

# 2015 Sport Canada Research Initiative Conference

## Plenary Presentations

<b>Strachan, Leisha</b>	<i>Project SCORE! A Deliberate Approach to Teaching Positive Youth Development Through Sport</i>
<b>Arellano, Alexandra</b>	<i>Building Meaningful sport-based Programs for indigenous Youth</i>
<b>Horton, Sean</b>	<i>Promoting sport participation: Exploring physical activity patterns and role models of aging amongst older persons</i>
<b>Fraser-Thomas, Jessica</b>	<i>Trickle down effect? Exploring the influence of the Olympic Games on preschooler sport participation and development</i>
<b>Mock, Steven</b>	<i>The Role of LGBT-focused Sport Group Involvement in Reducing Minority Stress</i>
<b>Balish, Shea</b> (Presenting on behalf of Laurene Rehman)	<i>Successful Experiences of Overweight Children in Sport</i>
<b>Doherty, Alison</b> (Presenting on behalf of Larena Hoerber)	<i>An investigation of innovation in community sport organizations</i>
<b>Reade, Ian</b>	<i>Influence of Interpersonal and Work Environment Factors in coaching</i>


ADVENTURER EXPLORER TEAM PLAYER REBEL PIONEER CREATOR DEFENDER ADVENTURER EXPLORER TEAM PLAYER  
 REBEL PIONEER CREATOR DEFENDER ADVENTURER EXPLORER TEAM PLAYER REBEL PIONEER CREATOR DEFENDER ADVENTURER EXPLORER TEAM PLAYER REBEL PIONEER CREATOR DEFENDER

# Project SCORE! A Deliberate Approach to Teaching Positive Youth Development Through Sport

Dr. Leisha Strachan, University of Manitoba  
 Dr. Dany MacDonald, University of PEI  
 Dr. Jean Côté, Queen's University




EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TEAM PLAYER



## Background

- Sport has the ability to develop performance, participation and personal development (3 P's)
- Organized youth sport can be an ideal setting for personal development but must be deliberate
- Positive youth development (PYD)
- Coaches identified as 2<sup>nd</sup> most influential adult after parents
- Coaches acknowledge that teaching personal development is important and many report not knowing how to teach these skills

Côté, Strachan, & Fraser-Thomas, 2008; Côté, 2015; Erickson et al., 2008; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Holt, 2008; McCallister et al., 2000; Mulholland, 2008; Pettipas et al., 2005




EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TEAM PLAYER

## A guiding framework

- **4 C's of positive development**
  - **Confidence**
    - Positive sense of self-worth & self-efficacy
  - **Competence**
    - Positive view of one's actions
  - **Character**
    - Respect for societal rules; sense of right/wrong
    - Empathy and sympathy for others
  - **Connection**
    - Bi-directional positive bonds with others

Côté, 2015; Lerner, 2005; Vierimaa et al., 2013



EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TEAM PLAYER

## Project SCORE! Development

- **Phase 1** - Development of the website ([www.projectscore.ca](http://www.projectscore.ca)) and Ethical approval
- **Phase 2** - Pilot testing
- **Phase 3** - Edits to site & Recruitment
- **Phase 4** - Research with Project SCORE!
- **Phase 5** - Evaluation



EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TEAM PLAYER

## Research with Project SCORE!



- Coaches Perceptions of Project SCORE! (Strachan, MacDonald, & Côté, in press)
  - Took some time away from training (i.e., skill development)
  - Valuable and coaches did see growth in athletes
  - Personal development for coaches "helped to make a connection with athletes...it helped me to make them better people"
  - Positive parent reaction to the program
- Mini U Instructors and Project SCORE! (Hobday et al., 2014 NASPSA conference)
  - Small increase in sport participants' initiative
  - Time too short but observed increases in effort and attitude of youth and personal growth for instructors




EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TEAM PLAYER

## Research with Project SCORE! con't

- Youth Experiences with Project SCORE! (Strachan, MacDonald, & Côté, abstract submitted to SCAPPS)
  - Positive changes in Personal and Social Skills, Goal Setting, and Initiative
- Think Aloud Protocol to Evaluate Project SCORE! (MacDonald et al. - poster accepted for the Petro-Canada Sport Leadership conference, November 2015)
- Improving Project SCORE! (Kristjanson et al. - poster accepted for the Petro-Canada Sport Leadership conference, November 2015)

## Implications and Conclusions

- Personal development can be easily implemented and integrated across all types of youth sport programs
- Project SCORE! is a free tool that coaches can use to encourage deliberate PYD delivery
- Creating more positive sport programs may help youth to persist in sport and fulfill the role of sport (i.e., 3 P's) in a more holistic way

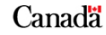



## Acknowledgements



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada





**BUILDING MEANINGFUL SPORT-BASED PROGRAMS FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH**

**ALEXANDRA ARELLANO**  
SCHOOL OF HUMAN KINETICS  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

**Co-investigators:**  
Allan Downey, McGill University  
Eric MacIntosh, University of Ottawa  
Tanya Forneris, University of Ottawa  
Jean Harvey, University of Ottawa

**Graduate students:**  
Cindy Gaudet, University of Ottawa  
Tanya Halsall, University of Ottawa  
Jared Kope, University of Ottawa

**Building meaningful programs for Indigenous youth:**

To help build more meaningful and relevant sport and recreation-based programs for Indigenous youth, through the examination of a series of multidisciplinary analyses and case studies.

Sociocultural perspectives of sport, leisure and physical activity	Psychosocial perspectives, sport psychology and youth development	Sport management
Alexandra Arellano, University of Ottawa Jean Harvey, University of Ottawa	Tanya Forneris, University of Ottawa	Eric MacIntosh, University of Ottawa
Kope, J. (2014) Empowerment and Unlearning: A Departure Towards Inter-Cultural Understanding, MA dissertation, University of Ottawa.	Halsall, T. (forthcoming) Evaluation of a leadership program for First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth, PhD dissertation, University of Ottawa	
Gaudet, C. (forthcoming) Stories of the land: Regenerating milo pimatisiwin, conversations, elders wisdom and youth wellbeing, PhD dissertation, University of Ottawa.		

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

- Formal partnerships with Right To Play, Moose Factory, Whitefish River First Nation, Henvey Inlet and Aamjiwnaang communities.
- Qualitative research designs drawing from emerging Indigenous methodologies, values of reciprocity and participation.
- Community-based participatory research.
- Case studies: Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) program, Project George and Milo Pimatisiwin programs from Moose Factory.
- Researchers participated in approximately 10 different week-long PLAY events with the PLAY team, partners and local mentors from 57 participating communities (2010-2014).
- Participant observation and interviews were conducted for all studies, autoethnography, oral history accounts, archival research were also used in specific studies. Youth-friendly evaluation capacity building workshops and activities, Photovoice exercise that included focus group interviews, stakeholder analysis, utilization and knowledge exchange explorations were also used.

**Indigenous Research Advisory Committee**

**Ethical principles of research with Indigenous peoples**

**Members:**  
Gloria Oshkabewisens-McGregor, Indigenous knowledge holder  
Ernie Sandy, Indigenous knowledge holder  
Allan Downey, Assistant professor, McGill University  
Yuma Hester, PLAY program officer  
Terry Swan, Director of Canadian programs, Save, the Children

- 1. Relational accountability:** All parts of the research process are related, from inspiration to expiration, and the researcher is not just responsible for nurturing and maintaining this relationship but is also accountable to 'all relations'
- 2. Respectful representation:** Supported through every aspect by partners of the research, through humility, generosity, patience and openness to any prevailing ideas and worldviews
- 3. Reciprocal appropriation:** Ongoing and mutually beneficial outcomes for communities, institutions and researchers
- 4. Rights and regulations:** Indigenous communities must own and control data through reporting and publication

