

Original Research

Exploring migrant families' acculturation and livelihoods in Canada and the role of sport participation

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ABSTRACT

Canada is poised to increase the number of migrants arriving annually. Growing attention is being directed toward how sport can be managed in a way that is accessible and inclusive of immigrant populations, as well as how sport can foster new opportunities for migrants to develop connections within their communities. The objectives of this research were to explore broadly the realities of the migrant settlement experience and migrants' livelihoods in Toronto and the role sport had on these experiences. Using an exploratory case study methodology, this paper explores the participants' strategies of acculturation and the implications of these strategies for developing social and cultural capital. Youth sport programming is discussed as having little effect on the financial capacities and livelihoods of migrants. As illustrated within this paper, sport has the ability to facilitate crosscultural relationships and influence acculturation strategies. However, sport-specific cultural capital produced asymmetries in the outcomes of sport participation. While sport may serve a role in developing social outcomes, efforts to improve the access of migrants to employment opportunities within their field of experience, either within or outside of sport contexts, are required to positively affect the livelihoods of migrants.

INTRODUCTION

Toronto is the largest city center in Canada and receives the

largest number of migrants compared to other Canadian city centers (Morency et al., 2017). Whereas Montreal and Vancouver receive approximately 3,800 and 2,300 migrants respectively annually, Toronto receives more than 5,700 (Morency et al., 2017). The interaction of culturally diverse populations contributes to acculturative stresses that are the results of behavioral changes among migrant populations (Berry, 1992). Acculturative stress has been associated with behavior shifts (Paulhus et al., 2002; Ryder et al., 2013), language difficulties (Boyd & Cao, 2009), emotional disorders (Sam & Berry, 1995), and perceived social exclusion and discrimination (Banerjee, 2009; Bauder, 2003b). However, there is a growing body of academic literature (e.g., Spaaij, 2013; Walseth, 2006, 2008) that examines how sport can ease challenges of integration and settlement of newcomers in new social contexts.

Canadian Sport Policy (CSP) formally recognizes five pillars that sport can support in order to assist in the production of broad social outcomes. These pillars include, "excellence," "enhanced education and skill development," "improved health and wellness," "increased civic pride, engagement, and cohesion," and "increased economic development and prosperity" (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 4). This study focuses on the last two of the five: increased civic pride, engagement, and cohesion; and increased economic development. Considering these ambitious claims of the utility of sport, the CSP notes that sport is in a position to play a greater institutional role through

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partnerships, identifying Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) as an institution that stands to benefit from leveraging sport to “build respect, tolerance and foster inter-cultural awareness and relationships, [and] assist in the integration of new Canadians” (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 14).

The benefits of sport participation, however, are assumed to occur as a function of “proximity” (Coakley & Donnelly, 2002, p. ix) or the simplistic view that being and playing together will lead to the development of social relationships. Attempts to foster cross-cultural relationships within a narrow framework of understanding risks a universal portrayal of both migrant experiences and the possible outcomes of sport participation (Kelly, 2011). Coalter (2010) argued that for the possibility of sport to catalyze desired positive social outcomes, program delivery must include a clear understanding of the “social process and mechanisms” (p. 311) that would dissuade from universal approaches to sport delivery. Therefore, the recognition of the diversity of migrants’ acculturation strategies and their settlement experiences within and outside of sport is necessary to understand the potential role that sport (and sport policy agendas) can play within these experiences.

This research is underpinned with the notion that sport is well positioned to act as a mechanism for facilitating outreach to migrant populations due to its ability to attract participants and “reduce [the] social distances between people” (Coakley & Donnelly, 2002, p. ix). In this article, we discuss findings from a study that explored the acculturation process of nine recent migrants to Toronto and the perceived implications of engaging in sports on their acculturation experiences. The objectives for this study were, first, to broadly explore the realities of the experiences of migrant families with regard to their settlement and livelihoods in Toronto such as economic, social, and cultural barriers and, second, to examine the role of sport within these experiences. Utilizing an exploratory case study approach to inquiry, we discuss the exclusion of migrants from the workplace in Toronto, the methods participants utilized to develop social networks and their influence on cultural capital generation, and the role sport played in the participants’ settlement processes. By acknowledging the realities of migrant experiences and the disruptions in their livelihoods, we discuss the potential for sport to play a role in the settlement process and how the diversity of cultures within communities can be better accommodated (Spaij, 2013; Spaij et al., 2020).

