Developing Young People's Sense of Self and Place through Sport

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Abstract

Previous research has recognised positive health implications, both physical and mental, as an outcome of participation in leisure pursuits. They provide opportunities for self-expression and stress reduction, as well as an environment in which people can socialise. Leisure activities, specifically sport activities, can play a significant role in young people's identity development. This paper explores the leisure activities in which young people in Adelaide, Australia participate. It examines the role of leisure activities in terms of young people's identity and feelings towards their hometown. This study consisted of semi-structured focus groups conducted with 24 senior high school students, followed by a survey resulting in 226 useable responses. Respondents were aged between 16 and 18 years of age. From the range of activities identified and explored the results revealed sports activities to have the greatest impact on young people's lives. The results demonstrated that frequency of participation has a significant effect on young people's involvement levels and how they identify with the activity.

Introduction

The importance of leisure activities for young people and the numerous benefits that they can provide has been recognised by many researchers within the leisure and recreation fields (Aaron, Storti, Robertson, Kiska, & LaPorte, 2002; Garton & Pratt, 1991; Steptoe & Butler, 1996; Trainor, Delfabbro, Anderson, & Winefield, 2010). The health benefits gained through participation in sports activities have been acknowledged as a key positive outcome of leisure participation. Warburton, Nicol and Bredin (1983) found that there is a linear relationship between physical activity and health which suggests that physical activity leads to an improved health status. Beyond the reasons of fitness and well-being, it has been suggested that leisure activities play a vital role in the development of young people. Through participation in leisure activities, young people can gain valuable social skills and have the opportunity to develop their own sense of identity through the social interaction process. Leisure activities often allow for the development of activity-specific skills as well as skills that can equip young people with expertise that they can apply to other areas of their life (Saggers, Palmer, Royce, Wilson, & Charlton, 2004).

Leisure pursuits also offer more worthwhile opportunities compared with other unsociable and undesirable activities in which young people may otherwise become involved (Saggers, et al., 2004). Young people are often viewed in a negative light due to the stereotypes of

youth activity, such as taking drugs and vandalising property with graffiti. Offering a positive social environment and activities for young people can be a means of reducing this undesirable behaviour. In doing this, young people have the choice to be involved in more productive pursuits which may be beneficial for their own self-development. The provision of activities for young people can also benefit the wider community by reducing damaging and destructive behaviour.

This paper aims to examine the leisure pursuits of young people and explore the degree of importance that young people attach to activities such as sport. It explores their motivations for participation, frequency of participation, and how their leisure activities affect their identity and feelings towards their place of residence.

Literature Review

Leisure is a broad term that incorporates a number of different types of activities. It can be defined as 'uncoerced, contextually framed activity engaged in during free time, which people want to do and, using their abilities and resources, actually do in either a satisfying or fulfilling way (or both)' (Stebbins, 2011: 4). However, Stebbins (2011) also asserts that short definitions can fail to reflect the complete idea of leisure. This is particularly apparent in the various perspectives from which leisure can be examined, including the planning and development of leisure activities and the individual's experience of leisure.

Motivations to participate in leisure activities can vary based on individual preferences and the abundant number of leisure activities available. Manfredo, Driver and Tarrant (1996) collated data from 36 studies which were published in the mid to late 1970s. Their analysis revealed 19 motivational dimensions for leisure participation: achievement/stimulation, autonomy/leadership, risk taking, equipment, family togetherness, similar people, new people, learning, enjoy nature, introspection, creativity, nostalgia, physical fitness, physical rest, escape personal-social pressures, escape physical pressure, social security, teaching-leading others, and risk reduction (Manfredo, et al., 1996). Some of these dimensions also contained sub-scales, additionally illustrating the complexity and varied reasons that contribute to the desire to participate in leisure activities. Beard and Ragheb (1983 in Ryan & Glendon, 1998) devised a broader set of categories representing leisure motivations. They suggested four motives for leisure participation: intellectual (learning and discovering), social (developing interpersonal relationships), competence-mastery (mastering the skills

and challenging oneself), and stimulus avoidance (escaping from over-stimulating situations in daily life) (Beard & Ragheb 1983 in Ryan & Glendon, 1998). Both of these motivational lists indicate the reasons why people participate in leisure activities even though the Manfredo, Driver and Tarrant (1996) categorisation acknowledges more specific factors. Of course, it is possible for individuals to be motivated by more than one of these factors (Crompton & McKay, 1997) and for motivations to differ from individual to individual.