**Towards meaningful programs**

**Indigenous resurgence**

“Building diverse, nation-culture-based resurgence means significantly reinvesting in our own ways of being: regenerating our political and intellectual traditions; articulating and living our legal systems; language learning; ceremonial and spiritual pursuits; creating and using our artistic and performance-based traditions. All of these require us – as individuals and collectives – to diagnose, interrogate and eviscerate the insidious nature of conquest, empire, and imperial thought in every aspect of our lives. It requires us to reclaim the very best practices of our traditional cultures, knowledge systems and lifeways in the dynamic, fluid, compassionate, respectful context within which they originally generated.”  
(Leanne Simpson, 2011, pp. 17-18).

**Empowerment**

Based on the need for Indigenous peoples to undergo a process of critical self-reflection helping to recognize, identify, and deconstruct the structures of domination, at the same time as celebrating, reviving, and re-grounding the communities in traditional practices and values.  
(Taiiaki Alfred, 2009; Glen Coulthard, 2014).

**RESEARCH THEMES**

- Exploring youth experiences through a definition of empowerment that involves critical thinking of socio-political processes and the centrality of cultural revitalization for indigenous youth
- The Indigenous sport of Lacrosse re-inscribed within Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee epistemologies
- Non-Indigenous practitioners critical self reflections on their practice and experiences working with Indigenous peoples and structural challenges they encounter
- Grassroot programs and the importance of the connection to the land
- Indigenous methodologies
- Program evaluation and management

**GENERAL RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

- The centrality of culture, traditions, but also more specifically, restoring the relationship to the land
- The importance of respecting Indigenous knowledge, values and ways
- Engage with critical self-reflection processes and resurgence advocacy




<p>Youth experiences and empowerment</p> <p>PLAY program</p>	<p><b>More specific outcomes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) support strong identity foundations;</li> <li>2) walk youth through healing journey;</li> <li>3) more resources needed to address trauma, suicide ideation and mental health issues;</li> <li>4) encourage a political understanding of historical and colonial structure reproducing inequalities;</li> <li>5) encourage Indigenous resurgence advocacy.</li> </ol>
--	---

<p><b>Contributions published and in preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaudet, "Rethinking Participatory Research with Indigenous Peoples", <i>Journal of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA)</i>, p.69-88</li> <li>• MacIntosh, E. Arellano, A. &amp; Forneris, T. "Exploring the Community and External-Agency Partnership in Sport-for-Development Programming" <i>European Sport Management Quarterly</i>.</li> <li>• Kope, J. &amp; A. Arellano, "Experiences of Critical Youth Empowerment in Whitefish River First Nation", <i>Leisure</i>.</li> <li>• Arellano, A &amp; Harvey, J. "Sport for Indigenous Resurgence: Towards a Critical Settler-Colonial Reflection", <i>International Review of Sociology of Sport</i>.</li> <li>• Arellano, A. &amp; Downey, A "Lacrosse as a Medicine Game"</li> <li>• Arellano, A. &amp; Forneris, T. "The PLAY Program Strengths and Challenges: Perceptions of the PLAY."</li> <li>• Kope, A. "Unlearning Through Experience: Understanding My Right To Play".</li> <li>• Halsall, T. &amp; Forneris, T. Evaluation of the Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) Program: Stories of Positive Youth Development and Community Development.</li> <li>• Halsall, T. &amp; Forneris, T. ). Challenges and strategies for success of a Sport for Development program for First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth.</li> </ul>
--




## Promoting sport participation: Exploring physical activity patterns and role models of aging amongst older persons


Sean Horton, Patti Weir (University of Windsor)  
Joe Baker (York University)  
Rylee Dionigi (Charles Sturt University)



## Sport involvement **drops** as we age




- By age 55, only 17% of Canadians engage in sport (Stats Can 2013)
- Negative Stereotypes








## Role Models




- Important for youth
- Utility for older adults?
- Designing effective interventions (Lockwood et al 2005)








## Methodology

- 112 participants
- Elite athletes – completely sedentary
- Age range (60-94)
- Qualitative Interviews




## Successful Aging

- Seniors have role models of what it means to 'age successfully'
- Biomedical vs Psychosocial approaches to aging
- Reactions to images of athletes
  - Similarities with literature on role models for young people

• Horton, S., Dionigi, R. A., & Bellamy, J. (2013). Canadian women aged 75 and over: Attitudes towards health related role models and female masters athletes. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social and Community Studies*, 7(3), 33-47.