The conclusions of this article more broadly highlight the need for greater emphasis on the improvement of practices

within Canada’s gateway cities to conduct outreach to migrant populations with the intention of positively influencing their acculturation processes. This paper argues that during the acculturation process of migrants, the benefits that sport participation could engender are less clear in comparison to the disruptions in their livelihoods. We suggest that for sport to meet the goals of the CSP and rhetoric of others, it needs to produce outcomes that mitigate the broad challenges that participants experienced outside the arena of sport. Thus, the implications for the findings of this article could better inform the design and delivery of sport programming to accommodate the challenges of all participants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sport, Livelihoods, and Pathways to Integration

“Livelihood” is an enigmatic term (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2016; Sørensen & Olwig, 2003). It describes an individual’s attempt to meet consumption and economic obligations yet acknowledges external influences (Long, 2000). Sørensen and Olwig (2003) described livelihoods as the accrual of economic capital (e.g., income) and the influence social relationships (e.g., family, kin, etc.) on the production of a standard of living. From a conceptual foundation, livelihood is influenced by one’s individual ability and their social environments (Long, 2000).

Canadian city centers such as Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal receive the majority of the country’s migrants and exhibit the highest rates of low-income migrants in Canada (Picot & Lu, 2017). Compared to other population demographics, migrant population groups have been shown to experience higher levels of chronic low income (Picot & Lu, 2017; Shields et al., 2011). These difficulties frequently relate to the language proficiency (Boyd & Cao, 2009), the devaluation of foreign credentials (Li, 2001; Xue, 2008), and the “de-skilling” of migrant labor (Bauder, 2003a). Studies have shown that migrants experiencing difficulty in obtaining employment in their desired fields as a consequence of barriers of unemployment turn to the secondary labor market (Buzdugan & Halli, 2009). Contrary to the primary labor market, the secondary labor market is characterized by precarious employment, labor-intensive work, and lower paying positions (Siar, 2013), which could represent a disruption in the migrant’s livelihood. Studies suggest that the disruption in migrants’ livelihoods could be implicated in acculturation strategies (Phillimore, 2011; Walters et al., 2007).

Stodolska and Alexandris (2004) noted that the socioeconomic status of migrant populations was a

determinant of acculturation strategies. The acculturation strategy utilized also affects the degree of acculturative stress that a migrant is likely to experience. The result of acculturative stress can produce behavioral changes (Paulhus et al., 2002; Ryder et al., 2013) that are associated with their contact with culturally diverse populations (Berry, 1992). The stressors of acculturation and the disruptions in livelihoods also limit opportunities for migrants to engage with their community (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003) and to build capacity to develop interethnic connections (Stodolska, 1998; Yu & Berryman, 1996).

Sport and Social Integration

It has been argued that sport has both the capacity to promote positive social integration (Kim et al., 2016) and the potential to engender social and cultural capital development (Spaaij, 2012). Internationally, Schulenkorf and Edwards (2016) noted that “sport activities” can bridge the divide between entrenched populations in post-conflict societies. Spaaij (2015) suggested that sport could foster different levels of belonging in migrant participants. The intersection of sport and the integration of migrants is increasingly discussed by policy makers. These discussions suggest that sport can produce positive social outcomes (Amara et al., 2005; Bailey, 2005; Coakley & Donnelly, 2002; Coalter, 2007), has the capacity to accommodate diversity (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003), and can play a role in mitigating acculturative stress (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009; Walseth, 2006, 2008). Doherty and Taylor (2007) noted that migrants perceived the utility of sport similarly to policy makers; however, other scholars (e.g., Coalter, 2010) caution the expectation that sport could be used to continually reproduce positive social outcomes in participants. Due to its nature, sport is perceived to be intrinsically positioned to alter the strategies of acculturation of migrant participants (Lee & Funk, 2011; Stodolska & Yi, 2003). However, Hatzigeorgiadis and colleagues (2013) remarked that sport alone does not have the capacity to integrate migrants. They suggested that sport provides the platform on which “integration can be cultivated” (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013, p. 1). By exploring the acculturation experience of migrants, this article attempts to fill this gap of how sport could cultivate the integration of migrants. This article emphasizes the need for a comprehensive exploration of the strategies that migrants utilize during their transition to their new home prior to implementing sport programming. Understanding the nuances of the migrant’s acculturation experience could better inform the delivery and utility of sport programming to cultivate the integration of migrants.

Theoretical Framework

This section outlines our theoretical framework for this study. We draw from the literature examining acculturation processes (Berry, 1992) as well as the role of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, 1993) within these processes.

Acculturation

Acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that follows when two groups interact (Redfield et al., 1936). While acculturation was previously recognized to be a group-level phenomenon, acculturation theories expanded to a discussion at the individual level. Group-individual relationships experienced in transition create tensions and produce acculturative stress. The acculturation process of the group includes changes in economic and political spheres, as well as psychological domains. Psychological acculturation is manifested in behavioral changes in which the individual’s attitudes—their sense of personal and ethnic identity or attitudes toward their group, for instance—alter during adaptation to their new environment (Phinney, 2003). These behavioral shifts as a consequence of acculturation can engender acculturative stress manifesting alterations in “psychological, social, or physical health” (Berry, 1992, p. 70).