Theories such as achievement goal theory and self-determination theory also provide an insight into motivations. In associating goals for participating in sport with beliefs of high school students, Duda and Nicholls' (1992) found that the ego-involved goal to succeed above others was linked to the belief of high ability. Whereas, task orientation is the goal of gaining knowledge and is believed to require interest, effort and collaboration with peers (Duda & Nicholls, 1992). Therefore, this theory suggests that certain characteristics and behaviours are required to fulfil the particular goals which participants are aiming to achieve. Self-determination theory is another psychological theory which aims to explain the types of human motivations (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Two distinct types of motivation are autonomous and controlled motivations. Autonomous motivations have been described as intrinsic and extrinsic motivations which the individual values in the activity and integrates into their sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2008). On the other hand, controlled motivations are regulated by external conditions. For example, the individual's behaviour is shaped based on the rewards or punishments they receive for their actions (Deci & Ryan, 2008). In these cases, participants aim to gain approval and avoid shame. Therefore, this theory provides an understanding of internal and external factors which influence motivations to participate in an activity.

In addition to the previously mentioned studies, a number of studies have focused specifically on the motivations for sport participation. One such study by Kilpatrick, Hebert and Bartholomew (2005) found that affiliation, competition, challenge and enjoyment were among the top motivators for college students participation in sport. Revitalisation as well as strength and endurance were also found to be important. Despite the emphasis that this study places on social development, the social variable termed 'social recognition' did not rank highly (Kilpatrick, et al., 2005). In contrast, Allen (2003) focused on the role played by social motivation and found that factors such as social status and social recognition helped to explain young people's decisions to participate.

The desire to fulfil motivations can encourage participants to participate frequently. Havitz and Dimanche (1997) state that leisure activities can be primary and supplementary, meaning that primary activities are more important and prioritised over supplementary activities. Other leisure studies have also recognised that different levels of participation and commitment to an activity exist. For example, Stebbins uses the terms casual, project-based and serious leisure to define participants (Stebbins, 2008). In contrast to serious leisure, in which the participant's interest level in the leisure activity directs their career towards it, casual leisure is immediate, short-lived and requires no skills training (Stebbins, 1997). Examples of casual leisure include going for a walk in the park and watching television. In contrast, project-based leisure is short-term, infrequent activities including one-off or occasional projects such as volunteering (Stebbins, 2008). Similarly, Bryan (1977) coined the term 'recreational specialisation' to indicate participants' level of specialisation in their activity by measuring factors such as the number of years they have participated, how frequently they participate and their financial investment in equipment for the activity. It was found that participants who have invested more, in terms of time and cost, are more likely to attach greater importance to the activity than those who are not as committed.

The concept of involvement has developed as an extension of recreational specialisation and explores the psychological motivation or interest towards an activity (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004). Scales developed to measure involvement commonly consist of three dimensions: centrality to lifestyle, self-expression, and attraction. These dimensions were first developed by McIntyre and Pigram (1992) and have been widely used since. Involvement has been applied to recreational settings in order to gain a greater understanding of participants and how they feel about the activity in which they participate. Research on this concept has found that involvement in an activity increases with frequency of participation (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2003). Therefore, an activity will mean more to the individual if they participate regularly. Consequently, it can be proposed that greater benefits can be achieved from a higher degree of participation.