• Dionigi, R. A., Horton, S., & Bellamy, J. (2011). Meanings of aging among older Canadian women of varying activity levels. *Leisure Sciences*, 33, 402-419.



## Masters Athletes

- Empowerment
- Sport, above and beyond exercise
- Saw themselves as role models/advocates for healthy living





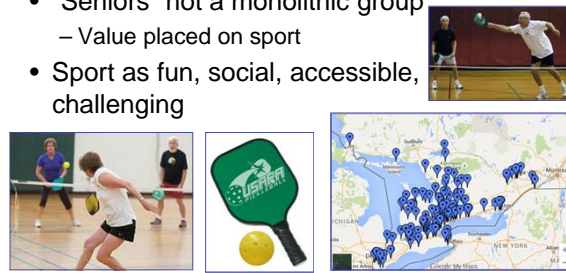

### Masters Athletes

- Resist and reinforce aging stereotypes simultaneously
- Moralizing component to exercise
  - Old as 'other'
- Socioeconomic status



### Policy Implications

- "Seniors" not a monolithic group
  - Value placed on sport
- Sport as fun, social, accessible, challenging



## Trickle down effect? Exploring the influence of the Olympic Games on preschooler sport participation and development

Jessica Fraser-Thomas

Parissa Safai



Peter Donnelly



## Objective 1

To explore preschoolers' development through sport.



## Method

- Participants:
  - 19 parents of preschoolers
  - 8 childcare providers
  - 57 preschoolers (ages 2-5)
- Data Collection:
  - Interviews and focus groups
  - Spring/summer 2012/2013
  - Children's drawings as a tool to enhance conversation



## Results

- Parents/childcare providers often perceived extensive developmental benefits
  - Health, fitness, motor skills
  - Psychosocial and life skills
    - Interpersonal skills, competence/confidence, team player, winning/losing
- Program shortcomings hindered optimal outcomes



## Objective 2

To examine preschoolers' sport participation patterns pre- and post-Olympic Games



## Method and Results

- Participants
  - N=30 in 2013; N=96 in 2012 (limitations of 69% dropout rate)
- Data Collection
  - Parent proxy 7-day sport/PA recall tool (2012, 2013)
  - Olympic Games exposure log (2012)

### **Results: NS difference in weekly sport/PA**

2012 M=10.3 activity bouts/week (SD=7.5)

2013 M=12.1 activity bouts/week (SD=6.5)

$t(29) = .47, p=.64$



### Objective 3

To explore the influence of the Olympic Games on preschoolers' psychological and social development



### Results

- Parents/childcare providers felt Games positively influenced children
  - Positive life skills (work ethic, perseverance, teamwork, role models)
  - Winning and losing (pride and disappointment; trying one's best, sportspersonship)
  - National identity, culture, geography








### Policy Implications

- Preschooler Sport
  - Coach training (age-specific): session planning, communication skills, cognitive/social development
  - Program structure: shorter sessions, modified rules, decreased instruction, increased physical activity
- Preschooler Trickle Down Effect
  - Need improved mechanisms to enhance sport/physical activity through and outside the Games
  - Benefit from age-appropriate educational curricula, materials, activities explicating connection between Games and pro-social norms/values

### Acknowledgements



 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada   
  Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada   
 