We drew on Berry’s (1992) framework for understanding acculturation strategies in order to contextualize migrants’ transitional experiences in Toronto. The strategies of acculturation are depicted on a four-quadrant matrix created by two intersecting spectrums (Berry, 1992, 1997). The two axes represent continuums on which an individual can be located based on two issues: (1) the importance of maintaining one’s distinct cultural identity, and: (2) the perceived value of building relationships with other groups. One’s location on these two continuums locates the individual in a corresponding quadrant that is associated with acculturative strategies (Bennett, 2015). Identified by Berry (1992) as assimilation, integration, segregation (or separation), and marginalization, these strategies are influenced by the repeated interactions between the individual and environment and may continue to change and develop with experience (see Table 1). For instance, a Southeast Asian migrant who does not value interethnic relationships but does value the maintenance of cultural relationships may be described by the “separation” strategy. With regard to sport, this may be reflected in a decision to participate in a sepak takraw (a ball sport native to Southeast Asia) league of primarily Southeast Asian migrants, thereby maintaining cultural characteristics and not engaging intentionally in relationship building with

Table 1. Berry's 1992 Determining Acculturation Strategies

		Question 1: Is it considered to be of value to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?	
		Yes	No
Question 2: Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups?	Yes	Integration	Assimilation
	No	Separation	Marginalization

other groups. On the other hand, a South American migrant may perceive value maintaining their ethnic identity but also in developing and fostering relationships with diverse groups. In this case, they may be described by the “integration” strategy and participate in a soccer (or football) league at a community center with a variety of community members of diverse backgrounds. Framing the acculturation strategies as a two-axis spectrum acknowledges the fluidity of the strategies, meaning the individual is never fixed to one particular strategy, and the strategies employed may shift and change over time and throughout the acculturation process.

Sport is one domain of life that has implications for acculturation processes. There is a long history of sport and recreation activities being employed as mechanisms to support migrant children throughout the acculturation process (Spaaij et al., 2014). Sport can also facilitate the contact of groups and, especially among youth participants, promote civic engagement (Gambone et al., 2006). Through repeated contact, an individual's experiences may influence their acculturation strategies (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011). Though studies have emphasized the barriers migrants face with regard to participation (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Stodolska, 2000), Yu and Berryman (1996) suggested that sport can influence the acculturation strategies of migrants by assisting migrants to develop and/or maintain self-esteem. Other studies suggested that sport can influence acculturation strategies by assisting in the uptake and regulation of “behaviours deemed acceptable” within social environments (Stodolska & Livengood, 2006, p. 298), as well as acting as a “buffer against acculturative stress” (Morela et al., 2019, p. 28), and develop “social inclusion and a sense of belonging” for migrants (Tirone et al., 2010). Therefore, although not always equitably accessible to migrants in a host country,

sport may have the capacity to promote interethnic engagement and engender positive social outcomes when facilitated intentionally.

Conceptualizing Social and Cultural Capital

Here, we review Bourdieu's (1984, 1986, 1993) seminal work on *habitus* and social and cultural capital. We connect these theories to acculturation theory (Berry, 1992), and how these theories have been adopted in the SFD literature. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as the benefits of sociability, or “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of durable networks” (p. 51). Bourdieu (1984) posited that relationships are transactional in design, and the profits can be represented in the potential outcomes of association with a particular group or lifestyle. Social capital is implicated in the livelihoods of individuals, as it intersects with employment, civic institutions, and sport programming. Consistent in Bourdieu's notions of social capital is the portrayal of social networks to represent a form of capital that can be drawn on in lieu of economic resources. Thus, the unequal redistribution of power as well as the capacity for social capital to influence the acculturation and adaptation of migrants become evident. Based on language or networks to accrue social capital, migrants therefore could experience challenges and transitions differently during their acculturation process.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) introduced the class-based concept of habitus. Habitus is used to describe the individual's conditioning (e.g., upbringing) and its relationship with the practices and lifestyles of the individual (e.g., taste in food, music, sport). Bourdieu's habitus included the notion that the acquisition of dispositions is a function of one's lifestyle that is in tension

with their engagement with their environment, or fields (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). Defining fields as the spaces in which social class is produced and cultural capital developed, Bourdieu (1993) plotted the distribution of lifestyle characteristics (e.g., musical works, sabre dance, or potluck) on two axes, or a cross. The lifestyle characteristics represented the social class of the individual as well as the influences of their habitus. Bourdieu's field theory conceptualized that power is reproduced within social class by the acquisition of cultural capital in relationship to lifestyle determinants. Importantly, with this depiction, sport is implicated in many ways, such as in the "immediate or deferred" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 20) benefits of visible or invisible physical health and in access to selective social groups that require economic capital (e.g., yacht club, golf and country clubs).