The benefits gained from leisure activities can be particularly beneficial for young people who are in a transitional stage of their life. Young people are broadly defined to be between the ages of 12 and 25 years of age (Cheers & Yip, 1993). This is a particularly large age

range considering the changes and transitional stages that occur during this time period. Trethewey and Burston (1988) suggest that the greatest transitional point occurs when young people are aged 16 and 17 and are noticing changes in terms of their physical appearance and emotions. At this age young people seek more independence and want to spend more time with their peers. Young people try to establish their own personal identities by interacting with various peer groups in order to find the best 'fit'(National Youth Council of Australia, 1975). Affinity with peers is often based on shared interests and activities (Cormack, 1992). Therefore the activities that young people participate in can be critical in their personal development.

It is beneficial for young people to pursue leisure activities for physical as well as mental health reasons. For instance, leisure pursuits can reduce stress levels (Trainor, et al., 2010), which can be important for young people facing stressful situations such as exams. Sport participation, in particular, can have a positive effect on an individual's psychological well-being (Donaldson & Ronan, 2006; Steptoe & Butler, 1996). As found by Trainor et al. (2010), structured activities like sport can result in increased psychological well-being and reduced substance use. Additionally, there is the argument that sport participation provides young people with moral lessons based on the underlying rules and guidelines learnt during play (South Australian Tourism Commission, 2009). This is a favourable argument amongst policymakers, but it has been argued that it only forms the basis of sport education and that other areas of education are necessary to create a holistic impression of morals for young people (Kosiewicz, 2006).

As well as being beneficial in terms of social development, leisure activities can assist to build character in young people through the development of new skills such as decision-making skills (Saggers, et al., 2004). Previous studies have also suggested a causal link between identity and leisure participation (Arnon, Shamai, & Ilatov, 2008; Schmalz, 2011). An individual's identity can encourage participation in certain activities and likewise participation can influence the individual's identity. Schmalz (2011) found that gender identity and stereotypes can influence young people's decision to participate in certain activities. For example, males were more inclined to participate in activities that were deemed to be masculine such as football. The association with particular activities is important to the individual because it helps to establish their identity and sense of self (Shamir, 1992).

Similarly, Garton and Pratt's (1991) study, found that gender was a key predictor of participation in sport, vocational, and watersport activities. Males demonstrated greater participation in sport and watersports, whereas more females participated in vocational activities (Garton & Pratt, 1991). This suggests that preferences differ based on gender, so this is an important consideration in young people's participation in leisure activities. The relationship between leisure and identity has also been acknowledged by Son (2011) who found that identity influenced young college women's choice to participate in leisure activities. The young women's perceptions of their self-identity influenced their decision of whether the activity was appropriate for them. Participating in an activity which fits with one's identity can also provide the benefit of allowing the individual to express themselves and be themselves within that environment (Roberts, 1983). Garton and Pratt (1991) found that activity participation is correlated with interest in the activity. This supports Coatsworth et al.'s (2005) idea that an activity is more important to a young person if it fits with their self-conception of identity. To test the extent to which activities impact upon an individual's identity development Shamir (1992) developed a concept termed 'identity salience'. Identity salience was established as a measure of an activity's relative importance in relation to the individual's identity development. In this study, identity salience was found to correlate with time investment and continued commitment to the activity (Shamir, 1992).

Young people are often involved in activities such as sport from an early age (Wright, MacDonald, & Groom, 2003), and as such the activity becomes a key aspect of their lives. Despite this, participation in physical activities has been found to decrease with age (Aaron, et al., 2002) perhaps due to the growth of academic commitments. Although, individuals who are serious about their activity may increase their involvement and competition level as they get older (Allen, 2003).

Studies conducted within the recreation field have demonstrated that involvement can lead to increased levels of place attachment (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Havitz & Dimanche, 1995). Place attachment itself is a concept that has received considerable attention within recreational settings. Defined as the affective bonds between people and place (Low & Altman, 1992), place attachment has often been found to be strengthened by continual use of a recreational area. Place attachment is commonly measured using two dimensions: place identity and place dependence. Place identity is described as the symbolic or affective

attachment to place (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Inalhan & Finch, 2004; Knez, 2005). Place dependence, on the other hand, refers to the functional attributes of the place and how well the place caters for the needs of the individual (Gibbons & Ruddell, 1995; Hou, Lin, & Morais, 2005; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981).