 Canadian Heritage   
  Patrimoine canadien  
 Sport Canada

## “The Role of LGBT-focused Sport Group Involvement in Reducing Minority Stress”

SCRI Conference 2015

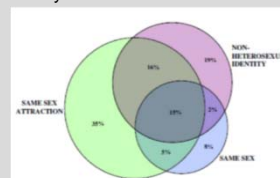
Dr. Steven E. Mock  
Associate Professor, Dept. of Recreation and Leisure Studies  
Director, RBC Retirement Research Centre

>> 1



## Minority Stress

- Sexual Minority Status



- Is Sexual Minority Status Stigmatized?
  - threat to gender norms (Bem, 1991)
  - vilified in certain belief systems
  - experienced across the life span

>> 2



## Minority Stress

- Consequences of stigmatization: *minority stress*
  - » Negative reflected appraisals lead to:
    - Devalued individual identity; e.g., internalization of stigma known as **internalized homophobia** (Herek et al., 1997)
    - **Social isolation** (i.e., *anomie*; Durkheim, 1897)
    - In sum – negative *individual* identity and disconnected from larger *social* identity
    - Identity concealment also takes a toll – hypervigilance is psychologically taxing, linked to worse health

>> 3



## Given the Minority Stress model...

- What could help?
  - » ...to enhance social integration?
  - » ...to enhance identity development?... and create the circumstances to reduce (*stressful*) identity concealment for those with a stigmatized identity?



>> 4



## Study Description

- **224 participants** took part in a **longitudinal** study of LGBT-focused sport group participation
  - » Recruited primarily from a large Canadian city
  - » Facilitated by Survey Research Centre at UW
  - » Top sports: softball/baseball; curling; soccer; volleyball; bowling; water polo; basketball; ice hockey; rugby; tennis
  - » Average Age: 37, SD = 9.91, min = 20, max = 68
  - » Sex: 60% male, 37% female, 0.6% transgender, 1.6% diverse response (e.g., genderqueer, not defined)
  - » Sexual Orientation Identity: regardless of sex, 62% gay, 27% lesbian, 2% bisexual, remainder unlabeled, other

>> 5



## Sample of Key Measures –

### Predictors

- Ego Involvement Scale (Kyle et al., 2006)
  - 15 items rated from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*
  - » Yields measures of key needs met in sport group, e.g., **Social Bonding, Identity Expression, Identity Affirmation**

### Outcomes

- (also from...) Ego Involvement Scale (Kyle et al., 2006)
  - » Yields measures that reflect commitment to the group, e.g., **Attraction, Centrality...**
- Disclosure of Sexual Minority Identity
  - » mean ratings for disclosure to friends, family, day to day life from 1 = no one knows to 5 = all know, M = 4.32, SD = 0.75


>> 6




### Sample of Findings

Social Bonding → Sport Group Attraction  
 Identity Expression → Sport Group Centrality


- Having social and identity needs met, increased importance of sport group in participants' lives

Identity Affirmation → 

>> 7 

### Summary & Discussion

- Evidence that having social/identity needs met in LGBT-focused sport can help “undo” minority stress process
- Additionally, spillover to everyday life – i.e., disclosure of sexual minority identity
- Challenges notions of “inclusiveness”
- “*Then and Now*”

>> 8 

# SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES

*for overweight children in sport*

**Presenter / Research Coordinator:** Shea Balish<sup>1</sup>  
**Principal Investigators:** Laurene Rehman<sup>1</sup>, Chris Shields<sup>2</sup>  
**Co-applicants:** Mark Bruner<sup>3</sup>, Melanie Keats<sup>1</sup>  
 Dalhousie University<sup>1</sup>, Acadia University<sup>2</sup>, Nipissing University<sup>3</sup>



Canadian Heritage  
Sport Canada



Patrimoine canadien



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada



Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



## Parental Views of Overweight Athletes

- Explored the supports and challenges of overweight youth participating in sport.
- Qualitative
  - Semi-structured interviews with 24 parents
- Parents described that they often sought sport as a new context to develop independence, self-esteem, wider social networks, team identity, and physical activity.
- Challenges related to the structure and lack of spontaneity and aspects of play associated with participation in structured sport/recreation.