The relationship between social and cultural capital is highly relevant in the acculturation of migrants. Progressive immigration policy emphasizes the idea of "two-way" integration, or the mutual accommodation between the host country's population and migrants (Joppke, 2007; Li, 2003). Integration, according to Berry (1992), implied the maintenance of traditional cultural integrity and the selective adoption of the host country's culture. Meaning, the migrant's relationships with the host country's culture is continually at tension due to the migrant's habitus and divergent positions. For migrants to develop connections with the host country and integrate, the migrant requires the capacity to gain access to groups for the accrual of cultural and social capital (Portes, 1998). Subsequently, there may be a lack of support for migrants adopting marginalization or separation (segregation) strategies to facilitate the development of social and cultural capital (Baron et al., 2000). Through a Bourdieusian lens, the habitus of migrants could influence their acculturation strategies, making the individual either more likely or more hesitant to shed their traditional cultural values (Cassim et al., 2020). The accrual of capital is therefore skewed to those willing to adopt the host country's culture—a misrepresentation of multicultural policies and a perspective that evokes countries to adopt a postmulticultural framework (Fleras, 2015).

Although perceptions are mixed within the sport for development discourse, the utility of sport to engender social and cultural capital is widely discussed (Coalter, 2007; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2018; Spaaij, 2011). Many policy makers subscribe to the notion that sport can develop aspects of social capital (Walseth, 2008) and promote cultural capital acquisition through the engagement with community and civic spheres (Spaaij, 2012; Woolcock, 2001). However, as Kay and Bradbury (2009) noted, the acquisition of social capital is dependent

on the habitus of the individual to develop cultural capital. Meaning, those without the necessary cultural capital to participate in sports programming are also constrained in social capital development (Smith et al., 2018). Utilizing a Bourdieusian lens, in this article we discuss the role sport has in the development of social capital; the relationship of social capital, the habitus, and cultural capital; and the influence these forms of capital have on the strategies of acculturation and livelihoods of migrants in Toronto.

METHODS

Background of Authors

This study was undertaken as a master's thesis research project. During the research process the first author (at the time a 24-year-old male), was employed in a nonprofit organization that worked with underserved youth populations. The first author collaborated with two male professors, one from the University of Guelph with a research interest in youth retention in rural communities and capacity development, and the second from Brock University with an interest in social inclusion and diversity in sport and recreation management. Both the second and third author had previously conducted research with newcomer populations and provided guidance throughout the research process. To report important aspects of the research process, the first author incorporated aspects of the consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ) (Tong et al., 2007).

Semistructured Interviews

Semistructured interviews were conducted by the first author. Over the course five months, nine newcomers ($n=9$) to Canada of various cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds were interviewed. To participate in the study, participants needed to have arrived in Canada within the previous 10 years (i.e., since 2008). Participants emigrated from Pakistan, Japan, Holland ($n=2$), Columbia, Saudi Arabia, Mauritius, Punjab in northern India, and Bangalore in southern India. The traditional gender perception of participants was seven ($n=7$) mothers and two ($n=2$) fathers. We did not constrain our scope to specific sports or participant demographics, and therefore participants varied in major demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, socioeconomic background, level of education, country of origin, etc.). However, we did focus on structured sport programming, rather than drop-in or unstructured play. The sport programming in which the individuals participated was not intrinsically designed to positively influence the acculturation process of migrants. Sports that participants were engaged in were: track and field (athletics), tennis,

soccer, cricket, and basketball, and ice hockey.

Interviews were conducted by the first author and scheduled to accommodate the participants. The majority were conducted by phone interview ($n=7$) and the remainder ($n=2$) were conducted face to face in public community centers. Nonparticipants were not present. Interviews were conducted in English using digital audio recording and transcribed verbatim by the first author. The length of interviews ranged from 16 minutes to 75 minutes with the average being 40 minutes.

Interviews began with the participants presenting their stories of immigration to Canada. Topics such as the participants' transition experience to Canada, hurdles to employment, actions taken to foster social and cultural roots in Canada, and the role of sport in the process of acculturation were all discussed. Interviews were conducted as an ongoing conversation without an interview guide. The centrality of sport in the interviews differed among participants as the objective of understanding the lived experiences of the migrants' settlement process remained consistent and the focus of all interviews. The semistructured approach to interviews allowed the opportunity to pose follow-up questions and points of clarification (e.g., about feelings relating to inclusion and exclusion and about discrepancies in culture) that resulted in a "thick description" (Lincoln & Guba, 1990 p. 57) of the experiences of acculturation, the livelihoods of participants, and the role of sport in these processes.

Thematic Analysis

All participants' identifying information were removed from transcripts in order to protect the identity of the interviewees, and participants were each given a pseudonym. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis, the first author utilized an inductive coding strategy. Initial codes were generated (e.g., accreditation programs, foreign credentials, friendships with Canadians, etc.) based on the first author's interpretations of the data. Thematically overlapping codes were organized into higher level themes (e.g., transition of livelihood, development of social networks, and culture). In consultation with the second and third authors, themes in the coding tree were given clear titles such as "exclusion from the workplace," "development of social networks," and "sport and acculturation." Examples from the interviews were extracted to represent the identified themes and verified by the second and third author.