This paper aims to examine the pattern of leisure participation amongst young people in Adelaide, their motivations and how their activities impact upon their identity salience, involvement and place attachment.

Method

A mixed methods approach was implemented to collect both qualitative and quantitative data for this study. This occurred in a two stage process, with qualitative data being collected via focus groups and then quantitative data being collected through a questionnaire. The exploratory nature of this study made it desirable to collect qualitative data from young people first in order to gain a sense of the leisure activities they pursue. Focus groups were perceived to be the best method because they enable a range of perspectives to be gained at one time and also offer the opportunity for the researcher to ask probing questions to find out further information (Bryman, 2008). In terms of researching young people, focus groups were favoured over interviews because of the greater ratio of young people to the researcher which aimed to put the participants at ease and speak more openly. Additionally, participants and the researcher were positioned in a circle so there was no dominant position, which reduced the perception of power (Best, 2007). Best (2007) has also acknowledged that research with young people can be difficult due to differing levels of understanding of theories and phenomena. In this instance, focus groups were useful in providing clarification for participants and discussions which helped to facilitate understanding.

Four focus groups were held with 16 to 18 year old high school students, resulting in a total of 24 participants (16 females and 8 males). Participants represented four different high schools, all co-educational schools but providing a cross-section of public and private school students living in a range of geographical areas within the city of Adelaide. Prior to the research being carried out, certain additional ethical requirements were needed due to the young age of the respondents. In addition to the regular university ethics protocol, approval was required from the Department of Education and Children's Services. The interaction

between the researcher and the participants also necessitated a police clearance. After these procedures were complied with consent was gained from the respondents and their parents.

The focus groups were semi-structured, focusing on the participant's leisure activity participation. This enabled the identification of the most popular leisure activities, as well as the respondent's feelings and perceptions of these activities. As the results presented in this paper are from a larger doctoral study in which tourism events were a particular focus, events such as the Adelaide Fringe Festival were emphasised during the data collection. The data were collected towards the end of 2009, within school time. Replicating their usual school setting, each focus group were mixed gender with the aim of gaining a range of perspectives. The duration of each focus group was approximately one hour, with one focus group being held in each of the four high schools. Upon concluding the focus groups, recordings were transcribed and this data was thematically analysed using NVIVO version eight (Teare, 1990).

The analysis of the focus group data guided the development of the questionnaire which was distributed for the second stage of data collection. The development of this questionnaire was also based on the relevant leisure research. The survey method is consistent with previous research (see for example Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Kyle, et al., 2003) which has adopted this method because it is the easiest way to capture research participant's responses to the multi-item scales which have been developed in this field. It was also considered to be the most appropriate method for obtaining a large number of responses that would be representative of the young population. Based on statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there are approximately 80,000 young people between the ages of 16-19 residing in Adelaide (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). A majority of young people are enrolled in high school until their completion of Year 12 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010) at which time they are, on average, between seventeen or eighteen years old.

The questionnaire contained questions about six leisure activities identified in the focus groups. The questionnaire aimed to determine whether the respondent participated in the activities listed and if so the frequency and reason for their participation. Pre-existing scales of identity salience (Shamir, 1992), involvement (Kyle, et al., 2003) and place attachment (Williams, 2000) were also included. Identity salience and involvement scales were completed for each of the activities in which respondents participated, whereas place

attachment was measured in relation to Adelaide in general. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure responses in relation to each of the scales.

The questionnaires were pilot tested with one class of senior high school students. This pilot test demonstrated the reliability of the scales in this context and resulted in only minor changes to the wording of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to senior high school students (aged 16-18 years old) in eight high schools within the metropolitan area of Adelaide. Questionnaire distribution to these eight schools aimed to gain an accurate representation of young people in terms of gender, geographic dispersion and private and public school attendees. To ensure that the questionnaires were completed voluntarily the students were given one week to complete the questionnaire and return it to a sealed box located at the school. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed and resulted in 226 useable responses, giving a response rate of 57%. Of the total useable responses, 118 were male (52%) and 108 were female (48%). The questionnaire data was entered into SPSS version 18 and analysed to reveal descriptive and frequency statistics. Between group analyses were also conducted using One-way Analysis of Variance tests (ANOVAs).

