination travel:

Cover flight, accommodations, conference registration, and meals for the doctoral student to attend a National Research Conference and an International Research Conference to network and share research findings (Year 2: National Conference: **\$1500**; International Conference: **\$2500**).

Other Expenses

Professional services

Transcribing services will be used to transcribe the data from all interviews. Data will be transcribed by Commapolice, who charge approximately \$100 per 1 hour of interview (Year 1: 25 interviews X \$100 = **\$2500**; 3 focus groups X \$100= **\$300**; Total for transcription **\$2800**)

Supplies

Printing costs of transcripts (approximately 3000 pages @ .10 cents/page). Replacement printer ink cartridges (2/year @ \$35). Copying (\$200). Total of **\$570**, which will be split over 2 years (\$285 per year)

Non-disposable Equipment

Computer hardware

Laptop computer (15-inch 2.2 GHz MacBook Pro; \$1749 + 5% GST) and relevant computer software (e.g., Microsoft Office) to record observations and notes from all one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and meetings at the research location. All data from the research will be stored on this computer and backed-up on Dr. McHugh's office computer (**\$1,900**)

Other

Two audio recorders (Sony 2GB Digital Voice Recorders; \$200 + 5% GST each) to be used to audio record all of the one-on-one interviews and focus groups (Total: **\$420**)

Other Expenses

Hosting expenses for hosting 25 one-on-one interviews and 3 focus groups. Each interview will be attended by 2 people (participant and research assistant; \$10 per person X 2 people X 25 interviews = **\$500**). Each of the 3 focus groups will be attended by 7 people (5 participants and 2 research assistants; \$10 X 7 people X 3 focus groups = **\$210**). Total hosting costs = **\$710**. Cultural protocols suggest that refreshments should be provided when participants are asked to share their knowledge. Thus, costs for refreshments for all interviews has been requested.

Knowledge mobilization activities: The following knowledge mobilization activities have already been suggested by participants: printing of research newsletters (\$500 X 2 years= **\$1000**); hosting small school/community information booths/presentations [\$300 X 2 years= **\$600**], travel to media interviews [\$200 X 2 years= **\$400**].

Participant transportation costs needed to cover the cost for participants to return home after interviews, as interviews are likely to take place outside of school hours but on school property (**\$600**).