Recruitment Difficulties

We also acknowledge that there were difficulties in recruiting participants for this study. Our original approach to recruitment sought to pursue recruitment through youth sport programming that involved engaging with prospective participants in public spaces as they watched their children's sport programming. However, this method produced little success due to the perceived limited engagement of migrant parents with youth sport programming. Fourteen prospective participants ($n=14$) were approached and two agreed to participate in the study ($n=2$). Similar recruitment difficulties are identified in other research studies focused on the experiences of newcomer populations (e.g., Rich et al., 2015; Tirone et al., 2010). Alternatively, we employed a method of convenience sampling (Marshall, 1996) whereby the first author sought participants from a previously established social and professional network ($n=7$). The first author however, had no previous relationship prior to the study commencement with participants. This approach proved to be more successful and provided us with a greater number of participants.

CASE STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section is divided into two parts that explore the complexities of the livelihoods of migrants and the implications of sport participation. The first section discusses experiences migrants have that are outside of the field of sport, which could have implications on the way in which migrants approach and participate in sport. The second section directly considers the utility of sport within the settlement process and the implications of sport participation for migrants in Toronto.

Participants' Experience Settling in Canada

The findings of this study suggest that some participants experienced difficulties in establishing employment within their field of expertise due to the privileging of Canadian qualifications over others earned in foreign countries and the preferential regard for previous Canadian employment. These factors further disrupted the participants' livelihoods and may more broadly represent a rigid systemic barrier that impedes full participation of migrants within Canadian society and the consequential underutilization of their human capital.

There were two notable barriers that negatively influenced the livelihoods of participants. The first was the requirement of professional organizations for migrants to accredit foreign credentials. The second barrier was

understood to be the continued presence of discriminatory hiring practices, most commonly referred to by participants as the requirement of “Canadian experience.” The combination of these two barriers affected the way migrants procured economic capital, which also illustrated the value of Canadian cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Provincial governing bodies in Canada regulate different industries to ensure Canadian ethical and quality standards are maintained. Although migrants can come to Canada with equal or comparable education and experience, professional governing bodies have the authority to refuse to recognize foreign credentials (Bauder, 2003a). This resulted in the requirement that some participants had to enroll in postsecondary institutions to become accredited within their professional field. Jess, a mother of two with a graduate degree in social work who had immigrated from Pakistan in 2011 with her husband, elected to pursue accreditation programs and commented on the redundancy of the employment process,

You need to retrain . . . which is redundant. [Regulations are] professional walls, they also served to exclude. . . . Whether it's unions, whether it's professional associations, whether whatever you may call them . . . by asking for so much local [education and experience] it's a way of exclusion.

Jess considered the requirement of migrants to pursue accreditation for their foreign education and professional experience to be a redundant measure that could be further indicative of professional organizations seeking to exclude migrants from Canadian professional labor markets.

The requirement of the pursuit of accreditation programs in order to obtain an employment in a previous field of expertise could place migrants in a financially precarious position. Meg, a former university professor from Columbia, now in the service industry, was unable to pursue accreditation programs in her field due to the lengthy approvals process and her lack of financial capacity. She commented,

I was a university teacher. . . . I went to find a position in the field of financial planning. . . . I try [sic] to validate my diploma in local services. . . . I couldn't study to receive a licence because the bank wouldn't [let me] borrow money. . . . I work cleaning or other organizing stuff that immigrants have to do. . . . That doesn't make sense, that doesn't help this country to grow.

Migrants arriving in Canada with equal educational and professional experiences are expected to contribute to the economic growth of the country (IRCC, 2019), yet they are constrained in their capacity to do so. The regulation of

foreign credentials creates, for some, a redundancy that places an insurmountable financial burden on them that they are expected to absorb. Their participation in professional accreditation programs was also understood to be indicative of participants' loss of net earnings due to their inability to establish employment within their field of experience as well as their loss of time that could otherwise have been utilized for income generation.

Participants in this study also experienced discriminatory hiring practices based on the requirement of Canadian experience (e.g. Bauder, 2003a; Ferrer & Riddell, 2008). Requiring Canadian experience was understood by the authors to suggest a perceived lack of cohesion between Canadian industries and the participants' expectations. The perceived lack of cohesion was understood to be indicative of the presence of a Canadian form of Bourdieu's cultural capital that held greater value within Canadian labor markets in comparison to cultural capital accrued in a foreign system. Pedro, a participant from Bangalore, India, argued that the discrimination on the basis of Canadian experience created cultural stratification within Canadian society where foreign cultural capital could be considered of less value relative to Canadian cultural capital. Pedro remarked,

I think honestly that's a joke [the requirement of Canadian experience] . . . they make it look like Canada is this country that is so different than everybody in the world, and they put it on a pedestal . . . I don't have Canadian experience, “I have international experience.” . . . They will also have to learn—those that have been here for so many years—will also have to learn to adapt to people outside of their own culture as well.