Results

Analysing histograms, skewness, and kurtosis indicated that the data was reasonably normal, but slightly negatively skewed. The four focus groups revealed that the most common leisure activities were playing sport, spectating sport, shopping, and going to the beach. The Adelaide Fringe Festival and the Clipsal 500 V8 car race were the events that were most highly attended by the sample. Other activities and events were mentioned in the discussions, but the aforementioned activities and events were the most popular. The questionnaire then investigated these leisure activities in terms of young people's participation, identity salience, involvement, and how these factors influence place attachment to Adelaide. In the questionnaire, the sample was asked to indicate their participation in each of the activities and events, and this is illustrated in Table 1.

Activity/Event	% of the Sample	Gender of Participants	
		Male	Female
Playing Sport	64.6%	56.5%	43.5%
Spectating Sport	60.2%	53.7%	46.3%
Shopping	82.7%	43.3%	56.7%

Going to the Beach	85.8%	50%	50%
Adelaide Fringe Festival	58.4%	49.2%	50.8%
Clipsal 500	52.2%	56.8%	47.2%

Table 1 Percentage of the sample participating in each activity and event

Shopping and going to the beach were the activities in which the highest number of young people participated. However, almost two-thirds of the sample was also involved in sport activities. Even though playing and spectating sports were not found to be participated in by the highest proportion of young people, those who did participate indicated the highest frequency of participation. Participation in events resulted in the lowest percentages, most likely because both of these events occur just once a year and therefore the opportunity for involvement is limited. Playing or being a spectator of sport, and attendance at the Clipsal 500 were slightly more popular with males. Not unsurprisingly, shopping was a more popular activity amongst female respondents. Previous studies (Brown, Jago, Chalip, Ali, & Mules, 2011; Real, 2000) have recognised a female preference for shopping because it provides a social experience as well as the opportunity to express their identity through fashion.

In order to understand motivations for participation, an open question asked respondents to indicate their reasons for participation. The responses were coded into themes which are illustrated in Table 2.

Activity/Event	*Reason for Participation*
Playing Sport	Fitness; Fun; Love the sport I play
Spectating Sport	Enjoy the sport; To support my team; Something to do/entertainment
Shopping	When I need clothes/food; Enjoy buying things; Fun
Going to the Beach	Atmosphere; Fun; Beach activities; Socialising
Adelaide Fringe Festival	Fun; Something to do/entertainment; Specific features of the program; Socialising
Clipsal 500	Interest in cars; Something to do/entertainment; Music: Socialising

Table 2 Reasons for participating in each activity and event

Reasons for participation varied among the different activities and events. Physical health motivations were prevalent in relation to playing sport, along with the enjoyment of the sport itself. This enjoyment of the sport was also demonstrated in the desire to attend sports games. Respondents implied that they attend events because it gave them something to do, whereas there seemed to be more specific desires encouraging them to participate in other activities. On the other hand, some young people did demonstrate a genuine interest in the activities involved in the events.

Respondent's feelings about the activities and events were also measured in relation to identity salience, involvement, and place attachment. A five-point Likert scale was used to examine the meaning of each activity and event to the personal identity of the respondent. The mean score for identity salience in each activity and event is shown in Table 3.

Activity/Event	*Identity Salience Mean (SD)*
Playing Sport	3.93 (0.83)
Spectating Sport	3.05 (1.04)
Shopping	2.91 (1.08)
Going to the Beach	3.13 (0.99)
Adelaide Fringe Festival	2.63 (1.04)
Clipsal 500	2.18 (1.15)

Table 3 Mean scores for identity salience in each activity and event

The results indicate that playing sport is the activity young people consider to have the greatest impact on their identity. Going to the beach also rated highly in comparison to other activities. The lowest identity salience scores were reported for the two most popular events, which imply that these are not perceived to be important in the development of young people's self-identity.