## Overweight Children and Team Sport



## “Pulling One’s Weight”

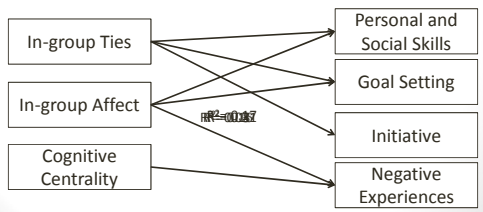
- Explored peers and coach’s experiences and perceptions of overweight youth to better understand motivational factors.
- Mixed method
  - Semi-structured interviews (N = 8) with coaches.
  - Children (N = 164, 59% female) completed an experimental impression formation vignette depicting a “heavy” or “tall” athlete.
- Qualitative themes converged on the perceived importance of youths’ negative performance experiences within a team. Feeling like the “weakest link.”
- Quantitative vignette revealed that children negatively perceive heavy athletes relative to tall athletes, especially as having decreased self-confidence.

## Method

- Dual-phase, mixed-methods design.
  - **Phase I** involved collecting survey data from children (ages 10-14) and their parents/guardians (N=233 dyads).
  - **Phase II** involved qualitative data collection via semi-structured interviews with parents (N=24) and coaches (N=8) recruited in Phase I.
- Three recruitment sites
  - Halifax NS
  - Wolfville NS
  - North bay ON

## Connection → Positive Development?

- Explored the association between social identity and positive youth development in recreational sport.
- Quantitative
  - 233 children (58% female) completed survey measures



```

    graph LR
      IT[In-group Ties] --> PSS[Personal and Social Skills]
      IT --> GS[Goal Setting]
      IT --> I[Initiative]
      IT --> NE[Negative Experiences]
      IA[In-group Affect] --> PSS
      IA --> GS
      IA --> I
      IA --> NE
      CC[Cognitive Centrality] --> PSS
      CC --> GS
      CC --> I
      CC --> NE
    
```



## Practical Applications

- Feelings of competence is central to motivation for sport
  - Talk is cheap, so we need to facilitate “deep” mastery experiences.
  - These feelings may need to develop “naturally”
- Feeling tied to an “in-group” may facilitate personal development.
  - How can we develop in-group ties and emotion?

## Conclusion

- Results converged on feelings of incompetence and the amplifying effect of team sports.
- Coaches may need to develop “deep” strategies to foster feelings of competence in overweight youth.
- Specific dimensions of team identity in recreational sport are related to different forms of positive youth development. In particular, in-group affect may be particularly important.

## AN INVESTIGATION OF INNOVATION IN COMMUNITY SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Larena Hoerber, University of Regina  
Alison Doherty, Western University (presenter)  
Orland Hoerber, University of Regina  
Richard Wolfe, University of Victoria

### Innovation in [community] sport

- "Any idea, practice, or material artifact perceived as new by the relevant unit of adoption" (Zaltman et al., 1973, p. 10)
- Critical to organizational competitiveness, effectiveness, survival (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010)
- Community sport organizations are innovative (e.g., Franke & Shah, 2003; Hoerber & Hoerber, 2012; Hull & Liao, 2006; McDonald, 2007)

### Objectives of our research

- (1) to investigate the nature of radical vs. incremental innovations in CSOs
- (2) to examine board culture and club culture as determinants of innovation adoption
- (3) to study the innovation adoption process in CSOs from a longitudinal perspective

### Methods

- Study 1: Semi-structured interviews with Presidents of 16 CSOs representing 12 different sports in 10 Ontario communities.
- Study 2: Planned to conduct focus groups with CSO board members, but unsuccessful in coordinating a sufficient number of groups.
- Study 3: Case studies of two CSOs (hockey, synchro) in Ontario. Conducted over an 18-month period of innovation.

### Findings (Study 1)

- Radical innovations are (1) brand new to the sport or to the club's community, (2) represent a substantial change to existing practice, and/or (3) have a wide and deep impact on the club.
- Radical innovations tends to focus on club growth and development, is led by an idea champion, and relies on a supportive board culture and financial resources to implement.
- Successful radical innovation may prompt a variety of further club opportunities.