The preference for Canadian credentials has the potential to situate new migrants who possess international experience in a difficult economic predicament due to the barriers that constrain the production of an equivalent form of Canadian cultural capital. In terms of acculturation, the preference for Canadian cultural capital also constrains the ability of migrants to utilize acculturation strategies that are reflective of integration (Berry, 1992).

Participants who experienced hurdles to employment within their field of experience altered their search for employment by looking for positions that were outside of their field of expertise. This finding is similar to the results discussed by other researchers (e.g. Bauder, 2003a; Ferrer & Riddell, 2008), whereby the presence or lack of Canadian cultural capital is a method of differentiating between applicants. Consequently, the participants needed to convince prospective employers of their knowledge of Canadian

workplace culture, rather than referencing their previous international professional experience. Barriers to employment and regulatory requirements that persuaded participants to pursue professional accreditation programs to validate their international experience were also factors that encouraged other participants to pursue work outside of their field of expertise and professional knowledge. This strategy is similar to strategies other scholars have documented (Picot & Sweetman, 2012; Xue, 2008) and reflects more broadly the pervasive issue of underutilizing human capital arriving in Canada.

Participants of this study who accepted positions in the secondary labor market were highly educated and possessed extensive experience that was gained in their country of origin. However, it appeared that due to the disruptions in their livelihoods, participants elected to exchange their human capital for economic capital that was valued less than what they perceived it was worth. This symbolizes a disjuncture of culture within the Canadian social class. The potential outcome could reflect a population segmented along lines of cultural upbringing, which highlights the reservation of primary labor market positions for Canadian-born citizens. The exclusion of foreign credentials from Canadian labor markets is problematic for a country that will be increasingly reliant on immigration to maintain population growth (Morency et al., 2017), yet this exclusion of credentials is attractive from the perspective of industry (Bauder, 2003a). According to the federal Department of Finance (DoF) (2014), Canada will need to have a “flexible labour force” (p. 4) to meet the challenges of increasing globalization. The experiences of participants represented in this study who expressed difficulty in obtaining positions in their field of experience is reflective of the DoF’s message stressing a flexible labor pool that could fill these positions.

Potentially indicative of the difficulties that some participants experienced in obtaining employment were their strategies to develop and accrue social and cultural capital. Participants of this study initially developed personal relationships and fostered social capital through culturally similar groups. A participant from Japan with a professional background in finance said she developed a friendship with an established Korean migrant. She considered this individual to be culturally similar: “I think she came to talk to me because I am Asian.” This strategy of developing social relationships with culturally similar peers was understood to be attractive for some participants due to its ease to engender social capital with little acculturative stress. For example, Pedro first developed relationships through his ethnic religious community: “My community was my family and my church. I did not struggle as much. I did not have to grow as much.” Similar

to the findings of other scholars, the accrual of social capital with culturally similar groups had the potential to reduce the acculturative stress of participants (Loizos, 2000).

This strategy for developing social capital, however, was understood to reflect an acculturation strategy of separation (Berry, 1992) and the notion that separation could be linked to a form of social capital that is only valuable within particular contexts (Bourdieu, 1984) or social groups. Similar to other research (e.g., Li, 2007), it was understood that the diversity of participants’ social networks was predominately limited to culturally similar groups. An acculturation strategy that is reflective of separation (Berry, 1992) could be unsupportive for other migrants wishing to exchange social capital for the transmission of Canadian cultural capital. The reduced cultural diversity within social networks could negatively impact the group’s capacity to accrue a Canadian form of cultural capital and access employment opportunities, thereby accruing economic capital and establishing a livelihood within Canada.

However, once social networks were established, some participants elected to pursue crosscultural relationships that had the potential of developing relationships with people of different backgrounds. Some participants leveraged their relationships with culturally similar groups to facilitate introductions with individuals who were outside of their cultural networks. For instance, Elara said, “Well, she had another Korean friend too . . . [and] they were a member of the, you know, club [tennis club], and then yeah, that’s how [I] start to [*sic*] getting to know the people.” This approach to developing relationships was reflective of acculturation strategy of integration. It is also indicative of the strategies participants used to leverage similarities in either of the domains of social or cultural capital.

The strategies of acculturation that some participants utilized could be indicative of their capacity to accrue social and cultural capital that could be leveraged to positively affect their livelihoods. The difficulty that some participants experienced in gaining access to Canadian labor markets could be a result of the limited diversity in their social capital, and therefore, cultural capital. As we will discuss in the next section, sport is uniquely positioned to engender social and cultural cohesion across different ethnic groups (Coakley & Donnelly, 2002; Sport Canada, 2012).

However, the disruption in the livelihoods of some participants could affect their strategies to engage with sport programming. Therefore, the capacity of some of the participants to accrue the potential benefits, or different forms of capital, that sport could engender was understood to be limited. The result could indicate the constraints migrant families experience accruing different forms of

capital through sport due to their financial capacity that may inhibit their ability to participate. As the following section will discuss, sport could be further utilized to facilitate bridging between the Canadian population and migrants who elect to pursue acculturation strategies that are reflective of separation. However, further processes need to be developed that include complexities of the migrant's acculturation experiences within the framework of sport to ensure that migrants have the opportunity to participate in sport programming.