An involvement scale was implemented to measure respondent's level of motivation and interest in the activities and events. Table 4 illustrates the respondent's involvement in relation to each of the dimensions that contribute to involvement: centrality, self-expression, and attraction.

Activity/ Event	Involvement Mean (SD)		
	Centrality	Self-expression	Attraction
Playing Sport	3.79 (0.95)	3.83 (1.71)	3.55 (0.97)
Spectating Sport	3.24 (0.98)	3.31 (0.94)	3.55 (0.97)
Shopping	3.22 (0.99)	3.18 (1.00)	3.38 (1.06)
Going to the Beach	3.21 (0.98)	3.18 (1.00)	3.71 (0.88)
Adelaide Fringe Festival	2.30 (0.96)	3.21 (1.58)	3.33 (0.91)
Clipsal 500	1.85 (0.87)	2.68 (0.91)	2.71 (1.15)

Table 4 Mean involvement scores for each activity and event

These results indicate that young people demonstrate highest levels of involvement in sport activities and also going to the beach. The two events consistently resulted in the lowest involvement scores. Involvement scores in relation to events indicated that young people find them attractive, but low centrality and self-expression scores illustrate that they do not personally engage in events like they do with other activities.

A place attachment scale was applied to measure young people's feelings towards Adelaide. A mean score of 3.29 (SD=0.88) was found for place identity and the place dependence mean score was reported at 2.84 (SD=0.84). These results indicate that place identity levels are higher than place dependence, which is consistent with previous research (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000). This implies that young people identify with Adelaide to a greater degree than they believe that it provides the best facilities for them.

An analysis of the relationships between the variables found that frequency of participation had a significant effect (at the 0.001 level) on the identity salience in each activity and event. It also had an equally significant effect on young people's involvement levels. Therefore, this indicates that the activities and events which young people participate in on a more frequent basis have the greatest effect on their identity salience and involvement levels. Participation in sport activities, both playing sport and spectating sport, were found to be the only activities which significantly impacted upon place attachment towards Adelaide. Playing sport had a significant effect on place identity ($F_{(1, 209)} = 7.52$, $p < 0.01$) and spectating sport had a significant effect on both place identity ($F_{(1, 209)} = 10.37$, $p = 0.001$)

and place dependence (F $(1, 210) = 4.56$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be surmised that participation in sport activities can have a considerable effect on young people's identity and their engagement in these activities can lead to greater attachment to place.

Discussion

This paper aimed to examine young people's participation in leisure activities and the role these activities play in their lives. The lowest levels of participation were reported for the two events, the Adelaide Fringe Festival and the Clipsal 500. This is most likely due to the infrequency of their occurrence. In contrast, young people indicated the highest participation levels for shopping and going to the beach. Just over two thirds (64.6%) played sport and 60.2% attended sports games. The role of gender as a predictor, as proposed by Garton and Pratt (1991), was not greatly supported by this study given that only a slightly higher percentage of males participated in sport than females. Sport was of interest to both males and females, however the sports participated in may differ based on gender.

Even though the highest levels of participation were reported for shopping and going to the beach, sport activities appeared to have the greatest effect on the lives of young people. The nature of the activities could be the key reason for this, with shopping and going to the beach being activities that are more mainstream and are not tailored to the individual to as great a degree as sports activities. In Stebbins (1997) view, these are casual leisure activities whereby no prior skills or commitment to the activity are required. Therefore, these activities are participated in by a large number of people but hold no significant value. Havitz and Dimanche (1997) would classify these as supplementary activities because young people participate in these activities but they do not appear to be their main passion or interest.