### Findings (Study 3)

- CSOs may experience innovation in quite different ways, highlighting the potential complexity of the process.
- Different innovations, and different approaches to their adoption and implementation, can be successful in terms of achieving their intended objectives.
- Unique aspects of the innovations also contribute to whether they are sustained or not.

### Practical applications (Study 1)

- If interested in club growth and development, consider radical innovations
- If interested in athlete development, consider incremental innovations
- Before pursuing innovations, consider
  - Volunteer capacity
  - Existence of an idea champion
  - Financial resources
  - Supportiveness of the board to innovation

### Practical applications (Study 3)

- There is no standard approach to innovation
- Idea champions can come from anywhere in the club
- Pressures to innovate come from internal and external sources
- Pay attention to barriers to innovation

## INFLUENCE OF INTERPERSONAL AND WORK ENVIRONMENT FACTORS IN COACHING

C.J. KNIGHT<sup>1</sup>, W.M. RODGERS<sup>2</sup>, I. L. READE<sup>2</sup>, J. M. MRAK<sup>2</sup>, & C. R. HALL<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>APPLIED SPORT, TECHNOLOGY, EXERCISE AND MEDICINE RESEARCH CENTRE, SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

<sup>2</sup>FACULTY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

<sup>3</sup>SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY, WESTERN UNIVERSITY.

### PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAM

TO create understanding and awareness of the importance of the CAREER COACHES' WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR:

- MANAGING COACHES
- CONTENT WITHIN COACH EDUCATION AND
- A TOPIC FOR COACHING RESEARCH

WORK ENVIRONMENT IS UNDERVALUED IN ITS IMPACT ON THE SPORT SYSTEM AND COACH AND ATHLETE PERFORMANCE.

### SSHRC FUNDED RESEARCH

The coaches that are the focus of our research are coaches that depend on coaching for their livelihoods.

- Research draws from coaching stress, work-environment, and role-conflict literature.
- Two qualitative descriptive studies were conducted to examine the work-environment factors that influence coach transitions.

The work environment of an employee has been found to be linked to job satisfaction, and job satisfaction is linked to retention.

Four major themes were identified:

- 1) interpersonal considerations (support from supervisors and athletes),
- 2) work demands,
- 3) career concerns (opportunities for career progression), and
- 4) success and enjoyment (winning, athlete development).

### APPLICATION TO PRACTICE

- WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SUGGEST MUST BE MANAGED IN THE COACHES' WORK ENVIRONMENT TO IMPROVE JOB SATISFACTION AND COACH RETENTION?

- interpersonal considerations
  - supportive colleagues and supervisors
- work demands
  - attention to amount of admin
- career concerns
  - contracts, compensation, benefits
- success and enjoyment
  - interactions with athletes
- opportunities for career progression
  - provide an obvious pathway

## Key learning

- While we are confident that our research findings reinforced the critical importance of the work environment in job satisfaction for coaches, we have yet to identify **which factors are the most important**.

However, employers and coach educators should be aware that:

- Opportunities for career progression are important to coaches and the employer can certainly build that into their management system.
- Workload does not seem to be a major influence on job satisfaction, but the type of work does matter. Coaches like to coach.
- Supportive interpersonal relationships are very important to coaches. However, strain in personal relationships is probably a larger factor for coaches than for many professions due to the long hours, the weekend work, and the emphasis on winning.

## Key stakeholders and benefits

- Coaches Association of Canada would benefit from incorporating into their advanced coach education a course to assist coaches in understanding and managing their work environment.
- All employers of coaches, such as national and provincial sport organizations, and clubs could ensure their employees have the skills to manage coaches effectively.
- Universities and colleges with coach education programs should ensure they incorporate management content in their coach education courses.
- Three peer-reviewed journal articles and one textbook chapter are now in print as an outcome of this research program.