Sport in Acculturation Experiences

This study's findings suggest that sport has the ability to attract diverse populations to a central area due to its capacity to act as a common ground (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013). The common ground that sport can create was understood to have the potential to cultivate new social relationships that could accrue different forms of capital. A participant from Holland who had immigrated to Canada in 2017 recognized the role sport played in facilitating social connections, commenting that,

The socializing part is a big part of sport in general. . . . [Sport] is such an easy thing to do worldwide. . . . [For example] if you join a tennis club, that's an instant social network that you build on . . . you have a common denominator.

The utility of sport to engender social relationships could positively affect the livelihoods of migrants who had experiences similar to Meg and Pedro. Utilizing sport as a medium to express frustrations could also facilitate the development of social networks within which migrants could accrue knowledge, recommendations, or advice that could have the potential to produce of a form of capital and positively affect their livelihoods. This could facilitate their adoption of strategies of acculturation that are reflective of integration (Berry, 1992). The utility of sport in the acculturation experience of migrants could be the opportunity sport provides for fostering the social development of migrants (Darnell & Dao, 2017).

The accrual of knowledge or advice was understood to be representative of a form of cultural capital that some of the participants perceived as lacking. The accrual of a Canadian form of cultural capital was interpreted to have the potential to positively affect the livelihoods of participants due to the barriers of entry to Canadian professional markets. The notion, therefore, that sport could "assist in the integration of new Canadians" (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 14) and provide the opportunities for newcomers to foster novel relationships should therefore not be undervalued.

The outcomes of sport participation, however, did not equally benefit all participants and could be indicative of the habitus of migrants. The findings of this study suggest that although sport could facilitate the development of a form of social or cultural capital, new migrants to Canada are more interested in the production of a more concrete form of capital, such as earning money through supplemental employment, pursuing professional accreditation, or developing language proficiency through coursework. First, and particularly salient among some of the participants of this study, were the difficulties in procuring employment and the subsequent financial insecurities. These factors could have limited the participants' abilities to participate fully in sport and experience the possible benefits of developing social relationships. Without sufficient economic capital it was understood that the participants were less likely to participate in sport programming for extended periods of time. Although mentioning they were financially secure, Jada commented on the financial challenges of sport participation: "It's just because of the money thing too . . . because it's costly still—it [sport] costs a lot of money." Participants who were understood to have experienced financial insecurity due to disruptions in their livelihoods elected to pursue accreditation programs, language training, or further employment in the secondary labor market. Pedro commented on his initial limited participation in sport programming: "I had to work, I had to take care of my family, I had to make sure that there was a job always at hand and there was money coming in." These alternatives to sport were understood by the authors to illustrate a form of cultural capital and were perceived by participants to be of greater benefit to their livelihoods than capital developed through sport participation. The authors understood that this form of cultural capital accrual was also understood as an acculturation strategy that was reflective of integration and the necessity of shedding cultural features (Berry, 1992). Several participants perceived gaining cultural capital that could be utilized within Canadian culture as a strategy to accrue economic capital.

The second factor that limited the utility of sport to engender analogous outcomes for all participants was language proficiency. Similar to the strategies participants utilized to develop social relationships, many participants elected to pursue cultural sport programming. Cultural sport programming was understood to include participants of similar linguistic backgrounds, which was perceived to be more attractive for those who were lacking proficiency in English.

The authors understood that the cultural sport programming pursued by participants was indicative of an acculturation

strategy that reflected separation and a habitus that elected to maintain cultural identity. The preference of participants ramming for culturally similar sport programming could more broadly be illustrative of the limitations of sport to embody a universal language (United Nations, 2005), which can act as a mechanism to bridge crosscultural divides and seemingly engender an acculturation strategy that could reflect integration (Berry, 1992). Importantly, these findings reflect a contrary conclusion. The limited capacity of some participants to communicate verbally across crosscultural groups during their participation in sport facilitated the separation of cultural groups on the basis of language. Without encouraging the engagement of cultural groups, sport could prove to be a mechanism that further separates cultural groups. Furthermore, if sport is expected to achieve positive social outcomes, an equal mechanism that also facilitates communication must be developed off of the playing field and outside of the arena.

Third, the findings of this study also suggest that sport-specific cultural capital such as sport proficiency and skill level could facilitate the development of social and cultural capital and engender an unequal distribution of the benefits of sport participation. For example, Jada, a former youth tennis protégé, benefitted socially from her level of skill, stating that, “I must say that it speeds things up [development of friendships] if you have a certain level [of skill]. You get an instant—people respect you. People look differently at you.” Given her level of skill, Jada was able to engender social capital through the platform sport provided, which subsequently could also be exchanged for cultural capital. Other participants, such as Emily, who experienced difficulty in developing social relationships through sport due to her modest skill level, appeared not to have experienced a similar opportunity to exchange cultural capital for social capital. The limited sporting ability of participants therefore effected their capacity to accrue social capital within the same period and required that they invest more of their resources to produce results that were similar to those of higher skill.