Due to the number of sports available to participate in within Adelaide young people are able to choose a sport which fits best with their identity therefore increasing the personal importance of the activity to the individual (Coatsworth, et al., 2005). This was evident in the results demonstrating that identity salience was highest in relation to playing sport. Involvement levels also demonstrated the appeal and significance of sports activities to young people. Young people reported that playing sport enables them to express themselves, supporting Coatsworth et al.'s (2005) suggestion that a leisure activity that fits with ones' self-identity is more important to the individual. This phenomenon can also be analysed as

an autonomous motivation as part of the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The high centrality score also acknowledges that playing sport is a key activity in the lives of young people (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000). This is also reflected in the high frequency of participation that was reported for this activity. In fact, frequency of participation was found to have a significant effect on identity salience and involvement levels, which provides further explanation for the key role of sports activities in the lives of young people. In comparison, the other activities and events were not participated in on as regular a basis, therefore minimising their influence on the lives of young people.

In terms of involvement levels, young people demonstrated that the other activities and events were appealing by reporting attraction as the highest rating involvement dimension for each of those activities and events. Young people's attraction levels in relation to spectating sport and going to the beach were particularly high. However, despite the appealing nature of these activities and events, the personal connection was less apparent, with lower centrality and self-expression scores being reported. Identity salience scores for spectating sport and going to the beach, however, were found to be highest, along with playing sport, amongst all the activities and events. Given these results, playing sport and spectating sport were the only two activities to have a significant effect on young people's attachment towards Adelaide. Of each of the activities and events included in this study, playing sport and spectating sport were the only activities to significantly increase young people's place identity and place dependence for Adelaide. Continuous interaction has been found to have an influence on place attachment (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000), and this was demonstrated in this study by young people's frequency of participation in sports activities.

In analysing the key reasons for participation in each of the activities and events, it can be seen that young people's decisions to play sport reflect the physical fitness and achievement/stimulation motivations of Manfredo, Driver and Tarrant's (1996) motivational classification. Enjoyment also appeared to be a key motivator, as reflected in Kilpatrick, Hebert and Bartholomew's (2005) study. The social importance of activities and events was acknowledged as a key motivator for going to the beach, Adelaide Fringe Festival, and Clipsal 500. Even though socialisation was not directly referred to in reference to spectating sport, there is an element of this that is reflected in the key motivations for participation. The desire to support a team reflects a need to be associated with a team and others who support the team. Therefore, this demonstrates social belonging and a shared identity with those who

support the team. The sport itself also appeared to be an important consideration in the decision to play or spectate sport. The participant's affinity with the sport itself has emerged as a key factor in this study, with participants demonstrating higher identity salience and involvement in playing sport. Playing sport was illustrated as having an important effect on young people and the results of this study indicated that participation in sport can encourage feelings towards young people's place of residence, assisting the development of their identity with place and acknowledging the facilities available to them.

Conclusion

This study emphasised the importance of sports activities and their effect on young people's identity. There was higher participation in two other activities; however sports activities appeared to engage young people to a greater degree, having an effect on their identity development and sense of place within Adelaide. Sports activities offer a social environment in which young people can develop their interpersonal skills and learn about themselves. Young people who participated in this study considered the sports they play and spectate to be a part of their identity. As primary interests, these sports were of particular value to individuals and a sense of social belonging was established amongst those with similar interests. This can enhance social capital due to the shared experiences and connections that leisure participation can facilitate (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007).

Additionally, the results of this study have important implications for policy in terms of encouraging young people to participate in sport. It was found that an individual's interest and passion for an activity encourages a higher frequency of participation. Therefore, it is positive for young people to try different sports from a young age because this process assists them to find an activity they perceive to fit with their identity. Activities aligned with an individual's self-concept can have more meaning (Coatsworth, et al., 2005), and this was illustrated in this study by the greater impact that playing and spectating sport had on young people's lives. They frequently participated in these activities which influenced their involvement and the effect the activity had on their identity development. This indicates that regular participation increases the importance of the activity to the individual. Lastly, participation in sports activities had a positive impact on young people's feelings towards their place of residence. It appeared that a sense of belonging amongst the sports community translates into an increased sense of place and attachment to Adelaide.

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