Similar to the findings of other research (e.g., Rich et al., 2015), the findings of this study may be indicative of the limitations of sport to foster social relationships equitably in a way that could be used to “assist in the integration of new Canadians” (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 14). Factors that influence the livelihoods of participants, such as the creation and maintenance of these relationships, may also be dependent on the proximity of the participants to sport (Coakley & Donnelly, 2002). As alluded to by other scholars, the accrual of social capital by the participants of this study and its exchange for cultural capital could have been an inclination of the participants’ willingness to

engage in crosscultural relationships (Frisby, 2011). Consequently, participants who elected to engage with sport programming as a step in their settlement process could already be employing acculturation strategies that are reflective of integration. On the other hand, migrants who utilized acculturation strategies reflective of separation may be less attracted to engaging with services that deliver sport, and as a result, they did not receive the new forms of capital that sport participation could accrue. Comprehensive approaches that include migrants utilizing strategies of separation could illuminate the broader nuances of the role sport plays in the livelihoods of migrants. Furthermore, the habitus of migrants who elect to utilize a strategy that is reflective of separation could also be indicative of their willingness to engage with services that are not culturally traditional outside of sport but that could positively influence their livelihoods.

The inequality of capital transmission with regard to sport participation, as Coalter (2007, 2010) remarks, is contrary to the perception of sport as a common denominator as described by some participants. Considering that a number of studies warn that sport could reproduce or exacerbate social exclusion (Janssens & Verweel, 2014; Spaaij et al., 2014), simply offering sport programming to migrant populations with the preconceived notion that sport could act as a “common denominator” to produce positive social outcomes may be insufficient in addressing the experiences of migrants utilizing different acculturation strategies. Further research into the implications of combining sport with other services, such as a “plus sport” (Coalter, 2010) model, whereby sport is a hook for the engagement and delivery of settlement services (e.g., language services, capacity development) to migrant populations, could be a pathway for the IRCC to include sport within its toolbox of settlement strategies.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The CSP Policy Framework called for the development of new institutional partnerships with the IRCC (Sport Canada, 2012) to assist in the settlement process of migrants to Canada. This suggests policy makers perceive sport as a viable pathway to affect the settlement experience of migrants. However, our findings suggest that sport participation alone is unlikely to produce real outcomes for participants that lead to a positive effect on their livelihoods unless they are combined with resources that facilitate the integration of migrants such as language programming or vocational support. Indeed, our research contradicts the CSP’s notion that sport could contribute to “increasing civic pride, engagement, and cohesion,” and “economic development and prosperity.” (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 4) While there are

ways in which the participants accrued social and cultural capital through sport, there was no evidence that sport increased their civic pride or their prosperity.

The glorification and idolization of sport could threaten to overshadow discussions that are needed to address the most persistent issues pertaining to the integration of migrants (Frisby, 2011). As such, we echo the remarks of Darnell and colleagues (2018) who suggest that addressing the systemic barriers that impede economic integration of migrants has the potential for a more profound impact on the settlement experience of migrants and their livelihoods. Further research that explores the implications of sport-facilitated knowledge transfer could provide a more nuanced discussion of the benefits of sport participation on the acculturation experience of migrants.

As articulated in this paper, sport represents a platform for connections to be formed through a shared commonality, yet the capacity of sport to engender positive outcomes was not easily realized. The outcomes of barriers to employment further disrupted the livelihoods of participants and influenced the strategies of acculturation that participants elected to pursue. Rather than pursuing sport during the settlement process, participants perceived value in acculturation strategies that could positively affect their livelihoods, such as Canadian accreditation programs or English as a Second Language courses. However, the perception of sport as a commonality could be utilized to leverage the delivery of other modalities that could have a positive effect on the livelihoods of migrants. For instance, the sport sector can produce opportunities for migrants to develop transferable skills, such as personnel management, project coordination, or the procurement of event funding, within a familiar environment. Further research that comprehensively explores the diversity of acculturation strategies among migrants could better inform the delivery or mode of participation within sport to overcome the social and economic challenges that migrants experience in their acculturation process.

The findings articulated in this paper were drawn from a small-scale research study. More comprehensive studies that explore the broader patterns of participation in sport and acculturation strategies are necessary to add nuance to the scholarly discussion of sport, migration, and livelihoods. Indeed, a basic understanding of participation rates of migrant adults and children in sport in Canada is lacking and could be useful to better understand the scope of the issues at hand and the possible effects of sport on the acculturation process. Research articulating the role that sport can play in developing the diverse capacities of migrants could provide more insights into innovative

approaches that may facilitate the transition of migrants to their new country. Additionally, future research might explore models of sport delivery and governance that can most effectively serve migrant populations and have positive impacts on their settlement and acculturation experiences in large urban centers.

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